

RING THE BELL SOFTLY.

BY DEXTER SMITH.

Some one has gone from this strange world of ours,
No more to gather its thorns with its flowers,
No more to liner where sunbeams must fade,
Where on all beauty death's fingers are laid;
Weary with mingling life's bitter and sweet,
Weary with parting and never to meet,
Some one has gone to the bright, golden shore;
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!

Some one is resting from sorrow and sin,
Happy where earth's conflicts enter not in;
Joyous as birds when the morning is bright,
When the sweet sunbeams have brought us their light,
Weary with sowing and never to reap,
Weary with labor and welcoming sleep,
Some one's departed to Heaven's bright shore;
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!

Angels were anxiously longing to meet
One who walks with them in Heaven's bright street;
Loved ones have whispered that some one is blest—
Free from earth's trials and taking sweet rest.
Yes! there is one more in angelic bliss—
One less to cherish, and one less to kiss;
One more departed to Heaven's bright shore;
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!
Ring the bell softly, there's crape on the door!

Another Warning Voice from 1805.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL T. B. COLLINSON, R. E.
1793-1801.

(Continued from Page 264.)

Remarks

Every General is not a Napoleon; but without any disrespect to the personal qualities of our Generals, we may ask, how many of them would take an interest in, or even wish to see, their troops employed in forming basins for the Navy, or in rowing or working boats, or even in learning gun drill? How many would be prepared to make any proposition about artillery, or to discuss, like Napoleon, surrounded with scientific men of all kinds, the whole bearings of the project, naval, military, and civil? Napoleon said once, that science was superior to arms; but we appear to act sometimes in our Army nearly on the contrary supposition; we seem to think that it is sufficient for a General to know his drill, and that the soldier should practice nothing else all his life; and the result is, that we have seldom a General qualified by practice to take in the whole branches of warfare into his calculations, in the way an Admiral has to do with a Fleet, and that our soldiers at the outset of a campaign are at a loss to do anything but fall in and march. The care and thought bestowed by Napoleon himself on these matters gave new feelings to his troops, and a confidence in the result of their labours they did not feel at first. We are a nation whose whole warfare is made up of such expeditions; how often do our Army and Navy rehearse together the parts they are to play so often in their lives? and yet the British soldier has quite as much time for all these as the French soldier had, and he is better qualified by nature to rise to the occasion. Our Officers and men have, I believe, higher personal qualifications for soldiering than any other race; but these qualities are in great measure wasted by the system which tends to keep each branch of the Army within its own little groove; and we train a portion of our officers very carefully for war, and then make little or no use of this expensively educated section during the long years of peace. This adherence to the purely tactical part of the military profession is a foreign tradition, quite contrary to the English character, which of itself naturally takes

the more comprehensive spirit of the sailor and is not slow to take advantage of the science of the day. We shall never have a really English army until we enlarge our notions about the duties of the profession.

British Attacks.

All the British cruisers appointed to watch all these proceedings did not allow them to go on during those two years without many attempts to stop them. Besides the constant way-laying of the flotilla as they crept, one detachment after the other, along the French shore to the rendezvous, there were several direct attacks upon them in harbour by bombardment or otherwise. Our naval Officers now would no doubt think, as they did then, that it would not be a difficult matter to destroy them in that manner, but none of the attempts at that time succeeded. Even Lord Nelson failed in two attacks on Boulogne in 1801, where there was already a portion of the flotilla collected; and the great cause of failure seemed to be the superior size of the French guns. As the British ships got bolder in their attacks, Napoleon made larger guns and mortars, and fired the guns at high angles. It is true that, now-a-days, bombardments look more hopeful with our powerful and accurate guns; but it must be recollected that the flotilla presented a fair mark even to the guns of those days; there were generally one or two hundred of them moored in the roadstead, close together, and yet, neither by French nor English account, was there much injury done to either flotilla or forts, and their close packing and other precautions saved them from several attempts at boarding. Our torpedoists will also be disappointed to hear that one or two attempts with new and ingenious machines of that kind failed completely, and not so much from any defects in the machines themselves, as from accidents, of time and place and the precautions of the flotilla, to which such inventions in all ages are liable.

Upon the whole, indeed, there seems to be no doubt that the French naval and military forces felt more confidence in the prospect of success in the flotilla in 1805 than they did in 1803, and really began to believe in the possibility of forcing their way across the narrow channel in spite of the British Fleet; the Minister of Marine (Admiral Decrès) declared at last, that with the loss of about 100 vessels and 10,000 men, the flotilla would arrive on the English shores. "We must lose some men in every campaign," observed Napoleon upon this; but these two were in the secret.

The Transit.

The arrangements for the actual transit over the strip of sea were these: On the signal being given by Napoleon, which would be towards high water time, as only half the vessels could get out in one tide, about half the number of troops would at once embark in their respective vessels in each of the three ports of rendezvous, and lay outside off the ports till the next tide; in the meantime the horses would be put on board the transports, and at the next high water the remainder of the troops would embark, and the whole would move on at once to the appointed places on the English coast. The force from each port was to move in three lines—the large gunboats in the van line, the small gunboats in the rear, and the pinnaces in the centre. The naval Commander-in-Chief of the flotilla (Admiral Bruix at first, and, on his death, Admiral La Crosse) calculated on moving in a calm at the rate of three miles an hour, with the help of their oars, they

anticipated and hoped for a calm, or even for a fog, so as to escape the British men of war: and they calculated on the passage, even in a calm, not occupying more than twelve hours. They were not afraid of night time, as the troops had been practised in embarking and disembarking, and moving the vessels during the night.

Whether such an expedition would have succeeded in reaching the English shore in the face of any respectable naval force is a doubtful question. Admiral Lord Keith, who commanded the British naval force opposed to it, thought they would never attempt it without having the command of the Channel; we know that Napoleon did not intend them to attempt it, but it seems certain that the French naval and military commanders, who were not in his secret, had made up their minds to try it, and that after some experience.

It has indeed been sometimes doubted, whether Napoleon seriously entertained the idea of invading this country—whether the whole affair was not a blind to deceive the world, including the French themselves. But I think no one can read his letters on the subject during those years, showing his earnest attention to every detail in the affair, and his anxiety when the action of the plot began, without coming to the conclusion that his mind was really set upon the attempt. But the strongest evidence of all is, that it was on the point of being completely successful; his calculations of the probabilities of success were so carefully made, that the failure was due, not to fault in design, but to defect in execution.

Other Preparations.

The consideration of the points of attack on the English coast, and of the whole scheme, will come better in subsequent parts of the account; but we may record in this part the other preparations for the affair on the French side.

At Texel Napoleon had compelled the Dutch to provide a war fleet, and transports and troops, which with a French contingent formed a separate expedition of about 25,000 men, prepared for long sea voyage.

At Antwerp he had commenced the docks and quays, which were let the beginning of the great work he contemplated there and at Flushing; and no doubt if he could have postponed the attempt on England, as he wished, till these were finished, the Scheldt would have been chosen as the point of departure of a large naval and military force. As it was, the Belgians were occupied in providing part of the flotilla, which was moved to Ambleuse when ready.

At Brest there were 21 French ships of the line and transports besides, and about 25,000 troops: forming another complete expedition for long sea voyage.

At Rochefort there was a small squadron and a few thousand men.

At Toulon there were 11 ships of the line and 9,000 men; and at Ferrol, Cadiz, and Carthagena, the Spaniards were bound by the treaty with Napoleon of January, 1805, to have 30 ships of the line and 5,000 troops.

It must be recollected that all these war squadrons, and their troops and transports were blockaded in their respective ports by the British ships; and it will be seen, subsequently, that the troops at Rochefort and Toulon and part of the Spanish forces were employed in the West Indies; and that the two great expeditions of Texel and Brest never moved at all.

At the beginning of 1805, Napoleon had available, towards the invasion of England, the following land and sea forces. Of these nearly 200,000 men, about 10,000 must be