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Empire Unity
and Defence

Empire Unity and Defence

by

Major-General
J. F. C. FULLER

"With that they looked upon him, and began to reply in this sort: SIMPLE said, '*I see no danger;*' SLOTH said, '*Yet a little more sleep;*' and PRESUMPTION said, '*Every vat must stand upon his own bottom.*' And so they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way." *The Pilgrim's Progress*



ARROWSMITH

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1934

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
J. W ARROWSMITH LTD., 11 QUAY STREET, BRISTOL

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PREFACE

HAS not the time come when we as a nation and as an empire should turn from talk to action? For sixteen years our statesmen and politicians have unceasingly proclaimed that what the nations yearn for is a new world, and that only through fashioning a new world can civilisation be saved. Yet during these sixteen years the old world has vanished and a new one has arisen beneath their feet.

What do we look back upon? Conference after conference, spell upon spell and incantation upon incantation. Conferences disrupt our Empire, conferences undermine our Navy, conferences disarm our Army, conferences disintegrate our rule in India, conferences confuse our trade; and so the spate of oratory surges on, littering the shore lines of the Empire with the drift of sterile hopes and a tangle of weedy words.

Meanwhile around us wells up a chaos of change: the abysses of Asia are glowing with strange lights; China is one great query, India another; Russia has divorced herself from Christian Europe; Italy has cast off democracy; Germany has donned autocracy and the United States is retiring into its silver-gilt carapace; Spain has changed, Turkey has changed, and

the continent of South America is changing. Everywhere surge destructive and creative forces, yet we talk and talk on as if the old world were still a reality.

Does not the Empire stand for anything besides words? Was not it built of blood and bone, of sweat and action? Did not it, less than a generation ago, stand for two tremendous ideals—freedom and authority? Did not it maintain peace and stability over a quarter of the globe? And cannot it accomplish again what it did accomplish if its statesmen will only cease talking?

I think it can, and it is for this reason that I have written this book, because I believe that the surest way of reinstating order in this world is first of all to set our own house in order. If we can by some means, means which I will enquire into, unify the Empire and secure it, and so make good the disruptive work of the last sixteen years, we shall establish so firm a pivot that round it world order and security must once again revolve. No other nation, or group of nations, possesses the potential energy of the British Empire. In the history of the modern world we occupy an unique position. No other people can do what we can do if we will and plan to do it. On us rests the destiny of the next hundred years.

How should we set about this work of revival and of reconstruction? First, we should not be afraid to acknowledge our errors, and we should

cease following the easy line of least resistance which we are now travelling along; secondly, we must have the courage to transform it into the line of highest efficiency.

Without doubt this work is a delicate one, for each part of the Empire is sensitive to criticism; yet it is only through criticism that we shall discover truth, and it is the true knowledge of facts which alone can guide us in reconstruction.

What I write may be incorrect, my ideals may be pitched too high, my criticism may seem impatient, and my judgment unsound. Not for a moment do I claim infallibility, nor do I wish to claim it; for all I hope to do is to appeal to those who are proud of the Empire to look squarely at this great problem of empire unity; to set aside prejudice and interest, and to decide, even if only provisionally, what is right and what is wrong with our present system of imperial management.

Should this book help our leaders to clear their minds of the dross of "Nature's drift," of jostling along the broad and easy highway of trial and error, of being surprised by each problem as it arises, of improvising solutions to meet each, and should it assist them in replacing this drift by a well-considered plan which will canalise the whole might of our Empire along the line of highest efficiency, then indeed will its purpose be fulfilled. I do not ask for faith in my ideas, but what I do hope for is creative criticism.

J. F. C. F.

Empire Unity and Defence

CHAPTER I

THE EMPIRE'S FOUNDATIONS

1. *The Anglo-Saxon Ideal.*

THE Anglo-Saxon ideal may be expressed in three words: liberty, prosperity, security. The rights of the individual man and of the individual State are its foundations, and on these rights is the prosperity of the British Empire founded, and because of this prosperity is it secured. The Anglo-Saxon race passionately loves freedom, it has never for long tolerated autocracy, and this we must bear in mind; for when we examine the past history of its expansion, or speculate on its future development, we must not lose sight of the fact that the security of the Empire is not a mere holding of acres and of boundary-lines, but the maintenance of an ideal. In this respect the British Empire differs from all other empires which preceded it—federated, confederated, or tyrannical; and because of this difference when in 1914 Germany, so it seems, aimed at establishing a Cæsarism in Europe, the free nations of the Empire banded together not only to defend their territories but to defend this ideal, which to them is their most precious heirloom.

Empires which are worthy survive, and empires which are unworthy perish. ". . . . the tranquillity of the Romans," writes Lieut-Colonel Vestal, "was purchased at the price of the decay of the public spirit which follows the extinction of political freedom."[1] This form of tranquillity the British Empire has never known, and yet its crowning achievement has been the establishment of peaceful prosperity over a quarter of the globe, hence its worthiness. If this be doubted, then all that the sceptic need do is to examine the history of the Empire. Until 1914 every great war except one[2] has given the Empire a new lease of life, and has left her the stronger for the waging it, because free nations only co-operate in support of their ideals, and do not wage war to dominate. That this is true of the Empire is most noticeable. In 1763 Canada was conquered; in 1775 Canada fought on the British side. In 1902 South Africa was conquered; in 1914 South Africa fought on the British side. In both cases, cases separated by 139 years, twelve years of British rule were sufficient to establish this astonishing loyalty in the hearts of two former enemies. Surely this is proof of the worthiness of the Anglo-Saxon ideal.

What has, then, been the secret of our government, for "liberty" alone is a disruptive

[1] S C. Vestal, *The Maintenance of Peace*, p. 244.

[2] The War of Independence in America. In this war the Anglo-Saxon ideal was violated, hence the loss of our American colonies.

word ? The secret has been disclosed by many, among whom I will select the words of one man, Mr. Gladstone, the greatest of British Liberals. In 1861 he said: "I would almost venture to say . . . that no community which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defence is really, or can be, in the full sense of the word, a free community."

This is, then, the fundamental principle of British rule : until a colony can maintain domestic peace within its frontiers it cannot be considered worthy to inherit the Anglo-Saxon ideal, or to become a partner in the League of British Nations, which is in fact the Empire.[1] It is the understanding and consolidation of this league which must be our aim, for the crumbling foundations of the civilised world require its solidarity. Compared to such a league the much-lauded League of Nations is diametrically opposed to the Anglo-Saxon ideal, for one of its fundamental principles is liberty of "self-determination," which unless the self-determining peoples are able to maintain domestic peace can lead to but one end —anarchy.

I have made this slight digression with a purpose, because it is important to realise that in the case of India—the pivot of our past defence policy—if the idea of British liberty is continued, India, directly she can maintain her own domestic

[1] The only infringement of this principle in the history of the Empire was the handing over of the government of Ireland to the Irish in 1921, when Ireland was in a state of open rebellion.

peace, will become a self-governing empire or dominion; but if, in the place of this idea, the idea of the League of Nations be substituted, Indian liberty must lead to disruption, and disruption to the reconquest of India by ourselves or by some other nation.

2. *Principles of Imperial Policy.*[1]

The birth of the British Empire dates from the union of England and Scotland, and for very definite political and military reasons. First and foremost, domestic peace within the frontiers of Great Britain was guaranteed by both countries coming under one Crown; secondly, the entire frontiers of the realm were surrounded by the sea, and fear of a land attack vanished. Domestic peacefulness thus secured had a direct influence on the whole future course of British history. To increase the realm expansion overseas became a necessity, and it was the smallness of Great Britain, and all but complete security from land attack, as well as the vigour of the race, which compelled Englishmen to seek new lands over the waters. This compulsion carried with it as a guarantee command of the seas, not to protect the realm against foreign invasion only, but to secure the sea communications between the Mother Country and her overseas settlements.

Expansion prevented decadence, it enabled hostile minorities to escape from tyrannical

[1] This Section is mainly extracted from a pamphlet by the writer entitled "Imperial Defence, 1588–1914."

majorities, it supplied a safety valve for adventurers, those truculent hunters after El Dorados who, if forcedly kept at home, revolt against their surroundings. So we find, if we study our history, that during peace time majority rule at home has guaranteed tranquillity by the brute force which every majority depends upon, until Charles I infringed the Constitution by placing himself above the will of the majority of his people. The Civil War which resulted was in its turn followed by a great imperial expansion under Cromwell, this expansion carrying with it as a necessity command of the sea, which in the Dutch Wars of the seventeenth century passed to England, and has ever since remained the instrument of security and consequently of union in the hands of the British nations.

From the close of the seventeenth century onwards we see the frontiers of Great Britain pushed out to the shore-lines of the world. Yet, as sea-power alone cannot guarantee the integrity of overseas possessions, under Cromwell we see developing, more definitely than in the days which preceded him, the theory that international war can be restricted by the institution of a balance of power between civilised nations. In other words, whichever nation on the Continent of Europe was the more aggressive a ring of weaker nations was to be drawn around it, whose united power was greater than its own. Similarly, as domestic peace within a nation is maintained by physical force residing in the hands of the majority

of the people, so also was international peace to be maintained by a majority of nations which, through preparedness for war and a threat to use physical force, could keep in check the aggressive tendencies of the would-be aggressor.

From the days of the Great Protector until 1914 the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe formed the keystone of British foreign policy, except for short periods of pacifity which invariably were followed by international conflicts. In itself the maintenance of the balance of power between the nations of Europe (and its enforcement when it has been threatened or infringed) guaranteed the integrity of the Empire as a whole ; but as it could not secure distant portions of the Empire against local attack, we find the instinct of expansion in full operation in our overseas possessions and colonies until their frontiers are pushed out to impassable obstacles. In the cases of Australia and New Zealand the sea is ultimately reached in all directions, in the case of India the Himalaya mountains and the Indus and later on the Hindu-Kush. Further, as an Empire, we have never tolerated the rise of powerful nations on our land frontiers, or where such already existed we have been careful not to stimulate their fear by establishing armed forces in their vicinity. In 1899, in the case of our South African colonies, we went to war with the Transvaal and Orange Free State not because of our interests in the gold fields, this was but a pretext, but because the existence of Cape Colony,

Natal and Rhodesia were threatened by the rise of military powers on their frontiers. In Canada we have never urged the Dominion Government to increase its armed forces beyond its domestic requirements, for every such increase would be a direct threat to the United States, the northern frontier of which to-day, on account of the military weakness of Canada, is safer than that of Bengal or the Punjab.

Separated by sea from her Dominions and Colonies, the Government at home has never been able to impose its will on our overseas possessions, and the only extensive attempt to do so, in 1775, gave rise to the American Rebellion and the loss of our American Colonies. The impossibility of exerting control based on physical force has resulted in our having to maintain alliance by means of sentiment. Herein the cohesive force which holds the Empire together is very different to that found in all preceding empires, which have either been held together by tyranny, by federation, or by confederation. The British Empire, as we see it to-day, is no more than a family partnership held together as every family is by a bond of family preservation and sentiment; preservation not only of the family as a whole, but of the family as the inheritor of traditions, customs and a literature which it is considered honourable to maintain because they have proved their worth and are the common property of all.

In the histories of our Dominions we find, as

in our own case, that the first principle of government has been the establishment of domestic peace by the threat rather than the application of armed force, and that once this domestic peace has been secured and can be maintained by the armed forces of the Dominions we have withdrawn our imperial garrisons and declared the Dominions to be of age, that is, to be in a position to govern themselves.

The supreme claim of the British system of rule is that it has been able for many years to hold together as one family a fifth of the inhabitants of the globe; and the secret of its success is that it has tended its Colonies in infancy and freed them on their coming of age. It has thus far reconciled security and liberty in a manner totally unapproached by any former empire.

From the above we see that in spite of many haphazard actions, in spite of many mistakes and much foolishness, the British Empire or Commonwealth has in the main been built up on certain well-defined principles, namely :—

1. The establishment of domestic peace.
2. The maintenance of the balance of power.
3. The establishment of secure frontiers.
4. The maintenance of command of the sea.
5. The self-government of self-controllable colonies.

These five great principles have proved their worth, beyond a shadow of doubt, not to the English race only but to all the races of the world.

In the past their infringement has led to disaster and war, in the future their maintenance is likely to lead to prosperity and peace.

3. *Foundations of Imperial Defence.*

In 1878 Mr. Gladstone very rightly said: "The strength of England is not to be found in alliances with great military powers, but is to be sought henceforth in the efficiency and supremacy of her Navy." At this time Germany and Russia were in the ascendant, but no land power could seriously threaten the frontiers of the Empire so long as our command of the sea was maintained. To-day, on account of the Washington Disarmament Agreement, the strength of the British Navy has been reduced to a one-power standard, consequently any increase in our future fleet, in order to maintain the integrity of the Empire, will either demand an infringement of this agreement or the assistance of the self-governing Dominions. It is unlikely that the first of these alternatives will be adopted, because Great Britain to-day cannot afford to bear the whole burden of naval defence; further still, not only does her poverty prohibit her from subsidising naval construction in the Dominions, but such subsidies, in principle, are wrong, for they infringe the ideals of free nations. What, then, are we to do? The answer is self-evident: we must seek a higher expansion of imperial co-operation, so that we may meet the changed political and

military conditions which to-day surround us. In fact, we require :—

1. A new imperial political outlook and organisation.
2. A new imperial military outlook and organisation.

We require a higher co-operation between the free nations of the Empire, and a higher co-operation between not only the defence forces of these free nations but between the Services within each of these forces. We require these three changes because the political world of 1914 has sloughed its skin, because the land frontiers of the Empire have been greatly extended, and because the very nature of the three sister Services is in a state of rapid transmutation to things new. In this book I shall deal with these three problems ; meanwhile I till turn to another, the understanding of which is all-important to political and military reforms, namely the problem of imperial psychology.

I will assume that the love of liberty is equally strong throughout the Empire. Freedom of thought is closely related to freedom of action, that is to the "materialisation" of thought in the lives and social institutions of the thinkers. This materialisation is strongly influenced by surroundings, which, in fact, give tone to national psychology. Broadly speaking, the psychology of the Empire may be divided into three categories : there is the European outlook, the Asiatic outlook

and the American outlook, all closely connected with the instinct of national preservation of those parts of the Empire which fall within these spheres.

Great Britain, the hub of the Empire, being an industrial non-self-supporting country, demands a prosperous Europe to enable her crowded population to live in comfort; her problem is pre-eminently European, and being threatened by no immediate foe, her outlook is economic, based on sea-power—mercantile and naval.

Australia and New Zealand, and to a lesser extent South Africa, are self-supporting countries, sparsely inhabited, possessing enormous potential possibilities and offering an enticing outlet for the surplus populations of Asia, especially China, Japan and India. If Asiatics are freely admitted to these Dominions they will cease to be Anglo-Saxon communities, consequently the outlook of these countries, especially the first two, is in nature military.

Canada is not only self-supporting and potentially immensely wealthy, but absolutely secure. Her military weakness, when compared to that of the United States, is her sure shield against invasion. First, as long as she is weak the United States has nothing to fear from her; and, secondly, because she is weak it will prevent any foreign nation annexing her. Her outlook is economic, but is based on the question of increasing her wealth and not on defending her trade routes.

Here are presented to us three different imperial points of view, and we in Great Britain have got to understand them if it is our intention to assist in the establishment of a defence policy which will be acceptable to the free nations of the Empire. We understand our own outlook well enough, but we must understand equally well the outlook of the Dominions and they must understand ours, so that the whole British family may see eye to eye. Until this new policy is defined and accepted no true plan of imperial defence can be formulated, and if this plan is not formulated, then, in my own opinion, it will not be many years before Australia and New Zealand, and later on possibly South Africa as well, will veer towards America for protection and establish an American outlook which, though excellent in its own sphere of influence, is not British. Such an outlook would in all probability spell the end of the present conception of European civilisation which is based on British balance of power in Europe.

If I am right that the present psychological outlooks of the Empire are divergent, and, consequently, latently disruptive, then the first problem of imperial policy is that they should be brought to coincide. This is a political question, and as yet its solution has never been attempted for lack of co-ordinating machinery. Once these outlooks do coincide, then the second problem is to secure the maintenance of the policy agreed upon against all foreign and hostile influences.

To-day the so-called strategical defence of the

Empire alters with every change of Home and Dominion Government, and in a lesser degree with every change of defence ministers. The present position is an impossible one, for not only does it not guarantee security but it squanders money now spent to attain it. To-day, even after the cataclysm of the greatest war in history, we are still not far removed from the conditions which faced Lord Carnarvon in 1878, when he exclaimed: "We lavish on what is obsolete, save on what is essential, and always think that our past good luck is a guarantee of future success." Yet in 1806 Napoleon laid down clearly, in a letter to the King of Naples, what the guarantor of success really is. He said: "You should make a start from such a powerful defensive order that the enemy will not dare to attack you," and "The whole art of war consists in a well-reasoned and extremely circumspect defensive followed by a rapid and audacious attack." In the case of the Empire such a defence can only be attained through concentration of effort and unity of direction, and such an attack through united preparation. I will now examine very briefly the past development of these two ideas.

4. *Evolution of Imperial Defence.*

In this section it is not my intention to outline the history of imperial defence, but instead the idea of imperial defensive co-ordination from 1854 to 1914. If by doing so I can disclose any

definite tendencies, then if I follow these when I come to examine the problem of imperial reorganisation it is more than probable that my suggestions will be based on premises which are acceptable to all parties.

Prior to 1854 the British Army was in a state of senile obsolescence, its administrative services being controlled by three separate departments—the Secretary-at-War's Office, the Treasury and the Ordnance Department, all housed in separate buildings. At this time the defence of the Empire was the charge of the Mother Country. In 1859, as an outcome of French aggressiveness, a Departmental Committee was formed to enquire into the cost of the military defences of the Colonies. The report of this Committee was laid before the House of Commons in 1861, and in it it was stated "that the tendency of modern warfare was to strike a blow at the heart of a hostile power," consequently unless the Colonies could defend themselves British troops could not be concentrated in England. The New Zealand War in 1868 created an impetus in the direction of concentration, for the imperial troops in Australia were sent to the seat of war, their place being filled by Australian Volunteers.

Due to the changes brought about by the Franco-Prussian War and the Bismarckian politics which followed it, in 1879 Lord Beaconsfield appointed a Royal Commission, under the chairmanship of Lord Carnarvon, to enquire into the defence of British possessions and commerce

abroad. The report of this Commission dwelt upon "the paramount importance to the British Empire of securing coaling stations," and pointed out that the Australian Colonies were "taking effectual measures for the defence of their principal ports." In fact, as Sir Charles Lucas says, this was the beginning "of a scheme of systematic imperial defence."[1]

In 1885, again on account of the alarms of war, a standing Colonial Defence Committee[2] was established, and in 1887 the first Colonial Conference was held, a Conference which is memorable "as being the first occasion on which defence was brought prominently before the Colonial Governments as the most important 'common interest' and 'common responsibility' of the Mother Country and daughter states." Ten years later, when the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Colonies assembled in England to attend the Diamond Jubilee, another Colonial Conference was assembled, before which, on June 24th, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain made a most remarkable speech, for it set before the Conference a new imperial gospel.

He divided what he had to say under three main headings—political relations, defence and commercial relations, and thus covered the ground of the three great ideals—liberty, security and prosperity. In more than one way this speech may be looked upon as an imperial Magna Carta.

[1] Sir Charles Lucas, *The Empire at War*, vol. i, p. 103.

[2] Later known as "The Overseas Defence Committee."

As regards political relations, he said :—

"I do not think that it is necessary for me to argue at all upon the advantages of . . . closer union. Strong as is the bond of sentiment, and impossible as it would be to establish any kind of relations unless that bond of sentiment existed, I believe we all feel that it would be desirable to take advantage of it, and to still further tighten the ties which bind us together."

Then he made a concrete proposal :—

"I feel," he said, "that there is a real necessity for some better machinery of consultation between the self-governing Colonies and the Mother Country, and it has sometimes struck me—I offer it now merely as a personal suggestion—that it might be feasible to create a great council of the Empire to which the Colonies would send representative plenipotentiaries—not mere delegates who were unable to speak in their name without further reference to their respective Governments, but persons who, by their position in the Colonies, by their representative character, and by their close touch with colonial feeling, would be able, upon all subjects submitted to them, to give really effective and valuable advice. If such a council were to be created it would at once assume an immense importance, and it is perfectly evident that it might develop into something still greater. It might slowly grow to that Federal Council to which we must always look forward as our ultimate ideal.

"And to a council of this kind would be committed, in the first instance, the discussion of all minor subjects of common interest, and their opinion would be taken and would weigh most materially in the balance before any decision were come to either by this country or by the legislatures of the several Colonies in regard to such matters . . .

"Now, gentlemen, in connexion with this subject we have already made a small advance, upon which I congratulate myself, since it was accomplished during my term of office, though it was prepared by my predecessors; and it may have in the future important results. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the great judicial court of appeal of the Empire. It is the nearest approach, the closest analogy, to the Supreme Court of the United States. It is a body of almost universal and world-wide reputation and authority, and it is our desire naturally, in pursuit of the ideas which I am venturing to put before you, to increase its authority, if that be possible, and to give it a more representative character; and with that view we have most gladly secured the appointment as Privy Councillors of distinguished judges from the courts of Canada, of Australia, and of South Africa, and they now will take their seats on equal terms with the other members of the Judicial Committee . . .

"Nothing is more desirable in the interests of the Colonies, in the interests of the United Kingdom and of the British Empire, than an uniformity of law, and that uniformity can only be obtained by occasional appeals to the

highest tribunal, settling once for all the law for all parts of the Empire; and I confess I think it would be a great loss to the Colonies if they surrendered the opportunity of getting this judicial decision upon difficult and complicated points of law which from time to time may arise in the local courts."

Turning to defence, Mr. Chamberlain pointed out that were federation established it would cover all other questions among which, "in the very first rank, must of necessity come the question of imperial defence." Then, turning to the Services, he said:—

"Now, these fleets, and this military armament, are not maintained exclusively, or even mainly, for the benefit of the United Kingdom, or for the defence of home interests. They are still more maintained as a necessity of empire, for the maintenance and protection of imperial trade and of imperial interests all over the world, and if you will for a moment consider the history of this country during, say, the present century, or, I would say, during the present reign, you will find that every war, great or small, in which we have been engaged, has had at the bottom a colonial interest, the interest, that is to say, either of a colony, or of a great dependency like India. . . . If we had no empire, there is no doubt whatever that our military and our naval resources would not require to be maintained at anything like their present level."

Next he went on to point out that no colony unless it is able to guarantee its security against foreign attack can be anything more than "a dependent country." Therefore "nothing could be more suicidal or more fatal than for any of those great groups of Colonies either to separate themselves in the present stage from the protecting forces of the Mother Country, or to neglect themselves to take their fair share in those protective resources.

> "What, then, I want to urge upon you is, and in doing so I think I am speaking to those who are already converted, that we have a common interest in this matter. . . . Therefore it is of the first importance that we, all having a common interest, should have beforehand a scheme of common defence against any possible or at all events any probable enemy, and we ought to have these schemes of defence before us."

Having dealt with the questions of Empire control and defence, Mr. Chamberlain lastly turned to Empire commerce with a view to making "relations closer and more intimate." Though the fiscal arrangements of the several Colonies differed, the ideal he placed before the Conference was that of the German Zollverein, of which he said: "It may be borne in mind that the history of that Zollverein is most interesting and most instructive. It commenced entirely as a commercial convention; dealing in the first instance only partially with the trade of the Empire, it

was rapidly extended to include the whole trade of the Empire, and it finally made possible and encouraged the ultimate union of the Empire."

I have gone to this length in quoting from this remarkable speech because, as I have said, it outlined a new imperial gospel, a system of imperial co-operation which is far more necessary to-day than it was even a generation ago. The main points to remember are: (1) The urgent need for a Council for Empire; (2) The uniformity of imperial law; (3) The common interest of imperial defence; and (4) The value of an imperial Zollverein.

This Conference was both preceded and followed by troubled times, and when the South African War broke out in 1899 England stood alone without a friend in Europe, and the Empire was found totally unprepared to wage war even against "embattled farmers." The Army was at this time in no way prepared for a war of this nature, for as Colonel Henderson says: "Imperial defence had never been approached from the standpoint of imperial strategy."[1] Yet, as this writer exclaims, "England owes much to Paul Kruger," for 92,000 imperial troops fought alongside their English comrades, and their participation in the war awoke a new imperial spirit throughout the Empire.

In the middle of the war (October, 1900) the Parliament of New Zealand passed a new Defence

[1] Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, C.B., *The Science of War*, chap. xiv. The whole of this chapter will at the present time repay careful study.

Act empowering the Government to establish an empire reserve available for imperial service outside New Zealand. This proposal was discussed at the Colonial Conference which assembled in 1902, but was vetoed mainly on account of the opposition of Sir Wilfred Laurier, who was always suspicious that any definite agreement in combined imperial policy would be inimical to the principle of the local self-government of Canada.

This outlook was a veritable obsession with the Canadian Premier, for whether imperial defence was co-ordinated or not, the fact remained that the security of the trade of the various Dominions was guaranteed by the British Navy, and as pointed out in the Admiralty Memorandum on Imperial Defence which was placed before this Conference, "The annual value of British Trade (including Bullion and Specie), which it is the ultimate object of the Navy to protect, amounted in 1900 to:—

	£
"Trade of United Kingdom with Foreign Countries..	711,838,000
Trade of United Kingdom with British Dominions beyond the Seas	237,098,000
Trade of British Dominions beyond the Seas with Foreign Countries and among themselves ..	254,342,000
Total Trade of Empire ..	1,203,278,000"

In other words, one-fifth of the total trade was purely Dominion, for the security of which the Dominions were paying practically nothing, as is shown in Appendix "A" of this Memorandum, which was added in April, 1903. It reads as follows:—

BRITISH EMPIRE: NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

Year.		Population.	Naval Expenditure.	Naval Expenditure per head of Population.
			£	s. d.
1902–3	United Kingdom	41,454,621	31,255,500	15 1
,,	Australia	3,765,805	169,324	0 10¾
,,	New Zealand ..	772,719	20,924	0 6½
,,	Canada	5,312,500	Nil	Nil
,,	Newfoundland ..	210,000	Nil	Nil
,,	Cape of Good Hope	538,000	30,000	1 1¼
,,	Natal	53,688	12,000	4 5¾

The same year that this Colonial Conference met the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was remodelled "to include the political and professional heads of the Navy and Army," and in the following year (1903) the Esher Committee was appointed to enquire into the defects of the army system during the South African War. On January 11th, 1904, the first report of this Committee was issued, and even to-day the following extract deserves careful study:—

"The British Empire is pre-eminently a great naval colonial power. There are,

nevertheless, no means for co-ordinating defence problems, for dealing with them as a whole, for defining the proper functions of the various elements, and for ensuring that, on the one hand, peace preparations are carried out upon a consistent plan, and, on the other hand, that in time of emergency a definite war policy based upon solid data can be formulated. It would be easy to show that unnecessary weakness coupled with inordinate waste of material resources thus results."

Without going into detail, the problem this Committee was set to solve was a three-fold one :—

1. The co-ordination of the defence forces of the Empire for war.
2. The preparation of the Army at home for war.
3. The reorganisation of the home land forces.

The solution of the first problem was sought in the establishment of a Committee of Imperial Defence, of the second by the creation of a General Staff at the War Office, and of the third in the Haldane army reorganisations of 1906–1908.

As regards the first it was no new creation, but an evolution of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, formed by Lord Salisbury in 1895, which itself was a lineal descendant of the Secret, or Inner, Committee of the Council under which many of our national wars were fought.[1]

[1] During the War of the Spanish Succession the Secret Committee called to their counsel a Dutch Admiral.

In 1903 the appointment of Commander-in-Chief, which had existed since 1798, was abolished and his duties taken over by the Army Council, an unsuitable innovation, especially so for war. In 1904 the Committee of Imperial Defence was formally established, and in 1906 a General Staff at the War Office was created. In India Lord Kitchener was not idle. "We must follow a system of training for war," he wrote, "suited to the vastly changed conditions of the present day, and steadfastly eliminate all obsolete traditions."[1] The time was now ripe to call together the fifth Colonial Conference, which was done in April, 1907, when its name was changed to that of the "Imperial Conference."

The first of the Imperial Conferences constitutes a notable event in the evolution of imperial defence. The new-born General Staff laid before it a well-considered memoranda based on the following principles:—

1. The power of imperial combination in war is dependent on the possession of maritime command.
2. Each portion of the Empire should provide, organise and render efficient such means of defence as will form a serious deterrent to the most probable form of attack.
3. Each portion should be prepared to offer mutual support in war based on offensive action.

[1] Quoted from *The Empire at War*, Sir Charles Lucas, vol. i, p. 170.

Further, to quote the General Staff: "All troops placed under the command of a general in the field should be organised on a single system, and that system should be one with which the commander is closely acquainted and on which the bulk of the army has been trained."

In order to give expression to the above principles, Mr. Haldane, then Secretary of State for War, proposed the establishment of an Imperial General Staff, "the creation of which he earnestly recommended." This Staff was to be an advisory body. Through it organisation would be rendered uniform and the local Governments or local Commanders-in-Chief would receive advice and information "based upon the highest military study of the time."

Though this Conference led to no important defensive policy being adopted, it nevertheless may be looked upon as the coming of age of the children of the family of Great Britain, for a resolution was passed establishing the Dominions "as national entities distinct from the British Isles." Further, "that the basis of imperial organisation was the co-operation of five nations, not the centralisation of power in the hands of the British, acting as an Imperial Government." In fact, the old British Empire was dissolved and re-born a Co-operative Commonwealth based on mutual equality; security was, however, not established.

The secret acceleration of the German naval programme soon forced security to the fore, and

the second Imperial Conference assembled in 1909, at which the following agreement based on the principles laid down by the General Staff was arrived at :—

1. To standardise the military forces of the Dominions on the lines of the British Army.
2. To work out a plan whereby the Dominion forces could be rapidly combined into one homogeneous Imperial Army.

This Conference was followed by yet another in 1911, a most important meeting, for not only were the representatives of the Dominions brought into closer touch with questions of foreign policy by being invited to attend the sittings of the Committee of Imperial Defence, but the whole question of Empire control was ventilated. Mr. Asquith opened the Conference by saying :—

> "There have been, in the past, empires which (like our own) were widespread, populous, rich in material wealth, the prolific breeding-ground of art and science and literature. But this Empire of ours is distinguished from them all by special and dominating characteristics. From the external point of view it is made up of countries which are not geographically conterminous or even contiguous, which present every variety of climate, soil, people, and religion, and even in those communities which have attained to complete self-government, and which are represented in this room to-day, does not draw its unifying and cohesive force

solely from identity of race or of language. Yet you have here a political organisation which, by its mere existence, rules out the possibility of war between populations numbering something like a third of the human race. . . .

"There are two things in the self-governing British Empire which are unique in the history of the great political aggregations. The first is the reign of Law: wherever the King's writ runs it is the symbol and messenger not of an arbitrary authority, but of rights shared by every citizen, and capable of being asserted and made effective by the tribunals of the land. The second is the combination of local autonomy —absolute, unfettered, complete—with loyalty to a common head, co-operation, spontaneous and unforced, for common interests and purposes, and, I may add, a common trusteeship, whether it be in India or in the Crown Colonies, or in the Protectorates, or within our own borders, of the interests and fortunes of fellow-subjects who have not yet attained, or perhaps in some cases may never attain, to the full stature of self-government."

From this clear perception of things it might be thought that Mr. Asquith would have proposed some machinery of imperial co-ordination, but though a man of learning he was in no sense a man of action, *laisser faire* was natural to him, and *allez! allez!* was foreign to his composition. Proceeding, he said:—

"There are, first of all, proposals put forward from responsible quarters which aim

at some closer form of political union as between the component members of the Empire, and which, with that object, would develop existing, or devise new, machinery, in the shape of an Advisory Council, or in some other form. I need not say that, in advance of the discussion which we are about to have, I pronounce no opinion in this class of proposals. I will only venture the observation that I am sure we shall not lose sight of the value of elasticity and flexibility in our Imperial organisations, or of the importance of maintaining to the full, in the case of all of us, the principle of ministerial responsibility to Parliament."

This somewhat narrow view was put forward because Sir Joseph Ward, representing New Zealand, had placed on the agenda the question of imperial co-ordination. His reason for doing so was that Canada had recently decided to create and maintain a local navy controlled by the Canadian Government which was not to participate in an imperial war unless Canada herself approved of that war. He pointed out that this decision had created an impossible situation, for "the Empire cannot be at war and Canada at peace at the same time." In his view empire defence was "the great vital topic," the creation of Dominion navies was a dispersion of force, and if "the whole of the oversea Dominions are to place themselves under tribute to the Imperial Treasury for the creation and maintenance of an Empire Navy, they surely are entitled to some voice—proportioned, it may

be, to their size and contribution—in such a vital question as peace or war." Then he went on to say: "In this great concern of Imperial Defence must not there be some kind of partnership between all parts of our Great Empire? . . . The day for partnership in true imperial affairs has arrived, and the question which now emerges is—upon what basis is that partnership to rest? It certainly cannot rest upon the present relationship. No partnership deserves the name which does not give to the partners at least some voice in the most vital of the partnership concerns; and what I am endeavouring to bring out is: how is that voice to be heard and how is it to be made effective?"

His answer to this question was: through the creation of a true Imperial Council of State "properly accredited to co-ordinate and harmonise these policies of naval defence, and of the still greater question of naval supremacy." "I recognise," he says, "as fully, I hope, as Mr. Asquith that a rigid constitution does not suit the genius of our people, but a rigid constitution is one thing and the entire absence of any definite imperial system is another. I recognise that there must be given up by the constituent self-governing parts of the Empire to any central Imperial Council only such power as is absolutely necessary to deal with questions essentially imperial in their nature, questions which cannot be dealt with satisfactorily or at all unless through collective deliberative action, and I would make

the framework of the Imperial Parliament of Defence or Imperial Council of State as elastic as is consistent with efficiency and durability; but I am impressed with the belief that some such framework we must have."

This Council, he suggested, should be evolved as follows: "That Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Newfoundland elect to an Imperial House of Representatives for Naval Defence one representative for each 200,000 of their respective populations; that is (approximately) Canada 37, Australia 25, South Africa 7, New Zealand 6, Newfoundland 2," and the United Kingdom 220. "That the mode of electing the representatives be left in each case to the determination of each of the oversea Dominions. . . . That the term for which they are elected be five years. That the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland each elect two representatives to be members of an Imperial Council of Defence, thus providing a Council of 12."

This scheme was severely attacked, not after its delivery but during it, so much so that the speaker's sequence of thought was almost destroyed. The main arguments against it were clearly brought out in General Botha's criticism. He said:—

> "If any real authority is to be vested in such an Imperial Council, I feel convinced that the self-governing powers of the various

parts of the Empire must necessarily be encroached upon, and that would be a proposition which I am certain no Parliament in any part of the Empire will entertain for one moment.

"If no real authority is to be given to such a Council, I fear very much that it would only become a meddlesome body which will continually endeavour to interfere with the domestic concerns of the various parts of the Empire, and cause nothing but unpleasantness and friction—in fact, the very opposite of what we desire."

Then he ended by saying:—

"It is the policy of decentralisation which has made the Empire—the power granted to its various peoples to govern themselves. It is the liberty which these people have enjoyed and enjoy under the British flag which has bound them to the Mother Country. That is the strongest tie between the Mother Country and the Dominions, and I am sure that any scheme which does not fully recognise this could only bring disappointment and disillusionment. I fear that the premature creation of such an Imperial Council as is suggested would —rather than bring the different parts of the Empire closer together—tend to make the connexion onerous and unpleasant to the Dominions. Let us beware of such a result. Decentralisation and liberty have done wonders. Let us be very careful before we, in the slightest manner, depart from that policy. It is

co-operation and always better co-operation between the various parts of the Empire which we want, and that is what we must always strive for."

There was, however, something wrong in this argument of liberty and authority, the two essentials of civilised society. Under the terms of "The Naval Agreement of 1911" "The Naval services and forces of the Dominions of Canada and Australia" were to "be exclusively under the control of their respective Governments," yet on December 5th, 1912, the Right Hon. R. L. Borden said in the Canadian House of Commons:—

"If Canada and the other dominions of the Empire are to take part as nations of this Empire in the defence of the Empire as a whole, shall it be that we, contributing to that defence of the whole Empire, shall have absolutely, as citizens of this country, no voice whatever in the councils of the Empire? I do not think that such would be a tolerable condition. I do not believe the people of Canada would for one moment submit to such a condition. Shall members of this House, representative men, representing 221 constituencies of this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, shall no one of them have the same voice with regard to those vast imperial issues that the humblest taxpayer in the British Isles has at this moment? It does not seem to me that such a condition would make for the integrity of the Empire, for the closer co-operation of the Empire."

Later on he said :—

"So far as official estimates are available, the expenditure of Great Britain in naval and military defence for the provinces which now constitute Canada, during the nineteenth century, was not less than $400,000,000. Even since the inception of our confederation, and since Canada has attained the status of a great Dominion, the amount so expended by Great Britain for the naval and military defence of Canada vastly exceeds the sum we are now asking Parliament to appropriate. From 1870 to 1890 the proportionate cost of North Atlantic squadrons which guarded our coasts was from $125,000,000 to $150,000,000. From 1853 to 1903 Great Britain's expenditure on military defence in Canada runs closely up to one hundred million dollars.

"Has the protection of the flag and the prestige of the Empire meant anything for us during all that period ? Hundreds of illustrations are at hand, but let me give just two. During a period of disorder in a distant country a Canadian citizen was unjustifiably attacked and fifty lashes were laid on his back. Appeal was made to Great Britain, and with what result ? A public apology was made to him, and fifty pounds were paid for every lash. In time of dangerous riot and wild terror in a foreign city a Canadian religious community remained unafraid. 'Why did you not fear ?' they were asked, and unhesitatingly came the answer, 'The Union Jack floated above us.'"

What was wrong was that no one would recognise that imperial unity was impossible without imperial institutions, and in no conceivable institution can its members do just as they please.

Such is a brief outline of the slow but sure growth of imperial co-operation up to the outbreak of the World War, a growth controlled by four factors—the fear of outside pressure, the love of independence on the part of the Dominions, the desire on the part of Great Britain for united security, and an all-embracing sentiment of oneness and strength. I will now set down in the following section the main principles which may be deduced from the period examined.

5. *Guiding Principles of Reform.*

To begin with, whatever system of control is considered, it must in no way infringe the rights of Great Britain or of the Dominions as free and independent nations. This may be looked upon as *the governing political principle*, in fact as the law of Empire. If security can be accomplished only through unity of effort, which in the past has been proved necessary, then from the grand strategical standpoint each Dominion has the right to assist in the elaboration of a combined policy of defence, for all actions which vitally threaten any part of the Empire, in an equal or lesser degree, threaten the whole, and, consequently, their counter-agents cannot be other than combined operations.

From the above may be extracted two closely-related moral principles of defence :—

1. The safety of each part of the Empire is the concern of the whole and of each separate part.
2. The duty of each part of the Empire is to assist whichever part is threatened or attacked.

And also two economic principles based on the idea of freedom, namely :—

3. Each part of the Empire must exercise complete control over all its forces and resources during peace time.
4. The cost of an empire war should be borne proportionately by the whole Empire in ratio to the realisable wealth of each independent part.

In order that the defence forces may efficiently assist in the accomplishment of the second of the moral principles they must be homogeneous in nature. This logically demands adherence to the following five military principles :—

5. The defence forces must be so organised, equipped and trained as to form one combined force.
6. A combined force requires centralised direction and decentralised administration.
7. Direction is dependent upon policy, which is the function of the combined Governments of the Empire.

8. Execution is dependent upon plan, the formulation of which is the function of the combined General Staffs of the Empire.
9. Administration is the function of each part which is called upon to put the plan into operation.

Before the outbreak of the World War of these principles only the fifth had taken a concrete form, yet during the war the remaining four of necessity became apparent. I will now enquire into how this took place and what were the main influences of the war on imperial unity and defence.

CHAPTER II

THE EMPIRE AND THE WAR

6. *Influence of the War upon Imperial Unity.* In August, 1914, the Empire went to war as a political unit. In theory such unity did not exist, but in fact it did ; for it was not sentiment only but above all fear which united the five nations, and it was the British Navy which enabled them to unite. Though Canada had, throughout the years of argument and discussion which had preceded the war, been suspicious of every proposal savouring of a closer federation, when war was declared her loyalty was as unbounded as it was in all the other Dominions. On August 19th, 1914, Sir Wilfred Laurier, who had opposed every measure of co-ordination, rose in the House of Commons at Ottawa and said :—

> "It is our duty, more pressing upon us than all other duties, at once, on this first day of this extraordinary session of the Canadian Parliament, to let Great Britain know, and to let the friends and foes of Great Britain know, that there is in Canada but one mind and one heart, and that all Canadians stand behind the Mother Country, conscious and proud that

she has engaged in this war, not from any selfish motive, for any purpose of aggrandisement, but to maintain untarnished the honour of her name, to fulfil her obligations to her allies, to maintain her treaty obligations, and to save civilisation from the unbridled lust of conquest and power.

"We are British subjects, and to-day we are face to face with the consequences which are involved in that proud fact. Long we have enjoyed the benefits of our British citizenship; to-day it is our duty to accept its responsibilities and its sacrifices. We have long said that when Great Britain is at war we are at war; to-day we realise that Great Britain is at war and that Canada is at war also."

In August, 1914, the Empire went to war to rescue Belgium. In theory this is true, but in fact the rescuing of Belgium was but a pretext, the underlying cause being that if Great Britain went down the Empire went down. The Empire was about to fight for its life, and though the Dominions were politically independent nations, strategically their very existence depended on the strength of the Mother Country. In 1861, as I have already quoted, Mr. Gladstone pointed out that no community could be considered a free community unless it was charged with its own defence. This was the conception of imperial freedom before the war; but once it came, it was shown definitely that Mr. Gladstone should have added that full liberty does not solely depend

upon power to maintain law and order at home, but also demands power to frustrate foreign invasion. The Dominions did not possess this power, for vast in size though they were, not one of them possessed even the military and naval power of Holland or Portugal. Since 1902 they had been talking like masked men, now war came and tore their masks off, and they at once recognised their respective weaknesses. For the Empire the main problem of the war was how to transmute this weakness into strength.

Strength in war, outside fighting force itself, depends on three great factors : internal harmony, united control and sufficiency of resources. The first is the moral, the second the political and the third the economic factor. These, when united, form the grand strategical base of military operations.

In war unity of action is essential to success, because it is through such unity that force is concentrated. Unity of action depends upon unity of control, which in its turn draws its strength from unity of opinion. When the World War was declared the Anglo-Saxon nations of the Empire set aside all party views and local interests and, gripping hands, strode into the war as one man. Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, did otherwise, and the national aspirants in Egypt and India saw in the war an opportunity for advancing their ideals. As the war proceeded the struggle for imperial preservation became more and more absorbing. Any internal disruption

within the Empire might prove fatal to the whole. In fact, there was little time for logical thought and there was no common thinking organ; further, consequences were obliterated by the one stupendous problem—the winning of the war even at any price. Ireland was cajoled and flattered and conscription was not applied to her, because the immediate consequences of its application were feared. Fear is failure, and the Irish Nationalists saw it as such. India and Egypt were promised greater liberty, self-government and suchlike, unwise promises. True, but it would be unfair to criticise them, for these promises were part of the price we were paying for victory —a victory to save the Empire, and yet a victory which might through such means lead to its disruption.

From the establishment of imperial tranquillity I will turn to the next problem, that of imperial control.

On the outbreak of the war there existed no organ which could control the Empire. The plans of the Overseas Defence Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence were carried out in detail by the Dominions in spite of the fact that they had had little say in their making. It was a case of *faute de mieux*, acceptance or chaos. Strategically control was vested in the British Government, not only because Great Britain was the senior and most powerful partner, but because the war was primarily a European problem, and above all because the British Navy commanded

the seas. In order to consolidate the position at home a Coalition Government came into existence in May, 1915; then, in December, 1916, Mr. Lloyd George succeeded Mr. Asquith as Prime Minister, and a War Cabinet was established in London, and in March, 1917, an Imperial War Cabinet was created upon which the Dominion Premiers sat as members of a grand Imperial Ministry.

The creation of this vitally important grand strategical organ brought into the foreground the problem of after-war control, for at the Imperial Conference which was assembled this same year Sir Robert Borden first pointed out that the old idea of imperial trusteeship was obsolete and "incompatible with the aspirations of the people of the Dominions," and secondly that after the war "any readjustment of relations must, in the first place, preserve all the existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs, that it must be based on a complete recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and must fully recognise their right to a voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations."

Then he said:—

> "There is another school, who advance the theory that anything in the way of an Imperial Parliament will not be likely to work so well as something in the way of what is called an Imperial Council — again, of course, representative of the different Dominions—which

would not have the powers which would be possessed by the Imperial Cabinet, but which would meet annually, say, and which would deal with all matters of imperial importance, and would in its turn make representation to the Parliaments of the different Dominions and to the Parliament of the United Kingdom itself.

"My own idea is, that if we can make such arrangements as will allow the present representation of the Imperial Cabinet to continue, even when the war comes to an end, if we can also along with that have a representative Imperial Council, then, I think, a very great deal will have been done and a very long step forward will have been taken along the road on which we are so anxious to travel. The Imperial Conference, which has been in the habit of meeting every four years, and which in itself I am bound to say was a very important advance, admitted the right of the Dominions to be consulted in connexion with imperial affairs. But something more than that is required at present, and something more than that must result from the position the Dominions have taken up during the present war."

General Smuts' views were almost identical. He said :—

"If we are to continue as nations and to grow as nations and govern ourselves as nations the great question arises : How are we to keep this Empire together ? That is the other

important point, I take it, in this Resolution —the point which recognises that there should be effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all common concerns, especially in concerns which are mentioned there specifically, that is foreign policy; but in all common concerns that there should be effective arrangements for continuous consultation. Setting aside the Federal solution as not applicable to this Empire, which is not merely a State but a system of States, half the world in itself—setting aside that solution, the question arises how you are to keep the different parts together, and it can only be done on the basis of freedom and equality which has existed hitherto, only the machinery would have to be arranged on which that system could be worked. I think it will not pass the wit of man to devise ways of continuous consultation — not intermittent, not every four years as we have had hitherto, but continuous consultation. Sir Robert Borden has pointed out . . . that a practice which has now arisen spontaneously of a double Cabinet may in the future provide the germs of a solution. I express no opinion upon that, because very intricate constitutional questions are bound up with that, and it is quite possible to arrange this system of consultation and continuous conferences even on a different basis and yet to make it perfectly workable and feasible as a means of keeping the different parts of the Empire together. It seems to me that some such machinery will have to be devised, and that it will not be difficult to devise if once we come to sit round

the table and discuss the matter carefully. In that way it will be possible, while leaving full executive action to the various more or less equal Governments of the Empire, while leaving full executive responsibility to them, to see that in all important concerns there is consultation and continuous consultation, that there is an exchange of ideas, and that the system, whilst preserving freedom and equality in its parts, will work with a strong sense of unity at the centre."

Again General Smuts says: "It all comes down to the mere question of finding some machinery which in a permanent and responsible form will continue what is now being done by the War Cabinet."

The war brought the Empire face to face with reality, and there can be no doubt that at this time these suggestions were put forth in good faith and that they were believed in. At the second session of the Imperial War Cabinet which opened on June 11th, 1917, the position was further strengthened by the representation of British India and the Indian Princes on the Cabinet. "The experience of the past year" had shown "the practical inconvenience resulting from the fact that, while the Prime Ministers of the Dominions could only attend the Imperial War Cabinet for a few weeks in the year, matters of the greatest importance from the point of view of the common interest inevitably arose and had to be decided in the interval between the sessions.

The natural remedy for this defect lay in giving the Imperial War Cabinet continuity by the presence in London of Oversea Cabinet Ministers definitely nominated to represent the Prime Ministers in their absence." Thus war conditions established an Imperial Council of State, as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain twenty years earlier. At this session the following two important resolutions were agreed upon :—

"1. The Prime Ministers of the Dominions, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet, have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and *vice versa*.

"2. In order to secure continuity in the work of the Imperial War Cabinet and a permanent means of consultation during the war on the most important questions of common interest, the Prime Minister of each Dominion has the right to nominate a Cabinet Minister either as a resident or visitor in London to represent him at meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet to be held regularly between the plenary sessions."

The Empire being now consolidated politically, the next task was to establish some grand strategical organ which could link the Allied Governments together and assist in harmonising their war plans. To accomplish this end an Allied Conference was held at Rapallo on November 7th, 1917, and a Supreme War Council was agreed upon. On February 5th, 1918, the

powers of this Council were increased, and the March *débâcle* resulted in the appointment of one man—General Foch—as a co-ordinator of the French and British Armies; then, after the next disaster, he was made Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in France; and finally, six days before the war ended, he was raised to the position of Generalissimo of all forces operating against Germany on all fronts.

Such was this astonishing evolution. Every thinking man, and there were many, must have realised shortly after the outbreak of the war, if not before it, that the Empire to act as a whole must become a political unit, and that for the Allied Fighting Forces to act as a whole they must become a military unit. Yet so strong were local interests, prejudices and traditions that no one man out of all these thinking men dared to unmask this question. Disaster, as it always does, ultimately loosened the strings. This omnipotence of disaster was one of the supreme lessons of the war, and one of the supreme lessons of the influence of the war on unity of control.

From the control of the Empire and of the Allied Armies I will now turn to the third great influence of the war, namely economics. First it must be realised that in actual fact the war was the climax of an economic crisis which had gradually taken form since the industrialisation of Germany after the Franco-Prussian War. It was the military expression of intensive trade competition, tariffs and embargoes giving way to

guns and rifles. As it was in fact an intensified economic struggle, it became obvious from the first that the blockade of the Central Powers would and must play an important part in their reduction, for these Powers were not self-contained any more than their opponents were. Consequently we find two courses adopted: the first was the blockade by land and sea in which the British Navy played the predominant part, and the second the establishment of free trade and the pooling of resources between the Allied Powers. In other words, the tariff war which had aggravated Europe since 1878 was suspended between the Allies and by them intensified against the Central Powers. The factor which prolonged the war was the attitude of the United States, the main neutral power which until 1917, when it joined the Allies, strenuously opposed the Allied blockade policy. Had this not been so, there can be little doubt that the war would have collapsed long before it did. Once the United States entered it the Central Powers were doomed, not on account of the Allies' increase in man-power, but because the blockade was rendered absolute. Had it been possible for the United States to have joined the Allies in 1914 the probabilities are that there would have been no German submarine campaign, no searching after land blockade in Turkey, Greece and Mesopotamia, no collapse of the Russian Empire and a far less intensive economic crisis after the war was over; for the probabilities also are that Germany would

have collapsed by or before the summer of 1916. It was economic pressure and not military force which brought her to her knees, and until April, 1917, the bulwark of her power lay in American neutrality.

From the opposite point of view inter-dependence was essential to the Allies, for no single one of them was self-contained as regards the necessities of war. Internal harmony and common control mean nothing unless fighting-power can be supplied with the material necessities of war. As regards ourselves, the circumference of the Empire could supply raw materials in abundance, and the hub could turn all these things into articles of war. Because the circumference is mainly agricultural and productive and the hub is mainly industrial and creative, the one is the complement of the other. The whole in fact, though not a political unit, is an economic unit. But as before the outbreak of the war this unit was deficient of controlling machinery, to supplement their means the Allied Powers had to fall back on the United States and establish debts which have perturbed the world ever since. Had the British Empire in 1914 been organised economically, that is had the British nations possessed the power to supply themselves as fully as they possessed the power through their navies to throttle the German and Austrian Empires, the probabilities are that to-day there would be no debt question, that reparations would have been settled years ago, and that the

financial crisis the world is now passing through would not have taken place.

In order to foster necessities by cutting down non-essential imports, in 1915 the McKenna Duties were imposed upon such articles as clocks, watches, motor-cars, musical instruments, etc. Hitherto in Great Britain such import duties as existed had been imposed purely for revenue purposes, now they were imposed to restrict luxuries, and immediately after the war they were included within the scope of the Imperial Preferences introduced by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the duties on imperial produce being reduced to two-thirds of their full rate. Thus it happened that during the war a definite fissure took place in the British Free Trade policy, a fissure which to-day has caused the whole pre-war economic edifice to crumble into dust, for what Joseph Chamberlain dreamed of in 1902 was thirty years later in part realised by his son.

This step towards establishing an economic unity within the Empire was largely fostered by the Allied Powers adopting a common economic policy to meet their common defence against the enemy, a policy which was strongly reinforced at the Economic Conference held at Paris in June, 1916. At this Conference it was agreed to prohibit all trading between the Allies and the enemy; to sequestrate all business undertakings operated by enemy subjects in the territories of the Allies; to compel the enemy to restore the countries he had devastated; to deny

most-favoured-nation treatment to the enemy; to conserve for themselves, "before all others, their natural resources during the whole period of commercial, industrial, agricultural, and maritime reconstruction"; to prevent dumping; "to take the necessary steps without delay to render themselves independent of the enemy countries in so far as regards the raw materials and manufactured articles essential to the normal development of their economic activities"; and "to increase production within their territories as a whole to a sufficient extent to enable them to maintain and develop their economic position and independence in relation to enemy countries."

The whole spirit of this Conference was not economic consolidation during the war only, but once its military operations were ended to continue the war in an economic form.

Referring to the Paris Resolutions, on August 2nd, 1916, Mr. Asquith said in the House of Commons:—

> "The war has opened our eyes to the full meaning and the manifold implications of the German system of economic penetration, and commercial and financial control of vitally important industries, and to the use of which vantage ground gained by this system can be put in war. . . . It is in our view necessary to make thorough preparation for the coming of peace, and the Paris Conference and the resolutions passed there represent the attempt of the Allies to decide the general lines on which preparations should proceed. . . ."

Then, immediately after the Armistice of November 11th, 1918, Messrs. Lloyd George and Bonar Law, in their Coalition Election Manifesto, said :—

> "One of the lessons which has been most clearly taught us by the war is the danger to the nation of being dependent upon other countries for vital supplies on which the life of the nation may depend. It is the intention, therefore, of the Government to preserve and maintain, where necessary, these key industries in the way which experience and examination may prove to be best adapted for the purpose. If production is to be maintained at the highest limit at home security must be given against the unfair competition to which our industries may be subjected by the dumping of goods produced abroad and sold in the markets below the actual cost of production."

Consequently, we see that though no comprehensive system of protection or of imperial preference was adopted, the full policy of Free Trade was abandoned; this was due entirely to the influences of the war.

7. *Influence of the League of Nations upon Imperial Unity.*

The war had shown beyond any possible doubt the vital importance of imperial harmony, military control and economic interdependence. Once at an end, we might well expect, in the

relaxation its ending must inevitably create, a relaxation from these essential factors, yet instead what do we see ? A recantation ! The British Empire and its consolidation are forgotten for a new ideal, that of internationalism and the principle of the self-determination of peoples, not preached by the Third International, its native home, but by the League of Nations, which was dragged by Mr. Wilson, President of the United States, like a red herring across the peace treaties, and which completely destroyed the scent.

It is astonishing that British statesmen did not see that this dire principle of self-determination, which by this date had completely wrecked Russia and was fast delivering her 150,000,000 people over to an oligarchy of Jews, might well do the same for the British Empire, built up as it is of diverse nationalities in all conditions of political and economic development. No sooner was its odour smelt when Ireland, India and Egypt were thrown into turmoil, and as it has well been said : " To sacrifice an Empire for a principle is surely a new thing in political idealism." Yet this is what, in 1919, was agreed upon at Versailles ; and this principle, like a plague, has afflicted the world ever since, for it has thrown the greater part of Europe, Asia and South America into such a delirium of anarchy that it is impossible for prosperity to flourish.

In the days before the war, though the Dominions were virtually independent nations, they possessed no international status. Even

when preparations for the Hague Peace Conference, interrupted by the outbreak of the war, were being made, no single Dominion asked for separate representation. The war at an end, it was natural enough that equality of hardships suffered during it should demand equality of responsibilities after it. This led to their distinct status being attested by appending their signatures to the peace treaties and demanding that these treaties should not be ratified by the Crown "until they had been approved by the Parliaments of the Dominions no less than that of the United Kingdom." But when, because of the Covenant of the League of Nations being wedged into the peace treaties, the Dominions secured distinct membership of this League, a totally new situation arose, for this membership stood outside and in theory *above* the membership of the British Empire; thus potentially was imperial harmony disrupted.

The very foundation of the League is that all nations are equal. Consequently, its ideal is that of "The Rights of Man" extended into the rights of nations, and a substitution of the French revolutionary ideal of "liberty, equality and fraternity" for that of "liberty, prosperity and security" upon which the British Empire is founded. So far has this disruption developed that in the Covenant of the League of Nations the term "British Empire" has come in practice to denote the Empire less the Dominions.

The object of the League is, however, not

based upon equality but upon the maintenance of the *status quo* as established by the peace treaties, and this object requires acceptance of obligations not to resort to war and the establishment of international law as the rule of conduct between Governments. As Mr. Lloyd George said in the House of Commons on July 3rd, 1919: "Without disarmament, without the indication which this war has given that the nations of the world are determined at all costs to enforce respect for treaties, the League of Nations would be just like other conventions in the past, something that would be blown away by the first gust of war or of any fierce dispute between the nations."

Generally speaking, this is true enough, yet so hallucinated were the politicians by this new ideal, that they forgot that that great and practical convention, called the British Empire, had by dissimilar principles, defined in Chapter I of this book, established peace, prosperity and security over one-quarter of the globe and among one-fifth of its inhabitants.

In place of the true freedom that the British Empire had created what do we find in the Covenant?

Article 1. That members are to accept the League's regulations in regard to their military, naval and air forces and armaments.

Article 5. That decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require

the agreement of all the Members of the League represented.

Article 8. That armaments are to be reduced to the lowest point consistent with national safety, and by the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

Article 10. That Members undertake to respect and preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League.

Article 11. That any war or threat of war is a matter of concern to the whole League.

Article 12. That disputes between Members will be submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement or to inquiry by the Council.

Article 14. That a Permanent Court of International Justice shall be established.

Article 16. That should a Member resort to war, all other Members of the League will undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations. And that the Council shall recommend what effective military, naval or air force action shall be taken.

Article 18. That every Treaty or international engagement entered into by any Member shall be registered with the Secretariat of the League.

Glancing through this brief summary of the more important articles, it will be seen that Articles 1 and 8 strike at the British Navy—the

foundation of our Empire security, that 10 maintains international friction and prevents the establishment of international justice, that 11 and 16 involve the Empire in every imaginable war and conflict, that 12 and 14 strike at the judicial power of the Privy Council, that 18 is meddlesome in the extreme, and that 5 renders the Covenant inoperative, for when friends and foes sit at the same table unanimous agreement is impossible. If ever an instrument was created to destroy world harmony, then it is the League of Nations.

For this criminal absurdity we abandoned the ship of Empire which had safely ridden out the storms of the World War, and in 1919 we took to the long-boats, rafts and dinghies of self-determination, of equality and of a paranoiic freedom from common sense. The dignity complex, which is but another name for the inferiority complex, smote our Dominions and dependencies like a crippling blight. Freedom is now no longer freedom within the Empire but is fast approaching the freedom of the Declaration of Independence of 1776: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and

to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do."

In Canada we find that dignity demanded political equality equal to that of her great neighbour the United States. In Ireland the same complex urged equality with Great Britain. In South Africa General Hertzog demanded complete autonomy in internal and external affairs and claimed the right to remain neutral in a British war. Whilst at the Imperial Conference of 1923 Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru exclaimed: "But I do fight, let me tell you frankly, as a subject of King George, and I fight for a place in his household and I will not be content with a place in his stables . . . " and "when 'Izzat' is at stake, we prefer death to anything else." And what is "Izzat"? Honour or dignity.

Yet, as the United States guarantees the security of Canada, and as Great Britain guarantees the security of Ireland, and as the British Fleet guarantees the security of South Africa, and the British Army the security of India, this outburst of dignity, of determination to appear great, in actual fact accentuated dependence; for, as the war had shown, complete freedom demands so great a bulk of power that even a country such as Germany did not possess it.

In 1919 freedom run mad replaced the balance of power which until 1914 had held the Western world in equilibrium for over forty years, a freedom so unbalanced by lack of authority that

the following words of Douglas Woodruff taken from his book *The British Empire* are no exaggeration :

> " The question has to be faced whether we are not in fact witnessing the gradual but steady dissolution of the Empire. We are now at the stage of friendly independent action, and each new departure is applauded as an advance in freedom and made the text for a sermon on the British genius for reconciling opposites. It is certain that if the Dominions and Great Britain waged wars against each other there would be people to exclaim that nothing showed more truly the greatness of our Empire and its superiority to the Empires of Rome and Spain than this fresh evidence of the complete freedom of every part to do as it chose."

8. *Changes in the Balance of Power.*

The balance of power has never been and can never be like a screw which holds a number of things in place ; it is what its name denotes, a pendulum which adjusts and compensates the oscillations of moving parts. Should these oscillations be severe the pendulum may be thrown off its pivot and the machinery it controls stop or run down with a crash. This is what happened in 1914, the oscillations became uncontrollable. And what caused them ?

To all students of history it is obvious that no nation can expect completely to upset this balance unless it possesses the power to command

the sea as well as to control the land. In 1900 Germany possessed a most powerful army, yet the balance was not upset. Then she decided to create an equally powerful navy, and at once severe oscillations set in. In the preamble to the German naval law of 1900 we read :—

> "In order to protect German trade and commerce under existing conditions, only one thing will suffice, namely Germany must possess a battle fleet of such strength that even for the most powerful naval adversary a war would involve such risks as to make that Power's own supremacy doubtful. For this purpose it is not absolutely necessary that the German fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest naval Power, for, as a rule, a great naval Power will not be in a position to concentrate all its forces against us."

Whilst in 1898 the German fleet consisted of 9 battleships, 3 large cruisers, 28 small cruisers, 113 torpedo boats and 25,000 men costing £6,000,000 a year, the aim of the various naval laws passed between 1898 and 1912 was to create a fleet of 41 battleships, 20 large cruisers, 40 small cruisers, 144 torpedo boats, 72 submarines and 101,500 men by 1920, the whole costing £23,000,000 a year.

As this was a direct challenge to British naval supremacy the most violent oscillations were set up.

As stated in the above preamble, the object of this fleet was to protect German commerce and

trade, consequently it was the economic factor which created this immense political instrument. Yet behind the economic factor lay the moral urge which in a generalisation may be described as the difference between French and German civilisation. The one was old, self-centred and walled round by an ancient culture dating back to Rome ; the other new, expanding and not yet a hundred years old. The pivotal difficulty between France and Germany was that they could not understand each other, and as is so often the case when people cannot do so a most innocent remark is apt to be construed as an insult.

These differences made war inevitable, and the growing economic interdependence of the world from 1871 onwards made it impossible to restrict war when it came. The old self-contained agricultural national departments of the eighteenth century had disappeared, no country was in fact independent of all other countries. The common bond between them was trade. Trade had established a war complex ; consequently, when war was declared every trading country was shocked by the conflict.

As long as the war endured a precarious equilibrium of power was maintained ; but when it ended, the fear of German dominion passing away, the balance flew to pieces like an exploding fly-wheel. It was not the war which wrecked Europe but the peace which followed it. Had the nations, victors and vanquished, set to work after the war to repair the damage done, half a

dozen years of strenuous work would have squared its deficit. That they did not do so was due to the fact that the peacemakers were living in a past world, almost an eighteenth-century universe. The economic interdependence of the world was unrealised by them, and led by France they returned to the narrow French nationalism of 1914 and tried to put the clock back to before 1870. Curiously enough, the instrument they seized upon to assist them was the Jewish-American ideal—the League of Nations, a piece of *international* machinery. Had this ideal been founded upon economic interdependence and not upon political self-determination, that is upon what was truly international in place of narrowly national, all would have been well. This was not so. Consequently the League Balkanised Europe. It would almost seem that it was fashioned to produce a chaos so profound that an utterly new cosmos would eventually have to be created.

The result was that in place of a peace of reparation a peace based on the idea of a balance of trade as well as of a balance of power, a peace of vengeance was imposed. The year 1919 was remarkable for its insanity. Whilst Clemenceau and his partners were plotting the economic destruction of Germany, were landing armies in Russia and were cutting central and eastern Europe up into a political jig-saw puzzle, the United States of America was hurrying back to her impossible isolation, and Great Britain, having uncorked the jinn of self-determination, was

distracted by rebellion in Ireland, Egypt and India.

The period which now follows, that is from 1919 onwards, may be divided into two cycles separated by the year 1929. During the first the seeds of the next war were carefully sown, manured and watered by the victorious Powers, everything possible was done to create an overwhelming calamity. The League of Nations, a direct descendant of the Holy Alliance, which a hundred years earlier had caused more trouble in Europe than Napoleon himself, was to become an international Solomon. It was the long-lost philosopher's stone which was to transmute the balance of power into an equilibrium of self-sacrifice and so cure all international diseases. Europe, a conglomeration of States, was bounded by emotional lines, lines of self-determination and of local opinion. Economics and strategy were cast to the winds, *e.g.* Poland, Danzig, Hungary, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and Greece; and so also was self-determination thrown aside when it suited the victors, *e.g.* the Trentino, Palestine[1] and later on Vilna. Eastern Europe is now pocked with soft spots and explosive nodules, because justice, economics and strategy have not been equated. She is still war weary, but once she has

[1] "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object."—The Balfour Declaration of 1917. In 1928, out of a total population of 898,000, 660,000 were Moslems, 150,000 Jews and 79,000 Christians.

regained her strength a series of terrible explosions must occur until power is once again balanced on a rational plan.

Whilst the Reparation Commission was fixing German indebtedness at the colossal sum of £6,600,000,000, which in any set of circumstances she was incapable of paying, in the autumn of 1921 a Conference on Limitation of Armament assembled at Washington. Its object was not disarmament, but to establish in favour of the United States the freedom of the seas. To accomplish this end it was necessary to break up the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and reduce the power of the British Navy. By it tonnage of capital ships was limited as follows: United States, 525,000; British Empire, 525,000; France, 175,000; Italy, 175,000; Japan, 315,000. The maximum tonnage of capital ships was fixed at 35,000 tons and calibre of guns at 16 inch. Aircraft Carriers were limited to 135,000 tons for the United States and the British Empire, 60,000 for France and Italy, and 81,000 for Japan. A *status quo* was to be observed as regards the naval bases in the Pacific Ocean. Submarines were restricted from sinking merchant vessels unless their crews could be saved, gas warfare was forbidden, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance brought to an end, and a Nine Power Pact agreed upon in order to guarantee the integrity of China.

Whilst this Conference was undermining British naval supremacy by reducing some of the most important elements of the British fleet to a

one-power standard, Articles of Agreement for a treaty between Great Britain and Ireland were formulated. Ireland was to be given Dominion Status, the bond of union with the Mother Country being whittled down to the following oath which was to be taken by Members of the Irish Free State Parliament:—

> "I . . . do solemnly swear true faïth and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State as by law established and that I will be faithful to H.M. King George V, his heirs and successors by law, in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations."

On December 14th, 1921, when reviewing this Agreement in the House of Commons, Mr. Lloyd George asked this question: "What does 'Dominion status' mean?" and he answered it by saying: "It is difficult and dangerous to give a definition," which is not a very illuminating answer, and we shall see later on how Ireland interpreted it.

The Constitution which was eventually agreed upon in 1922 marks a definite step in the progress towards complete autonomy. By Article 1 the Irish Free State is defined as "a co-equal member of the Community of Nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations." Article 17 lays down the Oath of Allegiance, and Article 49 reads:—

"Save in the case of actual invasion, the Irish Free State (Saorstát Eireann) shall not be committed to active participation in any war without the assent of the Oireachtas [Legislature]."

In other words, when the Empire is at war the Irish Free State may be at peace, or if its Legislature assents—at war with the Empire.

The next year, 1923, Germany being unable to pay the impossible reparations demanded of her, and the victorious Powers refusing to receive payment in kind, France plunged into the Ruhr in order to enforce payment, and so bankrupted Germany. On January 26th the mark stood at 36,188 to the pound sterling, and eleven months later it stood at 30,800,000,000,000! "I remember," says Major Colville, M.P., in a debate in the House of Commons, "when I left Cologne I offered the porter who carried my luggage a ten milliard mark note which I had still in my possession, and which at par value would be worth £400,000,000. . . . He refused it because it was not enough. So I gave him sixpence, and he took his hat off."

Having bankrupted Germany, France was nevertheless so fearful of her vanquished opponent that to maintain the *status quo*, which guaranteed her own security, she produced an astonishing document called the "Geneva Protocol," or "Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes," which had it been signed by

Great Britain would have involved her in every war which French hysteria might give rise to.

Good, however, came out of evil, for the French failure to separate industrial from agricultural Germany showed that the German Empire was a unit and not a loosely glued together mosaic of states. It emptied the moral magazines of France and brought her to her senses. Had she remained in the Ruhr she risked dictatorship or revolution at home, and had she possessed a Napoleon, or a Gambetta, or even a Boulanger, she might well have reverted to an empire, for at this time dictatorship had become a popular disease. To save her face the Dawes Plan was introduced on September 1st, 1924, according to which Germany was to pay in reparations £125,000,000 a year for an indefinite length of time.

This impossible plan having been devised and the Geneva Protocol set aside, a better road towards French security, the outer expression of the French inferiority complex, was found in the Locarno Conference of 1925. In the Final Protocol, known as "The Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy," which was initialled on October 16th, 1925, a *status quo* was established on the German, French and Belgian frontiers and was guaranteed by Great Britain and Italy. This involves these two countries in all wars which may take place on these frontiers.

If this were not bad enough, according to

Article 9 "The present treaty shall impose no obligation upon any of the British dominions, or upon India, unless the Government of such dominion, or of India, signifies its acceptance thereof." What is the full meaning of this? A writer in *The Round Table* of December, 1925, answers: "The result is a tremendous blow to the theory of diplomatic unity of the British Commonwealth of Nations." In war there is no honourable alternative to following the flag except secession from the Empire. "The new system inaugurated at Locarno strikes, therefore, at the very root of the British Empire."

Did this treaty, which was mainly directed towards assuring French security, satisfy France? Far from it, it accentuated her fears. Not only did France realise that Great Britain was in no way prepared to come to her assistance, but that Article 9 would make her pause before doing so; for the security of France would scarcely compensate Great Britain for the disruption of her Empire. Further still, as a logical consequence of this treaty, in 1926 Germany became a member of the League of Nations, and the question at once arose how long would she tolerate her defenceless position, a position which rendered her incapable even of self-defence, which under Article 2 of the treaty was laid down as a legitimate right. Further still, is it to the advantage of Great Britain that she should, seeing that in the past British foreign policy has pivoted on establishing

so strong a balance of power between continental nations that her commercial prosperity is assured by a prolonged period of peacefulness? Unless Germany is restored to strength through rational diplomatic action, which demands a revision of the Treaty of Versailles, such a guarantee is impossible, for at the first propitious moment she will take the bit between her teeth and proclaim her freedom to control her destiny.

To France, for the reasons already stated, the "Final Protocol" was no more than a scrap of paper. If war in her favour could not be guaranteed, could not a solution be found by outlawing war altogether? Possibly. So on April 6th, 1927, M. Briand suggested this course, which on April 28th was enthusiastically seconded in the United States by Mr. Kellogg. The eventual result was the signing of the Pact of Paris on August 27th, 1928, by no less than 56 nations. By Article 1 of this Pact "The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare, in the names of their respective peoples, that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another."

As no international police force to compel the observance of this renunciation was contemplated, the right of self-defence could in no way be restricted. "Every nation is free at all times," says Mr. Kellogg, "and regardless of treaty provisions, to defend its territories from attack or invasion, and it alone is competent to decide

whether circumstances require recourse to war in self-defence." Consequently, all this Pact accomplished was to legalise a specific kind of war. Of it Salvador de Madariaga says: "Mr. Kellogg had to recognise explicitly that his proposals reserved the right of self-defence. . . . This point established, it is evident that no outlawry of war declaration is going to be worth the paper and ink if it leaves to each and every State the sole right of defining when it is fighting a defensive war. . . . To outlaw purely and simply does not mean anything . . . the Pact is as good as non-existent."[1] This was seen clearly a few years later, when Japan and China went to war without a declaration.

We come now to the year 1929, when the first cycle ends in acclamation and gives way to a period of increasing gloom.

In 1928 war had been renounced. In 1929 Mr. Adachi, at the tenth Assembly of the League of Nations, expressed Japan's loyalty to the League and her interest in disarmament; Mr. Hoover and Mr. MacDonald were planning a Five-Power Conference to end naval rivalry; the Preparatory Commission was elaborating an arms limitation convention; the Young Plan replaced the Dawes Plan as a final settlement of reparations; France ratified her debt-funding agreements with Great Britain and the United States; the British Army of Occupation evacuated the Rhineland and the French promised to withdraw their forces

[1] *Disarmament*, pp. 41, 202.

during the following year. Finally, on September 5th, 1929, at the tenth Assembly of the League of Nations, M. Briand mentioned the subject of a European union, and on the 9th he electrified the nations by talking of a European United States. It would seem that the world was approaching Utopia.

Nothing was more distant, for Europe and America were at that moment approaching the edge of the pit they had ceaselessly been digging for over ten years. They had committed two errors, both fundamental and inexcusable ; they had violated the law of economic interdependence and had outraged the feelings of the entire German nation, and in consequence had endowed over 60,000,000 people with a crusading spirit against them. By demanding from Germany, under the Young Plan, a crippling tribute which was to last for fifty-nine years, they shattered German credit and indirectly brought about the Wall Street crash in the autumn of 1929. Then was the second period born, for the shoots of reviving German nationalism began to push their way through the dark soil of oppression.

The Wall Street crash depriving Germany of American financial support, German unemployment doubled between September, 1929, and September, 1930, with the result that on September 14th, 1930, almost exactly a year after M. Briand had proclaimed the advent of a European millennium, the National Socialists under Adolf Hitler polled 6,000,000 votes, that is eight times

as many as in 1928. This at once threw investors into a panic, and as capital was withdrawn from Germany unemployment went up, and as it went up discontent was increased and with it Hitlerism.

In 1931 the suggestion of a Customs Union between Germany and Austria threw France into a panic, and this Union being forbidden, a financial crisis occurred in Austria which caused a flight of capital from Germany, the Hoover Moratorium followed, and lastly a universal financial chaos, which on September 21st compelled Great Britain to abandon the gold standard, set aside her party squabbles, form a National Government and abandon her Free Trade policy.

In 1929 there were 1,500,000 unemployed in Germany. In March, 1932, there were 6,000,000, and during that month Hitler polled 11,000,000 votes in the Presidential elections. As the situation in Germany grew worse drastic remedies were attempted. In July a conference assembled at Lausanne and virtually scrapped reparations. In 1919 it was suggested that Germany should pay £24,000,000,000—in 1932 all but nothing at all. The difference between these two figures, twenty-four thousand millions and zero, is a fair gauge of the wisdom of the Allied politicians and financiers who had tormented the world during these thirteen years.

Simultaneously with this reduction, at the Geneva Disarmament Conference Germany demanded equality in armament rights ; in other words, a drastic amendment of the Treaty of

Versailles. Then came the Reichstag elections, and Hitler polled nearly 14,000,000 votes. In January, 1933, President Hindenburg appointed this extraordinary man—once a house painter, a private soldier, wounded, gassed and shell-shocked during the war—Chancellor, and by the Reichstag he was granted dictatorial powers for a period of four years.

It is as well that this revival of Germany should be viewed in its true light, for unless this is done there can be no readjustment of the balance of power in Europe. So far the facts are simple: Hitler though a great orator is, like Mussolini, a man of action. Whilst the elder statesmen of France, America and Great Britain hurry from conference to conference and discuss how the world ship can be saved, Hitler has taken off his coat and manned the pumps. He has crushed Bolshevism in Germany; he has dismissed 250,000 bureaucrats, and has saved to the nation £150,000,000 a year; he is to-day enrolling the unemployed into labour battalions, and is considering a system of labour conscription under which all unmarried men between the ages of 18 and 25 will be compelled to give one year's work to the State at threepence a day. Further, he is attempting to resuscitate the small property holder, and so is waging a relentless war against the trusts and against big business generally. Finally, he intends to make Germany a self-supporting country.

His strength does not lie so much in his ideals

as in the youth of his party. A writer in *The English Review* says :—

> "The Hitler movement is a movement run by post-war minds. The average age in the party is probably under 35. Hitler is only 43, Goering 42 and Goebels 36. Furthermore, they are all men who fought in the front line. The old politicians who were responsible for the conditions leading up to the war no longer have control. The men at the wheel in Germany have an utterly different outlook on life from that of the orthodox politician to which we in this country are accustomed, because they have had an utterly different training."[1]

Germany is now in the hands of youth, as Russia is and as Italy is. We, France and the United States are still in the hands of sexagenarians. On the one side we have the new men of action and on the other the old men of debate. The tendency of the first is towards autocracy, the instincts of the second are democratic. A new world conception is rising at our feet, a world of mighty forces. Unless we as an Empire are prepared to play our part in balancing these forces, which we cannot do unless we are united and intelligently led, they may submerge us.

9. *Changes in the Methods of War.*

As profound as the changes in the balance of power have been the changes in the means which

[1] E. W. D. Tennant, "Herr Hitler and His Policy; March, 1933," *The English Review*, April, 1933.

maintain it. Throughout history they have consisted in moral, economic and physical pressure. During peace time these are applied diplomatically, that is mainly through threats, disguised or actual; and during war militarily, the object being to compel the enemy by force in place of words to accept the will of his antagonist.

The moral attack is accomplished through propaganda and terror: the first discredits the enemy, his cause and his actions, whilst the aim of the second is to paralyse the civil will which lies at the base of his military power. The economic attack aims at starving the enemy out, or in preventing him from establishing credit to pay for supplies and the necessities of war. It is attained by blockade, investment, devastation and attack on his industrial power and financial system. The physical attack is carried out by armed forces and is based on weapon power, its first aim being to deprive the enemy's forces of mobility and its second of power to protect themselves.

From this brief outline two facts can be deduced; the first is that in war civil pressure can be applied equally with military pressure, and the second that there are two targets to aim at, the enemy's fighting forces and the enemy's population, including their work. In the World War what distinguished it so clearly from preceding wars was the important part civilians played in it, not only as statesmen but as war workers, and the reason for this is the close interdependence

of weapon-power and industrial-power. The logical sequent was the increasing urge to attack the civil will; because, could its stability be undermined, not only would the war workers cease to work, but by being thrown out of work discontent would eventually drive them to attack their Government. Whilst former wars were in the main frontal operations, the clash between armed forces, as the World War lengthened out it became more and more a rear attack operation. The armies clinched, and then every attempt was made to demoralise and starve out the undisciplined civilian workers behind them. In a different rendering of the words it was a "Civil War," a war between civil wills, for by terrorising the civil wills it turned them against their Governments.

To trace this evolution in what might be called the "higher tactics" is not my intention, for to do so even briefly would demand a book of its own. All I will do here is to mention sufficient differences in order to show how unlike the World War was to most of the wars which preceded it. Its nearest approach is probably the Thirty Years' War.

The war opened on traditional lines. Its strategy was conventional, and so were its tactics, which were based on the bayonet assault, in spite of the fact that this form of attack had for over fifty years ceased to be a profitable operation. The theory of fighting was mainly founded on the lessons of the Franco-Prussian War, those of

the South African and Manchurian Wars, the more recent, having been blindly studied in order to prove the lessons of 1870–71 right.

In 1914 the weapons of all civilised nations were very similar; all continental Powers of importance possessed conscript armies, and fighting strengths were universally measured in terms of man-power. Such differences which did exist in tactics were mainly theoretical, for all sides believed that the next war would be a mobile one, and that a sledge-hammer offensive backed by superiority of numbers would win through. Both the South African and Manchurian Wars had shown static tendencies, and the ever-increasing difficulty of the frontal attack. In the one we get blockhouses, in the other trenches, and in both the enormous stopping power of wire entanglements and magazine rifle fire as well as the demoralising power of the machine-gun.

This lack in foreseeing the difficulties incumbent in protecting the soldier, and the frequent impossibility of movement unless he is protected, reduced almost at once the operations of the war to a static condition. This condition of stability and the time it created to work in enabled the greater industrial powers to fall back upon civil industry in order to re-establish a war of movement. Civil industry, supported by science, rapidly increased and perfected such comparatively recent weapons as the aeroplane and the submarine, and developed entirely new ones such as the tank and lethal gas. The underlying

tactical idea of these new and improved weapons was either to reduce the power of existing ones, or to effect surprise by unhinging existing tactical organisation. Thus the aeroplane could avoid battle fronts by flying over them, and by means of gas and the tank an enemy could be so suddenly attacked that more frequently than not he was unable to render his tactical organisation articulate before he was overwhelmed. Once a successful surprise could be effected, as happened at the battles of Riga and Cambrai in 1917, wire and trenches could be penetrated and the mobility of the older arms revived.

Such, I hold, was the tactical conception held by the more progressive soldiers at the conclusion of the war. Had the war lasted for another year or two I am of opinion that this conception would have developed along the line of an extensive replacement of the older arms by the newer, in place of merely looking upon the newer as auxiliary weapons. The newer must in time win through, and the sooner this is realised in peace time the better will it be for us in war.

Turning from the tactical changes to strategy, we see an even more astonishing evolution. Here also is there to be found a higher form of strategy, not the mere manœuvring of armies and fleets, but of the will of the enemy's civil population. Propaganda, though clumsily used, was turned into a potent weapon, not only to attack the enemy's moral power of resistance but to blacken his cause in the eyes of neutral nations. During

these years wireless communication was little developed, but to-day the radio is to be found in the houses of the humblest citizen of the land; consequently, it is only rational to suppose that in another war intensive use will be made of it in order to bombard the enemy with disruptive information. Since the war this method of attack has been persistently used by the Bolshevik Government in Russia. In nature these attacks closely resemble the Papal use of interdict and excommunication during the Middle Ages. In both cases the attack is one on public opinion.

The acutest form of the moral attack is that of terror and panic, a feeling that the attack is ever imminent, overwhelming when it comes, and that the attacked is impotent to meet it. It is the feeling of an unarmed man in a jungle, and as the war proved again and again the aeroplane can establish it by attacking the civil population.

The power of the moral attack will very largely depend upon whether the economic attack has undermined the stamina and nervous power of the enemy's people. If the people are starving the moral blow is likely to prove shattering, but if they are well fed and free from anxiety its influence is more likely to provoke antagonism than terror. We see, therefore, that these two forms of attack are closely related, and that consequently a wise fighter will not launch them independently.

In the World War there can be no doubt whatever that the economic attack was the most

potent of all, and that it was *the* factor which brought about the collapse of the Central Powers. When the infantry attacks of 1914–15 failed to accomplish anything outside slaughter, the idea arose of encircling and besieging Germany and her Allies. In theory it seemed practical enough, but in actual fact it was fantastic, because the British Navy could and actually did effect it far more economically.

Before the war the predominant naval theory was the great battle, in which the enemy's fleet would be destroyed and after which the victor would gather in the fruits of victory. During the war only one great naval engagement took place, namely the Battle of Jutland, which was indecisive, and the predominant operation was an economic and not a tactical one, it was to protect and destroy trade and not to destroy warships, for no longer has the weaker fleet a chance in a fight with the stronger. Had all the millions which the Germans spent on their High Seas Fleet been spent on submarines Germany might have won the war; in the end her fleet was so demoralised by inaction that it mutinied and detonated the revolution.

To-day there can be no doubt whatever that the economic attack is the stronger form of war, and that the nation which commands the maritime trade routes is in an all-powerful position. Even in peace time we see this form of attack in frequent use, for tariffs and trade embargoes are nothing more than blockades and investments. When

Ireland refused to pay the "Annuities" she was blockaded, and so was Russia in April, 1933, when she convicted certain British engineers of sabotage.

These changes in the forms of the methods of waging war have had, and are still having and must continue to have in an increasing degree, important influences upon the security of Great Britain and the British Empire. During the World War the German submarine and aircraft attacks startled the British public into the realisation that their immemorial security was no more. The submarine and the aeroplane had cut into our isolation, and these two weapons, combined with wireless propaganda and the almost complete dependence of Great Britain on foreign food stocks, begot a future blurred by nightmares and delirium.

Ultimately, no doubt, right triumphs over might, but is it right to suppose that we can put the clock of scientific progress back? Is it not madness to attempt to do so? In the thirties and forties of the last century the British Admiralty opposed the introduction of steam-power at sea, because steamships seemed to threaten British insularity, yet in the succeeding sixty years British insularity was doubly secured by steam-power and British wealth increased manifold. At the Washington Armament Conference of 1921 the British Admiralty wished to abolish the submarine; and since then, as we shall see later on, consistent attempts have been

made by the British Government to abolish military aircraft, which means all aircraft, as the civil aircraft of 1933 are far more potent military weapons than those of 1914.

In place of accepting progress as inevitable and right an anathema was placed upon it. It was not seen, because fear dulled mental sight, that the true approach to this question was not by the road of opposition but by the road of alliance; that a new form of security could be built on these machines, and further must be built as it had been built on the new machines of the last century; that aircraft and wireless communication were potent factors in a new imperial unity; that the submarine was a most powerful weapon to secure Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and many of our Colonies against invasion; and that in our vast roadless territories tanks and kindred weapons, by being able to reduce time through rapidity of movement and the security they afforded to their crews, reduced space and so vastly facilitated military operations.

What was the reason for this lack of vision? Curious as it may seem, and as to this there can be no doubt in my own mind, the answer is the age of our leaders—political, naval and military. As old men generally suffer from physical astigmatism, so do they suffer from its mental counterpart, and so far no mental spectacles have been invented to overcome this natural defect. The result is that in this rapidly-moving world it becomes increasingly difficult for old men to

read present-day events aright. To them they are blurred and frequently not even understandable. Not grasping their meaning, they very naturally fall back on past methods and systems. Not seeing into the future, they gaze back into the past, and as the world moves onwards they and their doctrines lose their equilibrium and are swept into chaos.

Our first problem, therefore, in learning how to grasp the full meaning of the changes which have taken place in the methods of war and how they will and must influence the security of our Empire, is to place men in power who belong to the present epoch, who were born during it, have worked in it, and are in fact part of it. Briefly put, our first military problem is to de-fossilise our Government and our Services.

10. *Disarmament and World Peace.*

From changes in the methods of war it is but logical to turn to the problem of disarmament, which in its turn must intimately influence imperial defence, for there can be little doubt that as a superfluity of arms is a world danger, so also are obsolescent arms a poor security against war.

In examining this question the first fact which strikes us is that weapons in themselves, inanimate things, cannot create wars, and the second that the causes of war, and so also the incentive to manufacture weapons, must be sought in the minds and souls of men. Every student

of war must realise that the fundamental cause of war is discontent with the existing order of society, or as Mr. Hoffman Nickerson has so logically defined it: "Moral disunion produces discontent, discontent equals potential war; therefore the degree of moral disunion within any society will equal the potential of war within that society."[1]

The form which discontent takes obviously depends upon the nature of the civilisation surrounding it. In the Middle Ages it assumed a religious form, to-day it is assuming an economic. In both the impulse behind discontent is the search after freedom—in the one case freedom of belief, in the other freedom of trade. Since the World War there can be no question that trade, which is primarily a problem of consumption and not of production—because the producer exists only for the consumer—has been restricted by tariffs, war debts and reparations; and there can be no doubt that this restriction has given rise to universal distress, and consequently to universal discontent. To-day no nation feels politically secure, because it is economically insecure. The result is that insecurity, reacting on the instinct of national preservation, at once begets armaments. As this is so, it follows that unless this cause of war is eliminated armaments will continue, and that as long as they do continue fear will percolate through the nations and like a damp fog will rot every paper compact they choose to make. As

[1] *The Harvard Advocate*, April, 1933, p. 25.

long as the world resembles a gold-rush mining camp each nation will carry a gun on its hip, not because it fears any nation in particular, but is fearful of the system which girts them all. Fear is the outer expression of greed, and greed is at the bottom of the present evil.

The Disarmament Conference which met at Geneva on February 2nd, 1932, and which, so we were told, represented "seventeen hundred million people," met just ten years too late. Had it assembled at the time of the Washington Conference something might have been accomplished; but gathering together its immense hordes two years after Germany had scrambled to her feet, it was doomed to as certain a confusion and destruction as was Darius's horde when it met the Greeks at Arbela. As Mr. Douglas Jerrold has said: "If the Powers could not disarm five or six years ago when Germany was impotent, they are not likely to do so now when militarism is again the order of the day."[1] And as Mr. Hoffman Nickerson has said: "Far from being able to prevent future wars, Europe cannot even put an end to the last one; the Franco-German clash is as definite as ever, the only difference is that for the moment it is waged with intrigue and gold instead of bayonets and high explosives."[2]

The Conference having opened, I will ask the reader to examine the first series of proposals made.

[1] *The English Review*, April, 1933, p. 361.

[2] *The Harvard Advocate*, April, 1933, p. 21.

France: To establish an international police force under the League of Nations, which should organise its command. To place all batteries of long-range artillery at the disposal of the League and to internationalise civil aviation.

Great Britain: To abolish gas, chemical and submarine warfare and prohibit or limit such armaments as would weaken attack and so remove temptation for aggression.

The United States: To abolish submarines, gas and bacteriological warfare; to restrict tanks and heavy mobile guns and all arms of a peculiarly offensive character, and to protect civilian populations against aerial bombardment.

Italy: To abolish capital ships, submarines, aircraft-carriers, heavy artillery, tanks, bombing aircraft and chemical and bacteriological warfare.

Japan: To limit the use of submarines, reduce the size of battleships and the tonnage of aircraft-carriers; to abolish bombardment from the air and the use of gas and bacteriological warfare.

Russia: Failing total disarmament, to abolish tanks, heavy artillery, warships over 10,000 tons, aircraft-carriers, military airships, bombing aeroplanes, and chemical, incendiary and bacteriological warfare.

Why were these various proposals made? The answer is obvious—for national interests and not for international advantage. Each nation quite openly put forward what it wanted. Thus France wanted to keep Germany disarmed and

was afraid of German civil aviation; Great Britain wanted to return to her insular security of 1913 which was destroyed by the submarine; the United States wanted to avoid maintaining a large modern army during peace time and to weaken Japan; Italy wanted to weaken France and restrict military mechanisation because of her lack of coal and oil; Japan wanted to protect herself against the United States; and, lastly, Russia wanted to weaken all Capitalist nations. All were agreed to abolish bacteriological warfare because it did not exist; all, in fact, were manœuvring for secure positions in the next war and were little concerned with establishing peace.

These various wants may be arranged under three headings: a League army, qualitative disarmament, and total disarmament. The first was shelved, in fact it was put forward by France because it was impossible; the third was turned down; and the second, like a banana, was thrown into the monkey-house of the smaller nations, forthwith to be trampled into an unrecognisable pulp. For example, what does the Dominican Republic suggest:—

> "Considering that the League of Nations desires to spread among the childhood and youth of the countries of the world ideals of peace, fraternity and international co-operation . . . the delegation of the Dominican Republic to the Disarmament Conference has the honour to propose that the conference should agree to

recommend to all the countries here represented that they should agree to prohibit the manufacture of warlike toys."

Why was qualitative disarmament thus treated? Because it was the most popular idea of the cranks. Sir John Simon, the British delegate, placed this card somewhat cautiously on the conference table. He started off by saying that "armaments are the symptoms of a pathological condition," and then, apparently realising that to follow up this argument would lead him on to that dangerously realistic ground, the causes of war, he changed the subject and proposed "the outlawry by international agreement of certain weapons and methods of warfare." He said: "It seems to me that we are most likely to find these weapons and methods among the most recent developments. This is not only because it is the most recent lapses in habit which are the least difficult to eradicate, but because these new methods of warfare—the use of gas and submarines and of bombing from the air—all have their common feature, they tend to obliterate the boundary as drawn by Hugo Grotius . . . that as far as possible a distinction should be effectively drawn between combatant and non-combatant."

To the man in the street this may sound logical enough, but to anyone who has studied the subject it is far from being so. First, the world has vastly changed since the days of the noted author of *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, written in 1625! Then the civil population took no part

in war; now they play an essential part, because not only does war depend on the popular will, but directly war is declared the whole of each belligerent country is turned into an arsenal. In 1917, in France, 3,000,000 men were enrolled as soldiers and 1,700,000 men and women as munition workers. If in everyday life a civilian and a soldier enter into a compact to murder someone, and the civilian makes the knife and the soldier cuts the victim's throat, both will be tried for murder, and if found guilty will be hanged. Secondly, as regards "recent lapses in habits," weapons do not change because soldiers want to change them; they change because civilisation changes and they are compelled to change them. The truth is we must either march with civilisation or against her.

While these futile proposals were being toyed with by the smaller nations in order to give the greater more time to manœuvre in, Great Britain by abandoning her Free Trade policy annulled at one blow any hope of Germany ever being able to pay reparations. France, realising this, saw clearly that it was better to compromise on this question than to reduce Europe to chaos, yet she was uncertain what to do.

Then, on June 22nd, 1931, President Hoover proposed that the armies and navies of the world should be cut down by one-third, and that chemical warfare, all tanks, large mobile guns and bombing aircraft should be demolished. This was at once accepted as an electioneering stunt, and

in it European politicians saw a scheme to barter war debts for armaments. Then came the Lausanne Conference, and something had to be done to meet the changed situation.

What had been taking place ? Since February three contradictory diplomatic manœuvres had been in progress. The first was the French move to stabilise the treaty settlements ; the second, Germany's aim to readjust the balance of forces so as to upset these settlements ; the third, the attempt of the United States, in order to weaken Japan, to use the financial condition of Europe as a lever towards disarmament.

The stumbling-block at Lausanne was not Germany but the United States. France, never prone to give something for nothing, but knowing that she would have to abandon reparations, was determined to obtain a *quid pro quo.* Great Britain, anxious about her American debts now that reparations were out of the question, was drawn more and more towards France, the result being the so-called " Gentlemen's Agreement."

Whilst this important debt alliance was being cemented at Lausanne, a few miles away, at Geneva, the Disarmament Conference entered the last lap of its first stage, and on July 20th a gelatinous resolution based on President Hoover's proposals and the qualitative theory was adopted by forty-one votes against two, the dissentients being Germany and the Soviet Union. Four days later Germany withdrew from the Conference, because she was playing for a higher stake than a

re-adjustment in armaments ; she wanted equality of status, for this would enable her to raise the whole question of treaty revision. If this were not answered in her favour then this status would enable her to re-arm. Her trump card was this : that without her co-operation the Disarmament Conference was emasculated.

The second round of the Conference opened in November, when on the 14th France put up a new plan, which may be condensed into the words of Thomas Hobbes : "Covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all." Simple though it was in idea, in detail this plan was so complex as to lend itself to endless argument. Nations were to be divided into three groups and armies into three categories. There were to be nations which had signed the Pact of Paris, nations which were members of the League of Nations, and European nations. There were to be colonial armies for nations possessing colonies, national militias for national defence, and highly-organised national contingents to be held at the disposal of the League of Nations.

Aggression was defined as "The presence of troops on territory not their own." It was to be certified by a standing international committee appointed by the diplomatic representatives and military attachés accredited to the Government of the State aggressed against. This commission is to proceed to the place where the alleged invasion has occurred, and from it report to the Council

of the League, which will then decide the rights and wrongs of the case by a majority vote! From this it would seem that Gallic sense of humour has fallen into a sorry decline.

It will be seen from this brief summary that this plan is not only highly complex, but that its aim is a political re-organisation of Europe in the interests of France, that the maintenance of the *status quo* is its object, just as it was of the 1924 Protocol.

Great Britain, confused by this plan, was, however, determined that Germany must be brought back into the fold, and three days later, on November 17th, Sir John Simon laid a new British plan before the Conference. After reiterating that submarines should be abolished and tanks and guns restricted in size, he proposed that all Air Forces should be reduced to the level of those in the United Kingdom, after which an all-round one-third cut should be made. Then he proposed that the articles of Part V of the Treaty of Versailles, which limit Germany's arms and armed forces, should be deleted, and Germany's limitations should be arrived at "by the same process and expressed in the same document as those of all other countries."

To Germany this was a step forward, but no more; to France it was a step back, for no provision for sanctions against an aggressor was included in the British scheme.

So the wrangle continued, when on December 8th Great Britain, the United States, Italy and

France (very reluctantly) tentatively agreed that the so-called "American Plan" (a one-third cut in armaments) should provide the basis for an immediate convention. This meant that France would not accept the British plan and Great Britain the French. Three days later the subterranean rumblings of closely-allied problems, the two more important being the undeclared war in Manchuria and the American debt payments, forced the pace. Something had to be done, so a declaration was signed at Geneva in which the most important clause was the following: "The Governments of the United Kingdom, France and Italy have decided that one of the principles that should guide the Conference on disarmament should be the grant to Germany, and to other Powers disarmed by treaty, of equality of right in a system which would provide security for all nations, and that this principle should find itself embodied in the convention containing the conclusions of the Disarmament Conference." This brought Germany back into the fold.

To propitiate France war was once again solemnly outlawed, when three days later happened one of those amazing somersaults which are so characteristic of modern democracies. Since 1919 a succession of French Governments, backed by the French people, had insisted on the sanctity of treaties; then, on December 14th, the French Chamber decided not to pay the American debt. This decision not only caused the resignation of the Herriot Cabinet, but struck a mortal blow

at the Treaties of Versailles and Washington. The subterranean rumblings which drew Great Britain, France and Italy together on the 11th were on the 14th almost magically transformed into an ocean of troubled waters upon which the word-logged barque of the Geneva Conference drifted away rudderless.

As winter advanced, to starboard stood France, Poland and the Little Entente clinging to the toppling structure of the treaties; to port stood Germany, Austria, Hungary and Italy—the old Triple Alliance in new form. Mussolini advocated treaty revision. This precipitated an alliance between the States of the Little Entente and Poland landed troops in Danzig. As the ark of peace was about to founder, on March 16th Mr. MacDonald, like the dove with its olive branch, soared into the air and flew to Paris and Geneva and placed before the nations yet another plan. Its main proposals were:—

1. All armies should be recruited on a basis of conscription of eight months' service.
2. Germany, France, Italy and Poland to be allowed armies of 200,000 men; Rumania, 150,000; Spain, 120,000; Czecho-Slovakia and Yugoslavia, 100,000; the Soviet Union, 500,000, and other countries from 25,000 to 60,000.
3. The calibre of mobile guns to be limited to 105 centimetres and the military and

naval aircraft of France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States limited to 500 each.

4. This plan to supersede the provisions of the peace treaties by which the Central Powers were disarmed.

This done Mr. MacDonald flew on to Rome, and on the 19th appeared another plan sponsored by Mussolini and approved of by the British Prime Minister, known as the Four Power Pact, by which Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy undertook to co-operate, to revise the peace treaties, to grant effective value to "equality of rights" should the Disarmament Conference reach only partial results, and the pact to endure for ten years.

These two plans like so many others went straight into the melting-pot of contention; the second to be reduced to a mere skeleton, for all its flesh was boiled off it. Yet on June 7th its bones were solemnly initialled by Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany, and a proclamation went out that this dance of death would at some future date give peace to Europe. As to the first, it could not do otherwise than commit suicide, for it ran counter to all reality. It was thoroughly English, that is to say, it completely overlooked Continental psychology. How France could accept it at a moment when Germany was rising a phœnix from her eagle ashes, and how Poland could contemplate her military forces being fixed at

200,000 men when those of the Soviet Union were fixed at 500,000 never seem to have entered the heads of its British promoters. On March 16th it was born; between then and June 12th, when the World Economic Conference assembled in London, it made various infantile noises; then on June 27th it was decided to adjourn the Disarmament Conference until October 14th.

On October 14th the Bureau of the Disarmament Conference once again met. The usual platitudes were uttered, when, suddenly, came the deluge: a telegram was handed in from Baron von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, intimating Germany's withdrawal from the Conference and the League. The Reichstag was thereupon dissolved, and on November 12th a referendum on Hitler's foreign policy was taken. Out of a total electorate of 45,146,277, 43,460,529 (96·3 per cent.) votes were cast; of these 750,282 were invalid, 40,609,243 (95·1 per cent.) supported Hitler, and 2,101,004 (4·9 per cent.) did not. This was Germany's answer to France, to the League, to Europe and to the world.

With this phenomenal and portentious manifestation of the German national spirit I will take leave of the problem of disarmament, but before I end this chapter I will suggest what I think we might have done. Failing an international examination of the causes of the World War, which in the demented state the world has been in since 1918 is an action hardly to be expected, as soon after the war as it was possible the whole

subject of imperial defence should have been examined, debated at an Imperial Conference, and a detailed plan worked out on the basis of the minimum defences required. Armed with such a document, when the time came for the Disarmament Conference to meet, we could have entered into its discussions with force and honesty and have said: This is our imperial defence charter. What is yours? If you will do so and so we will do so and so; but if you will not our charter stands. If we had done this in place of futilising about aggressive and non-aggressive weapons, or attempting to make plans for Continental nations whose problems we do not understand, at worst we could have left the assembly-room with dignity. We did not do so because we failed to look at the problem from an imperial standpoint, and we failed to do so because we had no piece of imperial defence machinery to guide and advise us.

CHAPTER III

THE EMPIRE IN DISSOLUTION

11. *Changes in Imperial Conditions.*

I NOW come to the influence of the changes in political and military surroundings upon the problems of empire; but before examining these I wish to make one point clear, namely the relationship between peace and war.

War, Clausewitz tells us, is a political instrument. He would have been more explicit had he written "force" in place of "war"; for it is by force that peaceful tranquillity is maintained in all democratic countries, because the ballot is the moral equivalent of the bullet. In fact, peace is established through war or the threat of the application of force, and since between nations no international moral equivalent to the bullet is discoverable, I think that William James is right when he says: "Every up-to-date dictionary should say that 'peace' and 'war' mean the same thing, now *in posse*, now *in actu*. It may even reasonably be said that the intensely sharp competitive *preparation* for war by the nation is *the real war*, permanent, unceasing; and that battles are only a sort of public verification of mastery gained

during the 'peace' intervals."[1] If this be accepted, then the three great factors which essentially influenced the war, namely internal harmony or co-operation, united control and sufficiency of resources (the moral, political and economic factors), will equally influence the present peace. Further, they will influence the four great imperial defence problems which confronted us before the war, namely (1) command of the sea, (2) the security of India, (3) the maintenance of the balance of power, and (4) the co-ordination of the imperial fighting forces. In importance these problems remain much as they were, and though the structure of the Empire has not greatly changed, the psychological outlook of its parts has undergone a radical alteration.

The main cause of this psychological change is the complete upset of the balance of power on the conclusion of the World War. Before the war each part of the Empire was faced by many local problems, but each and all were simultaneously confronted by one common problem—fear of German dominion. This fear consolidated the whole Empire morally. The Armistice of November 11th, 1918, banished it, and the result to-day is that each main part is absorbed in remedying its local troubles largely created by the war, and no common problem is now sufficiently apparent to focus the opinion of all parts on the existence of the Empire as a whole. In fact, the internal imperial balance of power

[1] W. James, *Memories and Studies*, p. 273.

has been shattered with the disruption of the external international balance, and no international League of Nations can remedy this. This being so, it is indeed a curious paradox that whilst the Dominions insisted on becoming members of this League, no single one has suggested the establishment of an Imperial League in which the problems of Empire can be discussed and balanced. Before the war and during it fear of Germany consolidated the Empire, to-day lack of fear may easily disrupt it. Before the war two of our most pressing problems were the co-ordination of the defence forces of the Empire and the reorganisation of our Home, Indian and Dominion Armies. To-day these problems have become more important than ever, not because we are faced by a great war, but because we are confronted by radical changes in the methods of warfare. Then we had an outer compulsion to unite us, a tangible danger—Germany; now we have but an evolving theory seen by few. With the imperial machinery at our disposal our difficulties to-day are incomparably greater than they were between 1902 and 1914.

The main influences of the war, as I have already explained, were moral, economic and political. The war was as much a struggle between ideas as a struggle between nations, and out of the moral, economic and political wreck resulting has arisen a new world-idea full of hopes and doubts, certainties and assumptions. The epoch

which culminated in 1914 is no more, it is dead. The immense changes which have since resulted are as yet almost formless. Morally the world is now experiencing a stupendous change: in Asia may be seen a rebirth of the spirit of nationality, such as is now taking form in Turkey, India, and still rather obscurely in China. In Europe a wave of internationalism has swept over the continent, and though self-determination of nationality—white Bolshevism—is based on the ideal of universal brotherhood, its result has been the resurrection of a number of impotent and backward states, veritable human grit in the world machine. The majority of these states are of Slav origin; in fact, while a few centuries ago the Turks were encamped outside the walls of Vienna, the Slavs, a semi-oriental race, are there to-day. To the military philosopher the main tendency of this moral revolution is a growing struggle for supremacy between West and East. This struggle is accentuated by the fact that while the East possesses teeming millions of people, the white races of the West clutch fast to themselves millions of square miles of sparsely-inhabited land. Of this land Australia, New Zealand and South Africa offer a tempting bait. Their occupation by Orientals would mean the dissolution of the Empire, and this dissolution would probably lead to an Oriental invasion of Europe, and quite possibly of America as well.

Economically the upheaval has been almost as great. Two immense economic factors loom

athwart politics—corn and oil, the second almost as great a necessity to modern civilisation as the first. As to corn, Great Britain is not self-supporting, and of oil she has practically none; yet the Empire possesses both these necessities, food for life and food for movement, in abundance, the former mainly in the Dominions and the latter not only in territories belonging to the Empire or occupied by British forces, but in many foreign countries where British financial interests have been established.

In 1914 the political outlook was in complexion military, and Berlin, the headquarters of the Prussian General Staff, was the focal point of political thought. To-day Germany is impotent, and the military centre has shifted to Paris. And why? Because France still thinks in terms of a military Berlin. While Europe is quarrelling Asia is gaining strength.

As trade centres have shifted, and as new ideas gain sway, so must the organisation and distribution of our defence forces conform. While in 1914 our main naval question was that of the maintenance of supremacy in the North Sea, to-day it is the economic control of the Atlantic and the strategical control of the Pacific Oceans. The command of the first is vital to the food supply of Great Britain, and of the second to the maintenance of the independence of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, the sources of much of this supply. Not only has the strategical outlook of the Navy completely changed, but also

its tactical outlook; and so little has this been understood that, as I have already mentioned, at the Washington Conference of 1921 the British delegates proposed the total suppression of the submarine, when this vessel, the weapon of weak nations, is vital to the maintenance of the independence of Australia and New Zealand.

All these immense imperial questions demand skilled and incessant thought. Our imperial defence organisation of 1914 cannot accomplish this; it could not even adequately prepare the Empire to meet the last war; to-day it is totally incapable of giving deep thought to these questions, and so prepare the Empire to meet the next war or fend it off.

During the war we arrived at harmony and at some semblance of control, and we just managed economically to make both ends meet. The problems which face us to-day are almost identical in nature; our base of action is imperial co-operation, our means of action imperial control, and the source of our strength our imperial resources. Finally, our imperial security depends on our command of the sea, backed by an efficient Army and an efficient Air Force.

12. *The Problem of Imperial Co-operation.*

Though in form the problems of peace differ from those of war, in substance they are very similar. Without internal harmony a nation or an empire is in a state of latent or actual anarchy. Between war and civil war there is no physical

difference, and even between the ballot and the bullet there is no political difference, for both are means of forcing the will of one group of men upon another. As during the war our first and most important problem was to establish a state of imperial harmony, so also is this our first and most important problem in the peace which has followed it. Strange as it may seem, however, the steps which we took during the war to establish harmony were of such a nature that since the war they have led to interminable discord. In one form or another we promised Home Rule to Ireland, Egypt and India, knowing that when it was granted disruption would follow, and yet we felt that if we did not grant it civil war would result. Thus it must be realised that though we went to war to preserve the Empire, during the war, in order to win it, we mortgaged the unity of the Empire and so potentially destroyed it.

To-day our leaders are faced by three alternatives: (1) to follow the line of greatest resistance, that is to go back on our word and oppose the liberty we promised; (2) to follow the line of least resistance and give way to all demands; (3) to establish machinery which by threshing the wheat from the chaff will enable each part of the Empire to see more clearly than it can to-day that the line of true freedom—and freedom is anarchy unless it is founded upon authority—must be sought through co-operation.

Thus far, that is between 1919 and 1933, little has been done outside drifting along the line of

least resistance. Statesmen have not taken their courage in both hands, in place it has oozed out of their ankles. They do not know where their policy is leading them to, for they do not possess the courage to change it, or to accept it, or to scrap it; they hope to slow down the current of events by incantations—words. Words are the wire-entanglements in peaceful conflicts, and having no substance which can be cut, they are far more bewildering than their counterparts on the battlefield. Since 1919 the world, our Empire and each nation of it have been snared by words and asphyxiated by dialectics, arguments which would put the scholastic philosophers to the blush. It is this age of Empire volatilisation into which I now intend to plunge.

The Imperial Conferences of 1921 and 1923 I shall be dealing with in the next section; my starting-point here is the year 1925. This year the Colonial Secretary's title was changed to that of "Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and Secretary of State for the Colonies," and the next year the Dominions to all intents and purposes ceased to exist as such.

The Imperial Conference of 1926 was not a turning-point but a climax, it was the grand climacteric of Empire, and as in the human body this crisis is supposed to take place in the sixty-third year, this Conference assembled just sixty-two years after The Quebec Resolutions which federated Canada and so established the principle of Dominion Status.

A few months before this Conference assembled Lord Byng, the Governor-General of Canada, had refused to dissolve the Canadian Parliament as he was urged to do by Mr. Mackenzie King. At once and with a certain amount of logic it was proclaimed that this refusal challenged the doctrine of equal status and relegated Canada to the position of a colony. In debating this question at Ottawa on July 23rd, 1926, Mr. Mackenzie King said, and his words are so remarkable that they are worth quoting in full :—

> " It is a strange, mystical sort of thing, this British Constitution that we love. It is partly unwritten ; it is partly written ; it finds its beginnings in the love of the past, it comes into being in the form of customs and traditions, it is founded upon the common law ; it is made up of precedents, of Magna Cartas, of Petitions and Bills of Rights, it is to be found partly in statutes and partly in the usages and practices of Parliament itself. It represents the highest achievement of British genius at its best. No one has ever seen it ; no one has adequately described it ; yet its presence is felt whenever liberty or right are endangered, for it is the creation of the struggle of centuries against oppression and wrong, and embodies the very soul of freedom itself.
>
> " It is the principles of liberty and freedom embodied in the British Constitution, and secured to those who live within its guarantees that have made men of many races and many climes a great brotherhood in name and in

heart. To the people of Great Britain it is one thing: To the community of British nations which comprise the sister Dominions beyond the seas it is the same thing, but something more. Scattered as they are amid the several oceans of the world, their coasts washed by the waters of many oceans, it is the sheet anchor which holds all true to the little isles in the northern sea. The Crown and the Flag are symbols, symbols that we reverence and which help to keep us one ; but in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand, in South Africa, in Newfoundland, in Ireland, it is the British Constitution that is the sustaining and enduring element in loyalty alike to the Crown and to the Flag. It is the magnet which counteracts all tendencies of separation from Britain, or to annexation to other lands. This is the Constitution by which the Liberal party in Canada stands : and for which it is prepared to fight to-day."

These are noble words, but they are not true. The British Constitution may be a " mystical sort of thing," but it exists for a very practical purpose —to unite a quarter of the globe in a bond of prosperous and secure peace. Even mystical fraternities have some organisation. To assist in discovering whether one was possible a committee, known as " The Inter - Imperial Relations Committee " (Imperial Conference, 1926), with Lord Balfour as chairman, was formed, and on November 18th it issued its report.

To give some form to this " mystical sort of

thing" a worse chairman could not have been selected, for Lord Balfour was half-mystic himself. A philosopher by instinct and a statesman by accident, he was in no sense a practical man. Seeing every question from every side, and being incapable of deciding on the supreme value of anyone, he was the most able creator of political jelly-fish that have ever floated in our imperial seas.

The report of this Committee opens by stating:—

"The Committee are of opinion that nothing would be gained by attempting to lay down a Constitution for the British Empire," so in place it defines the nature of Great Britain and the Dominions as follows —

> "They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

As they lie *within* the British Empire, this Empire must be something, but what it is is not defined, consequently the above definition is little more than an obituary notice.

Lord Balfour, seeing this side of the question, as he saw all sides, the report continues:—

> "A foreigner endeavouring to understand the true character of the British Empire by

the aid of this formula alone would be tempted to think that it was devised rather to make mutual interference impossible than to make mutual co-operation easy."

And though no one could surely blame him should he do so, Lord Balfour at once sees another side, and the report argues :—

"The British Empire is not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security, and progress are among its objects. . . .

"Equality of status, so far as Britain and the Dominions are concerned, is thus the root principle governing our inter-imperial relations. But the principles of equality and similarity, appropriate to *status*, do not universally extend to function. Here we require something more than immutable dogmas. For example, to deal with questions of diplomacy and questions of defence, we require also flexible machinery—machinery which can, from time to time, be adapted to the changing circumstances of the world."

The remainder of this report is supposed to devise this machinery, and what do we find ?

1. The title of His Majesty the King is changed.
2. The Governor-General is to become solely a representative of the Crown, and "not

the representative or agent of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain or of any Department of that Government."

3. The right of appeal to the Privy Council is to become voluntary.

This may be machinery, but it certainly is not machinery of co-operation.

Though the King's title is to be changed, he is still left to advise six different Governments which may be at loggerheads between themselves, and how can he do so except on the advice of his ministers, and if he does so what becomes of the principle of "equal status"? Further, as the Governor-General no longer represents the British Government all personal contact between this Government and the Dominions is lost, consequently advice is apt to become purely British. As appeal to the Privy Council is to become voluntary, the sole great remaining bond of imperial unity is broken. How can imperial disputes be settled without a supreme court to settle them? If a Dominion wishes to secede it can now legally do so. In short, all this Committee accomplished was to place a frozen negation in the middle of the world's melting-pot. Had Lenin devised it it could not have been more disruptive.

Certain questions were referred by the "Inter-Imperial Relations Committee" to "The Conference on The Operation of Dominion

Legislation and Merchant Shipping Legislation," which issued its report in 1929.

The main questions considered by this Conference were:—

1. Disallowances and Reservation.
2. The extra-territorial operation of Dominion legislation.
3. The Colonial Law Validity Act of 1865.
4. The Merchant Shipping Legislation and Colonial Courts of Admiralty Act of 1890.

The first endowed the Crown with the power, on the advice of its Ministers, to annul an Act passed by a Dominion or Colonial Legislature. Such power had not been exercised in relation to New Zealand since 1867; to Canada since 1873; and had never been exercised in Australia or South Africa. This power the Conference decided could be abolished by the Dominions if they so desired. Reservation means the withholding of assent by the Governor-General to a Bill duly passed by a competent Legislature. As this power clashed with the "equality status," it was agreed "that it is the right of the Government of each Dominion to advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs, and that consequently it would not be in accordance with constitutional practice for advice to be tendered to His Majesty by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in any matter appertaining to the affairs of a Dominion against the views of the Government of that Dominion."

As regards the second, extra-territorial legislation, the following clause was recommended: "It is hereby declared and enacted that the Parliament of a Dominion has full power to make laws having extra-territorial operation."

The Colonial Laws Validity Act of 1865 had as its object the establishment of uniformity of law; but as this also clashed with equality, the Committee considered that this Act should "cease to apply to any law made by the Parliament of a Dominion," and that "no law hereafter made by the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall extend to any Dominion otherwise than at the request and with the consent of that Dominion." One legal bond only was to continue, namely that "relating to the succession to the Throne and the Royal Style and Titles," for these are "matters of equal concern to all." Consequently the following convention was recommended:—

> "In as much as the Crown is the symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and as they are united by a common allegiance to the Crown, it would be in accord with the established constitutional position of all the members of the Commonwealth in relation to one another that any alteration in the law touching the Succession to the Throne or the Royal Style and Titles shall hereafter require the assent as well as of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom."

As regards the last question, it was considered that each Dominion should be granted "full and complete legislative authority" over all ships within its territorial waters or engaged in its coasting trade, and also over its own registered ships both intra-territorially and extra-territorially." Further, "that each Dominion in which the Colonial Courts of Admiralty Act, 1890, is in force should have power to repeal that Act."

The next Imperial Conference assembled on October 1st, 1930, and outside approving of the report of the Conference on the Operation of Dominion Legislation it accomplished very little. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald talked grandiloquently of upholding the influence of the Empire in world affairs, and if its members acted simultaneously and together peace could be guaranteed. For economic co-operation he suggested "the will to succeed" and "the confidence that we shall succeed," a fine yet impotent incantation! Mr. Scullin was more practical. He said: "One of the principal tasks ahead of us at this Imperial Conference of 1930 is to advance a stage further the great task of harmonising the real self-determination of the Dominions with the real unity of the British Commonwealth of Nations," for on this unity "may depend, in time of crisis, the preservation of international peace." But in this direction nothing was suggested or attempted.

Thus far, that is up to 1931, nothing whatever was done to establish co-operation within the

Empire and between its parts. The further they fell away and diverged the more it was said that they were freely co-operating. The result of this upside-down way of looking at things did not take long to mature, for in the debates which took place in the various Empire Parliaments immediately preceding the passing of the Statute of Westminster, on December 11th, 1931, which gave effect to the resolutions of the 1926 and 1930 Conferences, co-operation was transmuted into disruption.

At the bottom of this anarchy lay emotionalism, the tap-root disease of democracy. The ideal of freedom, a word which no one would define and few would examine, had become an end in itself. The knots of imperial authority were not unpicked or loosened but cut in true Gordian fashion, and as Western civilisation began to rock and tumble, its last stable support, the British Empire, was sundered. In the House of Commons on November 20th, 1931, Sir Stafford Cripps said :—

> "We shall welcome the time when the greater and greater degree of self-government and self-determination can be given to the remaining parts of the Empire, and to India in particular, so that this country may have a just pride in having propagated throughout the world those ideas and principles of democratic government which it has itself developed for its own internal governance, a system which has been the admiration of the world, and the development of which we should welcome in

our sister nations within the Empire. That very independence which we, as a people, have so persistently claimed we now formally give to our Dominions."

Such emotionalism, which is of a pseudo-religious and certainly not of a political order, is the rock upon which the Empire has been wrecked. To talk of a system being the admiration of the world, when in four countries out of five its adoption has proved a grim failure, is to foster anarchy and not freedom. Mr. P. McGilligan when addressing the Dail Eireann, on July 16th and 17th this year was more honest. He openly said that an epoch had come to an end, that a system which it took centuries to build up had been brought to an end by four years' assiduous collaboration, for now the British Parliament had renounced its right in any way to legislate for the Commonwealth. The King had become "a legislative shadow" who functioned entirely, "so far as Irish affairs are concerned, at the will of the Irish Government," that acting on the advice of the British Government he can "no more contract for the Irish Free State than can the King of Italy or the Mikado of Japan." "There is the single person of the King," he said, "we might say there is a single physical crown upon his head, but outside these two items there is no question of unity as between members of the Commonwealth."

Turning to the other side, Mr. Churchill, on November 20th, 1931, in the debate on the

Statute of Westminster, informed the House that we were abandoning "the whole apparatus of sovereignty and constitutional law" built up by our ancestors, that "tradition, goodwill and good sense" were the only bonds of Empire left, and that they were bonds of extreme frailty in Ireland and India. He said: "I am advised on high technical authority that this Bill confers upon the Irish Free State full legal power to abolish the Irish Treaty at any time when the Irish Legislature may think fit." For though there is a difference between a Treaty and an Act, the Irish Treaty rests on and is embodied in the "Irish Free State Constitution Act" of 1922. He predicted that Ireland would repudiate the Oath of Allegiance or any other article in the Treaty. Nevertheless, the Bill passed, and on December 11th it took its place in history as The Statute of Westminster.

This Statute is divided into a preamble and operative clauses, and it is a little disconcerting to find the Crown as "the symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations" in the first division.

In every respect this Statute is a negative document: dissolution and not co-operation is its aim, as will be seen from the following clauses:—

> "2. No law and no provision of any law made after the commencement of this Act by the Parliament of a Dominion shall be void or inoperative on the ground that it is repugnant to the law of England, or to the provisions of any existing or future Act of Parliament of the

United Kingdom, or to any order, rule or regulation made under any such Act, and the powers of the Parliament of a Dominion shall include the power to repeal or amend any such Act, order, rule or regulation in so far as the same is part of the law of the Dominion.

"3. It is hereby declared and enacted that the Parliament of a Dominion has full power to make laws having extra-territorial operation.

"4. No Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom passed after the commencement of this Act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to a Dominion, unless it is expressly declared in that Act that that Dominion has requested, and consented to, the enactment thereof."

The ink of this Statute was barely dry when twelve years of high-sounding hypocrisy girt about by sentiment, tradition, brotherly love and imperial partnership began to crumble. Freedom had been preached because it flatters democracies that they are composed of what the Americans call "he-men." It flatters them to hear that they are strong, just, wise and noble, because these are the qualities which they lack. It is easy for their leaders to obscure difficulties by flattery and to proclaim that the line of least resistance is the road towards strength, because democracies are amazingly gullible. Living and thinking in herds and mobs, reason is dashed into spray upon their emotions.

Lack of authority breeds anarchy. Rome went down not before the barbarian but because of the

weakening in her central government; the hub could no longer hold firm the spokes, and when they bent inwards the circumference collapsed. The Roman Empire was never really conquered, it simply split up, each spoke proclaiming its independence.

As fear and respect for the Emperor and all he stood for diminished self-interest seized upon the parts. So with us, between 1902 and 1931 we see the same forces at work. As the Emperor was once flattered so is the Empire now flattered, hollow words are blown around it, it lives on in a mist of iridescent hypocrisy so multi-coloured that no man can see its true complexion. It would seem almost that the rampant spirit of nationalism which is now abroad, which has fragmented Europe and which has fragmented the British Empire, is in fact an act of divine Providence, a destruction of nineteenth-century civilisation so that something better may be incarnated.

A hundred and forty-five years ago Alexander Hamilton wrote in *The Federalist*:—

> "A man must be far gone in Utopian speculations who can seriously doubt that if these States should be wholly disunited or only united in partial confederacies and sub-divisions into which they might be thrown they would have frequent and violent contests with each other. To presume a want of motives for such contests as an argument against their existence, would be to forget that men are ambitious, vindictive, and rapacious. To look for a

continuation of harmony between a number of independent, unconnected sovereignties in the same neighbourhood would be to disregard the uniform course of human events, and to set at defiance the accumulated experience of ages."

How true these words are may be seen from what followed The Statute of Westminster, which became law on December 11th, 1931. On March 22nd the next year, that is only 102 days later, the Irish Free State Government raised the question of the validity of the Irish Treaty, as Mr. Churchill had foreseen it would. On this day the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs received the following statement:—

"1. The Oath is not mandatory in the Treaty.

2. We have an absolute right to modify our Constitution as the people please."

If this did not actually mean a repudiation of the Treaty, it conveyed to the British Government the undoubted meaning that this Treaty was nothing more than a scrap of paper which could be torn up whenever the Irish people chose. In other words, that the Irish Free State possessed full rights to secede.

The upshot of this claim was that as simultaneously the Irish Free State Government claimed the right to retain the land annuities accruing under the Irish Lands Acts of 1891–1909, the British Government declared economic war on the Free State; the de Valera Government fell, was returned to power, and the "Removal of Oath

Bill" became law on May 6th, 1933. Thus has the new Commonwealth created by the Statute of Westminster begun to fall to pieces.

During this period of fifteen years which has separated the unity of Empire as established in the Imperial War Cabinet and the disunity of Empire as established by The Statute of Westminster, what do we see? Co-operation? No! because there is no centralised command; the centripetal force is missing, consequently the centrifugal force takes hold and the Empire flies apart. In 1930, at the opening of the Imperial Conference held that year, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald said: "The members of the Commonwealth, acting simultaneously and together, can exercise an influence greatly exceeding any that can be employed by one member or series of members acting individually." This is a truism, so obvious that it cannot be refuted. But a faggot is not merely a collection of sticks, it is a bundle—a collection with a binding. As I have mentioned, he talked of "will to succeed" and "confidence that we shall succeed"; fine words, yet no binding. What was wanted was machinery to co-operate, a fulcrum to move the Empire on.

At the Imperial Conference of 1930 Mr. Forbes, representing New Zealand, said:—

> "It seems to us that in a Commonwealth consisting of at least six equal partners, differing in a marked degree in history, in geographical situation, in internal organisation, in industrial development and in economic

orientation, and differing to some extent also in language and in race, centrifugal influences must inevitably tend towards the weakening of our association in the absence of some effective means of evolving a common policy and common action in all essential matters. This is, in our opinion, the outstanding problem of the moment, and at this Conference it will be towards such a common understanding and a common policy based on adequate information and consultation that our efforts will be mainly directed. It is our hope that the Governments represented here will find it possible to divert their attention from status to co-operation."

No, they could not, and now that the British Government had de-federated the Dominions, to rid itself of responsibility in India, on March 18th, 1933, it issued its proposals for an All-India Federation. As one chapter ends so does the next begin, and thus we proceed towards the end of the book—The Rise and Fall of the British Empire.

13. *The Problem of India.*

The problem of India is essentially a military problem ; it has always been so, and it is always likely to be so because India is a land of many races and of many peoples. In Volume II of the *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission* it is clearly stated that " One condition . . . of a self-governing India must be its ability to maintain without the aid of British troops the essential of

all good government, viz. public peace and tranquillity." Though this is self-evident, it is an astonishing fact that from the Montagu declaration of August 20th, 1917, onwards, though time and again home rule, responsible government and dominion status have been promised, it has persistently been overlooked that none of these political ends is possible until India possesses a native army strong enough and well disciplined enough to maintain law and order within her frontiers. And what is equally important, and what is not even mentioned in this Report, is that this cannot be done unless the North-West Frontier is held by a highly-efficient army, an army able not only to control the semi-civilised tribes which inhabit it, but able to hold back an invader until the rest of the British Empire, or Great Britain alone, can come to India's support. How immense and important this problem is may be judged from one fact alone, namely that since the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 the whole of our military policy has centred on India, and since 1881, when the Cardwell Reforms were completed, the Army at home has been nothing more than a training depot for the British forces in India.

Were India a potential Dominion, that is were that country in the social and political condition existing in either Canada or Australia before either was granted Dominion Status, the problem of raising a national army would be a comparatively easy one. But this is not so ; for India possesses

no common race, no common language, no common religion and no common tradition. Its inhabitants are a polyglot medley of scores of races and tribes, many of which are mutually hostile, and some of which are so backward as to have not as yet emerged from the Stone Age. Further still, India is not even a British unity, but a mixture of Provinces which come directly under our rule and of independent States which are alone bound to us by allegiance to the Crown. It is, consequently, a contradiction in terms to compare this sub-continent which possesses no national foundations to Canada or any other of the Dominions.

Though the promise of dominion status to India was undoubtedly made in good faith, it was in actual fact a criminal thing to do, because India has no possibility of becoming a Dominion. This, so it seems to me, is appreciated, for in the *Proposals for Indian Constitutional Reform* (Command Paper 4268 of March, 1933) no mention of dominion status is made. In place what is proposed is the establishment of a Federal Empire, a combination of independent States and autonomous Provinces under a Federal Government which will not control the military forces, for these are to come directly under the Governor-General, the King's representative. That is to say, they will ultimately be controlled by the British Parliament as they always have been.

Because of this arrangement the scheme becomes theoretically workable, though in practice it is likely to prove far from being so, because, as

this Command Paper points out, "Federation elsewhere has usually resulted from a pact entered into by a number of political units, each possessed of sovereignty or at least of autonomy, and each agreeing to surrender to the new central organism which their pact creates an identical range of powers and jurisdiction, to be exercised by it on their behalf to the same extent for each of them individually and for the federation as a whole." Then it is explained that whilst the Provinces "have no original or independent powers or authority to surrender . . . the States have made it plain that they are not prepared to transfer to a Federal Government the same range of authority in their territories as it is expedient and possible to confer upon it in relation to the Provinces." What is the result? "The position will therefore necessarily be that in the Indian Federation the range of powers to be exercised by the Federal Government and Legislature will differ in relation to the two classes of units which comprise it."

Here, surely, we have the makings of endless friction; for should the princes join in the federation, which is by no means certain, and it cannot come into being unless "the rulers of states representing not less than half the aggregate population of the Indian States . . . have signified their desire to accede to the federation," approximately one-third of each Chamber—the House of Assembly and the Council of State—will represent autocracy and the remaining two-thirds

democracy, or, rather, an oligarchic form of this cult, because the number of voters will not be more than "2 and 3 per cent. of the total population of British India," that is between seven and eight millions. One can only hope as a Frenchman has said: "The art of conciliating contradictions . . . is perhaps the greatest source of strength of the English people, who are at once so old and so young. It is this that permits them to twist and to turn their way through torments which, in the light of our reason, would seem to doom the British Empire to extinction."

The weakness of this federation is that the whole problem has been elaborated from false premises. As I pointed out at the very beginning of this book, the British Empire has been built upon certain well-defined principles, three of which are the establishment of domestic peace, the establishment of secure frontiers, and the self-government of self-controllable colonies. Now, had these three principles been kept in mind the problem would have appeared as follows: Our ultimate object is self-government in India; our immediate object is federation under our own guidance; for the time being federation must be secured by the British and Indian Armies as now constituted, but as the first is mercenary to India and the second is in no sense of the word a national army, federation must be so organised as to permit of the eventual withdrawal of the first and the complete Indianisation of the second. Put

still more definitely: upon the military system adopted by the federation will depend whether or not self-government can take form. Conversely: self-government demands a national army, and this army can only be evolved from a homogeneous federation.

Our mistake has been that we have put the political cart in front of the security horse. We have omitted to remember that all governments, whether autocratic, democratic, theocratic or oligarchic are ultimately based on military force. Equally bad, in place of selecting a political vehicle which has proved itself suitable to the conditions in India, we have chosen our own chariot, because a minute section of British-educated Indians have ridden in it.

Self-government as applied to ourselves is not difficult to define: it is political freedom founded upon physical force, the basic instrument being the will of the majority. Our problem is simple, because whether we live in Great Britain or the Dominions the above essentials of democratic rule hold good. We inhabit, as it were, one block of flats, and though each flat possesses its own characteristics, the block is one building founded upon what we call Western civilisation.

Turning to India, we see no such a foundation, in place Oriental civilisation; no such a single block, instead two separate houses—the Indian States and the British Provinces, in both of which there is not even an understanding of democracy, in which the will of the majority is non-existent,

in which law and order have never been maintained except by mercenary armies, and in which political freedom, as we understand it, is meaningless to over 300,000,000 people.

This contrast is patent to all who have lived in India, yet in spite of it our present endeavour is to foist our system upon India, a system which took form at Runnymede in 1215, and which did not come of age until between the years 1832–1878. A system which began at the top of the society of its day and not at the bottom, and a system which in recent years, having enfranchised all classes, is showing definite signs of decay.

Why are we attempting this truly impossible political task ? Is it not because we lack imagination, that we cannot grasp the psychic differences between West and East, and that we are out to satisfy our constitutional conceits, our pride in Parliamentarianism, rather than conform to the age-old instincts of the peoples of India ? And in our bourgeois short-sightedness, our stubborn stupidity, have not we overlooked the fact that the cardinal virtue of any Government is its conformity to the spirit of the people governed ? In India the supreme question to-day is not one of efficiency, so dear to the hearts of economically-minded Western man, but of contentedness, a spiritual quality — something fundamental and transcending all machine power.

The parties involved in this problem are ourselves, the peasants, the princes and the congressmen, or babus, or intelligentsia. We

want a contented, prosperous and secure India; the peasants want their daily bread and low taxes; the princes, having bound up their destiny with our own, do not object to a federation under *our* rule; and the congressmen and their followers, the pseudo-Westernised Indians, numbering a few millions, want any proposals which will be disastrous to our prestige. They preach our extermination, and yet could not impose their will upon any section of India for a fortnight unless backed by our bayonets, because their ideals are incomprehensible to the peasants and repugnant to the aristocracy.

As the peasants are inert and inarticulate we are left with a choice between the princes and the congressmen, between what is a native Oriental system and what is an artificial pseudo-Western system. The one is rock, for it has already weathered the storms of half a dozen empires; the other is sand blown hither and thither by turbulent words; all it can do is temporarily to blind the peasants.

In place of building upon what exists and what has proved itself to be acceptable to the majority of the peoples of India for thousands of years we are now attempting to build upon what does not exist, what has never existed, and what is unlikely ever to exist. The States system already provides home rule for over forty per cent. of India and one-quarter of her people. From time immemorial the princes have been looked upon as *Arkan-i-daulat*—the pillars of the State, a State

which rose to its zenith under Akbar and Shah Jehan and which remained a virile federation as long as its centre remained virile.

When we first went to India we recognised this and relied upon the aristocracy. Then in the years which immediately preceded the Mutiny, rapidly becoming industrialised, our greed for power, markets and wealth led us to commit the egregious blunder of annexing States and turning them into Provinces. Yet, in spite of this, the princes remained our mainstay, for had they joined in the rebellion "each ancient name would have been a tower of strength to the rebel cause."

Since 1857 we have largely looked upon these true chiefs of the Indian peoples as "negative quantities in the State," and not as the pillars which support its edifice and without which our hold on India would have been impossible. Three years after the Mutiny, on April 30th, 1860, Lord Canning wrote: "When India shall be threatened by an external enemy, or when the interests of England elsewhere may require that her Eastern Empire shall incur more than ordinary risk, one of her best mainstays will be found in these Native States." These prophetic words rang true in 1914.

In the mind of every impartial man there can be no doubt whatever that Indians should have a strong voice in their government and ultimately, if possible, the sole voice. And to rational men it is equally obvious that this voice should come from the natural leaders of the people, the aristocracy, whom the masses will follow, the men

of power and not necessarily the men of foreign education ; for in the East education, the ability to pass competitive examinations, is nothing when compared to birth, tradition and prestige.

What form of Government should then be established ? The answer is simple, namely one based on the federal system, for this system is native to India ; but not in the bastard form as at present suggested—a mixture of autocratic States and pseudo-democratic Provinces. To extend the State system is, therefore, the only practical solution to this problem, and though to do so is difficult, it is nothing like so difficult as the present proposals. India is not a unit, a single people, but a congeries of States and Provinces embracing over 200 different groups of peoples. A federated Commonwealth is possible, but a representative Government, such as we know in Westminster, is impossible. Our aim should, therefore, be the devolution of our responsibilities to the States and not the establishment of an oligarchy of babus.

This means the creation of new States, which though a difficult task is not an impossible one, for in the past it has already been done in the case of Mysore and Kashmir, and to-day Mysore is not only the model State of India but also a model to the British Provinces. To accomplish this great end we must set aside the illusion that our local form of democracy is a divine instrument, for though it is barely fifty years old, it has foundered in Asia and is fast foundering in

Europe—witness Russia, Italy, Spain, Poland and Germany, without naming several of the small countries. Though still powerful in Great Britain, we should not overlook the fact that between 1919 and 1931 it almost brought us to ruin, and that a National Government had to be created to pull us out of the bog into which our much-lauded party system had driven us. Further still, it is only sane to acknowledge that from the dawn of history India has been ruled autocratically, and though autocracy may be anathema to us, it is nevertheless the only system ever known or desired in India.

Granted that the Provinces are reconverted into States, the next question is the establishment of a Federal Government. This must for a long time remain under British direction, and I do not think that this would be objected to by the princes, for they are wise enough to realise that a firm British centre guarantees their own independence by preventing inter-State wars. This central Government should be headed by a permanent Viceroy, a prince of the blood as suggested some twenty-five years ago by that acute observer M. Chailley in his *L'Inde Britannique*, this true representative of the King-Emperor being assisted in his government by an Imperial Council of Ruling Princes—a feudal organisation and not a democratic one.

Such, I believe, is the only practical system of Indian Home Rule, a system which is based on the traditions of the country and the instincts

of her many peoples. To-day we are on the wrong track and are heading for a precipice. Democracy is foreign to India, as foreign as autocracy at present is to us. Our true road lies in extending the only form of "Swaraj" India has ever known —the Indian States system. Which is better, which is more rational, to hand India over to her natural rulers or to the successful candidates of competitive examinations? These can only attract the lower and middle classes, and it is definitely known that the Princes will not tolerate a babu Government at the centre.

The question now arises, Is this suggestion a practical one, even accepting that it is workable? Is not it a counsel of perfection, seeing that we have so fully committed ourselves in quite another direction? I think this is just criticism, and I do not see how we can forthwith reverse our present policy. Yet if this policy fails, should not we be prepared to acknowledge failure, and the only sure way of being prepared is to have another scheme ready to hand to substitute for the one which has failed.

It is quite possible that when once the Provinces gain their autonomy the States will refuse to agree to a federation, and if they do not agree there are but two alternatives, namely to abandon federation, which will mean an increasing struggle between the autonomous Provinces and the Central Government, or to compel the States to join by turning them into Provinces, a course of action which led to the Mutiny of 1857.

Should, however, the Princes agree to join in a federation, seeing that its elements are diametrically opposed, one being in nature autocratic and the other democratic, its composition will be of flint and steel, consequently incessant political conflicts will disturb the land and in time contaminate the Indian Army. The ultimate end is, therefore, one overcast with mutinies, rebellions and civil wars.

Thus, whatever way we look the final and consequently primal question in India is a military one, because no State, Province or country " which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defence is really, or can be, in the full sense of the word, a free community." Therefore, unless the States and Provinces possess their own armies, self-government in either India as a whole or in the States and Provinces individually is a chimera.

The problem of raising a national all-India army is fantastic, because India is not a nation. To look upon it as such has been our crucial mistake, a mistake which has led us from one difficulty into another. India is a sub-continent of many nations, and how to maintain peace between them, and not how to weld them into one unit, is the fundamental problem which faces us. This problem solved, all other problems fade into insignificance.

In the Report of the Statutory Commission we read :—

" The plain fact is that the formation of an Indian National Army drawn from India as a

whole, in which every member will recognize the rest as his comrades, in which Indian officers will lead men who may be of different races, and in which public opinion will have general confidence, is a task of the greatest possible difficulty, and the Indian intellectual has, as a rule, no personal longing for an army career."

It is a problem even more difficult than creating a European army, because whilst in Europe all nations are of fighting stock, in India the martial races are segregated in a few areas, all of which lie in northern India and are not predominantly Hindu.

"Of the total number of combatants in the Indian Army, 140,600 are drawn from the North-West Frontier Province, Kashmire, Punjab, Rajputana, United Provinces and Nepal (total population 91 millions); whilst from Central India, Bihar and Orissa, Bengal, Assam, Burma, Central Provinces, Bombay, Hyderabad, Madras and Mysore (total population 225 millions), the number is 15,400. The Punjab (essentially non-Hindu) and Nepal (an independent kingdom) provide 62 per cent. of the recruits of the whole army, whilst Bihar and Orissa, Central India and Central Provinces supply a total of 600, and Bengal none. In the war it was much the same; the Punjab and the United Provinces with a population of 70 millions enlisted 492,000 recruits, whilst Bengal and Orissa with a population of 86 millions enlisted 14,000. More remarkable still,

Bengal with a population of 48 millions recruited 2,000 men, less than Ajmir with a population of half a million. In the four years of the war the Sikhs, from a total population of two and a half millions, furnished no less than 90,000 combatant recruits, that is one-eighth of the Indian total. If a national army is to be raised, then it will consist of Punjabis, Mahomedans, Pathans, Sikhs, Jats, Rajputs and Mahrattas, and is it likely that these men will honour and obey a Government mainly composed of Bengali babus, Bombay bunias and Madrasi pleaders ?

"The undeniable truth is, that though there are certain war-like races in India, the bulk of the people is pacific and totally unfit for military work. The war casualties show this clearly. 'The death casualties for all India with 320 millions of people,' writes Sir Michael O'Dwyer, 'were less than those of Canada with her 8 millions, of Australia with only 5 millions, and only double those of New Zealand with little over a million people.' These figures are, however, somewhat misleading, for more than half the Indian casualties must be debited to one province—the Punjab. Thus, from a fighting point of view, it may truthfully be said that this province is worth the rest of India put together."[1]

These facts and figures, drawn from official sources, are completely ignored by India's constitution-mongers. The Statutory Commission offers no suggestion outside that India might be

[1] Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, *India in Revolt*, pp. 205–206.

encouraged to organise, train and equip certain military and naval forces of its own. But the Commissioners add: "This involves technical questions into which we do not enter." The Round Table Conferences have offered no suggestions, and in Command Paper 4268, of 1933, things are left as they are and a national army is not even mentioned. Yet as Professor Keith has said: "Self-government without an effective Indian Army is an impossibility, and no amount of protests or demonstrations or denunciations of the Imperial Government can avail to alter that fact." If in place of self-government of all India as a unit we substitute the self-government of each individual State, then I am of opinion that the military problem becomes a feasible though still a difficult one.

What are India's main military liabilities? They are internal security, the holding of the North-West Frontier and ability to beat back invasion.

The forces employed on these tasks are: the British Army in India, approximately 60,000 strong; the Indian Army, 156,000 strong, backed by a reserve of 34,000; and about 120,000 States' troops in varying degrees of efficiency, of which about one-sixth, the Imperial Service troops, are sufficiently well trained to take the field. Curious as it may seem, this last-mentioned force of men is the only true native force in the country, for the Indian Army is officered almost entirely by white British officers.

To-day the British Army and the Indian Army meet all three of the above liabilities: they maintain law and order within the country and on the North-West Frontier, and are ready to beat back invasion. This is an extremely difficult situation, and one which does not tend towards efficiency, as these two armies having two main functions are simultaneously armed policemen and soldiers. In a normally well-governed Western country this would be no serious drawback; but in a country such as India, a country possessed of fierce religious enthusiasm and a hundred discordant qualities, a disaster on the frontier would at once set the greater part of India ablaze with excitement which might easily lead to revolution. Consequently, when trouble arises on the frontier not only is it necessary to reinforce its garrisons but to be prepared to crush internal disorders.

Again, the scattering of regular troops about India on internal security duties does not tend towards efficiency, as it renders co-operative training next to impossible.

Now, granted an India consisting entirely of native States and a strong Central Government under British control, these two military problems can be separated by handing internal security over to the States and insisting that for this purpose each State raises and maintains an efficient *gendarmerie*, forces of men which though they may not possess the characteristics of regular soldiers, will be sufficiently well trained

and disciplined to maintain law and order within each State. This arrangement agreed upon, the British and Indian Armies could be reduced in size and maintained and trained solely for frontier defence and active service beyond the frontiers should this become necessary. This central and in no sense of the word federal army might with advantage be organised in two wings—a Frontier Defence Force, stationed on the frontiers, and a small highly-mechanised Central Force, ready, like a fire-brigade, to move out to any spot in India or on her frontiers where a conflagration has broken out. This Central Force would, therefore, have two purposes: the first, to support the Frontier Defence Force; and the second, to support a State's *gendarmerie* should it be unable to quell a rebellion. As this force would be highly mobile, consisting of tanks, armoured cars, lorry-carried troops and aircraft, it would not be necessary to disperse it, consequently it might be kept in two or three important localities, for example Quetta, Delhi and Bangalore.

It may now be asked, Why not apply this same system to a federation of States and Provinces? The answer to this question is, that as the Provinces will possess pseudo-democratic Governments, it is more than probable that their ministries will always be filled by men hostile not only to the Central Government but to the Indian States. To trust these men with military power will consequently be dangerous, and in any case will necessitate a considerable strengthening of

the Central Force and its probable dispersion in small packets. Were this not feared, there can be no doubt whatever that the Statutory Commission, the Round Table Conferences and Command Paper 4268 would have dealt fully with the problem of Indian defence. In place they have shirked it, because it is a fact patent to all that an Indian democracy cannot be trusted with questions relating to its own security or with the defence of the country as a whole.

Finally, it is true that British statesmen and the moderate political parties in India recognise that government in India, as in Europe, finally rests upon military force, and that consequently the fundamental problem in establishing any form of government which can function for the benefit of the people is wrapped up in this question. First let us decide how internal security and frontier security can be maintained, and then on this foundation let us build up a political edifice which they can sustain. This is *the* problem in Indian unity and defence.

14. *The Problem of Imperial Security.*

If the reader will now turn back and hastily refresh his mind by glancing through Sections 7 to 13 of this book, I think he will agree with me that at no single period in our history has imperial security been a more pressing problem than it is to-day. What does he see ? The entire world in a state of chaos and girt about by a fear of war and

a disarmament hypocrisy which all but stagger the imagination. Europe, as I have said, is pocked with war problems, the majority of which was begotten by the peace treaties; Asia is in a state of volcanic eruption, and so is South America; the United States is full of brigands and pious words; the Empire has been knocked off its political pedestal and has been swung off its legal pivot, and to-day an elaborate scheme has been evolved to hand India over to the chaos in which we found her.

It is a terrifying picture, so thunderous that its gloom obscures its vastness from the public eye. Yet in theory the establishment of security is not so difficult as this picture suggests, and a knowledge of history, and above all an understanding of history, will help us in solving this problem.

The fundamental fact in our history is that we are an island Empire, consequently the predominant factor in our security and therefore in our unity and very existence is command of the sea. This factor has for centuries endowed our war strategy with a definite British complexion, just as the vast depths of Russia have endowed Russian strategy with a character of its own.

Because man lives on the land and not on the waters, and because it is not every enemy who can be attacked from the sea or be blockaded, the complementary factor to our sea power is a powerful, mobile, though comparatively small army, which can be fired from our navy just as a

projectile is fired from a cannon. What does this demand? A grand-strategical gunner who understanding the limitations of his piece does not waste his shot. Such a gunner, or co-ordinating brain, we as an Empire have never as yet possessed; consequently our strategy has been chaotic, and potentially it remains so.

The mistakes we made during the last war were but a repetition of mistakes we have made again and again throughout our history. For example, during the French Revolutionary Wars we scattered our strength in a number of ill-considered overseas expeditions, and we repeated this mistake in detail during the World War and most notably in Gallipoli and at Salonika. In both cases we sought a line of least resistance, not because it was stretegically sound, but because tactically it was so weak that the military pressure we could afford to exert had a sporting chance of accomplishing something, however insignificant. And why? Because this something may meet with popular applause and so keep the Government in power. By the people these blank cartridges are mistaken for live bombs, and on account of their noise they are apt to encourage one escapade after another, and so destroy one army after another.

This being so, and as no sane man can doubt that the security of our Empire still depends upon sea-power, which in war must be combined with air-power as well as military power, the problem of creating for the Empire a grand strategical

brain is as important as the maintenance of an efficient navy, and far more important than the maintenance of an efficient army, because if the navy holds the command of the sea this army can be created after the declaration of war. But a grand strategical brain cannot be so created, for to fashion such an organ requires many years of work—at least a generation.

From this problem of combined strategy I will turn to another which must and will vitally influence the entire Empire in another war. In Section 9 I pointed out that to-day we are faced by a radical change in the methods of war, and that future warfare will demand not so much man-power as machine-power. This inevitable change in armaments at once brings us up against a formidable imperial obstacle. The Dominions are essentially agricultural countries, and Great Britain is essentially an industrial country. Because the Dominions are weak in industries they are compelled to base their military strength on man-power, which they lack; yet Great Britain, strong in man-power, will, because of her immense industrial power, be compelled to base her future military strength upon her industries. Though during the World War the Home and Dominion Armies were similarly organised, because of industrial differences in the next great war they may radically differ, not as differences are generally reckoned, namely in variants of organisation, training and discipline, but in such essential differences as armaments and means of movement.

These differences may become so marked that the Dominion armies may prove next to useless for tactical work. Unless this difficulty is overcome, the only conclusion is that whilst in 1914 the security of the Dominions was guaranteed by the British Navy, in the future to this guarantee must be added the mechanised strength of the British Army and Air Force. In short, strategically the Dominions are likely to become more and more dependent upon the Mother Country, her industries and her arsenals, and consequently less free than they were in 1914, whatever their political liberty may be.

Turning this problem from the imperial to a European direction it assumes an equally remarkable form. If the Dominion forces are likely to slide into obsolescence, the industrial power of Great Britain enables her small army to rival in strength many, if not all, of the continental conscript hordes.[1] In 1914 we and these hordes were similarly organised, and consequently our military power was comparatively insignificant. In the future, unless conscript armies are replaced by mechanised forces (and only industrial countries can accomplish this securely, because during war time mechanisation will depend upon *internal* resources), our small Expeditionary Force may well prove the decisive military factor. If, however, they emulate us, and do change, then as

[1] This does not mean that an infringement of the balance of power will take place, because a mechanised army unless supported by a horde cannot for long occupy an enemy's country.

these changes will demand large sums of money to effect, the leading continental nations are unlikely to be able to expend sufficient money simultaneously to create strong navies and air fleets. Thus, through mechanisation of our land forces, not only shall we be able to play our part more fully in the maintenance of the balance of power on the Continent, but we shall simultaneously secure our home base against air attack and strengthen our command of the sea.

Unfortunately, the military picture which to-day we look at is not only less bright but gloomy in the extreme. We are the greatest industrial power in Europe. At the end of the war we had the most powerful tank forces in the field, and for the 1919 campaign were building no less than 6,000 of these machines. To-day, though in experimental work we may be ahead of other nations, and this is doubtful, in numbers of tanks we are vastly inferior to both France and Russia. Recently the Russians paraded 300 of these machines in Moscow, and the number in France must be five times this figure. In our turn we could not place 100 in the field, that is 100 efficient modern machines. The last seven years have indeed been lean ones in the history of British mechanisation. We still have masses of efficient infantry, but during these seven years we have added but one unit to our Tank Corps. Such neglect is to tempt Providence, and in the Dominions there is virtually no mechanisation at all.

With reference to this problem, there is an illusion held by many that mechanisation is purely a financial question. It is not, for it is pre-eminently an industrial question. We must not be able only to effect the change over from a man-power to a machine-power basis, but to maintain it during war also, which means the establishment of industries suitable for the production of war machines. Arsenals will not accomplish this, for these industries must be founded upon commercial utility. This problem resolves itself around the production of commercial cross-country machines, vehicles which can dispense with roads. As by far the greater part of the Empire is in a roadless condition, and as the cost of roads and railways is prohibitively expensive in sparsely-populated areas, areas which may nevertheless possess immense potential wealth, the utility of an economical roadless vehicle cannot be doubted, it in fact is a commercial necessity. Such necessities as these are always produced, because "Necessity is the mother of invention."

Ninety years ago the most direct influence of the steamship and railway was the shifting of people from highly-populated areas to under-populated ones; and if inference can be depended upon, the roadless vehicle will produce a similar effect. Thus, from the point of view of man-power we obtain an expansion of imperial strength. This expansion of British population is also the foundation of strategical power, for though large

nations frequently lose a war they seldom lose their independence. Again, as commercial roadless vehicles are introduced, not only will the Empire be commercially expanded but strategically contracted, because the military forces developed from the civil machines will be able to move five or six times faster than our present-day army. We thus see that not only will mechanisation enable us to re-establish, or assist towards the re-establishment of, the balance of power, but that it will, through its civil base, assist to solve the main problems which to-day separate Great Britain from the Dominions.

More criminal even than the destruction of our tank force has been the destruction of our Air Force, which has sunk from first to fifth or sixth place amongst the air forces of the nations. In both cases the reasons have been identical—adherence to traditional warfare and lack of appreciation of the power of modern inventions on the part of our soldiers, sailors and politicians. It is obvious to a child that unless Great Britain, our war base of action, is strongly secured against air attack, our military and naval forces may be rendered totally valueless. More than ever may it be said that London is the heart of the Empire, because it can be struck at by more than one continental nation and in spite of the fact that our enemy may not put to sea a single warship. We are now faced by the astonishing situation that should a small power, such as Holland or

Belgium, possess a superior air force to our own, it is possible for this power to unhinge and even destroy the Empire, an Empire embracing a quarter of the globe, in a single blow. Even more remarkable still, the reductions which have taken place in our Royal Air Force have not been brought about by outside pressure, but solely through an insane conservatism.

From these few general remarks on the problem of imperial security I will turn to the events of the years which have followed the war, in order to show that none of these problems were appreciated, let alone solved, and that to-day, as far as security is concerned, we are worse prepared to defend the Empire or even ourselves than we have been at any date during the last hundred years.

These events fall into two main groups, the attempts made by the United States of America, in the name of freedom of the seas, to undermine British naval power and so be in a position to influence British policy and strategy, and the dearth of defensive policy agreed upon or even suggested at the various Imperial Conferences.

One of the main causes of the prolongation of the war was American neutrality, because it seriously and decisively hampered a complete blockade. Though the United States eventually joined in the war, between the date of its outbreak and April, 1917, the infringement of the so-called neutral rights (largely connected with the

"Declaration of London" which had been agreed upon in 1909 but never ratified) were considered such a slight to American dignity, that after the war the United States determined that it would never be placed in so humiliating a position again. The first move was a direct one, a vast increase in the American Navy, and the second indirect, a separation of the two great naval Powers, Great Britain and Japan, at the Washington Conference of 1921–22. This accomplished, and the battleship strength of Great Britain and the United States equalised, a determined onslaught was made on British cruiser power. This led to an abortive naval conference in 1927, another in 1929, and to the signing of the London Naval Treaty on April 22nd, 1930.

This treaty was the result of a Five-Power Conference which opened in London on January 21st, 1930. The nations attending were Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy and Japan. As a whole this Conference was a failure, for it was unable to produce a comprehensive Five-Power agreement for naval disarmament. It was decided that no new battleships or battle cruisers should be laid down before 1936, and that the size of submarines should not exceed 2,000 tons. Far more important decisions, known as "The Three-Power Agreement" were arrived at by Great Britain, the United States and Japan, but not by France and Italy. They were as follows :—

By December 31st, 1936, the complete tonnage

of each Power was not to exceed the following totals for each category of ships:

Category.	British Empire.	U.S.A.	Japan.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
8-inch gun cruisers ..	146,800	180,000	108,400
6-inch gun cruisers ..	192,200	143,000	100,450
Destroyers	150,000	150,000	105,500
Submarines	52,700	52,700	52,700
Total	541,700	525,700	367,050

The number of 8-inch gun cruisers to be limited to—

British Empire 15
U.S.A. 18
Japan 12

By the terms of this treaty the number of British cruisers of all kinds was limited to 50.

These figures were arrived at not by assessing strategical liabilities but on political principles alone. Nations, according to their wealth and size, were divided into categories, or groups, and round figures decided upon for each. The reason for this totally unscientific method was that the United States, possessing few naval liabilities and cut off from Europe by 3,000 miles of water, did not really mind reducing her naval strength as long as she could cripple British and Japanese naval power. That she succeeded in doing so the following official figures worked out

by French naval experts in 1929 clearly show, the naval needs of Italy being taken as = 1.

Country.	Area of Territory.		Length of Coasts.		Length of Communications.	
British Empire	15·8		9·5		11·2	
U.S.A.	4·0	10·0	4·6	10·9	3·2	12·0
Japan	0·3		3·0		1·0	
Italy	1·0		1·0		1·0	
France	4·7		2·3		6·8	

Country.	External Trade.		Sea-borne Traffic.		All Factors.	
British Empire	10·6		17·8		12·9	
U.S.A.	5·3	10·3	7·6	14·5	4·9	10·5
France	2·7		3·6		3·0	
Japan	1·3		2·3		1·6	
Italy	1·0		1·0		1 0	

From these figures it will be seen that Great Britain's need is greater by 9·6 units to that of the other four naval powers combined. Can it, therefore, be said that there is any semblance of equality between the naval responsibilities of Great Britain and the United States? If responsibility had been the measuring-rod, then the British Navy should be over two and a half times as powerful as the American.

Rightly or wrongly, I maintain that had the Empire possessed a strategical brain such a system of measurement as introduced at the Washington Conference and again used at the London

Conference could not have been accepted by us. In place we should have stated our liabilities and our requirements to meet them. That we should have maintained the full power of our war fleet is absurd, as it totalled 3,250,000 tons, and we rightly cut this down by one and a half million tons between 1919 and 1923. The fact, however, remains that to-day, and in spite of the war, the world is not far removed from the conditions which existed in 1914. Then we had 2,160,000 tons of warships, now we have 1,200,000 tons; our naval establishments for 1913-14 were 146,000 men, for 1931-32 93,650; and whilst in 1913-14 our Regular Army stood at 185,600 men, in 1931-32 it had fallen to 148,800. Therefore in these two Services the reduction in man-power has been over 89,000, which is in part compensated for by 32,000 men of the Royal Air Force which did not exist before the war.

It is a strange fact, but one which is frequently overlooked, that the nation which has taken the greatest interest in naval disarmament has been the one to increase her naval armaments beyond all others, as the following table will show:—

Country.	August 1st, 1914.		January 1st, 1930.		Compared with 1914.	
	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.
British Empire	573	2,160,326	286	1,252,898	−287	−907,428
France	345	746,214	153	495,673	−192	−250,541
Italy	183	353,861	186	311,021	+3	−42,840
U.S.A.	180	881,347	457	1,204,457	+277	+323,110
Japan	147	522,022	226	807,052	+79	+285,030

From this international problem of naval power, in which the triangular duel between the United States, Great Britain and Japan became the culminating act, coupled with an altercation in the wings between France and Italy, I will turn to the inter-imperial aspect of security.

In 1918 an Imperial War Conference was held in London concurrently with the meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet. For the first time this Conference fully represented all parts of the Empire, including India. Though mainly concerned with war affairs, the suggestion put forward in the Admiralty Memorandum of May 17th, 1918, for a single navy under a central naval authority was not agreed upon by the Dominion Ministers, not only because they represented politically independent nations, but because outside the British Admiralty there was no machinery which could control them.

The next Conference, which assembled in 1921, was mainly concerned with the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and its bearing on the relations of the British Empire with the United States, which a little later on was brought to an end at the Washington Conference. Mr. Hughes, representing Australia, considered that this treaty should be renewed. He said: "We will do well, for the world's peace, we will do well for China, we will do well for the Commonwealth of British nations to renew this Treaty. We want peace." He pointed out that "in our case sea-power is,

and always must be, the determining factor of our foreign policy. . . . The Dominions could not exist if it were not for the British Navy. We must not forget this. We are a united Empire or we are nothing."

General Smuts apparently saw otherwise. He said: "Armaments depend upon policy, and therefore I press very strongly that our policy should be such as to make the race for armaments impossible. That should be the cardinal feature of our foreign policy."

Here are presented two opposite views. On the one hand the Navy is the determining factor, on the other hand it should be disarmament. Then Mr. Massey stated that in his view, though through signing the Peace Treaty the Dominions had acquired complete independence, they could not refrain from entering an Empire war, because "when the King, the Head of the State, declares war the whole of his subjects are at war." In other words, the authority of the King is in the end the deciding factor in our foreign policy. Realising, so it seems to me, a certain weakness in this argument, he said that he had hoped that the Imperial War Cabinet "would become a permanent institution, modified, of course, as required by a period of peace." Then he added: "We are here to-day, and I think I am right in saying we do not even know what to call ourselves, and there is a great deal in a name. A Conference means consultation and consultation only, but a Cabinet also carries with it the right to recommend

some definite course to the Sovereign. . . . We have lost the right which we had then [during the war] on war matters, and even other matters, to assist in making a recommendation to the Sovereign, the Head of the State, in regard to any course of action which we thought desirable and which required his assent." In other words, there can be no determining factor in our foreign policy, outside that of drift, unless there is established machinery which can determine it.

From this Conference onwards imperial security falls more and more into the background. When the next Conference met, in October, 1923, Germany no longer existed as an economic State; the United States was booming towards prosperity undreamed of in any former age; defence was thus daubed out of the picture. In his opening speech, on October 1st, Mr. Stanley Baldwin said that "defence will necessarily occupy a considerable share of our deliberations," but it did not. These are its recommendations:—

"1. The Conference affirms that it is necessary to provide for the adequate defence of the territories and trade of the several countries comprising the British Empire.

"2. In this connexion the Conference expressly recognises that it is for the Parliaments of the several parts of the Empire, upon the recommendations of their respective Governments, to decide the nature and extent of any action which should be taken by them.

"3. Subject to this provision, the Conference suggests the following as guiding principles:—

(*a*) The primary responsibility of each portion of the Empire represented at the Conference for its own local defence.

(*b*) Adequate provision for safeguarding the maritime communications of the several parts of the Empire and the routes and waterways along and through which their armed forces and trade pass.

(*c*) The provision of naval bases and facilities for repair and fuel, so as to ensure the mobility of the fleets.

(*d*) The desirability of the maintenance of a minimum of naval strength, namely equality with the naval strength of any foreign Power, in accordance with the provisions of the Washington Treaty on Limitation of Armament as approved by Great Britain, all the self-governing Dominions and India.

(*e*) The desirability of the development of the Air Forces in the several countries of the Empire upon such lines as will make it possible . . . for each part of the Empire . . . to co-operate with other parts with the least possible delay and the greatest efficiency."

Besides these guiding principles, "deep interest" was expressed in the provision of a naval base at Singapore, the command of the

Mediterranean and the Red Sea, the strengthening of the Home Defence Air Force of Great Britain and the problem of disarmament.

I have entered fairly fully into these resolutions, not because they are important but because they are totally backboneless. They are expressions of pious hopes and nothing more, for no attempt was made to create machinery which could put them into operation.

We come now to 1926, and once again we find at the Imperial Conference which assembled that year much talk and no action. The resolutions on defence of 1923 are reaffirmed. On October 26th Mr. Stanley Baldwin made a statement on defence. He opened by quoting Thomas Hobbes: "The first and fundamental law of Nature which is to seek Peace and follow it. The second the summe and right of Nature; which is by all means we can to defend ourselves." Then he explained the reorganisation which had taken place in the constitution of the Committee of Imperial Defence, pointing out its purely advisory and consultative character. He said: "Since the war the opportunities of personal association of representatives of the Dominions with the Committee of Imperial Defence have not been numerous. Owing, perhaps, to the more frequent meetings of the Imperial Conference, there have been very few, if any, visits from individual Dominion Ministers concerned in Defence matters." The true reason was lack of co-ordinating machinery, ability

not to formulate a problem only but to solve it. Once again nothing of practical value was accomplished. Excursions were made to Portland, Camberley, Croydon and Cardington. The Premiers were given rides in motor-boats, aeroplanes and tanks which they enjoyed immensely, and then this imperial bank holiday ended.

Finally, we come to the Imperial Conference of 1930, and we find no plenary discussions on imperial defence whatever. Inter-imperial relations and economics swamped the imperial vessel, and imperial security passes out of the bilge. Thus in thirteen years we see a steady devolution from security to helplessness, and since 1930 nothing has been done to fill in this chasm which has rent the Empire asunder. In place, out of this abyss have emerged such subversive imperial doctrines as "active" and "passive" belligerency: the one means supporting the Empire by arms, the other means anything from a friendly neutrality to supporting the enemy with armed forces!

15. *The Problem of Imperial Economics.*

In another book I once wrote the following: "The tools of peace are the weapons of war," and by these nine words I did not mean, as certain people suggested, that soldiers should fight with the hammers and axes of workmen, but that military power derives its strength from civil

industry. In the eighteenth century the staple industry of the great nations was agriculture, in the nineteenth it became more and more manufacture. In this change-over and in the clash between the political repercussions of these two systems of work must be sought the origin, foundations and vitality of the present world economic problems.

Political independence of agriculturally self-sufficient States was the ideal of the eighteenth century. To a very large extent this ideal was realised during the nineteenth century, and to-day it has become inflicted with an elephantiasis. Economic interdependence of specialised manufacturing States was the ideal of the nineteenth century, and during the World War it was clearly shown that it was no longer in its cradle.

For its security the former of these two ideal States depends upon military forces and economic barriers, the first to guard against invasion and the second to guard against economic penetration in order to undermine the various potentials a nation depends upon in war. For growth, that is evolution, the second of these two ideal States demands specialised production according to local facilities and free inter-exchange of trade. In other words, whilst the first aims at an artificial departmentalisation of the world according to peoples and races, the second is possessed of a unitary tendency, of looking upon the entire world as an immense workshop in which peoples and races are mere accidents and economy of

work is the vital problem. The first system is based on competition, natural evolution through international strife; the second on co-operation —the scientific method. The value of the first is that it eradicates weakness, and of the second that it eliminates waste. The danger in the first is war and in the second lack of incentive to struggle, lethargy or too much peace.

Turning from these few remarks on what may be called the philosophy of progress to history, what do we find ?

That until 1870 the wealth of Great Britain was created by specialised local production, that is the production of things which could be made more easily, cheaper and better in England than in any other country, and on free exchange, or what is generally called " free trade." But after 1871, partially on account of her natural resources in coal and iron, and partially on account of the indemnity paid her by France, Germany became a manufacturing power, and to protect her infant industries she soon established tariff barriers, and to supply them with raw materials and markets she sought colonies and oversea concessions. This at once led not only to economic friction but to war preparation: a gigantic army to force her will upon the continent of Europe and a powerful fleet to force her diplomacy upon Great Britain. Thus, and it was inevitable, the economic conflict developed into the military conflict.

Germany down and out, what in 1919 was the first aim of the victorious Powers ? To destroy

the economic strength of Germany—root and branch. In fact, to lop and ring the Teutonic oak so completely that the German Empire would wither away and revert to the departmentalised condition Germany was in before the year 1870. It was an impossible task, and realising that it would probably fail, their second object was individually to ring themselves in by tariff walls and economic barriers and so create an artificial economic self-sufficient national fat upon which they could live during war-time. Their whole thoughts were on war, not to abolish it but to prepare for its outbreak. What lip-service they did to abolition was pure hypocrisy.

In place of liberating Europe, the peace of 1919 was a throw-back, the revivifying of a worn-out ideal which ran counter to economic inter-dependence. The result of this was that the conflict of 1914-1918 was carried into the after-war period, and was waged with economic in place of military weapons in order to sustain and maintain States which could never be economically free. Ten years of this war brought the world to ruin.

Outside Western Europe and the eastern half of the United States, the two great manufacturing areas in the world, lies Great Britain, the industrial hub of an immense agricultural Empire in extent greater than both these areas combined. Whilst, until 1932, trade with the hub was mainly free, the circumference, that is the Dominions, was protected by tariffs of various kinds. The

war had, however, shown that the potential interdependence and self-sufficiency of the Empire were potential realities; but to "activate" these realities was impossible as long as trade at the centre was free. The result was that the restrictions created between 1919 and 1932 by the rising Continental and American trade embargoes automatically forced Great Britain to turn towards the Dominions, and little by little establish an empire preference in order to maintain the life of her industries, in fact to begin thinking in the terms of an Imperial Zollverein as foreshadowed by Joseph Chamberlain in 1897.

Could such a Customs Union be established a new meaning would be given to "Empire." Politically free, Great Britain and the Dominions would no longer be partners in the sense of partitioners of the Empire, but business partners, not in "some mystical sort of thing," but in a very practical and tangible thing. Here is opened up to us a vision of stupendous possibilities which demands our most careful examination.

Briefly the situation is as follows: Great Britain, a highly-industrialised, sparsely-agriculturalised country, is placed between two attractive forces, on one side Europe and on the other the Empire less herself. During the greater part of the nineteenth century the manufacturing vacuum of Europe, that is its lack in industrial development when compared to her own, turned her into the workshop of Europe, and so profitable was this business that British agriculture fell into

a decline. This had, however, a repercussion on her defence problem, for the less possible it became for her to feed her growing population the more essential it became to maintain command of the sea. Every factory erected, every acre of arable land cut down demanded an increased sea security to guarantee raw materials and food stuffs entering the country during times of stress. In 1914 we grew yearly about eleven weeks' supply of wheat for our overcrowded population, to-day we grow no more than eight. These two figures alone show our dependence upon the outer world.

Our business with Europe, as I have already shown, was challenged after 1870, and by the close of the last century a marked decline had set in. During the World War an artificial stimulus was given to our industries through war work; then after it the wreck of Europe followed by industrial collapse, largely due to the lack of wisdom among the peace-makers, so completely unhinged our business that between two and three million men were thrown out of work.

To establish a new business we were forced to look around. Asia was in turmoil, South America nearly bankrupt, and the United States artificially prospering behind the protection of unassaultable tariff walls. Two directions alone were open to our approach. The first and most obvious was to increase our business with the Dominions, the second and less obvious was to revive agriculture within our islands. The first was essential to our

industrial prosperity, the second to our economic security in war-time. I will now deal with these two problems in turn.

The Empire to-day is the largest undeveloped area in the world. It extends over 14,272,782 square miles of land, that is approximately a quarter of the globe, and has a population of approximately 481,000,000 people distributed as follows: Great Britain, 47,000,000; the Dominions, 27,000,000; India, 350,000,000; and the Colonial Empire, 57,000,000. The Russian Soviet Union cannot compare with it in potential resources or in varieties of produce, nor can the French Empire, nor can the United States of America. If the Empire could be turned into an economic unit it would constitute not only the most stupendous business arrangement as yet seen, but its power to maintain peace would render a world conflict practically impossible.

In October, 1903, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain said at Glasgow:—

> "The privileges of Empire bring with them great responsibilities. Think what this Empire means—what it is to you and your descendants. We have an Empire which with decent organisation and consolidation might be absolutely self-sustaining. There is no article of your food, no raw material of your trade, no necessity of your lives, no luxury of your existence, which cannot be produced somewhere or other in the British Empire, if the British Empire holds together, and if we who have inherited it are worthy of our opportunities."

Twenty years later, in November, 1923, Mr. Stanley Baldwin spoke as follows at Manchester :—

> " My ideal is one great Empire, safeguarding the standard of life of its own people, helpful to all the world, with Free Trade inside its borders and its people and its goods circulating across the waters, and every part of the Empire, from England through Canada, South Africa, Australia, regarding them as one unit, as one land, and as one home. A not unworthy ideal to work for. But it cannot be obtained without work. What the United States of America have achieved the Commonwealth of Nations in the British Empire can surely achieve. We have no less capacity for development than they have. We have no less wealth in the Empire. We have a greater wealth, if possible, of raw material. We can fulfil this great task, and we can do it by binding the different parts of the Empire together economically. . . . The Dominions cannot hope to remain each one self-contained, and if you don't take steps to bind them economically, what I may call the law of economic gravitation must act, and they will be drawn into some more powerful orbit instead of our own, and you will have missed for ever the chance of securing what in time may become the greatest markets in the world for your goods."

A new spirit was moving within the Empire, a spirit of self-preservation which began to dominate the spirit of individual independence. This same year, 1923, the Imperial Economic

Conference proposed to increase the preferences on Empire products, but nothing came of these proposals, as the Conservative Party was defeated in the General Elections and the Socialist Government was opposed to imperial preference and so was the Liberal Party. Then the following year, the Conservative Party returning to power, certain of these proposals were accepted and came into being on July 1st, 1925, and by the Budget of 1926 existing preferences were established for a period of ten years.

Considering that the British Government was now breaking away from a policy which it had followed for over seventy years, the speed of change is remarkable.

On February 5th, 1929, Mr. Baldwin said:—

> "I am convinced that the proper method to-day of approaching this question of a unified British Empire lies primarily through the industrial side, and I have been working for some time past . . . to see what could be done to rationalise imperially and not only to rationalise domestically. Every effort, in my view, should be made without delay to bring about arrangements between the industries —not the politicians, but the industries—in this country, and corresponding industries in the Dominions and India."

And again on November 22nd, 1929:—

> "Our progress depends on our capacity to visualise the Empire . . . as one eternal and indestructible unit for production,

for consumption, for distribution, for the maintenance and improvement of the lot of those who under Providence are dwellers within the confines of our Commonwealth."

Fine words, but without machinery to turn them into actions nothing but high-sounding phrases.

Then came the Imperial Conference of 1930, which sat in London between October 1st and November 14th. As the 1926 Conference had been concerned with constitutional relationship, this Conference was concerned with economic relations between the different parts of the Empire.

At this Conference the following statements were made which clearly outline the views of the Dominions :—

Mr. Bennett, Prime Minister of Canada :

"I propose that we of the British Empire, in our joint and several interests, do subscribe to the principle of an Empire Preference, and that we take, without delay, the steps necessary to put it into effective operation. . . . I speak plainly when I say that the day is now at hand when the peoples of the Empire must decide, once for all, whether our welfare lies in closer economic union or whether it does not."

Mr. Scullin, Prime Minister of Australia :

"It is our duty at this Conference first of all to affirm the maintenance of that principle

[Preference] and the extension of its operation . . . I must definitely declare that tariff preference is, in our opinion, much the most satisfactory form of help."

Mr. Forbes, Prime Minister of New Zealand:

"In my opinion the most important and effective method of increasing inter-imperial trade is by means of tariff preferences. . . . We would advocate the utmost possible extension of such concessions, either by a general arrangement or, when necessary, by individual agreements between any two or more portions of the Empire."

Mr. Havenga, Minister of Finance, South Africa:

"South Africa would welcome the extension of trade relations in the Commonwealth by agreements providing for reciprocal tariff benefits."

Sir Richard Squires, Prime Minister of Newfoundland:

"No matter what our constitution may be . . . there can, in my opinion, be no world bond of great endurance without that economic co-operation which, from the standpoint of commerce, finance and international politics, binds us together."

Sir Geoffrey Corbett, representing India:

"India is ready to consider favourably all

schemes designed to encourage the development of trade with all countries of the British Commonwealth."

Though these views are unanimous, the results of this Conference were meagre in the extreme, as the Socialist Government then in power was living, as most Socialists do, in the past. On December 10th, 1930, General Smuts said at Bloemfontein: "What might have been the most brilliant, the most successful and the greatest of all Conferences has ended in disillusion. . . . From an economic point of view the Conference was a complete failure." It was decided, however, that the economic section should meet again at Ottawa within twelve months' time.

Between the dispersal of the Imperial Conference of 1930 and the assembly of the next one at Ottawa, not in October, 1931, but on July 18th, 1932, the whole imperial outlook was changed, for on September 21st, 1931, the hub of the Empire was driven off the gold standard, a National Government had come into power with an open mandate, but as its supporters were overwhelmingly drawn from the Conservative Party its policy centred round Protection, which was automatically brought into force by the depreciation of the pound, and which during the spring of 1932 became an actuality by placing a tariff averaging 20 per cent. on most manufactured goods. Thus was Free Trade abandoned by Great Britain.

These changes radically influenced the Ottawa Conference. In 1930 the Dominions demanded preference and Great Britain refused to co-operate. In 1932 the reverse was the case, or very largely so, for the completeness of the British plan now frightened them. Suddenly they realised that this was not a purely imperial question but a world question, and that local and regional influences were immensely strong powers in the land.

For years the economic periphery of the Empire had grown faster than the centre, and growing as it had under the protection of high tariff walls it did not provide a sufficient market for British exports, about sixty per cent. of which was traded to countries outside the British Commonwealth. The world having gone tariff mad, Great Britain turned to the Dominions, but they also were afflicted by this paralysing disease. Ever since the war they had encouraged local industries by strongly protecting them, and consequently their manufacturers did not welcome British competition. Further, scattered as they are all over the world, they are automatically drawn towards other economic centres, the interests of which do not coincide with those of Great Britain. For example, Canada is drawn towards the United States and South Africa is deeply concerned in gold, the utility of which is threatened by its abandonment as a standard of exchange. For imperial economics to prove effective British preferences should be on food

and raw materials, and Dominion preferences should be on manufactured goods. But the first is unpopular in Great Britain because it will raise the cost of living, and the second is unpopular in the Dominions because it under-cuts their artificially cultivated industries, and so deals a blow at their self-sufficiency, at their national pride and, what is more important still, at their national security; for to-day a country which lacks manufacture is badly prepared for war.

We can hardly blame the Dominions for considering their own security, and though their excessive search after industrial independence is almost bound to end in ruin, we in Great Britain might well have taken a feather from their caps and followed suit in the opposite direction, that is by making ourselves more self-sufficient agriculturally.

A little before the Ottawa Conference assembled Mr. Stanley Baldwin said: "Those Dominions will be asked at Ottawa to consider if they have not gone a little too fast in industrial development, both for their own good and for that of the Empire as a whole." But what, I think, he should have said was: "We in Great Britain have gone much too far in agricultural devolution; we intend to revive agriculture in these islands, and as we can never hope to become fully self-sustained in this respect, we shall ask the Dominions to make good the deficit."

Had he expressed such a policy he would have started at the very centre of our imperial economic

problem in place of wandering out on to its immense periphery, he would have drawn the Dominions towards the Mother Country and not left them squabbling in the distance. Further still, he would have pointed the way towards our future security in war and upon our future contentment during peace-time, which is so intimately connected with the absorbing of our unemployed workers.

This problem of strengthening the hub is such a vital one, not only as concerns our prosperity but our security, that I will examine it before touching upon the Ottawa Conference.

There are three outstanding reasons why we should do our utmost to revive agriculture. These are:—

1. To render Great Britain less dependent on imported food during war.
2. To readjust our trade balance.
3. To absorb our surplus population.

Lack of the first added enormously to the cost of the war and taxed the strength of our Navy almost to breaking-point; the second has not only driven us off the gold standard but depleted our foreign investments; and the third is daily demoralising masses of our people and adding vastly to the cost of administering the country. In 1930 we imported over £475,000,000 worth of food, drink and tobacco, and of these it has been estimated that approximately £200,000,000 were

of a character that could be produced in Great Britain.

Though it is recognised only by a few, the main problem which faces us to-day is not the revival of manufacture but of agriculture—the two are interdependent. If agriculture is revived manufacture will revive with it, for agriculture to pay depends not on tariffs but on tractors. To-day to attempt to work our fields with spades and hoes is as unprofitable as to attempt to win our battles with rifles and bayonets. During the war what did we do ? We first entrenched ourselves and then went in for "big business"—we built up a mechanised army and broke the Hindenburg Line. Tariffs are nothing more than economic entrenchments, and unless we have the will to do something else besides digging them we shall simply assume a passive defence, which is the worst thing which can be done in either peace or war. What does this mean ? It means that we must tackle our agricultural problem as we tackled our war problem. We must mechanise our farmers as we mechanised our soldiers ; for it cannot be controverted that the foundation of present-day civilisation is the power-driven machine.

But what does the machine demand ? How can we in this country compete, or even run our agriculture economically, with farms of 100 or 200 or even 1,000 acres ? To maintain such farms behind a tariff wall is simply to pay far more than is necessary for our farm produce. The consumer pays more, not because our farmers are

profiteers, but because a hundred 200-acre farms cannot compete against one farm of 20,000 acres.

What are we going to do behind our tariff wall to solve this problem ? If all our farmers were to group themselves together the problem would be solved, but farmers are very conservative people. This is what the Soviet Government discovered, so it cut the Gordian knot by taking over not only all the farms but the peasants as well. Though this may, or may not, be good for Russians, it is certainly not good for us. We are not Russians, yet we must realise that above the individual stands the nation. Is it right, in the critical circumstances which now face us, for a farmer to plant any crop he likes, where he likes, in such quantities as he likes, or not to plant it at all. During the war no one could do just as he or she liked, and had we done so we most certainly would have been defeated. To-day we are facing an economic war of equal magnitude, and it is for the Government to direct us. The Russian Five-Year Plan is based on State ownership and virtual serfdom. What we want is State direction, statesmanship and generalship which do not deprive the citizen of his rights, yet see that these rights are not carried to such extremes as to imperil our national existence.

What is seldom realised is that among industrial nations we stand in the enviable position of having an outlet for our surplus population at our front door—hundreds of thousands of acres of almost

virgin land crying to be cultivated. To-day there are no more than one million people employed in agriculture, and as it has been calculated that agriculture in this country could absorb between four and five million people: here then is the only practical means of annihilating unemployment, of balancing our imports and exports, and of securing ourselves against starvation in war.

Had the British Government been able to decide, if only on a skeleton outline of a plan, for agricultural revival at home, then at the Ottawa Conference it would have had a firm base to work from. But it had none, and for four weeks its members discussed tariffs and trade concessions and never approached an agreement on Empire development.

What did this Conference accomplish ? It set up a host of sub-committees to discuss imperial goods from every point of view, goods belonging to a shop in which each department is running its own concern according to its own interests, and frequently to the detriment of all other departments. It established no general management because it failed to produce a single master-mind to direct it. To-day, as yesterday, we look out from our departmental windows and see the river of world economic chaos rising foot by foot ; yet without a master-mason, without a master-plan, what can a host of committees do ? Nothing, but build a bridge without a keystone.

It seems to me that this lack of a master-mason, that is of an outstanding statesman, is not only

the most terrible object-lesson of Ottawa, but of the whole Empire as it stands to-day. At the time *The Montreal Star* said :—

> "It would be a miracle if a number of politicians could discuss and settle in four short weeks all that must be decided in regard to the amazingly intricate, inextricably involved and world-encircling machinery of inter-Imperial trade."

It certainly would be, but why expect miracles when a little common sense will solve the problem ? This journal then went on to say that the deliberations of the Conference could only be brought into true perspective "if it is remembered that it is not a political assembly but a business meeting." That is exactly what this Conference proved itself not to be. No business, or nation, or group of nations, can be run without a managing organ. Do the statesmen of the Empire really believe that they can turn it into a business concern without permanent machinery to assist them, without a permanent organ which will live on whilst they dance in and out of the sunbeams of popularity ?

Lastly, we come to the World Economic Conference which assembled in London on June 12th, 1933. It failed to achieve its object, monetary stabilisation, not because it was too big, or too small, or that the problems were beyond the intelligence of its members to solve, but because no single nation could argue from a firm basis. Each and all were economically in a

paralytic condition; no single one had really attempted to set its own house in order or knew what it really wanted; all were floating about in the same sea, spitting water from their mouths and suggesting between the gulps that what they wanted was the arrival of an international life-boat to rescue them from their watery grave—the instability of their economic positions. Into their useless splashings suddenly paddled President Roosevelt on a home-made raft. On July 3rd he bluntly stated that his intention was to put the U.S.A. in order before attempting to put the world in order; in other words, that charity begins at home. Surely here we have the birth-cry of a new idea: if each nation in place of talking in generalities will get down to actualities and set its own house in order, or in some semblance of order, a firm foundation will be laid whereon to build a new economic world house.

Here, then, is our problem: to set our empire in order before we attempt to set the world in order, which means that we must, like an engineer, first work out a blue-print, a plan, of what we want to do. To-day this is our immediate task.

Thus we arrive by every path, whether it be political, military or economic, at the crucial problem that co-operation, security and economic unity require not only confidence and good will, but machinery to produce and sustain them. Disraeli once said: "Individuals may form communities, but it is institutions alone that can

create a nation." To-day the Empire can boast of only one imperial institution, the Imperial War Graves Commission, a cynical reminder of the fate that awaits this greatest of great empires unless we also establish an Imperial Commission for the living. This is the problem of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE EMPIRE IN CO-ORDINATION

16. *The Need for Imperial Machinery.*

FROM what I have now written I think I have made it quite clear that the Empire is without a brain. In 1914 the Dominions blindly followed the Mother Country because sentiment and fear, both consciously and unconsciously, drove them to do so. To-day each has grown a political head, yet there is no common brain; in fact, the Empire has become a Hydra—a monster of potential discord.

In the last chapter I have shown that victory in 1918 was not followed by consolidation but by dissolution. I have shown that co-operation has virtually ceased to exist, that India is in the melting-pot—a Medean cauldron which can kill as well as rejuvenate, that security has been utterly undermined, and that if economics demand empire preference this can only be gained by antagonising Europe, and that the more we attempt to turn the Empire into an economic unit the more must we be prepared to secure its existence by force, that is by arms.

On the last page of his book *New Imperial Ideals* Mr. Robert Stokes says: "The Empire needs institutions, and without them it cannot survive"; and at the very beginning he says: "In short, the Empire must co-operate or collapse, but it can only co-operate through institutions. Where is it to get them?" These are wise words, and it is my intention in this chapter to point the way, to show that institutions can be established, and that in no way need they infringe the governing principle of Empire.

If the reader will glance back to Chapter II he will see that between 1897 and 1917 various statesmen such as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Joseph Ward, Sir Robert Borden and General Smuts were of opinion that the crucial problem of Empire was the establishment of controlling machinery. After the war the ghost of this suggestion appears again and again. In the House of Commons, on December 14th, 1921, Mr. Lloyd George, discussing the Irish question, said:—

> "Although they [the Dominions] came to help the Empire in August, 1914, in a policy which they had no share in passing, they felt that in future it was an unfair dilemma to impose upon them. They said: 'You are putting us in this position: either we have to support you in a policy which we might or might not approve, or we have to desert the old country in the time of trouble. That is a dilemma in which you ought never to put us. Therefore, in future, you must consult us before

the event.' That was right; that was just. That was advantageous to both parties. We acceded to it gladly.

"The machinery is the machinery of the British Government—the Foreign Office, the Ambassadors. The machinery must remain here. It is impossible it could be otherwise, unless you had a Council of Empire, with representatives elected for the purpose. Apart from that you must act through one instrument. The instrument of the foreign policy of the Empire is the British Foreign Office. That has been accepted by all the Dominions as inevitable. . . . The sole control of Britain over foreign policy is now vested in the Empire as a whole. That is a new fact."

It was nothing of the sort. It was not Great Britain that had created this difficulty, but the Dominions themselves; for they, with few exceptions, had consistently opposed anything approaching a Council of Empire. Further, it was manifestly impossible when events of outstanding importance arose like mushrooms in the night for the Foreign Office to consult the Dominions before taking action. Soon after this speech this weakness in co-operation became visible to all.

The after-results of the Graeco-Turkish War of 1921–1922 show this clearly. During the controversy over the Lausanne Treaty and the Chanak incident of 1923, and over the London Conference of 1924, consultation only led to

acrimony and friction, and when, early in 1925 a crisis occurred in Egypt, things moved so rapidly that it was quite impossible for the British Government to defer taking action until after it had obtained the views of the Dominion Governments. To have attempted such a course would have required months of work. As a writer in *The Times* of February 2nd, 1925, said: All these crises "bring to the front, indeed, the most formidable problem which confronts the post-war Empire. How are the six self-governing nations, which now make up the dominant power in the Empire, to agree upon and support a common policy in dealings with the outside world? It is a problem which is of the first importance, because ultimately it involves the existence of the Empire itself. Unless the six nations can agree upon foreign policy it is only a question of time for them to separate into a number of independent States. There is no escaping this dilemma, we must agree or the Empire will dissolve."

The negotiations which led up to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne mark a definite break in the little control that had been left over by the war. On June 9th, 1924, Mr. Mackenzie King pointed out in the House of Commons at Ottawa that in the dispatch he had received from the Duke of Devonshire, dated October 22nd, 1922, "there is no mention there of the Governments of the British Empire; in particular, there is no mention there of the Dominion of Canada; nor, indeed, will there be found anywhere within the

four corners of this dispatch the least intimation that in any way it was intended that the Dominion Government should be represented at this Conference by the plenipotentiaries that are named therein." He contended that Canada should have been consulted because of "the position which was fought for, gained and held by Canada's representatives at the Versailles Conference" and "which was followed in subsequent treaties." He ended by saying:—

> "Now in regard to the manner in which that community of nationhood may be best maintained, there have been some who have thought that that end would be best served by an Imperial Parliament meeting at Westminster. Others again have thought that that end would be best served by something in the nature of an Imperial Council sitting in London and issuing decrees which would bind all parts of the Empire. There is a third view, which is that that end will be best obtained by the several Dominions having full recognition given to their status of self-governing Dominions, within the full meaning of these words, and in there being worked out in the best possible way as respects inter-imperial affairs effective means for consultation and co-operation between the Dominions and the Mother Country, as units possessing equality of status within the British Empire. Now I do not believe that an Imperial Parliament is a possible thing; I think an Imperial Council would be a thoroughly bad thing; I believe it would lead to the

destruction of the British Empire, and not to the making of it. But I do believe that within the British Empire every step we take to make clearer to each other that we believe in our nationhood and realise to the full our rights of self-government will make for that future development on safe and secure lines, and I believe, as against the rest of the world, it will make for the unity and strength of the Empire itself."

What was really behind this indignant outburst? First, that Canada placed complete independence before all other questions, and was determined to get it. Secondly, that she wanted to remain in the Empire but in no way to be controlled by the Empire. She wanted liberty without responsibility and interest without investment. This self-centred policy which Canadian statesmen have consistently pursued since the close of the war cannot possibly lead to co-operation. Even if an Imperial Parliament is useless and an Imperial Council a danger, what is the use of suggesting effective means "being worked out in the best possible way . . . for consultation and co-operation," for what the Empire wants to know is: What are these means? As long as they remain words any fool can utter them.

The next clash came a few days later. Friction having arisen over the form of Dominion representation at the London Reparations Conference, Mr. MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, sent a dispatch to the Dominions on the question

of foreign policy and imperial interests, in which he pointed out the limitations of the Imperial Conferences :—

> "First, it renders immediate action extremely difficult, more especially between conferences, on occasions when such action is imperatively needed, particularly in the sphere of foreign policy.
>
> "Secondly, when matters under discussion are subjects of political controversy, economic or otherwise, conclusions reached at and between Imperial Conferences are liable to be reversed through changes of Government."

He then suggested what he had mentioned in the House of Commons on June 18th, the "creation of some sort of workable machinery so that the public opinion of the whole of our Commonwealth of States should influence the policy for which the Commonwealth must be responsible."

What was Canada's answer to this eminently wise suggestion ? It was forwarded by Lord Byng on August 7th: "We regard the Imperial Conference as a Conference of Governments of which each is responsible to its own Parliament and ultimately to its own electorate, and in no sense as an Imperial Council determining the policy of the Empire as a whole. We would deem it most inadvisable to depart in any particular from this conception, which is based on well-established principles of Ministerial responsibility and the supremacy of Parliament. We consider that

with respect to all Imperial Conference resolutions or proposals each Government must accept responsibility for its attitude and the Opposition or Oppositions be free to criticise, with Parliaments and if occasion arises peoples deciding the issues." In other words, that friction is better than co-operation, because co-operation demands duties as well as rights, and give as well as take.

When on June 9th Mr. Mackenzie King made the speech from which I have just quoted, Mr. Woodsworth said: "If there is an equality of status, why are all these communications as between this Government and the Government of Great Britain conducted through the Secretary of State for the Colonies ?" To which Mr. Mackenzie King gave the evasive answer: This Secretary being "the customary channel of communication." This channel was, however, not destined to endure for long, for fifteen days later, on June 24th, a letter was sent to the British Ambassador at Washington instructing him "that it is desirable that the handling of matters at Washington exclusively relating to the Irish Free State should be confided to a Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to the United States Government. . . . In matters falling within his sphere the Irish Minister would not be subject to the control of His Majesty's Ambassador, nor would His Majesty's Ambassador be responsible for the Irish Minister's actions." In spite of this surrender of control over foreign affairs, in this letter it was

somewhat paradoxically stated that this arrangement "would not denote any departure from the principle of the diplomatic unity of the Empire," to which it gave a stunning blow.

The next crisis came hot-foot with the signing of the Locarno Treaties in December, 1925. In his comment on Article 9, in which the Dominions were absolved of all obligations entered upon by Great Britain, Sir Austen Chamberlain said: "I earnestly hope that not only may these negotiations not be an obstacle in future co-operation, but that they may excite in every Government of the Empire a keener desire to find a machinery by which our foreign policy can become in every act and at every hour the foreign policy of the Empire, and not the foreign policy of this country only."

On November 18th, 1925, in a debate on these Treaties in the House of Commons, this same speaker said:—

> "I regret, nobody more so, that the circumstances of the British Empire made it impossible for all parts of the British Empire to be present throughout all our discussions, and to conduct these international negotiations from day to day in common. It was the desire of His Majesty's Government, before ever they embarked on their policy, to get into conference with the Governments of the Dominions and of India. That was not found possible. All that we have been able to do is to keep those Governments fully informed of everything that has been done from first to last."

In reply Mr. Lloyd George said: "I think the failure to consult the Dominions, to bring them into consultation, is a serious error which may have grave consequences. . . . It has been a break in our diplomatic unity." As to this there can be not the slightest doubt, for in the event of war between Germany and France, whilst Great Britain was bound by agreement to intervene, the Dominions and India were absolved from doing so, and why? Because the dignity complex of the Dominions had grown so intense that any form of co-operation except that of the Imperial Conferences seemed to threaten its importance.

As these conferences assemble only once every three or four years, and then only sit for a few weeks, though they bring the representatives of the Dominions into social touch with Great Britain, they cannot, except in a small degree, influence the foreign policy of the Empire, the central problem of which has always been, and is likely to remain, the maintenance of peace, that is a war problem. It was, as I have already shown, war which created the Imperial War Cabinet in 1917, and in another Empire war it will have to be created again. If in 1918 the Dominion Prime Ministers came to this country, not to seek information, but, as a right, to discharge their responsibilities to the Empire and through the Empire to their respective Dominions, it is surely obvious that in order to prevent war, which is to maintain peace, they should do the same. If, however, they refuse to do so, or to set up machinery which will assist

them in doing so, then their free and independent countries must either secede or enter the next war as they entered the last, that is blindfold.

War, which is foreign policy in its intensest form, forced the Dominions to interest themselves and to co-operate. Yet, as I have shown, no sooner was the war at an end than they insisted on representation at the Peace Conference to safeguard their *own* interests, and further still that they should have the right not only to be represented at foreign capitals by Ministers of their *own* but to negotiate treaties with foreign nations in matters which *individually* concerned them. The situation thus created is paradoxical. Outside the Empire their independence is complete, yet inside the Empire they are still bound hand and foot to the home foreign policy machinery, and, curious to relate, though political independence is to them a fetish, no single one of them has taken an adequate step to establish complete freedom, except through secession. This freedom, as long as they remain within the Empire, can only be gained by assisting in the creation of foreign policy, and by sharing the responsibilities incumbent in its execution.

In place, what do we see? An almost religious dread of becoming involved in questions they feel they do not understand, and in problems the solution of which demand an experience and education which at present they so largely lack. They are willing, if not openly desirous, of shirking this supreme duty, because they are fearful of

being bound by any decision they may make; yet simultaneously they are unwilling to be bound by decisions arrived at by the British Government. As Mr. Victor E. Mitchell, K.C., of Montreal, said in *The Times* of February 3rd, 1925: "There is a good deal of unreality in the claims made by some of the Dominion Governments, particularly the Canadian Government, for an equal voice or say in the foreign affairs of the Empire. Sir Wilfred Laurier recognised that the responsibility for conducting the foreign affairs of the Empire must be left in the hands of the British Government, so long as the cost of administering and, if necessary, enforcing international treaties and arrangements rested with the British taxpayer." And again: "It is humiliating enough for self-respecting Canadians to know that Canada is relying, as she always has relied, upon the British Navy for national protection without contributing one dollar towards its maintenance and upkeep; but the depth of humiliation would be plumbed if we had to rely upon a foreign [*i.e.*, U.S.A.] Navy for that service." The same words may be applied to South Africa, and with still more force to Australia and New Zealand. Though all these great self-governing nations are independent, free politically, because they can maintain law and order within their frontiers, I will repeat it again, strategically they are not free, and no freer than Belgium, Holland or Switzerland, because they are unable to defend themselves against foreign invasion. They must either be

willing full-heartedly to leave the formulation of all foreign policy in the hands of the British Government, and as full-heartedly abide by the results, or, if they wish to attain to strategical freedom, they must be prepared to take part in the creation of this policy, because obviously for many years to come they will not be in a position to defend themselves. Every time the Dominions (except Canada) complain of British foreign policy running counter to their interests the answer should be: "Until you agree to co-operate with us your very existence depends on our fleet, which is the most powerful instrument of policy in the Empire. Ultimately your existence as free and independent nations depends on the will, even the whims, of the British public, for a single British budget can ruin the fleet, and in ruining it ruin you."

In spite of this adoration of the parish pump, as I have already stated, the fact remains that the primary interest of the Dominions, as well as of Great Britain, is the maintenance of peace, or conversely the restriction of war. To-day peace is threatened not only by European affairs which concentrate round the diseases created by the Peace Treaties, but also by Asiatic affairs. Russia is Mongol at heart, and the whole of the Mongol and allied races are stirring in their sleep. In the future, and the future may not be so far distant as some may think, the great war problem may be the East against the West, and such a problem not only involves all the Dominions but the whole

world. Asiatic migrations[1] and the problem of the Pacific already loom large on the political horizon, and these two problems alone cannot be effectively solved by the Empire unless its politically free nations can strategically see eye to eye, and to do so foreign policy must be backed by the whole might of the Empire.

To-day, though international affairs are divided between the Dominions and Great Britain, nevertheless all true foreign policy is conducted by the latter. There is no true consultation on important foreign affairs, because in the volcanic condition in which the world is to-day international eruptions are all but spontaneous, consequently counter-action has to be rapid in the extreme. The best way of avoiding war is not to keep out of foreign entanglements, but as a writer in *The Times* of February 5th, 1925, says: "To intervene promptly in every threatening international dispute with action designed to bring about a peaceful solution before public opinion has begun to solidify into irreconcilable positions. . . . The surest way of preventing war is a vigilant and active foreign policy, always provided that policy is wise. The surest way of becoming involved in war against your will is a policy of drift or attempted isolation in the rapidly contracting modern world. . . .

[1] For example, take India. In 1921 her population numbered approximately 320,000,000, and in 1931 350,000,000; the increase is very nearly 10 per cent. If this is sustained, by the end of the present century her population will number over 650,000,000, and even to-day the land is over-crowded and the bulk of the people lives on the brink of starvation.

The failure up to date to create any effective machinery for inter-imperial consultation is due in some measure to the conservatism of the Foreign Office. But probably the biggest single cause is the instinctive feeling in the Dominions that consultation will involve foreign commitments, which they might otherwise escape; all the more so because they believe that their representatives are liable to be unduly influenced by the 'atmosphere' of London, or over-persuaded by the superior knowledge of British diplomatists and statesmen. . . . There is really nothing to be said for running a great co-operative concern in blinkers."

The writer of this article sees clearly that the central imperial problem is one of maintaining peace by restricting war, and that the maintenance of peace can alone be guaranteed by the establishment of effective machinery which will render co-operation so firm that international conflagrations can be restricted. The problem of Empire unity is, therefore, fundamentally one dependent upon the avoidance of war, and as this is so, from now on I shall in the main examine this problem from the war angle, and elaborate my machinery of co-operation from this point of view.

17. *The Committee of Imperial Defence.*

To-day, as in the past, foreign policy is a purely British product.[1] The Imperial Conferences cannot

[1] Dominion control of foreign policy is a myth, for such control as they now possess is backed by British might and prestige.

direct its course, and though diplomatic action rests with the Foreign Office, direction is arrived at through the Committee of Imperial Defence, which, as I have mentioned, is the lineal descendant of the Secret or Inner Committee of the Council. I will now briefly examine its constitution.[1]

Originally the Privy Council governed Great Britain, but as this Council grew in size it became cumbersome, and the Cabinet took its place as the directing organ of the Government. In times past wars were fought under small Cabinets of about a dozen members, and it is more than a coincidence that when this number increased to over twenty the Committee of Imperial Defence came into being, and during the World War it was this Committee which virtually controlled the war policy of the Empire. Though, during the stress of war, its authority was recognised and its powers unlimited, for the instinct of imperial preservation obliterated all lesser considerations, it must not be overlooked that this Committee is solely an advisory body, that it is *not* an Imperial Committee for the Dominions are not represented on it, and further still that it is *not* a Defence Committee, for during peace time it is more concerned with foreign policy than with war and defensive preparations.

In the year in which it was brought to life

[1] For fuller information see *Parliamentary Debates*, 1904, vol. cxxxix, cols. 618 and 619; also 1909, vol. viii, cols. 1,381 and 1,382; and 1912, vol. xli, cols. 1,385 and 1,386.

(1904) Mr. Balfour said in the House of Commons :—

> "I think that my Honourable Friend need not fear that the Defence Committee will in any sense trench upon the responsibilities which properly lie, in the first instance, with the Admiralty or the Army Department, and, in the second, remain with the Cabinet as a whole. In truth, I think that one of the great merits of the Defence Committee is that it has no executive authority at all. It has no power to give an order to the humblest soldier in His Majesty's Army or to the most powerless sloop under the control of the Admiralty."

From this it will be seen that the official object of this Committee is to advise the Government on questions of defence policy. As regards the policy of the Dominions, the Committee of Imperial Defence can express no opinion unless an opinion be asked for by the Dominions themselves. A further duty of this Committee is to co-ordinate the work of the Fighting Services with that of the other government departments. In order to secure elasticity, its members (except for the Prime Minister, its chairman) are not organised as a permanent body, but are summoned to attend on the request of the Prime Minister.[1] Dominion

[1] The following members are now invited regularly: Lord President of the Council, Lord Privy Seal, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Dominions and Colonies, Secretary of State for War, First Lord of the Admiralty, Secretary of State for Air, Chiefs of Staff, and the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury as the head of the Civil Service.

Ministers, when in England, are *invited* to attend when questions concerning their countries are being discussed. Possessing no executive powers, the carrying out of any decision arrived at virtually depends upon the goodwill of the head of the department concerned, and any information required of a department is only forthcoming in such form as its head may consider advisable.

A moment's consideration will show that the committee itself has neither the knowledge nor time available to make up its mind on any complex subject, consequently, to render it operative, most of its work is delegated to sub-committees,[1] of which the following are the more important:—

1. *The Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee*,[2] which deals with the naval, military and air force obligations of the Empire.
2. *The Overseas Sub-Committee*,[3] which advises on questions relative to the defence of the Dominions, Colonies and Dependencies.
3. *The Home Ports Defence Sub-Committee*,[3] which advises on the defence of ports in Great Britain.
4. *The Joint Overseas and Home Ports Defence Sub-Committee*,[3] which is an amalgamation of Sub-Committees 1 and 2.

[1] There are nineteen permanent sub-committees and a large number of *ad hoc* ones.

[2] Created in 1923, see "Cmd. 2029."

[3] These Sub-Committees work within the orbit of the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee.

5. *The Man-Power Sub-Committee*, which assesses man-power for war.
6. *The Principal Supply Officers Sub-Committee*, which deals with all warlike supplies and resources.
7. *The Co-ordinating Sub-Committee*, the main duty of which is the revision of the War Book.
8. *The Imperial Communications Sub-Committee*, which advises on communications generally.

The most important of these sub-committees is that of the Chiefs of Staff, which replaced the Standing Defence Sub-Committee in 1923. In the report of the Salisbury Committee (Cmd. 2029) its duties are defined as follows:—

> "In addition to the functions of the Chiefs of Staff as advisers on questions of sea, land or air policy respectively, to their own Board or Council, each of the three Chiefs of Staff will have an individual and collective responsibility for advising on defence policy as a whole, the three constituting, as it were, a super-Chief of a War Staff in Commission. In carrying out this function they will meet together for the discussion of questions which affect their joint responsibilities."

With the addition of this sub-committee the general organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence has been brought in line with that of the

boards, or councils, which control the Services. Each of these controlling organs is under a Cabinet Minister. Its first Service member deals with plans and strategy, its second Service member with personnel, and its third and fourth (except in the case of the Royal Air Force) with transport, supplies, ordnance stores and buildings. To-day the Committee of Imperial Defence may be compared to these boards or councils, but in place of being under a minister it is under the Prime Minister. The duties of the first Service member are represented by the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee, of the second Service member by the Man-Power Sub-Committee, and the third and fourth by the Principal Supply Officers Sub-Committee.

To strengthen the whole organisation in the event of war, in 1926 it was agreed to create an Imperial Defence College in which officers of all three Services, at home, in India and in the Dominions will be trained to see eye to eye on questions of imperial strategy and combined operations. This college was opened in 1927.

Though the work of these sub-committees is of the highest importance, the defects of the constitution and organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence are so numerous that much of its work is abortive. Of these defects the following appear to me to be the more difficult to remedy:—

1. The formulation of an imperial policy is impossible, because the Dominions are not represented.

2. The formulation of a stable home policy is most difficult because the constitution of the Committee is apt to change with each change of Government.
3. Ministers called to the Committee as members are apt to look upon its work as of less importance than their own.
4. The Chiefs of Staff cannot possibly find the time to examine fully the questions laid before the Committee and also control their respective departments.

From these defects it will be seen that not one of the principles laid down in Section 5 can be maintained, consequently either the Committee of Imperial Defence must be reformed or replaced by an organisation which is more responsive to imperial requirements.

The question of reformation falls under two headings—imperial defence and the control of the British Fighting Services. As regards the first, a suggestion which has frequently been made is that the Dominions should be represented on the Committee of Imperial Defence; this, however, is not feasible, as the Dominion representatives would have to serve two masters—their own Governments and the Prime Minister of Great Britain. Such representation would violate the governing political principle. Instead, responsible representative liaison officers might be attached to the Sub-Committees; but though such officers could watch events, they would not possess the

prestige or knowledge to assist in the formulation of an imperial policy.

As regards the second question, a permanent naval, military and air force secretariat could be added to the existing Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee. This, I think, would be a distinct improvement (I shall return to this subject later); nevertheless, the three Chiefs of Staff cannot possibly be in two places at the same time, and their proper place is at the head of their own Departments, on the efficiency of which their thoughts should centre. Further still, even if these Chiefs could obliterate all departmental points of view, and think and see as the representatives of one Service, though they might speculate on imperial defence they do not possess the authority to formulate an imperial policy, or the knowledge to work one out in detail, for they are not imperial representatives. As reformation appears unlikely to meet requirements, I will examine the question of replacing the Committee of Imperial Defence by an organisation which will, I believe, be able to maintain the principles laid down in Section 5 as influenced by the conditions set forth in Chapter III.

18. *The Creation of an Imperial Council.*

That the Committee of Imperial Defence was an insufficient organisation to formulate an imperial policy was well recognised prior to the outbreak of the World War, for more and more was agreement sought through Imperial

Conferences, the meetings of which became more frequent as the war period was approached. Though these Conferences were of great value, in that they brought the Dominions as free nations into political contact with Great Britain, their constitution was too fortuitous and their knowledge too limited to enable them to outline a clear-cut policy expressive of imperial needs. That they did not meet these needs was emphatically expressed by Mr. Deakin, the Premier of Australia, at the Imperial Conference of 1907, when he said:—

> "But for the action of Australia and New Zealand there would not be an island in the Pacific under the British flag. Whatever losses there are have been due to neglect here. . . . Is it therefore to be wondered at that the feeling has been created and still exists in Australia —an exasperated feeling—that British imperial interests in that ocean have been mishandled from the first?"

At this time the error was that the Mother Country would continue to think of the Dominions as little children when they were in fact grown men. She could not bring herself to realise that it was not only to the advantage of the Empire but to herself to insist upon the Dominions taking part in formulating plans of defence. The result of not doing so was, as I have mentioned, that in August, 1914, the plans of the Overseas Defence Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence were accepted by the Dominions, because in the circumstances there was no other course

which could be adopted. Nevertheless, as a writer in *The Naval Review* says: "The present system under which plans are made by the Admiralty and War Office cannot persist in an organisation for the British nations. The sister nations cannot have sufficient representation under such a system, and it must lead either to disaster or to a change of organisation."[1] In other words, the present system, however well or badly it may have worked in 1914, is obsolete, consequently change of organisation is the only road open to us. To it there are several lines of approach.

The first is the creation of some form of War Cabinet. Such an organisation, as I will later on show, must in nature be totally insufficient for war, and in peace time it can possess no true powers whatever. First, a Cabinet is a *national* governmental institution and not an imperial organisation; secondly, it is composed of elected civilians; and thirdly, its constitution changes with each Government. If by a War Cabinet is meant a Dictatorship, then though the counsel to establish such an organisation may be one of perfection it certainly is not one of common sense; for such a directive assembly would run counter to the Anglo-Saxon ideal, and so violate the political principle of free and independent government.

Any form of Imperial Parliament or Federal

[1] "A Defence Organisation for the British Nations," *The Naval Review*, vol. ix, No. 1, p. 9.

Government is out of the question, yet personal contact must be established if the Empire is to exist as a Commonwealth. To-day there is practically no intercourse between the Foreign Office and the Dominions. The Governor-Generals are purely constitutional figures, as constitutional as the King is in Great Britain, for they are no more than his representatives overseas. The High Commissioners in London are confined to commercial business, and possess no diplomatic powers, except in the case of the representative of Australia, who has on his staff an official whose duty it is to keep in touch with foreign affairs. To overcome these difficulties it has been suggested that the Imperial Conference should be furnished with a permanent secretariat, which would prepare its work just as the secretariat of the League of Nations prepares the work for the Council and the Assembly. Further, that the High Commissioners should become Imperial Ambassadors, and that the Governor-Generals should be selected from highly-trained diplomatists, and in fact should become Royal Ambassadors.

As regards the first of these suggestions there can be no doubt that the benefit resulting would be very great ; for though the Imperial Conference would still be unable to establish that personal link which is so necessary to co-operative action, each Prime Minister and each Cabinet would be linked together mentally if not morally. As regards the second, as Ambassadors the High Commissioners would be in touch with foreign

affairs; but as regards the third, to turn the Governor-Generals into diplomatists is not a practical proposal, for as such they can no longer represent the King, who at the present time is the only common link between the Dominions and the Mother Country. The first two of these suggestions I will consider later on. Now I will turn to another series of proposals.

The failure of Cabinet control during the early stages of the World War can only be denoted as "thorough." In *From Private to Field-Marshal* Sir William Robertson writes:—

> "It is no exaggeration to say that every mistake we had made in our wars with France a hundred years before had been repeated . . . the false direction thus given to our strategy imperilled the chances of ultimate success, and at best was bound to hang like a mill-stone round our necks for the remainder of the war—as it did."

The Cabinet which existed in 1914 was in every respect a too cumbersome piece of machinery wherewith to conduct a war. "It was extremely difficult for so large a body to give that resolute central direction which became more imperative the more the population and resources of the nation had to be organised for a single purpose—the defeat of German militarism."[1] The result was the introduction of the War Cabinet system. Commenting on this report, the Machinery of

[1] *Report of the War Cabinet*, 1917 (Cd. 9005).

Government Committee (Cd. 9230 of 1918), under the chairmanship of Lord Haldane, stated: "It seems probable that the constitution and procedure of the War Cabinet will not be found entirely suitable to the conditions which will prevail when peace has been restored. But we think that . . . a re-arrangement of the supreme direction of the executive organisation as it formerly existed has been rendered necessary, not merely by the war itself, but by the prospect after the war." Then, in order to formulate a policy, this Committee recommended the placing of "the business of enquiry and thinking in the hands of persons definitely charged with it, whose duty is to study the future, and work out the plans and advise those responsible for policy or engaged in actual administration. . . . But the principle ought by no means to be limited in its application to military and naval affairs." In fact, what is here suggested is the creation of a permanent piece of machinery capable of accumulating information on *all* questions which affect the Empire, and which, after sifting this information and reviewing it, will advise the Home and Dominion Governments as to the policy each should adopt in order to meet the various requirements of the Empire.

Here we have our old friend the Council of Empire, or Imperial Council, appearing once again but in a different shape. Hitherto its suggestion had been wrapped up in some form of autocracy which had frightened the Dominions, or surrounded by a vacuity it had not enticed them. Now it

appears as a great Bureau of Information, a centre where all factors influencing the grand strategy of peace and the grand strategy of war can be sorted out, valued, catalogued and issued to the Governments of the Empire as freely as a newspaper is to individual men and women. But it may be said: How can this purely and strictly advisory organ in any way bind the parts of the Empire into one united whole? And the answer is that it can only do so by creating an intelligent imperial public opinion through the information it disseminates and through such advice as it may from time to time tender. Unlike the League of Nations, it will be backed by no sanctions political, economic or military. It will draw its strength entirely from the public opinion it creates, not through force or compulsion, but by broadcasting truth. To-day the mutual ignorance between the various parts of the Empire is astonishing, and until this ignorance is dissipated there can be no firm union.

If what I have just written is right, then it follows that this Council can in no conceivable manner be purely a Defence Council, for to-day defence cannot be separated from economics, law, finance, international relationships and world affairs. The organisation of this Council must, therefore, be multiform, for modern wars affect every department of State and every individual of the nation waging them. Further than this, this Council must of necessity be solely an advisory council, otherwise the governing political principle of Empire will be infringed, and being thus limited

in power, it must consequently possess so high a knowledge and authority that no single Government will lightly set aside its advice. In fact, this Council must be more than a secretariat to the Imperial Conference, for it must unceasingly collect and codify all information of imperial value, and, having deduced the various tendencies, elaborate general and special policies and place them before the Empire Governments.

The creation of the above suggested secretariat to the Imperial Conference is undoubtedly the first step towards the formation of such a Council. The next is to endow the High Commissioners with full diplomatic powers; to make them not only members of their respective Governments, but also Imperial Privy Councillors who can be summoned to attend the meetings of the British Cabinet whenever the Prime Minister requires their assistance, or wishes to bring them in touch with foreign affairs. The third and last step is to raise them to the position of Deputy Prime Ministers and to make them members of an Imperial Council which should consist of the following: a Deputy Prime Minister from Great Britain and each of the Dominions, the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and the Colonies. The Chairman should be elected by the Council from among themselves, and the Council should have the power to summon to its meetings such ministers or experts whose opinion may from time to time be required.

Under the Imperial Council should be established four great Departments of Empire:—

1. *The Department of Imperial Culture*, to study imperial psychology, health, local opinion, education, history, literature and art.
2. *The Department of Imperial Economics*, to study imperial resources, finance, tariffs, science, industry, agriculture, commerce and emigration.
3. *The Department of Imperial Politics*, to study law and order, national and imperial administration, international relationships, and foreign policy.
4. *The Department of Imperial Defence*, to study the grand strategy of the Empire.

Each of these departments should be divided into two sub-departments, Intelligence and Operations, which again should be divided into three sections, a Thinking, a Liaison and a Routine Section.

In order that logical thinking may become possible, the Thinking Section should be organised in three sub-sections, an Historical Sub-Section to draw deductions from the past, a Statistical Sub-Section to draw deductions from the present, and a Planning Sub-Section to shape these deductions to the future.

I believe that in the main the above organisation, undetailed as it is, is able to provide the

Empire with a thinking organ—a brain—which can suggest actions to the various muscles of the Empire. Its workings I will examine in another section ; meanwhile, I will consider in some detail the duties of the Department of Imperial Defence.

19. *Creation of an Imperial General Staff.*

In 1907 Lord Haldane emphasised the vital importance of the creation of an Imperial General Staff, an *advisory* body which would be able, as Lord Salisbury had said many years before, "to study large scale maps." This Staff was never created, and though in 1909 there was established a Chief of the Imperial General Staff, this officer was neither an imperial representative nor did he control a General Staff, but merely the Operations Branch of the Staff. I will now consider what an Imperial General Staff entails.

Though the Department of Imperial Defence of the Imperial Council must of necessity contain a number of civilian experts, its main strength should be drawn from the Fighting Services. I do not intend here to enter into detailed suggestions as regards its organisation, for my purpose throughout this book is to establish a series of rational ideas rather than to enter into the minutiæ of organisation, which obviously must require the thought of many brains. The main object of an Imperial General Staff cannot be other than to assess the value of all imperial resources and activities from the point of view of war. In France a Superior Council of National Defence

has already been established, which includes representatives of the Ministry of Public Works, Commerce; Labour, Agriculture, etc. The object of this Council is to give practical effect to the principle of the Nation in Arms ; in other words, to enable the whole nation to be mobilised for war. The Imperial General Staff must do likewise, but in place of thinking nationally it must think imperially.

As regards the organisation of this Staff, the officers serving on it should be specially selected for this duty, and they should in no case include the heads of the Navy, Army or Air Force either of Great Britain or of the Dominions. These chiefs have their own separate duties, which are in nature executive. Their duty is to obey, and not to advise.

In order to establish a close co-operation between the four great departments of the Imperial Council there should be a secretariat common to the whole which will watch the circulation of papers and see that they are properly distributed. Normally each subject of importance should be dealt with as follows : First, it should be submitted to the Cultural Department, which will attune the question to imperial psychology ; next, it should be passed to the Economic Department, which will cost its values in terms of resources ; then it should be examined and dealt with by the Political Department, which will shape it to fit policy ; lastly, it should be forwarded to the Department of Imperial Defence,

which, within the limits defined by the three former Departments, will stabilise the problem by rendering it secure.

This, I maintain, is a rational and common-sense procedure. The question is first considered as a *human* question, secondly as an *economic* question, thirdly as a *political*, and fourthly as a *military* question, from the standpoint of the whole Empire, and not solely from that of Great Britain or any one of the Dominions. Whether this is the soundest possible method I cannot say, but I am convinced that it is sounder than the process of holding spasmodic Imperial Conferences and of relying on the fluidic Committee of Imperial Defence to which Dominion representatives are invited as honoured guests *whenever they happen to be in England.*

I will now compare the differences between the Imperial General Staff organisation and the Committee of Imperial Defence.

Committee of Imperial Defence.	*Imperial General Staff.*
1. A fortuitous gathering.	1. A permanent organisation.
2. No continuity of policy.	2. Continuity of policy.
3. Calls for expert advice.	3. Possesses expert knowledge.
4. Dominions not represented.	4. Dominions an integral part.
5. Responsible to the Prime Minister.	5. Responsible to the Empire.

Finally, while the Committee of Imperial Defence is the tool of the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Imperial Council is the brain of the Empire. With such a brain a rational policy can be evolved, and once it is evolved, and it never

yet has been evolved, the road to the establishment of efficient Ministries of National Defence at home and in the Dominions will be cleared; without it we shall continue to grope through the twilight. In the next section I will consider the question of our existing Defence Organisation.

20. *Existing Defence Organisation.*

Granted that an Imperial General Staff has been established, an organisation which possesses the necessary knowledge to formulate a defence policy for the Empire as a whole, and that this policy has been accepted by the Imperial Council, and that this Council has advised the various free Governments to accept it, and that it has been accepted, the next question which arises is: How is this policy to be rendered operative? This question demands a brief examination of the Staff organisation of the existing Defence Forces, for it is these forces which will convert policy into plan and plan into action.

In Great Britain the Navy, Army and Air Force are controlled by Councils—the Board of Admiralty, the Army Council, and the Air Council. Each of these Councils is presided over by a civilian—the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State for War, and the Secretary of State for Air—who of necessity are ignorant of the requirements of the Services they control. Though these Ministers rely on the advice of the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and the Chief of the Air Staff, these three officers are

not the heads of the Services to which they belong but merely members of a Council, each member of which has equal powers to support or reject any questions placed before the Council. Worse still, each member, in place of being an independent director, is a departmental head; consequently, it is only natural that when any question which affects the three Services is discussed, in place of being viewed as a whole each is looked upon as a separate departmental question. The result is that a clear-cut decision is seldom possible, and when a decision is arrived at it is nearly always a half measure. So frequently has this been the case that on one occasion an Army Councillor is reported to have said at a Council meeting: "Gentlemen, never give a decision, because if you do you will bitterly regret it." The waste of time and of money is, consequently, great.

Turning now to a still more important problem, the carrying out of a policy which affects the three Services, it must be apparent that the above system of control by Councils is hopelessly inefficient. In the past such questions have had to be referred to the Committee of Imperial Defence; but as this Committee possesses no expert knowledge, it refers the question to the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee for answer. And as the members of this Sub-Committee are departmental managers, more often than not they depend for advice on the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry. As the three Services of necessity view each question from a Service point of view in place of from a

combined one, the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee has frequently to deal with three contradictory answers. Questions of a combined nature are therefore either shelved or meander on through interminable discussions in which they lose all recognition, or else a compromise is arrived at which pleases no one. Again the loss of time and money is great. Curious to relate, though the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee possesses no imperial powers whatever, more unanimity is generally arrived at on purely imperial questions than on national ones. For example, if the question of the defence of the St. Lawrence River arose, it would be far easier to obtain a unanimous answer than if the coast defences of Great Britain were being discussed. The truth is, that no committee can be considered a free committee if its members are responsible for the execution of their answers.

As the establishment of an Imperial Council obviates this palpably inefficient process of solving imperial problems, the present question is narrowed down to the creation of an instrument which will answer national defence questions as effectively. Before examining this problem I will put forward certain suggestions as to the reorganisation of the administration of the Services, the main defects of which are :—

1. Lack of centralisation of initiative in a single responsible individual — a Commander-in-Chief.

2. Over-centralisation of departmental control in a board of irresponsible heads—Army Councillors, etc.

As regards the second, why are these departmental heads irresponsible? Because of the existing Treasury system, which does not allow them control over the expenditure of their departments. As every officer who has worked in one of the Service Ministries knows, it matters not how many millions are squandered so long as Treasury regulations are not infringed. Whether these regulations are applicable or not is outside the question. Whether their application will prove beneficial or detrimental is immaterial. What *is* material is, that they are scrupulously observed in all circumstances without exception. The Treasury knows no exception, and it was last reorganised in 1689!

No ordinary business, in any conceivable circumstances except that of possessing unlimited capital, could possibly declare a dividend or avert bankruptcy if it exercised a similar control over its spending departments as the Treasury exercises over the Navy, Army and Air Force.

In order that it may not be considered that these are merely personal assertions I will substantiate them by three quotations:—

1. "The exercise of the Treasury's powers in governing other departments of the Government is not for the public benefit."—*Lord Salisbury*, 1900.

2. "The entire system of War Office finance, which has been built up during many years, and has its origin in a distant past, is based on the assumption that all military officers are necessarily spendthrifts, and that their actions must be controlled in gross and in detail by civilians. This theory is largely responsible for the unreadiness for war which has been frequently exhibited, as well as for reckless and wasteful expenditure."—*The Report of the Esher Committee*, 1903.

3. "Thirty years' experience of the actual working of the present system of external control of War Office expenditure, in peace and war, has convinced me that it fails to produce real economy."—*Sir Charles Harris, Joint Secretary of the War Office*, 1918.

Because of this totally obsolete system of Treasury control the Board of Admiralty, the Army Council and the Air Council are emasculated, their creative powers are virtually *nil*. Like Sisyphus, they roll their stones up the financial hill, they seldom top it, and why? Because, possessing no controlling head and seldom a united "push" the Treasury is always strong enough to kick the stone down again before it reaches the summit.

In the following four sections I will attempt to outline a system which will give the Services

a brain and an internal organisation which will enable them to sweat off their superfluous fat, which is mainly due to inertia begotten of Treasury interference.

21. *Reorganisation of each Separate Service.*

Two problems now face us. The first is the reorganisation of each separate Service so that each will be able to convert policy into plan and plan into action; and the second the establishment of a controlling organ, which will not only co-ordinate the plans evolved by the three Services, but will so direct the policy agreed upon by the Government that co-ordination will become automatic, co-ordination being attained by dividing the policy into definite problems, the solutions of which are left to the Services concerned. The former of these problems I will now examine.

Without question the first requirement of any healthy organisation is a thinking organ, or brain, an organ which possesses power to select and is not merely a machine for repetition work, such as to-day is forced upon the Navy, Army and Air Force by the Treasury. The functions of this organ are decision, operation and routine. Thus in the human brain we have the deciding will, and while the routine processes of the body are controlled by one part of the brain the operational activities are directed by another.

In the Navy, Army or Air Force the will must

be represented by *one* man, the Commander-in-Chief, for it is only *one* man who can give a definite answer to a definite question. The routine processes must be carried out by the Staff, and the operational activities by another portion of the Service brain, which portion I will call the General Staff. To-day no single Service possesses a Commander-in-Chief or a General Staff except in name. In the Navy the Naval Staff is separated from the Maintenance Departments, and it is in no sense a General Staff. In the Army the General Staff is but a branch of the Staff, and co-equal to the Adjutant-General's and the Quartermaster-General's branches. In the Royal Air Force a very similar system of administration exists, but is further complicated by the inclusion of a Department for Civil Aviation.

I will now attempt to define the purposes of the Staff and the General Staff and the governing principles of Staff duties, after which I will suggest a reorganisation.

The Staff is a body of managing assistants which renders operative whatever plan is determined upon. Its duty is to obey.

The General Staff is a board of directors which elaborates the plan to be placed in operation. Its duty is to co-ordinate the work of the Staff by issuing the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, the deciding will, and by seeing that these orders are carried out.

The guiding principles of administration are as follows :—

1. The direction of operations must be separated from the management of the routine and technical services.
2. Each department of the Staff must be responsible for its own internal efficiency and economy.
3. The work of each department must be co-ordinated so that their united efforts may be focused on the plan.

By means of the first operations are separated from routine, by means of the second decentralisation of effort is attained, and by means of the third are the results of this effort centralised on the plan, which is the expression of that part of the policy of the Government which refers to the Service in question.

The General Staff prepares the plans, outlines the strategy and tactics required and the training and organisation necessary to accomplish these. These requirements are worked out in detail by the departments of the Staff, which are as follows: Training, Personnel, Supply, Technical, Movements and Finance, and are co-ordinated by the General Staff. Once the detail of the plan has been agreed upon it should be co-ordinated with the general policy which affects not only one Service but all three Services. To submit it to the Government is useless, for the Cabinet does not possess the necessary knowledge for this work; nor can the Cabinet re-submit the plan of three National Services to the Imperial Council

for advice, for the Imperial Council cannot tender advice on national questions without infringing the governing political principle; further still, this Council cannot be made responsible for carrying it out. All the Government can do is to refer the question to the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee to wrangle out the differences between their own plans and the general policy; in other words, to refer the question back to the Services. This method I have shown to be inefficient; consequently, it would appear to be advisable to unite the Services and place all three under one directing head—a Combined General Staff. This means the creation of a Ministry of National Defence, the advantages and disadvantages of which I will now enquire into.

22. *The Question of a Ministry of National Defence.*

In 1912 Viscount Esher, in a lecture delivered before the members of the Royal United Service Institution, said:—

> "It has been often suggested that the naval and military forces of the Crown could be welded more effectively in war if they were organised in peace under a sole Minister responsible for both Services. The Dominions have carried this idea into practice. They most of them possess a Minister of Defence, controlling their armaments, and parcelling out such sums as may be voted by their Parliaments between their maritime and land forces."

Before 1854, as I have already pointed out, the administrative Services of the Army were dealt with by three separate and independent Departments of State, and as General Ellison writes: "For want of a strong military department there was no chance of any semblance of balance being preserved between military interests on the one side and administrative interests on the other . . . the failure of our military system was patent to all men. . . ."[1]

I maintain that to-day a similar criticism may with justice be applied to the three Services, and that as the outcome of the failure of the Army during the Crimean War was the consolidation of the Army under one Chief—a Secretary of State for War—and the bringing of the Commander-in-Chief's office into the same building as the administrative services, so will the outcome of the failure in co-operation between the three Services during the World War be that they will eventually be placed for policy (not for administration) under one Secretary of State and one Combined General Staff. For this there is at least one famous precedent in our history, namely that of the elder Pitt, who in face of all but overwhelming disaster absorbed the war functions of the Secret Committee of the Council, with the result that to all intents and purposes he controlled not only his own Department of Foreign Affairs but the Navy and Army as well. Of this action a writer

[1] Brigadier-General G. F. Ellison, C.B., "Our Army System in Theory and Practice," *The Army Review*, vol. iii, No. 2.

says: "The masterly direction of the elder Pitt of the entire policy, Armies and Fleets of the Kingdom during the Seven Years' War, is without parallel in the records of statecraft."[1] If these words are true, and history supports them, then there can be little doubt that, in theory, the establishment of a Ministry of National Defence to control the policy and strategy of the three Services is sound. All that then remains to be done is to discover whether it is practical.

Of all defence questions which have been discussed and debated inside and outside of Parliament the one which has been the most confused is that of a Ministry of National Defence. The reason for this is that strategical and administrative considerations have been muddled and mixed until common sense has vanished in a fog of nonsense.

In Section 21 I pointed out that the first principle of administration is the separation of direction from management. During the war it was not management which was at fault, but direction, and when General Foch was made Co-ordinator and finally Generalissimo of the allied land forces no one in his senses suggested that he should manage the allied armies. His duties were not administrative but strategical—he was to plot, plan and decide, and not to feed, equip and organise the forces under his direction.

The necessity of creating a strategical

[1] Capt. E. ff. W. Lascelles, "Unity of Control in Imperial Defence," *The Army Review*, vol. iv, April, 1913.

instrument which would advise the Government is clearly set forth in a letter written by Sir William Robertson to Lord Kitchener in December, 1915. Amongst other things he says :—

> " It is of paramount importance in war that there should be a definite plan of operations, and that that plan should be carried out with promptness and decision. It is impossible if the War Council is itself compelled to listen to conflicting advice, and to decide between the merits of rival experts. . . . It is vital, then, that it should possess the machinery both to come to timely decisions and to have its decisions executed."

This is common sense, and the machinery suggested can be no other than a body of men who have been trained to see eye to eye strategically on all questions of war, for though tactics and administration vary with the Services, there is but one strategy which is common to all three. To-day the creation of a grand-strategical instrument is even more necessary than it was during the World War, for then we were in alliance with two powerful nations, France and America, consequently force of numbers was on our side ; but to-morrow we may be fighting on our own, and unless a common strategical plan is full-heartedly agreed upon by the three Services nothing but chaos will result. To-day the beginning of this anarchy can be seen quite clearly ; each of the three Services is looking for an objective which will justify its

particular and individual existence. As obviously these views are not likely to coincide, and as the Cabinet possesses no strategical knowledge whatsoever, and is unlikely ever to possess it, how can it decide upon which objective it should mould its war policy? So long as this state of affairs exists so long will true economy in defence expenditure be impossible. Expenses may be cut down, but money spent will be largely wasted.

The strategical aspect of a Ministry of National Defence was completely obscured when in 1921 a Committee was assembled under Sir Eric Geddes to enquire into possible reductions in national expenditure. In the First Interim Report issued by the Geddes Committee we read:—

> "Apart from our detailed proposals for economy we are of opinion that the Estimates for the defence of the Empire lack co-ordination, and we have been forced to the conclusion that until that co-ordination is attained overlapping and wasteful expenditure is inevitable."

The Committee did not, however, leave matters here, but put forward a definite proposal as to how in their opinion co-ordination could be established. They said:—

> "In our opinion full economy in the Fighting Services cannot be realised under existing conditions. There is overlapping and duplication throughout. In order to fully realise these economies the three Forces must be brought together by the creation of a Co-ordinating

Authority or a Ministry of Defence responsible for seeing that each Force plays its part and is allotted appropriate responsibility for carrying out various functions. The theory of such a Ministry in embryo appears already to exist in the Committee of Imperial Defence. With the creation of a Co-ordinating Authority or Ministry of this description it would be possible to ensure that corresponding reductions in expenditure were realised when either of the older Services was relieved or assisted, and no additional expense or extra Ministerial appointment need, in our opinion, be involved, as the Minister and his Staff could all be drawn from existing organisations. All the arguments of an economic character which have been urged for the absorption of the Air Force into the two older Services apply in our opinion also to the fusion of all three Services under one Minister. Complete co-ordination in Supply, Transport, Education, Medical and other Services would then be possible.

"We attach great importance to the settlement of this question in the interests of economy. . . ."

This was the most important recommendation made by this Committee, because, though their main task was to cut down expenditure, here was a suggestion which they considered would prevent overlapping, and which consequently would prevent in place of cure uneconomical expenditure.

This suggestion was on March 21st, 1922,

supported by Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons, who said :—

> " No solution of a harmonious or symmetrical character will be achieved in the co-ordination of the Services except through the agency of a Ministry of Defence, but it is not possible to create such a body at the present time, nor will it be possible for a considerable time. In the interim the only steps which are open to us are to create machinery for pooling the administrative functions of the three arms and to create a common staff brain, from whose exertions in the future the responsible advice to the Cabinet of the day in regard to matters of defence must and can only effectively originate."

The interim steps referred to were the appointment of :—

1. A Committee, under Sir Alfred Mond, whose place was later taken by Lord Weir, to consider the amalgamation of the common Services of the Navy, Army and Air Force.
2. A Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, under the Minister of Education (Mr. Wood) to consider the establishment of a joint Staff College.

On January 2nd, 1923, Lord Weir's Committee[1] came to the following conclusion :—

> " We are of opinion that the amalgamation of the common Services would only be

[1] Cmd. 2649. Not published until 1926.

practicable if it formed part of a comprehensive scheme of reorganisation which provided for the establishment of a Ministry to control a defence force in which the identity of the Navy, Army and Air Force had been merged. So far as we are aware, such a revolutionary idea as the merging of the identity of the three Services in one force has never been contemplated. But unless such a Ministry is created, we are unable to devise means by which responsibility can be allocated as between the authority charged with the administration of an amalgamated common service and the Ministers who are severally responsible to Parliament for the administration of the Navy, Army and Air Force."

The Woods Committee was more helpful, for it outlined a scheme for the formation of a Joint Staff College, which, as I will show later on, is the first step toward the creation of a strategical Ministry of National Defence. In 1926 this scheme was accepted by the Government, and, as I have already mentioned, the establishment of a College of Imperial Defence was agreed upon.

23. *Opposition to a Ministry of National Defence.*

The proposal made by the Geddes Committee to establish an administrative Ministry of Defence, that is an instrument which would control, co-ordinate and manage the three Services as one Service, was met by a torrent of criticism, in which the idea of establishing a strategical directing

organ was completely lost sight of. The question of replacing the three Service Ministries by one super-Ministry horrified the politicians. The whole question had to be scotched, and that as rapidly as possible, consequently a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence was assembled, in March, 1923, with the Marquis of Salisbury in the chair, to enquire into the general co-operation between the Services and their co-ordination by means of a Ministry of Defence or otherwise. This Committee included among its members the Secretary of State for War, the Secretary of State for Air, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, who were unlikely to hold impartial views on a question which, if agreed upon, would result in the abolition of their offices.

The expert evidence laid before this Committee is peculiarly interesting, as it shows how little the requirements of strategy were grasped, and how confused certain minds were on such simple questions as the distinction between imperial and national defence. Sir Eric Geddes suggested the creation of a single Secretary of State for Warfare, or Defence, who would be responsible for the three Services. Sir Frederick Sykes went still further, and advocated a Ministry of Defence "by means of a form of fusion or amalgamation of the existing Service departments"; but how such a Ministry was to work was not explained.

All other evidence was directly or indirectly

hostile to the idea. Major-General Seely did not favour a Defence Ministry, yet suggested the creation of a Minister of Defence who should be Vice-President of the Committee of Imperial Defence. It is difficult to see how the appointment of a Minister without a Ministry could help matters. Sir John Davidson considered that a Standing Joint Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence should be "formed of the First Sea Lord, the C.I.G.S. and the C.A.S., or officers appointed or deputed by them, together with representatives of the self-governing Dominions, of India, and of other departments concerned." This Committee, amongst other things, was to examine our imperial organisation in Defence and our imperial responsibilities. Though these are admirable suggestions, they are not practical, because they violate the governing political principle upon which imperial freedom is founded. Sir Aylmer Hunter Weston suggested a scheme which was apparently based on Sir John Davidson's. The Committee of Imperial Defence was to become the Council of Imperial Defence, yet it was to remain under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, which automatically prevents it becoming an imperial instrument. Lord Middleton considered that it was beyond the power of one man to control the three Services, and Lord Haldane, who in 1907 earnestly recommended the establishment of an Imperial General Staff, and who, when Chairman of the "Machinery of Government Committee" in 1917, supported

the establishment of a Defence Ministry,[1] put forward no scheme, but only raised objections to the idea. His main points were :—

1. The Committee of Imperial Defence had been evolved to meet Dominion as well as Home requirements, and was better adapted to fulfil these than a Ministry of Defence.
2. A Ministry of Defence would interfere in administration.
3. The Minister of Defence would become a rival to the Prime Minister, and
4. Some Governments might appoint efficient Ministers but others might appoint "influential politicians distinguishable, perhaps, mainly for debating gifts."

Of all the evidence brought before the Salisbury Committee that of Sir William Robertson bore greatest weight. It is, however, curious to find that the views he placed before this Committee

[1] "We think that much would be gained if the distribution of departmental duties were guided by a general principle, and we have come to the conclusion that distribution according to the nature of the service to be rendered to the community as a whole is the principle which is likely to lead to the minimum amount of confusion and overlapping. In this way such divisions of the business of Government as Health, Education, Finance, Research, Foreign Affairs, and Defence would each be under separate administration, the Cabinet being in a position of supreme executive direction, and Parliament holding the various Ministers directly responsible to it for the efficiency of the service with which they were respectively charged."

are very different from those held at the time he wrote to Lord Kitchener in 1915. In his book *From Private to Field-Marshal* he writes of the earlier period of the war:—

> "The whole situation being so full of peril, I felt it to be my duty to do what I could to bring about somewhat more efficient methods in the supreme direction of the war. Strictly speaking, I had no right to interfere, but departure from official etiquette was a small matter in comparison with the danger in which the country seemed to stand, and therefore I decided to embody my views in a memorandum and send them unofficially to Murray, then Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to dispose of as he thought fit. The memorandum, which strongly advocated better co-ordination of the Entente plans, was eventually circulated to the Cabinet. . . ."

In this memorandum may be read: "There should be a supreme directing authority whose function is to formulate policy, decide on the theatres in which military operations are to be conducted, and determine the relative importance of these theatres. This authority must also exercise a general supervision over the conduct of the war, and must select men who are to execute the policy on which it has decided. Its constitution must be such that it is able to come to quick decisions, and therefore as regards the conduct of the war it must be absolute." Further: "The War Council will frequently find itself in a

position similar to that of a commander in the field," and "the absence of decision may be little less than criminal because of the loss of life which may be entailed." Again: "In order that the War Council may be able to come to timely decisions on the questions with which it has to deal, it is essential that it should receive *all* advice on matters concerning military operations through one authoritative channel only. With us that channel must be the Chief of the Imperial General Staff."

Though this last suggestion limits strategical advice to one Service only, advice which may frequently be unacceptable to the Chiefs of the other two Services, the whole aim of Sir William Robertson's argument was to accentuate the necessity for strategical control. Before the Salisbury Committee he did not mention strategy, he did not point out that it was a strategical Defence Council, or Ministry, that we required, and not an administrative one, which, however, he roundly condemned in no uncertain terms. He said:—

> "The formation of a combined Imperial General Staff, consisting of Military, Naval and Air Force officers, working under a Chief (a soldier, or sailor, or airman) responsible to the Government, or to a Minister of Defence, for working out plans of operations on land, on sea, and in the air, and, according to some, endowed with 'financial and strategical powers' is even more fantastical as well as dreadfully

mischievous. An important corner-stone in military organisation is that he who makes a plan ought to be responsible for its execution and stake his reputation upon it. Consequently, the Chief of this proposed combined Staff must draft and issue the orders of the Government to all the Generals and Admirals and Air Officers entrusted with the control of the armies, the fleets and the air forces. The confusion that would arise in the three War Departments and at the front if any such ill-considered system as this were adopted is quite inconceivable. Further, this Staff would directly interpose between the three Chiefs of Staff and the Cabinet, and there could be no more pernicious system than that."

Bearing in mind the above most open condemnation of a Ministry of Defence and of a Combined General Staff, it is curious to find that his proposals were that the Committee of Imperial Defence should remain very much as it is. "It would be the duty of the three Chiefs of Staff to advise the Council on professional matters." On the Committee itself should sit as members a senior officer from each of the three Services. "Their experience would enable them to give valuable help both to Ministers and the Chiefs of Staff, and they would be specially useful to the former in cases where the latter might feel compelled to differ from each other in regard to professional matters upon which they were called upon to advise. If these three officers

(unemployed) are not included in the Council, Ministers will have to decide for themselves professional questions about which their knowledge must necessarily be imperfect, and the soundness of their decisions will, therefore, remain largely a matter of chance."

Though Sir William Robertson rightly considered, so I think, that it is not possible for the Chiefs of Staff to fulfil the dual capacity of heads of their respective departments and members of the Committee of Imperial Defence, I am of opinion that their subordination to three unemployed and presumably retired officers, for this is what his suggestion amounts to, is to place three irresponsible officers in charge of the Fighting Services. Many of us can still remember the friction which took place in India, nearly thirty years ago now, between Lord Kitchener, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in India, and Sir Edmund Elles, Military Member of the Viceroy's Council. To establish this system at home, only on a still more impossible footing, was to court disaster. The three Service members of the Committee of Imperial Defence are no more likely to agree than the three Chiefs of Staff, so ultimately we are back at the old difficulty, namely the Prime Minister will have to decide all questions which are in dispute, and his knowledge regarding these questions must necessarily be imperfect.

The conclusions arrived at by the Salisbury Committee were that it was "impracticable to

supersede the Ministerial heads of the three Fighting Services by making them subordinates of a Minister of Defence," and that it was advisable to replace the "Standing Defence Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence by a Sub-Committee of the Chiefs of Staff," the three constituting as it were "a Super-Chief of a War Staff in Commission," which is an open admission that a Super-Chief of a War Staff is the ideal to aim at, that is, a strategical head to all three Fighting Services.

Obscurely this Committee did good work, it showed that a strategical head was necessary, and that the combined administration of the Services was impracticable. Yet its one creative suggestion was so overlaid that from the date of the issue of its report to the summer of 1926 the advantages of a Ministry of Defence were constantly mooted. In the House of Lords, on June 16th, 1926, Lord Thomson once again raised the whole question, and was supported in his condemnation of a Ministry of Defence by Lord Balfour, Lord Haldane and Lord Cavan. Though Lord Haldane pointed out that "the principles of strategy are just what they were in the time of Hannibal," the strategical aspect of such a Ministry was not mentioned. The whole of this aristocratic artillery was turned on to bombard a phantom—the possibility of one man controlling in detail the internal organs of the three Service Ministries. According to Lord Thomson, "a man in this position would have

to possess the patience of Job, the impartial judgment of a Solomon, the mental equipment of a Francis Bacon, and the patient organising power of a Caldwell"; finally, "he would become a kind of Buddha, a profoundly pessimistic person 'taking the middle path.'"

24. *A Strategical Ministry of National Defence.*

There can be no doubt to anyone who came into contact with the higher direction of the war that its strategical control was wholly defective. Then we only had to deal with two Services, to-day and in the future we have to deal with three. If we had no separate Air Force there can be little doubt that the question of a Ministry of Defence would either have never arisen or have been banished directly it arose. It is the air problem and its future that has kept this idea alive. The Royal Air Force can fight as a separate arm, just as the Navy and the Army can; but it can also directly co-operate with the two senior Services; in fact, neither of these two Services can be considered an efficient Service without its aid. Here is presented to us a new and complex strategical problem—the distribution of air power and the changes in land and sea power. If we do not control this problem we shall have three strategical conceptions of the next war, and not one. We shall have three policies, three plans, and one immense bill to pay, because they are

unlikely to coincide. True economy both in war and peace lies in efficient control. This is at the back of the minds of those who have championed the creation of a Ministry of Defence ; but, as I have shown, they have confused the issue by mistaking internal management for external direction. They have, in fact, confused tactics and administration with strategy, and have failed to see the wood for the trees. I am perfectly certain that Sir William Robertson, Lord Haldane and Mr. Churchill recognised this, though possibly they were not quite certain what was best to do. All Britishers are cautious by instinct, but the longer we delay in setting our strategical house in order the greater will be the bill we shall eventually be called upon to pay.

In my opinion the whole question is a very simple one to outline, and though I claim no infallibility, I will try and keep my answer simple and logical.

A Ministry of National Defence is not an organisation which should replace the three Service Ministries or control the internal administration of the Services. In brief its duties are :—

1. To assist the Government in arriving at a defence, or war, policy.
2. To convert this policy into a general plan of action, and to forward this plan to the three Service Ministries.

3. To estimate the cost of carrying out the plan, and to apportion money and means to the Service Ministries accordingly.

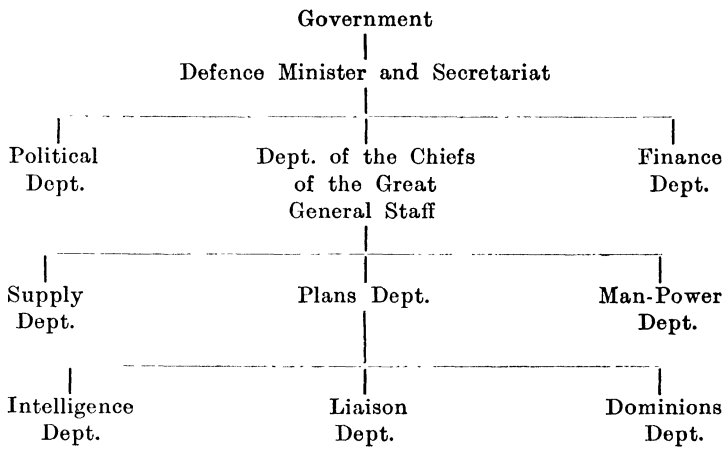
These duties entail the establishment of three departments: A Political Department; a Defence, or War, Department; and a Finance Department. The second I will call the Great General Staff, as this term to my mind expresses higher unity than the more common one of a Combined General Staff.

The Political Department should deal with all questions of policy—home, imperial and foreign. The Great General Staff should equate this policy with strategic requirements; and the Finance Department should cost this equation. When a definite plan has been evolved, the Defence Minister should forward it to the three Service Ministries for action.

The Great General Staff is firstly a grand strategical organ, it must think for the present and the future, not only in terms of strategy, but also in those of supply and man-power. It must also plan as well as think; therefore, secondly, it is a strategical organ. And in order to plan it must possess a highly organised Intelligence Department to collect facts, a Dominions Department to keep it in close touch with the Dominions, and a Liaison Department to keep it in close touch with the three Services.

The general organisation of a Ministry of

National Defence can now be charted out as follows :—



Having outlined in very general terms the organisation of a Ministry of National Defence, the next question to enquire into is the nature of the work it should carry out.

The Government is the ultimate organ of decision, but not of initiation, for defence policy must be created for it.

The Defence Minister is the spokesman of policy within the Government; he is not only one of the Government, but also the link between the Government and the organisation which can create a war policy, namely the Great General Staff. This Staff in its turn can accomplish nothing of a definite nature unless it can grasp in detail the political views of the Government—their home, imperial and foreign policy. The

Political Department can supply the Great General Staff with these views, and check the policy of this Staff when it infringes them. The Finance Department not only allots the defence estimates to the Services, but costs the policy of the Great General Staff, and audits the accounts of the three Services.

I now come to the departments of the Great General Staff. The Department of the Chiefs of the G.G.S. must pre-eminently be a thinking department. It must be divorced from all routine work, and must not only be able to elaborate a war policy which will fit existing conditions, but closely examine their tendencies and trace their probable evolution in the future. It must also shape its war policy to fit political policy and financial allotment.

Having decided on a war policy hypothetically, the Department of the C.G.G.S. will pass it to the Plans Department, whose duty it is to convert the idea into a concrete scheme, or plan. Policy is equated with supply in all its forms and with man-power, and is shaped according to the information supplied by the Intelligence and Dominions Departments. This done, the plan is submitted to the Department of the C.G.G.S. to be scrutinised from the point of view of policy, and to the Political and Finance Departments to be examined from their respective points of view. When these three Departments are in agreement the plan is submitted to the Defence Minister for his or for Government approval. This obtained,

it is issued to the three Services for action, and this action is closely watched by the Liaison Department, not only to see that the plan decided upon is carried out, but also to ascertain whether the Services can carry it out, and if not to suggest where and how the plan should be modified. We thus obtain in the Ministry of National Defence a living, directing and controlling organ, a veritable war-brain. This brain not only endows the Services with dynamic force which will render them flexible to change of surroundings, but it will also do all in its power to foresee eventual changes and shape policy accordingly. Outside formulating a general plan and seeing that this plan is carried out, the Ministry of National Defence will not interfere with the internal organisation, administration, or tactics of the Services, unless it is clearly apparent that their nature prohibits the execution of the plan, when changes will be referred to the Government for decision.

I will now outline in brief the individual duties of each Department of the G.G.S.

Department of the C.G.G.S.

1. To examine all political, strategical, financial, economic and imperial conditions in bulk and extract their values.
2. To trace the probable tendencies of these values in the future.
3. To outline a war policy for wars of all magnitudes.

4. To amend this policy as conditions change, or show tendencies of change.

The Supply Department.

1. To assess the economic resources of the Empire.
2. To assess the material requirements of each Service for each plan decided upon.
3. To work out schemes for the organisation of resources during war.
4. To harmonise war demands and trade so that national wealth is not squandered during-war time.

The Man-Power Department.

1. To assess in categories the man-power of the Empire.
2. To assess the wastage requirements of each Service for each plan decided upon.
3. To work out schemes for national conscription during war-time.
4. To harmonise war and industrial demands for man-power, so that skilled man-power is not squandered in war.

The Plans Department.

1. To examine in detail all information collected by the Intelligence and Dominions Departments.
2. To fit the policy received to the values of this information.

3. To work out a general war plan, or plans, for all three Services.
4. To amplify each plan by individual instructions for each Service.

The Intelligence Department.

1. To collect, examine and digest all conditions of information—home, foreign and imperial.
2. To control the secret service of the country.
3. To control the contra-espionage service.
4. To supply Ministries other than the Ministry of National Defence with information.

The Dominions Department.

1. To keep in closest touch with Dominion political policy.
2. To examine the strategical relationships of the Dominions to the Mother Country.
3. To suggest to the Plans Department courses of action.
4. To keep their own War Departments, or Ministries, informed on all decisions arrived at and proposals made.

The Liaison Department.

1. To establish harmony between the G.G.S. and the three Services.
2. To act as inspectors to the Plans Department.

3. To inform the Plans Department why and where a plan requires modification.
4. To visit the Dominions and ascertain their views.

Such I hold to be a rational and logical scheme, but there are two points which require amplification. I have used the term Chiefs of the Great General Staff, and not that of Chief, for though I am of opinion that one Chief would be better than three, I am also of opinion that inter-Service jealousies are so great that it would be but a counsel of perfection to suggest one. We as a nation are wedded to the committee system, and it is useless proposing an organisation which though the best is not necessarily the most expedient.

The second point is, that I have included empire defence amongst the problems of the Great General Staff, and as the Ministry of National Defence is an instrument of the British Government it might seem that I am infringing the governing political principle I have accused others of violating. This, however, is not so, because I am assuming that an Imperial Council has been established, and that consequently the imperial problems dealt with by the Great General Staff will be those upon which general agreement has been reached. For fullness in war preparations these two organs, the Imperial Council and the Ministry of National Defence, are complementary ; consequently, each Dominion

should, as far as possible, establish a Ministry of National Defence within its own Government. As all the Dominions already possess Ministries of Defence of one kind or another, it should not be difficult to reorganise each of these Ministries on the lines adopted by the Mother Country for her own.

25. *A Comparison between the Old and the New Orders.*

It is easy enough to point out the difficulties of establishing anything new, especially when a comparison is made with an old system which has become well grounded on accepted mud. If difficulties did not confront us the problem would scarcely be worth the solving, and of the difficulties which do confront us only those which depend on Treasury reform are really serious, the remainder are but points of view.

In order that a contrast may be obtained, and it is mainly through contrasts that values become apparent, I will now not merely examine the defects of the present system, but will appraise its work and will show that, while our organisation of defence is costly, its output of efficiency is small.

To-day we possess three Service Ministries and a pseudo-co-ordinating body, the Committee of Imperial Defence. What have they accomplished since the signing of the Armistice in November, 1918?

If I wished I could make out a convincing charge sheet from which the reader would gather that Service men are the most incompetent fools in the universe. This would be to follow the method of Fleet Street, a method which, though it may show that the Ministries are wasteful organisations, does not consequently prove that all soldiers, sailors and airmen are fools. Where does the fault lie? Is it in the individual or is it in the system?

The individual Service man normally comes from good stock, and the same stock which provides the country with its most successful professional and business men; consequently, from the start we must rule out of the question that Service men come from a special caste of idiots. What, then, of the system concerning which I possess close experience?

The system under which the Services are run differs from an ordinary business in two ways: first, it is not provided with a brain, a deciding organ; and, secondly, the executive members of the Services—the soldiers, sailors and airmen—are bereft of responsibility over expenditure. In a business the head, whether an individual or a board, decides, and the departments attempt to obtain the highest profit out of a given sum of money. In a Service Ministry, such as the War Office, the procedure is reversed. The politician says: "I do not want a Commander-in-Chief." Why? Because a Commander-in-Chief would possess power of

decision, and his decisions might be awkward. In place of the Commander-in-Chief the politician has created a Council, not a board of directors, but a board of departmental managers, who being immersed in departmental work quite naturally think of their individual departments before they think of the Army as a unit. The result is, that in important questions decision becomes next to impossible, not because the soldier cannot decide, but because the system does not permit of any one man possessing power to decide.

The politician has so organised the control of the Army that it possesses no organ whereby thought can be centralised and policy fashioned. This leads us to the second difficulty. The Financial Secretary, or Finance Member of the Council, asks for a policy. He must have a policy in order to reckon its cost. The Army Council cannot give him a policy, not because its members are idiots, but because they cannot extract a policy from the Government. The result is a complete deadlock. The Army Council, I will suppose, wants to establish a Corps of Mechanical Engineers. The Financial Secretary says: "I cannot consider this question until I know your entire policy, for otherwise we may exceed the estimates." The Army Council cannot possibly state what its policy is, it has no policy, and cannot have a policy until the Government provides one. The result is, that as the establishment of a new corps affects every executive

department, every department tries by persuasion and reason to justify its creation. This leads to an interminable skirmish with Finance; the Staff becomes immersed in routine work, and hosts of financial parasites are kept in bread and butter.

Even should the General Staff realize the value of modern inventions, yet how can it obtain them when the Government will not decide on a policy of defence, and the Treasury will do nothing until the General Staff decides on the establishments of the Army? How can it decide, when its does not know what liabilities it has got to meet? Again, if it is lucky enough to obtain, I will suppose, £50,000 for some new weapon, not only has it to estimate cost of production a year before manufacture, but it has to spend the whole of the sum received within the financial year; for the Estimates' system prohibits the carrying over of any balance from one year to another. The result is, in order to get money spent in any one financial year new weapons have to be produced without sufficient testing. If the money is not spent, then in the following year the vote concerned is likely to be cut down on the assumption if out of £50,000 a balance in hand of £20,000 is shown in 1933, then in 1934 £30,000 less will suffice! This creates a skirmish which frequently lasts a year, and there is great rejoicing amongst the financial question-mongers.

In the Admiralty and Air Ministry the same

system prevails. How can the Admiralty decide on battleships or submarines until it knows the defence policy of the Cabinet? How can the Air Ministry decide on its establishments without a policy? Can a shopkeeper estimate what his stock should be if he pays no regard to probable sales? Is he to open his shop in Bayswater or Freshwater, he wants to know? But it is in the planning and settling of combined operations and actions that the completest inertia is found. Such questions as Coast Defence and Anti-Aircraft Defence, which demand the attention of two or more of the Service Ministries, are for want of efficient co-ordinating machinery sadly neglected. Committees of experts meet and discuss these questions, and their reports are carefully registered and pigeon-holed.

Had we, at the end of the war, possessed a co-ordinating organ, it would have been totally unnecessary to assemble the Geddes and other committees, and seek economy through a blind swinging of the axe, hacking bits out of the Services, when economy, if it is to carry with it efficiency, can only be attained by reorganising the three Services in relation to each other's values in war. It is for this reason, whatever existing interests and prejudices may be ruffled, that I believe the only solution to our present inertia and rot is to provide the Services with a brain.

I admit I have not answered my question, "What have the Service Ministries and the

Committee of Imperial Defence accomplished since the signing of the Armistice ? " but I imagine that I have provided the reader with the true reasons why so little has been done. No single Service is allowed a brain ; no single Service is allowed freedom of thought or action ; no single organ exists which is capable of thinking of the three Services as one Force, and of initiating problems for the Services to solve.

The present inter-Service difficulties cannot be eliminated by General Staff Committees, even if all three Services are represented ; for their members will be looking in three directions ; but only by a Great General Staff and Ministry of National Defence which will :—

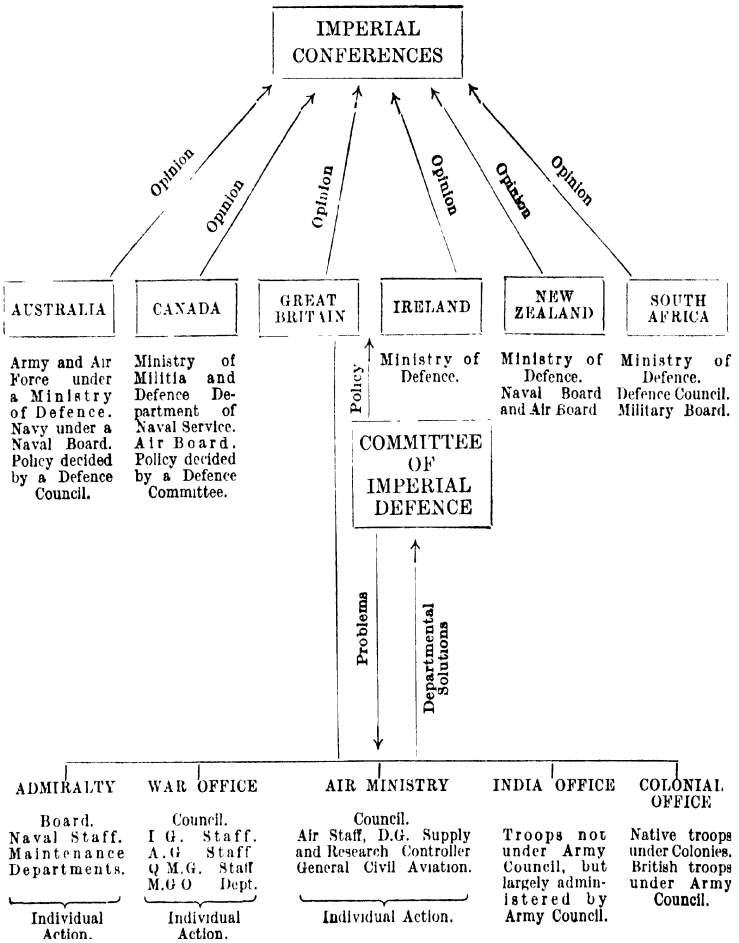
1. Study the national psychology, assess the national resources, and keep in touch with the progress of science and industry.
2. Study the imperial policy of the Imperial Council and the foreign and home policies of the Government.
3. Consider the Naval, Military and Air Force policy which will secure (2) without crippling (1).
4. Work out a strategical plan of action and allot sums of money to the Services to meet the cost of the plan.
5. Watch the development of the plan and amend the policy if the plan proves defective.

The detailed working out of the plans must be left to the Services. There is no question of administrative interference or of combining the Staffs of the three Services into one Staff, or even the three General Staffs into one Amalgamated General Staff; for the Great General Staff here visualised is as distinct from all these organisations as a Board of Directors is from the Managerial Staff of a commercial business. An organisation such as this not only does not infringe but maintains in all respects the last five principles laid down in Section 5.

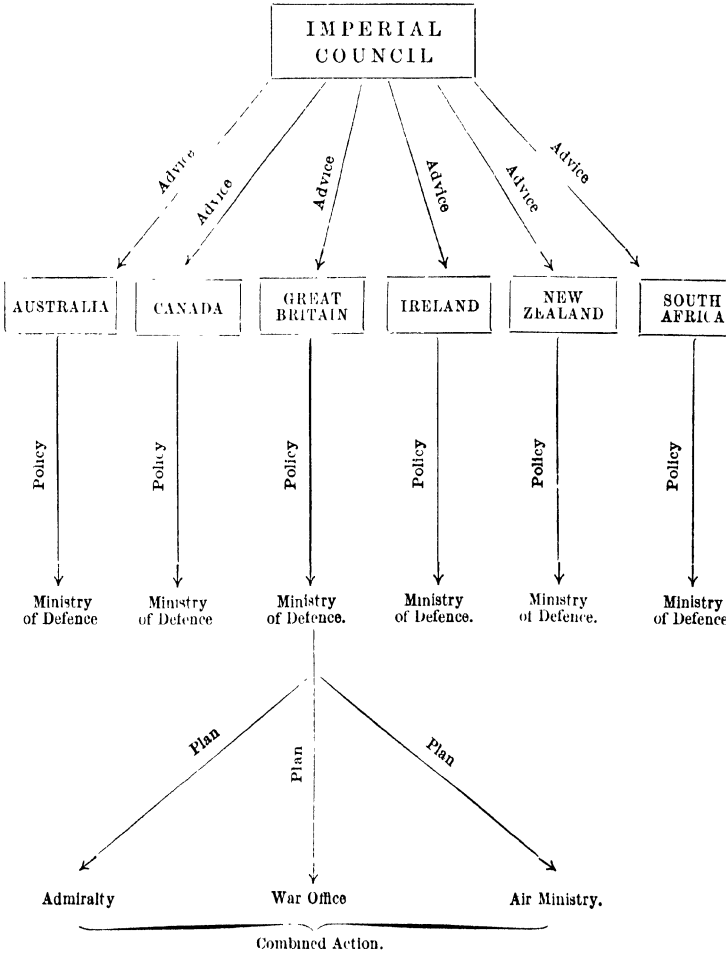
In order to render these reforms fully operative, it is essential that a higher degree of interest than to-day exists should be established in the Service Departments—the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry, the motto of which is "Inertia."

The Navy and Army, and in a lesser degree the Air Force, as many people know, are overloaded with obsolete arms and armaments, archaic organisation and out-of-date appointments and posts. Whenever one of these defects attracts attention in Parliament or the Press the usual course is to lay the blame on the inertia of the naval, military or air force members of the Councils. It is true that these members are normally too old to want to change; frequently they are in the last lap of their service, and so are actually disposed against change; nevertheless the chief blame should not be laid on their doorsteps. Where, then, should it be laid? On the shoulders of the Secretaries of State for War,

PRESENT ORGANISATION



PROPOSED ORGANISATION



Sea and Air. Not only should able men be selected for these vitally important appointments, but men *who will interest themselves* in the Services placed under their control.

In this respect the War Office has proved the worst offender; for time and again has a politician been placed in charge of it with the sole idea of providing him with a seat in the Cabinet; that is to keep him in office because he may prove useful to the Government in any capacity except that of national defence. As long as these dead-heads are appointed reform must of necessity be slow, for milking cows in Canada and heading economic committees at international conferences have nothing whatever to do with military control. These appointments must be whole-time ones, and their occupants must fill them in a whole-hearted way, and if they do not do so then they are not loyal to the country which has placed them in power.

Looking back on the whole organisation proposed, we arrive at the following picture:—

1. The Imperial Council views the Empire as a whole and its relationship to the world; collects all possible information, works out a policy and submits it as advice to the Home and Dominion Governments.
2. The various Governments reject, or accept, or amend this policy, so far as it concerns them individually, and pass it in bulk to their various Ministries for action.

3. The Ministries of National Defence work out a defence plan based on this policy and forward this plan to the three Services for action.
4. The three Service Ministries work out the detail of those sections of the plan which refer to their respective Services, and through their General Staffs issue instructions and orders to the Staff and the Commands.

Having thus obtained from a few guiding principles and a little history a picture of reform, I will now attempt to convert my diagram into a living picture by examining its work during peace and war.

26. *The Peace Duties of the New Organisation.*

In March, 1922, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson said: "The word co-operation translated into action was the way to lose war . . . the difference between co-operation and command was the difference between the losing and the winning of the war. Why, then, go back to co-operation?" These are words of wisdom, because, accepting human nature as it is, true co-operation is impossible without command, for without it it becomes compromise.

Command is the unifier of action, and action to be economical demands a definite objective. To the free nations of the Empire this objective

is the honourable and prosperous survival of the Empire, and from the military standpoint it is the maintenance of its policy, internal and external, against war, civil or foreign. To secure the Empire against war the causes of war must be studied; this is the first duty of the Imperial Council. These causes are in nature very largely political and economic. Once these causes have been diagnosed, the Council must examine the various scales of attack, and then the nature of modern warfare and its probable developments in the future. They must carefully weigh the words of Marshal Foch: "The military mind always imagines that the next war will be on the same lines as the last war. That has never been the case and never will be." Then they must consider the economic, political, naval, military and air force requirements for each scale, and outline a general imperial and foreign policy for the Empire, and suggest to the various Cabinets a division of the work required, so that they may enforce this policy unitedly.

The next step is for each Cabinet to consider the policy and place it in outline before the representatives of the nation, and when once it has been accepted by Parliament to forward it to the various Ministries for action and costing.

On receipt of the policy the Ministry of National Defence should examine each scale of attack in turn, and looking upon the three Services as three different sets of defence tools, it should decide how many of each type are

required for each scale, and finally what proportion of each type may be accepted as a guarantor of security. It should then examine the economic resources of the country. Does civil aviation enable an extensive Air Force to be maintained or expanded in war? If the Army is to be mechanised and moved by cross-country machines, can this economically be accomplished before a civil industry for roadless vehicles has been established? Such are some of the questions this Ministry must consider. Every new invention must be evalued from the point of view of its possible use in war. It is only thus that true progress can be maintained.

Having once "fixed" the economic side of security, the policy will have taken a material but not a final form, for the moral factors must now be equated. Thus, it is worse than useless to base a policy on conscription if the nation will not tolerate this form of service; or again, to establish recruitment on a voluntary system which leaves the soldier a derelict on the completion of his service is no less than a national crime.

Having arrived at a defence policy and having costed it, this policy should be resubmitted to the Government for approval, and if approved forwarded to the Ministry of National Defence in order that the Great General Staff may elaborate a series of grand strategical and grand tactical plans. These worked out, the establishments and distribution of the Services should then be

outlined and costed, and sums of money credited to each Service to meet their expense.

The scaffolding of planning I will now consider, for it is only through the harmony resulting from obedience to plan that co-operation becomes a living force and more than a "blessed" word.

The Plans Department of the Great General Staff should be organised according to geographical areas, and not according to Services or arms. Thus, there should be a European Sub-Section, an Indian Sub-Section, a Middle East Sub-Section, a Pacific Ocean Sub-Section, etc., etc., and ultimately a World War Sub-Section. The greater part of the Intelligence duties of the Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, Foreign Office, Dominion and Colonial Office and Board of Trade should be concentrated in the Intelligence Department, so that all available information may be placed before the Plans and other Departments of the Great General Staff.

In accordance with the organisation visualised, the Political Department should keep the Chiefs of the Great General Staff in constant touch with political changes, so that strategy and politics may be harmonised.

Under the Chiefs of the Great General Staff plans will be worked out on a *definite* policy by *one* Department, and not as now by three on vague surmises and panic demands for the most part originated by the Press.

When a combined plan is considered, the Chiefs of the Great General Staff should at once

determine on the predominant partner—whether it is the Navy, Army or Air Force, and the Minister of National Defence should, according to which Service is selected, appoint a Supreme Commander-in-Chief and a small Staff. These should attend the meetings of the Plans Department and follow the development of the plan, for as this Supreme Chief will in war be responsible for the carrying out of the plan, he, consequently, by right should have a hand in its making. Once the plan is agreed upon it should be tested out by Staff Exercises and War Games carried out whenever possible in the actual theatres of operations.

How different is this procedure from that adopted to-day is worth while examining.

In the past plans have been seldom prepared until an emergency has actually arisen, and if a combined operation is in question its appreciation is not made out by a supreme Commander-in-Chief but by the predominant partner. If the predominant partner is the Army, the War Office appreciation is sent to the Admiralty and Air Ministry for criticism. These offices then appreciate the problem from their own parochial points of view, and if these appreciations do not coincide with the military suggestions the items of disagreement are sent to the War Office. If the War Office will not give way, they are forwarded to the Government, which, having no ability to decide what is right or wrong, submit them to the Committee of Imperial Defence, which again, possessing no power of decision, either refers

them to the Chiefs of Staff who are actually responsible for them, or assembles a joint Services Committee. Once a compromise is arranged, the plan is made out and submitted to the Government for approval. When approved, the Commanders of the Services employed are appointed, and are given the three appreciations and the plan, and from these their Staffs, who probably have never met before, work out the requirements, and by the time they are completed normally all chance of surprise has vanished, *e.g.* the Gallipoli landing.

Under a Great General Staff there should be no ambiguity or waste of time. Projects will, in peace time, be minutely considered, and will not during war time emerge out of darkness like mushrooms in the night, and grow at the rate of Jack the Giant Killer's beanstalk, *e.g.* the Basra expedition. To-day we wait for war, and then combine our Staffs and hope for the best. What a Ministry of National Defence will do is to prepare for the worst. To-day the separated General Staffs have very little access to each other, but under the Chiefs of the Great General Staff there will be no need for access, for the Great General Staff will be a united body of men. To-day, for combined operations, we select Staff Officers on their equanimity of temperament, their lack of kick; under a Great General Staff they will be selected for one reason only—their ability to succeed.

The Service details of every plan must be left

to the General Staffs of the Services concerned, which in their turn must leave the administration of the plan to the departments of the Staff, and the minor detail to the subordinate commanders. The principle of distribution of work is a simple one: No individual should be concerned with detail which can be dealt with by a subordinate. Thus we see that in place of a Ministry of National Defence emasculating the Services it will invigorate them; it issues a definite plan, but it leaves to them the detail of the preparation and execution of the plan. Thus, through power of command based on sure knowledge does it give life to co-operation. Finally, the magic words of the new organisation suggested are: DECENTRALISATION OF WORK, and the magic force which renders these words potent: CENTRALISATION OF THOUGHT; the intelligence of *one* defence brain and not the equanimity of temperament of a war-like Cerberus, a monster so organised that each head in turn can be put to sleep by the poppy cakes of political controversy.

Having now dealt with the functions of the new organisation during peace time, I will briefly outline its duties during war.

27. *The War Duties of the New Organisation.*

When we look back on our pre-war machinery for co-ordinating national and imperial defence, though it may have prepared us in some small measure for a war, it most certainly did not

prepare the Empire for the war it had to face. As the Chinese saying is, "Rotten fish begins to stink at the head," so we find that the first factor of importance in our unpreparedness was the incapacity of the Cabinet to control defence, or even to appreciate what war entailed.

In February, 1912, Lord Haldane, Secretary of State for War, at the request of the Kaiser, visited Berlin. "The Kaiser demanded a free hand for European conquests, at the price of a friendly understanding with England. England was asked to pledge herself to absolute neutrality in the event of Germany being engaged in war."[1] In fact, Germany suggested that England should break her treaty obligations as she had done in 1864 under the influence of Mr. Gladstone.

This frank statement of Germany's intention must have completely opened the eyes of Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister; yet in place of taking the whole Empire into his confidence he did not divulge Germany's intention until some time after the Battle of the Marne! "Why," writes Colonel Vestal, "the Government withheld from the public the disclosures to Lord Haldane and countenanced the denunciations of Lord Roberts and took no decisive steps to place England in a better posture for defence is simply inexplicable. . . . England's only hope of peace was in making preparations sufficient to deter Germany from breaking the peace, and in

[1] *The Maintenance of Peace*, page 526.

convincing Germany that she was ready to use all her force in certain contingencies."[1]

The reason for this inertia was that the Cabinet was impotent, it could do nothing outside declaring its impotence to the nation, which would have meant loss of office. It possessed no true machinery for defensive work, and it despised its naval and military advisers. Its power passed into the hands of pacifists such as Sir Edward Grey, who, loathing war, imagined that it could be warded off by equanimity of discourse. As late as July 31st, 1914, President Poincaré declared to the British Ambassador in Paris that if England would support France war might be averted. "Sir Edward Grey believed that such a course would be regarded by the Germanic allies as a menace. The saddest thing in history is the fact that Sir Edward failed to perceive that the occasion demanded a menace."[2]

It is inconceivable that an Imperial Council and a Ministry of National Defence could have shown such incapacity. Though it is conceivable that an ambitious Ministry of National Defence might become imbued with militarist tendencies, it is inconceivable that an Imperial Council could become so tainted, for the common object of the Empire is not the aggrandisement of any one of its free nations, but the integrity of the whole. If Australia wishes to occupy Sumatra, Canada most certainly will not support her; if

[1] *The Maintenance of Peace*, page 529.

[2] *Ibid.*, page 537.

South Africa wishes to annex the Congo, this will not induce Australia to send a single soldier to her assistance; and if Great Britain wishes to reoccupy Constantinople, she will have to do so alone, because any direct benefit accruing will be hers and hers alone. We thus see that the Imperial Council is essentially an instrument of peace, and a check on the various Ministries of National Defence, which are instruments for war.

It is inconceivable, had we possessed a Ministry of National Defence with a competent Great General Staff, that our naval tactics of 1914 would have consisted of "certain quadrille movements," that an infantry division would have possessed only twenty-four machine guns, or that our flying men would have been armed with revolvers. It is inconceivable that such a fiasco could have taken place as the Agadir combined plan of 1911. It was kept a great secret, then "the critical hour came . . . the secret safe was opened and was found to contain a military campaign of which the General Staff had never heard. According to common report it included a landing on the Frisian Islands."[1]

During the World War, for over three and a half years we attempted to co-operate not only with our Allies but within our own Services, and we nearly lost the war. The three Services were like the three horses of a Roman chariot, but possessing no Great General Staff there was no

[1] Captain A. C. Dewar, R.N., "The Reorganisation of the Naval Staff," *Quarterly Review*, January, 1921.

charioteer to hold the reins and compel the horses to pull together. In the chariot sat, stood, or squatted the War Cabinet; none knew how to drive, and all tried to drive at once, in turn, or in different directions. Such equine, or rather asinine, acrobatics would be impossible under a Ministry of National Defence, because there would be, as Sir William Robertson wrote to Lord Kitchener in 1915, "a supreme directing authority" possessing power "to formulate policy, decide on the theatres in which military operations are to be conducted, and determine the relative importance of those theatres. . . . Its constitution" would "be such that it is able to come to quick decisions." And further still to co-ordinate the political and strategical aspects of the war.

Here, then, are the two great difficulties of modern warfare—decision and grand strategical co-ordination. Under the new organisation they are overcome: the Supreme Commander-in-Chief is relieved of all political wrangles, and is, consequently, free to concentrate the whole of his thoughts on war. The Chiefs of the Great General Staff protect him from political interference; in fact, while they beat back the onslaught of the Cabinet, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief is given liberty of action to defeat the enemy. This is no exaggeration, for when a nation goes to war it has to face two fronts, its own politicians and its adversary's fighting forces.

Under a Great General Staff there will be, when war breaks out, an objective, a policy, a

specially selected Commander-in-Chief, and a trained staff for each most probable operation. There will be no drawing up of hasty appreciations or interchange of orders between Staff Officers who scarcely know the organisation of each other's Services. Consequently, the Force will work as one force, not because sailors, soldiers and airmen have been made interchangeable, but because they will be directed by one Great General Staff which is one Staff and not three Staffs. Information will have been collected and kept up to date for each type of expedition likely to be undertaken. And if eventually none of these expeditions are undertaken, but one not thought of in peace time, the Great General Staff at least will have trained itself in the preparation of these combined projects, and when the flag falls will be in battle array and not in conference or committee order.

To attain this perfection of Staff work requires time wherein to evolve a breed of Staff Officers capable of viewing the three Services as the parts of one Service; but before I attempt to outline this evolution I intend to point out in general terms some of the main economies which can be effected by the creation of an Imperial Council and a Ministry of National Defence.

28. *Economies Effected by the New Organisation.*

At the present time so much is heard of the word "economy," and so frequently is this word

used in a meaningless sense, that I will first define it. Economy, when applied to expenditure, means a *proper* utilisation of money. . To reduce the amounts spent on the wrong articles is not to economise but merely to continue to waste on a lower scale ; to reduce expenditure on the right ones may, in certain circumstances, lead to uneconomical returns.

The existing machinery to guarantee economy in the expenditure of money voted for the Services is so inefficient that in 1920 the Government, goaded into action by the daily Press, appointed a Committee, under Sir Eric Geddes, to suggest means of reducing the national expenditure. The establishment of this Committee proved beyond a shadow of doubt the total incapacity of the Government, or of the Treasury, to prevent waste. The Geddes Committee set to work and carried out a certain amount of corn-paring ; it reduced amounts, but it did not attempt to restrict the origins of waste. The feet of the Services, once the war-corns were removed, were pushed back again into the old Treasury shoes, the misfit of which had caused these excrescences to grow, and will cause them to grow again.

Such action as this, the periodical corn-paring of the Services, may save money ; but it has nothing whatever to do with economy, which, as I have defined, is the *proper* utilisation of money. To-day money, in place of being well spent, is being squandered, and will continue to

be squandered until an organisation has been created to whose advantage it is to spend money economically. Under a Ministry of National Defence economy could be effected under the following headings :—

1. Direct saving through the establishment of one common policy.
2. Direct saving through amalgamation of certain establishments.
3. Direct saving through the weeding out of obsolete items.
4. Indirect saving through priority of expenditure on essentials.

The following are a few examples of these economies :—

1. A common defence policy is the foundation of all true economy, because the three Services will be organised to plan, and when changes in their organisation become necessary these will be effected to plan and not met by cheese-paring.
2. The Intelligence Department of the Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry and possibly also of the Foreign Office, Dominions and Colonial Office and Board of Trade, could be enormously reduced, the bulk of their work being taken over by the Intelligence Department of the Ministry of National Defence. The

Medical Services could be amalgamated as well as certain supply Services and Schools of Instruction.

3. Such exorbitantly expensive establishments as the Enfield Small Arms Factory and the Woolwich Arsenal could be closed, and the work put out to civil contract.

4. On account of our present lack of policy, no one to-day can decide on what equipment, arms, etc., are most required. Do we want more tanks or more infantry, more bombing machines or more fighting machines, more capital ships or more submarines? Nobody can answer these questions decisively, and until they are answered millions will certainly be squandered.

Such are a few examples, and a very few, of the economies which might be effected by a Ministry of National Defence. Should, I will suppose, the cost of the Defence Forces be £100,000,000 yearly, and the Government find that the nation cannot afford more than £80,000,000, then, in place of assembling a Committee of blind axe-men which cannot do otherwise than suggest reductions of individual Services without reference to the inter-related defensive values of the Services, the Government will say to the Minister of National Defence: Next year you will receive £80,000,000, and not

£100,000,000. Outline an organisation which will meet this reduction and place before the Cabinet the probable loss of defensive power resulting. Thus, when bulk reductions are necessary they will be carried out according to policy and not solely with reference to the clamours of the public Press ; further, they will be carried out according to a plan in which the Services are considered not only in relation to each other but as one Service.

Finally, the greatest economy will be that, because of the Imperial Council and the various Ministries of National Defence, the Empire will be prepared for war. It will possess a defensive organisation which will ward off war, and, when this is no longer possible, an organisation which will shorten the duration of war by being fully prepared to meet it.

Our existing Cabinet system of war control, our Committee of Imperial Defence, and our three separate Services each controlled by a Hydra-headed Council did not stave off war in 1914. Possibly no organisation could have, nevertheless these disjointed organisations could not bring the war to an end under four years, a war which cost Great Britain directly 1,000,000 men killed, 2,000,000 men maimed, 8,500,000 tons of shipping sunk, an immense expenditure on pensions, and left her in debt to the tune of £8,000,000,000. Surely we can create a defence organisation which will prove less expensive when the next great war is declared. Such an

organisation I have attempted to outline. I will now show how it can be developed.

29. *Evolution of the New Organisation.*

A new organisation, before it can be born, requires a period of gestation followed after birth by a period of careful nursing. It was for this reason, once it had become apparent, during the first decade of the nineteenth century, that European thought was concentrating on war, that it was all but impossible for the British Empire to establish a new order of imperial defence; for lacking the ability of some supreme genius, a Gustavus, a Chatham or a Napoleon, the danger of being caught nursing the baby was too great to be countenanced. I believe that if an honest and fearless attempt is made to carry out the reforms outlined in this book a period of about ten years will be required before the new organisation can become efficient. The steps to be taken in its institution, I am of opinion, should be as follows:—

1. An Imperial Committee should be assembled to consider the true meaning of Empire — morally, economically, politically and defensively. Under this Committee should be established four sub-committees to examine these four groups of subjects, the Committee itself elaborating a policy based on the work of these sub-committees.

2. This policy should be forwarded to each Imperial Government for consideration and criticism, and the amended policies should be sent back to the Imperial Committee in order that adjustments may be made and a considered agenda prepared.
3. Once this agenda is ready for issue, an Imperial Conference of the heads of the Imperial Governments should be assembled and the agenda discussed in detail and a final policy drawn up.
4. This final policy should be submitted to each Government for ratification.

As all these matters will require several years' work and discussion, meanwhile other steps should be taken to prepare the way. First, a standing secretariat to the Imperial Conference should be created; secondly, the Dominion High Commissioners should be converted into Imperial Ambassadors with full diplomatic powers; thirdly, a Council of Imperial Ambassadors assisted by the above secretariat should be formed; and when this Council has found its feet, fourthly, it should be converted into the Imperial Council suggested. Once this Council is established it does not necessarily follow that the Imperial Conferences should cease to be held. In my opinion they should continue, if only to maintain personal touch between the political heads of the various Governments.

Turning now to the evolution of a Ministry of National Defence, we find that the first step towards its establishment was taken in 1923, when the recommendation of the Salisbury Committee to replace the Overseas Defence Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence by the Sub-Committee of the Chiefs of Staff was accepted by the Government. The second step was taken in the spring of 1926, when it was decided to establish an Imperial Defence College. Now that a number of officers has been trained at this College, the next step should be to select the pick of these and form them into a secretariat under the three Chiefs of Staff. Though the members of this secretariat may on occasion be inclined to favour the Service to which they belong, their joint training at the Imperial Defence College should normally result in unanimity of opinion. As they will be in a position to devote the whole of their time to the study of grand strategy, and as their Chiefs will have to devote most of their time, as they now do, to their individual Services, unless they are to become mere ciphers, the next step is to divorce them from their Services and constitute them into the embryo of a Great General Staff. Freed from departmental duties, they will then be able to devote the whole of their time to strategical study, and will be directly responsible to the Cabinet as a whole, and not as before to the Cabinet and to a Secretary of State as well. Further, their advice will be much more decisive,

because their whole attention will be concentrated on one object—the strategical co-ordination of the three Services as one Fighting Force. Many of their suggestions will undoubtedly be of a radical nature, involving increase or decrease in the strengths of the Services, and will consequently affect the yearly estimates. This difficulty will, I think, lead to the final step, namely the three Chiefs will be placed under a single Minister of Defence so that the Cabinet may rely on one of its members devoting the whole of his time to the examination and proposals of the Great General Staff. When this takes place the Committee of Imperial Defence can either be abolished or kept on as a War Cabinet in Commission.

EPILOGUE

Is the Empire worth saving? Is it worthy of a resurrection, of a transfiguration into something nobler than it has ever been before? Or like so many empires which have preceded it, must it sink into the dust of history with Babylon, Rome and Spain? These are portentous questions, and the object of this book has throughout been to point a way towards the answering of them.

Should the reader wish to see the Empire founder, then his critical task is an easy one; for he can destroy my arguments, one by one, by spraying them with the corrosive acid of "freedom," of freedom run mad. This is the weapon of the anarchist, not of the philosophic anarchist, who believes that the best of all social orders is one which requires the fewest restrictive laws, but of his lower and Satanic brother, who seeks in the downfall of authority that liberty which will enable him like a beast to prey upon others.

Should, however, the reader agree with me that the Empire is worth the saving, then I must ask of him creative criticism, and he must find "a better hole" than mine in which to secure the Empire against the shot and shell of disintegration.

Before he launches his attack, and without attacking my theories or anybody else's the line of greatest efficiency will not be discovered, I would ask him carefully to weigh the ideas set forth in this Epilogue.

To-day the prophets are shouting from the house-tops that civilisation is crashing, and that another war will utterly destroy it. Dire words of warning, and yet in themselves they leave us where we are. So it happens that in the wake of the prophets come the quack doctors, the cranks and the crooks, the internationalists, the humanitarians and the conference men, now a caste, with their disarmament balsams, their League of Nations cure-alls, their showmanship and their chatter. Yet the path, narrow though it may be, is straight as theirs is crooked. It is this: Let us be true to ourselves, let us have faith in ourselves.

Has not the British Empire been for over a hundred and fifty years the pivot of what we call Western civilisation! And is not the present chaos due in the larger part to the fact that this pivot has become utterly unstable, not because it has been pushed this way or that by outward forces, but because of a lack of inward faith which has de-spiritualised its solidity?

Let us ask ourselves these questions before we condemn this assertion as exaggerated: Was not it we who created the industrial age in which the world now lives? Was not it we who rebuilt Europe after the Napoleonic Wars and taught

the nations how to create a new civilisation out of coal and steam ? Was not it our philosophies over all other philosophies which begot the French Revolution, and which by liberating the nations from strangling traditions rendered the whole civilised world of that day susceptible to the Anglo-Saxon ideal ? Also, was it not our expansion during the last century which gave an all but absolute peace and a higher prosperity than ever dreamed of before to a quarter of the globe ?

What were the hinges of this peace, this "Pax Britannica," a peace unequalled in any period of history since the days of Augustus ? They were British freedom and British sea-power ; freedom under the authority of a resilient law and order in which the individual was the keystone in the arch of the State, a power to brook no outward interference. Did not these two forces, complementary, for one was moral whilst the other was physical, guarantee not only our imperial security but the security of the world ? And was not it because, in 1914, this security was threatened by German autocracy and German sea-power that we came into the war ? And was not it our Navy which more than any other factor secured the German defeat ?

What do we see after this war is over ? Freedom goes mad, and in this madness the one instrument, our fleet, which had secured peace before the war and had beaten back German autocracy, was torn to pieces and thrown like

offal to the peace-mongers—the quacks, cranks and crooks of a demented world. Fear of the German Army was gone, and the freedom ideal, drunken on its own self-sufficiency, in its turn intoxicated the European nations, and turning it into a god, they entrenched it behind tariff walls and then discovered that their god was not freedom but fear. Fear of the German Navy was gone, so the Dominions of the British Empire held high carnival; their servitude was ended, and in their jubilation they began to rock and sway the edifice of Empire, and as its walls would not fall they attacked its foundations, autonomy, the self-determination of Lenin and Wilson, being dug under it—a political dynamite.

Thus it came about that madness smote the nations like a leprosy; a grey dawn broke upon humanity, a dawn blurred with miasmic mists out of which the maniacs proclaimed that they would fashion a new world, a world safe for democracy. And now that they have in part fashioned it they are terrified that civilisation will be blown away; for, like witches, having invoked the storm they cannot allay it.

Whilst Europe sank into the cauldron of conflicting antagonisms and Asia was swept by anarchy, one nation alone stood stable and aloof, an emblem of power solidified. This was the first British Empire, now the United States of America. She was cast in gold; she had no obligations — she was free. She begat upon Europe the bastard of the League of Nations, a

pink Jew-Bolshevik baby, and disowning it, she left Europe to nurse this incubus. Then she talked mightily of the freedom of the seas, proclaimed the magnificence of her own neutrality, of her right to do as she would. Thus, a new sabre-rattling, a first cousin to Germany's "place in the sun" and of her "mailed fist" began. In 1914 we had met these threats as we were accustomed to meet them; in 1922 we knuckled under and slank into the shadows. And why? Because the problems, big though they were, looked gigantic to our Lilliputian statesmen. Then the Empire began to rock and sway, for its naval hinge had been weakened.

Stuffed with gold, crazy doctrines and dignity, the United States thought she could dictate terms to her old mother—Europe; but she overlooked one small item. Rich though she was, and poor though her parent was, much of their united fortunes were invested in the same business—world interdependence, and as this business was bankrupt, American gold was of little more value than European bank-notes, for neither represented trade. All nations in some way or another were mysteriously dependent one upon the other, in fact no single nation was free. All belonged to some strange and invisible government, the heads of which ruled all alike and with an iron rod. If you obeyed their laws you prospered, if you disobeyed them you were beaten into a financial jelly.

This lack of freedom, this absolute despot up

against which each nation bumped in turn, appeared so appalling that the only thing the nations could do was to blindfold themselves against its terror; so they all became hypocrites. Wars were not wars if they were not declared; the world was not interdependent if you had all the gold; pacts were invented to obscure facts, and a new diplomacy was introduced based on face-saving formulæ. Marking time was to take the place of advancing, and obscuring truth was considered the height of statesmanship. The film system was introduced into politics; statesmen flew hither and thither like Valkyres between pasteboard scenery; political edifices looked substantial, but like the imposing halls and castles of the Movies, they were but shadow-deep. Everything solid was made hollow, and when hollowness became too transparent, the universal panacea was solemnly to outlaw war.

Behind this scantling of hypocrisy each nation strives fearfully after the little things — its immaculate self, its six-inch guns, its gold standard, or paper standard, in one word its shadow existence. Nevertheless, each is fearful of revolution or war, and would surrender anything but its dignity for a little reason. Thus the game goes on, for until dignity is replaced by humility, that is by a willingness for introspection, a sinking into the heart of things, the rout must continue until, like the Gadarene swine, Western Civilisation tips over the abyss. And what then?

Self-determination — freedom absolute to cut each other's throats.

Yet out of this abyss towards which we are fast galloping strange forms are emerging, casting still stranger shadows on the dust which we make. They startle us, these Mussolinis, these Hitlers and these Lenins. We proclaim them foul; perhaps, less than a generation hence we shall call them divine, for to-day we are so blinded by self-conceit that we can see nothing clearly. They are the spirits of a trampled world, the world of our time-marking; they are powerful emanations possessed both by good and evil, consequently they are intensely human.

What should we do, we as an Empire? That is the problem. Before we reform the world, or help to do so, let us help each other to put our own house in order. That is the answer. Leave Hitler and his like alone; he has his problems and we have ours. As the League of Nations cannot arrive at a unanimous decision on traffic signals, we may be certain that it will decide no greater problem; let us cut ourselves off from it, and suggest that it moves to Moscow—its spiritual home.

Twenty years ago one quarter of the world peacefully worked, played and slept under the Union Jack. To-day much of it has split off on its own, and much of it is in turmoil. We have two choices: We can either attempt to rebind the Dominions to us, not as slaves but as partners and for our mutual advantage and for

the advantage of the world, because all is interdependent; or we may let the Empire slip away, bit by bit, and throw our lot in with Europe to which we are bound geographically. It is a stupendous problem, a problem which no little men will ever solve. A great problem, and a problem which demands great men to tackle it, for they must be men who can shun pretence.

We cannot cut ourselves away from Europe, for the simple reason that we are not only part of Europe but still the centre of the present form of European civilisation, which in character is toned through and through by the industrialism we created. This does not mean that we should, therefore, muddle into those continental questions which do not concern us, such as disarmament and French security, and sacrifice the advantages of our insularity by guaranteeing other people's frontiers. Our centre of gravity lies in the oceans and not in the lands, consequently we should keep out of Europe's land quarrels.

Though we cannot under any circumstances cut ourselves away from Europe, the curious thing is that were we to cut ourselves away from the Dominions and the Empire, that is, should they just slip past us into a negative autonomy, we should by our loss of power and prestige be shifted from the European centre to the circumference, and find ourselves involved in every circumferential trouble. To avoid becoming a Portugal or a Holland, we must maintain our

central position, which conversely means that we must draw the Empire into closer union with us; and as I have shown, this is impossible without institutions and co-operative machinery. Our difficulties are, therefore, complex and all-embracing; we have got to establish a stable Europe and simultaneously a united Empire. If Canada cannot agree, and so far Canada, in spite of the loyalty of her people, has been the rock upon which every co-operative scheme has foundered, then we should say to her what we think, which is this: "We want a united family, that is the very best thing we can have; but if we cannot accomplish this, in no circumstances will we sacrifice our whole family for our eldest daughter." It is better to let her go and unite the rest, or even let some of the rest go and unite what remains over, than to live in a state of sham and of pretence. Even without the Dominions we are still a mighty power. We have already lost one empire, and if, because of our lack of outspokenness, half the second slips from our grasp, should we have the courage and the nous we can build up from the remaining half a third.

These may seem harsh words, but harsh words rightly spoken are infinitely to be preferred to snivelling hypocrisies about autonomy and freedom. Love, affection, or anyhow respect, is a necessary component of family life; but love alone will not cook the dinner; romanticism is not enough, for it must be supported by

practicality. We want a united Empire, because we also want a strong and stable Europe ; because a stable Europe is the true centre of the world and a united Empire, curious as it may seem, is the centre of Europe, the spring which can balance its discordant parts.

Our first and in fact our most formidable problem is to rid ourselves of hypocrisy, the dry rot of our bourgeois culture ; for truth alone can make us and the world free, giving to us and to the world the only freedom worth having. Let us, therefore, take a bold lead and formulate a bold policy. In other words, let us say what we think and cease thinking about what we should say so as to avoid giving offence. Let us speak with that authority which truth endows every speaker with. The world will be shocked ? Yes, and for once in a while a rough house will be an admirable tonic. The nations will revolt ? No ! they will eat out of our hand, for he who speaks with authority commands attention, and attention is the first step towards a new international discipline.

Once we have reassumed our manhood we should turn to the Dominions and say: "Let us cease talking about this 'mystical sort of thing' we have called the Empire, and instead look upon it as 'a practical sort of thing.' Each of us is an independent nation, each can do what he likes, but unity is strength and unity demands duties as well as rights. Will you co-operate with us, which means will you agree that we

establish machinery which will enable us both to co-operate ? If you will, so much the better for us all ; if you will not, say so frankly and we shall then know where we stand. To go on living in this house of polite platitudes is unmanly, it is unworthy of us. We may be an Empire of shopkeepers, but to continue as an Empire of shopwalkers is the lowest form of degradation."

Let us next turn to Europe and say: "We have had enough of your foolery. For us this sham which you call international relations shall not continue, we are sick to death of your humbugging. We will promise no support in war, and we withdraw the guarantees we have given you, for we will not sacrifice the life of one of our soldiers, or sailors, or airmen because some ridiculous Pole has knifed some ridiculous German, or because you Frenchmen want the whole world to wheel you about in a bullet-proof perambulator. If you people cannot keep the peace the worse for you ; for should we be forced to enter the war we will strike at whoever we think is the culprit. Until you cease talking about war we will not co-operate with you, but instead we will co-operate within ourselves until you have regained a sense of proportion."

Can we do this ? Can we act as our ancestors so often acted ? I doubt it. Frankly I am pessimistic of the future, not because what I suggest is impossible, but because the statesmen who muddle our destiny are incapable. They

are old and out of date, they live in a past age and each crisis bewilders them. There is not a great man among them, not a man of faith, of courage and of will. They are afraid of the people, and what we call public opinion; consequently, they have no authority. Each crisis startles them, each lull is proclaimed the doorstep to the millennium. They argue and they talk; they split hairs and then stick them together again. They are half-measure men who live in a shadow-land of unreality—the Empire cannot be run by wind-bags and ghosts.

We must wake up to the realisation that this age in which we live is a new age and a real age, and very different from the age which preceded it. We want new men, and as the age is still young we want young men to direct and to lead us, men who are of the age and not behind it. We do not want greybeards or men of nineteenth-century experiences, but energetic and live thinkers and workers even if they are unexperienced, and it is for such men that I have written this book.

Finally, I would say this: The old Empire has gone, and to-day we are living among myths and ruins. We can build a new Empire if we have the will and the energy to do so. If we have not, then it is only right that the ruins should crumble into dust.

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