

DEFENCE OF THE BRITISH ISLES.

Premier Balfour's Masterly Presentation of the Question.

NO POWER NEED HOPE TO CAPTURE LONDON WITH-OUT AT LEAST SEVENTY THOUSAND MEN.

And a Forlorn Hope Force of That Size Could Not be Landed on the English Coast Under Any Conceivable Circumstances.

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour made one of the most important speeches delivered by him since he assumed the premiership in the British Commons on May 11th, the subject being Imperial Defence. That part relating to the defence of the British Isles is as fascinating as a new puzzle when presented to Mr. Balfour's words. As reported in the Times, he said in part:

You will find that great soldiers in the sixteenth century believed the invasion of England possible—great continental as well as great British soldiers; and you will find that British sailors did not believe it possible. If you go down the stream of time, you come to an exactly similar state of things during the Napoleonic wars. There is no doubt that Napoleon conceived that invasion of these islands was possible. No man studying the facts can accept the hypothesis put forward by some historians that the marines, the men, and the ships which Napoleon assembled at Boulogne early in the last century were merely a ploy to distract some other power. It is certain that Napoleon believed invasion to be possible, and it is equally certain that Nelson believed it to be impossible. (Hear, hear.)

THE IRON DUKE ALARMED.

You come a generation later; and you find the Duke of Wellington, in the forties, in a very famous communication which was made public at the time, expressing the most serious alarm in terms almost pathetic in their intensity, as to the safety of these islands from invasion from across the channel. Sailors, I believe have been unwavering in their opinion. I am not aware of any considerable naval authority who has ever held that serious overseas invasion is a thing of which we need be greatly afraid. (Hear, hear.)

But that was the state of things which we found unaltered when we took up the subject, and it appeared to us, I do not say that agreement could be come to, but something nearer agreement than ever had been come to before, if we could lay down a specific and concrete problem for discussion by our expert advisers—a problem which, if extreme in its character, should be extreme against this country, and should assume things far worse than they are, ever likely to be, but a problem which should not belong either to the hypothesis advocated by the extreme military or to those of the extreme naval school. I will explain what the hypothesis was which we devised in order to attempt to bring this matter, I will not say to conclusion which would satisfy everybody, but which would at any rate satisfy any practical man who cared to devote his mind to the subject. We thought that we were going far enough in devising a hypothetical state of things adverse to this country, if we assumed that our army was abroad upon some overseas expedition and that our organized fleets were absent from home waters. I do not see that we could be asked to go much further than that. (Hear, hear.)

A CASE IN POINT.

Then the question arises, What exactly do you mean by the army being occupied in some overseas expedition, and what do you mean exactly when you say that your organized fleets are absent from home waters? How do you translate these two statements into concrete figures? We thought that we could not be going far wrong as regards the army if we assumed our military position to be what it was during the few days—four it was not more—at the very worst moment, from this point of view, of the South African war. As the House is aware, that war threw a strain upon our military resources quite unexpected in its magnitude, and the end of February or the beginning of March, 1900, was the lowest point reached during the whole of the war from the point of view of military defences at home; and as we were at the moment straining every nerve in meeting the unexpected crisis 7,000 miles away, it did not seem to us that was otherwise than a reasonable hypothesis to take as showing the lowest depth which we were ever likely to reach in home defence. The actual state of the home army at the beginning of that week—because the position improved afterwards—was as follows: We had 17,000 infantry and cavalry and 26 batteries of artillery; and that was the regular force that we had at home in organized units. We had 141,000 volunteers who would under the existing organization, be used for garrison; and there were 85,000 volunteers remaining; there were regiments of militia, and there were soldiers under age, soldiers ill, and soldiers insufficiently trained, who were not in any organized order at all. As regards the volunteers, there number was large, but from the

point of view of a field army, they were not organized, and there was not in the country at that time any machinery for organizing them. There was no headquarters staff and no sufficient arrangements for instantaneously using them as a field army. Though, no doubt, with sufficient notice, that organization could be improvised more or less, it did not exist at the precise psychological moment to which I ask the House to direct its attention. That is what we mean by saying that our army is absent on an overseas expedition.

OFF SOMEWHERE INTO SPACE.

What do we mean by saying that the fleet was away—had wandered off somewhere into space—and what degree of maritime helplessness did that leave us in? I ought, perhaps before answering my own question, to say that this idea of our organized fleets being lost in obscurity in some unknown ocean is a very extreme one to take; and it is not one which I can bring myself to pre-empt to the House comes very much within the region of reasoned probability. But let us take it that the Mediterranean fleet and the Atlantic fleet and the Home Fleet were, like the China Fleet, far away from these shores, incapable of taking any part in repelling invasion of our shores. It may be worth reminding the House that even if the Home Fleet of 12 battleships and the Atlantic Fleet of eight battleships were away, we should, under the new Admiralty system have ready for sea in a comparatively few hours—I believe that six hours would be sufficient—six battleships, and six first class cruisers in reserve, with nucleus crews ready to put to sea at very short notice—as soon as the fires are lighted in fact—and capable when they put to sea of taking part in an action, because, as the House knows, they will be manned by crews thoroughly acquainted with them, who do not come as strangers and who have gone through all those peace evolutions which are the necessary prelude to war. We should have at home besides, irrespective of the organized fleets, of which I speak, the 12 cruisers which cruise in home waters; there would be 24 destroyers in commission; and there would be in reserve with nucleus crews ready for very rapid action, no less than 95 more torpedo boats proper.

AT THE VERY WORST.

That would be the position if our organized fleets were away. But I am ready to take the hypothesis even at a lower level than I have put it; because when this subject was first examined by the Defence Committee, the new Admiralty plan was not in operation, and the reserve squadron ships, though they existed, could not be counted on at that time for rapid action and mobilization; action and mobilization measured not in days but in hours. I have omitted from that enumeration submarine boats, on which, no doubt, expert opinion may differ, but which, I believe, are destined to be of great importance, if not in naval warfare generally, yet in that part of naval and military warfare which consists in an attempt to land soldiers in crowded seas upon a hostile coast. (Hear, hear.)

I have now described the actual condition of Great Britain and Ireland at what seems to me its moment of greatest possible weakness—a moment of greatest weakness which we did reach for a few days as regards the army during the South African war, but which we have never reached, or nearly reached, I am glad to say, as regards the navy.

At all events, the problem, it will be noticed, is a precise problem. The question that we would put to our military advisers was a precise question, and it was this: Given that Great Britain was reduced to the position which I have described, what is the smallest number of men with which, as a forlorn hope, if you please, some foreign country would endeavor to invade our shores?

HOW TO GET ACROSS.

Observe, I say, "What is the smallest number of men?" That may seem a paradoxical way of putting the question, but it is the true way. (Hear, hear.) We are apt in comparing the defensive power or offensive power of Great Britain and her great military neighbors, to compare the number of our soldiers with the number of theirs, and to say, "If they can get across the sea, how could we hope to resist the masters of these innumerable legions?" But, sir, that is not the problem. The problem is how to get across the sea and land on this side; and inasmuch as that difficulty, which thinkers of all schools must admit—the extreme military school will admit it as well as the extreme Blue Water School—inasmuch as that difficulty

of getting men over increases in an automatic ratio with every new transport you require and every augmentation you make to the landing force, it becomes evident that the problem which a foreign general has to consider is not "How many men would I like to have in England in order to conquer it?" but "With how few men can I attempt the conquest?" (Hear, hear.) Very well, I have made that clear to the House. The answer which was given by Lord Roberts, and accepted by all the other military critics whom it was our duty to consult, was that he did not think it would be possible to make the attempt with less than 70,000 men; those men to be lightly equipped as regards artillery and as regards cavalry, because, of course, horses and guns are the things which most embarrass officers responsible for transport, embarkation and disembarkation.

A FORLORN HOPE.

Now, I make no pronouncement upon the figure of 70,000 men. I am not in a position to do so; but Lord Roberts was distinctly of opinion that for 70,000 men to attempt to take London—which is, after all, what would have to be done if there was to be any serious impression or crushing effect produced—he was of opinion that that was in the nature of a forlorn hope. The committee, therefore, will see that we have got one stage further in the argument; and the problem now is, is it possible with the fleet and with the military defences in the state I have described, is it possible to land 70,000 men on these shores? Sir, may I be permitted to interrupt the argument in its most direct shape, but not to interrupt it with anything which is irrelevant, to point out here that in this way of stating the problem, we avoid all the controversies raised by what are called the Blue Water School, because we assume that there are home defences, and it is necessary that we should assume that there are home land defences. If this country can be conceived as being as helpless as, let us say, some island in the South Seas, where the inhabitants know not even the humblest arts of war, why, I suppose 5,000 men, if they could get on shore, if they could squeeze a way through the navy, could march from end to end of the island, as white men have marched from end to end of Australia, unresisted by the blacks. But, of course, that is a state of things which does not exist, and cannot exist. So the people put a dilemma. Either the navy can absolutely stop an invasion—if so, why do you ask anybody to learn the use of the rifle; or else the navy cannot have a force at home competent to deal with a foreign force. But those dilemmas are very misleading. (Cheers.) And not only that, but they lead in this case to a completely false impression.

(Conclusion Tomorrow.)

PLAGUE ON THE INCREASE.

No Less Than 52,602 Deaths Are Recorded in One Week in India.

London, May 27.—The Lancet prints advices from its correspondent in India to the effect that the plague epidemic there continues with unabated virulence. For the week ending May 22 there were 54,602 deaths, compared with 61,786 during the preceding week. The mortality during the present year promises to exceed the record which stands as follows:—Total deaths for 1901, 273,679; 1902, 577,427; 1903, 581,263; 1904, 1,022,299, and to April 22, 1905, 639,968. It is doubtful if the figures tell the whole truth. Detailed figures show that the disease has spread throughout the country. The Pasteur anti-plague serum has been extensively used in the present outbreak. Although it is impossible yet to give a definite opinion as to its efficacy, many reports show that it is valuable.

Nearly every man is busy making money for some women—if he worked only for himself he would loaf most of the time.

Ever since Eve ate out of the garden of Eden the apple has been man's favorite fruit.

Doctors Said That Lumps and External Swellings Would Turn to Running Sores.

Mrs. Jacob Kaehler, Zurich, Ont., says that

Burdock Blood Bitters Saved Her from Many Years of Suffering.

She writes:—"Now imagine how joyous and great was my surprise when a friend of mine told me that Burdock Blood Bitters would cure me, so that the lumps and external swellings, which the doctors told me would turn to running sores, would disappear. I took her advice, and can say that I have no doubt but that Burdock Blood Bitters has saved me from years of suffering. It is with the greatest of pleasure and with a thankful heart that I give this testimonial, knowing that Burdock Blood Bitters has done so much for me, and you are at perfect liberty to use this for the benefit of others similarly afflicted."

Burdock Blood Bitters is the best blood medicine on the market to-day, and is composed entirely of roots, herbs, and berries.

Defended His Theology.

A colored Virginia preacher announced one Sunday morning: "Bred-dern an' sistern, I shall discourse dis mornin' on de power of de miracle, an' I am gwine ter take as example de chillern of Israel a-crossin' of de Red sea. Der wus Moses on de brink of de sea, an' right behin' him wus de army of Pharaoh. An' all at once, bred-dern, de sea froze over es solid es a rock, an' de chillern an' Moses walk-ed across." In the congregation were some young negroes who had been to college and whose orthodoxy had been slightly warped. One of them arose and said, "Why, parson, that can't be possible, 'cause de geographies tell us that water don't freeze at de equator." The old man hesitated a moment and then replied scornfully: "I jest knowed one of you young niggers wus gwine ter dispute de work of de Lawd. Young man, when de Red sea froze de warn't no geography an' der warn't no equator."

Willing to Sell Out.

The mayor of New York walked down the steps of the city hall the other evening and bought a paper from a newsboy. While waiting his change he said, "Well, my little man, how is business today?" The little merchant looked up and answered, "On de bum!" The mayor thought for a moment and finally said: "Keep at it, my little man. You have a chance to become the president some day." The little fellow answered immediately, "Dat might be so, but I'll sell me chances for a nickel right now!"

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SEALED TENDERS addressed "Inspectors of Penitentiaries, Ottawa," and endorsed "Tenders for Supplies," will be received until Monday, 5th June, inclusive, from parties desirous of contracting for supplies, for the fiscal year 1905-1906, for the following institutions, namely:

1. Kingston Penitentiary.
 2. St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary.
 3. Dorchester Penitentiary.
 4. Manitoba Penitentiary.
 5. British Columbia Penitentiary.
 6. Regina Jail.
 7. Prince Albert Jail.
- Separate tenders will be received for each of the following classes of supplies:—
1. Flour (Canadian Strong Baker's).
 2. Beef and Mutton (fresh).
 3. Forage.
 4. Coal (anthracite and bituminous).
 5. Cordwood.
 6. Groceries.
 7. Coal oil (in barrels).
 8. Dry Goods.
 9. Drugs and Medicines.
 10. Leather and Findings.
 11. Hardware, Tinware, Paints, &c.
 12. Lumber.

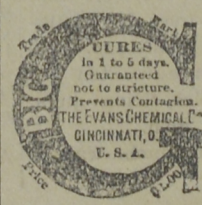
Details of information as to form of contract, together with forms of tender, will be furnished on application to the Wardens of the various institutions.

All supplies are subject to the approval of the Warden or Jailor.

All tenders submitted must specify clearly the institution, or institutions, which it is proposed to supply and must bear the endorsement of at least two responsible sureties.

Papers inserting this notice without authority from the King's Printer will not be paid for.

DOUGLAS STEWART,
GEO. W. DAWSON,
Inspectors of Penitentiaries
Department of Justice,
Ottawa, May 10, 1905.
May 13, dS31.



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