







THE  
DEFENCELESS STATE  
OF  
GREAT BRITAIN.

By SIR FRANCIS B. HEAD, BART.

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For oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps  
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity  
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill  
Where no ill seems.

MILTON. Book III

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TO  
THAT HALF OF OUR COMMUNITY  
WHOM IT IS OUR HAPPINESS TO REGARD,  
OUR DUTY TO DEFEND,  
AND WHO,  
UNDER THE BLESSING OF AN ALMIGHTY POWER,  
HAVE, AS YET, ONLY READ OF WAR,  
THIS VOLUME,  
MAKING KNOWN  
THEIR PRESENT UNPROTECTED CONDITION,  
IS  
FAITHFULLY DEDICATED AND INSCRIBED  
BY .  
THE WRITER.



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*The Sketch to face Chap. V, p 294.*

PART I.

MILITARY WARFARE.



THE  
DEFENCELESS STATE  
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GREAT BRITAIN.

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CHAPTER I.

Striking contrast between *young* France and *old* England — Ruinous military expenses of the one — Fatal insecurity of the other — The British nation averse to the cost of security — Reasons why no Minister can venture to propose it — Difficulty of explaining the necessity — The writer's reasons for attempting to do so — Mode in which his investigation will be conducted.

ALTHOUGH there is nothing more fascinating in nature than the guileless simplicity, the unsuspecting confidence of a child, yet it is the painful, the thankless, and almost the revolting duty of a faithful guardian deliberately to sully this purity, by admixing with instinctive good that salutary knowledge of evil without which—just as the moth flies into the flame that consumes



it—the youth of both sexes are liable, solely from their innocence, to be ruined.

As regards individuals, age, by accumulating experience, acquires caution. “*What!*” said a young Spanish monarch to his aged general, “*do you advise this from fear?*” “No—Sire!” was the calm, dignified reply, “*es PRECAUCION.*” And yet, while every member of a community thus daily becomes more anxious to guard himself from any description of evil, a nation, in proportion as it increases in wealth and luxury, usually reverts to the unsuspecting confidence of its childhood; in short, like the traveller in the fable, the sunshine of prosperity almost invariably induces it to cast aside—as a useless encumbrance—the cloak of protection.

This apparent anomaly is strikingly illustrated by the contrast which, at the present moment, is exhibited between France and the British people.

It is well known to our commercial men that the financial state of “*la jeune France*” not only rests on an unsound basis, but that its

escape from a second bankruptcy is mainly to be attributed to the temporary success of a well-timed action upon the currency, by an issue by the Bank of France, in small notes, of a hundred millions of francs, which, coming during a season of perfect tranquillity both at home and abroad, has fortunately caused no run upon the bank for specie, and has therefore appeared to the Parisians an actual creation of wealth to the extent of the increase of circulation; and yet, while it is undeniable that a political or commercial panic would cause this hectic flush to fade, this inflation suddenly to collapse, the burdens of France, as compared with those of Great Britain, are enormous. For instance, including all the expenses of our immense colonial empire, the average annual expenditure for purposes of government of *old* England is 19s. 4d. per head on a home population of thirty millions; while *young* France, with scarcely any colony except Algeria, pays 31s. per head for the same purpose!

With little foreign commerce to protect, she also maintains a standing army of 408,000 men,

exclusive of a numerous and expensive national guard.

Again, while the civil administration of the French republic, solely supported by an unqualified system of patronage, expends annually 308,000,000 of francs (say 12,078,431*l.* sterling) among 598,000 employés, four-fifths of whom are under the Ministers of the Interior and Finance, England in the same departments expends only 2,786,000*l.* per annum among 235,000 persons!

It is evident, therefore, that, independent of the tax upon time and of personal liberty caused by an indiscriminate conscription of the national guard (the burden of which in a commercial country no figures can adequately represent), the provinces of France are drained to maintain, besides regular troops, an immense citizen army, supplying patronage and wealth to Paris; and thus, with hypertrophy at the heart, the extremities are paralyzed.

Now while France, the elasticity of whose resources in time of peace is truly astonishing, by the unnecessary maintenance of enormous

military forces is thus deliberately cutting her own throat with her own sword, Great Britain, by a diametrically opposite process of suicide, is jeopardising her existence in the scale of nations, and her enormous wealth, by trusting for defence to an empty scabbard; in fact, there cannot in nature exist a more extraordinary contrast than between the exaggerated length of the sword of France in proportion to that of its purse, and the tiny means which England possesses to protect her home-population and vast property from the horrors of invasion!

The one country, with nothing in its pocket, is to be seen armed to the teeth; the other, with a protuberance of wealth which attracts the attention of the world, is absolutely toothless!

And yet how truly estimable are the sentiments of the British nation! In what other region of the globe can, among any class of people, be found so strong a sense of justice—so anxious a desire to offend no one—so earnest a wish for peace—such steady application to business—so much patient industry—so much gene-

rosity in prosperity—so much patient resignation under adversity ?

But while the nation, animated by the sentiments we have described, has been indulging in the placid belief that its disinclination for war would ensure peace, and that, even if it unhappily failed, its past victories would ensure future protection,—several naval and military officers of considerable experience—among them the Duke of Wellington—have in books, pamphlets, and letters declared the defences of Great Britain to be totally inadequate to its defence !

In any other country but England such corroborating opinions would instantly have been deemed worthy of investigation, but our statesmen of all politics had two insuperable difficulties to contend with,—

1st. They were perfectly sensible that, as they did not understand the subject, it would be extremely hazardous for them to undertake to explain it ; and—

2nd. That even if by great application they could succeed in doing so, the whole nation was so totally unacquainted with even the rudiments

of the art of protecting a great empire, that as it would be practically impossible to obtain the *remedy* proposed—namely, money—the less said about the *disease* the better.

It need hardly be remarked that there exists nothing in these reasons sufficient to induce the officers of the navy and army to alter the opinions they had respectively expressed. They, however, very properly did not feel disposed to repeat them excepting in private society, where, without reservation, they continue to maintain them.

But there, the difficulty they encounter, even among their own friends, proceeds from the fact that in the great question they have to argue there exist two holes, only one of which they are each respectively able to stop.

For instance, if a soldier officer indisputably proves that the British army is inadequate to resist the invasion of the French, instead of conquering his antagonist, he is invariably defeated by the remark, "*Oh, yes! but tell me, what would our NAVY be about?*"

On the other hand, if a naval officer triumphantly, as he thinks, demonstrates that we have

not force enough in the Channel to prevent invasion—his opponent adroitly escapes by saying, “*In the name of the British ARMY, I should just like to see 'em come!*”

Now it really appears—as indeed it has hitherto proved—to be almost hopeless and impossible for any individual to attract the good sense and sober attention of the country to the consideration of two separate slippery subjects, each of which is unpalatable and unpopular.

The stake, however, at issue is so enormous;—all that we venerate, love, esteem, and value are so inextricably involved in it;—it so clearly affects not only the welfare of the British people, but the political, moral, and commercial relations of the whole globe, that we have determined to undertake the task.

With this object in view, we propose, by a series of unconnected sketches, to divide our subject into the five following sections:—

1. Military warfare.
2. Naval warfare.
- 3 The invasion of England by a French army.

4. The capture of London by a French army.

5. Reflections thereon.

The two first of these sections will no doubt attract the criticism of the twin professions to which they relate. The whole of them are submitted to the calm judgment of a people who of their own accord will make whatever allowance they may deem to be due to the difficulty of an attempt to elucidate in light popular language a subject of the gravest importance.





## CHAPTER II.

SKETCH OF THE PRINCIPAL MILITARY FORCES OF  
EUROPE.

Descriptive sketch of the French Army — Of the Austrian Army — The Prussian Army — The Russian Army.

THE FRENCH ARMY is composed of—

Regular troops.—	Men.
Staff . . . . .	3,826
Cavalry . . . . .	58,932
Infantry, &c. . . . .	301,224
Artillery . . . . .	30,166
Engineers . . . . .	8,727
Pontoon Train, &c. . . . .	5,755
Total . . . . .	<hr/> 408,630 <hr/>
Garde Nationale :—	
82 battalions of 1500 men .	123,000
2378 ditto 1000 men .	2,378,000
	<hr/> 2,501,000 <hr/>
Of whom 2,000,000 are armed with firelocks.	
To the above are to be added :—	
Garde Nationale of Paris .	129,800
Total . . . . .	<hr/> 2,630,800 <hr/>

From the latter total there might be formed about 300 battalions of retired soldiers, perfectly capable of joining the army as regular troops.

“The Garde Nationale” of France, instituted “to maintain order and obedience to the laws; to support the army in defence of the frontier and coasts; to maintain the independence of France and the integrity of its territory,” is composed, with certain exceptions, of all Frenchmen from 20 to 60 years of age, formed in each commune of 82 departments into companies, battalions, and legions. The cavalry into squadrons. Each battalion has its colours, sub-officers, and corporals. The expenses of this extraordinary force are voted, regulated, and overlooked like all other municipal charges.

*Instruction.*—During the monarchy there were annual encampments for the purpose of instructing the regular army in field operations and manœuvres. The ground chosen was usually in the neighbourhood of Compiègne or St. Omer; the ordinary force from 20,000 to 25,000 infantry, in two divisions, to each of which were attached

a brigade of 1000 cavalry and a battery of 12 guns.

These assemblages of troops remained in camp three months, commencing in August, the infantry under tents and the cavalry cantoned in the adjacent villages. The first two months were employed in a series of manœuvres approved of by the Staff, executed first by the troops of each arm separately, and afterwards by the whole united force. The last month, after the harvest had been got in, was devoted to strategetic war movements of attack and defence, according to the features of the country.

In 1843 the Government ordered the formation of four camps, at Villette, Charenton, Romainville, and Ivry, in addition to which, for the permanent reunion of a corps of cavalry, barracks for 30 squadrons were constructed at Lunenville, at which place the mounted regiments in the neighbourhood assembled every year about the end of April, when, under a General-in-chief, they were formed into two divisions, to each of which was attached a battery of light artillery. During six months the whole of these troops were

exercised in grand cavalry manœuvres, on ground selected for that purpose, and during the last week of their assemblage they performed campaign movements.

Since the revolution of 1848, although these encampments and assemblages of troops have been superseded by the formation of corps d'armée, required for the maintenance of tranquillity, as also to meet such political contingencies as might arise from the disturbed state of Europe, large bodies of men are occasionally congregated to carry on such military exercises and evolutions as may be deemed necessary for their instruction. For each corps d'armée there is nominated every year by the Government an Inspector-General, authorised to review the troops under his orders, each regiment being inspected separately. The principal points to which the attention of this officer is directed are the discipline, instruction, clothing, accounts, and promotion either for merit or long service. The inspections commence July 1st, and the reports must be sent to the Minister of War by the 1st of December.

*Garrisons.*—Under the Bourbons the garrisons of Paris and Versailles in 1830 were composed of—

Garrison of Paris :—	Men
Household troops . . .	1,000
Garde Royale, Infantry . .	12,000
Ditto Cavalry . . .	1,440
Ditto Artillery . . .	1,600
Line, 4 regiments, Infantry .	7,200
Total . . .	<hr/> 23,240 <hr/>

Garrison of Versailles :—	
Household troops . . .	1,000
Garde Royale, Infantry . .	2,400
Ditto Cavalry . . .	1,440
Total . . .	<hr/> 4,840 <hr/>

In 1837 the Garrison of Paris was augmented to . . .	31,800
That of Versailles to . . .	14,600

Between 1843 and 1848 the Garrison of Paris was augmented to . . . . .	41,400
That of Versailles reduced to	4,200

Since 1849 the army of Paris, half of which is quartered in the capital and the other half in

Versailles, and within a circle of five leagues, has been composed of 11 brigades (of which two are cavalry) formed into two divisions. This force, under the command of General Changarnier, comprehends 60 battalions of infantry, containing altogether 60,000 men, and 10 regiments of cavalry, or 50 squadrons, amounting to 6000 horses. To the different regiments are attached artillery, consisting of 20 batteries, of 120 guns, besides which there are the reserve of the Ecole Militaire, the Château of Vincennes, and the siege artillery for arming the forts surrounding Paris, of which about one-third are mounted in battery, and the remaining two-thirds in the arsenal at Bourge. To this imposing army of about 80,000 men may be added the Garde Nationale of Paris, composed of sixteen legions, containing 128,000 infantry and 1800 cavalry—total 129,800; besides which the chemins de fer du Nord et de Bourge could within one day transport to the army of Paris an augmentation of 20,000 infantry with a numerous artillery, and in a few days the army of the Alps might, leaving a sufficient garrison in Lyons, also supply

the capital with a reinforcement of 25,000 men ; and thus could quickly be congregated under experienced generals a body of, say 125,000 disciplined and well-appointed troops, perfect in the art of war, ready to suppress domestic insurrection, or to join very many thousands more for any foreign enterprise.

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### THE AUSTRIAN ARMY

In time of war is composed of—

	Men
Infantry, 324 battalions . . .	489,240
Cavalry, 306 squadrons . . .	54,560
Artillery . . . . .	26,104
Engineers, Staff, Marines, &c. .	56,549
Grand total . . .	626,453
Peace total of the Austrian army	378,552 <sup>1</sup>

In addition to the above, the Landwehr, forming the reserve of the regular army, is composed of a force sufficient, whenever required, to

<sup>1</sup> The Austrian army at the present moment is deficient of its usual force by the temporary disbanding of 100,000 Hungarians, who have not yet been re-organized.

augment the regiments of infantry from 3 battalions (their number in time of peace) to 5.

*Instruction.*—Previous to 1848 three or four divisions of the Austrian army were at irregular periods of three or four years assembled together in Grätz, Styria, or in Bohemia, for the purpose of military manœuvres. This course of instruction lasted about a month, of which the first part was occupied in brigade movements and the latter in campaign evolutions, carried on in accordance with the strategetic features of the country. Since 1848 the Austrian army has had much better practice than can be afforded by camps of exercise. The troops, all placed on the war establishment, are now formed into great corps, viz., in Italy, Hungary, and Bohemia. Of these three armies the two first are each composed of upwards of 100,000 men, that of Bohemia of about 60,000.

Up to the period of the war with Hungary the strength of the Imperial army was about 450,000 men, of which there was furnished by Hungary a force of about 150,000 men, consisting of 15



regiments of infantry, 12 of hussars, and <sup>24</sup>~~18~~ of frontier troops. The latter, composed principally of Transylvanians, have almost all retained their fidelity to the Emperor.

The troops of each of these armies, under the command of their respective generals, have been in the habit of assembling for field manœuvres in brigades and divisions, to each of which there has been attached an adequate proportion of artillery.

*Garrisons.*—The garrison of Vienna, previous to 1848, consisted of—

	Men
2 Regiments of Infantry . .	3,784
5 Battalions of Grenadiers . .	4,625
6 Squadrons of Cavalry of the Line	730
8 ditto Hussars and Lancers . .	1,313
1 Regiment of Artillery . .	3,720
1 Brigade of Artillerie de Place	480
<hr/>	
Total . . .	14,652

The above garrison, at present on the war establishment, amounts to from 18,000 to 20,000 men, which by railroads to Bohemia now in operation might in a few days be quadrupled.

## THE PRUSSIAN ARMY.

The devastation, destruction of property, and heavy exactions which Prussia suffered while under the dominion of the French have been productive of extraordinary self-defensive arrangements on the part of the nation to prevent the recurrence of such calamities. Every Prussian male subject, without exception, from the King's son downwards, is obliged to serve, in time of war, from the age of 18 to 24, in time of peace, between the ages of 20 and 25, for 3 years, in the army; after which all men between 25 and 32, trained as above, belong to the Landwehr of the 1st class, and during that time are liable to be summoned annually for drill for 14 days. In case of war the Landwehr of this class are at once summoned to serve in the regular army, in or out of the kingdom, as required.

The Landwehr of the 2nd class, composed of all men trained as soldiers between the ages of 32 and 39, also assemble during war to garrison the fortresses.

All men from 40 upwards, as long as they are capable of bearing arms, belong to the Landsturm, and are only required to serve on great emergency.

By the above arrangements the whole nation—imbued with military enthusiasm as well as knowledge at an age when such impressions can never subsequently be effaced—is, at comparatively speaking a very small cost, converted into a disciplined army, ready at a moment's warning to rise *en masse* in defence of their fatherland, or for any other great national object.

The Prussian army may therefore truly be said to consist of the whole male population capable of bearing arms. Its total force in time of war, including the 1st and 2nd Landwehr bans and the reserve, is—

	Men
Infantry . . . . .	265,530
Cavalry . . . . .	49,662
Artillery . . . . .	23,400
Engineers . . . . .	4,800
Officers, Staff, Gendarmes, &c. .	36,000
<hr/>	
Total . . . . .	379,392
<hr/>	

To the above would be added, in case of an invasion of Prussia, or an offensive war beyond its limits, the Landsturm, composed of—

	Men.
142 battalions of Infantry .	142,284
56 squadrons of Cavalry .	5,600
Artillery <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	16,000
Engineers, 12 companies .	3,400

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167,284

Grand total of Regular army	546,676
Number of Guns . . . . .	1,163

Besides which there would remain 100,000 Landsturm capable of garrisoning fortified posts.

	Men
Its present force is . . . . .	222,416

Landwehr force:—

142 battalions of Infantry	142,284
51 squadrons of Cavalry .	5 600
Artillery <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	16,000
Engineers, 12 companies .	3,400

---

Total . . . . . 167,284

Total of Regular army and	
Landwehr force . . . . .	389,700
Number of Guns . . . . .	982

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<sup>1</sup> The Prussian Landwehr artillery have no guns of their own.

*Instruction.*—The regular army of Prussia is formed into nine grand corps, including that of the guards; each corps contains two divisions, each division two brigades, namely, one of infantry, composed of two regiments of 3021 men each; the other of two regiments of cavalry, of 800 men each. To each division there is, moreover, attached a battalion of artillery of 120 guns, with engineers, pioneers, &c., in proportion: as also one regiment of reserve infantry, one battalion of combined reserve infantry, and one division or company of riflemen. The regiments are reviewed annually, but at uncertain periods; and the whole of the Prussian cavalry is annually inspected by General Wrangel.

Previous to the late disturbances it was the practice in Prussia for contiguous garrisons to assemble every year for brigade and divisional manœuvres; and at irregular periods, but usually every third year, a corps d'armée, of two or more divisions, was congregated for manœuvres on a larger scale. The different regiments were warned in March or April, but

did not march into camp till September. The Minister of War fixed the locality of these manœuvres, which were always varied according to the features of the country, of which, if no plans existed, the staff officers of the division were ordered accurately to survey and map the ground. For the purpose of practically teaching the army the exigencies of war, the troops were kept for a month in bivouac. In the encampments near Berlin or Cologne there were usually about 40,000 men of all arms. Previous, however, to 1848, besides the field instruction above described, the army of the German Confederation, of which Prussia forms a part, was in the habit of forming for the purpose of manœuvres a camp, composed of one or two corps d'armée; and with the view of drawing together more closely the bonds of union which united the combined forces of the Confederation, the troops of one kingdom were occasionally inspected by the generals of another: for instance, the Bavarian army was inspected by Austrian generals. The troops manœuvred as on real service, under regulations which, to avoid quarrels or collisions

among the troops, prescribed how near they might approach each other,—when a corps might advance,—and when it *must* return.

*Garrisons.*—Previous to 1848 the garrison of Berlin, amounting to about 16,000 men, was composed of—

- 2 Regiments of the Guards.
- 1 Battalion of Landwehr Guard.
- 2 Ditto ditto Line.
- 3 Squadrons Body Guard.
- 4 Ditto Cuirassiers of the Guard.
- 4 Ditto Dragoons ditto.
- 4 Ditto Lancers ditto.
- 4 Ditto Eclaireurs ditto
- Artillery of the Guard, 12 battalions.

At present there is in garrison at Berlin a force of 20,000 men, which on a war establishment could be augmented to 36,000.

The garrison of Potsdam is nearly equal to that of Berlin.

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## THE ARMY OF RUSSIA,

Or rather, the military forces of that vast empire, are composed of—

	Men
Regular troops :—	
Cavalry . . . . .	950,000
Infantry . . . . .	
Artillery . . . . .	
Cossacks . . . . .	

The regular troops and Cossacks are divided into—

- 1st, three active armies ;
- 2nd, corps d'armée at fixed stations ;
- 3rd, corps beyond the circuits of those stations.
- 4th, grand corps of reserve.

One of these active armies—that of the Vistula, whose head-quarters are at Warsaw—is composed of an effective force of 180,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, and 350 guns.

In second line there is another army, whose head-quarters are at ~~Koef~~, composed of 200,000 infantry, 36,000 cavalry, and 400 guns.



In rear is the third army, head-quarters St. Petersburg, composed of 88,000 infantry, including the guards and the corps of grenadiers, 19,000 cavalry, and 270 guns—making a total in the three lines of—

Infantry	.	.	.	.	.	468,000
Cavalry	.	.	.	.	.	85,000
Guns	.	.	.	.	.	1,020
To which are to be added :—						
Cossacks	.	.	.	.	.	20,000

The troops at fixed stations, and which do not belong to either of the three armies, are—Finland corps, of about 10,000 infantry, 350 cavalry, and 36 guns. At Arenbourg 15,000 men. In Siberia 15,000 men. In Circassia, &c., 36,000 infantry, ~~2000~~<sup>600</sup> cavalry<sup>x</sup>, 108 guns, and 10,000 Cossacks.

*Instruction.*—In ordinary times, for the purpose of instructing this vast army in its field duties, manœuvres are carried on by regiments and divisions, each of the former being regularly reviewed once a-year; but in the event of a journey by the Emperor, or of a concentration

of troops being required by political events, there are formed, on an extended scale, camps for grand manœuvres, which are always commanded by his Majesty in person.

The garrison of St. Petersburg usually amounts to 58,000 men, composed entirely of guards and corps of grenadiers.

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The foregoing statements faintly show the exertions which the great military nations of the continent of Europe, *as a matter of economy*, very sedulously take to make their costly armies efficient in the science and practice of war, and thus to be applicable to the purposes for which they were raised. It would be beyond our limits to attempt to describe in detail or to enumerate the various operations which even we ourselves have witnessed. The following, however, are a few of the advantages they offer.

The troops of the various branches of the service, after having learned to handle with dexterity

their respective weapons,—to be steady in their regimental drills,—and orderly in barracks (BE IT OBSERVED THAT THE EDUCATION OF THE BRITISH SOLDIER, BY THE WORD OF COMMAND OF THE NATION, HALTS HERE),—they are in these great encampments next instructed, not only in the art of living in cantonments, en bivouac, under canvas, or billeted on the inhabitants, but, what is infinitely more valuable, in that high moral discipline and self-control necessary to enable young troops, under such circumstances, to resist those temptations to plunder and rapine which gipsy-life always offers. While the artillery and pontoon train are learning how to transport their guns and boats across rough country, ravines, streams, &c.—while the cavalry are learning to swim their horses,—with other accomplishments equally useful on active service,—the infantry are practised in making fascines, gabions, &c., and in rapidly throwing up field-works of various sorts, the defensive advantages of which they are made clearly to understand. Indeed, at Metz—the great French artillery and engineer school of practice—there are frequently mock sieges lasting six

weeks or two months, at which 12,000 troops, 1000 sappers, &c., go through all the forms and works of a siege up to storming the breach. But Marshal Saxe, in his 'Military Maxims,' truly says that "The art of making war successful depends not so much on the use of the *arms* as of the *legs* of soldiers." Accordingly, in the great continental encampments, officers and soldiers of every service not only as in real war are practised for several weeks in field-of-battle manœuvres by evolutions and movements on a large scale (in which all ranks take the deepest interest, and which, forming invariably the general topic of conversation, are subjected to severe criticism), but they learn in the field the far more important acquirements necessary for moving large masses of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, many miles across a country, as also simultaneously by its roads, so as to reach given points at given times with the whole force, and in proper order, a combination of arrangements always of considerable difficulty, and which nothing but repeated *practice* can teach. In short, by these and numberless other experimental exertions, the

great armies of the Continent gradually become provided not only with young skilful generals, but with subordinate officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, all more or less instructed in the higher branches of their profession, in the utility of the evolutions and manœuvres they are required to perform, and, lastly, in the self-control necessary for living creditably *en bivouac*, under canvas, or in billets.



## CHAPTER III

SKETCH OF THE SECOND AND THIRD RATE MILITARY  
FORCES OF EUROPE.

The Belgian Army — Its Cadres — Field exercise — Reviews  
— Arsenal

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## THE BELGIAN ARMY.

THE system of the Belgian army is interesting, not only because it shows the efforts which a small quiet, agricultural, and manufacturing kingdom, of a population of little more than four millions, deems it prudent to make for self-defence, but because it is nearly similar to the sensible system pursued by all other second-rate powers, such as Bavaria, Piedmont, Denmark, Sweden, &c., namely, to maintain in time of peace the “Cadres,” or framework of all the corps necessary in time of war.

“THESE CADRES,” exclaimed General Charzet, the Belgian Minister of War, in his speech

in the Chamber of Representatives, on the 17th of January, 1850, "ARE THE RICHES, THE STRENGTH, THE SECURITY, THE HONOUR OF A NATION, THE HEART AND SOUL OF AN ARMY!" Belgium, during her late difference with Holland, had an effective force of 112,000 men: at present the "cadres" are for an army of 80,000 men; they are composed of—

	Men.
Infantry . . . . .	23,013
Cavalry . . . . .	4,634
Artillery, Engineers, Pontoon Train, and Staff . . . . .	6,704
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	34,351
	<hr/>
Reduced in winter to . . . . .	28,440

As a proof of the efficiency and elasticity of this system of "cadres," it may be stated that on the 24th February, 1848, the Belgian army was about 30,000 men. In six days it was increased to 60,000, the fortresses were armed, repaired, and in a short time 160 cannon and materials for a short campaign were collected.

The annual contingent of the army is 10,000 men, whose average duration of service is eighteen

months. They are sent to the camps and exercised. The old soldiers form the reserve, and are ready to fill up the "cadres" at a moment's notice.

Besides the "cadres" of the regular army, there is constituted in Belgium a garde civique, "*for the defence of the country, for the maintenance of order and the law,*" composed of all men from the ages of 21 to 50, and forming a grand total of 113,000 men, of whom 33,000 are ready drilled, armed, and equipped.

*Instruction.*—The Belgian army is instructed in manœuvres and field exercise at the camps of Beverloo and Bragschael, where many hundred thousand cartridges and several thousand rounds of ordnance are fired. In these reviews the King takes himself the general direction, and appoints two old soldiers who served under Napoleon in his latter campaigns, the one to attack, the other to defend. He also practises the assembling of troops by railway, and, with a view to introduce into every corps the study of the art of war, his Majesty has also appointed several very distin-



guished French and German officers to high posts in the Belgian service. At Brussels and elsewhere there are military schools of every description, besides which, at each garrison there is a course of evening lectures for the instruction of the soldiers.

At the arsenal there is a foundry for cannon, at which, since 1840, there have been cast for different governments ordnance amounting in price to 1,626,000,000 francs. In 1839, 3,000 stand of arms were made, and 3,600 old ones changed to percussion.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SKETCH OF THE BRITISH ARMY

Strength of the British Army — The British Soldier — Descriptive sketch of the duties of the various departments of the Army — Commissariat — Engineer department — Artillery — The Staff of an Army — Infantry and Cavalry — Lamentable results in Spain and Portugal from the Army's inexperience in field-discipline — Present condition of the Army — Comparative Ages of the Officers in the French and British services — Future consequences of the British Army being debarred by the nation from Military Education

THE British Army is composed of—

Regular troops : — Cavalry, Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, and Sappers . . . . .	Men
	123,768
In Great Britain . . . . .	37,843
Ireland . . . . .	24,005
Europe } . . . . .	7,915
Mediterranean }	
Asia . . . . .	30,467 <sup>1</sup>
Africa . . . . .	3,703
America, New South Wales, New Zealand, Van Diemen's Land, Mauritius, Bermuda, West Indies, &c., &c., &c. . . . .	19,835
Grand total . . . . .	123,768

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of the troops of the East India Company

Besides the above, there are in the United Kingdom 30,000 enrolled pensioners, more or less worn out; 8,000 dockyard-men occasionally drilled; 13,441 yeomanry; and in the Channel Islands 4,700 well-organised militia. By an Act passed in the late session (13 and 14 Victoria, cap. 46), the making of lists and the ballots and enrolments for the militia of the United Kingdom have been suspended for a year.

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#### THE BRITISH SOLDIER.

Although it is the fashion, especially among those who have seen but little of the surface of this world, whenever they have an idle moment, to abuse the English climate, yet it is undeniable that the repeated showers, white fogs, and heavy dews,—in short, that the constant humidity of which we all complain,—has not only made Great Britain and Ireland the most verdant region of the globe, but is highly favourable to animal as well as to vegetable life. The continual irrigations with which we are especially blessed, nourish our pastures,—which

fatten our cattle,—which feed us; and thus, although we may truly enough be designated by foreigners “*men of the mist*,” the British nation ever have been, and we believe, as long as our moist soft atmosphere lasts, ever will be, more robust in body, in heart, and in mind, than the inhabitants of gayer, gaudier, and dustier climates. But whatever may be the physical causes,—be they “in thunder, lightning, or in rain,”—the cold blood, the cool courage of the English are as proverbial as their muscular strength. In their senate, — in their mercantile speculations, — in their exertions for discovery, — in their construction of great works, — in their readiness to encounter difficulties or dangers of any sort, — in their domestic games, — in their sports, — and, lastly, as pioneers, backwoodsmen, or settlers in every region of the globe, they have evinced a calm intrepidity of character which has enabled them successively to overcome the chequered difficulties they have had to encounter. From an utter contempt of bluster or bravado, they are, however, of all civilized nations the least military in their ideas and knowledge. Conscious of their innate powers of self-defence, they dis-

tain any other assistance. Instructed from their cradle in the firm belief that a "standing-army" is "*unconstitutional*," they are jealous even of its appearance: indeed, fancying that they breathe freer without it, they take every opportunity of dismissing it from their presence; and thus in our House of Commons, as well as out of it, any proposal for "another *good* reduction of the army," whether expedient or inexpedient, is invariably designated "*a popular measure*." Among the labouring classes the distaste for military life is still stronger. Always copying the opinions of the wealthy, and observing that at an election the first precaution of their magistrates and employers is to order away every soldier, they naturally learn to consider them to be, in some way or other, enemies of their liberty; and as a barrack life has apparently no pleasures, as military discipline is evidently severe, and as it is observed that soldiers, like criminals, are sooner or later invariably banished, for five, seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, to countries "beyond the seas," from which many never return, the result altogether is, that, although our agricultural labourers and manufacturers from various causes and

calamities are often suddenly thrown out of work, they prefer, generally speaking, to be imprisoned as paupers in a union workhouse (on the 1st of July last the number of able-bodied men thus incarcerated in England and Wales alone amounted to 14,227); indeed—they would almost starve rather than wear the scarlet uniform and eat the wholesome rations of a common soldier!

The French pay great attention to the comfort of soldiers in their barracks. As ample space is given, and as the beds therefore are not required to be turned up during the day, a tired man can lie down when he likes. Each soldier has a bed to himself of *two* good mattresses, one of straw, the other of well-filled wool. They have good sheets, one blanket in summer, and two in winter. Along the sides of the rooms there are double shelves, and other conveniences. The British soldier is only allowed by the nation one straw mattress, one blanket for winter and summer, and bare walls.

For these reasons, familiar to us all, our army becomes, without metaphor, the very last refuge for the destitute, and yet, strange to

say, although it has ever been composed of what in their adversity has been designated "the scum and refuse of our society," yet in every region of the globe it has of late years by its bravery conferred glory and honour on the British name, until, at the present moment, even by its enemies, its steadiness under fire is the admiration of the world.

Having, we trust, done justice to the determined character of the nation, as well as of its army, it is necessary we should remind our readers that, although in all ages the physical strength and bull-dog courage of the English soldier have been the same, yet that scarcely half a century ago it was an axiom easier expressed than understood, that while our sailors always conquered, our soldiers were invariably defeated! The reason of the anomaly has become evident, and we refer to it only for the purpose of enabling our readers, from the facts we are now about to state, to reflect, and then determine whether, if similar causes shall be allowed to recur, they must not be productive of the same lamentable results.

Without the smallest desire to reprobate the

anti-military notions that exclusively characterise the British people, it is evident that they must always have powerfully operated upon our army. And thus, while in France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Belgium, and the German States, every man-milliner, every barber's clerk, has been assuming the mustachio to ape the soldier, the English officer, in modest compliance with the general feelings of his fellow-countrymen, has been, and still is, in the habit, on every opportunity, of shaking off his red coat to ape the squire! Among the great continental powers, military knowledge to a considerable degree has long been common to all classes of people; whereas, in English society, conversation rarely turns on such subjects; indeed, as a proof of our ignorance thereon, may be cited the entire absence of military literature in England, our professional reports and reasonings having been almost all founded on quotations from continental authorities; in short, the service has never offered either means or opportunity to our officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, to attain any higher knowledge of the art of war



than that afforded by regimental drill. The natural result of this national anti-military system has been, that prior to the year 1808, whenever the British soldier came into action, he has had usually to perform not only his own duty, but,—by courage unknown to any other army, and which our opponents have only accounted for by declaring that “*English troops never know when they are beaten*”—he has almost invariably had to make up for the inexperience of his General.

Without, however, any further preliminary observations, we will now, by a few facts, endeavour to delineate to our readers the *practical* results of the extraordinary system we have described. We propose to do so by very briefly describing and contrasting with their present state, the condition and duties of the various departments of the British army under the Duke of Wellington in Portugal, Spain, Belgium, and France.

#### 1. COMMISSARIAT.

Sir John Moore, in his despatches to Lord Castlereagh, dated Lisbon, 18th of October and

24th of November, 1808, after reporting that "in none of the departments is there any want of zeal, but in some most important ones there is much want of experience," added "nothing but ABUNDANCE OF MONEY and prompt payments will compensate, when we begin to move, for *the want of experience and ability in our commissariat*," which he subsequently described as "extremely zealous, but quite new and inexperienced in the important duties which it now falls to their lot to execute." The result, as might have been anticipated, was, that on his retreat to Corunna a considerable portion of this "abundance of money" was *abandoned*, and merely for want of shoes many cavalry horses were shot, and many foot-sore British soldiers left *in the rear*.

On the Duke of Wellington's arrival in Portugal, he accordingly found with his army, the expense of which amounted to more than 200,000*l.* a month, a Commissary-General without staff, surrounded by many hired accountants, who, knowing nothing of accounts, had but too often been driven to the necessity

of very hastily signing vouchers or of obtaining similar receipts from the inhabitants of a country who proverbially "would sign anything;" besides which the army, as well as the country, were irreparably injured by a set of "*sharks*," calling themselves British merchants at Lisbon, who by the vilest intrigues managed, first to depreciate, and then purchase, our commissariat securities.

The Duke, foreseeing the alarming consequences of this want of system in the department, and well knowing that an army without provisions is infinitely *worse* than muskets without ammunition, on the 9th of May, 1809, and subsequently, took extraordinary pains to draw up with his own hand a code of minute regulations for the formation of a commissariat,—for the promotion of its officers,—and for their respective duties, which he clearly detailed. He also ordered the organization of 800 bullock-carts of prescribed patterns in two grand divisions, each to be superintended by an officer of the commissariat: each of these divisions of 400 carts to be composed of eight subdivisions of 50 carts, under a commissariat clerk; each

subdivision into two brigades of 25 carts. The weight which every description of carriage was to carry he prescribed ; also how the bullocks were to be shod ; how much barley or Indian corn, besides forage, each was to receive per day ; lastly, to the whole he appointed an efficient establishment of capatazes, smiths, and drivers. Under similar arrangements he directed the organization of brigades of mules. These preliminaries having been completed, to every division of the army he appointed a Deputy Commissary-General, with a sufficient number of clerks, interpreters, capatazes, herdsman, &c. ; and to each brigade of infantry, to each troop of cavalry, to the artillery, and to head-quarters, he attached an assistant commissary, with assistants, &c., adequate to the duties he had to perform. Finally, in the rear of the army, he provided, under the charge of storekeepers, for the safe custody of the enormous necessary amount of provisions and forage.

For the maintenance of the Portuguese army he organized similar establishments placed solely and exclusively under the direction of the Por-

tuguese Government, and of the Commander-in-chief of the Portuguese army.

Under this system the commissariat department, at great cost, became gradually accomplished in field-service. For instance, although a corps of the army had occasionally to advance 20 miles per day for twenty consecutive days (Sir Thomas Picton's division marched in 1813 for thirty-four days through muddy roads without a halt to the battle of Vittoria), its commissary was enabled actually during the march to find, purchase, pay for, and grind, wheat, which, by the assistance of innumerable women, and by order of various municipal authorities, had to be kneaded, baked into bread, to be transported on the backs of mules, and finally to be delivered, together with rations of meat, wine, or spirits, to the troops in cantonments extending say four or five miles. He had, moreover, by means of his assistants, to procure, transport, and distribute forage for the cavalry, artillery, and for other horses of the division. Under the exigencies of this service, which often required ready-money payments, a young deputy-assistant

commissary, under due precautions, had frequently to despatch, in various directions, by conductors and capatazes receiving only two or three shillings a day, sums of money amounting to 200, 300, or 1000 dollars, to procure provisions for which vouchers in triplicate were to be required. Nevertheless, by the power of the discipline which had been organized, a common muleteer, whose clothes were literally not worth ten shillings, was sometimes, almost without anxiety, despatched alone in charge of a mule-load of silver; nay, the commissary himself had occasionally to ride for twenty-four or forty-eight successive hours, crossing mountains full of wolves, in charge of mules laden with dollars, and driven by a few trusty Spaniards in garb and education exactly resembling banditti.

Besides exertions such as have been described, the jaded commissary, after having managed to feed his division, had at night through cantonments in a strange country to search among innumerable camp-fires for his own tent, around which he was almost sure to find a crowd of muleteers and peasants waiting to be paid. By candle-

light he had then, under a system devised by the Treasury, voluminous, vexatious, and almost impracticable, to endeavour to make up his accounts, arrange his vouchers, answer letters, &c., until, while his papers were still before him and his money-chests by his side, all of a sudden the key-bugles, trumpets, &c., of the *reveillée*, at various distances and in all directions, would be heard to sound, echo, and re-echo, on which the canvas over his head would obediently begin to flap in signal that his servant was striking the tent; in short, that his office was about to vanish into pure air; and thus, say at 3 A.M., the commissary had again to mount his horse, and, actually before his division had continued its march, to search for and transport to it, wherever it might halt, sustenance for both men and horses for another day!

At the conclusion of the Duke's campaigns this well-organized system of officers and subordinates, thoroughly instructed in and acquainted with the principles and practice of obtaining and of distributing, under severe responsibilities, that enormous amount of provisions and forage

necessary for the movement of a combined army, was disbanded; the consequence of which is, that at the present moment a *field* commissariat, the life-blood of every movement in a campaign, is not in existence in the British service. In lieu of it there is, however, a corps of commissaries attached to the Treasury, such, we readily admit, as never before existed. By men of business they would justly be declared better competent to keep the accounts of an army than the old worn-out campaigners they have succeeded. They are gentlemen of education, of good character and conduct; but as their sedentary duties are, generally speaking, quite foreign to field-service, there is reason to apprehend that whenever, for the exigencies of war, they shall suddenly be placed on saddles, in short, whenever a British army shall again take the field, its General commanding will probably find himself in the following predicament:—

“I have had the greatest difficulty,” wrote the Duke in a despatch to Lord Castlereagh, dated Lavos, 8th of August, 1808, “in organizing my com-



missariat for the march, and that department is very incompetent notwithstanding the arrangements which I made with Huskisson on the subject. This department deserves your serious attention. The existence of the army depends upon it, and yet the people who manage it are incapable of managing anything out of A COUNTING-HOUSE."

As a contrast to the above may be cited the following description of the French system :—

"It is certainly astonishing," wrote the Duke in his despatch to Lord Liverpool, dated Cartaxo, 21st of December, 1810, "that the enemy have been able to remain in this country so long, and it is an extraordinary instance of what a French army can do. With all our money, and having in our favour the good inclination of the country, I assure you that I could not maintain *one* division in the district in which *they* have maintained not less than 60,000 men and 20,000 animals for more than two months."

In a despatch to Vice-Admiral the Hon G. Berkeley, dated 7th of June, 1809, the Duke stated,—“Our commissariat is very bad indeed, but it is new, and will improve, I hope.”

We have shown that it not only *did* improve, but by the end of the campaign became well organised for the performance of its field duties.

In the mean while, however, during its progress from ignorance to knowledge, within the space of five years there passed through the hands of that faithful public servant, Sir Robert Kennedy, Commissary-in-Chief with the army in the Peninsula, the enormous sum of FIFTY-FOUR MILLIONS!

With these facts and figures before the mind, is it not painful to reflect that, in case of war, the nation will, in all probability, in the words of the late gallant Sir John Moore, be again fearfully admonished that “nothing but ABUNDANCE OF MONEY will compensate, *when we begin to move*, for the want of experience and ability in our commissariat”?

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## 2. ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT.

Considering it has long been an axiom among engineers, that while a well-conducted siege is certain in its results, the application of labour and force *without science* is invariably punished by an enormous unnecessary expenditure of life

and money, it will scarcely be credited that the trenches, saps, mines, batteries, and other important works necessary for the recapture of Olivença, in April, 1811, the attack of Fort Christoval, in May, 1811, the siege of Badajoz, in May and June, 1811, the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, in 1812, the siege of Badajoz, in March, and April, 1812, the escalade and capture of the French works at Almaraz, in May, 1812, the reduction of the French posts at Salamanca, in June, 1812, the capture of the Retiro at Madrid, in August, and the siege of Burgos, in September and October, 1812, were undertaken and conducted by a British army UNATTENDED BY A SINGLE SAPPER OR MINER (at Olivença there were present only two military artificers, namely one carpenter and one mason); that, under an inadequate number of officers of engineers, the above works were accordingly directed by *infantry* officers, “appointed to act as assistant engineers, and to be obeyed as such;” and that in lieu of a corps of sappers and miners a selected body of from 100 to 200 infantry private soldiers, who literally had never seen a military

sap, mine, fascine, or gabion, were collected to superintend, by night as well as by day, in sunshine, darkness, and in all weathers, the construction of trenches, parapets, banquettes, and batteries, by working parties of their fellow-soldiers, amounting from 1000 to 2000 men, all equally ignorant of the duties they respectively were required to perform; and yet when the French besieged Badajoz, in 1811, although *they* had, as assistants, 100 miners, 483 sappers, 60 artificers, it required 41 days of open trenches to take the place!

The details of the extraordinary circumstances above stated are briefly as follows:—

In the year 1809 there were with the army in Portugal only 16 officers of Engineers, and 29 “Royal Military Artificers” (namely 2 sergeants, 2 corporals, 2 second corporals, 7 carpenters, 5 masons, 4 smiths, 1 wheelwright, 1 collar-maker, 4 miners, and 1 labourer), without the slightest knowledge of field duties, and without any tools or implements whatever!!

The fatal consequences of such deficiency and ignorance in this highly important protective as

well as offensive branch of the service being manifest, the Duke with considerable difficulty obtained a greater number of officers. Previous, however, to their arrival from England, he himself framed instructions for the creation of an establishment of entrenching tools to be carried on 100 mules, to accompany the army for *field-service*. He also ordered to be collected and arranged in a *siege-depôt* all that was necessary for that service, to be moved forwards, by extra efforts, when required. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the sacrifice of money, to say nothing of men, from the inadequate means we have described, having proved, as might have been anticipated, enormous (at the second siege of Badajoz, in 1812, the number of casualties were—officers and men killed, 1035 ; wounded, 3787 ; missing, 63 ; total, 4885), the Duke, on the 11th of February, 1812, wrote to Lord Liverpool as follows:—

“ While on the subject of the artillery, I would beg to suggest to your Lordship the expediency of adding to the Engineers’ establishment a corps of sappers and miners. It is inconceivable with what disadvantage we

undertake anything like a siege, for want of assistance of that description. There is no French *corps d'armée* which has not a battalion of sappers and a company of miners. But we are obliged to depend for assistance of this description upon *the regiments of the line* ; and although the men are brave and willing, they want the knowledge and training which are necessary. Many casualties among them consequently occur, and much valuable time is lost at the most critical period of the siege."

Although by the above recommendation the Duke caused to be originated our present highly educated corps of Sappers and Miners, as also that admirable establishment at Chatham, which by instructing them as well as our Engineer officers in the theory and practice of field-fortification, and especially in the scientific application of gunpowder, for the purposes of blowing open gates, throwing down palisades, &c. &c., has been productive, particularly in India, of such important results ; yet it was not until 1813, *when most of the sieges were concluded*, that a single company of sappers was despatched to Spain. In the mean while the Engineer department of the army, notwithstanding its exertions, was so inadequate to the important services

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to be performed, that although the utmost amount of Engineer officers ever present at any one time in the Peninsula was 48, the number killed and wounded in the various sieges amounted to 49. Indeed, the following specimens of their losses will briefly show how severe were the duties they were required to execute.

*List of Officers of Royal Engineers present at the Siege of St. Sebastian.*

Lieut.-Colonel Sir R. Fletcher, Bart., Commanding Engineer in the Peninsula, *killed*.

Lieut.-Colonel J. F. Burgoyne,<sup>1</sup> Director of the siege, *wounded*.

Captains George Henderson.

Charles Rhodes, *killed*

C. G. Ellicombe, Bt.-Major.

C. F. Smith, Bt.-Major.

G. G. Lewis, *severely wounded*.

Richard Bolden.

George Collyer, *killed*.

Lieuts. F. Stanway.

H. D. Jones, *severely wounded on the breach, and taken prisoner*.

A. Marshall, *wounded*.

Philip Burney, *wounded*.

H. A. Tapp, *wounded*

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<sup>1</sup> Now Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, K.C.B., Inspector-General of Fortifications.

Lieuts. W Reid, *wounded*.

E. Matson.

L. Machele, *killed*.

H. Wortham.

At Badajoz, in 1812, out of 17 Engineer officers who were present throughout the siege, 11 were killed or wounded.

In 1815, when the Allied army was organised, the Duke, having apparently determined not again to be caught without the means of even fortifying a position, attached to each British corps from 8 to 10 officers of engineers, commanding a regular travelling field-depôt packed into 13 Flanders waggons, properly appointed with drivers and horses, and attended by a body of 131 practised sappers. He, moreover, insisted on having a reserve of 11 officers of engineers, 19 waggons, 88 horses, and 197 sappers; and, lastly, he required to be organised and attached to each corps of the army, under the direction and management of 8 officers of engineers, an efficient pontoon train, composed altogether of 80 pontoons, 4 sub-lieutenants, 265 sappers, 32 civil artificers, 2 lieutenants commanding 167 royal artillery drivers, 348



Flemish drivers, 105 seamen, 861 horses, 4 wheel carriages, 4 boats, 16 Flanders waggons, and 4 forge-carts.

From the foregoing statements it appears, that between 1809 and 1816 the Duke of Wellington gradually established, for the first time in the history of the British army, an efficient department for siege and field duties, composed of—

1st. Officers of engineers, and a corps of sappers and miners well instructed in their peculiar duties.

2nd. A field supply of entrenching tools, with adequate means for transporting them.

3rd. An appropriate assortment of materials, &c., necessary for reducing fortified posts, or for the construction as well as demolition of bridges

4th. A collection, in dépôt, of all stores necessary for a siege, with organised means for their movement when required.

5th. A pontoon train.

The corps of Royal Engineers as well as that of Royal Sappers and Miners still retain the full benefit of the above system, and there exist,

therefore, reasonable grounds for believing that in case of war the "*personnel*" of the Engineer department would be found *fully* prepared for the scientific duties required of it; but ever since the retirement of the army of occupation, the "*MATÉRIEL*" above described has remained totally unorganised.

The arrangements for field service, provided for Portugal and Spain, would be scarcely applicable to any other country. Those of the army of occupation, though well enough devised under the urgent circumstances of the moment, would require *thorough* reconsideration. In the mean while, although the French have 5587 horses attached to their "military equipages," and 1058 horses to their "engineers," there exists in the British service no recognised field system,—no carriages approved of,—no experienced mode of packing entrenching tools,—no horses, drivers, or even any established regulations for either; and the British nation has therefore reason for apprehending that, in case of a sudden war, the Government, embarrassed by the great demand for horses and means of transport for artillery

and commissariat, would very possibly avert their eyes from this important branch, in which case, as in 1809, our officers of engineers would again be attached to the army without the means requisite to render their services available, and thus, for a considerable length of time and at enormous sacrifices of men and money, our troops might have to contend with an antagonist prepared to avail himself, at almost every movement, of the innumerable scientific advantages which field fortification offers.

As regards the pontoon train of the British army, *it* also was broken up in 1818 : and although our officers of engineers continue to be fully instructed and exercised at Chatham in the arrangements of balks, chesses, &c., when the pontoons are once *on the banks of the river* over which the bridge is to be formed ; yet, in the infinitely more important and difficult art of *conveying* portable bridges with an army, they are not only without system, but without the means of devising one ; and as in all the continental armies a portion of the “train du génie” is invariably composed of the carriages, horses,

and drivers of a pontoon train in complete organisation, it is but too evident that in this branch of the Engineer department we are also, from what the English nation firmly believe to be "ECONOMY," in a state of lamentable inferiority, that is to say, a British army suddenly taking the field could not pursue over rivers which without difficulty its enemy had crossed; while on the other hand it might be stopped by water over which by military science *he* with the utmost facility would be able to escape.

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### 3. ARTILLERY.

During the French wars which terminated in 1794 and 1814, the British service enjoyed a striking advantage in the rapid movements, mechanical arrangements, and excellent practice of its field artillery, which by its rude but powerful eloquence proved itself to be so irresistibly superior to that of all other nations, that since the last peace its system has been copied by

almost every country in Europe. But although the compliment is highly flattering, it is nevertheless equally evident that its effect will be to deprive us, in future, of a certain portion of the superiority which this important branch of our army has hitherto enjoyed.

On the commencement of the campaign in the Peninsula, it will, however, appear from the following extracts, that, in point of equipment, this department, like all others, was sent to the field not altogether in an efficient state :—

“ I write,” said the Duke, in his despatch to Lord Castlereagh, dated Villa Franca, 29th April, 1809, “ in the chance that this letter may find the packet at Lisbon, to inform you that I have received a very bad report of the state of the artillery horses lately arrived from England with the heavy dragoons, being *very old, diseased, and out of condition.*”

At the period in question there existed in England an unwholesome hankering desire to keep at *home* whatever was either showy or serviceable, and to draft *for service* what remained. In accordance with this feeling the reinforcement of horses applied for proved to

be, in age and constitution, of about the same sample as those first despatched.

“ I hope,” wrote the Duke to Lieut.-Col. Framingham, R.A., in a letter dated Pombal, 5th June, 1809, “ that your horses on their arrival in the Tagus will not be in the unserviceable state in which *you expect they will be*. If they should be so, I must relinquish that important branch of our equipment, the British artillery, and I have requested General Beresford to have some brigades of Portuguese artillery in readiness to join and do duty with the British army on its entry into Spain.”

This threat produced its effect; by degrees the artillery became properly horsed; and having then a fair chance, by distinguishing themselves in the manner we have stated, they did full justice to their system of instruction at Woolwich, thus proving, in direct opposition to our national theory, the incalculable advantage of educating a soldier in the way he should go.

As soon, however, as peace was obtained, it was deemed necessary for “ economy ” that this noble branch of the service should be reduced, and to such a drastic extent has this national prescription been administered, that, while the

Russian army have at present 1020 guns, the Prussian army 492 guns, the French army 3759 field-pieces, of which 500 guns are horsed, and even the Belgian army 84 guns, the British army could only, for the defence of England, at present, bring into the field, fully equipped, and with ammunition waggons fully horsed, forty guns (less than half of a line-of-battle ship's broadsides), of which more than one-third are in *Ireland*! Our artillery, as at present organized, from being *underhorsed*, can no doubt show more guns than they could bring into the field. For ordinary service in Great Britain and Ireland few of them, if any, have ammunition waggons, but carry thirty or forty rounds on the limbers, which, although ample for common mob-work, would be utterly insufficient for regular warfare.

The French have 13,331 artillery horses, while the total number of the artillery horses of the British nation is as follows:—

	Horses
In Great Britain . . . .	756
Ireland . . . .	451
Grand total . .	<hr/> 1207

One troop of six 6-pounders Horse	Horses.
Artillery, complete, require	188
A battery of six 9-pounders (five guns and one howitzer) requires .	162

Horses could, of course, be readily purchased on an emergency, but, as soon as the guns were unlimbered for action, they would probably—like the Duke's description of semi-disciplined Spanish troops—"run away *frightened only by the noise of their own fire!*"

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#### THE STAFF OF AN ARMY

In the field is composed of a quartermaster-general's department, an adjutant-general's department, majors of brigade, and aides-de camp.

From the sporting habits of Old England, a British army, in every climate of the globe, in times of peace as well as in war, has always teemed, and ever will, with officers brimfull of the energy and natural qualifications requisite for the above duties. A few facts, however, will explain that at the commencement of the



next campaign our most forward riders may prove to be lamentably deficient in strategic knowledge. For instance, previous to the advance or retreat of an army, especially in an enemy's country, it is necessary for the General commanding—who, of course, has not time to reconnoitre everything—accurately to ascertain from the quartermaster-general's department its military features; its resources as regards shelter, shade, water, provisions, and forage for the troops; the nature and state of its rivers, streams, and fords; the condition of its by-roads as well as high-roads; whether its bridges are safe for the passage, in close order, of infantry, cavalry, and brigades of artillery; if not, how much each should be extended; if unable to bear a single gun and limber, whether, by unlimbering, each could be hauled over separately by men and drag-ropes, &c. &c. &c.

In 1809 this department in Portugal possessed, of course, but little practical acquaintance with the groundwork necessary for estimating such details. By experience, however, it gradually improved, until, by its zealous exertions,

it became so highly intellectual, that the Duke was enabled with confidence to transmit even to his *assistant* quartermaster-generals queries, the following specimen of which, from his own pen, will very graphically explain to those unacquainted with the precautions necessary for the movement of an army the inestimable value of an efficient STAFF :—

*“ To Lieut.-Colonel Bourke, Assistant-Quartermaster-General.*

“ MEMORANDUM OF QUERIES.

“ Abrantes, 21st June, 1809

“ 1. When the French corps under Victor and Sebastiani shall join near Toledo, and be reinforced probably by the French garrisons in Toledo and Madrid, is there any defensive position they could take up? Is such a position afforded by the Guadarama or the Manzanares, throwing their left upon the Tagus?

“ 2. What is the nature of the country between the Guadarama and Manzanares? What is the nature of the banks of those rivers, particularly the upper part of the former? What the nature of the banks of the Tagus between them? Any fords or other passages?

“ 3. Are there any roads leading from Plazencia or

Talavera, and of what description, to the upper part of the Guadarama?

“ 4. Supposing an enemy to retire beyond Madrid upon being threatened with an attack by the three combined corps under Generals Cuesta and Venegas and myself, could the mountains of Castille afford him any defensive position?

“ 5. What position would be most probably taken up by the French army in those mountains?

“ 6. What are the commonly used passages through them from the southward, in the whole extent of their range?

“ 7. What the nature of the country on this side, and of the different passages through them?

“ 8. What the nature of the country after passing them?

“ 9. Supposing the enemy to retire at once to the Ebro, and take up his position upon that river, his object would be most probably to secure his communications with France. With that view, what position would he take up?

“ 10. Is the Ebro fordable in the whole length of its course?

“ 11. Where the principal passages?

“ 12. The nature of the banks generally?

“ 13. The nature of the country on both sides?

“ 14. What Spanish corps are there in Valencia, Murcia, Aragon, and Catalonia, which might be brought to co-operate in a general movement upon the enemy?

“ ARTHUR WELLESLEY.”

To assist the Quartermaster-general's department the Duke organized a corps of mounted guides; the duties of which, in his despatch to the Military Secretary of the Commander-in-Chief, he described as follows:—

“This corps is essentially necessary in all operations in Portugal. It is most difficult to obtain any information respecting roads, or any of the local circumstances which must be considered in the decisions to be formed respecting the march of troops; and this difficulty obliged me last year, and all those who have since conducted operations in this country, to form a corps of this description.

“The object is not only to have a corps whose particular duty it will be to make inquiries and have a knowledge of roads, but to have a class of persons in the army who shall march with the heads of columns, and interpret between the officers commanding them and the people of the country guiding them, or others from whom they may wish to make inquiry.”

To the Adjutant-general's department he organized and appointed a mounted police corps of two troops, denominated “the Cavalry Staff Corps;” in addition to which, for the purpose of providing for the speedy communication of intelligence between the line of posts of the

combined army, he formed an establishment of telegraphs.

On the termination of the Duke's campaigns his valuable staff, or rather that portion of it that survived Waterloo, was broken up; and as his Quartermaster-general, Adjutant-general, with many of their assistants, are now dead, the remainder being too old to resume their former duties, it is evident that, in case of war, the STAFF of a new British army, although it would no doubt again be composed of officers of great energy and intelligence, would inevitably prove, *at first*, inferior in that experience and in those acquirements for reconnoitring, for regulating the discipline, the internal arrangements, the quartering, the encamping, and the movement from place to place of troops within reach of an enemy's force, which the continental armies, by means of their great reviews and by other efforts, are at this moment studiously maintaining in full vigour, READY AT ANY TIME TO TAKE THE FIELD. From the above data our readers will sufficiently judge for themselves what must be the probable results of a contest between say a

French General fully supplied by his Quartermaster-general's department with all necessary strategetic information, supported by an Adjutant-general's department full of practical knowledge, and a British General destitute of these professional advantages !

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#### INFANTRY AND CAVALRY.

No one, we believe, can have attentively observed the lights and shades which delineate the character of the British soldier, without perceiving that the former are the gifts of nature, the latter the work of his fellow-countrymen.

In all times, in all countries, in all climates, and under all circumstances, the indigenous courage of English troops under fire has ever shone with resplendent brightness. On the other hand, until very lately, their general conduct has been sullied by the national habit of hard drinking ;—a vice which, although our leading statesmen, country gentlemen, and indeed all classes of our community, more or less

every day of their lives, simultaneously committed with impunity, involved the poor soldier, especially in foreign countries where wine and spirits were cheap, in sorrow, misery, and disgrace. Haunted by this bad habit of his countrymen, and stinted by his Government from all practical knowledge of the art of war, he laboured under disadvantages for which, it is undeniable, his country rather than himself was to blame; besides which, the extraordinary custom, even among the lower orders of the English people, of repudiating soldiers from their company—(strange to say, for many years after the battle of Waterloo, their very uniform precluded them from entering Kensington Gardens)—naturally unfitted them for any society except that indelicate mixture of men, young women, and children in their own barracks, to which by the regulations of their sovereign they were habituated; and accordingly, so soon as on active service the bands of their domestic discipline became suddenly relaxed, it was invariably discovered, as might have been expected, that in bivouac, under camp, or in billets, to use a mild but

common expression, "they did not know how to behave themselves."

"I have long been of opinion," said the Duke of Wellington, in his despatch to our Minister at Lisbon, dated Coimbra, 31st May, 1809, "that a British army could neither bear success nor failure ; and I have had manifest proof of the truth of this opinion, in the first of its branches, in the recent conduct of the soldiers of this army. They have plundered the country most terribly, which has given me the greatest concern."

Again, in his despatch to Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State, dated Abrantes, 17th June, 1809, he wrote :—

"I cannot with propriety omit to draw your attention again to the state of discipline in the army, which is a subject of serious concern to me, and well deserves the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers. It is impossible to describe to you the irregularities and outrages committed by the troops. We have a Provost and no less than *four* assistants, and yet there is not an outrage of any description which has not been committed on a people who have uniformly received us as friends by soldiers who never yet for one moment suffered the slightest want or the smallest privation."

Again, in his despatch to the British Minister



at Lisbon, dated Badajoz, 8th September, 1809, he wrote :—

“I really believe that more plunder and outrage has been committed by this army than by any other that ever was in the field. To this I may add that I have not less than SEVEN or EIGHT Provosts,<sup>1</sup> other armies having usually *two*.”

We beg our readers to mark the gradual consequence of this resolute but severe discipline, which, had our gallant soldiers been fairly dealt with—had they been properly educated by their country—would have been unnecessary.

“I certainly think,” writes the Duke to Lord Liverpool in his despatch dated Viseu, 24th Jan. 1810, “the army are improved. They are a better army than they were some months ago. But still these terrible continued outrages give me reason to apprehend that, notwithstanding all the precautions I have taken and shall take, they will slip through my fingers, as they did through Sir John Moore’s, when I shall be involved in any nice operation with a powerful enemy in my front.”

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<sup>1</sup> A provost-marshal has power to flog or hang on the spot any soldier he may find committing outrage or plunder.

In his despatch to the Earl of Liverpool, dated Cartaxo, 23rd February, 1811, he wrote :—

“We are becoming a more efficient and better army every day.”

In his despatch to the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley, dated Villar Formoso, 8th May, 1811, he wrote :—

“We have had warm work in this quarter, but I hope we shall succeed in the end. The French, it is said, lost 5000 men, we 1200, in the affair of the 5th ; on the 3rd we lost about 250 ; the French left 400 dead in the village of Fuentes de Oñoro. We lost the prisoners by the usual dash and imprudence of the soldiers.”

On the 15th May, 1811, he wrote to Major-General Cameron :—

“The British troops surpassed everything they had ever done before, and of which the result was most honourable to His Majesty’s arms.”

On the 25th July, 1811, he wrote to Marshal Sir W. C. Beresford, K.B. :—

“I have for some time observed a visible improvement in the conduct of the soldiers towards the people

of the country, and certainly those crimes for which so many soldiers of this army have been *executed* now occur but rarely."

In his despatch to the Earl of Liverpool, dated Quadrageis, 29th September, 1811, after describing the battles of El Bodon and near Aldea del Ponte, he added :—

"I cannot conclude this report of the occurrences of the last week without expressing to your Lordship my admiration of the conduct of the troops engaged in the affair of the 25th inst."

Lord Hill, in his despatch to Lord Wellington, dated Merida, 30th October, 1811, describing the conduct of the British troops at the battle of Arroyo Molinos, added :—

"No praise of mine can do justice to their admirable conduct ; the patience and goodwill shown by all ranks during forced marches in the worst weather ; their strict attention to the orders they received ; the precision with which they moved to the attack, and their obedience to command during the action."

As might naturally be expected, the total absence of instruction—and consequently of knowledge of any sort—in field duties, which in

time of peace characterises the British army, or, to speak more correctly, the British nation, operated upon the officers as strongly as it had upon the soldiers under their command;—in fact, the blind were leading the blind.

Accordingly, in an address “to officers commanding divisions and brigades,” dated Freneda, 28th November, 1811, the Duke stated:—

“I am far from questioning the zeal, still less the gallantry and spirit, of the *officers* of the army; and I am quite certain that if their minds can be convinced of the necessity of minute and constant attention to understand, recollect, and carry into execution the orders which have been issued for the performance of their duty, and that the strict performance of this duty is necessary to enable the army to serve the country as it ought to be served, they will in future give their attention to these points.

“Unfortunately, the *inexperience* of the officers of the army has induced many to consider that the period during which an army is on service is one of relaxation from all rule, instead of being, as it is, the period during which, of all others, every rule for the regulation and control of the conduct of the soldier, for the inspection and care of his arms, ammunition, accoutrements, necessaries, and field equipments, and his horse and horse appointments, for the receipt, and issue, and care of his provisions, and the regulation of

all that belongs to his food and the forage for his horse, must be most strictly attended to by the officers of his company or troop, if it is intended that an army, a British army in particular, shall be brought into the field of battle in a state of efficiency, to meet the enemy on the day of trial.

“In regard to the food of the soldier, I have frequently observed and lamented in the late campaign the facility and celerity with which the French soldiers cooked in comparison with those of our army.

“The cause of this disadvantage is the same with that of every other description—the want of attention of the officers to the orders of the army and the conduct of their men, and the consequent want of authority over their conduct. Certain men of each company should be appointed to cut and bring in wood, others to fetch water, and others to get the meat, &c., to be cooked; and it would soon be found that if this practice were daily enforced, and a particular hour for seeing the dinners, and for the men dining, named, as it ought to be, equally as for parade, that cooking would no longer require the inconvenient length of time which it has been lately found to take, and that the soldiers would not be exposed to the privation of their food at the moment at which the army may be engaged in operations with the enemy.

“But I repeat that the great object of the attention of the general and field officers must be to get the captains and subalterns of the regiments to understand and perform the duties required from them, as the

only mode by which the discipline and efficiency of the army can be restored and maintained during the next campaign.”

The beneficial results of the Duke of Wellington's addresses, admonitions, regulations, orders, and punishments, as above quoted, will sufficiently be demonstrated by the following extracts from his examination on the 20th February, 1836, before the Commission on Military Punishments:—

*Question 5834.*—“Do you conceive that the army when it left France was in as efficient a state for service as any army can well be brought to?”

*Answer.*—“I always thought that I could have gone anywhere and done anything with that army. It was impossible to have a machine more highly mounted, and in better order, and in a better state of discipline than that army was. When I quitted that army upon the Garonne, I do not think it was possible to see anything in a higher state of discipline, and I believe there was a total discontinuance of all punishment.”

The foregoing brief sketch of the condition of the various departments of the British army up to the retirement, in 1818, of the Army of Occupation, will, we believe,

sufficiently demonstrate that under all circumstances the intrepid courage of our troops has done honour to the country of their birth. There is, however, in warfare, as in mechanics, a point beyond which physical resistance is unable to withstand the simple combinations of science, and accordingly, for the reasons we have just detailed, namely, from sheer ignorance and inexperience in its field duties, our army, though composed of the noblest elements, was, until about forty years ago, almost invariably defeated. By the efforts, the talents, and by the *experience* of the Duke of Wellington, who, by the minute organization we have described, not only *made* the army he commanded, but by doing so saved HIMSELF from inevitable defeat, the wheel of fortune has since 1808 been completely reversed, but the principles of the machinery remain unaltered ; and therefore, for the very reason that it has been indisputably proved by a series of battles that a British army properly commanded and controlled is, when opposed to an equal force, invincible, we ought—without allowing ourselves to be dazzled either

by the brightness of its existing character, or by that prestige which, like a glorious halo, now surrounds its name—prudently to consider whether the PRESENT fabric of our military power is composed of perishable or imperishable materials; or, in other words, whether for future wars we can as safely rely on able generalship, experienced officers, and field discipline, as we undoubtedly can on the calm intrepidity of our troops.

Some of the data necessary for forming a judgment on this important subject are as follows:—

1. Our Parliamentary Returns will show that about two-thirds of the service of the British soldier continues to be passed in distant colonies, in which our troops, rarely exceeding 2000 or 3000 men, usually scattered over a vast expanse of country, are almost entirely occupied in the necessary guards for fortresses, stores, &c. The late reductions in the army, as well as those which during last session of Parliament were more than half-promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and by the Secretary-at-War,



will, of course, have the effect of diluting the scanty force at each of these stations, and thereby of impairing, in a slight degree, the strictness even of its present discipline.

2. In India the Queen's regulars (about 30,000 men) are also not only, like their comrades in other regions of the empire, much dispersed, but on account of climate are not very actively exercised. Excepting for war, the periods for taking the field are few, short, and far between ; and after all, as regards the European soldier, the active service he is called upon to perform not only affords experience of little value for an European campaign, but his residence in the country is so long, that his constitution, impaired by climate and but too often by intemperance, usually proves but a very little longer than his period of service.

3. Excepting India, where a portion of our officers have lately had opportunities of acquiring knowledge in their profession, the only part of the world where as many as 4000 or 5000 British soldiers are ever collected together is on the grass plot of the Phoenix Park in Dublin ;

indeed, with the exception mentioned, the latest period at which the officers of the British army have had an opportunity of witnessing the movements of troops, or of acquiring any practical knowledge of their profession, beyond that of the care and the exercise, on a small parade, of say a battalion of men, was upwards of 35 years ago, when the greater number of the present subalterns, captains, and many field-officers *were not born*! No wonder, therefore, that it should have been stated by the highest authority, "I don't believe there are five general officers in our service who, if you put 70,000 men into Hyde Park, could get them out again!"

4. The comparative ages of the officers in the French and British services offer a self-evident moral.

For instance, to the army of Algeria—the infantry of which have repeatedly marched with *nine* days' provisions on their backs, the cavalry with five days' provisions for themselves and three or four for their horses!—the French appointed, under General Lamoricière (the real commander-in-chief), who, when he first went

to Africa, was not much above thirty years old, fourteen general officers of the following ages :—

	Age.
1 Governor-General, a Lieutenant-General . . .	46
1 Lieutenant-General commanding the Province of Oran . . . . .	46
1 Major-General, chef d'Etat-major de l'armée . .	39
1 Major-General of Artillery . . . . .	53
1 Major-General commanding the Province of Algeria . . . . .	54
1 Major-General commanding the Province of Constantine . . . . .	48
1 Major-General commanding " la Cavalerie Indigène " . . . . .	39
1 Major-General at Algiers . . . . .	46
1 Major-General at Mideah . . . . .	38
1 Major-General at Milionah . . . . .	45
1 Major-General at Oran . . . . .	41
1 Major-General at Montanyeau . . . . .	40
1 Major-General at Glonun . . . . .	37
1 Major-General at Setif . . . . .	38
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Average age of all, including Lamoricière	43½
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Now the ages of British generals are as follows :—

	Age.
Commander-in-Chief . . . . .	81½
Generals . . . . .	From 88 to 68
Lieutenant-Generals . . . . .	From 75 to 62
Major-Generals . . . . .	From 70 to 61

The following also is a memorandum of the ages of the senior and junior officers of each rank in the corps of British Royal Engineers, 18th September, 1850:—

RANK.	Ages		
	Senior	Junior	Average.
Colonel-Commandant . . .	82½	75½	79
Colonel . . . . .	64½	63	63½
Lieutenant-Colonel . . . .	60½	55½	58½
Captain . . . . .	54	35½	44½
Second Captain—assumed . .	35	30	32½
First Lieutenant „ . .	30	22	26
Second Lieutenant „ . .	22	18	20

Again, the following is a statement of the ages of the senior and junior officer of each rank in the Royal Artillery on the 19th of September, 1850:—

RANK.	Ages.		
	Senior.	Junior	Average.
Colonel-Commandant . . .	77	70	73½
Colonel . . . . .	70	62	66
Lieutenant-Colonel . . . .	64	54	59
Captain . . . . .	54	34	44
Second Captain . . . . .	35	26	30½
First Lieutenant . . . . .	26	20	23
Second Lieutenant . . . .	20	19	19½

It is generally admitted that no commanding officer of Artillery with a very small army should be less than a Lieutenant-Colonel in rank; and that with one of 30,000 men and upwards he should be a General officer, that is, among the seniors of the Colonels.

From the foregoing facts it appears to be the fixed policy of England, that while the immense youthful armies of Europe, in extensive encampments such as we have described, as well as in garrisons, each containing a little army, are studiously learning grand manœuvres and evolutions, siege duties, as well as the minutest details of field-exercise and discipline, the British

army,—stricken in years, and deprived of every opportunity of learning its duties,—shall, to satiate the anti-military propensities of the nation, be made to revert to the unorganised condition in which its various departments existed in 1808 ; in short, that, from the difficulties experienced, overcome, and pointed out in the Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, we shall, in the words of Napoleon,

“ HAVE LEARNED NOTHING, AND HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL !”



## CHAPTER V.

## ON UNDISCIPLINED AND SEMI-DISCIPLINED TROOPS.

Hereditary aversion of the British people to any description of protection designated unconstitutional — Description of the progressive effects of discipline — Creates confidence — Description of young Soldiers first coming into action — Consequences of over-excitement — Duke of Wellington's sage opinions thereon — Gradually become subject to self-control — Men totally undisciplined worthless in war — Their courage valueless — Their confusion increases with their numbers — Fallacy of relying for national defence on such a power — Comparative value of semi-organized bodies — Duke of Wellington's opinions of the inestimable value of old Soldiers — His descriptions of their conduct in the field — On the proclamation of peace, impatience of the nation to rid itself of its Army — Many of the pensions of our veterans commuted — Their miserable condition in our colonies — Their death by hunger, want of clothing, and cold — Reflections.

THE British people, from their insular position, are so inexperienced in the operations, and above all in the sufferings of war; so ignorant of what is requisite to defend a country from the devastations of a hostile army; they are, on

what they call “principle,” so averse to any description of protection designated “*unconstitutional*,” and, on the contrary, so prone to place implicit reliance on any force, however imperfect, provided it bear not the odious appellation of “*regular* ;”—that it is not surprising there should exist among us as national maxims which we are in the habit of singing as well as of saying, that “Britons never will be slaves,” that “a free people cannot be conquered,” and as a corollary thereto, that “if the French were to invade us to-morrow, the whole nation would rise, and with irresistible vengeance drive them into the sea!” One moment’s reflection, however, will, we believe, be sufficient to overthrow the works of this imaginary fortress; indeed, in the very showing of the case there evidently exists a serious anomaly; for if the British people, as they declare themselves to be, ARE on “principle” averse to *military* protection, it is evident they are peculiarly unfit at a moment’s warning,—say at the sound of a trumpet,—to rise *en masse*, like the citizens of ancient Greece and Rome, or like the present



inhabitants of the great military nations of Europe, who, accustomed from their cradles to military conversation, rigorous discipline, encampments, and manœuvres, gradually become inflated with “*esprit militaire*,” until they naturally consider war, plunder, rapine, and glory to be synonymous. As, however, it is undeniable that, in spite of its apathy, or even of its prejudices, the daring character of the nation has attained for it the highest respect, let us endeavour as fairly as possible to estimate what amount of physical resistance—exclusive of regular troops—its inhabitants, undisciplined and semi-disciplined, could offer to repel the sudden invasion of say a French army.

We have already stated, that among the ranks of the British army there exists—especially among *old* soldiers—no blustering notion that they are superior in courage to their brethren at the plough and loom ; indeed, proud of their country, they would be very sorry to think so : at the same time they well know, and more confidently *feel*, that discipline has invested them with a power which unorganised men are

utterly unable to resist; and this magic result may, to our unmilitary readers, briefly be explained as follows:

While a recruit who has just joined the army is apparently only learning—very much against his will—how to hold the back of his head up, his chin in, and especially to keep his mouth shut;—how to stand with his thumbs uncomfortably touching the seams of his trowsers; how at the word of command to advance, in goose-step, with his left foot,—to turn to the “right,” “left,” “right about,” “left about,” “halt,” “eyes right,” “eyes left,” stand “attention,” and finally “*at ease*,” by which time he is usually sick unto death of the whole incomprehensible process,—his mind is undergoing an invisible change; namely, by following the will of his drill-serjeant instead of his own, *he is learning* OBEDIENCE.

After having been taught, throughout various marchings and countermarchings, always to touch his left-hand man, by which simple arrangement the squad is kept compactly together, he is instructed in the dexterous use of his

musket, which he learns, first, to carry without injuring his comrades, and then, within his small allotted space, to load, prime, make ready, present, fire, fix bayonets, and charge. In the course of about six months' instruction of this sort, he is usually reported competent "to join the ranks," and after about six months' regimental drill he may be considered a *young* soldier. But in this year's purgatory or probation there has been effected a moral change infinitely greater than that which has deprived him of his stoop, and has given lightness, smartness, and activity to his movements. In his room, as well as within the dry, gritty precincts of his barracks, he has observed among his comrades occasional displays of physical strength and of daring courage which have silently instilled into him, not a vain conceit of his *own* powers, but a reasonable confidence in that of the company to which he belongs; and above all, in the regiment of which he is but a unit: and as his officers are a set of high-spirited men, evidently "up to anything," he becomes animated with a manly conviction—the heavy tread

of his regiment on its march is itself an emblem of its power—that it will take a good deal to make the old ( )th, or as he learns to term it —“*our fellows*,” turn tail!

With this exalted but not inflated estimate of his regiment's power, he embarks for foreign service, where he joins a brigade, and finally a division, the irresistible strength of which, by a similar process of reasoning, he teaches himself to appreciate; in fact it is a military axiom, that large bodies of men not only excite each other, but wherever they go carry with them the confidence of success; but now, just as a landsman enlisted on board a man-of-war, however carefully he may have been practised in harbour, has to go through the ordeal of sea-sickness, so has the young soldier to go through that conflict of feelings which assail every one on entering upon active service. Before coming into action, the first waggon-load of wounded men from the advanced posts, sitting or lying without their stocks, with their jackets unbuttoned, ghastly as death, in various attitudes of mute suffering, seriously affect, rather than appal, almost every

man. The sight of the enemy, however, soon refreshes him; and now, the difference between young soldiers and old ones surely need hardly be described. Although the men of a regiment on a parade appear nearly all alike, and although, as we have stated, they have learned to move and act in union, yet in temperament there remains a latent invisible moral difference, which the fire of an enemy tends very strongly to develop. The sudden explosion of a shell, the tearing noise of cannon-shot, the thundering roll of musketry, the half-singing, half-whistling sound of passing bullets, the sight of comrades falling, the agony they suffer—most especially from grape-shot—(cannon-balls usually numb the limbs they strike)—produce altogether on the mind of the young soldier various effects. Some get angry;—some, it need not be concealed, become alarmed;—the great mass are eager to advance, and the word is no sooner given than the artificial bands of the year's discipline proving not strong enough to hold together in a phalanx the various degrees of impetuosity and other feelings we have described, the regiment, officers

and men, from over excitement, “dash on” too far, until they not only suffer for their imprudence, but do infinite mischief.

The following calm sentiments of the Duke of Wellington on this subject form a striking contrast with some of the bombastic “*en avant*” proclamations of Napoleon :—

“ *To Major-General Alexander Campbell.*

“ Villar Formoso, 15th May, 1811. ”

“ SIR,—Adverting to your report of the transactions of the morning of the 11th instant, in the pursuit of the garrison of Almeida, I have to state that nothing has given me more concern than the conduct of Lieut.-Colonel —, of the — regiment

“ When the enemy had passed the bridge of Barba de Puerco, the further pursuit of their troops was useless ; and every step taken beyond the point to which the lieut.-colonel was ordered to proceed was one of risk to the officers and soldiers under his command, from which the retreat was next to impossible. . . . This advance, however, and his passage of the bridge, was an imprudence to which all the losses of the day must be attributed. The *frequent* instances which have occurred lately of severe loss, and, in some instances, of important failure, by officers leading the troops beyond the point to which they are ordered, and beyond all bounds—such as the loss of the prisoners taken in front of the village of Fuentes, on the

3rd and 5th instant; the loss incurred by the 13th Light Dragoons, near and at Badajoz, on the 25th of March; the severe loss incurred by the troops in the siege of Badajoz, on the right of the Guadiana, on the 10th instant; and the loss incurred by Lieut.-Colonel — on the 11th instant,—have induced me to determine to bring before a general court-martial, for disobedience of orders, any officer who shall in future be guilty of this conduct.

“I entertain no doubt of the readiness of the officers and soldiers of the army to advance upon the enemy; but it is my duty, and that of every general and other officer in command, to regulate this spirit, and not to expose the soldiers to contend with unequal numbers in situations disadvantageous to them; and above all not to allow them to follow up trifling advantages to situations in which they cannot be supported, from which their retreat is not secure, and in which they incur the risk of being prisoners to the enemy they had before beaten.

“The desire to be forward in engaging the enemy is not uncommon in the British army; but that quality which I wish to see the officers possess, who are at the head of the troops, *is a cool, discriminating judgment in action*, which will enable them to decide with promptitude how far they can and ought to go with propriety; and to convey their orders and act with such vigour and decision, that the soldiers will look up to them with confidence in the moment of action, and obey them with alacrity.

“The officers of the army may depend upon it that

the enemy to whom they are opposed are not less prudent than they are powerful. Notwithstanding what has been printed in gazettes and newspapers, we have never seen small bodies, unsupported, opposed to large; nor has the experience of any officer realised the stories which all have read, of whole armies being driven by a handful of light infantry or dragoons.

“I trust that this letter, copies of which I propose to circulate to the general officers commanding divisions, with directions to circulate it among the officers of the army, will have the effect of inducing them to reflect seriously upon the duties which they have to perform before the enemy, and to avoid the error which is the subject of it, which is really become one of serious detriment to the army and to the public interests.

(Signed) “WELLINGTON.”

By experience, however, the various feelings which over-animate young soldiers become subject to self-control. The habit of command on one side and of obedience on the other begets not only mutual confidence between officers and men, but on the part of the latter that determination to obey, fearless of all consequences, the spirit of the orders they receive, without which the evolutions of an army cannot possibly be directed. And as it is impossible for the human mind, for any length of time, to continue



under violent excitement, so by repeatedly going into action soldiers learn to view with indifference the various scenes to which they are exposed. In sudden attacks, especially from cavalry, they learn that to be "*steady*" is to be INVINCIBLE; and they therefore, in self-defence, strictly obey the orders of their officers. By degrees they feel proud of their power and of their profession; and thus they eventually become what are justly termed "OLD soldiers."

Now, if a mob of undisciplined men assemble for the purpose either of defending their country from invasion, or merely for riot and plunder, their position is briefly as follows:—As among them there are but few competent to command, and none accustomed to obey,—as there exists no system, no arrangements, no acquaintance with the weapons to be used,—it is evident that they must remain either in an immoveable mass, in which state, under any sudden excitement, they would, from sheer unskilfulness, prick, strike, wound, and shoot each other; or if they succeeded in extending themselves, they must unavoidably occupy so much unnecessary ground

that their line, physically speaking, would amount to more than double that of the same number of regular troops; and thus, supposing both parties to be armed with muskets, each undisciplined man would have to receive two bullets, delivered at least twice as fast as his own, or say four well-aimed bullets for every one which under feelings of violent excitement he could possibly hope to fire. But the overwhelming disadvantage he would have to encounter would proceed from a want of the artificial support—we mean, the confidence *in others*—we have described. An English ploughman's notion of courage—and a very good one it is—is, that with his fists he will fight any man breathing, or, to save his life, any two men, and to this extent he is prepared to go; but he knows nothing about *his neighbour*, and accordingly, as soon as he sees a compact body of scarlet well-trained soldiers, with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, all coming to attack HIM, he feels very clearly that HE cannot fight a whole regiment, and so off *he* runs. But even supposing that he and all the rest of the mob, instead of doing so, instead of

forming, as they really do, a rope of sand, were to determine like soldiers to rely on the courage of their comrades, it is evident that, not being held together by discipline, they would, as soon as they found themselves under heavy fire,—like animalcula in water, viewed through a solar microscope,—be seen moving hurriedly in all directions, at different rates of impetuosity: in fact, whatever might be their bravery, they would, if suddenly attacked in flank as well as in front—and particularly if at the same moment a shell or two happened to explode in the middle of them—be sure to run against, across, and over each other; and the greater the number the direr would be the confusion.

Of course, if they had no field-pieces, or having any, did not exactly understand how to use them, it would not be necessary for regular troops even to take the trouble to attack them, as their artillery, from out of reach of musketry, would effectually in double-quick time disperse them.

For the above reasons—which after all are only those which enable every description of

workman to excel men who have never practised his trade—it is an established maxim among old soldiers that a mob of undisciplined men, “the more the merrier,” would fly before them like chaff before the wind. We shall shortly have to submit to our readers a very important memorandum, written by the Duke of Wellington in 1819, during the great riots in Scotland, in which he fully concurs in this opinion, that a small body of regular troops may safely attack undisciplined men, “*be their numbers what they may.*” In the mean while we will conclude by observing that, in a contest between disciplined and undisciplined bodies, the relative *superiority* of the former and *inferiority* of the latter greatly increase with the proportionate numbers of each ; thus, 10,000 troops would contend infinitely better with 100,000 unorganised opponents than 10 against 100 or 1 against 10.

Having endeavoured to demonstrate the absolute impossibility of undisciplined men contending against regular troops commanded by experienced officers, we will submit—we hope for the amusement of our readers—a specimen of popu-

lar inconsiderate opinions on the subject, which scarcely require a comment.

Extract from one of Charles Knight's cheap publications, entitled—

“THE LAND WE LIVE IN.”

“How soon would the rail, the coach, and the steam ship tell the bold descendants of the Sea-King to gird on their swords, if a foreign foe should dare to plant his foot on British soil! *Invasion!*—it is a joke! [a very bad joke]. *Invasion!*—open the map of England, and show the spot, from the North Foreland to the Land's End, where an army of 100,000 men could not be gathered in twenty-four hours. How many hours would it require to *empty the Arsenals of Woolwich* [great heavy ship-guns without carriages] upon Southampton, or Brighton, or Hastings, or Folkestone, with a coast line uninterruptedly communicating with London as a common centre? No, no! The first pulsation of the Electro-Telegraph that proclaimed an hostile fleet in the Channel would have an answering movement from the Admiralty that would make the island *throb* [with fear] to its remotest extremities. Invade a country that could collect the sturdiest of its population upon any given point within eight and forty hours, and provide them with all *the materials of war* [from whence? they do not exist.] in half the same time! The thing is too ludicrous! The col-

liers of Northumberland would be whirled from the north to the south by the fuel that their sturdy hands have brought to the surface, and they alone would be a host to sweep the aggressor from the earth!" [! ! !]

With respect to *semi-organised* bodies, such as occasionally-trained garde nationale, yeomanry, militia, &c., fighting in defence of their native country, it will appear from the following evidence that when the bands of discipline, even of the proudest nations, which hold them beautifully together on a parade, prove insufficient under fire, their movement is not *always*, as we have previously described, in *advance*.

"I was apprehensive," wrote the Duke to Lieut.-Colonel Trant, dated 6th August, 1808, "that the Spaniards in Alentejo would suffer. There is nothing so foolish as to push these half-disciplined troops forward; for the certain consequence must be, either their early and precipitate retreat, if the enemy should advance, or their certain destruction."

Accordingly, about a year afterwards, in his despatch to Lord Castlereagh, dated Merida, 25th August, 1809, he had occasion to state,—

"The Spanish cavalry are, I believe, entirely without discipline. They are in general well clothed, armed,

and accoutred, and remarkably well mounted, and their horses are in good condition. But I have never heard anybody pretend that in any one instance they have behaved as soldiers ought to do in presence of an enemy. They make no scruple of running off, and after an action are to be found in every village and every shady bottom within fifty miles of the field of battle ”

After describing that the discipline of the Spanish infantry appeared to be confined to placing them in the ranks three deep, at very close order, and to the manual exercise, he adds, respecting them also,—

“This practice of running away, and throwing off arms, accoutrements, and *clothing*, is fatal to everything. . . . Nearly 2000 ran off on the evening of the 27th from the battle of Talavera (not 100 yards from the place where I was standing), who were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack, and who were frightened only *by the noise of their own fire*.”

Again, in his letter to Lieut.-General Sir Brent Spencer, K.B., dated 22nd May, 1811, he said,—

“I went yesterday to Albuera, and saw the field of battle. We had a very good position, and I think should have gained a complete victory in it, without

any material loss, if the Spaniards could have manœuvred ; but unfortunately *they cannot.*"

Lastly, with respect even to well-disciplined *regular* troops, the determined opposition which, it will appear from the following extracts, the Duke of Wellington made to an Aladdin proposal of the Horse Guards to give him some new soldiers in exchange for his old ones, strikingly demonstrates the *practical* difference which in his opinion exists between those who have been drilled only on parade at home, and those who have learned to perform *field* duties under *field* discipline.

*" To His Royal Highness the Duke of York,  
Commander-in-Chief.*

" Cadiz, 26th December, 1812.

" Experience," says the Duke, " has shown us in the Peninsula that a soldier who has got through one campaign is of more service than two or even three newly arrived from England ; and this applies to the cavalry equally with every other description of troops."

Again :

*" To Colonel Bunbury, Under Secretary of State*

" Freneda, 2nd February, 1813.

" I prefer having one officer or soldier who has



served in one or two campaigns, to two or three who have not."

Again:

*" To Colonel Torrens.*

" Freneda, 2nd February, 1813

" His Royal Highness and I unfortunately take a very different view of these questions. . . . I am of opinion, from long experience, that it is better for the service here to have one soldier or officer, whether of cavalry or infantry, who has served one or two campaigns, than it is to have two or three who have not. Not only the new soldiers can perform no service, but by filling the hospital they are a burden to us. . . . I am sure I am right on this subject; and if anybody doubts it, let them look at the state of the 4th, 5th, 38th, 39th, and 82nd regiments, with this army, compared with others. Yet these are the regiments of the best reputation in the service; some of them, the 2nd battalion, 4th, 82nd, and 39th, have come from climates not dissimilar to that in which they are now serving; but it is *the service in the field* to which neither officers nor men are accustomed, and for which training and habit are required. The same is the case in regard to the cavalry, and indeed it is stronger."

Again:

*" To Earl Bathurst.*

" Freneda, 9th March, 1813.

" I can only repeat to you what I have said to Colonel Torrens, viz., that when His Royal Highness,

or the Government, shall send me *an order* upon any subject, they will invariably find it obeyed with the utmost celerity; but if they leave the execution of their wishes to my *judgment*, they must expect that I shall exercise a judgment upon the subject, and that, with every desire to act as they wish, I shall not adopt a measure which is in my opinion prejudicial to the service in this country.

“Every day’s experience has proved to me that one soldier who has served one or two campaigns in this country is worth two, if not three, newly sent out; and it further appears that it signifies but little from what part of the world regiments come, as those from Gibraltar, Ceuta, Cadiz, and the Mediterranean are equally inefficient with those from England and Ireland.

“I hope that your Lordship and His Royal Highness will understand that I am not at all desirous of throwing any difficulties in the way of the execution of the plans formed at home for the service at large; but that when a point is left to my judgment, it can be exercised only upon the effects which the execution will have on the service in this country.”

“*To Earl Bathurst*

“Lesaca, 3rd September, 1813

“The other day the 51st lost 12 officers killed and wounded, and, I believe, not quite 100 men. As to sending them home, I must tell you that, in this country in particular, one old soldier is worth at least *five* new ones.”

It appears from the foregoing extracts, written within sight of the enemy with which he was to contend, that the Duke not only persisted in preferring old campaigners to new ones, but that, like Falstaff's account of his "men in buckram," he estimated their comparative value—first at two, then three, and at last at *five* to one; and as his opinion—evidently a "favourite" one—was in opposition to that as pertinaciously entertained at the Horse Guards, we deem it necessary that our readers should be enabled to judge for themselves whether the Duke's estimate of the value of his *old* soldiers was not triumphantly confirmed and ratified by their conduct in the following battles, his descriptions of which we select, because, from the dates quoted, it will appear that they actually took place pending the discussion of the disputed theory.

*"To Earl Bathurst.*

"Lesaca, 3rd August, 1813

"We have," writes the Duke, "had some desperate fighting in these mountains, and I have never known the troops behave so well. In the battle of the 28th

we had hard fighting, and in my life I never saw such an attack as was made by General Barnes's brigade in the 7th division upon the enemy above Echalar yesterday; the loss of the French is immense I understand they say themselves they have lost 15,000 men—that is what I estimated their loss; but if they acknowledge that number, I ought to estimate it at 20,000 men, which is the number more generally believed."

Again :

*" To the Earl of Liverpool.*

" 4th August, 1813

" We have about 4000 prisoners. I never saw such fighting as on the 27th and 28th of July, the anniversary of the battle of Talavera, nor such determination as the troops showed."

Again :

*" To Lieut.-General Lord William Bentinck, K.B.*

" Lesaca, 5th August, 1813

" I never saw such fighting as we have had here. It began on the 25th, and, excepting the 29th, when not a shot was fired, we had it every day till the 2nd. The battle of the 28th was fair *bludgeon work*. Our loss has been severe, but not of a nature to cripple us."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The casualties of the British army between the 25th of July and the 2nd of August inclusive, 1813, were—killed 779, wounded 4918, missing 672

If we were inflated by the vain-glorious desire of merely extolling old soldiers, we should refer seriatim to their conduct as officially reported in all the great battles, including Quatre Bras and Waterloo, at which between the years 1808 and 1815 they were successively engaged. As, however, we have an infinitely higher object in view, we will—instead of doing so—very briefly observe that the concluding history of the old soldiers of the Peninsula and Waterloo very strikingly exemplifies the eccentric propensity of the British nation to divest itself, as nimbly as possible, of its military power.

As soon as the allied sovereigns had concluded the treaty by which 150,000 troops were to occupy the northern fortresses of France for three years, it of course became necessary that the remainder of the combined forces should at once return to their respective countries. The army of occupation offered to the British service a most valuable opportunity of learning not only discipline in a foreign country, but whatever in military science might be worth

copying from the various departments of the Continental armies. Nevertheless the great object of the war had thus scarcely been secured when there was evinced throughout England the usual hereditary hectic impatience to disorganise the “*unconstitutional*” force by which it had been obtained ; and, accordingly, although France was bound by treaty to *feed and lodge* the allied army of occupation, yet it was urged in England that, for the mere miserable saving in the difference of pay between our troops and Hanoverians, it would be “prudent” that the British contingent should, by a feat of dexterous ECONOMY, be composed of the *latter* as the representatives of the *former* ! !

“I received,” wrote the Duke of Wellington to Major-General Sir Henry Torrens, K.C.B., in his despatch dated Paris, 4th November, 1815, “last night your letter of October 28th, and that of His Royal Highness of the 27th. I did not understand from Lord Bathurst that Government objected to give more than 20,000 British troops for the army of occupation, but that his Royal Highness could not give more. What I imagine is, that Government think they can get foreign troops cheaper than they can British ; and they prefer to employ them, forgetting the number of years

required to form the army they have got, and that, if they disband it, *they will destroy the military profession in England.* My opinion upon the whole transaction is, that now that we have toiled like slaves here to make the arrangement which has been made, Government do not like it, because some newspaper-writer or some friend in Parliament dislikes it, and they will not carry it into execution.

“All I beg is, to have positive *orders* what troops to keep, and what troops to send home. . . .

“If Government mean to carry the measure fairly into execution, they should allot 30,000 *real* men for the service from the British army now here. Let them afterwards change the corps—recall some and reinforce others, or substitute Hanoverians for them, if they like ; but let us in the first instance *really perform* our treaty to our allies and the French Government.”

But “the dislike of the newspaper-writer, or some friend in Parliament,” required still to be appeased, and accordingly—it is now, alas ! a matter of history—as a popular measure of further “ECONOMY,” it was determined to commute the hard-earned pensions of our veteran disbanded soldiers for a small sum, with which they were sent to our colonies, where, unversed in the art of taking care of ready money,—unable to resist the fatal allurements of cheap

spirits,—“drinking is the soldier’s pleasure,”—they soon became, as might have been anticipated, utterly destitute; indeed, in Canada, to the discredit of the British name, these brave, improvident, undecorated men expired in the backwoods in hundreds—we might say in thousands,—miserable victims—poor fellows!—of the combined effects of hunger, sickness, want of clothing, and intense cold upon constitutions worn out in the service of the noblest, most generous, and wealthiest nation on the surface of the globe!

“SIC VOS NON VOBIS.”

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Having now concluded the sketches by which we have endeavoured to illustrate the comparative forces of the great military nations of Europe, the peculiar organisation of the British army, and the results of various degrees of discipline, we shall endeavour to draw—principally from the latter subject—a few useful conclusions. -



Although it is most readily admitted that there exists no superiority in courage or in physical strength between the soldiers and citizens of any country, we submit that it has been practically demonstrated—

1. That an unorganised mob of ploughmen, weavers, townsmen, &c., are totally incapable of contending against disciplined troops, and consequently, that if suddenly congregated for that purpose even by the proclamation of their sovereign, they would, especially in their retreat, by pillaging, &c., under pretence of subsistence, probably prove in the hour of danger to be absolutely worse than useless.

2. That it is impossible to effect the great moral change necessary for converting such unorganised men into properly disciplined young *soldiers* in less than say twelve months.

3. That although an army of such young soldiers may—in home drill, and even in small evolutions—equal or even excel the less active movements of old troops, they are from their dash and impetuosity, when they first come under fire, and until they have practically

learned the value of coolness and field-obedience, liable to burst the bands of discipline, and, by doing too much and advancing too far, to subject themselves to unnecessary slaughter, confusion, and defeat.

4. That for the reasons just stated an army of old soldiers may more safely be relied on than one composed solely of young troops.

5. That mixed with old soldiers, young ones, subdued by their example, become of equal value.

6 That mixed with an equal proportion of regular troops, British imperfectly trained militia and yeomanry—though utterly inefficient by themselves—encouraged by their example, would become of considerable value.

7. That troops who have served only in garrisons or in colonies—who have had no field practice, and who are moreover commanded by Generals, Lieutenant-Colonels, Majors, Captains, Lieutenants, and Ensigns, *totally* inexperienced in evolutions, manœuvres, and in the science of moving, at the same moment, a great army from point to point, across

country and along roads,—who have never even subsisted in billets, under canvas, or in bivouac,—ought not in common prudence to be deemed capable of contending, at a moment's warning, with an army composed of an equal number of brave veteran soldiers, commanded by officers and generals, the whole of whom, first in artificial warfare, and then in real war, have learned seriatim the details, minute as well as great, necessary for fighting, under the usual variety of movements, a great battle.

Lastly, that for the reasons above stated it is, in any country, a fatal delusion to believe, that to maintain a military force inadequate to defend the lives and properties of the community,—to deprive that inadequate force of the means of learning the art of war,—and moreover to trust for defence, in the hour of danger, to cheap undisciplined men, *are measures of* “ECONOMY.”

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## PART II.

THE NAVAL SERVICE.



## CHAPTER I.

## NAVAL WARFARE

Man the only animal that voluntarily goes to sea — Description of a British Sailor — His successes in the late war — His calm courage — Jack's belief that an English Admiral is not permitted to strike his flag — National belief that we must always conquer at sea a fallacy — Exposition thereof — Description of the infancy, growth, and progress of War — Reflections.

HOWEVER wonderful may appear the construction of a vessel capable in the boundless ocean of triumphantly contending against the combined forces of winds and waves,—of the wild hurricane and angry sea,—yet naval architecture, when attentively considered, does not display greater ingenuity than many other pieces of human mechanism. But a ship, though no miracle of itself, may be said to have created one. Of all the animals that came out of Noah's ark, man is the only one that has since shown any disposition to return to the restraints and restrictions which such an existence un-

avoidably imposed, and certainly it is nothing less than miraculous that not only in every quarter of the globe there should be found immense numbers of human beings voluntarily adopting as their profession a life of dangerous imprisonment on a restless element, in which they are weaned, sometimes for years together, from their mothers, their sisters, their wives, their sweethearts,—from the flowers, fruits, and verdure of the vegetable world; but that such apparently unnatural privations should be the means of strengthening the human frame to the utmost, and of developing the most generous and noblest feelings of the human heart! The crew of a line-of-battle ship, frigate, or any description of man-of-war, exhibits a picture in which man, often lightly clad and always loosely dressed, appears to very great advantage: indeed, in the character of a sunburnt, weather-beaten sailor, there is usually to be found united contempt for danger, patience, steady friendship, manly endurance, with the honesty and guileless simplicity of a child. Besides these professional characteristics, naval officers of all nations, though

often of rough exterior, are almost invariably distinguished by that indescribable refinement of mind that constitutes what is termed "a gentleman." Wherever they go they are welcome members of the community, and from having been taught from their infancy to encounter emergencies of various descriptions, they almost invariably, on shore, turn out to be better settlers in a colony than the members of any other state of society.

"O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,  
Their thoughts as boundless, and their souls as free,  
Far as the breeze can bear the billows' foam,  
Survey their empire and behold their home.  
These are their realms !"

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#### THE BRITISH, FRENCH, AND AMERICAN NAVIES.

Although the French, notwithstanding their nautical inexperience, have ever displayed on the ocean the same bravery that has so brilliantly distinguished them on shore, the figures necessary to illustrate the superiority of the British over their navy during the last war are so few,



that at its conclusion they might, by order of the Admiralty, as a cheap substitute for a medal, have easily been tattooed with gunpowder on the brawny right arm of every sailor in our service, as follows :—

“ Captured and destroyed by Jack between the years 1793 and 1815 :—

100 French Line of Battle Ships.

166 Frigates,

224 Corvettes, Brigs, &c.,

950 Privateers,

6200 Merchant Ships,

} Up to 1802 only.<sup>1</sup>

Out of 13 general actions, Jack gained all but one.

Out of 34 single frigate actions, ending in the capture or destruction of either combatant, he gained all but two.

Result of battles of the Nile and Trafalgar :—French loss, 36 sail of the line and 30,000 men ! Jack not losing a single ship.”

To the above facts Captain the Honourable E. Plunkett, R.N., adds that it is among the proud traditions of our navy, that, in our innumerable conflicts with the French, there exists no precedent in history of a British admiral striking his flag to a French fleet; in-

<sup>1</sup> From French authority.

deed that among our seamen there reigns a belief that an English admiral is not *permitted* to do so. Now, inasmuch as in any series of experiments on the relative strength of two different descriptions of timber, metal, rope, or other material, a continuous corroboration of results such as those we have just detailed would by men of science be deemed perfectly conclusive, so it was apparently not very unreasonable for the British nation to come to the conclusion—" *We have always beaten the French at sea, and THEREFORE we always shall.*" And yet it is evident almost on a moment's reflection that this inference is fallacious; for although the strength of any material, like its specific gravity, is undeniably a fixed quantity, the power of man on land, as well as at sea, is not only liable to sudden alternations, but has scarcely ever existed long without them; and as our national safety rests upon a clear understanding of this well-known axiom in military science, we will very briefly endeavour to illustrate it.

In a state of pure nature, it is evident that in a duel between two animals of any sort, the

strongest must conquer ; and thus Cain rose up against Abel and slew him. But while the relative strength of brute animals, like their instinct, never alters, that of human beings, by the power of reason, is constantly increasing. For instance, to overbalance the force of his enemy, man, " when wild in woods the noble savage ran," probably first armed himself with a club, and yet, so soon as his example was followed, the superiority he had invented vanished. A heavier, a harder, a sharper weapon, and eventually the use of a shield, with various degrees of dexterity in the use of each, consecutively produced a series of similar ephemeral advantages obliterated by similar results. In the boyhood of the science of war, the next great superiority invented was that of missile weapons, by which a pigmy's arm suddenly became not only many times longer than that of a giant, but by throwing several spears before his antagonist could stride up to him, he was enabled, without receiving a blow, consecutively to slay two or three enemies, the larger the better. The slaughter caused by the dart was soon increased by the extended range

of the bow and arrow, the point of the latter being at first made merely sharp, then barbed ; and when, by copying these prescriptions from each other, hostile tribes became, as originally, equal, the ingenious art of dipping the extremity of the missile in poison again altered their relative strength, rendering, however, the inventors predominant only until the deadly secret became known.

By mixing together in certain proportions common sulphur, charcoal, and nitre, man next discovered a new power which when applied against uncivilised tribes was considered to be the lightning and thunder of heaven. The reed, however envenomed, now became innocuous, in comparison with an ingredient, one half ounce of which has (it has been proved by experiment) power to drive a steel bullet through sixteen elm planks placed three-quarters of an inch from each other ! This magic power of slaying an enemy at a distance, at which he may be often barely visible, retarded at first by the slow match, was rendered more rapid by the invention of the lock-match ; and although it was again

multiplied by the application of a flint and hammer, yet until very lately the rain of heaven invariably gave to muskets the word of command, "cease firing."

The French have just invented a new musket to which they ascribe extraordinary power of accuracy of fire at ranges such as have never yet been in use, namely, from 600 to 1000 yards; indeed, they consider that very light field artillery will be totally unable to stand against it.

Gunpowder was next employed to propel, from cannon, balls of an infinitely larger size, to a greater distance.<sup>1</sup> To obtain shelter from the deadly havoc these created, there were invented parapets, ramparts, and other works, by placing guns behind which an immense superiority was obtained. As a counter invention hollow shells filled with gunpowder were projected at an angle of elevation which enabled them, by over-

<sup>1</sup> The following facts will exemplify the explosive power of gunpowder. A 56-pounder shell filled with lead, and thereby weighing sixty-one pounds, penetrated twenty-six feet into the butt at Woolwich, which was 1200 yards distant; charge of powder seventeen pounds. A 24-pound shot, at 400 yards, penetrated six feet into concrete.

riding the barriers we have described, to explode among those who had erected them. In spite, however, of all that human ingenuity has been able to devise, up to the present moment, one thousand men in an average fortress can effectually resist from six thousand to eight thousand of their equals; and although all military men know that to assault them is utterly impracticable, yet so sure are the operations of science, that by any engineer of experience it can be calculated, almost to a day, how long the weaker force is capable of holding out; or in other words, in what precise time the stronger, by sapping, trenching, mining, &c., can confidently undertake to overcome the artificial advantages that have been created; in short, the poet has truly said —

“ War is toil and trouble,  
Honour but an empty bubble;  
Never ending, still beginning;  
Fighting still, and still destroying!”

Now, from the mere showing of the case, is it not evident, that from the first conflict that took place between two naked members of the human

species down to the last great battle, there has never existed a single moment at which any family, tribe, or nation, civilised or uncivilised, could reasonably or safely have said,—“ *We won't bother ourselves by reflecting on the progress of the art of war: we won't trouble ourselves to invent new weapons, or even to adopt those which other nations may have invented. In the science of the destruction of our fellow-creatures we will neither lead nor follow: we have always licked our neighbouring enemy, and THEREFORE we always shall.*” The Directors of a great Railway Company might as well publicly announce, “ We will henceforwards have no more alterations of machinery. Our engines are *now* the fleetest in the world, and THEREFORE they always must be so.”

The fallacy of such reasoning is, it is submitted, so glaring, that we will at once proceed to consider the practical points which we desire to elucidate, namely:—

1. What were the relative conditions of the British and French navies at the conclusion of the last war?

2. What are their relative conditions at present?

This comparison will enable us to judge —

3. Whether, because we undeniably beat them then, there exist reasonable grounds for believing that we could do so now, and that, moreover, we shall be able to do so for ever?

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## CHAPTER II.

ON THE RELATIVE CONDITION OF THE BRITISH, FRENCH,  
AND AMERICAN NAVIES DURING THE LAST WAR.

Description of the British system of Naval Warfare during the last War — Close quarters the policy and practice of Nelson — Description of yard-arm action — Its success — The Americans carefully study the British system, and remedy its defects.

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## NELSON'S SYSTEM OF WARFARE.

THE British people, as if they were aware of their innate superior strength and cool courage, appear in private life to disdain to have recourse to artifice of any sort. Not only is "war to the *knife*" unknown to our peasantry, but when they have stripped off their jackets, waistcoats, neckerchiefs, and have shaken hands to fight, it is considered "foul *play*" to strike their antagonist below the belt, and above all when he is down. Accordingly, animated with these sentiments, it is not surprising that in the constitution

of our naval as well as military forces there should appear an instinctive propensity on the part of the nation to work as much as possible with the raw material; and certainly so long as we were able to persuade the French navy to follow our example, we adroitly secured to ourselves those physical and moral advantages which, as we have just shown, it is in the power of science to annul.

Without therefore any desire to condemn the system which existed under Nelson—on the contrary, with a firm belief that it was far from *our* interest to alter it—we will very briefly endeavour to describe what that system really was, and under what circumstances it enabled us to gain, one after another, the series of brilliant victories which in the naval annals of our country are indelibly recorded.

During the reign of Napoleon, it need hardly be stated that, while the white sails of British merchant-vessels, in all weathers and in all seasons, sometimes scudding and sometimes becalmed, were to be seen dotted over the blue aqueous surface of the globe, it was dangerous

even<sup>t</sup> for a French line-of-battle ship to put to sea; indeed in many instances where it was attempted, the devoted vessel—for instance the ‘Rivoli’—just launched, glided in a few hours from its cradle to its grave, or, without metaphor, it became the youthful prize of its enemy. Under these circumstances the maritime population of England, in numbers as well as in seamanship, of course greatly exceeded that of France; and although our system of impressment was (as we shall shortly have occasion to consider) subject to grave objections, yet it may equally truly be said that that by which our unscrupulous antagonist obtained his marine conscripts was, practically speaking, very little better.

Our ships were sometimes very badly recruited. The ‘Vanguard,’ Lord Nelson’s flag-ship at the Nile, was so miserably manned as to *seamen*, that the Captains of the other ships offered to contribute to him a portion of good seamen from each ship, in exchange for the same number of his landsmen; but Nelson would “not allow *a man to be changed*.” The ‘Java,’ also, when she fought the American ‘Constitu-

tion,' was wretchedly manned. Captain Chads, who was first lieutenant, stated "that they had not ten good sailors on board."

Nevertheless, so soon as a British man-of-war was commissioned, by hook or by crook she was soon filled with a crew partly composed of hardy seafaring young men, accustomed in a rough way to the handling of sails in all weathers; and, as every change of wind as well as every tack was practice, they were soon taught by their officers, and if necessary by the sudden prescription of "the boatswain's mate," to be quick in their movements.

With such materials to work with, it was the plain bulldog policy as well as practice of Nelson—nearly<sup>1</sup> the best seaman of his day—without evolutions or circumvolutions to run straight at his inexperienced enemy; and as, for yard-arm action, short guns are as good as

<sup>1</sup> Nelson is not considered, by naval men, to have been so good a practical seaman as Collingwood, still less in comparison with Lord Exmouth, who was probably the best sailor that has ever been on the list of admirals. But Nelson admirably well knew what to do with a fleet, and, although he was frequently sea-sick, his attacks proved the originality of his genius.

long ones,—indeed, from being lighter and easier worked, and consequently requiring fewer men, they are, especially on the upper deck, infinitely *better*,—a considerable proportion of the old-fashioned long cannon were exchanged for carronades of the same bore, of about two-thirds of their length and weight; and as, thus manned and armed, our fleet bore down upon its antagonists, the scene on board the assailants was one strongly characteristic of the British people. In many instances, especially in hot latitudes, the ship's company—as from stem to stern they stood silent at their quarters, clustered on each side of their respective guns, the centre of each deck remaining unoccupied—were naked to the waist; and although their calm, noble, manly countenances, and the tranquillity of their powerful muscles, soon to be strained to their very utmost, were indicative of repose, and even of peace, yet the short prayer which in every well-regulated ship was offered up, the common precaution of preparing sand for the deck to enable them to keep their feet when it should become clotted with blood, and

the large tubs of water on the gratings of the main hatchway, to allay the thirst invariably created by the smoke of gunpowder, clearly showed that, although the narrow stratum between decks—(while the crew rested on the one, their heads all but touched the other)—would probably, as usual, soon become the temple of victory, nevertheless, to those destined during the action to be thrown by their comrades as corpses through the very port-holes through which they had fired, it was, really, without metaphor, the chamber of death!

To persons who have never witnessed the destruction by wholesale of their fellow-creatures, it would be impossible to describe the scene of excitement that existed during an action between two vessels pouring broadsides into each other at occasionally so short a distance, that as a necessary precaution it was, and indeed still is, the custom to serve out to each gun a spare *rope* sponge, in consequence of the long wooden ones, which, on being withdrawn from the gun, necessarily protrude many feet through the ports, having been often snatched out

of the hands of our men by the crew of the enemy alongside.<sup>1</sup>

When this furious system of warfare is calmly compared with the victorious results we have recorded, it surely cannot be denied—at all events by our antagonists—that it was admirably adapted to the attainment of *our* object. In great actions, as well as in duels between vessels of all sizes, it proved invariably successful. By it our naval officers and men captured almost every vessel that ventured to oppose them—it swept the ocean of their enemies; and such being the case, how fully justified was Nelson—whose maxim was to seek for every possible description of danger—in not only constituting close action as the rule of English warfare, but in moreover declaring, “*I have always considered a gale of wind or a dark night as a point in my favour!*”

Now, we are quite aware that the facts and conclusions we have just submitted, apparently contradict the object for which they

<sup>1</sup> Rope sponges are also used when, from a heavy sea, it is necessary to load the guns with the ports down.

have been adduced; and that, as an unskilful advocate often ruins his client by proving too much, so it may be observed that we have actually substantiated that which we had endeavoured to deny; and that, from our own showing, unless we can prove that the British race has degenerated, nothing but special pleading of the most despicable description can attempt to refute the good old English maxim, "We have always licked the French at sea, and *therefore* we always shall." We reply, however, in the words of Portia, "*Tarry a little: there is something yet!*"

RELATIVE CONDITION OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN  
NAVIES DURING THE LATE WAR.

It is evident that in warfare the policy of a stout man and a weak one are not only very different, but that what is good for the one is bad for the other. For instance, it was proved at Paris, in 1815, that a body of British highlanders, or lowlanders, standing "shoulder to shoulder," stretch over more ground than a similar number of the inhabitants—soldiers or civilians—



of any other nation in Europe; in three words, they are stronger; and consequently, without any intentional disrespect to the art of war, it is undeniable that, the balance of Nature being in favour of our countrymen, they acted wisely—*so long as the choice of weapons was allowed to them*—in preferring everywhere to fight in buckram rather than in armour, and in what is commonly called “buff,” to both: in short, that they could not do better on the wide ocean than follow the policy which Nelson had pursued. But as we have shown, it is the high privilege of science, in war as well as in mechanics, to annul the superiority of mere physical strength; and accordingly, when the Americans (in 1812) suddenly declared war with us, we found out, to our cost, how astutely they had pre-considered this important truth.

They knew themselves to be weaker than us in money; their looking-glasses told them that their emaciating climate had made them lean, lengthy, sallow; in short, infinitely our inferiors in physical strength: nevertheless, far exceeding us in ability, they very sensibly and very

carefully looked into our naval system, which, though admirably adapted for *us*—if we could but have inveigled them, as Nelson had seduced the French, to adopt it—was evidently most defective in that which, by recourse to science, it was in their power most amply to supply, and which will form the subject of the following chapter.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE OLD SYSTEM OF GUNNERY.

Description of Nelson's system of Gunneiy — French and British equally ignorant of the art — Illustration of the extraordinary errors committed — Americans invoke the aid of Science — Build larger Ships — Arm them with longer and heavier guns — Man them with British Sailors — Their success — The British nation smarts under the consequences — But as soon as peace was obtained forgot the causes — Maintain the defective system under an erroneous idea of "economy "

IN Nelson's glorious system of "close quarters," this science, the cultivation of which materially over-rules the physical and, comparatively speaking, petty advantages of stout hearts and sturdy limbs, was—perhaps purposely—neglected ; at all events, the Admiralty issued no orders on the subject. It formed no part of the examination of a midshipman or of any commissioned officer ; in short, with a few exceptions, it was not only totally neglected, but by our gallant seamen, who were taught to consider manœuvring or prudence

of any sort as “unworthy of the British Flag,” it was looked down upon as an artifice rather than an art; and thus the only system of gunnery which the English navy recognised was that every captain was to have his own, which amounted as nearly as possible to the old gunner’s prescription: “Don’t fire a shot till we close with her, and then, my lads, give her our - - - board broadside, *as hot as she can suck it!*”

“There must,” said the lieutenant of the quarters, to the captain of a gun, the excessive recoil of which had chanced to attract his attention, “there must surely have been *two* shot there!” “*And, plase your honour,*” replied the man archly, as with the back of his broad thumb he wiped a mixture of powder and perspiration from his brow, “there were *THREE* of them!”

How many balls hit, and how many missed, it was no one’s duty to inquire, because, in due time, hit or miss, down came the enemy’s flag—and out burst three glorious British cheers!

In the naval actions which had taken place between the French and English, the ignorance on both sides of the art of gunnery was altogether

beyond belief, and almost beyond description. For instance, it was a maxim in our fleet, and to this day it is steadfastly believed by many flag-officers, decorated with medals and wounds received in the late war, that "*a shot always rises when it leaves a gun,*" whereas, from the instant it does so, it theoretically as well as practically begins to *fall*, although, for as far as what is called its point-blank range, the power of gravity bears so small a proportion to that of the gunpowder, that its declination is imperceptible. Again, strange to say, it is still an old-established prejudice in our navy that "the French almost always fired at our rigging instead of at our hull;" whereas the fact is, that smarting under our fire, they fired at our hulls to disable our guns, instead of which, true enough, like the cockney who shot at a pigeon and killed a crow, they usually either hit our rigging, or sent their shot high between our masts! The causes of these misapprehensions and mistakes may briefly be explained to un-military people as follows:

If any one of our readers, as he is comfortably

seated at his fire-side, will take the trouble to put a pea into his mouth, and holding a common tin peashooter horizontally, and placing the far end of it on the back of a chair, if he will then look through it, he will distinctly see the precise spot on the chimney-piece at which it points. Now, if without moving his head or the far extremity of the peashooter, he will lower the end through which he had looked from his right eye to his mouth, and then with the whole power of his lungs, if he will blow out the pea, he will find it hit the chimney-piece infinitely *higher* than the mark he had observed;—the obvious reason being, that by having lowered one end of the peashooter considerably below the horizontal line at which he had at first adjusted it, he had given to it a corresponding angle of *elevation*. Now, this demonstrates exactly the error in gunnery which, in the hurry of action, the French almost invariably, and the British very generally, committed; for, if a cannon, like a tin peashooter, were of the same thickness of metal throughout its whole length, it is evident that by merely looking along its

top surface, it might be most accurately pointed at any object. But in order to impart to the gun the greatest amount of strength where it is most necessary,—namely, at the point of explosion,—the metal at the breech (where the powder is lodged) is purposely made considerably thicker than at the muzzle; and as this difference of thickness, termed in gunnery “the Dispart,” is in a 32-pounder gun as nearly as possible equal to the distance between a man’s eyes and his mouth, it is evident that in aiming the said gun by looking along its *upper* surface (which, from not being parallel with the bore, pointed at a different object), the interior of the breech, like the near end of the peashooter, was depressed between 3 and 4 inches, and accordingly the shot, like the pea, striking very considerably above the mark at which—not *the bore of the gun* but—the line of *exterior* metal, actually pointed, it was declared, as has been stated, “that a shot always *rises* when it leaves the muzzle of a gun;” and “that the French always fired at our rigging instead of at our hulls!” And yet, strange to say, it was

not until many years after the peace that this glaring mistake in our gunnery was at last forced upon the attention of the Admiralty by Sir Howard Douglas; and even then the national disinclination to correct it was so strong, that when the simple means of aiming guns correctly, namely, by the adjustment of a "sight" that need not have cost sixpence, was at last supplied, it was served out only to every alternate gun, thus making only half a ship's broadside efficient!

Such ignorance on the part of the French and British navies of an elementary geometrical fact, known for more than fifty years to every artilleryman in our land-service, will probably appear to our readers so incredible that we feel it due to the subject we are endeavouring to illustrate, to support our statement by the evidence of our own naval officers.

"An examination," says the Honourable Captain Plunkett, R.N., in his admirable work entitled 'The Past and Future of the British Navy,' "of the accounts, whether private or official, English or foreign, of the last war, will leave us utterly at a loss to account for ships cannonading each other at 'pistol-



shot' for hours without result. What became of the shot?

"A naval officer," continues Capt P., "related the following story to the House of Commons:—'A frigate which I belonged to in 1811 chased a French frigate almost into her own port, and being then compelled to retire by the French batteries, gave her opponent a parting broadside at a very short distance. NOT A SINGLE SHOT TOOK EFFECT!'

"Here is ample proof," adds Capt P., "that, though we surpassed our adversaries in efficiency of fire, the execution done bore no proportion to the ammunition expended."

Again, in a pamphlet published in 1847, entitled 'Remarks on the Conduct of the Naval Administration of Great Britain since 1815, by a Flag Officer,' with a Preface by Rear Admiral Bowles, lately one of the Lords of the Admiralty, it is stated —

"There can be no doubt that our reverses during the American war are to be attributed, not only to the great superiority of the ships we engaged, but to the imperfect manner in which our gunners and men had been trained to the use of their guns. It will perhaps hardly be credited hereafter, that there was at that time no regular system established by authority in the British navy, but that each ship had its own particular plan and method, varying, of course, according to the

experience and degree of information possessed by the captain, as well as to the *degree of importance* which he attached to the subject I need not detail the fatal negligence which too often prevailed, and which became only known in its full extent by its unfortunate results."

Sir Howard Douglas, in his admirable treatise on Naval Gunnery, which now forms the basis of the new naval system on board H.M.S. the 'Excellent,' as well as that of the other maritime nations of Europe, says:—

" Reviewing carefully our naval actions with European enemies during the whole of the last war, and comparing them with the battles that were fought in that which immediately preceded, there appears abundant proof that the navies of Europe had very much deteriorated in the practice of gunnery In the war which terminated in 1783 the damage which our ships sustained, even in combats with nearly equal force, was, in general, much greater than in the actions of the late French war It appears, indeed, that, even in the later periods of Napoleon's reign, when he had certainly effected considerable improvements in his marine, the state of practical gunnery was still so wretched, that we have seen ships, fully officered, superbly equipped, and strongly manned, playing batteries of twenty or thirty heavy guns against our vessels, crowded with men, without more effect than

might easily have been produced by one or two well-directed pieces; and we have seen some cases in which heavy frigates have used powerful batteries against our vessels for a considerable time, *without producing any effect at all*

“ The danger of resting satisfied with superiority over a system so wretched as this, has been made sufficiently evident. It consisted more in relative than in absolute excellence. We became too confident by being feebly opposed; then slack in warlike exercise by not being opposed at all; and, lastly, in many cases, inexpert for want even of drill practice \* \* ”

“ If the gunners of a vessel mistake the elevated sight of their carronades for the point-blank line, and when close to their enemy fire at an elevation of three and a half degrees, what can be expected? I have witnessed and could name distinguished authorities to prove the existence of *much more serious errors* ! ”

Gunnery was, in naval warfare, in the extraordinary state of ignorance we have just described, when our lean children, the American people, taught us rod in hand our first lesson in the art. Undaunted by the prestige which illuminated the names of those gallant officers who had fought under Nelson—unintimidated by the number of our men of war, or by the noble crews of seamen that existed between their

decks, they very adroitly determined to obtain, partly from science and partly from a very excusable description of smart legerdemain, more than enough to make up for their deficiency in money and physical strength. Accordingly, they not only, by patient application and constant drill, converted their seamen into practised *gunners* and expert *artillerymen*, but, by substituting long guns instead of our short ones, they secured for themselves the immense advantage of being able, without loss or danger, luxuriously to pummel us to death at ranges at which they had precalculated they would be completely out of our reach. In short, just as in civil life “a pistol and twelve paces,” in the days of duelling, at once enabled the smallest man to level the physical superiority of him who had got into the habit of overpowering everybody merely because everybody was weaker than himself, so did the Americans concoct similar arrangements for meeting on its native element the navy of Great Britain. With this object in view, they not only constructed their three principal classes of ships, nominally of

the same force as our own, one-third superior in size, but in the same proportion in each instance they increased the calibre of their guns and the number of the crew, who, be it always remembered, were almost entirely composed of BRITISH SEAMEN converted into *artillerymen*.

“ At the navy-yard at Gosport,” says the late Captain Basil Hall, R.N., in his ‘Travels in North America,’ “ there was a line-of-battle ship, the ‘ New York ’ (called a seventy-four), of *ninety* guns, and the ‘ St. Lawrence ’ (called a forty-four), of *sixty* guns.

“ In the course of the same morning we visited the ‘ Delaware ’ (called a seventy-four), lying fully equipped, and all ready for sea. There were mounted, when I went on board, thirty-two *long* guns on the lower deck, 42-pounders ; on the main-deck thirty-two guns, 32-pounders ; on the quarter-deck and forecastle twenty-eight 42-pound carronades ; in all, *ninety-two* guns. Eight ports were left unoccupied on the upper deck, so that she may be said to be pierced for *one hundred* guns ”

And yet, overwhelming as were these advantages, it will appear from the following evidence that it was principally by *superior gunnery* and artillery tactics that we were sentenced to pay to

the Americans the penalty ever exacted by Science from whoever, relying solely upon physical strength, presumes to despise her superior assistance.

“The enemy’s fleet,” says Captain Sir James Yeo, R.N., in his letter dated Lake Ontario, 12th September, 1813, “of eleven sail, having a partial wind, succeeded in getting within range of their *long 24 and 32 pounders*; and, having obtained the wind of us, I found it impossible to bring them to close action. *We remained in this mortifying situation five hours, having only six guns in the fleet that would reach the enemy. Not a CARRONADE was fired.* At sunset a breeze sprung up from the westward, when I manœuvred to oblige the enemy to meet us on equal terms. This, however, *he carefully avoided.*”

Again, Captain Barclay, R.N., in his report on the same action, says:—

“The other brig of the enemy, apparently destined to engage the ‘Queen Charlotte,’ supported in like manner by two schooners, kept so far to windward as to render the ‘Queen Charlotte’s’ 24 pounder *carronades* useless, whilst she and the ‘Lady Prevost’ were exposed to a heavy and destructive fire from the ‘Caledonian’ and four other schooners armed with *long and heavy guns*”

The testimony of various other British naval

officers of rank and experience might be added, each adducing facts proving the superiority of American men-of-war in artillery tactics. We will, however, conclude by submitting to our readers the following summing up of the case by that highly intelligent officer to whose work we have already referred.

“In accounting,” says Captain Plunkett, R.N., “for the defeats of the American war, Englishmen are accustomed to attribute them *wholly* to the superior size and force of the enemy’s ships. It is perfectly true that this superiority was sufficient to account for the unfavourable result — nay, to make such result inevitable; yet candour compels us to admit that the immediate and actual cause of our defeat, in several instances, was *the superior gunnery of the Americans*. That our ships should have been captured by opponents half as large again is no proof of extraordinary prowess in the victors, but that half the ships taken should be reduced to a sinking state and *actually founder*, is irresistible evidence of *good gunnery* on the part of the Americans; while the comparatively uninjured state of the American ships shows, as many other facts do, how sad was our own negligence.”

It might naturally have been expected that the fatal results of this “negligence” would have taught us the necessity of correcting it.

No sooner, however, did our war with the United States end, than, just as the ruddy schoolboy not only stops crying the instant the ugly usher has done flogging him, but, without even wiping his eyes, runs off to play, so did the British nation, forgetting the castigation it had publicly received, instantly revert to its darling habits, prejudices, and opinions; and though the art of gunnery as practised at Woolwich was the admiration of Europe, from our national *vis inertiae* it remained,—as if it had been non-amphibious,—untransferred to sea practice. Our sailors were paid off, our men-of-war were laid up in ordinary; and thus, although as in the case of our army the advantages of discipline and of the science of war had been most clearly shown to us, and although the pages of the precious volume had by the Americans been actually held up before our eyes until we had wept as we read them, we resolutely persisted, as had been the case with our army, in  
“LEARNING NOTHING, AND IN FORGETTING ALL!”

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## CHAPTER IV.

ON THE PRESENT RELATIVE CONDITION OF THE BRITISH  
AND FRENCH NAVIES.

The successes of the American Navy create a deep impression in Europe — France especially determines to adopt the successful system — Descriptive sketch of the new system of Gunnery as recommended by Sir Howard Douglas — Alteration in the armament of guns — Oddities in shot — Simplification of wads — Strange anecdote concerning them — Horizontal shell-firing — Shells, *percussion* and *concussion* — The havoc they create, even to those who use them — Sanginary effects they will probably produce in the next war — Powder — Fuses — Tubes — Musket, Pistol, and Sword exercise — Action — Reflections

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## THE NEW SYSTEM OF GUNNERY.

ON the continent of Europe, however, the case was very different. The success of the American navy in suddenly breaking a talisman—the magic power of which for so many years had appeared to be invincible—produced such a deep impression, that every maritime power, especially France, resolved, more or less, to follow

the example of that new system of gunnery and naval tactics which had been attended with such astonishing results; and as we have now to consider, secondly, what are at present the relative conditions of the British and French navies, it is necessary that we should submit to our readers a very faint sketch of the progress, since the year 1815, of the art in question in both countries. Previous, however, to doing so, with great satisfaction we have to observe that although for more than five-and-twenty years after the peace of 1814 British naval officers continued not even to be examined in gunnery, yet that, since 1832, in accordance with the recommendations of Sir Howard Douglas, very great efforts have been made by our Admiralty sometimes to copy and sometimes to excel the improvements adopted by the French; and it is, therefore, this peaceful scientific struggle between the two greatest nations on the globe that we have now very briefly to review.

## GUNS

One of the first points to which the French turned their attention was to substitute, like the Americans, *long, heavy* cannon for *short, light* ones.

For the British naval service there were formerly no less than twenty-seven different descriptions of guns, principally 32, 24, 18, and 12-pounders, all of which are now obsolete, excepting the first, which throughout our navy has been constituted the principal armament for all descriptions of vessels, excepting those deemed large enough likewise to carry a proportionate number of guns of larger calibre.

The length and weight of these 32-pounder guns are various. For frigates and line-of-battle ships there are no less than four descriptions, differing in length from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to 8 feet, and in weight from 56 to 45 cwt. For brigs and most of the smaller vessels, 32-pounders of 25 cwt. have been substituted for the old carronades of similar bore weighing 17 cwt. By the above alteration a most important simplification has been obtained; for, as the *shot* of all these differ-

ent 32-pounder guns are, of course, alike, it is evident that those taken out of any description of vessel will serve for every other.

In addition to this 32-pounder—the “jack of all work” of the British navy—there are supplied to frigates and line-of-battle ships a proportionate number, generally about 12, of 8-inch guns, weighing 65 cwt., and throwing a shot of 56 lbs. There are also supplied to steamers *only*, a 10-inch pivot gun weighing 85 cwt., throwing a shot of 84 lbs., and also a 68-pounder pivot gun of the enormous weight of 95 cwt., which, at 14*l.* 10*s.* per ton, costs 78*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* *Brass* guns cost nearly ten times as much, namely, 140*l.* per ton.

#### SHOT.

For the 32-pounders of all lengths, as also for the gigantic 68-pounder, *solid* shot are used; but for the 8 and 10-inch guns, which, to prevent their being too heavy, are not cast strong enough to propel solid shot to a sufficient distance, there are supplied hollow shot, which of course make a much larger hole than if the

amount of metal contained in them had been solid. Now our readers would probably suppose that it could matter but little—at all events to the missile—in what part of a hollow shot the vacuum within it existed; it has, however, lately been ascertained by experiment that if, instead of being, as is usually the case, in the centre, it be near the circumference, the following extraordinary results occur:—

If a hollow shot be placed in a gun with the vacuum on the *left*, the projectile will be propelled to the *right*; if it be placed with the vacuum on the *right*, its flight will be to the *left*; if to the *rear* (that is, towards the breech of the gun), the range will be slightly *diminished*; if *outwards* (that is, towards the muzzle), the range will be slightly *increased*. If in a 32-pounder the internal vacuum of the shot be placed *upwards*, the range will be from 300 to 400 yards less than if in the centre. If, on the contrary, with the vacuum *downwards*, the range will become from 300 to 400 yards greater; the mere alteration of a hollow shot's centre of gravity thus making a difference in

its range from 600 to 800 yards, besides the various other changes enumerated!

In all shot called "*solid*," whether of lead or iron, however carefully they may be cast, there is always a small vacuum; and as the centre of gravity is consequently seldom or never exactly in the *centre*, it is evident that the course and range of the projectile must always slightly vary according to the position in which the said vacuum (unknown to the loader) happens to be placed.

Besides solid and hollow shot, there are a proportion of grape and case for all the guns above mentioned.

It has been calculated that a moderate breeze drives a shot to leeward one foot in every hundred yards; a moderate gale, two feet.

Every 68 pound shot that is fired costs (at  $\frac{3}{4}d.$  per lb.) 3s. 5d.

#### WADS.

In order to prevent the charge within a gun from moving by the motion of the sea, it was deemed necessary throughout the late war to load

with *solid* oakum wads, which, from the inside of the gun getting rusty, and from various other causes, occasionally became so tight that considerable strength and most valuable time were often expended in unscientifically attempting to compress air which had no power to escape. These clumsy retainers have since been superseded by a piece of circular rope, crossed in the middle by two broad oakum bands, resembling altogether a wheel of four spokes; which simple contrivance, by not confining the air, not only gets rid of that unnecessary difficulty, but as the circumference of the rope jams the shot all the way round just as a stone placed under a carriage-wheel touches it in one part, it answers its purpose infinitely better than the old wad, which, besides all the bother of insertion we have described, was after all a mere tangent to the exterior circumference of the shot—as unfavourable an application of power as could possibly have been devised.

The French have lately materially improved this invention by simply cutting through the circumference of the wad; which operation,

completely counteracting the expansion of the rope by moisture, materially facilitates its insertion. But, besides this, the French have adopted an infinitely greater improvement in loading, which, at the time we write, has not yet been introduced into our service—namely: while *we* consecutively insert and ram down powder, and then shot and wad, *they* do both these operations at once; by which means, with infinitely less fatigue, they gain six seconds with good loaders and considerably more with bad ones.

We must here relate a curious anecdote. In October, 1817, Sir Howard Douglas, an old artillery officer, submitted to the Lords of the Admiralty, in manuscript, his treatise on Naval Gunnery, published in 1819, in which this mode of simultaneous loading was recommended; and as the treatise was translated into the French, Russian, Dutch, and Swedish languages, and used as their manual, as it also is by the Americans, “*la feu simultanée*” was adopted by regulation in the French navy, and became known to our service as “the FRENCH system of loading.”



As such it attracted the observation of the Admiralty, who have recently ordered this "*French*" invention to be tried on board the 'Excellent,' where it has been found to succeed so well that it is now again, as "the *French* invention," under trial by our squadron of evolution at sea; on which element it has long ago been found by the French to answer most admirably. The moral of our little story is as follows :

Had any conflict taken place between the French and British fleets in 1840 or in 1844, the French would, to our cost, have used against us the invention of an English officer, which, though printed and published to the whole world, it has taken the British people upwards of thirty years to adopt—indeed, which is not *yet* adopted.

We, however, deem it just to observe that this reflects upon no particular administration, Sir Howard Douglas's recommendation having, for nearly a quarter of a century, been equally overlooked by *all*.

Again, in the French service, in aiming the gun, the breech of their carronades is very quickly

elevated or depressed by means of a screw, whereas in the British navy both operations continue to be performed by two men, two handspikes, and a cumbrous wooden quoin or wedge.

### SHELLS

Shells, lately introduced into the naval service for horizontal practice, are principally fired from the 8 and 10 inch guns, but in some cases from the 32-pounders also. In several instances a shell has burst within the gun, strange to say, without injuring it !

The object and the effect of *percussion* and *concussion* shells are the same, though the causes of the explosion of each are different. In both cases the shell should be able to resist the force of the charge, and yet explode on striking the side of a ship.

*Percussion* shells are constructed to explode by means of some detonating or percussion powder enclosed in the fuse or in the shell. Various arrangements have been tried ; all, however, must be dangerous, as the shells carry

with them the means of being exploded—indeed a mere tumble on the deck, or a blow, or being unskilfully rammed home, may effect this.

A *concussion* shell, on the contrary, is perfectly harmless until its fuse is ignited by the discharge of the gun. It cannot therefore be dangerous to its employers. On its striking its object, a mechanical arrangement in the fuse causes the fire within it to communicate with the powder in the shell, and consequently to explode. No detonating or percussion powder is used in *concussion* shells.

As the parts of a shell after bursting always go *onwards*, never *backwards*, if the explosion should take place in the ship's side, just after it had passed through, or in midships, the loss, if both sides were manned, would probably be three or four guns' crews, forty-five men, more or less. The utmost havoc would probably be caused by the shell bursting just before it freed itself from the inner part of the ship's side, as then, besides the chance of setting the vessel on fire, the iron fragments of the shell and the splinters

of the wood would inevitably cause great loss of life.

Under the new system, it is supposed that a broadside of shells at about 400 yards will prove to be the most drastic medicine in the pharmacopœia of modern war. Between three and four hundred loaded shells form the complement of a three-decker. Two for each gun are *at all times* ready on deck, and thus in action there will in a 120-gun ship be no less than 240 live detonating and concussion shells distributed among the crew! Whether these fearful engines will prove more destructive to their friends than to their enemies—whether human beings will have nerve enough to fight with firearms in the middle of innumerable loaded mines, one or all of which by mere accidental blows may be exploded, are problems which the next war will very quickly demonstrate. In the mean while there is, we fear, but too much cause to prophesy that in this instance it will be found that Science has at last overreached herself; that in naval duels the two combatants, on the lone ocean, will sink each other, in which case, although both may

disappear with their colours flying, how truly may it be said of each of them—

OH GRAVE ! WHERE IS THY VICTORY ?

The cost of loaded shells, which, of course, varies according to their sizes, is as follows :—

	£	s	d
13-inch shell . . . . .	1	0	10
Wooden fuse . . . . .	0	0	8½
5 lbs. of powder for bursting . . . . .	0	2	6
	<hr/>		
	1	4	0½
Maximum charge of powder, 20 lbs	0	10	0
	<hr/>		
	1	14	0½

### POWDER

If a cannon be *overcharged* with gunpowder, the surplus, ejected before it has time to ignite, (we have repeatedly seen snow covered with it,) produces no more explosive effect than if it had been so much sand; indeed its useless unclastic weight, by deadening the force of the powder, actually *diminishes* the range it was intended to increase. On the other hand, if a gun be *undercharged*, although its range is of course shortened, the damage it creates is occasionally most materially *increased* ! for it is an axiom in gun-

nery, that whatever be the material through which a shot passes, be it glass, wood, or brick-work, the slower it goes, the more does it shiver, splinter, and shake it.

These facts, long known to artillerymen on shore, have lately induced the French and British navies, instead of continuing the "good old custom" of at all ranges blazing away the same quantity of powder, "the more the better," to vary their charges according to the various objects to be attained. On board the 'Excellent'—the discipline and practice of which are most admirable—the arrangement is to have three different charges of powder for every gun. 1st, for the utmost possible range; 2nd, for ordinary distances; and 3rd, for the minimum necessary for penetration, and thereby for creating the utmost amount of havoc by splinters.

The distribution during a heavy action of gunpowder throughout, say a 120-gun ship, requires so many precautions that it would be impracticable even briefly to enumerate them. As soon as the drum beats to action, there is hastily rigged up in the middle of each deck, and con-

sequently between decks, what at first sight appears to be a large flannel phantom with two short arms or fins, one drawn inwards and the other projecting outwards. Within this shapeless "screen"—concealed from view and consequently from sparks of fire—there are stationed one or two trusty men whose duty it is to deliver to the running powdermen through the flannel sleeve which is turned *outwards* a series of cartridges as fast as they are handed up from below, and per contra, to receive through the flannel sleeve which is turned *inwards* the leathern buckets which require to be replenished ; and certainly it is impossible, even for a moment, to contemplate this operation without reflecting what a strange position it is for any human being to occupy, for, although he can see nothing whatever of what is going on, he is as much exposed to be shot as those who within a few feet of him are fighting the guns !

The two magazines (one fore and the other aft) from which the powder, under the direction of a mate or midshipman, is with innumerable precautions handed up, and then through the sleeve of

the phantom delivered on deck, are lighted by external powerful lamps, which, glaring through two thick glass bull's-eyes, cast a sort of pale moonlight on him whose duty it is, amidst the roar of cannon vomiting forth fire and fury, calmly at intervals to watch the black hands of a white dial by his side, upon which are inscribed the words "DISTANT," "FULL," "REDUCED," "STOP," and in obedience thereto to select and hand out seriatim the different description of cartridges required for the three ranges above indicated, and thus, although far below the surface of the ocean,—out of the reach of all shot,—and secluded from his thousand mess-mates, he can guess, probably more accurately than most of them, his distance from the enemy. The various cartridges over which he presides are respectively taken from zinc boxes, which, arranged in bins separated by passages like those in a wine-cellar, are so hermetically closed, that if in case of fire it should suddenly be deemed necessary to drown the magazine, the water, it is *said*, would flood them without wetting the powder, which would be again fit for



action as soon as through another stop-cock the fluid had been turned off into the hold.

The cost for powder alone of a single discharge of the armament of a line-of-battle ship of 120 guns is upwards of 20*l*. The cost for powder alone of the firing of a morning and evening gun exceeds 100*l*. a-year.

#### FUSES.

It having been ascertained by experiment that the old-fashioned eight-penny wooden fuse which still answers for land service, was apt to be disorganised by the shell striking the side of a ship, one of brass, made to screw in, has been substituted. This modern improvement has, however, been lately superseded by processes we have detailed, by which shells are now made to explode by *percussion* and also by *concussion*; in short, the enemy's ship is now the hammer which gives to them the fatal blow. The cutting, as also the boring, of these fuses, which are still to be used in the naval service for firing at troops on shore, likewise the driving them into shells, are operations requiring a degree

of nicety which nothing but great coolness and experience can attain. Each fuse costs two shillings and twopence.

#### TUBES.

In the late war, as soon as the captain of a gun, often enveloped in smoke, gave the word "*fire!*" the sailor, whose duty it was to execute the command, after perhaps leisurely turning his quid, put the burning end of a rope of slow-match, which often required blowing, to the powder priming, which in due time igniting, off went the gun, and away went the shot in whatever direction the rolling and pitching of the vessel might at the moment combine to ordain. Sometimes it went slap into the sea running mountains high, and sometimes bang over the mast-head of the enemy. Many years after the peace of 1815 flint locks, which had long been applied on shore, were used by our navy, after which there were substituted percussion tubes to be fired by the blow of a hammer, an operation which, from the usual explosion from the touchhole, was attended with

difficulty and sometimes danger. There has, however, lately been adopted on board the 'Excellent' an American invention of great merit, by which, and by means of a string which the captain who aims the gun holds in his hand, a simple piece of iron is very beautifully made to strike the tube, and at the same instant glide out of reach of its effects.

#### MUSKET, PISTOL, AND SWORD EXERCISE

Throughout the late war, seamen were so little instructed in sword exercise, and especially in the use of firearms, that in our navy pistols, generally speaking, were not allowed in boarding, as it was found that the men, when their blood was up, were liable to shoot each other. In the days of Nelson a British sailor with his breast bare and with an iron ship's cutlass in his hand, if placed by his captain on the earth's orbit, would without flinching have tried to stop it; in fact, provided he was awake and tolerably sober, he was ready at any moment to fight anything; and as other navies, especially the French, had not recourse to art, his physical strength enabled

him almost always to overcome his enemy, and therefore by the supporters of the old-fashioned mode of warfare it was apparently truly enough said, “*What more can you want?*” As a decisive proof, however, of the enormous amount of undeveloped power of a ship’s company under the ancient system, we have only to observe that a body of marines of one-fifth of their number were always considered sufficient to conquer them, not by superior courage,—not by superior strength,—not by superior prestige,—*but by discipline and the ready use of firearms.* It seems astonishing that so glaring a moral should have existed so long in vain!

In the new system, however, the self evident truth is fully appreciated, and accordingly in the French service, as also on board the ‘Excellent,’ every sailor is patiently drilled into an expert swordsman, and into an almost unerring shot with pistols, carbines, or muskets. The correspondent of the ‘Times,’ an “officer of experience,” in his admirable description, dated September 9, of the late grand naval review at Cherbourg, states—

“In a few moments the signal was given to man the boats, which pushed off in divisions to represent an attack on the steamer ‘Descartes.’ This was a beautiful part of the evolutions. Upwards of 55 boats with heavy guns (32-pounder carronades generally) in the bow, filled with small-arm men, officer, and sailors, pushed out in excellent order, after preparing for nearly half an hour for the attack. For some time they advanced towards the steamer with great regularity, the bow-guns being fired with quickness, and the musketry spattering away from every boat in a continuous roll, so that the advance soon became obscured by the smoke ”

#### ACTION

After the decks of a man-of-war have been cleared for battle by the removal of cabin partitions, and every other description of lumber, worse than useless, for it creates splinters,—(in the ‘Rivoli,’ however, a pet canary-bird and its cage were allowed to hang between decks during the whole of the action,)—and so soon as the ship’s drum beats to quarters, the men in apparent indescribable confusion rush down the hatchways to their respective guns, which, being always kept loaded at sea, they have only to unleash, and run the muzzles out of

the port-holes. They then, in mute silence, stand to their quarters, every man facing his gun excepting No. 1, called the "captain," who, out of reach of its recoil, stands in its rear.

Over every cannon hangs suspended to the upper deck a long-handled sponge ; also a rammer and worm of the same length. The squad at each gun are not only numbered off as "sponger," "loader," "assistant-sponger," "assistant-loader," "second captain," "auxiliaries," "hand-spike-men," and "rear-men," but, in addition to these duties, for rushing on deck, at a moment's warning, as "boarders," "fire-men," "sail-trimmers," and "winch-men." It is evident, therefore, that as the action proceeds, and the number of the living diminish, a variety of exercises are successively required : for instance, the sponges and rammer, unwieldy at all times even in the most skilful hands, repeatedly change their masters ; if the powder-man while about to obtain cartridges falls, he must be replaced ; if the carriage, disabled by a shot, requires to be replaced, its gun, weighing nearly three tons, has, by a very few men, and in the space of say two

minutes, to be triced up close to the deck like a hammock, and then lowered upon the new one. Usually one gun's crew, by dividing its strength, likewise fights the gun on its right. Occasionally the whole ship's company man the guns of only one side, and then all of a sudden subdivide, to fire broadsides from both starboard and port.<sup>1</sup> The results of a cool, steady, well-directed fire apparently need not be described, and yet the advantages of quick firing and discipline combined are almost greater than can be conceived. For example, it requires exactly one minute and twenty seconds for two ships passing each other on opposite tacks, at the rate of five knots an hour, to get out of each other's fire. Now, during this brief period, it is quite within the power of a well-drilled ship's company, by the joint jerks of handspike levers and of tackles of great power, to slue their guns to the utmost extent that the ports will allow,—fire,—run in the gun,—load,—run it out,—again slue it by jerks in the opposite direction,—and fire ; and thus an

<sup>1</sup> The old term *larboard* is abolished.

efficient crew in passing would pour *two* broadsides into their enemy, who, if his discipline was at all slack, would find it as utterly impossible, within time, to return more than *one*, as it would be for a man to travel by an express train who by violent exertion had arrived at the railway station half a quarter of a minute after it had started.

Considering how narrow between decks is the stratum within which such a variety of manual and mechanical operations have to be performed, it is evident that under the serenest circumstances nothing but repeated practice can prevent confusion; how invaluable, therefore, must be the product of discipline and experience during a desperate action, every pulsation of which may be attended with new circumstances to agitate, to excite, or inflame the passions of the crew! To subdue these passions the French navy has lately established a silent system of command; and thus, while on board one of our largest line-of-battle ships there may be heard exclaimed at every gun the words, "muzzle to the right," "muzzle to the left," "run in," "lift," "down," "well," "run out," "ready," "fire," &c. &c.,



on board its antagonist there will literally be emitted no sound save the thunder of say a hundred and forty cannon and the groans of the dying! How this new system of signs and tokens will answer in the dense smoke of an action remains to be proved. In the mean while, however, it clearly demonstrates the intense anxiety of the French to obtain, by every possible effort, the inestimable advantages of pure discipline

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In the sketch which we have now concluded of the progress of Naval Gunnery since the late war, it has been our particular desire not to claim for the British service more credit than is due to the French for the important alterations which have consecutively been adopted ; indeed, we have considered the two nations as allies rather than rivals in a science which, morally speaking, is utterly indefensible.

Without, therefore, giving the palm of precedence to either, we submit that by their united exertions it has been indisputably shown that in

the next war naval engagements will not, as formerly, be decided by superior physical strength and courage, but, on the contrary, by superior intellect, that is to say, by superior skill in gunnery and in the use of muskets, rifles, pistols, and cutlasses ; in short, now that steam has rendered a whole fleet independent of wind and sails, and consequently of seamanship, that a shipload of mere brave, old-fashioned rope-hauling sailors will be no more competent to contend against expert naval artillerymen, marksmen, and swordsmen, than a good-humoured heavy Englishman, seated on a platform, would be able to resist, simply by his weight, the force of the lever, pulley, screw, or hydraulic pressure applied beneath him by a diminutive French engineer ; and as the next fearful conflict on the ocean between the fleets of France and England must therefore, to a considerable degree, be one of *mind* against *matter*, we must now briefly and impartially consider what is the comparative state of preparation of the two countries in this respect.

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## CHAPTER V

## ON THE ART OF MANNING A NAVY.

Extraordinary contrast between the French and British methods of manning their Navy — Admirable arrangements of the French — Description of the English system of Impressment — Improvidence in turning off Able Seamen as fast as they become valuable — The American system — The practice of Impressment inconsistent with the Abolition of Slavery — Seamen must now be also trained Gunners — This subject explained — The nation in a fearful predicament — Impressment no longer practicable — By voluntary enlistment a sufficiency of seamen cannot be obtained — England the only country in the world that has neglected to organize her maritime population — In consequence thereof the nation is unable, in a moment of emergency, to man her men-of-war in ordinary — Reflections.

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## THE FRENCH SYSTEM.

As Nature is no respecter of persons, and, consequently, as her simple laws affect equally all sorts and conditions of men, it is not surprising that the same principle which binds together servant and master in private life should prove equally applicable to public service. For instance, in our domestic arrangements it is found

that the most efficacious as well as the oldest receipt for creating good servants, is *to make them comfortable*,—that is to say, to make them anxious to stay,—unwilling to go away; and thus our great railway companies have discovered that the difference between good wages and bad wages being utterly insignificant, in comparison to the difference between the amount of care that is bestowed on valuable property, by men contented and discontented,—it is false economy to underpay their servants

Again, for the London police, not only without the smallest difficulty did good pay collect together as many thousands of men of the height, age, size, strength, and peculiar qualifications required, but, by making dismissal a punishment, it mainly created that admirable “*discipline*” by which they have been governed, and which, it is well known, would instantly evaporate, were the men by a reduction of wages to be made to feel that they could readily better themselves elsewhere.

Now if the laws of human nature pervade the aqueous as well as the terrestrial surface of the

globe, it would follow that among all nations the first principle of *economy* in manning a navy should be, a determination to make the men required a little more comfortable—a trifle better off—than the seamen of an ordinary merchant vessel. The means to effect this are, of course, good wages, good food, and kindness, which combined together would, as we have just shown, materially assist discipline, and, consequently, diminish the necessity of severe punishment; and as a wise course in life is invariably—like Euclid's definition of a line—the shortest distance between any two points, so it is satisfactory to reflect that, when the simple solid basis we have delineated has been established, all further anxiety on the part of a nation about manning its navy is at an end; for, first, it may reasonably be expected that of their own accord sailors will flow to the best market, as surely as the element on which they live invariably finds its own level. If from self-interest they do so in great numbers, the State has the advantage of selection; if, on the other hand, contrary to the usual laws of human nature, sea-

men should prefer to remain with *inferior* advantages on board merchant vessels, the State, having performed *its* duty, is evidently justified either by conscription or ballot in requiring all seafaring men to submit to the same liabilities by which, in all countries, the able-bodied are bound in time of peace to come forward in defence of their father-land.

But the theory we have just described is precisely the highly organized, efficient, and, consequently, formidable system by which the French navy is recruited. For instance, to make the public service *attractive*, many thousand men at the expense of the State are annually well fed and comfortably lodged in barracks where, divided into what are called "compagnies permanentes," they are carefully instructed in artillery practice, musket and sword exercise, &c., and where they quickly imbibe an interest in their profession and an *esprit de corps* which are fostered and flattered by all classes of the community; and as action and reaction are equal and contrary, so does the honour paid in advance to these men produce an enthu-

siastic desire on their part to do honour to their country. Accordingly, even in time of peace, many able-bodied seamen voluntarily flock to this alluring provision; and as in case of war the greatest portion of the French merchant ships would be obliged to remain in ports, it might reasonably be expected that the whole of their sailors thrown out of pay would of their own accord come to the navy. The French nation, however, deeming it unsafe to rest on any such frail contingency, has wisely as well as justly decreed that her maritime districts and commercial marine shall be subject to *the same* obligations to serve their country as other classes of the community; and, accordingly, by the laws of France every boy who goes to sea is required to register his name on the "*inscription maritime*;" after one year's probation he enters into the class of "mousses" until he is sixteen, when he becomes "novice," or apprentice till eighteen, when he is classed as a "marin," or seaman, and is, thenceforward, at the service of the State until he is fifty years of age; besides which, about one-twentieth part of the general "*conscription*"

throughout the inland provinces are, by law, liable to serve in the navy.

By the above arrangements, it appears that between the years 1835 and 1844, both inclusive, 55,517 seamen answered the calls of the annual "levée permanente," and, moreover, that very nearly the whole of the French merchant seamen, amounting altogether to upwards of 100,000 men, must have successively passed through the navy.

Under this admirable system, which, while it flatters the passions and cultivates the mind, comfortably provides for the sailor, the French nation are prepared, on any impulse, to march by beat of drum, from their various quarters to their respective ships, "compagnies permanentes" of well-trained gunner-seamen, and thus at a moment's warning, even in time of peace, to complete the manning of no less than sixteen sail of the line.

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#### THE ENGLISH SYSTEM.

During the late war, the *art* of manning the British navy consisted in setting the simplest of



the laws of nations, as well as of nature, at defiance. It consisted, first of all, in offering a totally inadequate bounty (to a seaman from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, while to a soldier *boy* there was given 12*l.*), and when that proved—as all persons versed in marine arithmetic foretold it could not but prove—ineffectual, every seafaring man was liable to be collared, if at all dissatisfied with that, knocked down, and dragged on board a man-of-war. There was no ballot, no conscription, no act of parliament, no law human or divine, no appeal; in short, as Captain Plunkett, R.N., has professionally well described the process, “*We took our own seamen as we took the French ones—BY FORCE.*”

Impressment thus not only collected the dregs of our seaports, but without reluctance or remorse tore away from the outstretched arms of mothers, sisters, and wives, the country's hardy, weather-beaten sailors, on their return—to “*home, SWEET home*”—from a long, weary voyage. Our tyranny, which we facetiously nick-named “*right of search*,” pervaded the ocean as well as our ports; in short, the

British flag, wherever it appeared, was a signal to our seafaring men to coop themselves up in barrels, stow themselves in the cargo, or scud away in all directions.

On board our men-of-war the discipline by which crews were governed accorded with the means by which they had been obtained; in two words, they were smartened by that which they smarted under,—“the rope’s end;” and yet, so unvengeful is an Englishman, that, in spite of this unwarrantable system, our gallant blue-jackets,—noble fellows,—no sooner came in sight of an enemy, than, forgetting wrongs heavy enough to sink their ship,—boatswain’s mate, lieutenants, captain, chaplain, admiral, and all,—they stood to their guns, and generally, as we have stated, in yard-arm action overcame their equally brave but totally inexperienced foes.

Before sunset how many of each mess had lost his comrade, need not be considered; suffice it to say, that so soon as the brief period for which their vessel had been commissioned expired, those who had escaped with their lives, in reward for their services—or, as it is termed

in mercantile phraseology, “in full of all demands”—were paid off; turned off, in fact.

“Where they went, or how they fared,  
No man knew, and no man cared.”

At a small cost, and by that trifling kindness with which the owners even of American *merchant* vessels at the end of every voyage now provide for their crews, they might have been kept together until their services were again required; in which case their rude qualifications in gunnery would not have been learned in vain. Nevertheless, from the propensity of the British nation always to work in war with *raw* materials, they were, as we have stated, discarded, to engage with whomsoever they chose; and thus, by always recommencing—*de novo*—the dreadful process of impressment we have described, we eventually, with unpractised crews, had to contend against *our own* seamen, whom we had ourselves instructed, but whom the Americans—by far better judges of “*economy*” than ourselves—by high bounties and high wages, had allured into their service.

At the conclusion of the war it might natu-

rally have been expected that the mere fact of the British nation having been beaten upon its own element by its own sailors, driven from their allegiance by hunger, improvidence, and impressment, would have proved the necessity of altering that unnatural system of violence and injustice which had scared from its service invincible seamen, whom every other maritime nation on either side of the Atlantic understood how to *attract*. Nevertheless, although every individual in the country knew and *felt* that the English system of impressment was impolitic as well as indefensible, we have allowed the blessings of peace to shine upon us for more than five-and-thirty years without correcting it; in short, neither adversity nor prosperity, foul means nor fair means, have as yet been able to persuade us to reform it!

The predicament in which we stand, if calmly viewed, is truly alarming. In case of war, if we could suddenly return to the old practice of impressment, and, without bothering ourselves to consider whether it was right or wrong, if we could but obtain by it the same guilty glorious results,

we might, with more truth than justice, say—as indeed *is* usually said—“ We did very well last war ; we have always licked the French at sea, and *therefore* always shall.” But in morals as well as in gunnery great changes have taken place. Besides that reformation in the public mind that has successively abolished bull-baiting, prize-fighting, duelling, and, as far as is practicable, the punishment of death, the British nation, at a cost of twenty millions, and at the sacrifice of at least fifty per cent. of the value of the whole of its West Indian property, *has abolished* SLAVERY ; and although it has not as yet by Act of Parliament abolished impressment, yet it would be such a glaring inconsistency for us, in the face of all we have said, sung, and written against slavery, to kidnap British sailors,—force them to the unhealthy coast of Africa,—in order that they,—white slaves,—should there prevent naked, black, white-teethed, woolly-headed savages from kidnapping, not each other as *we* do, but their *enemies*, that it is generally *felt* rather than expressed that we must not, nay, CANNOT again have recourse to

it; in fact, that before the civilized world we cannot—like our children on the other side of the Atlantic—at the same moment preach freedom and practise slavery.

But even supposing that, on the dishonest principle that “necessity has no law,” we were to consent, or, as we should mildly term it, “*be forced*” to do so, the changes which, since the last war, have taken place in the education of the French sailor, would at once render the crime its own avenger. On this important subject we will offer to our readers a sailor’s opinion.

“Supposing,” says Captain Plunkett, R.N., “the necessity for equipping a fleet—that is, the certainty of war—to arrive during the recess of Parliament, we believe the Government have not, strictly speaking, the power of issuing press-warrants, or even of offering a bounty. But allowing both those methods of procuring seamen to be in operation, while we limit the bounty to five pounds, it is hardly to be supposed that an able seaman will rate himself at half the value of a drummer-boy. This was the sum offered through the last war, and the precedent was followed in 1840, of course without success. The press-gang will bring us *men*, but not the *hearts* and *wills* which animated the ‘Rodney’s’ and ‘Albion’s’ seamen the other day, and

which, according to the old naval proverb, would have made 'one volunteer worth two pressed men' The time of fitting out our fleet, however, be it long or short, will be one of serious and painful responsibility to the heads of departments, and of harassing anxiety to all subordinates."

How fearful is the following picture!—

"While the drafts of sullen-looking pressed men closely guarded are gradually arriving at the sea-ports, and a few smock-frocked peasants from the workhouse, with a sprinkling of 'civil-power' gentlemen strongly recommended by the magistrates, are slowly making up the force upon which the fate of England will depend, we can imagine the urgent exhortations to despatch which will be addressed by the Admiralty to the port-admiral, and by the latter to the different captains. But whatever be their zeal, they cannot *create* men, and will have, in some cases, to represent the worthlessness of those that are raised, and to request their discharge "

But the roll of the drum beats to quarters, and therefore let us now, as by-standers, deeply interested in the conflict, attentively mark its results as delineated in the following graphic sketch:—

"Let us conceive," says Captain Plunkett, R.N., "a British and a French fleet issuing simultaneously from

Spithead and Cherbourg on a calm summer morning, each fleet in tow of steamers, and mutually seeking each other. It will be seen that less than seven hours' towing, at the moderate rate of six miles per hour, will bring the two fleets together; and between ships thus towed by steamers, and thus becoming mere floating batteries, it will be a contest which good gunnery, and not seamanship, must decide. To say that *any* men unaccustomed to the use of heavy ordnance, whether merchant sailors, ploughmen, or tailors, would be useless in such a contest might seem superfluous, but for the fact that it is to such men England would have to intrust her fate under her present system.

“Yet a single glance at the heavy and well-appointed tiers of a line-of-battle ship guns will satisfy any one that they are no toys to be placed in the hands of novices. See what formidable batteries of the heaviest ordnance are there; not a gun under a 32-pounder, and many 68-pounder shell-guns! How perfect in all their appointments! How simple, yet how scientific, those tangent sights by which a distant object is struck with such wonderful precision! How excellent the arrangement of all the stores! How immoveable do those ponderous guns, secured in their manifold tackles, appear; and yet how rapidly are they disengaged and manœuvred by skilful hands! In one instant that maze of rope is unravelled, the fast-bound guns are free, and, as though the long black tiers had suddenly become instinct with life, they fly rapidly inwards and outwards, to the right and to the left, under the united efforts of the well-trained crews. It



is a striking sight to see the decks of a well-disciplined man-of-war when 'at quarters,' her seven or eight hundred men standing silent and motionless at their guns awaiting the word of command.

"Not a sound is heard until the full, clear voice of the officer rings along the decks, and then at the same instant every back is bent, every sinew is strained, the tackles rattle through their blocks, the handspikes creak, the decks groan, the giant frame of the ship trembles, as about two hundred tons of metal and near a thousand men are in simultaneous motion: each gun's crew strives emulously against the next, as though life and death were in the effort. For a few moments all appears to the unpractised eye a confused struggle, and then a motionless silence ensues. Every gun now points to the same object; each captain of a gun stands, trigger-line in hand, and eye fixed upon the sight. The discharge of that broadside would open a breach in the strongest ship through which a river might enter.

"Here we see the value of organisation, and the results of that practical skill without which the best appointed armaments are, like good tools in the hands of incapable workmen, thrown away. Formidable as these batteries are—and no such ordnance ever accompanied an army or thundered against an inland town—they would be contemptible in unskilful hands. Yet to whom have we to intrust those destroying weapons to-morrow if we commission ten or twenty sail of the line? At best we have merchant sailors pressed out of coasts; to men who never *saw* a gun

before ; to men who will blow off their own arms in loading, break their own or their neighbour's legs in firing, and point, if they do point at all, as a schoolboy does his new single-barrel when he aims at a rabbit and shoots a beater !

“ If the guns of a first-rate man-of-war were disembarked for land service, no sane man would think of intrusting them to other hands than those of trained artillerymen. Now it is easier to manage ordnance properly on shore than afloat, just as it is easier to shoot a bird sitting than a bird flying, so that there is an inconsistency in leaving the future supply of naval gunners to *chance*.”

By the doctrine of chances we will, however, endeavour to explain the condign punishment which would be inflicted on a raw British crew by the seamen-gunners with whom they will have to contend.

In the late war it was considered as *good* practice to fire three broadsides of shot in five minutes. The French can now fire six in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  minutes, that is to say, in yard-arm action, they could pour in *four* broadsides for every one that the crew of Nelson could have fired, while, at long ranges, their superiority in the art of gunnery would, comparatively speaking, of course

prove still more destructive ; and when it is moreover considered that shells can now be horizontally fired from the same guns and with the same precision as shot, that a single well-directed shell is sufficient to sink a ship, and consequently that in future naval actions there will probably, as we have already stated, often be no survivor to claim the victory,—

“ APPARENT RARI NANTES IN GURGITE VASTO,”—

it is evident that such fearful engines are neither to be handled nor endured by an unpractised crew.

Even those who have observed the havoc which the bursting of a shell in *open* air makes among troops, can scarcely conceive what will be the result at sea, when the explosion happens between the decks of vessels teeming from stem to stern with human beings and loaded shells. The utmost we can reasonably hope is, that British seamen under such circumstances will, from the example of their officers, *learn* to do their duty ; at all events, that they will brave such dangers as long as the sailors of any other

country: but for the nation to suppose for a moment that UNDISCIPLINED men will do so, is to rest its safety on a fatal delusion. Such a crew would actually be frightened at the very sight of the implements of war they had to wield; and it is not exaggeration to say that, in case of the ship taking fire, to save themselves from their own shells, they would probably jump overboard.

“ENGLAND,” says Captain Plunkett very eloquently, “ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY! *Oh! that such a signal should be addressed to men who never had a chance even of learning it!*”

The evidence we have submitted will, we believe, satisfy every reasonable mind that the old-fashioned British art of manning the navy is not only unsuited to the enlightened opinions and feelings of the present day, but that, casting conscience aside, men dragged by press-gangs from the workhouse, &c, on the good old-fashioned principle that “anything that has legs and arms will do,” are, now-a-days, no more capable, all at once, of standing against the shot and shells of the marine-artillery of the French navy, than they would be capable, if suddenly dressed in

cuirasses and placed astride horses, of galloping against the sabres of the French Garde-à-cheval. While, therefore, we have been slumbering over the question, impressment, by the mere operation of nature, has, like many a line-of-battle ship, rotted during the peace. It is no longer sea-worthy. It is the commission of a crime productive of no use. It creates its own punishment. In fact science, whose gifts are from the Almighty, has irrevocably decreed, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die!*" And if it has thus morally as well as physically become obsolete, there only remains to be considered what power at the present moment the British nation possesses to man its fleets by *voluntary* enrolment.

The manner in which this system is effected, and its results, will be best explained by the evidence of our naval officers.

1. Admiral Bowles, late one of the Lords of the Admiralty, in his able pamphlet, published in 1840, entitled 'Suggestions for the more speedy Equipment and better Manning Her Majesty's Navy,' says,

“ Nothing can be more primitive and defective than our present mode of proceeding.

“ A ship is required to relieve another for foreign service. She is selected, reported ready for commission, the captain and officers are appointed, and then volunteers are advertised for. They come in slowly and uncertainly. If the ship is a large one, the men will not enter until the heaviest part of the work of fitting is completed ; the equipment proceeds slowly and carelessly, because energy and rapidity are impracticable, but even then those who enter first feel they are unfairly worked, and the seeds of discontent and desertion are sown at the very commencement of their service.

“ Three or sometimes four months thus pass away before the ship's complement is complete, and in the mean while little progress is made in discipline or instruction. She at last sails for her destination, and relieves a ship which, having been three or four years on active service, is, or ought to be, in a high state of efficiency ; but on its arrival in England it is dismantled, the officers and crew are paid off and discharged, and we thus proceed on the plan of perpetually creating, and as perpetually destroying, what we have with so much labour and expense endeavoured to obtain—an effective ship of war.

“ The objections to this mode of proceeding are so numerous, but at the same time so obvious, that they will at once suggest themselves to my readers.

“ To the economists the improvident expense of keeping a ship intended to relieve another three or

four months in commission before she can proceed, will be sufficiently striking ; while professional men, who view a ship also as a school for the rising generation, in which not only mere seamanship, but the higher qualities of energy, promptitude, and resource are to be taught, contemplate with anxiety and regret a slow and slovenly system, calculated rather to damp and deaden activity and exertion, and to train up the young beginner in exactly the way in which he *ought not* to walk, and wholly at variance with the first principles of all warlike establishments, discipline, activity, and instruction.”

2. Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane, in 1826, addressed to the First Lord of the Admiralty the following opinions, which he also afterwards printed in pamphlet form :—

“ I do not know whether it has or has not reached your Lordship, but it is no less true, that notwithstanding the few men employed, there is a general complaint as to their inferiority, and not one captain in ten that acknowledges his having a crew with whom, either in strength, quality, or character, he is at all satisfied ; and, moreover, that although these men enter voluntarily, desertion is carried on to an extent never known in time of war. For this there cannot be but some cause, and I think it may be traced to the mode in which the peace establishment is at present conducted. When a ship is first commissioned, men

are brought together from wherever they can be collected — unknown to the officers as well as to each other : after their ship shall have been nominally ready for sea (which is seldom under four, five, or six months), she yet has a great deal to do with respect to her equipment and her internal arrangement, and it is still some months more before that most necessary part of their instruction is taken in hand, their gunnery, and on which the Admiralty have most justly laid considerable stress ; and there is no captain who has been employed during peace that will not tell your Lordship that he did not consider his ship in all points an efficient man-of-war until she had been from twelve to eighteen months in commission, and particularly in relation to the management of her guns. However anxious a captain may be to have his ship perfect in that respect, he at first meets an obstacle at every step : to exercise the guns as they ought to be, breaks in upon the whole day's work ; it is therefore postponed from time to time, and just enough exercise performed to fill up the quarterly report.

“ About the period before mentioned, a ship becomes in all respects in a state a man-of-war ought to be ; the men know and agree with each other, they work together, and are comfortable in their messes ; the drudgery of the exercise of sails, guns, arms, &c., is over, and desertion ceases, and the officers begin to reap the benefit of their exertions. The ship being complete in all respects, the exercising of guns, sails, &c., goes on regularly, and without interruption ; and this continues for a twelvemonth or a little more, when



the prospect of paying off comes in view, and then discipline, exercise, &c, begin to relax, and, if at home, the ship is paid off at the end of three years, and all belonging to her dispersed. Re-commission this ship the next day, and she is perfectly a new creation, and the same routine to be repeated already stated to your Lordship. The men who were lately in her have no more inducement to return to that ship than any other, as she is but the shell they formerly inhabited; and although a crew may be collected, all of men lately serving in a man-of-war, yet you will have the same complaint from the present as from her former captain, as to their inefficiency and want of union, and the same discontent will for an equal period exist, and the ship be in a similar state of inefficiency for a similar length of time.

“ I have always considered that a peace establishment was as much a preliminary preparation for war as for any other service; that consequently your ships thus employed should be manned with picked men, and that they should be in that state of training and efficiency, that each ship, on a rupture taking place, could turn over one watch to form the groundwork of another vessel to be fitted out ”

The natural, or rather the *unnatural* consequences of the British people making it a rule to discard all their seamen—poor improvident fellows—the moment their vessels are laid up, while by the governments of all other maritime nations

they are considerately provided for, until again required, are as follows :—

3. "In France," says Captain Plunkett, R.N., "the whole commercial navy, masters, mates, sailors, ship-boys even, are under the eye and jurisdiction of the Minister of Marine; nay, every fisherman, waterman, ferryman, oysterdredger, boatbuilder, is registered.

"Voluntary enlistment may be considered entirely inapplicable to cases of emergency. There are no means of calculating how long ships would be manning, if, as would necessarily happen in cases of emergency, their crews were not increased by men recently paid off from other ships. In peace there are usually *as many ships* paid off as commissioned in a year, and thus the men who leave one ship join another. But even with this aid the average time occupied by general line-of-battle ships in completing their crews we find to have been above five months. In 1835-6, when we commissioned several ships of the line at once, they were *six* months waiting for seamen, and were then very ill manned. We may safely suppose that were ten sail of the line commissioned at this moment, and did circumstances not admit of paying others off, we should not see them manned in less than *eight* months. We may therefore say that for any case of emergency simple volunteering will fail, *as it always has failed*.

"We may expedite the material fitting of a fleet; we may move ships about our harbours, put their masts in, and call them 'demonstration' or 'advance

ships ;' we may even fit them for sea—for the dock-yard men can do all that—but, when fitted, *there they must remain* for months waiting for seamen. Foreign powers are quite aware of this, for it is the duty of their consuls at our ports to inform their governments, and they must laugh at 'the demonstration' by which John Bull plays a trick upon—HIMSELF !

"It is a matter of official avowal—and we may add, of personal and painful recollection—that in 1840 we were unable to collect a few hundred seamen to make a show of preparation. . . . When England was vainly trying to scrape together a few hundred seamen, France had [in *compagnies permanentes*] upwards of 3000 ready in the Atlantic ports, and probably not less at Toulon.

"It is a fact as surprising as it is discreditable to England, that Russia could send thirty sail of the line to *sea* before England could send *three*.

"It is scarcely an exaggeration to say we might *build* a ship in the time required to *man* one."

Now, if the facts, allegations, and assertions we have just stated and quoted be true, in what an illogical dilemma, in what a fearful predicament are the inhabitants of Great Britain !

In the immediate vicinity of all their great dockyards are to be seen, like lions asleep, a number of powerful, unpainted, tawny-coloured line-of-battle ships, which it is conceived have only to

be awakened to rush upon and devour their foe. On close examination, however, it appears that these tremendous-looking creatures—although many of them have no less than a hundred and twenty mouths—have neither legs to run with, teeth to bite with, nor hearts to fight with; in other words, they have neither masts, guns, nor *crew*! The two former, it is said, can be supplied in a few days, nay, if necessary, almost in one; but as regards the third, there remains to be proposed, to be debated, and to be *agreed on* by the three branches of the Imperial Parliament, in what manner, at what price, and by what laws this “*tertium quid*” of the Admiralty is to be obtained: and thus, strange to say, although the British people have had thirty-five years to consider the question; although as regards number of ships they have the largest navy in the world; and although they both , chant and declare that “the wooden walls of Old England” are impregnable, they remain the only civilised nation on the surface of the globe that not only has forgotten to organise its maritime population, but has actually, by Act of

Parliament, made it an exception to that Law of *Nature*, by which the rest of the population, by militia ballot, have very properly been made liable to serve their country, if required!! and thus, just as in Indian mythology the Gentoos believed that the world rested on a tortoise, without considering how, in boundless space, that creature was to be supported; so do they rest for protection upon “wooden walls,” which *in a sudden emergency* they will find rest upon nothing! In fact, it may truly be said, that we are without the power of manning our navy at a moment’s warning, either by foul means or fair, by impressment or by voluntary enrolment; and although it is evident to the whole world that between these two stools the gigantic power of England may suddenly fall to the ground, yet no one has hitherto been able to make the nation even *reflect* on the subject. If our obduracy proceeded from political infidelity,—from a disbelief in a future state of war,—we might at least *argue* that it is useless to provide for a calamity that can never again recur; but the sanction which early in every session of our legislature is

annually recommended from the throne to naval estimates of several millions, clearly proves that the British sovereign believes and ever has believed in war; and therefore, leaving morality entirely out of the question, is it not incomprehensible that our statesmen of all politics—although they differ on every other subject—should, year after year, cordially persist in rendering fruitless the expenses they recommend; nay, that they should themselves paralyze the right arm of the country, on the defensive power of which they profess to rely, by constructing at an enormous cost, in our various dockyards, an iron as well as a wooden fleet, which in their hearts they *know* that the nation has not power to MAN!

Independent of all political considerations, the false “economy” of such astounding neglect can surely scarcely require to be demonstrated

- A line-of-battle ship commissioned for three years, is, it has been truly said, unserviceable for six months waiting for men; inefficient for six months more, while teaching raw merchant-sailors and landsmen their first duties; and being

thus two years only out of the three a man-of-war, its cost is to its use in the proportion of 3 to 2.

This fact has been powerfully corroborated by the well-known pamphlet of "a Flag Officer."

It is surely not necessary to be a "flag officer," or even to have served before the mast, to comprehend the simple truth of such observations, as they equally apply to all situations in life.

What should we think of the Directors of a great Railway Company, were they every three years to insist on engaging raw ploughmen as engine-drivers? What would the Directors of the Bank of England, or of any other bank, or the partners in any mercantile house, say, if it were proposed that with respect to their clerks, cashiers, agents, &c., they should triennially do the same? And yet, while every individual, high or low, who seeks for a situation deems it necessary to explain his proficiency, while servants of both sexes out of place advertise their qualifications, and while the whole system of apprenticeship in England rests on the principle

of securing to masters, for seven years, the services of those they have had the trouble to instruct, the British nation, from a prejudice plastered like wax into the mind of every Englishman, deems it advisable, *as a measure of ECONOMY*, to force its Navy—to whom it so confidently looks for protection—to be everlastingly discharging able seamen for raw, undisciplined, uneducated merchant-sailors and landsmen !

As the cost, however, of a man-of-war is usually estimated at £1000 a gun, it has been calculated by advocates of Peace that, even if the enemy *were* to capture one of our line-of-battle ships in consequence of its being inefficiently manned, the loss, after all, could only amount to say £120,000. It is evident, however, on reflection, that their estimate is as fallacious as if they were to calculate that because the earthen dike which prevents the ocean from flooding Holland, only cost, in its construction, one shilling per cubic yard, or say four thousand pounds per mile, the latter amount accurately represents the sum total of the loss which would be sustained by every



mile of the said dike which an enemy should destroy—whereas any Dutchman would explain, or rather exclaim, that the real value of protection depends on the amount of property protected; and if this be true, the loss of a British man-of-war, a portion of the wooden dikes of our vast empire, is, in the strictest “economy,” infinitely greater than its mere cost.

If, after due consideration of the foregoing facts and evidence, the nation should be of opinion that the maritime population of Great Britain ought, without delay, to be organized for the purpose of rendering impressment unnecessary, we venture to recommend—

1st. That the whole of our marines (10,000) should be converted into marine artillery: the increase of 4*d.* per day to each man would amount to 3500*l.* per annum, for which sum there would be always 10,000 skilful gunners ready for action at a moment’s warning.

2nd. That, inasmuch as it is impossible for the ‘Excellent’ to educate all the gunners that may be required, branch instruction ships should without delay be established at Plymouth as

well as in any other harbour that might be selected.

3rd. That when we have thus, at vast trouble and expense, *educated* our seamen, a number sufficient for the exigencies of the empire should, like regular soldiers, be always *retained*.





## PART III.

ON THE INVASION OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND  
ON THE CAPTURE OF LONDON BY A FRENCH  
ARMY.



## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

UNPOPULARITY OF THE INVESTIGATION — VARIOUS  
CLASSES BY WHOM IT WILL BE CONDEMNED—MODE  
IN WHICH IT IS PROPOSED TO BE CONDUCTED.

As by the law of England it has been decreed “high treason to encompass or *imagine* the death of the sovereign,” so we feel sensible that by most people it will be deemed highly culpable, or, at all events, inexcusably presumptuous for any one by conjuration to “*imagine*” the twin evils which, on due reflection, we have determined to bring before the consideration of the public.

*Many religious men* will consider it wrong to doubt the continuance of that superintending protection by which it has hitherto pleased Almighty God—at whose will alone nations and empires rise and fall, flourish and decay—to protect the British people from the ravages of a foreign foe.

*Many learned men* will consider the his-

torical fact, that since the Norman conquest no nation has ever dared to invade Great Britain, a practical refutation of our suppositions, to which it is impossible to reply, and which it is out of the power of sophistry to obscure.

“*The advocates of Peace,*”—we are happy to believe that, like legion, they are many,—will with much apparent truth observe that, inasmuch as for many centuries there have not existed between the French and British people the feelings of friendship which, to the credit of both, have lately been evinced, it is alike unbecoming, impolitic, and above all *untimely*, to instigate hostile conjectures which it is the interest, as well as the wish, of both parties to allay.

*Among the advocates for economy*—the most respectable portion of the population of the empire—millions will, probably, *primâ facie*, disapprove of searching out for a disorder, for which it is obvious to them that, if discovered, the only possible remedy must be INCREASED TAXATION.

*Many of our great capitalists*, especially the holders of fluctuating stocks, will be disposed at once to condemn a discussion which may depreciate their property by “causing unnecessary alarm.”

Lastly, *our leading statesmen* of ALL parties will no doubt declare, that, inasmuch as it is perfectly well known that the representatives in Parliament of the people of England — the masters of their own means — will, now-a-days, neither listen to nor support any prime minister that shall dare to propose, in a period of profound peace, a considerable increase of positive taxation for the ideal object of providing for dangers which thirty-five years of peace have shown to be imaginary, it is unwise — simply *because it is* USELESS — to enter upon the inquiry proposed.

Oppressed, but unappalled by these objections, we shall proceed with the task we have undertaken. All we ask of the nation is a patient hearing and a judgment unbiassed by political party feelings. We further beg



to be permitted to divide our subject into several heads, and to continue to treat each in the style absolutely necessary to render them intelligible to the great body of the people.



## CHAPTER II.

## ON THE INVASION OF GREAT BRITAIN BY A FRENCH ARMY.

Division of the subject into past and present — Abstract of Alison's History of the threatened Invasion of England by the French in 1797 — Preparations then made — Napoleon abandons the design — In 1801 Napoleon again makes preparations — Great Britain makes most powerful preparations for self-defence — Conduct of the King — Of the Prince of Wales — Of both Houses of Parliament — In 1803 Napoleon combines a flotilla of praams — Patriotic exertions of the British Parliament — And British people — Napoleon's object to obtain for a few days command of the Channel — His secret deep-laid project — Suspected by Collingwood — Defeated by Sir R. Calder — Napoleon in rage and disappointment breaks up his army at Boulogne.

If our problem were to determine in what way the Emperor of Russia or the Emperor of China would endeavour to invade Great Britain, the details, both of the attack and the defence, would involve so many unknown quantities, that the subject would admit of little more than a kaleidoscope solution, which every man, as he turned it

in his mind, would view in a different aspect. In considering, however, the probability of an invasion of *England* by FRANCE, the unerring light of history at once illumines the subject, not only by revealing—what was once a dark secret, namely—the enemy's plan of attack, and the preparations by which it was to be attempted, but by showing also the great counter arrangements by which such attack was to be resisted. To this experience of the *past* is to be added our *present* knowledge of the pecuniary, military, and naval resources of France as officially published ; and if this be not deemed sufficient, any one who chooses to cross the Channel may have an opportunity of moreover inspecting the very men, the very muskets, bayonets, and sabres, the cannon and the very cannon-balls, that would be brought against him.

We will, therefore, deal consecutively with these two tenses, and first,

AS REGARDS THE PAST. In the year 1797<sup>1</sup> the Directory of the French Republic, under the pretence of invading England, constructed

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Alison's 'History of England,' vols. 4, 5, and 6.

and equipped flat-bottomed boats for transporting across the Channel an army of 150,000 men, which had been assembled for the purpose, between Brest and the Texel, under the name of "THE ARMY OF ENGLAND;" and which, to encourage the Irish insurgents to join this force, was represented to them by the Directory as consisting of "270,000 men, all fully equipped." Of this army Napoleon Buonaparte was appointed commander-in-chief, with the following instructions:—

"Crown," said Barras to him, "so illustrious a life by a conquest which the great nation owes to its outraged dignity. Go! and by the punishment of the Cabinet of London, strike terror into the hearts of all who would miscalculate the power of a free people; go, and chain the monster who presses on the seas; go, and punish in London the injured rights of humanity. Hardly shall the tricolor flag wave on the blood-stained shores of the Thames, ere a unanimous cry will bless your arrival, and that generous nation, perceiving the dawn of its felicity, will receive you as liberators, who come not to combat and enslave, but to put a period to its calamities!"

According to orders, Napoleon proceeded to the coasts of the Channel, and after visiting

Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk, Antwerp, and Flushing—after sitting up till midnight at every town, interrogating the sailors, fishermen, smugglers, listening to their objections with patient attention,—he returned to Paris, where he delivered the following sage opinion: “IT IS TOO DOUBTFUL A CHANCE. I WILL NOT RISK IT. I WILL NOT HAZARD, ON SUCH A THROW, THE FATE OF FRANCE !”

In 1801—about four years afterwards—Napoleon, of his own accord, again made preparations for the invasion of England, which excited the serious attention of the British government. From the Scheldt to the Garonne every creek and headland was fortified to protect the small craft that were to be seen creeping along the shore to the general rendezvous of Dunkirk and Boulogne. At the latter harbour gun-boats and flat-bottomed praams were collected in great quantities, and the most energetic preparations made for defensive as well as offensive operations. Nothing was talked of in the French newspapers but “THE APPROACHING DESCENT UPON ENGLAND.”

In Great Britain the preparations for self-defence were worthy of the nation and of the words of Faulconbridge,—

“This England never did nor never shall  
Lie at the proud feet of a conqueror.”

The King, George III., declared his resolution, in the event of the enemy landing, to put himself at the head of his troops.

“Whatever,” wrote the Prince of Wales, in his letter to his royal father, dated August 3, 1801, “may some time back have been your Majesty’s objection to *my* being in the way of actual service, yet at a crisis like this, unexampled in our history, when every subject in the realm is eagerly seeking for and has his post assigned him, these objections will, I humbly trust, yield to the pressure of the times, and that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to call me to a station wherein I may prove myself worthy of the confidence of my country, and of the high rank I hold in it, by staking my life in its defence. Death would be preferable to be marked as the only man in the country who cannot be suffered to come forth on such an occasion. Should it be my fate to fall in so glorious a contest, no injury could arise to the line of the succession, on account of the number happily remaining of your Majesty’s children. But were there fifty princes, or only one, it would, in my humble opinion, be equally

incumbent on them to stand foremost in the ranks of danger, at so decisive a period as the present."

But while these vigorous preparations were making on both sides of the Channel, negotiators were also at work for the purpose of annulling them, and, the Angel of Peace triumphing over the Demon of War, a London Gazette extraordinary announced, on the 2nd of October, 1801, the signature of the preliminaries of that welcome treaty by which the war on the previous day had been happily concluded.

On the 8th of March, 1803, although France and England were nominally at peace, a message from George III. to both houses of Parliament announced that, "as very considerable military preparations are carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, His Majesty had judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions."

This message was received with the most animated feelings of patriotism by both houses of Parliament. The address, moved by Mr. Fox, passed through each without a dissentient voice. A few days afterwards the militia was

called out. Ten thousand additional men were voted for the navy ; and preparations were made in the principal harbours of the kingdom for the most vigorous hostilities.

“These measures,” Alison very eloquently remarks, “were immediately met by corresponding menaces on the part of France ; and everything breathed hostility and defiance in the two countries. Lord Nelson was intrusted with the command of the Mediterranean fleet. Lord Keith set out for Plymouth. Sir Sidney Smith received orders to put to sea with a squadron of observation. *A hot press* took place in the Thames. Sixteen ships were instantly put in commission. The public ardour rose to the highest pitch ; and England resumed her arms with a degree of enthusiasm exceeding even that with which she had laid them aside.”

In May, 1803, the dense smoke we have just described burst into flames, and no sooner was war proclaimed, than Napoleon, as First Consul, not only again declared his intention to invade England, but officially announced his intention to put himself at the head of the expedition. From the Texel to Bayonne forts and batteries were constructed, to afford protection to the small craft proceeding from the places where they had



been constructed to the general place of rendezvous.

The object of all these preparations was to assemble at a single point—the harbour of Boulogne—a flotilla capable of transporting an army of *a hundred and fifty thousand men*, with its field and siege equipage, ammunition, stores, and horses; and at the same time a covering naval force for its debarkation: accordingly, at every port along the coast, vessels were not only constructed, but as fast as they were finished they were, under the protection of the batteries, sent to Cherbourg, Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk.

The craft assembled were of four different kinds:—

1. Praams, carrying six 24-pounders, and artillerymen.

2. Do., flat-bottomed, carrying four 24-pounders and one howitzer; each capable, moreover, of holding from 150 to 200 cavalry.

3. Do., do., carrying two 24-pounders, and 80 infantry soldiers.

4. Do., do., carrying one 4-pounder, one howitzer, and 40 or 50 infantry men.

The organization of this force and the discipline of the troops were so studiously adjusted, that it *was proved by experiment that a hundred thousand men, with three hundred pieces of cannon, and their whole caissons and equipage, could find their place in less than half an hour !*

In the course of the year 1803 there were collected at Boulogne and the adjoining ports 1300 vessels of the above description, capable of carrying 3000 pieces of heavy cannon, besides lighter guns. It was calculated that a hundred or more of these craft, containing 10,000 or 15,000 men, might be sunk by the English men-of-war ; “but,” said Napoleon truly enough, “you lose a greater number every day in a single battle ; and *what battle ever promised such results as the* INVASION AND CONQUEST OF ENGLAND ? ”

Besides these preparations, a number of transports were assembled for the reception, in the presence of Napoleon, of stores and ammunition for the army ; and a decree directed the further construction *at Antwerp* of a dock capable of containing twenty-five ships of the line, and a

proportionate number of frigates and smaller vessels; but while these ostensible works were preparing, there remained—*altâ mente repos-tum*—secret in the mind of Napoleon a deep-laid project of attack, “the most profound combination,” says Alison, “that the genius of Napoleon ever formed”

Although at the period in question the army of France alone, without counting the subsidiary forces of Holland, Switzerland, and the Italian States, amounted to the enormous aggregate of 427,000 effective men, independent of 200,000 national and coast guards, Napoleon obtained a decree for the immediate calling out by forestalment 50,000 additional troops liable to the conscription for the year 1803, thus increasing his army to 477,000 men, of whom 150,000 stationed on the coast formed what he was pleased to call “THE ARMY OF ENGLAND.”

His plan for transporting this force to its destination was *apparently* the flotilla of armed praams we have described; his *REAL* project, however, was as follows:—

“But,” says Alison, “these naval forces [the praams and transports], great as they were, constituted but a part of those which were destined to be employed in the invasion of Great Britain. The whole fleets of France and Holland, and soon after that of Spain, were engaged in the mighty enterprise. The design of Napoleon, which he himself has pronounced to have been the most profoundly conceived and nicely calculated which he ever formed, was to have assembled the fleet destined to compose the covering naval force at Martinique, by a junction of all the squadrons in the harbours of Spain and the Mediterranean, in the West Indies; to have brought this combined armament rapidly back to the Channel, while the British blockading squadrons were traversing the Atlantic in search of the enemy, raised the blockades of Rochefort and Brest, and entered the Channel with the whole armament, amounting to seventy sail of the line. It was under cover of this irresistible force that Napoleon calculated upon crossing over to England at the head of 150,000 men, with whom he thought he would reach London in five days, and where he intended instantly to proclaim parliamentary reform, the downfall of the oligarchy, and all the objects which the English republicans had at heart. At the same time, and in order to distract the attention of the enemy, a descent with 20,000 men and a large store of arms was to be made in Ireland, where the malcontents were profuse in their promises of a general insurrection. But this was a diversion only: the decisive blow, as in all the enterprises of Napoleon, was to be levelled at

the heart of the enemy's power in Great Britain. Numerous as were the chances against the successful issue of so vast a design, it will appear in the sequel how near it was to succeeding, how little the English were aware of the danger which really threatened them, and with what signal ingratitude they treated the gallant officer whose important combat defeated the most profound combination that the genius of Napoleon ever formed for their destruction."

The efforts made by Great Britain not only at that period corresponded with the patriotism and spirit of its people, but at the present moment—as compared with our existing means of repelling invasion—they offer so IMPORTANT a moral, that we beg the particular attention of our readers to their details. Independent of the militia, who were 80,000 strong, and the regular army of 130,000 already voted, the House of Commons, departing from its usual practice, agreed to raise 50,000 men in addition by conscription. Besides this, a bill was shortly afterwards brought in to enable the King to levy *en masse* all men in the United Kingdom between the ages of seventeen and fifty-five, to repel the invasion of the enemy; and such was

the enthusiasm of the British people, that in a few weeks 300,000 volunteers were enrolled, armed, and disciplined in different parts of the country, thus rendering the compulsory conscription useless.

“The King,” says Alison, “had everything arranged for the expected invasion. He was to go himself to Chelmsford or Dartford ; the Queen and the Royal Family, with the treasure, were to be sent to Worcester ; the artillery and stores from Woolwich to be sent into the interior by the Grand Junction Canal. In the great approaching conflict every one had his post assigned to him. The merchant left his counting-house, the lawyer his briefs ; the farmer paused in the labours of husbandry, the artisan in the toils of his handicraft ; the nobleman hurried from the scene of dissipation or amusement, the country gentleman put himself at the head of his tenantry. Everywhere were to be seen uniforms, squadrons, battalions ; the clang of artillery was heard in the streets, the trampling of cavalry resounded in the fields. Instead of the peasant reposing at sunset in front of his cottage, he was seen hurrying with his musket on his shoulder to his rallying-point. Instead of the nobleman wasting his youth in the ignoble pleasures of the metropolis, he was to be found inhaling a noble spirit amidst the ranks of his rural dependants. In the general excitement even the voice of faction was stilled. The heartburnings and divisions on the origin of the war were forgotten ; the

Whigs stood beside the Tories in the ranks of the volunteers ; from being a war of opinion, the contest had become one of nations ; and, excepting in a few inveterate leaders of party in the Legislature, **ONE FEELING SEEMED TO PERVADE THE WHOLE BRITISH EMPIRE.**"

In order to strengthen the Navy, still greater efforts were made. In addition to 50,000 seamen, including 12,000 marines, 10,000 were granted, and 40,000 more when the war actually broke out. Seventy-five ships of the line and two hundred and seventy frigates and smaller vessels were put in commission.

"The harbours of France and Holland," says Alison, "were closely blockaded ; Lord Nelson rode triumphant in the Mediterranean ; and, excepting when their small craft were stealing round the headlands to the general rendezvous at Boulogne, the flag of France, at least in large fleets, disappeared from the ocean."

On its coasts, however, the Emperor Napoleon reigned triumphant. He reviewed the preparations, and from the heights of Ambleteuse, after gazing at the white cliffs of England, he on the same evening wrote to Cambacérès, "**I HAVE SEEN THE COAST OF ENGLAND AS DIS-**

TINCTLY AS YOU SEE MOUNT CALVARY FROM THE TUILERIES. IT IS A DITCH WHICH WILL BE PASSED WHEN YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO ATTEMPT IT!"

The running water of the British Channel appears, however, so far to have cooled his courage that it was not until the 8th of July, 1805, that, leaving Turin, he again repaired to the coast, as Alison truly says, "there to peril his crown and life on the most gigantic undertaking ever projected by man since the invasion of Greece by the army of Xerxes" Shortly after his arrival he reviewed on the sands of Boulogne 100,000 men, drawn up in a line three leagues in length.

"THE ENGLISH," he wrote to Admiral Decrès, "DO NOT KNOW WHAT AWAITS THEM. IF WE ARE MASTERS OF THE CHANNEL FOR TWO HOURS, ENGLAND HAS LIVED ITS TIME!"

The amount of his army, which was in the most perfect state of discipline and equipment, was as follows :—

Effective combatants, including			
38,654 cavalry	.	.	158,000
Pieces of cannon	.	.	432



For each cannon, rounds of am-	
munition . . . . .	200
Cartridges . . . . .	13,000,000
Flints . . . . .	1,200,000
Biscuits . . . . .	2,000,000
Saddles . . . . .	10,000
Sheep . . . . .	5,000

Provisions for three months had moreover been collected; and for the transportation of 160,000 men and 6000 horses there had been congregated 2293 vessels, of which 1339 were armed with above 3500 pieces of artillery, besides that which accompanied the army!

This immense force, which for so long a time had remained in field barracks, was divided by Napoleon into corps of 20,000, each accompanied by its field and heavy artillery, cavalry, and reserve, and under the direction of a Marshal of the Empire. The remainder of the heavy cavalry and dragoons he united into one corps under one General. The organization of the Imperial Guard, under the more immediate command of the Emperor himself, was similarly arranged.

The organization of the Flotilla was equally

extraordinary and perfect. It was divided into as many subdivisions as there were sections in the army. The stores, baggage, and artillery were on board, and the mode of embarkation was by repeated practice brought to such precision, that it was found by experiment that a corps of twenty-five thousand men, drawn up opposite to the vessels allotted to them, *could be completely embarked in the space of ten minutes*

“LET US,” said Napoleon, as, in the vigour of life and ambition, he conversed with his generals, “BUT BE MASTERS OF THE STRAITS FOR SIX HOURS, AND WE ARE THE MASTERS OF THE WORLD!”

We have now to bring his vast project to its close.

Notwithstanding the exclamation we have quoted, Napoleon was secretly quite aware that the armament of cannon on board his praams, &c., was perfectly incompetent to resist the broadsides of British men-of-war. This enormous armament, therefore, was nothing but a costly but well-devised stratagem to make the

British confident of defeating it, while the *real* force that was to effect the purpose was to be concentrated at the remote distance of 5000 miles ; and accordingly, while the English fleets allowed themselves to be decoyed to distant parts of the globe to protect their colonies, fifty French ships of the line were under secret orders to assemble at Martinique, from whence in a body they were to enter the British Channel, for the purpose of triumphantly convoying Napoleon and his magnificent army to the shores of Old England !

“The stratagem,” says Alison, “thus ably conceived, was completely successful : not one person in the British dominions, except the sagacious Admiral Collingwood, penetrated the real design. The French fleets returned in safety from the West Indies to the European latitudes, leaving Nelson three weeks’ sail in the rear ; and when the Emperor was at Boulogne in August, 1805, at the head of 130,000 men, sixty French ships of the line were assembled in the Bay of Biscay, where the united British squadrons did not amount to much more than half that force.”

On the 28th of May the French combined fleet had sailed from Martinique to proceed to

Boulogne to cover the passage of the flotilla. Villeneuve was ordered, if possible, to shun a battle. "THE GRAND OBJECT OF THE WHOLE OPERATIONS," repeated Napoleon, "IS TO PROCURE FOR US A SUPERIORITY FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE BOULOGNE. MASTERS OF THE CHANNEL FOR A FEW DAYS, A HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND MEN WILL EMBARK IN THE TWO THOUSAND VESSELS WHICH ARE THERE ASSEMBLED, AND THE EXPEDITION IS CONCLUDED!"

While, however, the French Admiral was endeavouring against foul winds to steer towards England—with Nelson, who had been decoyed to the mouths of the Orinoco, eighteen days' sail astern—Admiral Collingwood, on the 21st of July, wrote to Nelson, describing intuitively what was taking place almost as clearly as if he had actually seen it. With his usual promptitude, Nelson despatched to England a fast-sailing vessel, with intelligence to the Admiralty, in consequence of which Sir Robert Calder, with his squadron united to that of Admiral Stirling, sailed to a point about sixty leagues to the westward of Cape Finisterre, when, the com-

bined fleets of France and Spain suddenly appearing in sight, the British Admiral made signal for an action, upon which the existence of the power of England may be said to have depended. In consequence of a heavy fog, the victory of the British was incomplete. The great object, however, of the battle was obtained; and accordingly, while Sir Robert Calder steered upon the support of the British Channel, Villeneuve, deeming it not prudent to persevere in his course, veered away towards Spain, and entered Ferrol on the 2nd of August.

With all due respect to the penetration of Admiral Collingwood, and with equal admiration of the bravery of Sir R. Calder and his fleet, it is impossible, we consider, for any just man to read even our brief abstract of that ray of light which, without apparent reason, shone upon the mind of Collingwood,—of the adverse winds and of the fogs which conjointly affected the arrangements both of the French and English fleets,—without feeling most deeply that the British people are solely indebted, for the important

results which occurred, to that omnipotent superintending Power which has hitherto protected them. “NON NOBIS, DOMINE, SED NOMINI TUO DA GLORIAM.”

As soon as Napoleon received intelligence that his extensive as well as deep-laid project had been not only discovered, but defeated, he at once exclaimed, with rage and disappointment,—

“WHAT A NAVY! WHAT SACRIFICES FOR NOTHING!  
WHAT AN ADMIRAL! ALL HOPE IS GONE! IT IS  
ALL OVER!”

But the powerful energies of Napoleon's mind, though chastened by adversity, were not to be subdued, and accordingly, no sooner was his secret project for invading England discovered and defeated, than, phoenix-like, there arose out of its ashes that magnificent plan of his campaign of Austerlitz, and thus, says Alison, “he prepared to carry the thunder of his arms to the banks of the Danube, when he was frustrated in his design of terminating the war in the British Capital.”

## CHAPTER III.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MORAL POWER OF FRANCE  
AND ENGLAND.

Comparison between the present moral power of the French and British nations — Reasons why the “morale” of the French Army has increased, while that of the British people has diminished, since 1803 — Evidence thereof — Comparison between the present physical power of the French and British nations — Sketch showing the Dr and Cr. results of the Power of Steam in account with Great Britain — The invention on the whole highly in favour of England — Sketch showing, per contra, that the power of steam has removed the uncertainties attendant upon sailing-vessels — That combinations for invasion which could not before have been effected are now practicable and certain — That steam has thus levelled the outworks of the defences of England — That out of the profits of the invention Great Britain *must* therefore strengthen her citadel — Absolute necessity of a standing army — Popular abhorrence of such protection — Inconsistent with the caution that characterizes the nation — Enormous amount of property insured in Great Britain from fire — From other results — Accidental Death Insurance Company.

HAVING in the last chapter reviewed by the light of History the real *modus operandi* of an invasion of England by a French army, in a

*past* tense, we now beg leave, as we proposed, to proceed to consider that important subject in the *present* tense. •

There can, we submit, be only one way of doing so—namely, a comparison between the agencies which the French nation at this moment could combine to conquer Great Britain; and the means which at this moment the latter kingdom either possesses or could readily call forth for self-defence; and as these agencies are moral and physical, we will consider them separately.

#### 1. THE “MORALE” OF THE FRENCH NATION

As it is a favourite saying among French soldiers, “*C'est le cœur qui fait le grenadier*,” so on a larger scale it was invariably a maxim with Napoleon that the value of the “*morale*” to the “*physique*” of an army was in the proportion of 2 to 1; and as a striking illustration of the prevalence of this sentiment, we may state, that during the Peninsular war in several instances there fell into the hands of our Engineer officers the governor's daily report, during the different sieges,

..



of the strength of his garrison, in which the hourly fluctuations of “*la morale des troupes*” were as carefully recorded as the motions of the weathercock at our Observatory at Greenwich.

Now in case of a war between France and England, the “*morale*” of the French army would be more strongly excited against England than in 1803, 1804, and 1805, for the following simple and obvious reasons, namely, that *then* the French soldiers had only to avenge our victories over their *fleets*, whereas they have *now* to wipe out, on their own account, and by their own hands, a series of disasters which under untoward circumstances befel these brave men from the battle of Vimiera to that of Waterloo. In short, the very crosses on their breasts and the eagles on their standards now inspire them to avenge the defeat, imprisonment, and death on a lone rock, of one to whom it would be unnecessary further to allude.

To these high-flown feelings are to be added the French soldier’s “*morale*,” or incentive to plunder, which, if it be proportionate to the amount to be plundered, would of course be

stronger now than at the period alluded to exactly in the ratio of the increase of the wealth of London *then* and *now*—say eighty millions.

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THE “MORALE” OF THE BRITISH NATION, in the years 1803, 1804, and 1805, as compared with that of the present moment, may briefly and truly be defined by stating that in the former periods it was at its *maximum*, whereas it is now at its *minimum*: indeed, in the words of Burke, it might be said that “the age of chivalry has fled,” or, in still plainer words, that the military “morale” of the nation is EXTINCT.

But let us come to facts.

The patriotism that, from George III. and the Prince of Wales downwards, burst forth throughout the United Kingdom at the mere mention of the words “*French Invasion*,” has been just quoted by us from the History of England; and as that brilliant picture is therefore fresh before the mind of our reader, let us calmly compare the present amount of danger with the present “morale” or disposition of the nation to resist it.

1. "With the aid of steam navigation," says the Prince de Joinville (*vide* his pamphlet), "a war of most daring aggression is permitted at sea. We are certain of our movements and free in our actions. Time, wind, and waves need no longer give us uneasiness: we can calculate to the day and the hour." . .

"We shall make war with safety, because we shall attack two vulnerable things—the confidence of the English people in their insular position, and her maritime commerce.

"Our steam service would have two distinct scenes of action: first, the Channel, in which our ports could shelter a considerable force, which, going forth by night, would defy the most numerous and most dense fleet of cruisers. Nothing could prevent this force from meeting before morning at any part of the British coast agreed upon, where it might act with impunity."

2. "Steam," says M. Hyppolyte Lamarche, in his well-known letter to M. Thiers and M. Barrot, "has thrown hundreds of bridges across the Channel—we can now pass at any time and in any weather from France to England."

"In estimating at 85,000 men the number of troops which England could raise for the defence of her territory, we certainly concede more than the reality. The mass of the people would be of no use to the government. They are absolutely unacquainted with the use of arms . . . .

"A landing may be effected upon a hundred different points of the English coast, and then a skilful

general will not hesitate what course to adopt : he will choose in his rear a point of concentration to re-unite his troops, cover London, or march in force against the enemy. . . . .

“ The average duration of the voyage between France and England would be five hours for such an expedition. Our war-steamers do not proceed worse than those of our neighbours ; and there is nothing to compel us to accept battle, when we want only to effect a passage. We shall be made to pay for it more or less dearly, but it is in our power to land, if we be *resolved* to do so. . . . .

“ The duty of a fleet of sailing-vessels, of a battle-fleet during an invasion, is traced in the order Napoleon gave to Villeneuve, to place himself, at whatever cost, before the Downs, and let himself be crushed there, if it should be necessary, in order to protect the passage of the flotilla. . . . .

“ France has at this moment 1432 naval officers and 200 students of the first class, who may be ranked as the staff. If you question them on the possibility of a descent upon England, in the present state of naval science, I may be allowed to say that *every* voice would answer in the affirmative.”

.There is often so much empty bluster in mere words, that, if there existed no more positive proof of danger than the statements, arguments, and threats above quoted, we might perhaps in the name of “ economy ” reasonably dismiss them

to the winds. The following evidence will, however, show that the French nation, notwithstanding the violence of the political storms which have lately assailed them, and notwithstanding the difference of opinion that has convulsed them, have throughout the whole period of their afflictions, and under almost every description of government, *steadily, unceasingly*, and at *vast cost*, been making preparations for *performing* what for more than half a century they have THREATENED, namely, the invasion of England.

*Extracts from the correspondence of the Times, described as from "an Officer of Experience in our own Service."*—(See *Times*, September 10, 1850.)

“Cherbourg, Saturday night.

“The spectacle of to-day was perhaps one of the most splendid of its kind that has been ever witnessed. Nothing short of the terrible glories of actual warfare could have exceeded it, and, without being an alarmist, I may safely say that the effect made on the mind of an Englishman by such a display of force and power on the part of an ally who has been our bitterest foe in times gone by, in a port almost impregnable, and

within a few hours' sail of the shores of Great Britain, was not calculated to put him at ease."

"Cherbourg, Monday, September 10.

"There are not many Englishmen who know that within less than sixty-six miles of Portsmouth there is a French port in which the most extensive works have been for years carried on, till nature has given way to the resources of skill and infinite art, and the sea and land, alike overcome, have yielded to our ancient foe one great naval entrepôt,—placed in a direct line with our greatest dockyards, fortified at an enormous cost, till it is impregnable to everything but desperate daring and lucky hardihood, increasing day after day in force and power, accessible from every point of the compass and at all states of the tide to a friendly fleet, capable of crushing beneath an almost irresistible fire the most formidable of hostile armaments—in one word, 'the eye to watch and the arm to strike the ancient enemy.' There is no geographical necessity for such a port opposite to our coast. The commerce of France does not need it. Our neighbours may well remark that they are justified in protecting a place which has already felt the force of our arms, and that they are bound to protect Cherbourg from such a contingency as that which occurred in the last century, when Admiral Bligh laid it in ruins; but Admiral Bligh would not have attacked Cherbourg had it not been a menacing warlike station; and, talk as they may, there can be no doubt that the whole of these immense works are prepared *for a war with England, and with Eng-*

*land alone.* When I say this, of course I do not mean to say that France will take any unjust advantage of her position ; but we ought not to shut our eyes to the fact that such a place is within seven or eight hours' sail of England, and that a French fleet leaving it in the evening with a leading wind could be off Portsmouth next morning, and could bombard any of our towns on the southern coast. . . . . In the centre is a large battery with lighthouse, which is nearly ready for the reception of all its guns, some being already mounted and in the embrasures. This breakwater, called the Digue, is about two miles from the interior harbour. Inside and out there is deep water, and the passages leading by either extremity are capable of being used by the largest men-of-war at all times of tide. Commanding one of these entrances is the Fort Homet, placed on a projection of the shore, and mounting no less than ninety heavy guns, casemated. On an island placed across the other entrance is the Fort La Pelée, which also mounts ninety heavy guns, the fire of some of which crosses the fire of the guns of Homet at right angles in the roads. At another point commanding the entrance is another fort—Querqueville—which can sweep the roads with the fire of forty 32-pound shell guns. As if all this were not enough, the arsenal walls are casemated and mounted with cannon, and every height over the town is commanded by a fort, while the sea-walls present all the features of a regular fortification, and are plentifully provided with cannon and casemated redoubts. . . . . And now one word as to the fleet. I believe I only echo the

opinions of all the naval officers present, when I say that France never sent a finer armament on the waters. Every improvement of which ships are capable has been tried with them, and even to such points as new and very excellent 'stops' on the cables has the minutest attention been paid. The officers are all excellent theorists, quick and intelligent men, and full of mathematics; the crews for the most part young, with a want of weight and 'beef' about them, but smart, active, and sinewy."

On the above graphic description the editor of the *Times* offered to the country the following just remarks:—

"It is impossible to forget—perhaps, without the slightest imputation on our neighbours' good-will, we may say it was not intended we should forget—that the fleet which issued in such magnificent style from behind the Cherbourg breakwater might some day sail straight across the Channel; that those heavy guns might all be pointed in anger; and that each of the black rakish-looking steamers might throw a thousand men on a hostile shore without warning given or suspicion raised. Such a suggestion cannot be thought out of place or ill-timed, for doings of this kind are the very vocation of the vessels paraded before us. If guns were not meant to be fired or steamers to be employed for transport, there would be no use in manufacturing either one or the other. From the



extent of our liabilities we may measure our precautions, and it is undoubtedly not advisable that we should be without the wherewithal to receive such visitors as might possibly be some day despatched from Cherbourg. The point is certainly a brave one for the economists, who will appeal to the folly thus palpably exemplified of nations urging each other forward in the ruinous race of public expenditure. The argument sounds very plausibly, but it is in plain truth impractical."

Lastly, during England's late disagreement with France and Russia on the subject of Greece, after the French Ambassador had left this country, and while the Russian Ambassador was ready to leave it also, the *Times*, without creating the smallest excitement throughout the country, informed its readers of two ominous facts, namely,—

1st. That during the said discussion France was *increasing* her number of seamen.

2nd. That as soon as the aforesaid discussion ended, they were *dismissed*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of late years, whenever differences have arisen between France and Great Britain, the former has *invariably* increased her preparations for war, while the latter has almost as invariably remained passive.

In the quotations, observations, and facts just concluded, we have clearly before our eyes,—

1st. Moral causes for an invasion of England by the French troops.

2nd. Arguments and threats of invasion.

3rd. Extensive preparations for invasion.

In 1805 a single speech from Mr. Fox on these three subjects electrified with patriotism the House of Commons, the Government, and the Crown, in the manner we have described.

In 1840 Admiral Bowles, M.P., late one of the Lords of the Admiralty, in very cautious but significant terms addressed the country as follows:—

“Although I am no alarmist, and very generally deprecate any hostile feeling towards France, I ought not to conceal this important fact, that the government of that country is preparing with all possible rapidity, and regardless of expense, for great naval operations: that all their establishments and arsenals (more especially those which relate to steam-vessels) are on the largest and most formidable scale, and no reasonable doubt can be entertained that all these preparations are well calculated to realize the aspirations and hopes of a strong party, who look eagerly forward to a favourable opportunity for avenging past defeats by some sudden and disgraceful blow.”

On the 9th of January, 1847, the Duke of Wellington, shortly after a severe illness, addressed to Major-General Sir John Burgoyne a letter, which was published throughout Europe, and of which the following is an extract:—

“Strathfieldsaye, January 9, 1847.

“MY DEAR GENERAL,

“Some days have elapsed, indeed a fortnight has, since I received your note with a copy of your observations on the possible results of a war with France under our present system of military preparation.

“You are aware that I have for years been sensible of the alteration produced in maritime warfare and operations by the application of steam to the propelling of ships at sea. This discovery immediately exposed all parts of the coasts of these islands, which a vessel could approach at all, to be approached at all times of tide, and in all seasons, by vessels so propelled, by all quarters. We are in fact assailable, and at least liable to insult, and to have contributions levied upon us, on all parts of our coasts, that is, the coasts of these, including the Channel Islands, which till this time, from the period of the Norman conquest, have never been successfully invaded.

“I have in vain endeavoured to awaken the attention of different administrations to this state of things, as well known to our neighbours;—rivals in power, at least; former adversaries; and enemies, as it is, to ourselves.

“I hope that your paper may be attended by more success than my representations have been !

“I have above, in a few words, represented our danger.”

Old John o’ Gaunt, when he was breathing his last counsel to his king, remarked—

“ They say the tongues of dying men  
Enforce attention, like deep harmony .  
When words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain ;  
For they breathe truth, that breathe their words in pain.  
He that no more would say is listen’d more  
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose ;  
More are men’s ends mark’d, than their lives before.”

It appears, however, from his own statement, that the Duke of Wellington had TOTALLY FAILED to raise, either in the hearts or minds of the ministers of various administrations, the slightest attention to his repeated warning,—nay, by his peers he has not even been interrogated on the subject ! in fact, it has become odious as well as unpopular ; and we are, therefore, justified in concluding that, while the “ *morale* ” or “ *amor sceleratus habendi* ” of the French nation, whatever it may be worth, has materially *increased* since the years 1803, 4, and 5 the morale or defensive spirit of the British nation has—to say the least—materially DIMINISHED.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PHYSICAL FORCES OF  
FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

These forces are composed of three elements, namely, steam, military, and naval powers, each of which we shall consider separately.

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ROUGH SKETCH SHOWING THE DR. AND CR. RESULTS  
OF THE POWER OF STEAM IN ACCOUNT WITH GREAT  
BRITAIN.

As in war every victory, great or small, important or unimportant, has its list of casualties, so every blessing which science beneficently confers upon mankind, proves, in some way or other, injurious to the power it supersedes ; and thus in both cases, amidst the loud joyful-cheers of the successful, are to be heard, beneath their feet, the low moans and groans of the dying.

The invention of steam power strikingly illustrates this fact, for, while millions of our fellow-creatures are rapturously hailing its progress, how many thousands of poor emaciated people, incarcerated at this moment in our workhouses,

are, to say the least, mourning over “the new-fangled fire-engine” that has thrown them out of work!

Such being the state of the case, it is evident that it would not be just for us to consider to what extent the naval and military defences of England may have been *injured* by the use of steam, without also as fairly weighing the amount of *benefit* the empire has derived from the invention. The balance alone will show the true state of the account.

As the applications of steam power are nearly co-extensive with the manufacturing industry of Great Britain, it will be necessary to estimate, as far as is practicable, the value of the increased consumption and diminished prices which visibly as well as invisibly give luxury and comfort to the community. For instance, of the 60,000,000*l.* of British goods annually exported, nearly two-thirds consist of the staple manufactures of wool, cotton, flax, and silk. From them, therefore, we shall be enabled to obtain some important data.

In these four fictile manufactures there are employed conjointly upwards of 500,000 persons,

aided by the steam power of 100,000 horses, by whose assistance each of these 500,000 persons is enabled to do the work of at least *eleven*. Five workers assisted by one steam-horse will, therefore, do the work of 55 men, or in other words, while five men are doing their own work, their steam-horses are doing for them the work of 50 men more.

This being *the fact*, we will now proceed to compare the cost of each of these 50 steam men with that of each of their five fellow-workmen of flesh and blood.

The 500,000 human labourers receive in wages (at the rate of 25*l.* each) 12,500,000*l.* per annum, and if the 100,000 steam horses, or their equivalent 5,000,000 steam men, were to be paid at the same rate, *their* wages would amount to 125,000,000*l.*, instead of which they cost only 2,500,000*l.*, to which there must be added 12,500,000*l.* for machinery, buildings, &c., forming altogether the sum of fifteen millions as the extreme cost of five millions of steam men and all their tools, instead of one hundred and twenty-five millions!

But this saving of one hundred and ten millions effected by employing cheap steam men whose wages amount only to  $2\frac{1}{4}d.$  per day, instead of expensive human workmen whose wages at the rate of  $25l.$  per annum amount to  $1s. 7\frac{1}{2}d.$  per day, is not paid over to the owners of the steam horses, but, on the contrary, it goes mainly into the pockets, or rather it is broadcast upon the back, of every consumer, who—although he is probably ignorant of the services which steam has rendered to him—pays in the aggregate for the manufacture of his calicoes, linens, silks, and woollen clothes, not above one sixth part of the prices that he must have paid for them had they been manufactured by costly human hands alone.

Again, the application of steam to raising coal cheapens it, first, by diminishing the expense of lifting it from moderate depths, and it then cheapens it again by the greatly increased quantity which its gigantic power has without metaphor dragged to daylight and to the market from greater depths.

The quantity of coal raised for transport by sea is about ten millions of tons per annum ; about



an equal quantity passes by railways and canals ; besides which a large amount is used in our manufacturing districts without any considerable transit by either means. Altogether 25,000,000 of tons is a probable estimate of the quantity of coal raised per annum from a general depth which we underrate by stating at 600 feet ; and as 2000 tons per annum is a liberal allowance of work for every steam horse-power, there must be required 12,500 horses to raise this coal, and as many more to take off the water, making a total of steam-engine power of 25,000 horses employed in getting coal.

Now, if these 25,000 horses were living ones, they would for maintenance and attendance not cost less than 25*l.* each, or 625,000*l.* per annum ; whereas steam-engines of the same power may be worked at 2*l.* each, or 50,000*l.* a year ; and thus, making a fair allowance for wear and tear, we may reasonably estimate the saving effected in mechanical power *alone* at half a million.

And yet this is a very inadequate estimate of the benefit annually derived from the application

of steam-engines to raising our coals; for, as the greater part of the most productive collieries are altogether unworkable by human power alone, it is not too much to say that we are indebted to the steam-engine for five millions' worth of coal which could not otherwise be obtained.

Again, our mercantile steam fleet, which cannot be valued at less than four millions, is propelled by a power of upwards of 30,000 steam horses, each of which, by burning from seven to ten pounds of coal, propels on an average about four tons weight ten miles an hour, the whole cost, including every expense for this work, being one-seventh of a penny per ton per mile!

Although it is to a certain degree foreign to our argument, we must here observe that in ordinary times and in full work, the establishments of private builders of steam-engines and ships *on the Thames alone* could, for the purposes of war, produce, within less than twelve months from the date of an order so to do, *twenty* first-class steam-vessels of 400 horses power each, armed, and ready for sea; and twenty more in every succeeding period of six months.

The builders and engineers of the Clyde could produce *twelve* in the same time ; those of the Mersey probably six ; and other ports six more. Thus in twelve months' notice, IF WE BUT HAD IT, our ordinary existing establishments could turn out an armed fleet of nearly fifty paddlewheel steamers in a year ; the cost of which might be about 3,000,000*l.* sterling ! Stimulated however by high prices, the manufacturers of marine engines could, in case of emergency, summon to their aid, in the manufacture of the various parts of their machines, the vast powers of other establishments now employed in manufacturing other descriptions of machinery, and in this way they would be able greatly to increase, perhaps to *double*, the amount we have stated. The whole of the marine engine manufacturers in *France* could perhaps construct about one-half the amount of the Thames alone ; indeed this is a liberal estimate. Her other available manufactures of machinery are certainly less than one-tenth part of England.

As regards our railways, although it is of course scarcely feasible to make comparative

estimates of a mode of conveyance which to all other mechanical power is impossible, the advantages of steam-engine power over living horse power are very apparent. For example, there are in England above 2,500 locomotive engines, each of which is capable of drawing 50 tons 100 miles a day, at the rate of 30 miles an hour along an ordinary line of railway, at a cost of one shilling a mile. Now five tons carried along a road 100 miles, at the rate of ten miles an hour, is more than a day's work for 40 horses, and certainly could not be done at less than one shilling per mile. The locomotive engine therefore does the work of 400 horses at triple the speed and at one-tenth part of the cost; in fact, each engine, which at horses' wages would have earned 50*l.*, feels itself well paid at 5*l.*

Of course the capital invested in the railway is one of the agents employed in effecting this saving, but it must also be admitted that, at the rates above mentioned, one thousand locomotives running regularly would in a year, and at a cost of a million and a half, not only perform work which horses could not do for fifteen millions,

but that without the steam locomotive the modern railway would be *unworkable*. Indeed it is quite evident that, besides the enormous savings to the public, our railways, although but lately termed “prodigies and impossibilities,” have benefited society to an extent which it is utterly impossible to estimate in cash values.

Throughout our mining districts, tall chimneys, gigantic bobs or levers slowly rising or falling, and slender columns of white steam, are indices everywhere to be seen of that ethereal power by which ores of tin, copper, iron, or lead are raised and stamped, while rivers of water are, at an equally trifling cost, lifted from the lodes. In short, in all parts of the British Empire—above ground as well as below—crossing our lakes—ascending and descending our rivers—and traversing every ocean on the surface of the globe, does the power of steam not only cheapen for us every article we require, but, by reducing the cost of a horse’s labour to 2*l.* a year (1½*d.* per day), and a man’s labour to 2½*d.* per day, it enables us successfully to sell our manufactures in countries with which it would otherwise

have been utterly impracticable for us to compete.

Lastly, steam is the propagator of religion and the patron of literature.

At the University Printing-office at Oxford there were in the year 1848 printed by steam—

271,500 Bibles

254,000 Testaments.

287,750 Prayer-Books.

Of the above, hundreds of thousands (at prices reduced by steam as follows: Bibles, 6*d.*; Testaments, 2*d.*; Prayer-Books, 2½*d.*) have, by the very power that printed them, been despatched to bless the inhabitants of the remotest countries.

In like manner the paper for the *Times* newspaper is made by steam; it is printed by steam; and by the same power—while we are now writing—it is whirling along railways to be transmitted by steamers to every region of the globe!

The enormous benefit, comfort, and luxury which Great Britain has amassed, and is still amassing, by the power of steam, having been very faintly detailed, we must now proceed,

with equal fairness, to consider, or rather conjecture, what, *per contra*, will be the result of the invention as regards the defences of the United Kingdom.

Now the defences of England could not by our Inspector-General of Fortifications, aided by the whole corps of Royal Engineers, be more correctly, or half so beautifully, defined as they have been by Shakspeare:—

“This fortress, built by Nature for herself,  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happy lands.

. . . . .

England, bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of watery Neptune.”

In fact, while the coasts and boundaries of other countries, at enormous cost, have been protected at intervals—in many places far and wide between—by towers, batteries, and fortresses, England has, by the inexpensive agency

of salt water, been protected in the simple manner above described.

This protection, however, and these defences, by a power unknown to Shakspeare—the magic power of steam—have, as we are about to explain, been materially impaired;—nay, it may truly be said they have been almost annihilated.

To our unmilitary readers we may observe that, in order to estimate the strength of a fortress on shore, it is necessary to measure the breadth and depth of its ditch, and the height of its rampart. But what has rendered Nature's defence of England hitherto impregnable is, that prior to the invention alluded to it has been beyond the genius of Napoleon, or of any human being, to estimate the defensive breadth of the British Channel! We will explain our meaning by figures and facts.

It appears from the following extract from a very able statement which has been expressly drawn up for us by the veteran harbour-master at Ramsgate from his "own journals," that during last year (1849), throughout which there was what is termed by him "average



weather," there were no less than 125 days on which, in the time of Napoleon, the invasion of England would have been *impossible*.

"Ordinary sailing-vessels would have deemed it impracticable or unsafe to endeavour to cross the narrowest portion of the British Channel from France to England or from England to France, in consequence of calm or light winds, storms, contrary winds, or fogs, as follows :—

	Days.
Calms or light winds . . . . .	50
Stormy weather . . . . .	20
Contrary winds . . . . .	50
Dense fogs . . . . .	5

"Schooners and other fore-and-aft rigged vessels, selected for despatch, being of a class easily acted upon by light airs or wind, would reduce the fifty days to twenty; and, as they readily beat off a lee-shore, they would reduce the effect of stormy weather from twenty days to ten; and as to contrary winds, a distance of twenty miles is trifling to a fast-sailing vessel. Such vessels also have a great auxiliary in the tides; for, either on one tack or the other, they will get the tide under their lee bow, chucking them to windward towards the desired ports." . . . .

"But there is a fact worth observing, on approaching either coast, which requires to be guarded against in sailing-vessels. It is the tendency of the wind to draw *off from* the shore as you approach it—consequent (I imagine) upon the radiation in atmospheric

influence from the land, which, pressing upon the sea-breeze, pushes its column aside and causes it to diverge two or three points from its natural course. Thus far, in a national point of view, the countries appear to me to be on pretty equal terms; and we of the old school know that their privateers cut a tolerable caper in the Channel, which we assumed to be *ours*, during the last war."

Now, from the above data, it is evident that in the days of Nelson a man might as well have endeavoured, from the given longitude and latitude of a ship far away at sea, to have determined the captain's age, as from any data that could then have been given to him to have presumed to declare what would be the defensive breadth of the British Channel that day three months, or even on that day week. When the sea was smooth, and when wind and tide were favourable, the distance was undeniably exactly twenty-two miles. During a calm it became a glassy surface as immeasurable as infinite space. During storms it was converted into mountains as impracticable to cross as the Andes in winter. During foul winds its breadth became either immeasurably great, or of

a distance varying every hour with the most fickle element in nature, acting in combination with the tide, which, it is well known, like a captain pacing the deck, or like the pendulum of a clock, is everlastingly going backwards and forwards. Again, even during light and *favourable* airs the distance could not always be accurately determined, inasmuch as on approaching the goal it was liable to be influenced by the protective propensity of an antagonist wind to blow, or, as the worthy harbour-master expresses it, to “*draw off the shore.*” Lastly, although passable, the passage was occasionally totally obscured by a dense fog.

Now let us for a moment practically test the value of this ancient defence of England, which may easily be explained as follows:—In besieging a fortress on shore, it is customary for the commanding engineer to report to the general commanding in chief to what height the breaching batteries have reduced the escarp, and consequently at what period the assault may reasonably be effected. But we ask, what would the Duke of Wellington have said if his

engineer had reported to him as follows:—  
“The scarp being at this moment only twelve feet high, it could readily be surmounted by scaling-ladders. It is my duty, however, to inform you, that by the time the troops CAN GET to it, it may, for aught I can warrant, be a hundred yards high, or any height you like to name between that and its present state; besides which, though the men may be close to it, they will perhaps not be able to *see* it.” Under such a report, what orders could possibly be given? what arrangements could possibly be made for the attack? To what conclusion could the Duke arrive, but to say to his engineer, “By —, if what you state is correct, the place is IMPREGNABLE!” and thus in the days of Nelson the combined forces of winds, waves, tides, and fogs rendered *old* England almost impregnable.

The power of steam, however, has, no doubt, so far levelled the works of our fortress, that it has converted what Napoleon, as on the heights of Ambleteuse he gnashed his teeth at it, called “THE DITCH OF ENGLAND,” to an esplanade

from eight to twelve leagues broad, clear of buildings, but which, with a very few exceptions, can, almost with the regularity of a railway time-table, be crossed by steamers by day or by night throughout the year. But it has been shown that this new power, besides operating in the British Channel, is omnipresent as well as omnipotent over the whole aqueous surface of the globe; and as, instead of "tide and winds waiting for no man," no man now waits for them, it follows that combinations at a point five thousand miles off,—such as Napoleon devised for the invasion of England and for the capture of London, but which, thanks to the uncertainties we have described, he found to be impracticable,—could now be as securely calculated upon as the arrival of the steamer "Hindustan" from India at Southampton, or of the arrival at 10.30 P.M. of the Edinburgh Express train at Euston station.

"*What then!*" it will, probably, be exclaimed, "*are we doomed, after all, to be ruined by the invention of steam? Has Science betrayed us? Under the hypocritical pretence of cheapening our*

*calicoes, has she put into the hands of mankind a loaded engine, the trigger of which the French nation has only to pull to blow our brains out?"* To such language we have pleasure in replying, that as regards that blessing which the Almighty Power has conferred upon mankind, the balance of the account-current is infinitely in favour of the British people.

If the sinews of war be money—and who will deny that fact?—a small tithe of the wealth which steam has created, and is still creating for us, will afford us ample protection. All that is necessary is, that—as in all cases of momentary danger—the good sense of the nation should determine, first of all, to subdue its feelings either of over-confidence or of unnecessary alarm, and then calmly to devise such amount of protection as altered circumstances shall have rendered necessary.

WE HAVE LOST OUR OUTWORKS, or rather, as we have more correctly stated it, they have been levelled by science into an extensive esplanade. With a rival power within twenty-two miles of us, and with upwards of four hundred thousand bayonets—which without a moment's warning

may become hostile—glistening before our eyes, we have NO alternative but at once to remedy our loss by the simple military prescription of *strengthening our citadel*, which, the instant we have the will, we have—as is well known to all military men—the power of rendering as impregnable as the extended works we have lost.—In six words:

WE MUST HAVE A STANDING ARMY.

But our statesmen of all parties declare, “*Oh, THAT is impossible ! The nation won’t hear of it, —they have been born with a prejudice against it, which—nullis medicabilis herbis—is incurable. We don’t dare even to THINK of it, much less PROPOSE it. The country would rise up in arms against it. The nation would sooner die than submit to it !*”

We shall shortly have to take a *military* review of these objections ; but as in the present chapter we are merely endeavouring, as auditors, to draw out “a Dr. and Cr. statement of the results of the invention of steam in account with Great Britain,” we will merely reply, that our

proposal is not, as is usual in surgery, to require the patient to submit to a painful operation to save his life; but it is, to show in figures that, inasmuch as it is usual as well as profitable for every landlord or tenant out of the profits of his farm to thatch his stacks in order to keep the rain off; and maintain his fences in order to prevent the sheep, bullocks, and pigs belonging to his neighbour from trespassing on his lands and eating his crops; so it would be only consistent with such prudence and such practices for the nation most cheerfully to appropriate, out of every million it gains by steam, a small percentage for the purpose of repairing the breach which the new power has made in our defences, and through which, *if it be not repaired*, there will sooner or later most surely enter—not rain,—not cows,—not sheep,—not inquisitive pigs, nor even pigglings, but say two hundred thousand young enthusiastic French soldiers waving banners in our pure English air, on which are mentally inscribed three words—we almost shudder as we transcribe them—

“BOOTY, BEAUTY, and REVENGE!”



Our immortal poet might then but too truly have exclaimed,—

“THAT ENGLAND THAT WAS WONT TO CONQUER OTHERS  
HATH MADE A SHAMEFUL CONQUEST OF ITSELF!”

As, however, we are at present straitly confined to figures, we willingly revert to them. It is very powerfully urged by our economists, “*Why incur a certain expense for an uncertain contingency? Perhaps after all the French won’t come!*” We repeat the words, “*Perhaps they won’t!*” as heartily and as readily as we would say to any one of our readers, while seated at his or her fireside, “Perhaps your house won’t be burned to-night!” but it appears by the following statements from official and private authorities that in the aggregate the British nation are much too wise and too prudent to be satisfied with such security.

1849.—1. Duty on Fire Insurance, average 3s. per cent.

Collected in England	.	.	£1,001,470
Scotland	.	.	64,393
Ireland	.	.	50,947
			<hr/>
			£1,116,810

The sum that would be covered  
by this amount of duty is . . . £744,540,100<sup>1</sup>

2. Life Insurance:—

Approximate aggregate of the sum insured, computed from the various returns of stamps on life policies . . . . .	}	14,488,910
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3. Marine Insurance:—

Calculated on the basis that the average rates of premium in 1849 were those charged by the Mutual Indemnity Company: the total amount of duty re- ceived by Government in that year being 158,749 <i>l</i> . The above calculation does not in- clude the very large insurances effected on British account in India, America, Hamburgh, and other places abroad . . .	}	192,966,548
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Total . . . . £951,995 558

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<sup>1</sup> The ordinary rate of premium is 1*s.* 6*d* per 100*l.*, or one-half the rate of duty. If all risks were of the ordinary kind, the sum paid for insurance would therefore be 558,405*l.*; but a portion, which cannot be defined, are considered hazardous or doubly-hazardous, and pay much higher rates of premium—hazardous, 3*s* per 100*l.*; doubly-hazardous, 5*s.* and upwards—according to the nature of the risk. Farming stock is exempt from duty. The sum insured on it, 58,292,209*l.*, would, at the ordinary rate of premium, pay 43,719*l.*

The precautionary measures adopted by the poorer classes are evinced as follows :—

The amount of money in the Savings Banks, 20th November, 1848, was—

	£
England . . . . .	24,985,730
Wales . . . . .	692,495
Scotland . . . . .	1,081,110
Ireland . . . . .	1,355,801
	<hr/>
	28,115,136
Friendly Societies . . . . .	2,003,635
	<hr/>
	£30,118,771

From all these figures it may surely not unreasonably be inferred that, under Providence, the enormous wealth and possessions of the British Empire are the reward of that extraordinary caution, precaution, and foresight, by which all classes of people,—ship-owners, house-owners, owners of every description of property, down to the honest labourer who has nothing to protect but the weekly stipend earned by the sweat of his brow,—have apparently combined together in the custom of each giving a percentage of his possessions to save the remainder from accidental loss; and if this be the deliberate will and estab-

lished habit of the nation, is it consistent for it to refuse to prescribe for the safety of THE WHOLE that which is universally admitted to be salutary for all its *parts*? For instance, is it reasonable for a man to say, “ I am insured by ‘ *The Accidental Death Insurance Company* ’ from violence or accident of every description. I have insured my dear wife and daughters, by ‘ *The Railway Assurance Company, against loss of life or other PERSONAL injury arising from railway accidents.* Bankers : Messrs. Charles Hopkinson & Co., Regent-street ; Secretary, W. W. Williams, Esq. One payment to cover an assurance for the whole life.

	£.	s.
‘ For every policy of 2000l. . . .	4	4
‘ Ditto ditto 1000l. . . .	2	2’

And yet I deliberately refuse to insure either myself, my faithful wife, or any one of my five blooming daughters from the merciless ravages of foreign soldiers? nay, I moreover won’t even allow Science to apportion out of HER earnings for me one farthing in the pound to insure us all seven most effectually from the smallest possi-

bility of such a calamity! No; I'll spend the *whole* of my steam earnings; that is to say, I will, during every day of my life, enjoy cheap cotton, cheap silk, cheap linen, and cheap woollen clothes. I will warm myself in the evening at a cheap fire; I will sleep at night between cheap sheets and cheap blankets; I will travel 40 miles an hour at a cheap rate; I will read a cheap newspaper; say my prayers out of a cheap Bible—all cheapened by steam: but if I am called upon to contribute to repair the only little injury which this blessed beneficent power has created — an injury to the defences of my country which at any hour may deprive me and my family of our property, our lives, and our honour, I deliberately reply, 'I know nothing about *your new inventions*. I have inherited a good OLD English hatred to a standing army; the thing, I tell ye, is *unconstitutional*; and besides this, I can't and won't afford it!'" Q. E. D.

Without arguing this point, and without presuming to dictate in what way a great nation ought to spend the balance of its steam account, we shall now leave the ledger for other subjects.

## CHAPTER IV.

ON THE COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF THE NAVAL FORCES  
OF FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN.

The wealth of Great Britain—Creates the power of maintaining a larger fleet than any other nation on the globe—Evidence showing that the exercise of this power has been neglected—Injudicious expenditure—Evident cause thereof—The confidence reposed in the Navy based on the notion that it is always ready at hand to prevent invasion—Obvious fallacy of this opinion—The Colonial Empire of Great Britain requires the protection of Naval power—The impossibility of its pervading the ocean and protecting the British Channel at the same time—Popular illustration of this truth—Reflections

As the Duke of Wellington, in his letter to Major-General Sir J. Burgoyne, says, “ *We have no defence, or hope or chance of defence, excepting in our fleet;*” and as the nation relies very confidently on its navy for protection, the above comparison is evidently one of vital importance.

The construction and maintenance of a man-

of-war are so costly, that, although the free will of almost any people may, for a short time, decree the building of ships, it is undeniable that in such a pecuniary contest the nation that has the longest purse must eventually have the largest navy. Not only, therefore, does the enormous wealth of Great Britain ensure to it the *power* of manufacturing and of maintaining a larger fleet than that of any other nation on the globe, but the indigenous productions of the United Kingdom—coal, oak, and iron—readily afford the *means*.

The French declare, that as regards the construction of our present ships of war, we have neglected to exert either this power or these means.

“It must be said,” asserts a French writer in the *Journal des Débats*, “that in general our ships of the line are materially superior to the English ships in the excellence of their construction, the perfection of their armament, the solidity of their scantling, the number of guns they mount, and *the dimensions of the calibre* of their guns.”

The distinguished “Flag Officer,” whose admonitions have been published by Admiral

Bowles, late one of the Lords of the Admiralty, declares,—

“Our present force consists chiefly of those objectionable classes I have already so severely censured, and being consequently, wherever they are found, notoriously inferior to the enemy’s ships in that part of the world, will in all probability be sought and attacked with all the confidence naturally resulting from the consciousness of superiority; and even if they escape capture, will be reduced to the humiliating necessity of a purely defensive system, until reinforcements arrive, while our merchant-ships will fall an easy prey to privateers, &c. The 28-gun frigates and 10-gun brigs must inevitably be overpowered by any vessel of war (nominally of their own class) to which they may be opposed, and with which they cannot honourably decline an engagement; but what will be the feelings of the officers and men, whose blood and honour will have been thus wantonly sacrificed, and of their countrymen at large, when the light of truth breaks in upon the nation? When it is seen that enormous sums have been lavished on injudicious and inadequate preparations, and that after *seventy millions* expended in putting our navy into what was considered a perfect state of equipment, we have to throw aside the greatest part of our smaller ships, and again recommence operations;—will not the burst of public indignation be loud and tremendous, and will it be admitted as a sufficient vindication to allege that, in many particulars, the British Navy was



far more inferior at the commencement of former hostilities?"

Captain the Hon. E. Plunkett, R.N., has published opinions similar to the above, and Admiral Sir Charles Napier's letters on the defects of the wooden walls of Old England appear to adduce unanswerable evidence in corroboration of the same.

With respect to our *iron* navy, the result is so well known, that a very few words will suffice.

In July last, by repeated experiments from the well-directed fire of the 'Excellent' at a target, 450 yards distant, of wrought-iron of the exact construction and thickness necessary for iron war-steamers, it was ascertained beyond all doubt, that shot,—besides making large holes, which do not, as in wood, collapse,—tear the plates and start the surrounding rivets so fearfully, that a single blow between wind and water would probably at once drive a ship's company from their quarters to their pumps. In addition to this calamity, it was most unexpectedly ascertained, that even 68-pound solid

*cast iron* shot, on striking plates of *wrought iron* only five-eighths of an inch thick, shiver into innumerable small pieces, and accordingly, besides piercing the side of the steamer in the destructive manner described, create between decks the havoc of shells! Moreover, if the iron plates be lined with wood, there are added nearly a similar amount of splinters; and as these experiments, on a target about fifteen feet square, and of a value of above five pounds, indisputably proved that a wrought iron vessel is unfit for action, it was very wisely determined by the Admiralty that the project should be condemned,—and it was condemned accordingly.

But the British nation—so often accused of being in its preparations for war “penny wise and pound foolish”—had previously *expended* about a million of money in making wrought iron steamers of from 1000 to 2000 tons burden; and, as soon as they were finished, it then without reluctance spent five pounds more in scientifically ascertaining, by the simplest of all possible experiments, that its new-born

iron fleet of war-steamers were utterly unfit for war!

Lastly, it is well known to and has been lamented by every experienced officer in our Navy, that, although in the time of Nelson the oceans were not only swept clean of French vessels but were dotted with British sail, yet, at the conclusion of the war, naval architecture was so much better understood and practised in French dockyards than in British electioneering ones, that the construction and form of several men-of-war of the blockaded country became actually the models of the blockaders!

But how can all this possibly be otherwise so long as the English people persist in their national whim of invariably selecting as the head of their Admiralty any individual of high rank, polished manners, great powers of oratory, and undeniable ability, *provided always* he can clearly prove to them that he is totally ignorant of naval affairs? Indeed, so immoveable are they on this point, that, as soon as they consider he has had time enough to learn the rudiments of the art, he is usually exchanged for ZERO!

Since the days of Nebuchadnezzar there surely has never been set up an image for official worship of a less intellectual invention. No reasonable member of our community would intrust the repair of his watch to a surgeon, his clock to a chemist, his coffee-mill to a dentist—no man would ever allow a farrier to bleed his wife ; and yet the nation insists on committing to a nobleman or gentleman of undoubted character, but of *no nautical experience*, the most complicated piece of mechanism that can possibly be imagined, on the proper repair and maintenance of which the whole community declare that their lives, property, and political existence depend !

Although the facts we have stated are somewhat appalling, yet, as we do not require to use them, we are willing to give to them no weight whatever ; nay, to admit that in point of construction British men-of-war are equal, or, if our readers would at all prefer it, are *superior* to those of the French.

We are also willing to admit—as, indeed, we are most desirous to believe—that they are as fully manned with experienced gunners as the

French ; in short, that the nation has grounds for believing that, either in general actions or in duels, the English Navy is competent in any part of the globe to beat the French. We have therefore now only to consider what would be the relative strength of these two Naval Powers with respect to an invasion of England by a French army.

If France and Great Britain in point of commerce and colonies were upon equal terms ; and if, moreover, the former Power would by treaty undertake—in case of any political dispute—invariably to give to the latter public notice, that, unless its demands should be conceded within, say six months, war and invasion should be the result ; *in that case* there would be reason for believing that, on the battle-ground of the British Channel, the assembled English fleet would destroy their antagonist, and thereby effectually prevent its conveying to England a French army. We will offer no doubts on this subject ; on the contrary, we will readily admit, that, as under the circumstances we have stated, and under the protection of its Navy, the nation

would be perfectly safe, it would be unnecessary — say even unjustifiable — to expend money on “a standing army” for the citadel, when the outworks alone were sufficient for defence.

But France has NOT with Great Britain entered into the imagined treaty, NOR are the two countries in point of colonies and commerce upon equal grounds. And yet, although hypothesis and superstructure must consequently both fall to the ground, the nation still sleeps on, enjoying the most delightful dream of the power of its navy to repel invasion; and yet it is melancholy to think how easy it is logically and mathematically to expose this delusion.

As it is an axiom in philosophy that two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time, so it is equally indisputable that the English fleet cannot be scattered over the whole aqueous surface of the globe and be in the British Channel at the same time. They can do either, but not BOTH.

By the laws of nature every substance is, like gold leaf, weakened in proportion as it is extended.

The dew that in an October morning covers Great Britain would, if collected, form an acre of water nine feet deep. Again: a garrison of 10,000 men, in a fortress of a size adapted to their numbers, can easily resist for, say three months, 50,000. And yet if these 50,000 soldiers were dotted round the circumference of Britain, a boat's crew could at any point defeat the individual they would have to contend against. In short, it is evident that the sentinel at "John o' Groat's" might call in vain for assistance to his comrade at "the Land's End."

Now Great Britain truly asserts that the sun never sets on her empire, and that it moreover is uninterruptedly shining on, and as it were blessing, the canvas of her merchant vessels. But the late Lieutenant Thomas Drummond, of the corps of Engineers, as truly asserted that "property has its DUTIES as well as its *rights*." It becomes necessary, therefore, that the property, the commerce, and the subjects of Great Britain should everywhere be protected; and accordingly, wherever we have colonies, in the vicinity of which, as in the West Indies, America, Medi-

terranean, &c. &c., the French have a squadron, it becomes necessary that we also should there have a squadron, which conjointly with the garrison of each colony forms its defensive force.

At foreign stations where we have no colonies, as in the Rio de la Plata, Brazil, or the Pacific, the same necessity for our maintaining a naval force is created by the mere fact that our rivals do so; indeed, in the French blockade of Mexico, in the Rio de la Plata, and especially at Tahiti, *experience* has shown that our flag is liable to insult and our commerce to vexatious interference, unless both be protected by a force equal to that of other powers.

Lastly. The protection which a British man-of-war is enabled in distant regions to afford to British subjects may be briefly exemplified by the following fact:—When the late Sir John Phillimore, in his way to England from Vera Cruz, in 1824, put into the Havannah, he received a letter informing him that several British subjects had been unjustly imprisoned for several weeks. He accordingly no sooner quietly demanded them, than the mere appearance of his



broadside released nine Englishmen from an unwholesome gaol in which they would soon have died.

For the foregoing reasons it is obvious, not only that it is necessary for the British fleet to be dispersed over the aqueous surface of the globe, leaving at home to protect Great Britain an average force of about three line-of-battle ships, fully manned—a few weeks ago there was actually only ONE—but that France can with the greatest ease, by stratagem, attract to any remote part of it an unusually strong force of British men-of-war. In this stratagem the Americans, without incurring the slightest risk of going to war with Great Britain, might assist, by a mere unfriendly demonstration, which would almost inevitably decoy to it a corresponding squadron of English vessels. Now, while this simple stratagem was in operation, or even without it, while the Navy of Great Britain, on its ordinary duties, was dispersed over the world, in what position would be the English nation without its citadel—A STANDING ARMY?

In the days of Nelson, in order to sweep the British Channel clean for invasion, it was deemed necessary for a French fleet secretly to assemble at a distance of 5000 miles. They were then, at the mercy of the wind—which never has had any mercy—to have sailed for Boulogne. When they got there, they and the invading flotilla were to have waited for another fair wind, and even when it arrived they would have had to start with a fearful knowledge that before they could cross the Channel it might become foul, or that, when within a few miles of the British shore, the whole fleet, men-of-war, praams, transports, and boats, might suddenly become water-logged by a calm, which would give ample time to their opponents to throw up field defences, &c. &c. &c., at the very points at which the expedition was to land.

But how does the case stand now? Why, exactly opposite to Portsmouth the French have, before our eyes, just completed at Cherbourg a capacious harbour armed to the teeth, in which at the present moment there are lying five line-of-battle ships, two frigates, and four war-

steamers, with room for seventy or eighty more, within which, in six words, *they can do as they like*. And after they shall have done so, what, we ask, is to prevent the French Government—that is to say, the French Army—under pretext of wrong or insult in any part of the world, from BEGINNING their negotiations by making it perilous for Great Britain even to take one step in her defence, namely, by suddenly anchoring their fleet at the Nore, with a demand for immediate satisfaction (whether due or not), coupled with an intimation that any naval preparations on the part of the British, such as preparing seamen, preparing line-of-battle ships in ordinary, &c., would be considered a refusal and a declaration of war? And as, under these circumstances, the naval defence of England would, as we have stated, consist, on an average, say of only three line-of-battle ships fully manned, and as it would require at least *six weeks* before the British people could obtain the assistance of their Mediterranean fleet, it is evident that, while the French navy ruled in the Channel, the French army would have

abundant time, by the power of steam, to invade England.

But because, since the days of Nelson, we have, mainly in consequence of the invention of steam, lost our outworks, it by no means follows that we have lost all: on the contrary, if our CITADEL should prove impregnable, the subtleties and stratagems we have imagined would be fruitless, for, while the French were concentrating their navy in the English Channel, our navy, in due time, would bombard their towns as severely as they could ours; in addition to which, they could seize upon their commercial navy, and in various ways punish them most severely; to say the least, the penalties of war would be equally distributed.

Let us, therefore, without being alarmed at having lost our outworks, now proceed to estimate the strength of our CITADEL.

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## CHAPTER V.

ON THE COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF THE MILITARY  
FORCES OF FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN.

Enormous amount of the French Army—British Army inadequate even to defend our Colonies—Duke of Wellington's opinion of the perilous condition of the nation—His opinion disregarded—Strange inconsistency—Distinguished qualifications and character of Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, the nation's Chief Engineer—Inconsistency in rejecting his professional opinion also—Words of warning from old Naval and Military Officers—Offered in vain.

A SINGLE glance at the annexed sketch will, we trust, be sufficient to induce many of our readers, of their own accord, to forgive an observation—in our first chapter—which they may have deemed somewhat offensive; namely, “*that there can scarcely exist in nature a more extraordinary contrast than between the preposterous length of the sword of France in proportion to that of its purse; and the tiny means which toothless Eng-*





*land possesses to protect even her home population and property from the horrors of invasion."*

The sketch explains so mutely the relative forces of the two nations, that it will probably appear unnecessary that we should disturb the serious meditations it engenders by a single remark. It is necessary, however, as a matter of business, which no feelings can be permitted to arrest, that we should proceed with our comparison.

The whole of the population of *France* capable of bearing arms has been so carefully organised, that, besides a standing army of 408,000 men admirably officered, disciplined, and equipped, and 500 guns, there exist, as has been stated, among the National Guards (two millions of whom have received arms), about 300 battalions of retired soldiers. It is evident therefore that France, without abandoning any of her fortresses, could not only despatch for the invasion of England 150,000 men, but if the whole of them were to be drowned in crossing, she could in less than a month despatch 150,000 more. Indeed the following few historical figures will very



briefly remind our readers of the extraordinary elasticity of the military resources of France:—

In the invasion of Russia the French lost—

	Men.
Killed in battle . . .	125,000
By cold and hunger . . .	132,000
Prisoners . . .	193,000
<hr/>	
Total . . .	450,000

And yet no sooner did Napoleon, leaving his army on the 5th of December, 1812, arrive at Paris on the 18th of December, than he immediately levied, under a conscription almost unanimously voted by the Senate, another army of 350,000 men, which enabled him to gain the battle of Lutzen! Again, on his sudden return to France from Elba, he was enabled in less than three months very powerfully to contend against the combined armies of Europe.

Now it becomes our painful duty to observe that the military force of “*Great Britain and the Channel Islands*,” as marked on our sketch—tiny as it is—represents not an amount of spare disposable power created by the nation to repel invasion, but merely that pittance neces-

sary, first, for Ireland, and, secondly, to relieve the different regiments after they have been sufficiently sickened and deteriorated by the various climates to which they have been subjected: indeed, to those acquainted with the subject, it is but too well known that the existing force of England is inadequate even to a proper defence of her vast colonial possessions! Without, however, continuing remarks which we are aware cannot but be unpalatable, and which may be declared to be indefinite, we will at once proceed to figures.

It appears by our printed Parliamentary Returns—very attentively studied by the military authorities of the great nations of Europe—that the number of regular troops in Great Britain and Ireland are as follows:—

IN GREAT BRITAIN AND CHANNEL ISLANDS:—

	Men.
Cavalry . . . . .	3,993
Infantry . . . . .	27,288
Engineers and Sappers . . .	1,080
Artillery . . . . .	5,482
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	37,843

## IN IRELAND :—

	Men.
Cavalry . . . .	2,988
Infantry . . . .	19,636
Artillery . . . .	1,381
	<hr/>
Total . . . .	24,005
	<hr/>

Grand total in Great Bri-  
tain, Channel Islands,  
and Ireland . . .

61,848

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Total number of Guns that could be fully  
horsed for field service . . . 40

The above figures include sick and non-effectives of all descriptions, besides that considerable proportion of the artillery who, for want of horses, would be unable to take the field : without, however, making *any* of these deductions, let us consider what proportion of this aggregate force in Great Britain, &c., of 61,848 men and 40 guns, could, with due regard to the protection of national property of immense cost and of vital importance, be spared to be despatched to the coast of the Channel to resist invasion.

“It is perfectly true,” says the Duke of Wellington in his letter to Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, “that as we stand at present, with our naval arsenals

and dockyards not half-garrisoned, 5000 men of all arms could not be put under arms, if required, for any service whatever, without leaving—standing without relief—all employed on any duty, not excepting even the guards over the palaces and the person of the sovereign!

“I calculate that a declaration of war should properly find our home garrisons of the strength as follows; particularly considering that one of the most common accusations against this country is, that the practice has been to commence reprisals at sea, simultaneously with a declaration of war, the order for the first of which must have been issued before the last can have been published

“We ought to be with garrisons as follows at the moment war is declared:—

“Channel Islands, besides the Militia					
of each, well organized, trained,					
and disciplined . . . . .					
				Men	
Plymouth	.	.	.	.	10,000
Milford Haven	.	.	.	.	5,000
Cork	.	.	.	.	10,000
Portsmouth	.	.	.	.	10,000
Dovor	.	.	.	.	10,000
Sheerness, Chatham, and the Thames	.	.	.	.	10,000

“I suppose that one-half of the whole regular force of the country would be stationed in Ireland, which half would give the garrison for Cork. The remainder must be supplied from the half of the whole force at home, stationed in Great Britain.

“The whole force employed at home in Great Britain and Ireland *would not afford a sufficient number of men for the mere occupation and defence, on the breaking out of war, of the works constructed for the defence of the dockyards and naval arsenals.*”

From the foregoing statement, it is evident that in the opinion of the Duke of Wellington the nation has neglected to provide within Great Britain, the Channel Islands, and Ireland,—we might almost say, within Europe,—more than five thousand men that could properly be applied for the purpose of defending the United Kingdom from invasion; indeed, it might be further stated, without fear of contradiction, that the nation, on chronic “*constitutional*” principles, has been so resolutely averse to maintaining in time of peace ANY ARMY AT ALL *for such purpose*, that no Minister, Whig or Tory, has lately even dared to propose it, or—as if it were treason—in any discussion in Parliament on Army Estimates even to “*imagine*” it; nay, as it has been stated, it has been impracticable for any Government in the present day to obtain troops enough adequately to defend the home

possessions of the empire: the natural consequences are as follows:—

“As we stand now,” says the Duke in his letter to Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, “and if it be true that the exertions of the fleet are not sufficient to provide for our defence, **WE ARE NOT SAFE FOR A WEEK AFTER THE DECLARATION OF WAR! . . . .**”

“I was aware that our magazines and arsenals were very inadequately supplied with ordnance and carriages, arms, stores of all denominations, and **AMMUNITION. . . . .**”

“You will see from what I have above written that I have contemplated the danger to which you have referred. *I have done so for years!* I have drawn to it the attention of different administrations at different times. . . . .

“I quite concur in all your views of the danger of our position, and of the magnitude of the stake at issue!”

Now even supposing in case of invasion it were to be determined to abandon the protection of our sovereign, of our arsenals, and the necessary guards and duties in the interior, to our aged pensioners, dockyard brigades, yeomanry, and police, and to leave in Ireland only *one-third* of the amount of troops at present deemed necessary for its safety;—the utmost force, including

all the Guards and troops of the line, the corps of sappers, and 2000 marines, that could by any means be possibly scraped together, would barely amount to 45,000 men.

#### REFLECTIONS.

From the three comparisons which we have just concluded, of the relative moral, naval, and military agencies of France and Great Britain, it but too clearly appears that since the threatened invasion of England by Napoleon in 1797, 1801, 2, and 3—

1. "*La morale*"—Anglicè, the desire for revenge—of the French army has materially increased, while, on the other hand, the inclination of the British people to defend themselves from invasion has—almost inversely with the increase of their wealth—diminished, until it has now become nearly extinct.

2. That while, in the *French* navy, the improvements in the art of gunnery,—the establishment of "compagnies permanentes" of practised

gunner-seamen,—the power of steam to tow vessels and boats of all descriptions across the British Channel during almost any weather, by day or by night,—and, lastly, the construction of a gigantic impregnable harbour of rendezvous at Cherbourg, capable of containing more than 90 sail of the line,—have removed the principal difficulties against which Napoleon had to contend; the *British* people have not yet devised any practical plan for manning the ships of war they have built; and that as the navy of England have colonies and commerce to defend all over the world, while the navy of France, about equal to it in force, have *no* such errant duties to perform, it is evident that by a sudden secret concentration of the French fleet on the old plan devised by Napoleon, or even by the power of the fleet anchored at this moment in the harbour of Cherbourg, a temporary command of the British Channel could easily be obtained.

3. That while the French army is now nearly as large, more efficient, and better appointed than it was in 1803, and while their "*morale*,"



or disposition for invasion and plunder, is more hostile than it then was, the British people, instead of patriotically congregating for self-defence, as they then did—an armed force, amounting to 130,000 regular troops, 80,000 armed militia, and 300,000 armed volunteers—have gradually, and almost in proportion to the increase of the danger that now awaits them, culpably reduced their army to a mere corps of relief for the remote colonial stations of the empire; and having moreover dismissed their militia, they could only now, by abandoning their sovereign, their dockyards, arsenals, &c., to the inefficient forces we have named, scrape together by every possible exertion somewhat less than 45,000 men to resist at various points the feigned and real invasions of a well-disciplined French army of say 150,000 men, guarded and protected by a fleet from Cherbourg of say 12 sail of the line, 12 frigates, 12 sloops, 12 war steamers, with an adequate further amount of steam power. Under these appalling circumstances and combinations, we submit that there can remain no doubt in the minds of our principal

naval and military authorities—especially among those who witnessed the manner in which, in 1801, 6000 British troops, embarking at once from ships many miles from the beach, landed in Egypt in spite of the French infantry, a numerous artillery, and of cavalry, who charged them as they jumped on shore—that there exist no professional reasons for doubting the practicability of a French invading army, of the amount mentioned, in the course of a few days EFFECTING A LANDING ON THE COAST OF ENGLAND !

In the next section we shall endeavour to define a few of the consequences of this catastrophe ; we cannot, however, even contemplate it without unburdening our mind of a few more reflections, in which,—in this moment of our adversity,—we believe many of our readers will be disposed to concur.

1. Why, we ask, have the Duke of Wellington's repeated prayers, supplications, admonitions, and warnings "to various Administrations," and through the press to the British people, been so utterly disregarded ? Without offering one word of adulation—we have personally no reason

to do so—we cannot but observe, that no problem in science, no theory, important or unimportant, has ever been more thoroughly investigated than the character of the Duke of Wellington by his fellow-countrymen.

During the spring and summer of his life, the attention of the British nation followed consecutively each movement of his career in India, Portugal, Spain, Denmark, the Low Countries, France, and latterly in the senate. In the autumn of his life the secret springs which had caused his principal military movements, as well as his diplomatic arrangements, were unveiled by the publication of despatches, letters, and notes, official as well as private, which without palliation or comment developed the reasons,—naked as they were born,—upon which he had acted, on the spur of the moment, in the various predicaments in which he had been placed. In the winter of his life, bent by age, but with faculties matured rather than impaired by time, it has been his well-known practice, almost at the striking of the clock, to appear in his place in the House of Lords, ready

not only to give any reasonable explanations that might be required of him, but to disclose his opinions and divulge his counsel on subjects of the highest importance. Every word he has uttered in public has been recorded; many of his private observations have been repeated; his answers to applications of every sort have usually appeared in print; even his "F. M." epigrammatic notes to tradesmen and others, almost as rapidly as they were written, have not only been published, but in one or two instances have actually been sold by auction. Wherever he walks, rides, or travels, he is observed; in short, there never has existed in any country a public servant whose conduct throughout his whole life has been more scrupulously watched, or whose sayings and doings have *by himself* been more guilelessly submitted to investigation. The result has been that monuments and inscriptions in various parts of London, of the United Kingdom, and throughout our colonial empire, testify the opinion entertained in his favour; and yet although in the Royal Palace, in both Houses of Parliament, at public meetings, and in private

society, every opportunity seems to be taken to express unbounded confidence in his military judgment, sagacity, experience, integrity, and simplicity of character, yet in our Legislature, in the Queen's Government, as well as throughout the country, there has for many years existed, and there still exists, an anomaly which foreigners observe with utter astonishment, and which History will not fail to record, viz., that his opinion of *the defenceless state of Great Britain* has, by statesmen, and by a nation who almost pride themselves on their total ignorance of the requirements of war, been utterly disregarded !

“ The honours,” says the *Times* of the 22nd of August last, “ that were lavished on the Swedish Nightingale at Liverpool, were attended with much the same pomp and ceremony as would have celebrated the departure of a crowned head.” The British people pay similar “ honours ” to the veteran defender of their country—with this difference, that when Jenny Lind opens her mouth to sing, they listen with mute attention ; but when the Duke of Wellington

tells them that their country is defenceless, they decline to listen, and walk off!

2. *Who, we ask, is Major-General Sir John Burgoyne?* and as our determination in commencing this volume was neither to flatter nor speak unkindly of any individual, we must refer our readers to the following answer from “Hart’s Army List:”—

“He was present at the blockade of Malta and surrender of Valetta in 1800; campaign in Egypt in 1807, including the capture of Alexandria and attack of Rosetta, from 7th to 18th April, 1807; campaigns in the Peninsula, including the retreat to Corunna; passage of the Douro; affair of Salamonde (blew up Fort Conception in presence of the enemy, 21st July); battle of Busaco; retreat to and occupation of the Lines of Lisbon; siege of Badajoz, 2nd to 13th June, 1811; action of El Bodon; siege and storm of Ciudad Rodrigo; siege and storm of Badajoz, siege and capture of forts at Salamanca; battle of Salamanca; advance to Madrid and capture of the Retiro; siege of Burgos (wounded), 19th Sept. to 21st Oct. 1812; retreat from Burgos; advance of the army, and crossing of the Ebro; battle of Vittoria; siege and storming of San Sebastian (wounded), 15th July to 13th August; siege of Castle of San Sebastian, 31st August to 9th September, 1813; passage of Bidassoa; battles of the Nivelle and Nive; passage of the Adour; blockade

of Bayonne, and repulse of the sortie. Served afterwards in the American war, at the attack on the Lines before New Orleans, 8th January, 1815, and capture of Fort Bowyer."

He was with the army of occupation in France, and, from his professional attainments, was subsequently selected as "Head of the Board of Works of Ireland."

From the high opinion which the late General Sir George Murray—who, as well as the Duke of Wellington, had attentively watched his career—entertained of his military qualifications, experience, and cool judgment under fire, he was, over the heads of many senior officers, appointed by the former, when Master-General of the Ordnance, to be the General Commanding-in-Chief (professionally termed Inspector-General of Fortifications) of the corps of Royal Engineers, which appointment he now holds.

Now leaving the *prestige* of his well-known personal character and services completely out of the question, our readers will understand from the foregoing statement that Major-General Sir John Burgoyne is the individual who—rightly

or wrongly—has been selected *by the nation* to watch over the defences of the empire. “*You*,” said the Duke, in the letter referred to, “*are the confidential head of the principal department of the country.*” And how, we ask, has he performed this important duty? Why, by privately, unassumingly, but fearlessly explaining, over and over again, to the constituted authorities of the nation—by figures, facts, and arguments, which by the Duke of Wellington have been pronounced to be unanswerable—that *Great Britain is in an utterly defenceless state*; and that, unless the country will consent to provide for itself those means for protection which it has been and is his especial duty to enumerate, he gives the British people full warning that upon their heads—not upon his—must rest the awful consequences which, in any month, on any day in the week, may befall them and their country!

We appeal to every steady man of business in the kingdom, is it consistent for a great nation or even for a paltry individual to select and appoint an agent, and having done so, to treat him



with contemptuous neglect? If the Duke of Wellington be not fit to be Commander-in-chief of the British army, and if Major-General Sir John Burgoyne be incompetent to provide for the defences of the empire, the remedy is self-evident; and there can be no doubt that, without a moment's hesitation, it should be applied. On the other hand, if these public servants be deemed *competent* to the high responsible duties they have to perform, it is undeniably inconsistent to discard their united warnings, and to refuse to supply the exigencies they require!

With an army of 150,000 French soldiers safely landed on our shores, how keenly will YOUNG England recall to mind—*when it is too late* — the following affecting words of distinguished individuals in our navy and army!—

“I will conclude,” said Admiral Bowles, M.P., in his able pamphlet entitled ‘Suggestions for the better Manning of her Majesty’s Navy,’ published in 1840, “by repeating my earnest hope that by exciting the public attention to the errors and omissions which I have endeavoured to point out, I may in some small degree

contribute towards averting the dangers to which I confess I cannot look forward without apprehension, and that now, as well as at that time, the warning voice of an officer devotedly attached to his country's service may not be raised in vain."

"If in the course of these observations," said a well-known and experienced veteran, in concluding his pamphlet entitled 'Remarks on the Conduct of the Naval Administration of Great Britain since 1815, by a Flag Officer,' published in 1847, "I have misstated or mistaken facts bearing materially on my argument, I can only assure my readers that I have spared no pains to obtain the best and most accurate information, and from 1816 down to the present time I have been in such constant correspondence on this subject with my brother officers, both at home and abroad, and have so carefully rejected every circumstance of doubtful authenticity, that I do not think any of my important assertions can ever be seriously controverted.

"If I can succeed in my object, my declining years will not have been unprofitably employed; and I sometimes fondly hope that an old officer, who has witnessed the reverses as well as the successes of the service to which he is still devotedly attached, may not raise his warning voice in vain!"

"I AM BORDERING," said the Duke of Wellington in his letter to Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, K.C.B., dated Strathfieldsaye, 9th January, 1847,

“ON SEVENTY-SEVEN YEARS OF AGE, PASSED IN  
HONOUR!

“I HOPE THAT THE ALMIGHTY MAY PROTECT ME  
FROM BEING THE WITNESS OF THE TRAGEDY WHICH  
I CANNOT PERSUADE MY CONTEMPORARIES TO TAKE  
MEASURES TO AVERT.

“BELIEVE ME,

“EVER YOURS MOST SINCERELY,

“WELLINGTON.”



## PART IV.

ON THE CAPTURE OF LONDON BY A  
FRENCH ARMY.

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## CHAPTER 1.

## ON THE CAPTURE OF LONDON BY A FRENCH ARMY.

Descriptive sketch of the animated exertions of combined Naval and Military forces adequate for the defence of Great Britain — Lamentable contrast — Awful results — Two fearful alternatives considered — London declared indefensible — Advance of the French Army — Investment and Capture of London.

As soon as, by a few quivering motions of two little black needles, there had almost simultaneously appeared upon the white dials of all the electric telegraphs throughout the United Kingdom the three words, “ *Mene, tekel, uphar-sin !* ” — Anglicè, “ THEY ARE LANDING ! ” — what a variety of sensations would be created in the hearts of fundholders, landowners, placeholders, owners of property of every description, parents, women, children, and last, though not least, in the minds of that large, philanthropic portion of our community who, irrespectively of all sordid or

even political considerations, would most deeply deplore the approaching sacrifice of human life!

But however various these feelings might be, one sensation only would pervade the army and navy—namely, intense anxiety to get “*at 'em*.”

Now, if the people of Great Britain, the “gentlemen of England who live at home in ease,” in the hour of their prosperity, had, out of the exuberance of their enormous wealth, but cautiously insured their lives and property by the creation of a standing army and a standing navy, adequate, or nearly adequate, for their defence, the result would probably be as follows.

In our dockyards every ship of war in ordinary, like an ant-hill, would be seen swarming alive with labouring creatures, each busily employed for the public good. Masts, yards, and rigging, as if by magic, would assume their places; and as soon as the crews of disciplined, well-trained gunner seamen were mutely marched on board, one vessel after another would be reported “ready,” until, in an incredibly short time, England’s defensive fleet would have put to sea.

In like manner, in obedience to brief telegraphic orders, every barrack in Great Britain and Ireland would be either partially or totally deserted; and while every description of lumber remained behind, the troops, rammed, jammed, and crammed into first, second, third class carriages, bullock-waggon, ballast-waggon, and trucks, would in silent joy through the verdant fields of merry England be seen flying along every railway in the kingdom towards the metropolis. To whatever cheers might there await them there would be no corresponding reply. Intent upon one object, they would

“ Mark not the shouts, feel not the grasp  
Of gratulating hands ;”

but with due despatch would proceed on Her Majesty's Service towards that part of the coast at which the faithful black tiny fingers of the dial-plate had told them, “ *they are landing !*”

As 150,000 invaders could not, under any circumstances, be landed on the shores of England at once, but would probably be transported across the Channel at repeated intervals of six or eight



hours, it is evident that the precious moment for our united services to attack them would be when they were in the uncomfortable, awkward attitude of having one French leg on British sea and the other on British shore ; we mean, when only a portion of the invaders had landed. But whether half or all had disembarked, the two armies, when they first appeared in sight of each other, would strikingly exhibit the opposite characters of the contending combatants ; for while the French officers, with their usual bravery, were *exciting* in every possible way the enthusiasm of their troops, the great difficulty which the British officers would have to contend with would be to *restrain* their men.

What, under that Providence which has hitherto watched over us, would be the result, it would be presumptuous as well as impracticable for any human being to foretell, because the powers of the British soldier fighting on his own soil in defence of his sovereign, his countrymen, and his countrywomen, have never yet been developed. Two things, however, are quite certain ;

namely, that whenever the conflict began our men would *give* no quarter, and that their teeth would be much too firmly clenched to *ask* for it; and under such circumstances, and in so just a cause, without bravado there would be reasonable grounds for the people of England believing that the united services, by indomitable resolution, would save the great empire they had sworn to defend.

Having, as above, merely imagined what might possibly be the *fate* of a French invading army if England had previously provided herself with a combined naval and military standing force, adequate, or nearly so, for her defence; we have now to conjecture, or, alas! to consider, what might be the *fortune* of a French army in case the naval and military forces of Great Britain were, *as at present they ARE*, utterly inadequate for its defence.

In obedience to telegraphic orders there would no doubt be displayed in our dockyards the same busy scene we have described; and thus, by dint of almost superhuman exertions, the English people would rapidly fit out their men-

of-war in ordinary ; but as soon as they had done so, there would suddenly arise before their eyes, like a ghastly apparition, the fearful and humiliating fact, that all these costly compounds of hemp, iron, oak, tar, paint, ropes, canvas, guns, shot, fuses, live-shells, and gunpowder, were—for the especial purposes for which they had been devised—as utterly useless as if, with the view of frightening away the French, they had, at an enormous outlay, mixed together a great heap of chalk, stable-manure, salt-water, and potash. “ WHERE ARE THE GUNNER-SEAMEN ? ” and if echo alone answered—as most surely it would answer—*where* ? it may truly be asked, for what object had such vast lifeless masses and so much bustle been created ? Pressgangs might forcibly collect *men*, but, as has been shown in a former chapter, for the purpose of firing shot and *shells* against practised artillerymen they would be men of no use, or at all events of very little use !

Again, as regards the military force of Great Britain, there would, no doubt, be despatched through London, with the rapidity we have

described, the whole of the disposable troops and the few guns of the United Kingdom ; and if that effective force, on reaching the point of invasion, perceived anything approaching to a chance of success, there can exist no doubt that all due efforts would be made to destroy the enemy. If, however, it were found that the French fleet, which by Napoleon's old stratagem—or from the harbour of Cherbourg—had secured a temporary command of the Channel, were by the power of their broadsides protecting the landing of 150,000 men, of whom a large proportion were already occupying buildings they had loopholed, with other similar advantages, it would then become necessary by the gravest and coolest consideration to determine what course should be pursued.

If the British army were to be consulted—however inferior they might be in numbers and in guns—they would, we believe, almost unanimously petition to be allowed “ *to try what they could do.*” On this important question everybody is of course at liberty to state his opinion, but, as we have undertaken to discuss the subject,

we feel that it is especially incumbent, in a moment of so much danger, that we should not hesitate to express ours.

Considering the vast interests at stake, we submit, as an axiom, that the course to be pursued ought to be that which, when divested by History of all temporary feelings,—and especially of the rash feelings of soldiers,—would appear the most prudent that could have been devised under the desperate contingencies of the case.

Now, resting on this firm basis, we submit, as our humble but deliberate opinion, that if the utmost force that the nation could collect should, according to all military experience, prove to be theoretically utterly inadequate in respect to numbers, and especially in guns, to contend with the amount of French troops and artillery landed on the shores of England, the wisest course that could be adopted would be for the army and the sovereign to retire to some of our fortified dockyards, or to such other points as should be deemed advisable, and thus to abandon the palaces, the Houses of Parliament, the public buildings, the docks, the shipping, the Bank of

England, the press, bankers, merchants, and shopkeepers, in short, the wealth and property, the lives and persons of the inhabitants — men, women, and children—of London, TO THEIR FATE!

A rough sketch of what that fate would be we shall shortly have occasion to submit; in the mean while, the following are the reasons upon which our opinion has been grounded.

If our army of say 45,000 men, unpractised in great military evolutions, WITHOUT ANY RESERVE TO SUPPORT THEM, and with only a few guns, were—as in all military probability they would be—destroyed by a well-disciplined French army of 150,000 men, duly provided with artillery, the British nation would be ANNIHILATED. Whereas if London only were to be captured, the nation would be RUINED, but not *annihilated*. We will explain our meaning at greater length.

To the call of their sovereign, and to an army of 45,000 British soldiers thirsting for revenge, there would flock the stoutest and best hearts in the country; and although it would require considerably more than a year to equip, train, and

organize 40,000 or 50,000 additional troops, yet, in proportion as the loyal rallied round the standard of England, would the laws, the order, and the hopes of the nation be kept alive. Our enemy would clearly see the storm that was brewing, and, with this little black cloud to windward, he would probably deem it expedient not to be too immoderate in his demands.

Now, on the other hand, in what predicament would the British people be placed, if, contrary to the admonitions of military experience, their little army, in compliance with its petition, by attempting an impossibility had been destroyed? The answer is surely self-evident. The nation would be completely at the mercy of the French general. His demands, whatever they might be, must be complied with. Whatever sum he named we must pay—whatever colonies he demanded we must surrender—if he asked for the whole of our fleet in ordinary, we must give it to him; and, as it would be utterly impossible for the British people to raise, organize, equip, and officer an army sufficient to overpower him in less than two or three years, he might during that

period continue his occupation of London. But would this be all? alas! no. As soon as it was discovered that the sovereign authority of the law had ceased to exist—that there existed neither power nor means to levy poor-rates, and that the greater portion of the industrious classes were deprived of the means of earning their bread,—is it not *possible* that, out of the shafts of our collieries and of our mines, from our manufactories and from our fields, there might arise and congregate, bodies of men who, impelled by want, would begin first of all merely to help themselves to food, and, finding that easily obtained, to whatever else they chose? in which case the British nation, besides being *ruined*, would, as we have stated, be ANNIHILATED!

Having, as above, submitted to our readers the reasons upon which we formed the startling opinion we expressed, we will now abandon subjects of mere conjecture for those of more certain results.

If a small British force, such as we now possess, were on the shores of England miraculously to destroy an invading army of say 150,000 men,



the subject of our consideration would of course be at an end. If, on the other hand, the small British force were to retire, as we have imagined, it is evident that the French army, as soon as all its requisitions were landed, would, at its leisure—without harassing the troops or distressing the horses—commence its march upon London, through an agricultural garden, which we need not say would amply provide it not only with necessaries of existence, but with almost all the luxuries soldiers desire. At night the neighbouring towns and villages would become the dormitories of a portion of the troops, and the remainder would, in a less degree, enjoy themselves under the old-fashioned canopy of heaven.

As, however, we have no inclination to accompany them, we will leave them on their march to consider for a few moments an idea which, though not entertained by military men, is a subject of vague hope in the minds of many others.

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## ON THE POSSIBILITY OF DEFENDING LONDON.

An entrenched line of positions round London, requiring from their extent at least 100,000 armed men, would probably cost say two millions. Such a measure would not only be highly unpopular, but, as it is only applicable to a country essentially military, where hundreds of thousands of semi-disciplined men could be speedily collected, equipped, and armed, it would, after all, afford but little practical defence; certainly not so much as if its cost were to be expended in the organising of an efficient military force.

Taking London therefore as it is, we may observe in general terms, that, excepting in small operations, where the invaders are in small numbers, open towns (that is, not fortified) are *always* given up at once to the master in the field: for instance, the best people in civilized Europe for the defence of houses and towns are, perhaps, the Spaniards, whose towns, containing convents, massive premises, built of solid masonry, with flat roofs and covered balconies, afford

great advantage for defence, especially to a people prone to desultory warfare and to act together by general impulse; and yet the unfortified towns of Spain, such as Madrid, Seville, Salamanca, Valladolid, &c., although in all preparations were started and confident hopes of self-defence entertained, were *always* given up to any French army in force.

The boasted defence of Saragossa does not alter the rule, as, besides the remains of its ancient fortifications, it contained, in addition to an enthusiastic population within its walls, a regular organised army as numerous at least as the besiegers, although in quality they were certainly inferior to cope with them in the field. At Berlin, Moscow, and Vienna, where every man is more or less a soldier, no resistance was offered. Even at Paris, containing an army of well-equipped soldiers of the national guard, its defence was not attempted. And although in the late insurrectional street fighting, from the lukewarm attacks of the troops, who eventually joined the defenders, a temporary success was obtained, yet as soon as the army

became staunch, the "*barriers*" proved of little account.

But we are enabled to offer to our readers, if possible, higher authority on this subject than the statements we have just detailed.

In December, 1819, during the great riots in Scotland, the authorities of the city of Glasgow having applied for military protection, the commanding engineer, Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone, an officer of great experience, drew up a long statement detailing in what manner the town might be fortified against the expected attack. This paper was forwarded to the Duke of Wellington, who, being at that time Master-General of the Ordnance, had, of course, no authority to interfere with the operations of the troops. His opinion, nevertheless, was asked; and as at the moment in question we had occasion to read it, as also the plan of defence of Sir Howard Elphinstone, before it was submitted to the town council, we are enabled to lay before our readers not only the Duke's opinion on the defence of great cities, but on the little reliance for defence which the nation can reasonably

place on a body, however large, of undisciplined men.

(Copy.)

MEMORANDUM.

“ It is impossible to form a judgment of a plan of defence such as herein suggested, without having more local knowledge than can be obtained from any plan.

“ It appears to me to be judicious, however, as far as it goes, and might enable a small body of troops to hold the town for a short time.

“ Generally speaking, however, I should say that no town of the size of Glasgow could be held long by any body of troops not strong enough to meet its enemy in the field ; as the population of such a town would require such constant and daily supplies of provisions from the country, that the interruption of the communication with the country would so distress the town, that the strongest in the field must have the town.

“ From this foundation I should say, if you have in Glasgow, or in any town so circumstanced, 500 men of cavalry and infantry, and any cannon, I should recommend that the field should be taken against the insurgents, *be their numbers what they might*, rather than attempt to keep a footing in Glasgow, or in any such town, by measures such as are proposed in the enclosed papers, and which might as well be carried into execution by local troops, or even constables.

“ I mention this my opinion, as these papers are brought before me, and because it is wished to have the sanction of my opinion to these measures, and not

from any desire to dictate to others, whose duty it is to decide upon the spot.

(Signed) "W."

*"Mais, revenons à nos moutons !"*

The French army, after leisurely marching towards London through—say Maidstone, Tunbridge, and Chatham—its right resting on the Thames, would probably encamp on and in the neighbourhood of Blackheath, and here Woolwich, OUR MAIN AND ALMOST ONLY ARSENAL, in which *all* our brass guns are made,—the great dépôt of guns and ordnance preparations for our navy,—as also for the preparation of our shells, rockets, fire-works, and cartridges,—would fall into his hands !

Ever since the invention of steam navigation, various Master-Generals of the Ordnance have urged the obvious necessity of removing the arsenal of the British nation into the interior; but the answer has invariably been "that the House of Commons would object to the *expense*."

Remaining here for a few days until his rear—filled up by successive reinforcements from France—had increased his force to say 200,000

men, he might then safely inform the French admiral that he and his fleet, being no longer required, might quietly return to Cherbourg; for it is evident that if the French army, after reaching Blackheath, were to be conquered, they would neither as corpses nor as prisoners of war require their own fleet, and that, if they were *not* conquered, the ships and navy of England would be but too happy to take them back to France the instant they were disposed to return there.

About a month after the French ships had anchored at Cherbourg, there would probably arrive in the Channel—in a state of profuse perspiration caused by eager and excessive haste—the British Mediterranean fleet, the admiral of which would be apprised by a communication, possibly dated “Admiralty, London,” that any damage he might do to the French coasts or to French shipping would, by the French army in England, be duly placed to the Dr. side of its account with Great Britain.

With no force to oppose him, the French general might from Blackheath offer to the British people peace, or rather dictate to them

terms of submission; he would, however, most probably prefer, à la Napoléon, to do so in the enemy's capital, and accordingly with drums beating, bands playing, trumpets resounding, and colours flying, he would continue his march upon London.

On arriving at his goal, his arrangements, according to the usual system of military occupation, would be probably somewhat as follows:

With a view of establishing a cordon of close confinement, the bulk of the army would be encamped in the most open, convenient, and commanding points in the vicinity of the capital, such as—

1. St. James's and Green Parks.
2. Hyde Park.
3. Regent's Park.
4. Any convenient open ground about Hackney and Bow, and between them and Regent's Park.
5. Deptford Dockyard.
6. Clapham and Camberwell.
7. Brixton and Battersea.

The strength of the corps at each of the above



would of course be apportioned according to the importance which circumstances might recommend at the time.

As it is always a great object to get as many men under roofs as possible, all large buildings, warehouses, &c., sufficiently near to each encampment would be occupied, first for hospitals, and then for barracks: efforts would especially be made to obtain cover for all the horses; and as it is quite usual for churches to be taken for such purposes, they would, no doubt, be so applied, unless other shelter could be conveniently procured.

Every officer would be billeted in the nearest and *best* houses; he would require from two to four or five rooms according to his rank, and on exceedingly easy and intimate terms to live with the family.

The interior of the city would of course be strongly watched by powerful guards and numerous patrols, supported by detachments occupying strong buildings, either commanding useful positions, or in open places, such as the squares. For these purposes, and for the important object

of maintaining a communication with them and the main forces encamped in the outskirts, a precaution always of vital importance, the Millbank Penitentiary, the new Houses of Parliament, the Horse Guards, Whitehall, the Admiralty, up to the National Gallery and Barracks adjoining, and all the other great buildings round Trafalgar Square, as well as all the Clubhouses about Waterloo Place and Pall Mall, would be strongly occupied; and to secure a communication from these points to Regent's Park, and also to interrupt any hostile communication between the east and west portions of London, the whole of Regent Street would probably be strongly occupied. Lastly, to command the line of the Thames, which would of course be considered of great military importance, troops would hold, in considerable force, Hungerford Market, Somerset House, the Tower, St. Katherine's and London Docks, the buildings of which are all most admirably adapted for barracks.

These preliminary arrangements having been completed, and with the additional power, by a

few shells, carcasses, and rockets, of burning the whole town to the ground, if necessary, the French general would probably proceed to business.

## CHAPTER II.

French general proclaims parliamentary reform and redress of all popular grievances — Mode of feeding his troops — Skilful “ commissaires ” — Orders to the press — Treatment of refractory editors — Contributions levied from the inhabitants — Concessions demanded from the British people — Dreadful effects of the sudden annihilation of credit — Possibility of internal riots, robbery, and rapine

*What BUSINESS have you here?* is the usual stereotyped question which a florid, healthy English country gentleman puts to any one, happening to have a ferret and snares in his pockets, that he finds trespassing upon his estate. If the British people were to put this query to the General commanding-in-chief the French army in London, his answer would probably be,

“ *Meum est corrigere nefas, et debellare superbos,* ” —

Anglicè, “ I have come here for indemnification for all your victories, and to humble your pride.”

This being the nature of his business, his pro-

cess would be two-fold ; 1st. To demand money, ships, and foreign possessions ; 2nd. Humiliation.

With respect to the latter, as it is quite evident that it would be impolitic, by carrying insult too far, to infuriate the nation he had come to subject, he would probably copy the course which Napoleon repeatedly declared he had determined to pursue, namely, to issue a proclamation announcing that he had come to bestow upon the British people (See Alison's History of Modern Europe) "Parliamentary reform, the downfall of the oligarchy, all the objects which the English republicans had at heart, and the liberation of Ireland."

Having thus lubricated the lower orders, he would first of all require the town to make permanent arrangements for feeding his army, in order to relieve it from all further trouble of helping itself.

Now in all the countries which the French have forcibly possessed themselves of, they have invariably had in the suite of their army a body of admirable administrators, who know how to turn everything to the best possible account,

and who, without the slightest compunction for the feelings of their victims, understand how to obtain the greatest practicable amount of every article desired. They are systematic in all their calculations. Thus, if they get into a town of 10,000 inhabitants, they argue that it is quite possible for it to *feed* 4000 or 5000 troops—that is, share their food with them, special care being taken that the troops are the first to be provided. Again, if they want *shoes*, they calculate almost to a nicety how many pairs of shoes the population have been in the habit of purchasing, and consequently how many per week the shoemaker could be required to make.

If they want *money* for the soldiers' pay, they either seize it themselves, or, under a skilful "sous-commissaire," they appoint an administration of renegade citizens, who, under a semblance of native authority, vigorously work out the exorbitant views of the invaders by seizing on every establishment, and by forcing from all parties contributions of, say, half their wealth, for which plate and every other article of value

is taken ; in short, the “commissaire” calculates the value of property within the devoted city—houses, furniture, wine, plate, pictures, horses, carriages, merchandise, &c. &c., considering each as the security for the quatum of contribution required. Indeed, it is an axiom with the French, “*that a military contribution in an enemy’s country, when put on a PROPER scale, is easier to raise than the ordinary taxes of a legitimate government ;*” which means, that a tax-gatherer, with a musket on his shoulder, a sharp bayonet, and sixty rounds of ball-cart-ridge in his pouch, can get through his business quicker than a meek sleek man whose only implement of persuasion is his black pocket-book. In Hamburgh, where the French levied heavy contributions, the “commissaire,” instead of bothering himself to go round the town, took the whole of any man’s goods, giving him an order on his fellow-citizens for payment. For instance, to build a bridge over the Elbe, they took all Godefroy’s timber, paying him by a cheque of this sort, hanging at the same moment seven sluggish contributors, as if to explain to

him that, after all, he might have been infinitely worse off.

Besides providing food and comforts for the army, one of the first duties of the "commis-saire" is to send for the editors of the leading journals, whom he briefly informs that it will be requisite that they should state "that, although the ARISTOCRACY are suffering severely, the *people* at large offer no complaint, and that, on the whole, the '*morale*' appears to be favourable to the new system."

If these orders are not complied with, the "commissaire," either by word of mouth or by a very slight movement of one eye, directs that the offender be made an example of. Accordingly, with the butt-ends of muskets the invaluable printing apparatus is smashed, the type cast into the street, and the editor, falling into the hands of the soldiers, undergoes treatment which nothing but the ingenuity, ferocity, and frivolity of a Frenchman could devise. For instance, they will perhaps, first of all, cut off one or both of his mustachios,—strip him,—plaster him over with thick printer's ink,—curl his hair with it,



—dress him up in paper uniform and jack-boots made from the broadsheet; if he open his mouth, —“ *Tiens, petit ! tiens !* ”—feed him with pica ;— in short, by a series of innumerable and ever-varying strange methods of what they call “ *joliment arrangé* ” any refractory subject they wish to victimise — our military readers will, we are confident, corroborate these facts—they would so intimidate the press, that, like every other power in the country, it would be obliged to bend to the storm.

If, when called upon for his contribution, any unhappy shopkeeper or householder in the Strand, Oxford-street, the City, Belgravia, Grosvenor-square, or elsewhere, ventured to remonstrate — that is, to produce words instead of money — the commissaire’s eye would have scarcely twinkled once before the “ *plat de sabre* ” of some ten or fifteen soldiers would most unmercifully have punished the offence. Indeed, if even a sulky look was offered, there would instantly be billeted in the house a detachment of cavalry or infantry, who, by day as well as by night, would “ *joliment arrangé* ” the interior.

On entering France the Duke of Wellington issued proclamations to the following effect:—

“St Jean de Luz, Feb. 1, 1814.

“The municipality of St. Jean de Luz is authorised to take the sum of one hundred thousand and sixty-six francs six centimes out of the money collected for customs, to pay the salaries of the officers of the customs to the 31st January, on a statement given to me of the same date, signed by M. D. Laxalde and M. Raymond St. Jean.

(Signed) “WELLINGTON.”

A similar indulgence would probably be granted by the French General to Her Majesty's chief commissioner of customs, to the principal cashiers of railway companies, water companies, gas companies, and all other companies, to each of which the “commissaire” would appoint soldiers to take all the receipts, and out of them to pay wages and salaries sufficient to keep up the supply.

All preliminary details having been satisfactorily adjusted, the great secret would at last be made known, namely, the amount of the pecuniary indemnification, &c. &c. &c., demanded by France from the British people.

On this point we shall purposely avoid even imagining the demands which might be made. The terms exacted in 1815 from France by the allied armies under the Duke of Wellington, were, we believe,—1st, the payment by France of seven hundred millions of francs;—2nd, the cession by France of the greater portion of all countries obtained by force of arms since the year 1792;—3rd, the maintenance and clothing by France, for three years, of an army of occupation of 150,000 men;—4th, the cession by France of all trophies of victory, such as pictures, statues, &c. &c.

But this sentence of retributive *Justice* can give no idea whatever of the demands which INJUSTICE, intoxicated by success and stimulated by revenge, might exact; and as they are but too forcibly and fearfully conjectured in the Duke of Wellington's letter to Major-General Sir J. Burgoyne, we shall say no more on the subject, for this reason, namely, that however enormous may be their amount,—whatever may, in the words of the Duke, be “THE DISGRACE, THE INDELIBLE DISGRACE,” they would inflict,—they

would be insignificant in comparison to other extensive and almost incalculable results.

To any person conversant with the amount of business daily transacted by the British people, it will be as needless to attempt to define the consequence of London falling into the hands of a French army, as it would be to define to a man by particulars the consequences of his being suddenly shot through the heart.

In a poor country, or even in such countries as France, Germany, or Russia, the capitals of which are, comparatively speaking, the *limbs* of their respective empires, rather than the **HEART**, the damage done by an invading army is usually limited to the amount of actual property they seize, or the contributions they inflict; whereas, if a French general had his head-quarters, say at the Mansion-house of London, the loss and injury which the nation would sustain would not be in proportion to the wealth of the country, but vastly greater, in consequence of the enormous amount of its commercial transactions *based* entirely upon the most perfect system of credit, and the perfection of its circulating me-

dium: in fact, the sudden collapse of the former would occasion an injury immeasurably greater than all the gold and silver in the kingdom. As the plunder of the Bank would make it impossible for it to convert its notes into coin, these notes would no longer be accepted in payment, and, as few people keep much coin in their possession, the richest men would suddenly find themselves without the means of procuring the necessaries of life—for instance, Rothschild or Baring carry about money for a day's expenditure, knowing that they can draw on their balances at their bankers', or, if they should happen to be exhausted, by the sale of Exchequer bills or stock; but in that emergency, on the brink of which the British people, at the midnight hour at which we write, are securely sleeping, no Government security would be convertible, and consequently all trade must be resolved into a system of barter; indeed, during the *panic* which occurred only a few years ago, persons having Exchequer bills and Bank-post bills in their possession actually failed, merely because, in the state of alarm which even *then* existed in

the commercial world, nothing but bank-notes would satisfy a creditor: but if THEY also were discredited and rejected, it is almost impossible to conceive the amount of distress that would pervade all classes of the community. Such a destruction of property by forced sales, the disruption of commercial credit, and the alarm inflicted upon capitalists, would exceed in amount almost any sum that could be estimated.

With respect to our manufacturing districts, as all nations engaged in commerce and manufactures (especially with a paper currency) are more or less in an artificial state, and as Great Britain is more extensively engaged in these objects than any other nation on earth, its monetary system, which works so beautifully in time of peace and security, would be shivered to atoms by the occupation of London by a French army; for as the metropolis of England is the great centre of money payments for the whole commercial world, it is not only from London that the principal payments of the British manufacturers are finally settled, but it is from thence *chiefly* that the specie is received

for the weekly payments of the manufacturing operatives ; and as, the instant bank-notes ceased to pass current, nothing but gold and silver would answer the purpose of daily traffic, the latter would immediately be seized upon and hoarded up by the timid to meet their domestic wants. In Lancashire, for instance, as it would be quite impossible for the spinners and manufacturers to obtain metallic money to pay the workpeople their weekly wages, it would be necessary that they should be immediately discharged ; and thus there would be thrown out of employment six or seven hundred thousand people, most of whom would soon be in a state of absolute destitution : and as the same causes would produce the same results in the other manufacturing districts, as well as in the iron and mining districts, of England and Scotland, the confusion as well as misery would become terrific ; indeed the whole kingdom is so dependent upon trade of one sort or another, that it would be difficult to find a locality where the paralysation of credit would not throw a large population out of work.

With respect to the funds, the capital of which may be said to be imaginary, inasmuch as it rests entirely on the national faith and the ability of the Government to raise the necessary amount of taxes, many thousands of families who, on the annual interest of thirty millions, had hitherto been in the enjoyment of affluence or competency, would be totally ruined.

It is to be fervently hoped that, during the awful visitation we have but faintly described, some mode, at present unknown to us, would be devised for raising from the farmers, the country gentlemen, and from the inhabitants of country towns, villages, &c., sufficient money—or, as that probably could not possibly be obtained, money's worth—to barter in exchange for provisions for the millions of poor people who would be thrown out of work. It is fervently to be hoped that, during such collections, during such sufferings, and during the almost total annihilation of civil power, these millions of sufferers would patiently bide the time when, by the blessings of capitulation on almost any terms, the nation should be relieved from the awful pestilence of war. Should



they, however, be instigated by wicked persons, by idleness, and by want, to have recourse to plunder and rapine, there might be scenes in the interior of Great Britain and Ireland, especially in the large lone houses of the wealthy, infinitely more terrible than those that were devastating the metropolis.

We should be relieved from very painful feelings if we could here throw down the pen with which we have been most reluctantly delineating the abject condition of the British people during their subjection to a French army; but the bitterest portion of the cup of their affliction remains to be analysed. “THE GROANS OF THE BRITONS” are not yet half described.

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## CHAPTER III.

Difference between uncivilised and civilised warfare — Mercy shown in the latter — Exceptions to the rule — In taking a fortress by storm — Other instances — Usual conduct of an invading army — Where revenge and insult are desired as well as conquest the consequences are most lamentable — Reasons why these injuries are usually concealed.

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## ON THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN IN WAR

AMONG that long list of commonplace sayings which, by the people of every country, are continually expressed without being clearly understood, are that "*the men of . . . were all put to the sword,*" and that there was "*no respect for age or sex.*" We deem it necessary to endeavour to explain to our unmilitary readers the principle and practice in war respecting these words.

Among uncivilised nations there exists no medium between peace and war, and accordingly the individuals of various tribes either mingle with each other on the most friendly terms, or on the raising of the hatchet of war they endea-

your most furiously to exterminate each other. But in civilised countries, between peace and war there exists a broad neutral ground, upon which the life of any combatant who surrenders is safe ; and indeed, such is the politeness of modern war, that there have been instances where Frenchmen who have ridden to cut down a British officer—too stern to surrender—suddenly wheeling their horses to retreat, have saluted with their right hand a . . . *one-armed* man

But notwithstanding this creditable alleviation of the worst features of war, it occasionally happens—for instance, in preventing troops crossing a bridge in pursuit of a retreating army—that a body of men are left in a strong loop-holed building, with orders “to defend the passage to the last;” in which case, though repeatedly called upon to surrender, they are enabled, from the advantages of their position, to slaughter a considerable number of their assailants. In cases of this sort, whenever, after the unequal contest, the entrance to their position has been forced, the defenders are what is termed “*put to the*

*sword."* That is to say, they are massacred by the butt ends and bayonets of muskets.

In like manner, when a body of men occupying a fortress in a country which is in the hands of their enemy refuse to surrender, it becomes necessary for the besiegers, at immense disadvantage, to go through the painful and bloody process of a siege. For weeks, and sometimes months—by day, and especially by night—the investing army is exposed to a galling fire and to the inclemency of the weather, while the besieged are either snug in their beds, or, secure behind ramparts and parapets, are firing at them through embrasures, casemates, or loopholes. As the sure progress of the attack advances, it is customary again to call upon them to surrender that which by the science of war it is impossible for them ultimately to maintain. On their refusing, the besiegers, notwithstanding the deadly fire to which they are exposed, continue their advances until, on the completion of the third parallel, and on the breach in the escarp being reported practicable, they are once again, by a flag of truce, usually called upon "*to surrender, and*

*thereby to avoid the further effusion of human blood."*

Although, if the besieging army be of proper force, success has all along been *certain*, yet the process of mounting the breach is always more or less murderous to the assailants, inasmuch as the besiegers, still behind walls, can, in comparative security and through loopholes, fire grape and musketry,—roll down loaded shells upon them, —&c. &c.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the superiority of numbers is sure eventually to prevail; and although the storming party may be found all lying dead or writhing in the breach, their comrades eventually ascend it, and, having thus overpowered a garrison who, availing themselves of their lurking-places, have mercilessly *insisted* on their assailants going through all the dreadful processes we have detailed, the conquerors consider that the "*mercy*" that was refused to them is not due to the refusers, and, accordingly, they are usually "put to the sword," *i. e.* massacred, and *then* "neither age nor sex are respected."

Again, when armies are contending against each other in the field, it is the rude maxim of war to show neither consideration nor respect for the females of their enemies, who, accordingly—especially in a retreat, when men are smarting under defeat—usually suffer treatment which, if described, would, to those born and fostered under the blessings of Peace, appear utterly incredible.

In the hostile invasion of a country where *no* resistance is offered, it is often difficult on the march to prevail upon soldiers to perceive this important distinction ; and, at all events, wherever resistance, however trifling, is offered, it usually becomes *impossible*.

In the peaceful occupation of an enemy's country, the authority of the commander-in-chief, and the sense of justice of the army, are usually sufficient to induce the troops to consider the population of the invaded country as occupying the neutral ground we have described, and, consequently, as entitled to consideration. Nevertheless, whenever the avowed object of the invading army is *revenge* as well as

victory ; when the earnest desire in the heart of every man composing it is to *insult* as well as to subject, the slightest combination for resistance—nay, even a trifling street quarrel—is considered, *pro tanto*, as a declaration of war, and dealt with accordingly ; in short, wherever the lives, and, what is of more importance, the honour of the inhabitants of a country or of a great city have, in point of fact, no protection but *that* which a revengeful enemy shall deign to afford,—no tribunal to appeal to but a court-martial of its officers, whose maxim is that the *law and practice of war* declare “*malheur aux vaincues*,”—the consequences are usually productive of a series of wrongs to the weaker sex, great and small, of such complicated and variegated detail, that it would be beyond the power of all the civil courts of Europe even to listen to them.

We feel confident that every officer—however high may be his rank—and old soldier in the United Kingdom will not only confirm the general accuracy of the foregoing statement, but will declare it to be a mere pen-and-ink sketch, divested of the colours of a reality, to which *he*

could contribute a picture infinitely more appalling. Indeed we ourselves have heard from French officers descriptions of the way in which they treated the families of the wealthy citizens of \* \* \* \* , which we have not only never repeated to any human being, but which we believe—instead of the smiles with which they were detailed—would be listened to with feelings of unmitigated horror by every class of English society ; nevertheless, rude as may be the notions of propriety of the French army, especially that portion of it that has served in Algeria, it will appear from the following brief extract from the official paper of the Austrian government in Pesth, dated Sept. 1, 1850, that in time of war the Russian troops are no great respecters of persons :—

“ The 9th, at dawn, the regular pillage began. The signal was given with trumpets ; the plunder was granted to every regiment by turns. After a regiment had plundered, it was recalled and relieved by another. The Russians not only plundered, but flogged the citizens indiscriminately. The later plundering regiments tore the boots from the feet of the inhabitants, stripped them of their clothes, leaving them scarcely a shirt. The last band, furious at finding no more



valuables, committed the most atrocious cruelties; they demanded money, and, as the inhabitants had no more to give, they were tortured. The officers plundered with the privates. The last regiments came armed with bars and perches, and destroyed everything which could not be carried away. Not a chair, not a table, not a door remained unbroken; they cut the feather beds, and flung away the feathers; they carried away in waggons the contents of the premises; they bounced open the cellars, drank as much as they could, and when they could drink no more they broke the barrels, that the wine might run out. In their intoxication they committed such beastly excesses that even the Russian officers, unable to restrain them, lamented the misfortune of the citizens. There is no pen to describe the dreadful fate of the women; no age was spared by the intoxicated ruffians. The plundering lasted the whole day; the town was during this time always surrounded by the Russian army, no issue granted to any one."

It would not be fair to conceal that an English army has often in the moment of victory committed very dreadful excesses, and yet, in 1815, after Waterloo, several of the ladies at Paris used to say of the British officers that they were "*doux comme des demoiselles*," as compared with the Prussians, Russians, and Austrians.

It is perfectly true that, generally speaking, few or no complaints have been made of the enormities at which we have only hinted; but deep sorrow, like deep water, often wears an unruffled surface. By the defalcations of the banks of the United States of America, and by the repudiation of their state loans, the British people have lately incurred a loss of about ten millions; and yet, though thousands of honest families have been reduced to penury and distress, excepting Sidney Smith there has scarcely been *one* who has uttered in public a single word of complaint against the disreputable fraud over which he mourns. The same silence is observed by the representatives of the many millions of money that within the last few years have been lost in railway speculations; and if mankind are thus averse to proclaim their pecuniary misfortunes, it surely is not very surprising that they should mutely brood over the disgrace of the names they bear, and of the dishonour of their nearest and dearest relations!

With considerable reluctance we have sub-

mitted to our readers a slight and purposely veiled description of the principle and practice of war, as regards that half of our community to whom our volume is especially dedicated, and in whose behalf it has mainly been written. We have done so, because, having undertaken to bring "THE DEFENCELESS STATE OF GREAT BRITAIN" before the patient judgment of a just, a wealthy, an ancient, and a noble-minded nation, we have considered that it would be culpable distinctly to enumerate the enormous pecuniary losses that would result from the invasion of England and the occupation of London by a French army, and yet, from puny feelings and false delicacy, to conceal from view a loss which the wealth of the whole world could not compensate,—which would make our young men ashamed to show their faces on the continent of Europe,—and which, indeed, would BRING THE GREY HAIRS OF OLD ENGLAND WITH SORROW TO THE GRAVE!

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## CHAPTER IV.

## DISCREDITABLE POSITION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The nations of the continent of Europe all perceive the defenceless state of England—Strange speeches of leading members of the House of Commons boasting of the nation's excessive power—The inevitable result—Peace meetings on the Continent likely to prove highly beneficial—In the mean while Great Britain ought not to remain unprotected—Glaring inconsistency in England's conquests by *war*, and her present inability to defend herself by *arms*.

IN private life it often happens that a just and high-minded man is the last who knows of his own dishonour, but this observation cannot be applied to the British people, because for years they have been loudly warned of their unprotected condition, not only by the leading newspapers of their own country, but by those of every civilized nation in Europe and America.

For instance, the following extract from the 'Allgemeine Zeitung' but too truly shows how clearly the defenceless state of Great Britain is

understood, even in all its details, by the nations of the Continent :—

“It is known to all the *world*, and particularly to those foreign Governments which perhaps hope to profit by the circumstances, that England is neither protected by a standing army, nor by a popular militia force.

“Immeasurable sacrifices, especially as regards the military force of the nation, have been made to the spirit of saving which since the peace of 1815 has tied the hands of every English administration

“Throughout the whole of Scotland and England it would hardly be possible to collect 10,000 men, the garrison troops of Ireland are, it is true, more numerous, but entirely absorbed by the necessities of that distracted country.

“The people of England are, of all European nations, the most unused to bearing arms, and the most averse to military service; and it is therefore necessary with the English to subject them to the longest course of training in order to make soldiers of them.

“One consequence of this state of things is, an essential decline of British influence abroad; as the military power of the country forms a ridiculous contrast to the tone which Lord Palmerston loves to assume in diplomatic negotiations; and, secondly, a real danger of invasion from the side of France, to which the country can no longer look with indifference.

“A few hundred fishing-boats, towed across the

Channel by steamers in the course of a calm and cloudy night, might easily transport a considerable French force to the shores of Albion."

To any reasonable being it must surely appear almost incredible—and at all events inexplicable—that the imminent danger above so minutely described, in which the wealth,—the property,—the men,—and the women of England have been existing, and in which they still exist; in short, their utterly unprotected condition,—has not only been openly declared by the Duke of Wellington, by the General commanding-in-chief of the corps of Engineers, by naval officers of the highest distinction, but we affirm that, if the existing naval Lords of the Admiralty, the Master-General of the Ordnance, and other naval and military authorities *at the present moment in office*, were to be examined, they would almost unanimously concur in opinion that the British nation is utterly defenceless; indeed the fact is so glaring that several officers of the French army have, in their visits to this country lately, very significantly remarked to British artillery and engineer officers whom we could name, "THAT OUR

WEAKNESS IS OBSERVED !” And yet the British House of Commons, the representatives of the wealthiest, the most just, and the most generous nation on the globe, not only inexorably refuse to furnish the supplies necessary for the mere defence of *their own* property and of *their own* honour, but, encouraged by “clamour from without,” they keep each other in countenance, and bolster up the national ideas of false security by speeches, *loudly cheered*, of which the following are specimens.

At the moment when the French ambassador had demanded his passports, and when the French nation were absolutely *before our eyes* increasing their number of sailors, evidently with a determination to invade England, one of the most eloquent of our liberal speakers (for the reasons we have stated we omit his name) thus gave vent to those highly popular feelings which we have already quoted from Charles Knight’s paper entitled ‘*The Land we Live in*’ (vide *Times*, 25th June last).

“If,” said this distinguished orator, “if we talk of terror and alarm and bullying, only let us look around

this European world of ours, and I ask where is the people, save England, who could safely go to war? Could France go to war? Could Austria go to war? Where would Italy and Hungary be? (Hear, hear.) Could Russia go to war? The fact is, we are forbearing *because we are so powerful*. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. It is the *weak* people, as everybody well knows who knows aught of human nature—it is the *weak* that are always the most sensitive!”

Of the above what can possibly be said by the great nations of Europe, but

“Quos Deus vult perdere, priùs dementat”?

Again (vide *Times* of the 22nd July last), one of the principal ministers of the British Crown, in a celebrated speech on the subject of the Greek question, expressed himself as follows:—

“Anxious as the people of this country are—and, to their honour be it spoken, I believe no people in the world are more anxious than they are—to preserve peace and avoid war with any country whatsoever, yet, believe me, there is no other country that is not as disinclined, and that for the best of all reasons, to go to war with England, as England can be to go to war with them (cheers). *This consciousness of strength*—this feeling of *the national power*—ought not to TEMPT the



Government of the people of England to commit anything that is unjust or wrong; but it ought at least to bear us up in pursuing the cause of justice and honour, and induce us not lightly to give way to apprehensions *founded on no real grounds* (loud cheers) I feel that we may be *proud*, and reasonably proud, of the country in which we have the good fortune to be born. (The noble Lord resumed his seat amidst enthusiastic cheering.)”

If our House of Commons, whom we all desire to respect, persist in relying upon fallacies such as we have just quoted, and on which their constituents, the British people, equally securely repose, the hour will in due time arrive when a highly popular speech such as above quoted—asserting, amidst enthusiastic cheers, “*the fact is, we are forbearing because we are so powerful—there can be NO DOUBT OF IT*”—will be suddenly interrupted by three loud knocks at the door, which, on being opened, will no sooner disclose to view the glittering helmet and dazzling uniform of the French general in possession of London, than our valued friend Sir Denis Le Marchant—in virtue of his office—will be heard very significantly to whisper into the ear of

Lord John Russell, in the words which General Megret, the commanding engineer at the siege of Frederickshall, uttered as the cannon-ball that killed Charles XII. passed through his body,

“ *Voilà la pièce finie. . . allons souper !*”

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## CHAPTER V.

## REMEDY.

Beneficial results of continued appeals from the friends of peace to the inhabitants of the military nations of Europe — In the mean while the British people *must* protect themselves from the horrors of invasion, just as they protect their houses from fire, their vessels from storms, their persons from rain, their property from the swell-mob — Peaceful and economical results of this policy — Amount of military and naval force necessary to attain these great blessings — Estimated cost thereof — Short effectual plan showing how to obtain the money.

NOTHING, we most readily admit, can be more pure and praiseworthy than the desire entertained by a large portion of our community to discountenance the evil practices of war, and to substitute in their stead the religious habits of peace : indeed, it is impossible for any one to consider the simple fact that the cost of every thirteen-inch shell that is fired away would in England support at least two families, and on the Continent nearly four families, for a week,

without reflecting how severe is even the pecuniary punishment which the art of destroying our fellow-creatures inflicts upon mankind ; and if this be true, however easy it may be to ridicule the exertions of what are termed “men of peace,” it is equally true that every reasonable being should pray that their efforts may be successful,—nay, we are humbly of opinion that the “peace meetings” they are encouraging on the Continent will eventually produce the most beneficial results.

To attempt to persuade the Governments of Europe all of a sudden to put down their armies, would, we submit, be not only utterly hopeless, but would be attempting the object at the wrong end ; for as in those countries *military* government is the only existing protector of life and property, it would evidently be as erroneous in theory as it would prove lamentable in practice to destroy an existing fabric until a better substitute should have been provided—in fact, to exchange protection—imperfect as it may be—for anarchy. It is evident, therefore, that the course to be pursued is precisely that which

“ the friends of peace ” are adopting, namely, to endeavour, by practical appeals to their heads and pockets, to explain to the inhabitants of the several military nations of Europe that, by free representation, Government has power to protect life and property without the presence of a single soldier. By assiduously and scientifically working at this end of the question, which is *penetrable*, instead of at the other, which is *impregnable*, they will no doubt eventually succeed in their object.

In the mean while, however, it is equally evident that Great Britain, regardless of cost, must by a standing army and by a standing navy protect itself from the invasion and ravages of its armed neighbours, exactly in the same way and exactly by the same means as the British people protect themselves from the elements of nature.

For instance, instead of praying to fire not to burn, the British nation by pecuniary outlay have at this moment very sensibly insured upwards of seven hundred millions of property from its effects.

Instead of praying to the wind and to the waves not to sink ships, at vast expense they have carefully constructed their vessels seaworthy, and moreover, by other pecuniary arrangements, have cautiously insured ships and cargoes amounting in value to considerably more than one hundred and ninety-two millions.

Instead of praying to West India proprietors to manumit slaves, by an outlay of twenty millions they themselves nobly purchased their ransom.

Again, instead of praying to the rain not to wet them, at considerable expense they slate, tile, and thatch their houses, buy umbrellas, and defy it. Instead of praying to an ox-fence not to hurt them, our young sportsmen pay almost any money for hunters that can clear it. Lastly, instead of praying to the swell-mob not to break their windows, not to plunder their houses, and not to pick their pockets, the lord-mayor, aldermen, and inhabitants of London,—overcoming their ancient prejudices,—by a self-imposed tax, have created a *standing army* of blue policemen on purpose to beat the skulls and capture the persons of all delinquents.

Now would it not be only consistent with all these habits of caution which almost exclusively distinguish the British people, that, instead of *praying* to the French Government—*i. e.* the French army—not to invade them, they should, **AT ANY EXPENSE**, provide their naval and military officers with men and means sufficient to kill them if they come?

The results of this peaceful policy of England, thus inscribing upon her white cliffs “**MEN-TRAPS AND SPRING-GUNS ARE SET IN THESE PREMISES,**” would be immediately beneficial to the whole family of mankind. Supposing that Louis Napoleon be—as we sincerely believe he is—desirous, on high principles, not to invade England, how greatly would HE approve of our fortifying the attractive wealth of London, which, from having remained unprotected, he has probably long foreseen must inevitably, sooner or later, become the property of the French army! Indeed, it must be evident to every reflecting man that the French nation, under a tempest of violent passions, has for some time been playing a game of desperate expedients, the last card of which—it

matters, not who holds the hand—*must* be “THE INVASION OF ENGLAND.”

If the people of Great Britain were, as from their wealth and industry they ought to be, properly protected, there is scarcely any insult that the nation might not before the world with calm dignity prefer to submit to, rather than inflict upon humanity the horrors of war. They would then, indeed, be powerful ; and their forbearance would be a practical lecture on peace, respected and admired by every nation on the globe. But instead of occupying this high position—the birthright of the honest industry of the nation—in what a humiliating predicament do the British people at this moment appear before the world !

By force of arms they gained almost all those colonial possessions on which it is said the sun never sets. They have in history most carefully recorded their victories—at the corners of streets and squares they are painted and inscribed—brazen men on horseback everywhere announce them ; and yet no sooner have they acquired by naval and military power *all* they can possibly



desire, and infinitely more than they know how to govern, than all of a sudden they deprecate war;—earnestly advise those whom they have defeated to abandon the vile practice;—set them the example by reducing their army and navy to zero;—and having thus deprived their property, and, above all, the *honour* of their women, of all protection, having closed their eyes and shut their ears to the horrors of invasion, which everybody sees but themselves, they stroll about the Continent in “*wide-awake*” hats—objects, we regret to say it, in the minds of all military and naval men, of just ridicule and contempt.

“*But,*” our readers, wearied with the details with which we have troubled them, will by this time, no doubt, impatiently exclaim, “*we want to know what is it that is required to place us all in a state of security from the invasion of the French?*”

We request that the Duke of Wellington may answer this question:—

“There are,” says the Duke in his letter to Major-General Sir J. Burgoyne, “not less than twelve great

roads leading from Brighton upon London; and the French army must be much altered since the time at which I was better acquainted with it, if there are not now belonging to it forty chefs major-general capable of sitting down and ordering the march to the coast of 40,000 men; their embarkation, with their horses and artillery, at the several French ports on the coast; their disembarkation at named points on the English coast, and of the cavalry and artillery in named ports or mouths of rivers; and the assembling at named points of the several columns, and the march of each of these, from stage to stage, to London.

“Let any man examine our maps and road-books, consider of the matter, and judge for himself.

“I KNOW OF NO MODE OF RESISTANCE, MUCH LESS OF PROTECTION, FROM THIS DANGER, EXCEPTING BY AN ARMY IN THE FIELD CAPABLE OF MEETING AND CONTENDING WITH SO FORMIDABLE AN ENEMY, AIDED BY ALL THE MEANS OF FORTIFICATION WHICH EXPERIENCE IN WAR AND SCIENCE CAN SUGGEST.”

The Duke, however, assuming—as a national axiom—that the British House of Commons would constitutionally shrink from the expenses of enabling Her Majesty’s ARMY AND NAVY to defend the nation from invasion in the proper manner, suggests the formation of a militia force of 150,000 men.

“This,” he adds, “with an augmentation of the

force of the regular army, which would not cost 400,000*l.*, would put the country on its legs in respect to personal force, and I would engage for its defence, OLD AS I AM !”

But the ink with which these chivalrous words were written was scarcely dry, before reflection materially modified the enthusiastic declaration :—

“ I shall be deemed foolhardy,” he adds, “ in engaging for the defence of the empire with an army composed of such a force of *militia* ! I may be so ! I confess it ! I should infinitely prefer, and should feel more confidence in, an army of regular troops ; *but I KNOW that I shall not have THESE ; I may have the OTHERS. . . . THIS IS MY VIEW OF OUR DANGER AND OUR RESOURCE.*”

Now, without any blustering appeal to national honour or national glory, we calmly ask of every prudent man who has funded, landed, mercantile, railway, canal, gas, shop, or any other description of property to defend, or who values the domestic happiness of his family, has there ever existed in the history of Great Britain, or of any other great nation, so affecting and so humiliating a picture as that of an aged

warrior publicly volunteering, "*old as he is,*" to head an undisciplined force *to defend his country from invasion*; adding in unfaltering accents, at which the wealthy nation to be protected might justly blush with shame, "I shall be deemed foolhardy in engaging for the defence of the empire with an army composed of a force of militia; I may be so—I confess it! I should infinitely prefer an army of *regular troops*, BUT I *know* I shall not have *these*"?

Surely every member of the British House of Commons—especially those in whose veins there flows the blood of what now-a-days is called "*Young England*"—must keenly feel the severe, unsarcastic reproof which these words offer; namely, that while Her Majesty's army and navy are burning to do *their* duty, they look upon the representatives of the nation, in Imperial Parliament assembled, as a body of men to whom it is *vain* to appeal for the necessary funds for defending their own properties and their own families from RUIN and DISHONOUR!!

"*But,*" our readers will, we feel sure, by this time impetuously repeat, "*we want to know*

*exactly what it is that is required to place us all in a state of security from the invasion of the French."*

We briefly reply: A small defensive tax upon the whole property of the country, amounting to about one-sixth per cent. of the average rates voluntarily paid by the community for the insurance of nine hundred millions sterling, as already detailed, would protect the commerce and industry of the country,—preserve our colonies and our commerce,—allow every British subject to enjoy the blessings of peace,—and enable the nation, if war should prove unavoidable, to  
DEFY INVASION AT HOME OR ABROAD.

The following is a rough sketch of what would probably be required:—

#### MILITARY.

1. An increase for our colonies and for home service of 100,000 infantry troops, efficiently armed and equipped.
2. An increase of 100 pieces of cannon fully horsed.
3. A reserve of 200,000 stand of arms.

4. Ammunition for at least a year's war consumption.

5. A provision of equipments and stores proportionate in number to the difficulty or facility of speedily obtaining them if required.

6. The principal naval arsenals, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness, and Pembroke, and also some of the most valuable <sup>1</sup> of our colonies, to be put into a state that would enable small forces to resist, for a moderate period, any sudden attack.

7. Dover and the mouth of the Thames, containing shipping, &c., of inestimable value, to be sufficiently strengthened.

*N.B.*—The whole cost of *maintaining* 100,000 men, including officers, would, exclusive of recruiting, barracks, arms, and equipments, amount per annum to about 3,670,000*l*.

<sup>1</sup> The French occupation of the Mauritius, up to the time it was taken by English troops, cost the British people several millions of money in losses by the capture of their vessels, besides the indirect loss and expenditure of working their commerce by powerful convoys. Now, if that valuable mercantile position were adequately fortified, and had a moderate garrison, the nation would *ensure* retaining it; whereas, at present, three or four French frigates with troops could undoubtedly take it.

The whole of the fortifications proposed in Nos. 6 and 7 would not comprise more work than the construction of *one* first-rate fortress on the Continent, such as France, Prussia, Austria, and even Belgium, undertake at any time for much slighter objects.

#### NAVAL.

1. The seafaring population of Great Britain, —comprehending 22,000 seamen in Her Majesty's service, 200,000 in the British merchants' service, and 40,000 in foreign service,—to be made liable, *by law*, to serve by ballot in the Royal Navy.

2. A powerful standing force of able seamen-gunners to be comfortably lodged, maintained, drilled, and otherwise employed in our dock-yards, ready *at a moment's warning* to man Her Majesty's ships in ordinary.

3. Additional Instruction-ships, similar to, and under the direction of, the 'Excellent,' sufficient to convert Her Majesty's raw seamen into practised artillerymen.

4. The whole of the Marines, instead of using *small* arms only, to be converted into a well-drilled and well-disciplined Marine Artillery.

5. That the Minister or Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Naval Forces be invariably an officer of distinction in Her Majesty's Navy.

The sole object of the above proposals for a prudent Insurance of the Empire is to save the British people from the horrors and EXPENSES of war, by rendering an invasion of Great Britain by the French army IMPRACTICABLE: indeed, the facts we have adduced will, we believe, alarmingly demonstrate the fallacy of the English House of Commons considering as "ECONOMY" any reduction of taxation that jeopardises the safety of the whole community.

On the nation's ordinary principles of Insurance, the honestly-acquired wealth of Great Britain, if timely applied, is an invincible defender of its interests and of its honour; no nation on earth can compete against it: they all *know* it—they all *feel* it. Nevertheless, as no mercantile man can insure his ship *after it has foundered*,—



so it is utterly impossible for any nation to make preparation for self-defence in a short time. It requires at least a year to convert recruits into soldiers, or raw seamen into trained gunners. It requires years to construct fortifications and ships of war. It requires many years, or, as the case may be, many months, to fabricate arms, equipments, guns, carriages, shot, shells, gunpowder, &c., necessary for war-operations on a large scale; and thus, though in case of invasion Great Britain would inevitably be *ruined*, if not ANNIHILATED, *in three months*, it would require nearly *three years* to prevent the catastrophe. In short, a man might as well *begin*, in a terrible hurry, to construct tanks, lay pipes for filling them, and advertise for tenders for the construction of a fire-engine, the instant he perceives that his house *is on fire*,—as for the British House of Commons to maintain that the husbanding of a wealthy nation's resources, and an accumulation of its funds, can provide TIMELY RESISTANCE to invasion.

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## HOW TO GET THE MONEY

“Ay, there’s the rub”—HAMLET.

However exhausting may occasionally be the defender of an injured client, yet, in proportion as the advocate gradually develops evidence, facts, and arguments that he knows to be in combination irresistible, is he usually supported by an inward conviction which not only cheers him in his course, but which, on closing his case—as he sits down—triumphantly congratulates him on the certainty of a successful verdict. In the lone cause, however, which we have undertaken, we have not, as we have proceeded, been refreshed by any such conviction, nor at this moment are we enjoying even an ideal reward of success. On the contrary, when we reflect “*on the difficulty*” (see the Duke of Wellington’s letter to Sir John Burgoyne) “*under which all governments in this country labour, in prevailing upon Parliament, in time of peace, to take into consideration measures necessary for the safety of the country in time of war!*” we

feel that, unless we can clearly satisfy the present ministers of the Crown that they will be powerfully supported from without,—that the British people have become not only *disposed* but ANXIOUS to be taxed for the purpose of securing themselves from invasion,—our volume, though it may alarm a few, especially the timid, will be of no practical use whatever.

Of the earnest desire of the present prime minister of England to protect the empire from the ruin and annihilation we have described, there can exist no doubt; but, however anxious he may be to do so—however he may for years have been inwardly convinced of the fidelity and truth of the Duke of Wellington's admonitions—and however “ready, aye ready for the field” may be his well-known moral courage, yet, may he not fairly argue to his colleagues that the very size of our volume renders it for the multitude utterly valueless?

As the case, therefore, is evidently a desperate one, as the commercial interests of the whole world are involved in it, and as we feel bound—and at all events justified—in remedying,

if possible, the disorder we have described, we will at once, in the concentrated essence of our volume, offer, in a very small compass, a practical prescription, which, we feel perfectly confident, would enable her Majesty's Ministers to propose and *carry* a protective tax to maintain a standing army and standing navy sufficient to protect the British people from invasion, almost by acclamation.

Our proposal is briefly as follows:—

With a view to arouse a brave, a just, a powerful, and a high-minded people to a sense of the danger and *dishonour* of their sleep, we propose that, on the first day of the next meeting of the Imperial Parliament, some member of high character of the House of Lords should be prevailed upon to give notice that on,—say, that day fortnight,—he should feel it his duty to put to the Duke of Wellington two questions respecting the defensive state of Great Britain.

There can be no doubt that this notice would cause very general excitement, and that, when the day arrived, the House would be crowded

with peers,—peeresses,—members of the House of Commons,—with their wives, daughters, &c. &c., all eagerly anxious for the result.

In this interim with what ease and unconcern would the Duke, with his usual punctuality, enter the House;—how affably would he converse with the leading members of various parties;—and after he had taken his seat, put on his hat, folded his arms, and gradually allowed his countenance to assume its usual fix, how utterly impossible would it be for any one pair of all the eyes that were concentrated upon it to decipher either what were his opinions or what would be his answer! We will, however, venture to divine that, when the anxious moment arrived, the dialogue would substantially be as follows:—

*Lord A.*—My Lord Duke,—In the two questions I am about to put, I shall not presume to trouble your Grace for any opinion as to the present safety of our vast Colonial empire, or of the dockyards, military position, or internal wealth of Great Britain; but I feel it due—

most especially to one-half of our community—to ask your Grace this plain question:—

Is your Grace of opinion that Her Majesty's army and navy, consistent with their Colonial duties, are at the present moment sufficiently powerful to protect, from the horrors of invasion, the women of England?

*The Duke.*—NO! (Sensation.)

*Lord A.*—My second question is as follows:—In case of a declaration of war, I beg leave to ask your Grace for how long a period you consider that Her Majesty's army and navy would,—consistent with their foreign duties,—be enabled to protect, from the horrors of invasion, the women of England?

*The Duke.*—I WOULDN'T INSURE 'EM FOR A WEEK! (Indescribable sensation.)

Now since the days of Samson and of Solomon has there, we ask, ever existed a man strong enough in person, or wise enough in mind,

to stand up in such a scenc, and in a voice “scarcely audible below the bar” to say, even in broken sentences, and under feelings naturally of an overwhelming nature—

“ *Very sorry ! . . . . exceedingly awkward for them ! . . . . very awkward indeed ! . . . . But . . . . with wheat at (     ) shillings a quarter, the nation really and truly CAN’T AFFORD IT* ” ?

Bequeathing this picture to HB, we proceed to propose that by a similar notice Her Majesty’s Inspector-General of Fortifications, Major-General Sir John Burgoyne, be required simultaneously to give answers to the same two questions at the bar of the House of Commons ; and if, unmoved and unawed by the severest cross-examination that our most valuable economists can suggest, this experienced officer, “ *the confidential head of the principal defensive departments of the country,*” should calmly and resolutely—as there can exist no doubt he will—corroborate the fearful declaration of the Commander-in-chief of Her Majesty’s army ;—if the Master-General of Her Majesty’s Ordnance, and if one or two of the most experienced of the naval

Lords of Her Majesty's Admiralty, on being sent for and closely examined, should also fearlessly corroborate—as *we declare they will*—the same fearful declarations,—are we wrong in stating that the dormant chivalry of Great Britain will instantly be aroused ;—that its noblest, its purest passions will be excited ;—that farmers, yeomen, hunting men, manufacturers, fundholders, landowners, shopkeepers—ay, and “England's bold peasantry, her country's pride”—will, hand, heart, purse, and voice, unite together, to save those “WHOM IT IS THEIR HAPPINESS TO REGARD, THEIR DUTY TO PROTECT — AND WHO, UNDER THE BLESSING OF AN ALMIGHTY POWER, HAVE AS YET ONLY READ OF WAR,” from the horrors of invasion ? and thus the British empire—now on the brink of ruin—will be saved !

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Having now closed our arduous case, we have but one remaining duty to perform—namely, humbly to ask pardon of the nation for the freedom with which we have submitted our opinions.

Our volume has been written in absolute



retirement, under disadvantages which have often rendered it impracticable for us to obtain the information we have desired. More than three-fourths of it have daily been sent to press as fast as it was written ; and as there has therefore been no artifice in its composition, it has nothing, we are aware, to protect it from criticism but its object, and, we believe, its TRUTH.



## A P P E N D I X.

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### I.

It is said that a good elephant ought to be able, with his trunk, either to lift up a gun or pick up a pin. In like manner, a good general has constantly to decide questions of great magnitude, as well as of very minute detail.

In the sieges in the Peninsula the several arrangements for assaulting or escalading, containing twenty or thirty different orders to the storming parties, to be executed sometimes consecutively, and sometimes at different points at the same moment, were mostly written by the Duke of Wellington on the ground, after he had himself carefully looked at the breach or point to be escaladed, and although the lives of thousands of men depended upon the clearness and propriety of these orders, the Duke usually, as fast as one side of the paper was covered with his instructions, handed it to his secretary Lord Fitzroy Somerset, or some other staff officer, to be copied and immediately distributed.

Now, as a contrast to considerations of such vast importance, we annex the following specimen of the Duke's knowledge of the details of what may be called "the little kettle question."

*“ To Brigadier-General Robert Craufurd.*

“ Badajoz, 29th September, 1809.

“ MY DEAR GENERAL,—I have been for some time very anxious respecting a part of what forms the subject of your letter of the 26th, I mean the camp kettles; and I am much obliged to you for your opinions on the subject. Faulty as is the existing mode of carrying the camp kettles, it is more efficient than that of which it is the substitute in this country; and I have written a letter to England, which I hope will have the effect of making the allowance for keeping up the numbers more equal to the object for which it was granted than it has been hitherto.

“ There is much to be said on both sides of the question respecting the description of kettle which the soldiers ought to have, and as the iron kettle is the best for cooking, and lasts longest, and, moreover, as the use of that description and size of kettle requires the employment of fewer men in cooking, the choice between them resolves itself into this point,—Which is most likely to be carried with certainty, so as to give the soldier at all times the use of a kettle?

“ In deciding upon this question, much depends upon the care which officers take of their men, and the degree of minute attention which they give to their wants. In a regiment well looked after, it is certain that the tin kettles would answer best, as the officers would oblige the soldiers to take care of them, and regimental arrangements would be made to provide for the casual increase and diminution of numbers occasioned by men coming out of and going into hospital, returning from detachment, &c.; and in actions they would be prevented from throwing them away; and care would be taken that the carrier of the kettle

should, above all other men, not straggle or stay behind his regiment till the hours for cooking should be past, or get drunk and lose the kettle. But in two-thirds of the regiments of this army such care would not be taken, and whether the regiment would have kettles or not would depend upon that most thoughtless of animals, the soldier himself, and I should very soon hear that there were none.

“ According to the existing system, bad as it is, the care of the camp kettles is not only the business of the bātmān of the company, but of all the bātmān of the regiment and of the brigade. The officer of the baggage guard is particularly interested, as with the kettles he loses the mules; and the officers commanding the regiments and the brigade are not inattentive to the subject. I think also that the practical effect of this system must improve as the army becomes more experienced in the field.

“ Upon the whole, therefore, I prefer the iron kettles to the tin for general purposes, but I have no objection to try the latter in some of our best regiments, in order to see how the experiment may answer.

“ I agree with you about the expediency of allowing the Captains of companies to ride. The forage required for this purpose is no object, as forage for 200 or 300 mules cannot be very difficult to procure. The objection I think is the increased number of bātmān and servants which will be taken out of the ranks, which becomes an object of the greatest consequence.

“ Believe me, &c.,

“ WELLINGTON.”

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## II.

It will appear, from the following document, that nearly forty years ago the Duke of Wellington warned the Ministers of Great Britain of the disposition of the French to invade England, and of the awful consequences that would ensue.

Extract from a despatch from Lord Wellington to the Earl of Liverpool, Secretary of State, dated—

“Sta. Marinha, 23rd March, 1811

“ . . . . . From what I have seen of the objects of the French Government, and the sacrifices they make to accomplish them, I have no doubt that if the British army were for any reason to withdraw from the Peninsula, and the French Government were relieved from the pressure of military operations on the Continent, they would incur all risks to land an army in His Majesty's dominions. Then, indeed, would commence an expensive contest, then would His Majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge, and the cultivation, the beauty, and prosperity of the country, and the virtue and happiness of its inhabitants, would be destroyed, whatever might be the result of the military operations. God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor, in the scene, and I only hope that the King's Government will consider well what I have above stated to your Lordship . . . . .”

“To what are these facts to be attributed? Certainly not to the inclination of the inhabitants of the country to the enemy; certainly not to the superior abilities of the officers of the civil departments of the French armies, at

least not on comparison with the civil officers of the British army ; but to the system of terror on which the French, and all under their authority, invariably act, and to which no power in Europe ever has, or ever can have, recourse.”

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### III.

The following memorandum, dated Paris, 15 June, 1850, will show the amount of the military stores, &c., which France has prepared for the purposes of war :—

“ The Minister-of-War has just distributed to the Assembly the general statement of the *matériel* of his department for 1848, but for the present year there is an increase of 9,000,000 It appears that, on 31 Dec. 1848, France possessed more than 22,000,000 (francs') worth of provisions in its military store, military equipments, 3,640,000, military beds, 11,000,000, 69,000 horses (20,000 for artillery), the estimated value of which, 45,838,150 f. ; artillery stores, valued at 267,276,802 f. These stores consisted of 8089 battering-guns (3124 being of iron), 3,759 field-pieces, 2,883 carronades and mortars, 1705 siege and 2754 field howitzers. The engineer *matériel* was valued at 16,657,653 f The stores of powder and salt-petre were estimated at nearly 61,000,000 f.”

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## IV.

We offer to the “Friends of Peace” the following sketch, showing a very trifling proportion of the beneficial results of the industry of the British people ; and although we have so strongly urged that all such honestly-acquired property ought to be adequately protected, yet, we ask, would it be possible for an Englishman, at a great Peace-meeting on the Continent, to submit to the sober judgment of the people assembled a more convincing argument in favour of free, instead of military, government, than the striking contrast exhibited between the wasteful, useless, expensive requirements of war as detailed in the French official memorandum just quoted, and the following extract from English statistics ?

## “SHIPS, ROADS, RAILWAYS, CANALS.

“There are employed in the yearly transit of Great Britain, with the world and with her own shores, 33,672 sailing vessels, and 1110 steam-vessels, employing 236,000 seamen. Calculating the value of each ship and cargo, as the value has been estimated before Parliament, at 5000*l.*, we have an aggregate value—sailing-vessels, steamers, and their cargoes included—of 173,910,000*l.* Further, supposing that the yearly wages of the seamen, including officers, was 20*l.* per head, the amount paid in wages would be 4,720,000*l.* The railways now in operation in the United Kingdom extend 6000 miles, the cost of their construction (paid and to be paid) having been estimated at upwards of

350,000,000*l*. Last year they supplied the means of rapid travel to above 63 millions of passengers, who traversed above a billion of miles. Their receipts for the year approached 11½ millions of money, and nearly three quarters of a million of persons are dependent upon them for subsistence. The turnpike and other roads of Great Britain alone (independently of Ireland) present a surface of 120,000 miles in length, for the various purposes of interchange, commerce, and recreation. They are maintained by the yearly expenditure of a million and a half. For similar purposes the navigable canals and rivers of Great Britain and Ireland furnish an extent of 4850 miles, formed at a cost of probably 35,000,000*l*. Adding all these together, we have of turnpike roads, railways, and canals no less than 130,000 and odd miles formed, at an aggregate cost of upwards of 386,000,000*l*. If we add to this the 54,250,000*l* capital expended in the mercantile marine, we have the gross total of more than 440,000,000 of money sunk in the transit of the country. If the number of miles traversed by the natives of this country in the course of the year by sea, road, rail, river, and canal, were summed up, it would reach to a distance greater than to the remotest planet yet discovered."

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## V.

The following extract from a speech lately made by the King of Holland shows the precautions which that pacific and commercial country is about to take for self-defence :—

## OPENING OF THE SESSION OF THE STATES-GENERAL.

The Hague, October 7, 1850.

“ This morning, at 12 o’clock, the Legislative Session of the States-General took place with the usual ceremony. His Majesty delivered the following speech from the throne :—

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ IT is my earnest desire that the present meeting of the States-General may from this time forward be the complete emanation of those rights which the constitution lately established, and secured to the Netherlands.

“ I am happy to find myself surrounded by the newly elected representatives. Our relations with all foreign powers continue to be of an amicable nature.

. . . . .

“ Preparatory measures which promise a favourable result have been adopted *for the formation of a thorough system of national defence*, WHICH HAS LONG BEEN AN OBJECT OF MY SOLICITUDE.”

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## VI.

The following letter, from Admiral Sir Charles Napier, which has just appeared in the *Times* of the 11th October, 1850, (after our volume was in type,) very powerfully corroborates our description of the defenceless condition of the British people :—

“ TO THE EDITOR OF THE ‘ TIMES.’

“ SIR,—The President of the French Republic, the French squadron, and the gigantic works, finished and in progress, which have been seen by many British officers, by the Yacht Club, and by numerous English gentlemen, together with the articles in the press, have done more to open the eyes of the people of England to our unprotected state than the celebrated letter of the Duke of Wellington, and the various communications myself and others have made to different members of Her Majesty’s Government, both publicly and privately, and through the medium of the press. They have seen, almost within sight of our own shores, a splendid breakwater of nearly three miles long rise from the bottom of the sea, 60 feet deep, under which can lie at moorings 50 sail-of-the-line with perfect safety, almost frowning on England. That breakwater, ere long, will be defended by three tremendous fortifications, independent of movable guns without number, to protect either entrance that may be attacked. On the Isle of Pelée, opposite the breakwater, on the eastern entrance, is Fort Royal (now Fort National), mounting 90 guns casemated, and guns pointing out of ports like a ship. Opposite this, on the main land, is Fort de Flamands, mount-

ing many heavy guns ; in its rear is the redoubt of Tourlaville.

“Opposite the breakwater, to the west, are the Forts of Querqueville, St. Anne, and Honet, and one intended to be built on a rock, between the west end of the breakwater and Querqueville. These forts will mount upwards of 150 guns. There are also strong batteries to the left of the basin, bearing on the roads. Within the breakwater, excavated out of rock and faced with stone, is the *avant port*, capable of containing ten sail-of-the-line alongside the quay, 30 feet deep at low-water spring-tides. In this port are a dock and four slips, in a line with this, and communicating with it, is an inner basin, in which ten sail-of-the-line can also lie alongside the quay. On two sides of this basin are magazines, and here also lies the sheer hulk. In the rear of Fort Honet there is another small basin, and two building slips. This serves as a ditch to the fort, which is cut off from the mainland and island by a draw-bridge, from the lower tier of guns, another bridge conducts you over a ditch to a large barrack-yard, casemated ; and two small stairs lead up to the second tier of guns.

“In the rear of the *avant port* and the inner basin inland there is another basin in construction, which communicates with both. This basin when finished can accommodate 20 sail-of-the-line alongside the quay. Here are four docks and five slips. To the left of the great *avant port* there is another *avant port*, which leads to the steam basin, where there are three slips. The storehouses are large, well arranged, and close to the basins. There is also a port of refuge, leading to another steam basin, where, as in the other basins, the steamers can coal alongside the wharf.

“This splendid dockyard is surrounded by a high wall,

and the wall is again surrounded by regular fortifications, with a wet ditch: and to protect the works, the heights in the rear, and, indeed, all round from Tourlaville, there is a double chain of strong redoubts. Independent of all these there is a commercial basin, with gates, in which merchant-vessels lie afloat. Two piers project a considerable distance beyond the gates. Both the town and basin are outside the fortification.

“Under this magnificent breakwater lay the French squadron, consisting of two ships of 120 guns, three of 100 guns on two decks, two of 90 guns, and one of 96 guns; one frigate of 88 guns, three large steamers of 16 and 12 guns, but pierced for 28, and capable of transporting to a short distance upwards of 2000 men each, one screw brig, one corvette, and three smaller steamers.

“The ships, as far as we could judge, were in high order, lowered and furled their sails as well as we could do, shifted maintopsail and foresail by signal—the ‘Inflexible,’ the best of the squadron, in  $5\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. They also fired five broadsides with blank cartridge.

“In the ‘Friedland,’ where we were, some of our officers thought they fired slow, but half of her crew had only been on board two months, and this the President took care to explain. The mode of passing the powder was perfect, and well worth copying. Boats were then manned and armed, but not so quickly as I expected. They attacked the steamer, and kept up a good fire; the boats more numerous than ours, and, except the launches, much larger. This fleet mounts more guns, and, generally speaking, throws a heavier broadside, than our ships, with the exception of the ‘Queen.’ Their crews are also larger; in the ‘Friedland’ there are 184 men to pass along the powder and shells.

“It is commanded by Vice-Admiral Parseval Duchesne,

a young-looking man about sixty ; the second in command, Rear-Admiral Dubourdien, about forty-five, had lost a leg. The captains and officers are young men, and experienced men, inasmuch as they are almost constantly employed, and it requires more interest for a French officer to get out of employment than for an English officer to get into it. Promotion is by selection, except to lieutenants, where one-half rise by seniority, and, as far as I could learn, with little favouritism. I am justified in saying they are commanded and officered by experienced men, for they are almost always afloat, while we, on the other hand, are commanded by men who are employed about once in ten or fifteen years, when little justice is shown in selection for promotion, and not much for employment. The Minister of Marine (an Admiral) was present, and could form his own opinion of the fleet, whereas, had we had a review at Spithead, our Minister of Marine would have been gaping with his mouth wide open, scarcely knowing the difference between a musket and a great gun.

“ With us every change of Admiralty brings a change of plan. When Sir James Graham and his Admiralty came into office, they replaced the efficient flag-ships with inefficient ones. After a while they found it would not answer, and the efficient ships were restored. This lasted till the present Board came into office, and they brought back the inefficient flag-ships. They are now adopting what I recommended when Sir Charles Wood was secretary, ten years ago, viz., to make efficient ships do the duty of the ordinary, and the sooner they do the same thing with the flag-ships the better ; then will you see seven sail-of-the-line ready. Let them take the reliefs, and instead of three years' work out of our ships we shall get five at about the same expense ; and, instead of having three ships at home

half manned, we shall have two full manned, which will cost the same money. Add to them three more, and you will have a respectable Channel squadron. Keep half the marines of that squadron on shore to garrison your seaports in peace, and fill their places with sailors, and, in the event of emergency, let each ship send one watch into the flag and ordinary ships, fill them up with officers, seamen, and boys, and you will immediately double your force. Let the duty of labourers and convicts in the dockyards be done by sailors; you would then have a fleet ready for work at a moment's warning; and if this was not enough, call in your Coast-guard to fit out another squadron. By that time you would be able to see whether the proclamation would bring the seamen from the merchant service or not.

“ The affair of Syria ought to have given us a lesson. When the treaty was signed by the Allied Powers to reduce the power of Mehemet Ali, France was isolated and offended—the whole nation took fire, and was eager for war. Foreseeing, I suppose, what would happen, they had a reserve squadron at Toulon, and when they recalled their fleet from the Levant I think they mustered twenty sail-of-the-line. During the operations in Syria we never had more than twelve. The ‘ Vanguard ’ was commissioned on the 2nd of April, 1840, and, I think, arrived off Alexandria in October; the ‘ Rodney ’ was commissioned on the 13th of May, and did not arrive till after Acre was taken, the ‘ Calcutta ’ was commissioned on the 22nd of August, 1840, and, I think, arrived at Marmorice at the end of November. The menaces of France frightened us, and on the 1st of October the ‘ Britannia ’ and ‘ Howe ’ were taken from the Port-Admirals, the ‘ Donegal ’ was ordered from Lisbon, and I believe the ‘ Belleisle ’s’ men were draughted to man them.

But, notwithstanding all this, they did not arrive at Marmrice till the beginning of January, after the treaty was signed with Mehemet Ali. The 'Impregnable,' another flag-ship, was commissioned on the 27th of October, and the 'Monarch' on the 30th, and lay eight months waiting for men, so that, while the operations were going on on the coast of Syria, we had only twelve sail-of-the-line, and they undermanned, scattered from Alexandria to Scandaroon, two on the passage out and three fitting in England; while France had twenty sail-of-the-line in Toulon watching events. What they had in other ports I do not know.

"In this state of things France had three courses before her—the first, to have raised the blockade of Alexandria, and brought out the Turco-Egyptian fleet of upwards of twenty sail, to have endeavoured to cut us up in detail, or at all events have driven us from off the coast, and then proceeded to England or Ireland. Thus, I believe, was Admiral Lalande's plan. Their second course was more sure and more simple, viz., to give out at Paris that the Toulon fleet was ordered to Gibraltar and Cherbourg, and was to sail on a fixed day. We should have got alarmed, and Sir Robert Stopford would have been unquestionably ordered home, or he would have sailed the moment he got information of the sailing of the French fleet. When the coast was clear, Mehemet Ali would have sent his fleet to the coast of Syria, and made prisoners of all the Turks, and thus France would have outwitted the allies and gained her point, and without going to war. Why this was not done I don't know. The third course was to have kept everything secret, ordered all her steamers to collect on a given day at Cherbourg, and gone there themselves, taking care to have had steamers at Gibraltar to have towed them through the Gut. This would have given

them at least five or six weeks the start of Stopford; and I will ask any unprejudiced man what could have prevented them from bringing over any number of troops and inflicting on us a most severe chastisement? There would have been no breach of faith nor dishonour in this; France had a cause of war, the people were all anxious for it; Louis-Philippe had not nerve for such a dash, and England was saved from dishonour and disgrace.

“ This was not the only event France was prepared for. She had assembled from foreign stations from 25 to 30 men-of-war (some of which were double-banked frigates) in the West Indies before we had the least idea she had one there, and the order was only necessary to secure the whole of our West India islands. Fortunately we escaped, and France lost the finest opportunity she ever had of taking a full revenge on England for all the disasters she met with last war.

“ One would have supposed such an escape would have been a lesson—not a bit of it. Sir Robert Peel gradually paid off the fleet, and when the Talut affair took place we had only one line-of-battle ship in the Mediterranean, and, by accident, the flag-ship at Spithead going to the Pacific. We got out of that scrape, and I believe the indemnity to Mr. Pritchard is not paid to this day. Again, when France and Russia joined in the affair of Greece, and the French Ambassador left this country, and the Russian was ready to leave it, we had not one full-manned ship in England.

“ Napoleon said Cherbourg was an eye to see and an arm to strike. We had better take care, or some day it will strike with a vengeance. We have Russia on our left flank with a large fleet in the Baltic, and France with a harbour capable of holding a large fleet in our front,



waiting only a railroad from Paris to make it complete. Should these two powers at any time fall out with us, I do not think they will pay much attention to Cobden's Peace Congress. One wants to go to Constantinople, the other wants to go to the Rhine, and we want to prevent both; and when the pear is riper, Cobden's preaching at Frankfort will not prevent them.

" I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

" CHARLES NAPIER.

" *Merchistoun, Oct 1* "

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## VII.

The following authentic account of the mode in which the Landwehr or militia forces of the Continent are constituted, may be deemed worthy of perusal :—

"The landwehr of Austria is organized on a different system from that of Prussia. It is, in fact, the reserve of the regular army, and is composed of such a force as, if necessary, may enable the government to augment the regiments of infantry to five battalions, instead of three, of which they are composed in time of peace.

"In Austria every province has certain military regulations peculiar to itself, and which have hitherto been respected by the government. Thus, Hungary furnishes no landwehr. Its contingent, composed of 15 regiments of infantry, 13 regiments of frontier troops, and 12 regiments of hussars, forms, with the Transylvanians included, an effective of 115,280 men in time of war, and this force,

on emergency, might be carried up to 145,144 men, as was the case in 1809.

“But if Austria should have to sustain a national war in Hungary, and the enemy should invade the imperial territory, there would be a ‘levée en masse’ of the nobility, which levée is denominated an ‘insurrection.’ This insurrection, in 1809, having furnished 38,444 men, added to the regular army of Hungary, viz 145,144, brought the contingent of Hungary in that year up to 183,588 men. But this levée en masse is never resorted to unless the integrity of the empire be assailed by an enemy.

“Tyrol is nearly in the same condition, furnishing in time of peace a regiment of chasseurs of 4 battalions, or an effective of 5240 men; and 12 battalions of chasseurs, each of an effective of 1310 men: but should the Tyrol become the theatre of war, the insurrection would double this contingent.

“The Croats, Slavomans, Carylthians, Transylvanians, Dalmatians, and Illyrians, form 17 regiments of frontier troops, who have the same staff as the regiments of the line, the force of the battalions being in proportion to the population of the districts in which they are raised. They are in fact military colonies, which have in themselves all the elements of a levée en masse, and at the same time, certainly in the Tyrol, so far more formidable than the other provinces, inasmuch as that every male inhabitant of the country is habituated from childhood to the use of the rifle, and admirably adapted for military service. A portion of these frontier troops, during the late insurrection in Hungary, rendered important services to the Austrian government, when under the Ban Jellacich.

“ Thus, therefore, the landwehr of Austria, or the reserve of the regular army, appertains solely to the German provinces; viz. to those regiments which are raised in the duchies of Austria—Moravia, Galicia, and Bohemia. It is composed of men who have already served as soldiers, the first battalion being formed from the youngest and most vigorous, and the second from the more aged; which last are generally employed as garrisons for the fortresses. Every soldier on retiring, after having served his regular time, deposits his arms and accoutrements, which are numbered, at the depôt of his regiment, receives a ticket, on which is inscribed his number, and must hold himself at all times ready to rally to the standard of his regiment when required, the ‘cadre’ of each regiment of landwehr being kept up in time of peace.

“ In the Austrian provinces of Italy there is no landwehr. Their contingent regiments in time of war are composed each of 4198 men, including two reserve companies ”

THE END.

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"Mr Cumming had exhausted the Deer Forests of his native Scotland, he had sighed for the rolling prairies and rocky mountains of the Far West, and was tied down to military routine as a Mounted Rifleman in the Cape Colony, when he determined to resign his commission into the hands of Government, and himself to the delights of hunting in the untrodden plains and forests of Southern Africa. Having provided himself with waggons to travel and live in, with bullocks to draw them, and with a host of attendants, a sufficiency of arms, horses, dogs, and ammunition, he set out from Graham's Town. The annals of the chase, so far as we are acquainted with them, supply no instance of familiar intimacy with Lions, Elephants, Hippopotami, Rhinoceroses, Serpents, Crocodiles, and other furious animals"—*Dickens' "Household Words."*

"Sport and the free life of the hunter, not geographical description or discovery, were the objects of Mr Cumming, and he enjoyed them to the fullest extent. He has knocked over half-a-dozen elephants or more at a time, chased and slaughtered caméléopards in like manner, killed and carried off hippopotamuses as men do deer at home, and grew so bold that two or three lions were less to him than an over-driven ox to a London Alderman. He met the king of beasts in open plain, rode with them, at them, across them, and round them in the execution of his tactics, knocked them over right and left.

"The most valuable parts of Mr. Cumming's book are those which describe the habits and appearances of the animals, as he saw them under more favourable circumstances than perhaps any other observer with equal powers of observation"—*Spectator.*

"He seems a man born for adventure, and the spirit that prompts him to his perilous enterprise seems fertile of expedients of combating the danger to which it exposes him. From his very childhood he seemed fired with a desire to penetrate the Bush, the Jungle, the Morass, and the Wilderness. The result of his roamings is set forth in the work he has just issued, and verily it is a wonderful tale. The man's courage often borders on madness"—*Christian's Penny Magazine.*

"One of the last testimonies given (to the labours of the missionary), and not the least remarkable, is that from the 'mighty hunter,' Mr Gordon Cumming, of Altyre, whose work, 'A Hunter's Life in South Africa,' is just published. That wondrous adventurer—amidst his wilderness roamings found his way to Ruruman, when he stumbled upon the missionary settlement of the Rev. Robert Moffatt. We confess to no inconsiderable pride and pleasure in having such a testimony from such a man—a man of whom we can scarcely give any adequate picture. To know his character the public must read his book. We have read nothing in the history of romantic adventure so extraordinary. That he was not devoured a hundred times can only be accounted for by the superintendence of a special Providence. He slaughtered lions, rhinoceroses, and elephant-like sheep, and many a time was he himself in the very jaws of destruction."—*Christian Witness.*





