

74. It is interesting to note that the following considerations were advanced by the Admiralty in 1905, in seeking Treasury sanction for the proposals for erecting a Shore Establishment at Shotley Point, Harwich :—

- (a) that the Boys would be much healthier on shore ;
- (b) that they would have better facilities for exercise and recreation than in Stationary Ships ;
- (c) that they would derive great benefit from being able to sleep in beds instead of in hammocks ;
- (d) that medical opinion was emphatic as to the advantages which would result from the generally improved conditions in the case of growing lads.

It appears to have been in contemplation at that time to effect the ultimate transfer of practically all the Boys from the hulks to Establishments on shore, and the following notes on the subject are summarised from the report of a Committee appointed in 1903 to consider the question of the training of Boys :—

*Portsmouth* (" St. Vincent ").—Will be transferred to bungalows at Frater Point on ground already settled ; or else to Block House Fort in the possible eventuality of the removal of the Royal Engineers.

*Portland* (" Boscawen ").—Site to be chosen on land already selected in the North of Ireland.

(" Minotaur " and " Agincourt ").—Iron ship likely to be habitable for a considerable period. No alteration proposed.

*Plymouth* (" Impregnable ").—Suitable. When no longer serviceable, establishment to be transferred to the shore.

(" Implacable " and " Lion ").—Ships condemned. Establishment to be transferred to Shotley, when bungalows are completed.

*Queenstown* (" Black Prince ").—Iron ship, likely to last a considerable time. Not considered necessary to provide for an Establishment on shore.

*Harwich* (" Ganges ").—Ship suitable at present. When no longer suitable, Establishment to be transferred to Shotley.

*Queensferry* (" Caledonia ").—Establishment will be transferred to bungalows on shore, on land already selected in the vicinity.

75. Taking into account all the considerations set out above, we are of opinion that the balance of advantage lies in favour of a Shore Establishment for the training of Boys, and we recommend that such accommodation as is permanently required should in future be provided by the erection of such establishments. We fully recognise the large initial outlay which such a policy necessarily involves, but we are of opinion that it would be false economy in the end to perpetuate the present system of training in hulks. We also recommend that the " Impregnable " establishment should be transferred to Barracks on shore as soon as practicable. Proposals for utilising two of the most suitable vessels thus set free are discussed in paragraph 128.