

without delay, and leave the Colonies to determine, by negotiation among themselves, how far, and how soon, they will avail themselves of the power thus conferred on them.

"10. The Commission are disposed to regard it as part of the duty committed to them to prepare a bill for transmission to the Imperial Parliament of the nature which they have indicated, and to ascertain by communication with the leading public men in the other Colonies whether they are disposed to co-operate in securing the sanction of the Imperial Parliament for it. While all questions of Intercolonial relations must be reserved for a Colonial Conference, it seems plain that, unless those who make a proposal of this nature give it practical shape and take means to ascertain how far it will be acceptable, it may prove as barren of results as many proposals on the same subject which have preceded it. *They intend, therefore, to print such a bill with their second Report.*

"III.—THE NEUTRALITY OF THE COLONIES IN WAR.

"11. A cognate question has been brought under the consideration of the Commission, as belonging to its general object—the existing relation of the Colonies to each other and to the Mother Country.

"12. *The British Colonies from which Imperial troops have been wholly withdrawn present the unprecedented phenomenon of responsibility without either corresponding authority or adequate protection. They are as liable to all the hazards of war as the United Kingdom; but they can influence the commencement or continuance of war no more than they can control the movements of the solar system; and they have no certain assurance of that aid against an enemy upon which integral portions of the United Kingdom can confidently reckon. This is a relation so wanting in mutuality that it cannot safely be regarded as a lasting one, and it becomes necessary to consider how it may be so modified as to afford a greater security for permanence.*

"13. It has been proposed to establish a Council of the Empire, whose advice must be taken before war was declared. But this measure is so foreign to the genius and traditions of the British Constitution, and presupposes so large an abandonment of its functions by the House of Commons, that we dismiss it from consideration. There remains, however, we think, more than one method by which the anomaly of the present system may be cured.

"14. It is a maxim of international law, that a sovereign State cannot be involved in war without its own consent, and that while two or more