

TRUE COURAGE.

BY A. THOMSON.

'Tis easy to stand on a vessel's deck,
On a vessel neat and trim,
And to watch the foam from her flashing
wake,
And the rainbow bubbles swim—
It's easy enough to climb the mast
When hushed the billows' war,
And the zephyrs play
With the pennon gay
That floats from the highest spar.

'Tis another thing in the murky night,
By the snaky lightning's glare,
To climb and stand on the dizzy height,
When the tempest's arm is bare;
When the masts are bending low with the
strain,
And the canopy all is riven,
And the angry blast
Goes whirling past,
And the flying clouds of heaven.

'Tis easy enough to be brave and true,
With nothing to set us wrong,
When the sky above is a cloudless blue,
And the heart is full of song;
'Tis another thing when the stormy clouds
Are darkening overhead,
When the angel of wrath
Stoops o'er our path,
And all above is lead.

Oh! the Christian who stands through his
flery youth,
When the tempest's power is strong,
And who will not barter God's holy truth
For the proffered hire of wrong;
Oh! bring not him, the warrior's mood,
'Tis a fading wreath, and dim,
Earth has no gem
For the bright diadem
That the Lord will give to him.

AN AUSTRIAN VIEW OF THE DEFENCE
OF ENGLAND.

(From Macmillan's Magazine.)

BY BARON VON SCHOLL, MAJOR GENERAL, AUS-
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(Continued from Page 611)

2. THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

The South Coast of England, in its extent from the Land's End to Samsgate is certainly the most exposed, on account of its proximity to the French coast; and as the Isle of Wight lies in front of this coast, and is only separated from the mainland by the narrow channel of the Solent, this island appears to me of such importance for friend and foe that I cannot sufficiently recommend it to attention, and I would wish to see more done to fortify it than has hitherto been effected. The Solent is to an English fleet just what the channel near Pola was to the Austrian before the battle of Lissa, affording good shelter and free issue, either towards east or west.

The Solent, in fact, is the true offensive basis for British maritime operations; but it would cease to be so from the moment an enemy was in the Isle of Wight. This is my reason for asserting that the defences of this island should be further strengthened. This is the more necessary because an enemy lodged there would have within reach of him, at the short distance across the Solent, a most desirable *pied a terre* . It might be alleged that a landing at the back of the Isle of Wight is difficult from the nature of the coast, and that the enemy, having no port there, would not seek to occupy the Isle of Wight, because troops once landed could not be reinforced or supplied in bad weather and would even be in danger of starving. But many persons acquainted with the locality believe that a landing is perfectly possible, the sea often remaining calm for days together. And it would perhaps be to

the enemy's interest to seize the Isle of Wight, with the object of diverting the defender's attention from points of landing elsewhere. In that case he would throw only a small number of troops on the island and the landing would occupy but a very short time. They would thus be little exposed to danger from a sea getting up during the operation, and the small number could easily be provided with food and ammunition, sufficient for a considerable time.

With the enemy in possession of the Isle of Wight, there is the striking disadvantage that the works which serve to close the Solent at the Needles passage and Spithead are taken in flank and rear, that the fleet can no longer use the Solent, and the entry into Portsmouth is endangered. Moreover, in order to check the further advance of the invader, it would be necessary to concentrate a superior force on the English coast, cut in two as it is by the deep inlet of Southampton Water, and an English army acting elsewhere would be correspondingly weakened. I assume here, naturally, that the enemy has not only infantry, but also guns on the island, for it is only with the shells of these that he can reach the northern shore of the Solent. The island is in fact a very tempting object for an enemy; for if the landing succeeds, he secures himself a footing from which he cannot easily be expelled, having the Solent, like a gigantic wet ditch, in his front. It may be further said of the Isle of Wight, that its preservation is all the more important in English interests, inasmuch as by its means the disadvantages of Portsmouth (the position of which under modern conditions, is very bad, are somewhat obviated. Portsmouth, as a great naval depot, is far too advanced. In regard to this question I must recognize the wisdom of the English Government in having, as has been the case quite recently, paid increased attention to the more secure position of Chatham, and having made extensive preparations there for building and repairing ships of war.

I do not propose to enter here upon the question of what further fortifications are necessary on the Isle of Wight to prevent the enemy from occupying it, for this is a question of detail, the solution of which my honoured friend Colonel Jervois understands as well at least as I can pretend to.

3. THE ISLE OF ANGLESEY.

No reference is made to this island in the treatise, possibly for the reason that it lies on a less exposed side of the country, and because Colonel Jervois, considering the shortness of the time available to him, did not wish to bring too many questions under consideration, and desired to arrive as soon as possible at his virtual object. Perhaps I may be allowed to add something relative to the Isle of Anglesey.

Although I am not of those who believe in the probable outbreak of a war between England and the United States, in which the latter could play so aggressive a part as to carry the operations into the mother country, yet nevertheless one should for safety's sake accept the supposition, that the Americans, aided by a coalition of European States, might carry the war to Europe. In such a case Ireland might become a base of operations in the prosecution of the war, and considering the small width of the Irish Channel, the Isle of Anglesey would offer the same advantages as the Isle of Wight, and become a good *pied a terre* naturally secured from attack from England by the Menai Straits.

On a closer comparison with the Isle of

Wight, Anglesey has the advantage, being in possession of a good harbour at Holyhead whereby troops could be supplied and reinforced whatever the weather. It appears to me very necessary that some special attention should be paid to its defences, although on the other hand, I must allow that the Menai Straits do not form a rendezvous for the fleet like the Solent, neither is there any point in the vicinity resembling Portsmouth in importance.

4. IRELAND.

Colonel Jervois speaks of the necessity of keeping a strong force in Ireland in case of war. Thoroughly agreeing with this view, I cannot divest myself of the apprehension that the enemy might succeed in possessing himself of Ireland; for, as it would be undesirable to weaken the army in Great Britain too much, this force in Ireland could never be very large, and on the coast of Ireland there are a number of unfortified harbours and bays where the enemy could very easily land.

The possibility of the loss of the island should therefore be held in view, and it should be considered what should be done either to prevent or regain the island if lost.

The first end would certainly be obtained by means of fortifications. But even if only so much were done as to prevent enemy's vessels from lying in any harbour, this would involve the expenditure of a very formidable sum.

It would be better to undertake first what would be necessary for effecting the recapture of the island. This involves the means of landing an entire army with all its material without molestation, of putting it in a position to take the offensive immediately under favourable conditions, and of having a place of security to fall back upon in the event of failure in the open field. In reply of the further question, whether one or two points of the coast should be selected for this purpose, I would certainly say two; for advantages not only double, but manifold, are to be derived therefrom. For suppose one point of the coast only prepared, should the enemy take position before it with his entire strength, it might happen that it would be altogether impossible to debouch, or the prospects of success be very much diminished. But if two points of the coast are so prepared, and the English army lands at that one where the enemy is not, there is no obstacle to debouching. And should the enemy take position before both points, he has committed the fault of dividing his strength, and the English army has good prospect of beating the enemy in detail. The existing fortifications of Cork are not sufficient for such purposes as the above, as they only serve to prevent an enemy on the leeward side from forcing his way into the harbor. The existence, however, of these fortifications and of the harbour establishments, and the geographical situation of Cork Harbour, with reference to a British fleet stationed on the English coast, and an army held ready for embarkation, should be sufficient to designate this as one of the places spoken of, whilst the other should be in the northern section of the eastern coast near Dundalk, if the natural conditions are appropriate. Not at Dublin, certainly, for this would be too near Cork, and the development of the town would be interfered with. Cork and Dundalk would be, so to speak, the *têtes du pont* which would facilitate the recapture of Ireland, and would also serve for any troops to retreat upon which