

naval supremacy frees her from the necessity of having her land forces in a state of more complete preparation.

Since Elizabeth's time England has, on the whole, enjoyed this naval supremacy, but in 1667 she was reduced to a second-rate sea power, and the Dutch, under de Ruyter, boldly sailed up the Thames and burned English vessels after defeating her fleet.

In 1797 England could only place thirty-six vessels in line to oppose the French and Spaniards. Even if England is now superior to any one naval power, she would not, he thinks, be superior to the combined fleets of France and Russia. But the chief factor in any future war is what nation has the greatest sea power on the decisive field of battle—the English Channel. The French channel fleet is even now on a par with that of England. If the Russian fleet joined it, and possibly a portion of the German fleet (and the facilities for the combination of these offered by the Emperor William Canal must be taken into consideration), the preponderance of England in the channel would be very problematical. Judging by the recent exertions, England has probably foreseen this herself. If we examine, he says, the much-vaunted British constitution, here again history declares many chinks in her armor. Since Cromwell's time Ireland groans in her fetters. Every military disaster that England has suffered has evoked rebellion in Ireland. Every invader has found, and will find, an ally in her. It took 30,000 men and immense exertions to put down the rebellion of 1798. For all this the Briton boasts, and that with right, that never yet has an invader of his island succeeded.

Now, this is a remarkable fact, the writer continues, considering we have in all periods of history beheld British armies fighting on the Continent. They took part in nearly all the battles fought against Louis XIV, against Frederick, and against Napoleon.

Is, then, an invasion of Great Britain, from a military point of view, something totally different and much more difficult than a British invasion of the continent of Europe? Must all attempts at an invasion of England fail because there is something impossible in the undertaking? asks the writer, who then proceeds to make what he calls a critical examination of the various attempts that have taken place.

He attributes the failure of the Spanish armada, in 1588, to defects in plan and defects in organization, and considers—

1. A mistake was made in mixing the invading army with the sea-fighting fleet. The latter should have been kept quite separate from, and unencumbered by, the invading troops, so as to be free to act against the English fleet. The former should have been embarked in transports protected by fighting vessels, which the Spaniards with their numerous fleet could well have spared.

2. Ignorance on the part of the Spaniards of the English Channel; five-sixth of their vessels had so heavy a draft that landing troops from them was only possible in well-defended harbors.

3. Ignorance of the sudden changes of weather to which then, as now, the channel was liable. The close order observed by the fleet was, therefore, in the absence of trustworthy pilots, doubly dangerous.

4. Small scouting vessels of light draft seem to have been entirely wanting.

5. That the leader was quite unacquainted with naval matters.

6. That a landing was to be attempted before the English fleet was defeated.

In 1690, Louis XIV sent James II with 10,000 men to invade Ireland, but he was defeated at the Boyne on the 13th July by William III, and in 1691 the remnant of the invading army surrendered. Louis made the mistake of aiming the blow at one of the limbs instead of at England, the vital center. On the 18th July, 1690, De Tourville defeated the combined Anglo-Dutch fleet, so that the waters of the English Channel may have been described as French waters. The friends of James II besought Louis XIV to seize the opportunity; but he would not, though everything was in favor of the invaders, as the French were supreme at sea, and William III was engaged in suppressing rebellion.