Our navy is not neglected!!!

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NEGLECTED!!!

THE NAVY

AGAINST

LORD MINTO AND SIR JOHN BARROW.

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ETC. ETC.

Two naval officers have lately attracted the public attention to the defenceless state of their country—one of them being a British Admiral—the other a British Captain—Napier.—They stated that whilst we had not one manned ship at home, the Russians had in the Baltic twenty-seven, completely manned and stored for four months for 30,000 men—and that they had another in the Black Sea, which we have lately had to watch, of ten of the line——they affirmed that with the Baltic force they might come upon us on a sudden—disembark on our shores 50,000 men—and that for any thing we had to oppose them either by sea or by land, they could destroy all our eastern dock-yards—take our great arsenal at Woolwich—perhaps pillage London—and get safe back again——Captain

Napier spoke decidedly to this effect, and has since added that our northern ports and capital, and its second capital, Glasgow, are also exposed—the Admiral specifying that they might besides, take and establish themselves in the Isle of Wight.

These statements excited a strong sensation in the public mind, for we had been told when the subject was discussed in the House of Commons, that " England is prepared whenever, or from " wherever any enemy may come to attack her"—and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Minto, had said afterwards in the House of Peers, that he had not even thought it necessary to avail himself of the number of sailors voted by Parliament—that he considered we had enough—and that he knew he might have had more than had been voted if he had asked for such a vote.

For it to be affirmed that we were prepared against any enemy who might present himself, when we were not so prepared—that we had plenty of sailors, when we had not a manned ship to oppose to twenty-seven, if they chose to come, seemed most extraordinary——what could be said in defence of such assertions, and such a line of conduct—it was a difficult matter to create manned ships which had not existed, and did not exist—to what recourse then had the partisans of the ministers? they run down the Russian ships—alleging they were rotten—made of pasteboard—that they could not swim in the North Sea in summer time—that about half of them at any rate must be left at home, for fear that we should be going into the Baltic at the moment they were coming out of it—but as this was found not to be very tenable or reasonable doctrine, they fixed upon some inaccuracies of the two officers' statements in respect to the number of ships, armed, or otherwise, of the fleet of France—as if that was the point to which our chief attention was required—the great resource, however, for diverting that attention was to calumniate the British Admiral for exposing our weakness, our nakedness to our rivals—as if they had not been allowed to come and witness it—to have access to everything belonging to us—as if they did not make it their study to profit of it—as if they should know our weakness, and not the British public, who alone could remedy it—who would be the sufferers if it was not remedied—as if a nation should not know itself and its defects in order to stand up to, and to perform its duties—a most singular trait in this mode of proceeding was, that the Admiral alone was fixed upon as the offender, as if Captain Napier had not been equally so—the Captain is known to the world as a brave, experienced, meritorious officer—he has won its confidence by his deeds—it would not, therefore, have answered to attack him—besides from his character and talents he would have been an awkward customer to deal with—the Admiral then is declared to be unworthy of his rank—of hoisting his flag, whilst the Captain's name is kept back as if he had never said a word upon the subject, and he is appointed to the command of a fine line-of-battle ship.

At length comes forward in support of the Admiralty its second secretary, Sir John Barrow—he too directs the most virulent attacks on our Flag-Officer—never taking any heed—any notice whatever of our celebrated captain—it at once strikes us that this is a diverting way of making the defence of a naval administration—making it after that fashion a personal affair—but it is to the arguments of Sir John Barrow we have to attend to, and in so doing it will be very proper sometimes to compare the statements he makes in his present work, with those he made in a work he published last year—the Life of Lord Howe.——He doubts whether it can be an admiral of Britain who has addressed the letter having that signature to the Duke of Wellington, though everybody else seems not to have a doubt upon the matter—it being well known who the person is—that he is a respectable officer, and a worthy religious man—but why should not a British admiral, when he conceives his country to be endangered—its pride and support exposed to be entirely prostrated—address the person who has been the great defender of it—who takes such a prominent part in the national counsels—and who himself, not long ago, stated in Parliament, that the public must be made sensible of the necessity of an augmentation to our naval force.——" But the facts," says Sir John Barrow, " should have been " first communicated to his own department"—what! are they to be supposed not to know our condition? —at least this cannot have happened from their not having been previously fully told of it by reclamation of every kind—private and public—Captain Napier alone had then repeatedly addressed them—the letter he published, had first, long before, been sent in manuscript to one of the ministers—it is to be presumed he gave it to the press, after the Admiral's publication, from finding he was not listened to—as much as to say—I back you in your statements—I have said as much, but in vain.

Sir John Barrow goes on to assure us, that if we are to have war with the Czar, we shall have time to prepare.—" If war be his object, there " must be discussions, negotiations, manifestoes, " previous to actual war, as customary among " civilized nations." The way he proves this must be the case, if we regard the statements contained in his two publications, is as follows:——The French are a treacherous people—always ready to come upon us by surprise—but the Russian—the Russian—he is more treacherous than the Frenchman—" he, undoubtedly, is the least of all others " to be trusted, because war or peace is, in that " nation, actually the prerogative of one man— " represented, ambitious, restless, vindictive, and " unforgiving—and who can never want a pretext

" for going to war"—therefore that man " ought to " be esteemed a man of honour,"—and we ought to count upon his giving us due notice previous to his commencing hostilities—We shall see that Sir John Barrow says all this.

In his Life of Lord Howe he states in the American war the French fleet, under the command of Count d'Estaing, came upon him by surprise, without his having any knowledge of the war—the First Lord of the Admirality having written to him— " I do not think at present there is any probability " that France will declare openly—it would appear " that the ministers knew nothing of the fleet " which was dispatched under the orders of Count " d'Estaing—therefore that Howe was left with a " force utterly unequal to compete with it"*—and was obliged to shelter himself against its attack in the harbour of Sandy Hook. He prefaces the above account by saying of the French—" they " with their accustomed bad faith, their rooted " hatred of England, and their readiness, on every " occasion, to take a treacherous and undue advan- " tage, by uniting their forces to those of any " power with which she was engaged in hostilities, " had become the confederates of the revolted colo- " nies."†—In his present volume, immediately after having spoken of France, he delivers himself as follows :—

* Howe's Life, p. 103. † Ibid.

" But Russia? This power is undoubtedly the " least of all others to be trusted, because war or " peace is, in that nation, actually the prerogative " of one man; and her motions ought therefore to be " more closely watched: it is not, however, because " she has two large fleets, that she makes herself " an object of jealousy to England; but it is her " warlike indications in keeping them constantly " manned, and, as we are told, provisioned for " four months, ready at a moment's notice to put " to sea;—it is this state of naval preparation, " enabling her to commence hostilities at once, " that should keep us on our guard against a " surprise."

It may be here mentioned on this subject of being taken by surprise, as we were in the American war, what the late Mr. Fox said about the commencement of that war—" To prove that no " assurances of friendship were to be trusted when " that object, the diminution of our power, was in " view, we had only to read the correspondence " between the French minister and Lord Stormont, " our then ambassador at Paris, during the first " year of that contest."*——And on the subject generally of commencing war there may be mentioned what appears in two works I have before me of two distinguished French officers.

General Count Lamarque wrote in 1820—" Formerly a long space of time elapsed between the

* Gifford's Pitt, vol. i. p. 356.

" causes of war, the determination to make it, and " the commencement of hostilities——troops had " to be raised, magazines to be formed, a quantity " of stores to be collected——at the present time " every thing is held in readiness——the troops " are under arms——the cannon loaded, and their " discharge may follow the first hostile note of one " of the Powers."* The present General Baron Marbot, now aide-de-camp to the Prince Royal of France, wrote in 1825—" In former times war was " foreseen, and often even declared in form some " time before the commencement of hostilities— " a nation consequently could not then fear being " taken by surprise, for it had the time requisite " to raise, form, and organize recruits—but now-a- " days what is the custom?——

" It is that of great and rapid invasions. Under " a specious pretext, one or more States unite in " a very short time considerable armies; then of a " sudden, without declaration of war, they fall " rapidly upon one of their neighbours, without " giving him time to look about him, and march " directly to his capital——unhappy, then, the " people whose army should experience a defeat, " and who had not to sustain and reinforce it other " reserves than recruits, who have to be raised, " drilled, and organized."†

Sir John Barrow depends on impressment being

* See Note at the end.

† Ibid.

resorted to on the first breaking out of hostilities—these are his words—" That on the first breaking " out of hostilities, recourse must be had to the " legal and constitutional measure of impressment, " no doubt can be entertained by any unprejudiced " man; without it the ships of war for a long time " must continue to repose on their shadows, while " those of the enemy are reaping a rich harvest " unmolested."——" We may crowd into our har- " bours of Hamoaze, Portsmouth, the Thames, and " Medway, as many as we please of those ' move- " able fortresses,' those ' stupendous masses,' there " to repose on their shadows, but without men they " will not, to pursue Mr. Canning's metaphor, " ' ruffle their plumage and start into life and ani- " mation.'——Every thinking man, however, must " be fully sensible of the absolute necessity of " having recourse to impressment on the first break- " ing out of war, if we wish to protect our shores " from insult, our colonies from capture, our com- " merce from plunder; all other modes can only be " slow and progressive; and the party who strikes " the first decisive blow has made a great stride in " winning the battle."*——What says the experienced naval officer—Captain Napier—in his letter to Lord Palmerston, about depending for getting men in any way that is to be resorted to on the breaking out of hostilities—when the enemy may be coming upon us.

* Anson's Life, p. 457, 459.

" Even should men come voluntarily forward " and work with all their hearts and souls, and fit " out a fleet with the expedition the government " anticipates, still, for want of experience, they " would be totally unfit to contend even with the " Russians—a ship of war, my Lord, even with " the most experienced officers (and they are not " numerous) cannot be disciplined in a day ; and " we must not fancy because we were constantly " successful last war, we are to be equally so after " a peace of upwards of twenty years, during which " time other Powers have increased and improved " their navies in about the same proportion that we " have retrograded."

Here let us stop an instant to reflect——Lord Minto said last year we had sailors enough, and so forth.——Sir John Barrow now says we shall have due notice of war, leading us to imagine we should have time to get ready,—and then he states that on the commencement of hostilities we must have recourse to impressment, without which our ships of war for a long time must continue to repose on their shadows,——they are to repose then on their shadows until the enemy is actually coming down upon us, for surely he may be expected on the breaking out of hostilities,—a most extraordinary mode of proceeding and reasoning this appears to be.—Would it not have been better to have had the sailors which Lord Minto said he could have got,——besides the impossibility of getting them in time on the conjuncture spoken of?—who would contemplate the forcing by impressment our brave seamen, in hastily collected, unorganised, undisciplined crews, to go and fight a disciplined enemy, who had had his men united for years?—

By the by it may be remarked that circumstances, what they are cannot possibly be guessed, seem in a very short time somewhat to have changed Sir John Barrow's ideas as to the necessity of having recourse to impressment, for last year in his life of Lord Howe, he wrote as follows:—" This encou-
" ragement (that afforded by the Act of William
" 5 and 6, brought in by Sir James Graham,) with
" the benefits above stated which the seamen now
" enjoy, and the many superior advantages of a
" ship of war, over that of a merchant ship, may
" be expected to diminish, if not wholly supersede
" the necessity for impressment,"——this was his concluding sentence of his long paragraph on the subject.

The grand object of our Admiral's and Captain Napier's publications, in the view of guarding against the blow we may expect, if we remain in our present unprepared condition, was for us to have a good home fleet, as we had before the last war.—On this main point what does Sir John Barrow state, and suggest for us at this moment,—
" It was the old system to have a fifty or sixty gun
" ship stationed as a guard-ship in the Downs;
" and not a bad one, were she of no other use than

" to show to the foreign states of all nations, passing " through that anchorage, that we had at least one " ship-of-war on the look-out.——Formerly ten or " twelve sail-of-the-line were kept up at the three " great ports, Sheerness, Portsmouth, and Ply- " mouth ; but the result of the revolutionary war, " which placed Malta and the Ionian Islands in our " possession, was to transfer these guard-ships to " the Mediterranean, which from that time became " the principal station for our fleet. Still it ap- " pears to me it would impress foreigners with a " higher notion of our navy on visiting our ports, " which they all do, if a second-class ship-of-the- " line were stationed at each of the ports of Ports- " mouth and Plymouth, with the full peace com- " plement, to exercise the officers and men for six " or seven months, or be ready as a reinforcement " whenever required,—our ports at present, it must " be admitted, wear but a gloomy and deserted " aspect."—In the body of his work—this Life of Lord Anson—before he comes to his supplemental chapter——he recommends a very different sort of system from the above, for he cites in praise of that Lord the very different system he followed, as stated by the first Lord Chatham,—and that at a period when we had to guard only against the effete kind of government of the elder Bourbons.

" The second object with an English minister " should be to maintain, at all times, a powerful " Western squadron. In the profoundest peace it "should be respectable; in war it should be formidable; without it, the colonies, the commerce, "the navigation of Great Britain, lie at the mercy "of the house of Bourbon.—When I had the "honour of acting with Lord Anson, that able "officer never ceased to inculcate upon the minds "of his Majesty's servants the necessity of constantly maintaining a strong Western squadron; "and I must vouch for him, that while *he* was at "the head of the marine it was never neglected."

Should it then be neglected now when we have a rival more treacherous than France?—if we have to watch this rival at the end of the Mediterranean, is that a reason for our not having to watch him as regards our own shores, when he has a fleet opposite to them of twenty-seven sail of the line—all ready for the start—with the troops ready to step on board?—Captain Napier affirms—"It was never "before known in the history of England, during "a profound peace, that a foreign power kept a "fleet of near thirty sail of the line ready for sea, "within a few days' sail of our own shores, without "our having a fleet to protect us."

Sir John Barrow apparently would incline us to believe that this is not an extraordinary condition for Great Britain to be in——for in reply to the Admiral's assertion respecting it he says—"The "hardihood with which this letter-writer utters "things that are wholly destitute of truth is quite "surprising. He asserts, for instance, that Russia

" has 'an overpowering, well-exercised fleet, which " has been increasing for several years'—pithy, " but false; it has been shewn that it has *not* been " *increasing*."—How had Mr. Barrow shewn this-—by having previously stated that—" If Mr. " Craufurd will look still further back than 1823, " he will find that in the year 1801 Russia had " sixty-one ships of the line, thirty of which were " in commission in the Baltic—fourteen in the " Black Sea—the remainder building or in ordi- " nary"—we have to bear in mind that this was the period of the armed confederation of the North, which Nelson went to attack—beating one of them, the Dane, at Copenhagen, 2d of April, 1801—and the following is the account from James's Naval History of the then fleet Mr. Barrow speaks of:—" These thirty-one ships were divided between " Petersburg, Archangel, Cronstadt, and Revel— " perhaps the effective number, or that which might " be brought to act as a fleet, did not exceed twenty " of the line, and they were badly equipped, ill " appointed, and worse manned."*

Relative to the fleet in 1823 Mr. Barrow had stated—" If young officers would take the trouble " to read what their seniors and superiors have " seen and said; if Mr. Craufurd had done this, " he would have found that in the year 1823 an " intelligent old captain of the British navy saw

* James's Naval History, No. iv. p. 65.

" at Cronstadt twenty-seven of the line—that he
" was on board one of them; and says—'she ap-
" peared to me, as did most of the ships, to be
" hogged, for when standing on the after part of
" the lower deck, it was impossible to see more
" than one-third forward.' The Russian ships, in
" fact, last but a few years; they are built either of
" Casan oak or larch, both of which species of
" timber are of short duration."—The paragraph concludes with—" It is certain, however, that as
" the old ones break down, new ones of a superior
" class are built."——Now, after this remark, what have the broken-backed ships of 1823 to do with the present state of the Russian Baltic fleet?——We will see.——The writer of the Letter to Lord Minto—One of the People—the person who has stood forward in his defence against the Admiral's attack, states—" It is, however, essential for us to
" remember that his Imperial Majesty has a marked
" taste for naval affairs; that he encourages his
" fleet by his own frequent presence and constant
" superintendence, and that its admitted state of
" efficiency at present is mainly owing to his own
" care."——It is since his accession—that is, since 1823—that his fleet has been particularly attended to.——The several travellers who have paid a visit to Russia, and have given an account of their visit, have stated as much—Lord Londonderry, most especially.——If a fleet has increased in the effective number of its ships—if, instead of their being

broken-backed, " they are ready at a moment's notice to put to sea," as Sir John Barrow seems to admit—if the broken-backed have been replaced by new ones of a superior class—must it not be admitted that it has been increasing?—How *true* is it then to call the statement which has been made to that effect—*false*.

He insists that " the salvation of Great Britain " and her dominions depend on the navy."—In his Life of Lord Howe he assures us—that " without " a well-appointed and commanding naval force, " the British army and the lofty spirit of Britons " would be confined to their own shores at home, " and become powerless and unknown abroad; " their commerce would fall into decay, and pass " into other hands, and we should once more be " reproached as the *Britanni toto ab orbe exclusi*, " instead as now known and feared in every part of " the globe."——For this commanding naval force then so indispensable for England, and without which she will become the reproach and contempt of the nations, he appears satisfied with our having —dispersed over the world,—half the number of commissioned ships which the Russians have in two seas—he rails at, and vilifies the man who complains that we had not one manned ship to oppose on our own coasts to twenty-seven of these Russians—more treacherous than the French—who themselves are always ready to unite their forces with any power with whom we may be engaged in hostilities——and who have——no doubt for this very purpose——a fine fleet—with every thing prepared expressly for its speedy equipment and manning—at least so say themselves in the reports of their legislative assemblies.—Such being the case, Sir John Barrow maintains that the navy of Great Britain is not neglected—about our being confined to our island, his language doubtless is very fine—but if we continue as we are—without fleet or army at home—we may expect to be turned out of it—and to be sent like the Poles and their children to cultivate and populate the Russian deserts.

Asserting that the navy of Britain is not neglected—that the charges to that effect are wholly unfounded in fact—asserting that unless we have recourse to impressment on the commencement of hostilities, our ships of war for a long time must continue to repose on their shadows—after having seen it stated that if we remain as we are until this measure should have occasion to be resorted to we must be exposed to be beaten—with all its consequences—after not having said one single syllable in contradiction to this opinion—given by an experienced naval officer—after having seen us lose months, during which, notwithstanding what he has said, undoubtedly great progress might have been made in manning ships—Sir John Barrow calls upon the Russians to come down upon us as soon as the Baltic is open—for he excites the other nations of Europe to make war upon her—of course leaving it to be inferred that we would join them—is not this the same as calling upon the Russians to attack us—Suppose I were to say to a man—if I could get a fair opportunity I would knock you down——indeed——well—as the opportunity is now fair for me, I will anticipate you.—The following appeal to the nations of the continent appears in his book :—

" An able pamphlet, under the title of 'Progress " and present Position of Russia in the East,' " shows what have been, what are, and what will " be, the views of this overgrown despotic power, " which, if not soon checked, will prove an over- " whelming power. Its acquisitions, marked on " the chart which accompanies this pamphlet, are " so scattered over, and indented into, the several " states of Europe, looking like so many plague- " spots, that must sooner or later be dispersed or " burst : but in the meantime, what are all the " powers of Europe, exposed to the infection, about? " Let them look seriously on this chart, and, if its " spotted blisters will not arouse them, nothing " will."—p. 144.

We are told by Sir John Barrow that the present Emperor " is said to be a calculating monarch; " and if so, it will be difficult to conjecture by " what process he will arrive at the conclusion, " that a war with England would be gain to Russia. " The hirelings of the German press may flatter " him, as one of them has done, with the idea of

" his dictating a peace to England from the palace " of Calcutta; but they carefully abstain from " hinting that England, by a blockade of the gulf " of Finland, and the occupation of Petersburg, " may dictate to Russia from the capital of Peter " the Great—the one is about as likely to happen " as the other."

In the last assertion we are perfectly agreed—as it is absurd hinting even at our occupation of Petersburg; and such being the case, I think Sir John Barrow had better not have hinted it;—but as to the question of what Russia might gain by an attack upon us, unprepared as we are, I say she might gain the chance of dictating in England the surrender of Calcutta;—and Sir John Barrow himself must at least allow as much,—because he has before affirmed that, without a commanding naval force, we should become unknown abroad—shut up in our isle, and therefore without colonies;——but, setting aside this consequence—this prediction of his, what says Captain Napier—a man who, from his experience and knowledge of the operations of war by sea and by land, ought to be a pretty good judge;—he states that the Russians might destroy all our eastern yards and shipping there;——and if they could do that, I conceive he has refrained from stating one-half of what they might do,——for what is to prevent them, after having disembarked their troops, sending their fleet, or the best part of it, round to St. Helen's, and taking the

Isle of Wight.——The admiral says, there is nothing to prevent them.—We know that the French have often had a footing on that isle,—that they contemplated the occupying it in the American war.

The late Admiral Schomberg, in a pamphlet of his published in 1830, that is, I believe, not long after his death, informs us——" I am old enough " to remember that, only fifteen years after almost " as successful a war as that which we saw so glo-" riously terminated in 1815, Plymouth was block-" aded by a superior fleet, and our ships of war at " Spithead obliged to take refuge in Portsmouth " harbour. This great national disgrace was en-" tirely attributable to the improvident and injudi-" cious manner in which our naval administration " was conducted; and although I am far from in-" tending to draw invidious comparison, yet I can-" not avoid recalling to my recollection both this " fatal period and the commencement of the war of " 1793; and fears will then arise in my mind, that " even all this dearly-bought experience has not " produced the desired effect."

Supposing, then, it not to have done so—and the Russians were opposite Portsmouth harbour—out of which the ships must come one by one—leaving there a sufficient number to keep them in check, he would have the rest to oppose to the Plymouth division—in time we should be able to fit out a fleet there—we should concentrate our seamen upon it;—but should we expose ourselves to such disasters and chances—Russia has a commanding position over the Baltic powers—who knows what reinforcement she might get from thence—and would not the temptation be too great to offer to France——the spoils of England——the half of her colonies——this is what Russia might gain by a war, if she should find us unprepared.

Other persons, besides Sir John Barrow, ask what Russia would gain by a war with us—saying that the Emperor would lose his head if he were to enter into it—that he would not be such a fool—that we should ruin the commerce of his subjects; ——how absurd it is to talk in this way—that we could ruin him with our force, while we expose it at once to be prostrated;—before we hold such language would it not be better to put our force on a different footing, and then there might be something in it.——We continually have had differences with Russia, and are ever likely to have them —— what then more likely than that she should try to give us a good set-down——to put us out of her way?——what would be more flattering to the pride and power of the Russians—if the Emperor had a good opportunity, might it not be asked—whether he would have his head on if he were not to avail himself of it.——At any rate, who would live at his mercy—subject to his views of expediency—or those of his people—leaving them the opportunity to attack and ruin us at their pleasure——is this the way Great Britain would exist, or think of preserving her existence?

I am persuaded that Englishmen are not aware of the effects which may ensue from remaining unarmed opposite to great military, ambitious, jealous neighbours—armed by sea and by land—in the latter way so powerfully that should they be able to get but temporarily the maritime superiority, they might pour in any number of troops upon us—the so remaining is contrary to the eternal principles of policy, and prudence—independent of any secrets of diplomacy, or of the present intentions of any foreign power—we see that it is contrary to the example of all the neighbouring states—they have found that they cannot trust each other—that they must be prepared to defend themselves.—They have suffered the most dreadful reverses for not having been so—they therefore provide against the like for the future—they act according to a lesson given through all time—if we are not ready to maintain our own, it will be taken from us.—Adam Smith said, in treating the subject of defence of continental kingdoms—"When the "expedient of a standing army had been once "adopted by one civilized nation, it became neces- "sary that all its neighbours should follow its "example.—They soon found that their safety "depended upon their doing so."—It was the only way of preventing sudden inroads, and the most devastating invasions.—Some persons may think that because we are a maritime insular power we are exempted from this general rule—that every people should be armed according to its circumstances and position, in a manner equal to repel its neighbour.—So far from this being the case, it is the direct contrary, from some very peculiar circumstances inherent in the nature of the naval force.

One of them is—that continental states must have a good deal of notice of the collection and march of armies—and at any rate they cannot come upon them as quick as the wind—before any courier can announce their departure.—Besides, many obstructions may be put in their way—not so when your neighbours have prepared fleets.—Another is, that the ships of a maritime power are often very much dispersed in remote quarters—and that there is no telling how a rival may unite or direct his in furtherance of a deceitful project—another, that your rival may, if he is first ready, get the command of the plain, or main, upon which you have to collect your forces and fight.——We all have heard that when we have to form a fleet, we have to collect ships, from the river or from Chatham—or from Plymouth, as well as from Portsmouth—the enemy may interpose, and take stations for preventing such assembling—thus exposing you to fight in detail, and to leave your commerce and merchant ships at sea unprotected.—In sudden land attacks he cannot prevent any such thing—his enemy has at least ground enough, and roads in the rear to move upon and collect his forces.—He is not obliged for that purpose to come by particular channels, which may be commanded by his opponent—moreover in general he can have a good deal to say as to his field for fighting the battle, after having collected his means.——He can take a strong position—add to these considerations that the means or resources of a maritime power are in great part of a very combustible nature—are, from their situation, exposed to the enemy's very first blows—perhaps unprotected by fortifications—whilst those of the land power are not of the same description—are distributed in fortified arsenals which are never in the first line—and are so placed that, if some should fail, recourse immediately can be had to others.

We then peculiarly are acting against the acknowledged principles of the past and present time —contrary to our former practice—in a manner, as Captain Napier states, unexampled in the history of England —— we are exposing our power—our persons—every thing dear to us—to receive the most dreadful, the most fatal wounds——Were there no immediate danger—to habituate ourselves —to accustom our minds to such a condition—existing at the mercy of another, would in itself, be most degrading;—what might not be expected, if in prudential care and foresight—we were so to lower ourselves——nothing but ruination—or the effects of desperation.

People talk of our debt—of our incumbrances—why the nation that is in debt, if it means to pay it—should of all others take most care of itself, as the only way of doing so—and as to those who think but of self-interest, unmindful of paying debt—should they not think of what they would have to pay if they were under the rule of a master——their all—and to slave for him into the bargain—a commercial and manufacturing nation should particularly provide for its safety—because the shock of a reverse would be most peculiarly fatal to it.

In so providing, it must attend to all the circumstances of its power, or means of defence——if that power, or the force it has on foot, is obliged to be dispersed—to be sent into remote quarters of the globe—what is dispersed is so much lost at home—or worse, for it must be supported from home——yet home is the first thing we look to—we talk of the amount of our naval force, and compare it with that of France—(Russia we will put out of the question for the moment)—why there is no justice in the comparison, if we dwell upon the amount alone——for she has not occasion for such dispersion of force as we have, and besides she is secure at home——she can unite her maritime means against us, and can back them with an immense number of troops.

I would observe to Sir John Barrow, that when he insults France, with whom we are in alliance, and then states, as he has done, her naval means, he should have included in the means he has recited for manning her ships—the military conscription, which, now some years back, she applied to the purpose—she says most successfully—making a large body of the conscripts serve their seven years in their ships' companies;——this answers, and has answered most particularly, we are told, for sudden or speedy arrangements——when he insults France he should have considered how important it is that we should remain friends, and he should further have considered that we can never remain friends unless our force is on such a footing as to be respected by her——having in view, therefore, either her friendship or her enmity, he should not underrate her means—all power is comparative—and all its elements and circumstances are to be attended to in the comparison.——The dispersion of ours is a material circumstance to be weighed—for what is power that is not in our hands;—moreover I would recommend to him, when he insults both France and Russia, to consider that they have together much more than double the number of our commissioned ships—that they have a million of soldiers—and that we have about 20,000 at home—in Britain—and I should like to know from him what distribution of these he would propose from his office, so as to enable them to meet the enemy any where he might land.——He tells us that if we change our system—increase our fleet as proposed, and keep our ships full manned, we had much better at once be at war, to which such measures would probably lead.——When Sir John Barrow writes again, he had better reflect upon what he says—for I imagine that assertion can hardly bear reflection.——I hope we may yet be permitted to arm like our neighbours, and according to the circumstances of our position—at any rate let us determine, without minding Sir John Barrow, to make the most of our time, whilst one rival is paralyzed by the ice of winter.

Should we not thank the Admiral and Captain Napier, not forgetting Captain Craufurd, for drawing attention to this affair—the national safety? The public will determine who are most to be thanked—they or Sir John Barrow—the latter has intimated to the Admiral something about his deserving the fate which former ministers decreed to Vernon—I am persuaded that he regards such intimation with the utmost contempt——Nelson gained a battle by disobeying orders—he won another with the loss of his life—the Admiral too would lose his to defeat the enemy—and he tells us he looks upon our present Admiralty as such—a member of it, as well as the Secretary, tell him they hope he never will be permitted to hoist his flag—he tells them that they will not much longer have any power to let him hoist his flag or not, for that England will have to strike her's, if she lets them have anything more to do with it.

Perhaps it may be thought that the writer of these few pages is a friend of the Admiral's—he never, as he knows, exchanged two words with him, and is utterly unconnected with any one belonging to him—or having anything to do with him—perhaps it may be thought he is of the same political party with him—he does not know to what party he belongs—but conjecturing he is a Tory, he has no alliance with him in that way.

NOTE.

" Autrefois un long espece de temps s'écoulait entre les causes de la guerre, la détermination à la faire et les premières hostilités. Il fallait lever des troupes, former des magasins, réunir un grand matériel; aujourd'hui tout est prêt, les troupes sont sous les armes, les canons sont chargés, et leur détonation peut suivre la première note hostile de l'une des puissances."—Page 11. Nécessité d'une Armée Permanente, &c. *Par le Lieutenant General Max. Lamarque.—Paris,* 1820.

" Jadis la guerre était prévue, et souvent même *declarée en forme* bien avant le commencement des hostilités.

" Un état ne pouvait pas conséquent craindre d'être pris au déssourvu, et on avait le temps de lever, dresser et organiser des recrues. Mais aujourd'hui, quel est le genre de guerre en usage? C'est celui des *grandes et rapides invasions!* sous un prétexte spécieuse, un ou plusieurs états reunissant en peu de temps des armées considérables; puis tout à coup, sans déclaration de guerre, ils fondent rapidement sur un de leurs voisins, et sans lui donner le temps de se reconnaître, marchant droit à sa capitale. Malheur alors au pays dont l'armée éprouverait une defaite, et qui n'aura pour la soutenir et la renforcer d'autre réserve que des recrues qu'il faudra lever, dresser et organiser!"—Page 37. De la Nécessité d'augmenter les Forces Militaires, *par le Col. Marbot, Paris,* 1825.

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