

recurrence of such deplorable enterprises as those of Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Papineau. The colonies, it was argued, would presently attain to their manifest destiny of independence, and float away from the insular parent plant on the milk and water sea of cosmopolitan love. The old conception of the Empire—predatory, fearless, slave-catching, tobacco-planting—gave place to the newer ideal of England as the mother of the nations, a sort of incubator for hatching out the bacteria of colonial liberty. This was the middle century. And in all this, of course, the defence problem went to sleep. There was no need to talk about it. The two-power standard was assured. The Royal Navy could easily undertake the task of carrying the Prince of Wales to New York, or of bombarding the mud forts of the Chinese at Taku, without sending a bill of costs to the colonies.

Then, gradually, the horizon changed. Universal peace, universal free trade, failed to appear. Cosmopolitanism went bankrupt. New, warlike states arose. Germany closed its heavy volumes of philosophy, worked off its superfluous flesh in a few preliminary enterprises, and then "unified" itself under the spiked helmet of the Hohenzollerns. Russia declared itself civilized and ready to fight. There ensued a scramble for the open places of the earth. Africa was torn asunder by the powers. The old plantation theory was back again, and at once the frantic navy building and the era of armed peace started in its course. This began, shall we say, about thirty years ago. Since then Europe is a soldiers' camp, its seaports are naval dockyards, and its commerce a mere tenant at will of the God of War.

With this situation came again the defence problem of the Empire. To let the colonies go, became unthinkable: for the colonies, equally unthinkable, to relinquish the protection of the British government. Imperialism sprang into life again: in part it was the old, crazy creed of conquest and slave-catching, and the aristocratic overlordship of alien peoples: in part, however, it appeared as the plain common-sense creed of union and common government, as rational as the case for the confederation of Canada.