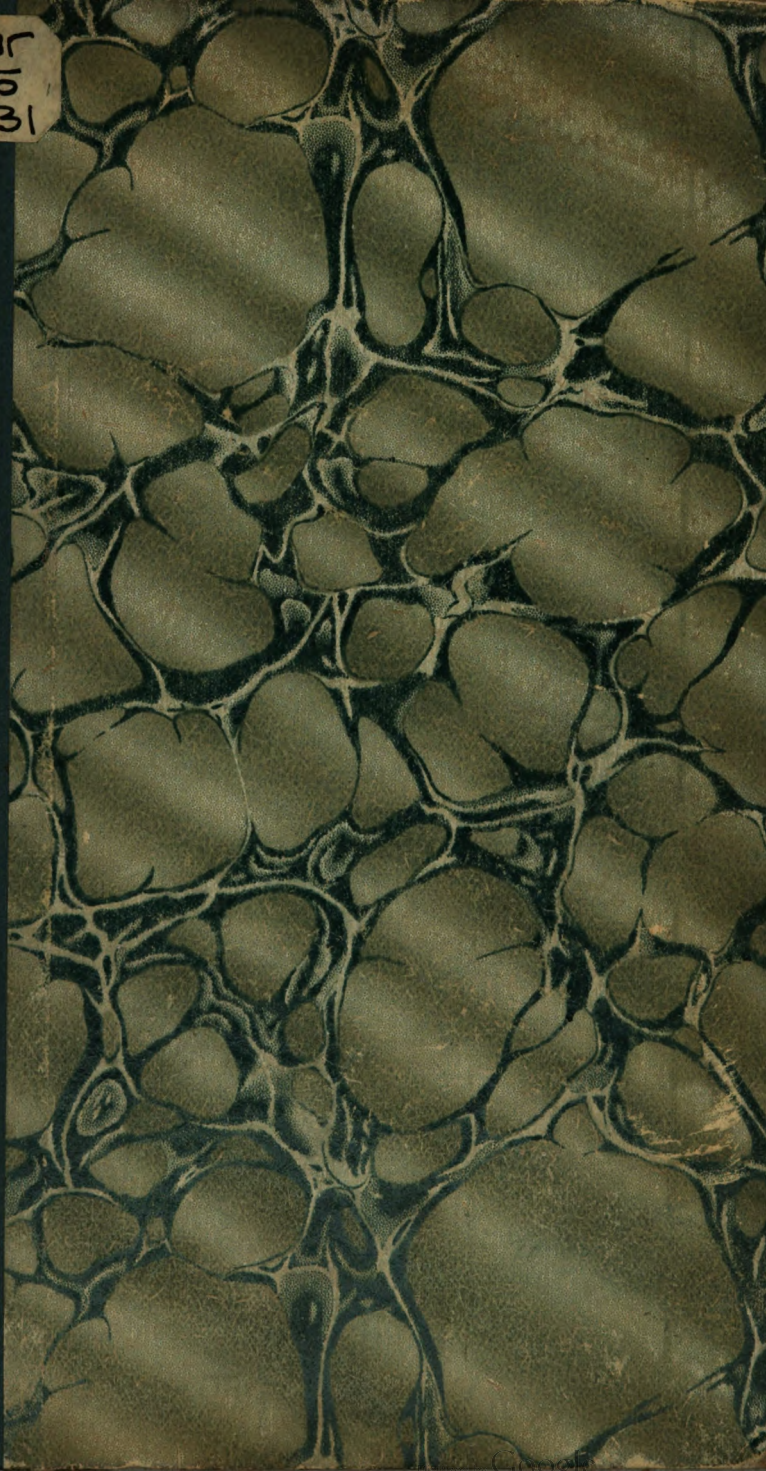


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A Chapter of Future History.

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A REPLY

TO

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AND BATTLE OF DORKING.

“’Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.”

REPRINTED FROM THE LONDON TIMES OF JUNE 22, 1871.



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[Continued on third page of cover.]

THE SECOND ARMADA.

A CHAPTER OF FUTURE HISTORY.

“’Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.”

(Reprinted from the London Times, June 22d, 1871.)



SHORTLY after the close of the war between France and Germany, in 1871, the English alarmists seemed unreasonable to an extent that verged on foolishness. Never was there a period when, to all outward seeming, an invasion of England was less probable or feasible. France was stricken down and disabled. We had amicably arranged our differences with the United States, and the greatest military nation of the Continent had apparently neither the disposition nor the power to become a formidable assailant of our independence. If ever there was a country whose interests and constitution pointed to a pacific policy, it was United Germany. She required peace to consolidate her empire, and she could not make war without calling the mercantile man from his desk, the professional or literary man from his study, the shopkeeper from his counter, and the agriculturist from the plough. Then, all-powerful on land, she was powerless on the seas. A contest between her and the maritime population of an island must resemble a contest between a dog and a fish, in

which neither could quit its proper element for aggressive purposes without imminent risk of discomfiture or destruction. Germany would no more think of sending an armament across the North Sea to invade England, than England would think of landing an army at Hamburg to advance on Berlin. Nor was the navy of the United States sufficiently strong in seagoing iron-clads, like the *Minotaur* or *Monarch*, to cross the Atlantic and encounter the English in their own waters.

So thought and argued the wise men of England in 1871. They thought and argued well; but wise men, however well they argue, will sometimes turn out wrong; and they turned out substantially wrong in this instance—as wrong as the late lamented Cobden when he made the tour of Europe to announce that, for all time to come, Free Trade had rendered war a moral impossibility. Unluckily, mankind are more swayed by their passions, their prejudices, their caprices, and their vanity, than by their well-understood interests; and so it fell out that, in the year 1874, the greatest of the Continental Powers, having taken umbrage at the tone and attitude of England in reference to sundry fresh parcellings out of territory, a league, including the most powerful states, was formed for the avowed purpose of reducing the British Isles to the condition of conquered provinces, to be divided among the conquerors. The best mode of invading England had been so often the subject of competitive examination at the military schools, that an eager desire to test theory by practice was felt by every young officer of promise; and a saying of the greatest of modern strategists had got abroad to the effect that the capture of London, as compared with that of Paris, would be

child's play (*Kinderspiel*). The time was opportune; for the long-smouldering hostility of the United States to Great Britain, through a series of untoward accidents, was again kindling into flame. Accordingly, all the shipping of the Baltic, all the naval resources of the league, were put under requisition, and a sufficient number of vessels was built especially adapted for the landing of troops, including cavalry and artillery. In particular, a large provision was made of flat-bottomed boats, carrying 100 or 150 men, the sides of which could be let down when they were in shallow water or had been run on shore. A formidable force of iron-clads was to precede the transports and engage any opposing force while the landing was effected, which, it was calculated, could be easily accomplished in six hours. As the Army of Invasion was computed at from 150,000 to 200,000 men, the allotted time seemed short to those who had witnessed the landing of the French and English army in the Crimea, which occupied two days, although that army did not exceed 55,000 men, and the landing was unopposed. But the great Strategist had pronounced six hours sufficient, and the great Strategist could not possibly have miscalculated such a problem.

In recent histories, claiming to be as veracious and trustworthy as this, it has been confidently assumed that we thick-skulled islanders would wait quietly to be knocked on the head like the birds called boobies, or caught, like sparrows, by putting salt upon our tails. But although we are constantly running into extremes, although we are by turns profuse from groundless alarm and niggardly from undue confidence, although representative institutions are by no means favorable

to the production of good administrators, we are not altogether wanting in an emergency, and we had profited somewhat from the errors of our neighbors in 1870, '71. Our army had been placed on a respectable footing in point of numbers; it was well officered under the new system of selection; both Regulars and Irregulars had been supplied with the most improved pattern of breech-loaders; our artillery, as regards quality, was (what Bugeaud said of our infantry) the best in Europe; the coast had been carefully surveyed, earthworks thrown up in some places, rifle pits and trenches dug in others, and railway communication rendered so complete that a large force might be concentrated at the shortest notice on a point. It need hardly be added that our diplomatic agents were on the alert, so that an enormous armament could not be got together in any quarter of Europe without creating an alarm. In point of fact, our Government were opportunely advised that the invasion was seriously meditated, and that they must be simultaneously on their guard against an American squadron which was to co-operate in a Fenian insurrection of Ireland. The bulk of the English Navy was, as usual, scattered abroad, but the Channel Fleet, complete in numbers and equipment, was in the Downs, and a number of gunboats and other vessels had been equipped and put to sea under orders similar to those issued by Nelson when Napoleon was meditating an invasion from Boulogne:

“Do not throw away your lives uselessly; retreat towards your own shores before an overwhelming force; but if the enemy attempt to land, dash among them at all hazards, and fight on till you sink them or are sunk.”

It was on the evening of the 17th of June, 1874, that the Admiralty received intelligence that an American squadron had been sighted off Milford Haven on its way to the Irish Sea, and my Lords immediately telegraphed to the Commander of the Channel Fleet, Admiral Sir Henry Keppel, to be on the lookout. Three hours afterwards arrived the news that the Armada had been descried, and subsequent reports coming in rapidly left little doubt that the Suffolk coast had been chosen for the landing. The very locality might be inferred with tolerable certainty from its almost exclusive adaptation to the purpose, and from the ascertained fact that foreign officers, disguised as artists, had been seen sketching it. We also, with all our talk about un-English practices, had not disdained to employ spies. Fouché certainly sent the Duke of Wellington Napoleon's plan of the Waterloo campaign, though it came too late; and it was shrewdly suspected, from the unusual foresight shown by the English Government, that there was a Fouché in the military Cabinet of the League.

So soon as the course of the headmost ships left no doubt of the precise destination of the expedition, the telegraphs were set to work, and all the available troops were brought down without delay. His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief was present in person, but the detailed arrangements were left to Lord Strathnairn and Lord Sandhurst, assisted by General Wolseley and a well-appointed Staff. A couple of hours sufficed to dig in the sand such rifle pits and trenches as were still wanting; and these were manned with the Guards, the Rifles, a battalion of Marines, and the Inns of Court Volunteers. The rocky and un-

even ground behind the beach was occupied by a strong body of Volunteers, under the direction of Lord Elcho, whose dispositions were an improvement on those of Roderick Dhu :

“ ——he waved his hand,
Down sank the disappearing band.
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood.”

Taking advantage of every inequality of the ground, he placed his men so as to be within easy range of the boats when they should near the shore, and under shelter from the covering fire of the ships. A brigade, consisting of three regiments of the Line, the Sherwood Rangers, and two batteries of horse artillery, was kept in reserve under Sir Richard Airey. The rest of the artillery, with the exception of one masked battery, was placed on a mound or eminence commanding a large portion of the beach, and the cavalry, including the Blues and 2d Life Guards, under Lieutenant-General Sir James Scarlett, were placed behind the heights on the extreme left, where they could easily reach the shore. In the contingency of the enemy effecting a landing in force, the cavalry were to charge along the beach, and roll them up before they had time to form. With them, at the head of his Hussar regiment, was the Heir Apparent to the Throne, irresistibly impelled by the hereditary courage of his race to disobey a Royal order (issued from Balmoral) not to leave the capital. Torpedoes were laid down by a flotilla of gunboats under Rear-Admiral Sherard Osborn, which withdrew when this duty was performed, prepared to operate on the flank of the Armada when the landing should commence.

It was a time of agitating suspense to the bravest while the ships of war were taking up their positions to cover the landing, and the transports were transferring their armed cargoes to the boats. After ascertaining by careful sounding that they could approach no nearer, they opened their fire at about the distance of a mile. The rocks were shelled, and the strand was swept with round-shot, causing little or no loss to the English, who never showed a finger above rifle pit or trench till the landing boats intervened and the iron hail necessarily ceased. Then a signal gun was heard; the battery in the centre of their position was unmasked; shells and plunging shot from the mound fell thick and fast among the boats; a line of fire ran along the beach; the rocks and heights were all in a blaze with musketry. The effect was withering when volley after volley, by practiced marksmen, each taking an individual aim, poured into boats crowded with men whose orders were to land and rush to close quarters without returning a shot. And gallantly did they struggle to carry out the programme. Half of one boat's crew and a third of another, some 150 men at the most, did actually reach dry land and make a rush at the trench held by the Guards, who shot down most of them as they approached, then sprang up and drove the remainder back into the water with the bayonet. Here occurred one of those incidents which show that modern warfare, with all its mechanical contrivances for wholesale and cold-blooded butchery, still affords scope for chivalry and romance. An officer of distinguished mien, the scion of a princely house, was pushed to the water's edge, overpowered and exhausted, although still fighting desperately, when his situation

was seen by a young lieutenant of the invading navy from a ship's launch in which he had been carrying orders. Without a moment's hesitation he commanded the crew to pull back, and they obeyed with such a will that within a few seconds the boat was run aground not many yards from their gallant countryman; and they were springing to the rescue, when a ball struck the lieutenant and he fell. He sacrificed his life to his chivalry, and not a man of the heroic boat's crew got away.

Among the many casualties which added to the confusion, a shell exploded in the boat which carried the leader of the headmost division and his Staff, killing and wounding most of them; and two transports, carrying artillery, ran upon torpedoes and were blown up. Things began to look very unlike *Kinderspiel*. But large sacrifices had been counted on; it was known and felt that a first landing on the British coast must be effected in the spirit of a forlorn hope, and fresh boats were hurrying in or loading from the transports; when, hark! a low rumbling sound, like intermitting thunder, is heard from far off across the sea. It is the sound of cannon on the extreme left of the Armada. It can be nothing but the English Channel Fleet. A fast steamer had, in fact, overtaken the Admiral, and, dispatching two of his ships to watch the Americans, he had come back (like Desaix at Marengo) to give a decisive turn to the wavering fortunes of the day,—the day big with the fate of England, of Europe, of the world. He brought with him seven first-class iron-clads, with more than twice as many others of heavy metal; and it was a grand and fearful spectacle, the approach of those magnificent machines, instinct with life and motion,

cleaving their way right onward through the thick of the hostile armament without stopping to engage the ships of war, and running down transport after transport; while almost every shot from their enormous guns sent a ship to the bottom, or left a boat load of gallant men struggling for life in the waves. If such a fate is appalling to think of or contemplate at a safe distance, what must it have been to those who saw and felt that their own turn was coming,—who watched with fixed and fascinated gaze the rush of the iron monster that was about to pass crashing over them?

The military organization of the invading army was beyond all praise; an order emanating from headquarters might be said to live along the line, and the skill to restore a losing battle or effect a retreat was never wanting, any more than the strategy which wins or improves a victory. But what did such skill avail here, on an untried element, where soldiers and generals were equally helpless, where strategy was useless and bravery thrown away? All hope of carrying out any pre-organized plan was at an end. *Sauve qui peut* became the word among the hired or pressed masters of transports, who, such of them as escaped being run down, made off without waiting to take in their original freights. The wind rose and soon freshened to a gale. The gunboats which had fallen back before the advancing armament now assailed it on every side. The fire of shells was continued from the heights. A desperate sea-fight was prolonged till dark, and partially continued through the night. When morning broke the catastrophe was made clear in all its horrors. The second Armada had shared the fate of the first. Most of the hostile iron-clads were missing. That

which carried Cæsar and his fortunes—in other words, the Admiral-Generalissimo and his suite—had received a six hundred pound steel-headed shot between wind and water, and had no alternative but to strike. Princes, Archdukes, and Dukes were made prisoners by the score. The renowned Chief of a brilliant Staff was picked up in an exhausted state while endeavoring to regain his ship by swimming, after the boat in which he was trying to remedy the confusion had been swamped by the surge; and a Serene Highness, who had made his way to the shore at the head of his contingent, was, with difficulty, persuaded to give up his sword to Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, who enacted the part of Bayard to Francis I at Pavia. But we reserve for another chapter the various episodes of this ever-memorable triumph and its results.

EDITORIAL
ON
THE SECOND ARMADA.

(From the London Times.)

ONE imaginary history is, as far as argument goes, as good as another, for none does more than express what the author thinks may happen, or might have happened, and the very nature of the literary artifice precludes any serious reasoning. We beg, therefore, to present our readers with a sketch of an Invasion of England which, though less elaborate in description than the *Battle of Dorking*, has quite as much claim to be considered a just view of the event of such an enterprise. The *Battle of Dorking* has given a new thrill, not unmixed with a sensation of gloomy pleasure, to our alarmists. If it had only appeared a few months ago, when the anti-Prussian fever was at its height, there is no saying what effect it might have produced. But, as its admirers would probably tell us, the cold fit is again on the British public; they are more absorbed by the catastrophe of the Commune, or even by the momentous question of "Baronet or Butcher," than by the danger which threatens them from the 200,000 Germans whom Moltke can launch against us out of all the ports from Ostend to the Elbe. In these cir-

cumstances it is possible that a narrative which represents the other view of the case will be listened to, though, of course, it is only opinion against opinion, and we must form by independent reflection a judgment as to which romancer's fiction is founded on the sounder basis of fact. This type of composition has been applied before to this very subject. *Napoléon Apocryphe* was written to show what the great Emperor might have done if only he had not been ruined by the hostility of the elements and the treachery of his allies. His chief feat was the invasion and conquest of England. He landed on the east coast, fought a battle at Ipswich, and totally broke the power of England at Cambridge. The British Isles were divided into Departments. The National University was established in London, while Oxford and Cambridge were reduced to the rank of *Lycées*; the laws were recast on the basis of the *Code Napoléon*, and many other substantial and excellent changes were introduced. To a whole generation of Frenchmen the feasibility of such an invasion was an article of faith, and they believed, in fact, that Pitt only succeeded in saving England by precipitating the campaign which ended at Austerlitz. Numbers of Englishmen have held the same opinion. Yet the most painstaking and impartial inquirers have since come to the conclusion that Napoleon, having duly examined all the contingencies of the enterprise, saw that it was impracticable; that, in fact, the French invasion was a boast on the one side and a bugbear on the other, even when England, with little more than a third of the population of France as it then was, had to face the greatest military genius of the world. The imagination of a writer of romance could describe, with

reference to that time, the various steps in the conquest of England ; is there any reason to believe that similar ingenuity is less misplaced now ?

We cannot but think that this is little more than a question of military curiosity. The political expectations which the writer of *The Second Armada*, for the purpose of his narrative, represents as falsified, we believe to be so well founded that England may safely take them as the basis of her policy. Never has there been a period when an Invasion of England was less feasible. The interests and aims of United Germany do really point to a pacific policy. She does require peace to consolidate her Empire, and she cannot make war without calling men from their various pursuits at a cost which a nation will only bear when its dearest interests are at stake. Whatever boasting on the subject of a war with England comes from beyond the Rhine arises, in our opinion, very much from the instinct which prompts men to try to frighten those who proclaim their apprehensions after a fashion which the world cannot help thinking ludicrous. Fussiness is, unfortunately, one of our political characteristics. It is, perhaps, an inevitable result of popular institutions, and of the intense interest which a people informed of the minutest details of public life takes in the discussion of every incident. We debate all our national concerns in public, and the distinction which is to be gained by taking part in political controversy insures that every opinion, however unreasonable or unworthy, shall find somebody to maintain it. Foreigners are surprised at the way in which Englishmen run down their own country, represent its statesmen as fools, its

policy as contemptible, its social system as corrupt, its civilization as a counterfeit, its strength as a delusion. Even if this be true, it cannot, they think, be either patriotic or prudent to say it. They do not realize that in England the appetite for political controversy is so great that this national Opposition is indispensable to the public contentment, and that its members have a necessary place in our public economy. So far as the idea of a war with England has entered the mind of any German it has, we believe, been put there by this class of our countrymen. It is not entertained seriously by one out of a hundred thousand, but, at the instigation of such writings as the *Battle of Dorking*, it may appear in magazine articles or squibs as an instrument for provoking the "selfish islanders" who begin to find that money and twenty miles of sea do not give immunity from all evils. German development and German extension, if there be extension, must be exclusively Continental, and almost certainly inland. Politicians can already anticipate the points where the German Power is most likely to be brought into collision with rivals, and these are far from our neighborhood, and involve antagonisms which in no way concern us. Furthermore, it may be said that Germany, though triumphant, will have enough to do for years to come in watching a vanquished but vindictive enemy on one side and a gigantic military Power on the other. Who will venture to say that even now Frenchmen have made up their minds to pay their five milliards submissively and then to remain models of peacefulness forever? In the elation of victory there may be some empty talking, but we ought to know enough of the

Germans to be aware that, in their present circumstances, they are not likely to quarrel with the first naval Power of the world, or to cherish the hope of conquest from an Armada of North Sea merchantmen.

It is probably useless to offer these considerations to our alarmists. It is their nature to conjure up visions of evil, and if one fancy is dispelled, another will present itself. Up to last summer it was France that threatened us, and not a week passed in the Session without some reference to the French ironclads, their number, size, thickness, and so forth, or to French guns and chassepots and mitrailleuses. No sooner is France overthrown than Germany is at once put in its place, and declared far more dangerous, though formerly the main point insisted upon was that the enemy were only separated from us by twenty miles of sea. But, assuming what these gentlemen expect,—that one or more Continental Powers should ever make the attempt to land a force upon these shores,—we submit that the event which the author of *The Second Armada* anticipates is far more probable than such a landing and such a march as others have described. We know something from former experience of the difficulties which impede the assembling of fleets and flotillas, the embarkation and transport of large bodies of troops, and of the obstacles to landing and penetrating inland in presence of defensive forces. We also know the overwhelming power of the British Navy, and that it could dissipate in a few hours all the maritime preparations by which we are said to be threatened. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the land forces of which this country will now be able to dispose could be collected and concen-

trated in a few days in sufficient numbers to deal with any enemy which might break through the barrier of our Fleets. Independently of all political reasons, we have in the danger of the enterprise and the facility of the defence a guarantee which ought to be sufficient to all reasonable minds.

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[Continued on fourth page of cover.]

' THE BATTLE OF DORKING.—*Blackwood's Magazine* for May has caused much angry excitement across the water. * * Occupying thirty-four pages, is a striking composition, 'The Battle of Dorking; Reminiscences of a Volunteer,' which may be said literally to have alarmed and annoyed John Bull. It is a well-told narrative, which reads like truth, purporting to be related, fifty years hence, by a grandfather, who had 'assisted,' as a Volunteer in the mock-review at Dorking, near London, in 1871. * * The veteran, supposed to talk to his grandchildren, A. D. 1921, traces England's decline, step by step; loss of India and of Canada; the establishment of Ireland as an independent country; the annexation of Holland and Denmark by Prussia; a war with Germany, commencing with the defeat of the British fleet, and ending with the invasion, conquest, plunder, and occupation of England; the future of the Bank of England; the West Indies taken by the United States; the loss of Australia; Gibraltar and Malta ceded to Germany, which becomes a great naval power; trade gone, factories silent, harbors empty, pauperism predominant; credit lost, and oppressive taxes levied by the conquerors. This, after all, is on the cards, and therefore the government journals, because of its truth, have bitterly denounced this remarkably outspoken article in *Blackwood*.'—*Press (Philadelphia)*, June 3d.

" 'German Conquest of England in 1875 and Battle of Dorking; or, Reminiscences of a Volunteer,' originally published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, is now reprinted in pamphlet form, and has created as much sensation as did 'The Fight at Dame Europa's School.' It overleaps time, and is written in 1925. The author, talking to his grandchildren of events 'fifty years ago,' describes the arrival of the German armada, the destruction of the British fleet, the decisive battle of Dorking, capture of London, and total downfall of the British Empire, as happening in 1875. It must be of painful interest to English readers, for, as the *Spectator* acknowledges, 'it describes exactly what we all feel that under the circumstances Englishmen, if refused time to organize, would probably do.' "—*Daily Chronicle (Washington, D. C.)*

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