

THE SONG OF THE MARINES.

The following admirable lines have been written by a Marine veteran (T. J. McCartney) as an address to his son, on enlisting as a drummer in the glorious old corps, and bear the date of "The Royal Marine Barracks, Plymouth, 12th November 1873." They are worthy of being preserved by every man of the Marines who feels pride in the record of the gallant deeds of "the glorious past," and we trust they will be likewise an incentive to the youngest to whom they are addressed to do no act unworthy of the honourable coat he wears.

Come to my side, my stalwart son, my little man of strife,
There's something I would say to thee now at thy opening life;
For great deeds of the mighty past are crowding on my view
And 'tis of that immortal past that I would speak to you.

You see this little globe of brass that you so lightly wear,
Also those tiny laurel leaves entwined around it there;
There is no nobler emblem worn beneath the dazzling sun!
I'll tell you why you wear it, boy; I'll tell you how 'twas won.

Were all the battles of your corps upon its colors placed,
A powder cask, boy, no pen has ever traced;
How quickly would the great names stand on its unsullied fold,
For they have borne an honoured part in the great fights of old.

They help'd to win the mighty Rock long wept by haughty Spain,
That like a couchant lion seems to watch its wild domain;
Both Bunker's Hill and Charlestown Heights enhanced their renown,
And in the conquest of Belle Isle they gained their laurel crown.

Their spirit fired the flagging Turks at Acre's battered walls;
They marched through Egypt's burning sands at Abycromby's call—
They at St. Vincent's glorious fight did battle with the famed,
And through the smoke of Camperdown their deadly bullets aimed.

They mann'd the guns whose thunders shook the towers of Elsinore
And long did Denmark mourn the wreck then scattered on her shore;
They were in that immortal strife where Nelson fought too well,
And perished on the heroic deck where that great hero fell.

'They bled that Algiers' lawless Dey his piracies should cease,
Fought at famous Navarin to break the chains of Greece;
At Irun and Ametza they did not charge in vain,
But dyed their steel in Carlist blood for the young Queen of Spain.

They shared the toll, and shed their blood, on the Crimean snow,
And smote on India's parched plain the rebel Sepoy foe;
Fearless they faced a thousand deaths in China and Japan,
In opening those eccentric lands to commerce and to man.

The sun of tropic climes has dyed their brows a deeper shade
In Arctic and Antarctic snows their vallant hearts are laid;
The storm has sung the requiem of thousands 'neath the waves;
Yea, every spot of earth and sea has furnished them with graves!

The lustre of their proud exploits can never, never fade:
They've mourned a thousand battlements, a thousand breaches made;
Their blood has crimson'd every land, and every ocean's foam,
And from the farthest ends of earth they've brought their trophies home!

They did their duty nobly throughout the glorious past,
And should the sky of Britain with clouds be overcast,
The gallant corps, whose duty 'tis to serve by land and sea,
Shall, in the hour of England's need, the State's SHEET-ANCHOR be!

ON COLONIAL DEFENCE—A PAPER BY CAPT. J. C. R. COLOMB (LATE R.M.A.)

READ BEFORE THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE, ON 25TH JUNE 1873.

His Grace the Duke of MANCHESTER in the Chair.

My Lord Duke and Gentleman,—Though this subject has direct reference to the Colonies, it is necessary to observe that "Colonial Defence" cannot be considered as an abstract question, any more than that "National Defence" can be limited in its meaning to the defence of the United Kingdom. The full force of this assertion is not, however, generally understood.

When we get frightened on the subject of what is falsely termed "Our National Safety," but one idea is prevalent in the minds of nine people out of ten, to the exclusion of all other considerations; it is this:—guarding the soil of the British Islands against invasion.

In time of profound peace we like to talk of "our vast Colonial Empire, our extended commerce, and interests in every part of the globe." It sounds big and grand, and, perhaps, some vainly imagine that big swelling words must frighten away aggression; but when danger, real or supposed, threatens, and the nation is alarmed, we habitually forget that "England with her colonies is still a giant amongst nations, and that without them she would be a dwarf." (a) and exhibit practically our disbelief in the "giant" by seeking a refuge in the "arms of the dwarf."

Look back a few years, and by past events test the truth of this assertion. Take the panic of 1859 and its results. We were in a state of wild alarm. We imagined that France threatened our safety, nay, our existence. We took fright at her successful armies, and her powerful fleets, capable of transporting those armies. We steadfastly shut our eyes to the fact that the possibility of the invasion of England involves, as a natural consequence, the possibility of investment, the cutting of the Imperial lines of communication, and attacks upon "our vast Colonial Empire, our extended commerce, and interests in every quarter of the globe;" we, in short, forgot everything except our personal safety, and instead of taking measures for defending the Empire, we were satisfied with taking measures for defending the hedge-rows of England.

Again, we owe change in our military system to the last panic. We are told by the Government of the day that England (the dwarf) is now better prepared to resist an attempted invasion than during any past period of her history. How has this result been attained? By rendering her colonies and possessions (which swell the dwarf into the giant) less capable of resisting attack.

The military policy has been to disarm the giant in order to arm the dwarf.

I must, however, here observe that I do not argue against the pressing necessity which existed for defending the Imperial base of operations by withdrawing the insufficient garrisons formerly maintained in the colonial outposts; on the contrary, I was one of the first to advocate the withdrawal of the few regular troops quartered in certain colonies and possessions, (b) as a necessary part of a scheme of Imperial

(a) Vide Sir E. Sullivan on "Our Economic Causes."

(b) For the purpose of concentrating them at certain strategic and Imperial positions.

defence; but the scheme did not propose to leave the question of the defence of our colonies and possessions in the air, as has been done. What appears objectionable in the limits of the defence of the Imperial base, to the exclusion of all considerations for the safety of our Imperial communications, the security of our Colonies, and the maintenance of our power in distant possessions.

I therefore venture to assert that before these troops were withdrawn, before the question of military reorganization was practically dealt with, it was the duty of statesmen to cast their eyes beyond the shores of "Happy England," to look beyond the "streak of silver sea," and to face this truth viz., that the security of the United Kingdom against invasion is but a part of the great question of "National Defence." It is now nearly five years since, at the Royal United Service Institution, (a) I endeavoured to draw attention to this fact, in these words:—"The defence of the United Kingdom against invasion is an object of primary importance, but to suppose that this is the one thing needful in the matter of national defence, is a grievous error. We are bound to look to the general welfare of the Empire. The sources of our greatness are the possessions of India, and our commercial prosperity. Our commercial prosperity is in direct proportion to the freedom with which we can carry on trade with our Colonies and other countries. Commerce is in fact the link that binds together the several interests of the scattered territories comprising the Empire. . . . Bearing this in mind, let us suppose that the view which limits national defence to the protection of Great Britain and Ireland against invasion be practically adopted, and that the whole resources of the country have been wholly and exclusively directed to rendering the soil of the British Isles secure, and that this object has been fully attained, what would our position be in time of aggressive war on the part of one or more great powers? Does it not stand to reason that, as the object of all aggressive war is either to acquire territory, or to weaken, if not destroy, the power of the nation against which war is made the easiest and safest mode is adopted to carry out these objects: under the circumstances we have supposed, therefore, an enemy would naturally confine his efforts to destroying our commerce and our power in India, leaving the British Isles to watch his proceeding with impotent dismay."

If the heart and the citadel of the Empire is alone protected, will it "surprise us to hear" that, when the Empire is attacked, our enemy prefers cutting our unprotected communications and appropriating our undefended colonies and possessions, to a direct assault upon a "small island bristling with bayonets?"

In the celebrated article in the *Edinburgh Review* it is written:—"Steam applied to navigation has done at least as much for a defending as for an invading Power; even the stores of coals needed for marine locomotion are principally ours; and while by the aid of this powerful agent the ships of both nations may scour the coasts with favourable weather at from twelve to fifteen or sixteen miles an hour, the railways which gird the land, to say nothing of the telegraphs, may in all weathers carry the armies which are to guard it and their material

(a) "Lectures on the Distribution of our War Forces," 1869