

# **THE COMMAND OF THE SEA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649202027

The command of the sea by Archibald Hurd

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**ARCHIBALD HURD**

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OF THE SEA**



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# THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

SOME PROBLEMS OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE  
CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF THE  
GERMAN NAVY ACT, 1912

BY

ARCHIBALD HURD

AUTHOR OF

"NAVAL EFFICIENCY : THE WAR READINESS OF THE FLEET,"

"THE BRITISH FLEET : IS IT SUFFICIENT AND EFFICIENT ?"

ETC.

TEXT OF THE FIVE GERMAN NAVY ACTS

LONDON

CHAPMAN & HALL, LIMITED

1912

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*Printed by*  
*The Westminster Press 411a Harrow Road, London, W.*



## PREFACE.

**T**HE German Navy Law Amendment Act was passed by the Reichstag on May 21st. This is the last of the five enactments for the expansion of the German Fleet, and it is the most notable and menacing to her neighbours.

It is proposed to add only three large ships, two cruisers and seventy-two submarines to the "established strength" of the fleet, but the grave feature of the Act consists in the resolve to set up a new standard of naval efficiency.

For many years all nations in the interest of economy kept a large proportion of their men-of-war in reserve. Under the impetus of Germany the tendency of administrations has lately been to achieve rapid action—quick transition from the conditions of peace to those of hostilities. Now the German naval authorities have taken a further step in the same direction, which must impose on Europe the burden of war in times of peace.

In future, within four hundred miles of the British Isles, all the most effective ships of the German Navy—battleships, cruisers and torpedo craft—will be held on the leash—manned, stored, victualled and incessantly trained.

The German Fleet as now planned will be superior in fighting strength and more instantly ready for

aggression or defence than the fleet of any Power in the past.

So far as shipbuilding is concerned, the British people knew in 1909—in the words of Sir Edward Grey—that “Germany was creating a fleet larger than had ever existed before.” Now it has been decided that, winter and summer alike, at moments when there is not a cloud on the political horizon, and at moments when there are signs of storm, the greater portion of these ships shall be kept on a war footing, the remainder being furnished with nucleus crews which can be increased to full strength in a few hours.

The purpose of this volume is to explain the character of the new German Navy Act and to consider its influence upon the British Fleet and on some of the correlated problems of British and Imperial Defence.

The present writer can claim that during the twenty years which he has devoted to the study of naval affairs, he has never exaggerated the dangers which have threatened British sea power, and in the present volume he has set forth the facts of the new situation without any desire to excite unnecessary alarm. But it must be apparent that unless adequate measures are speedily taken by the British peoples our naval supremacy will be in serious jeopardy and our homes, our trade, and our Empire in peril.

Acknowledgment is made of the kind permission of the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* to use in the preparation of this volume articles contributed to that publication.

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