

WHEN ENGLAND WAS INVADED

Almost Forgotten Historical Occasions on Which Fees Have Landed in "Tight Little Island"

EVERY schoolboy knows all about the Spanish Armada, how it came, how it saw, and how it did not conquer, writes Sir Henry Lucy in the London Chronicle. There is an earlier, not less stirring page of English history which does not occupy prominence in the schoolroom. This oversight is perhaps partly due to our popular historians. Green's "Short History of the English People," for example, is not long enough to contain a paragraph about the second and last invasion of England. The story is told in picturesque detail in the many-volumed but little-read "Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII." Mr. James Williamson, making close and sympathetic study of this priceless compilation, skillfully condenses the narrative of "Blackwood."

At a time when the invasion of England is the desire nearest the heart of the monarch who, through a long course of years, was frequently its honored, trusted guest, the episode is interesting, and for those on the Continent, whom it may concern is not encouraging.

These "Letters and papers," penned 370 years ago, throw a flood of vivid light on the kind of place this

little island is, regarded as a suitable landing for the invader, and what reception he may expect if he temporarily obtains a footing on its shores.

A Former Invasion

In the closing years of Henry VIII's reign there was no standing army in England nor anything nearly approaching the form of an organized navy. On land and sea the defence of the country was committed to the charge of the people.

Such ships as the king could muster to beat off the larger, better-manned, armed, and victualled for the invasion of an ancient enemy, who still desecrated French soil by holding Calais and Boulogne, were manned by the impressment of merchant seamen and fishermen, guilty-less of naval training.

Favored Treatment.

They were bedded, boarded and paid wages at the rate of 6s. 8d. per month. Wherein they were quite a pampered crew compared with the lot of the land forces. These not only did not receive any money payment, but were required to find their own weapons and keep themselves in food and drink.

In those good old days the principle of universal military service, hankered after today by certain high authorities, was in vogue as it originated under the Heptarchy. Every man was liable to serve without reward in defence of his country. Not only was he expected to possess suitable weapons but to have learned how to use them.

The peasants and citizens who answered the call to arms were led against the enemy not by professional captains, but by their own landlords



and neighbors among the territorial peerage.

Fortify the Coasts

England's plight in 1545 was perilous. Francis I. and Charles V. having suddenly signed a treaty of peace, the former was left to concentrate his attention on the hated English. As far as numerical force was concerned, he held a position of superiority on land and sea.

Nor was this all. Scotland, not yet conquered, was a menace to the north, ready to take advantage of any embarrassment that might befall her neighbor south of the Tweed.

Then, as now, the first conviction on the part of Englishmen was that, at whatsoever cost of life or limb, their personal and national liberty must be maintained. It being evident that the fleet might not be depended upon to bear the Channel against the invader, steps were taken to look to the land defences.

Happily at an earlier epoch, when the Catholic powers, shocked by King Henry's dissolution of the monasteries, threatened armed intervention, a system of fortifications of the south and east was established. Wherever a landing place seemed inviting, there was built a battery, a castle or a blockhouse.

Was Fortified.

One relic of this historic time exists in Camber Castle, which guards the entrance to Rye Haven, an undertaking much more effectually accomplished under the direction of friendly Neptune who, withdrawing the sea, long ago left Rye high and dry and safe. The country was divided into four military districts. The nine northern counties were thought not too many to keep an eye on Scotland. East Midlands and East Anglia formed a second district under the command of the Duke of Norfolk, whose counties raised an army exceeding 30,000 men.

The Duke of Norfolk, Warden of Kent, Sussex and Hants, marshalled 32,000. The Southwestern counties

provided a force of 27,476. The armed manhood of the country mustered for its defence slightly exceeded 117,000, considerably less than that which a few weeks ago was secretly, at dead of night, ferried across the Channel to Belgian battle fields.

Raising War Taxes

Mr. Lloyd George will learn with envy that the estimated expenditure upon a campaign that might last a year did not exceed £100,000,000, supplemented by a blank cheque placed at the disposal of the government, this is what Mr. Lowe, if he were living, might call a feat.

It was, however, too much for the financial resources of Henry VIII. In a straightforward business-like fashion earlier brought to bear upon rich abbays and monasteries, he proceeded to levy what was known as a Benevolence.

On the principle underlying modern death duties, the king arranged that the burden should fall chiefly on the shoulders of the extremely rich.

It was borne with patriotic acquiescence. One exception to the rule revealed a grim humor in the royal widower. Alderman Richard Reed, of the city of London, refused to meet the demand made upon him. Very well. Majesty was not bound to a particular method. If he could not get what he wanted in meal he would take it out in malt. The hapless alderman was straightway dispatched to the Scottish border with a letter in the king's own hand, addressed to the warden.

Contribution Any Way.

"As for the defence of the realm and himself," wrote his majesty, "he would not disburse a little of his substance, the king thought that he should do some service with his body, and for that purpose sent him to your school to serve as a soldier, both he and his men at his own charge. Use him after the sharp discipline military of the northern wars.

Possibly knowledge of this little pleasantry bruited abroad had useful effect in hurrying up donations. The French king's armada in this enterprise of invasion had something of the same measure of luck that in a later Tudor reign awaited the ships from Spain.

Arrived off Portsmouth, they found the British fleet becalmed, and proceeded up. Admiral Lord Lisle, in command of the fleet, took the offensive, chasing the intruder before him.

The French admiral, hastily making his way up Channel, reached the Isle of Wight, where he landed three columns and proceeded to possess himself of the island. He counted without the English bowmen who, ambushed in various unexpected quarters, peppered the French with such effect that they were glad to make their way back to the ships and sheer off from so pestilent a neighborhood. On July 18, 1545, the French fleet came in sight at Portsmouth. On July 24, having had enough of the Isle of Wight, they, happy in a favoring gale, steered eastward and disappeared from the ken of the islanders

STEBAURMAN'S OINTMENT

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