

## EDITOR'S PAGE

### LORD ROBERTS AND HOMELAND DEFENCE

Lord Roberts is one of the most picturesque personalities in the public life of the British Empire, and whatever the independent critics may think of his speeches on preparedness, it will probably be agreed by all that, if occasion arises, it is the duty of every man, without regard to creed or color, to be ready to take part in the defence of the country which is by birth or adoption his Homeland.

Though men are not in favor of war, though they may even believe in seeking to work for universal peace, constant adherence to such a course is not inconsistent with a recognition of the need, in the present state of the nations of the earth, for civilized peoples being prepared, not only to defend what they have as the heirs of the ages inherited, but, if need arises, to take the offensive to prevent anarchy and brutality from reigning in any portion of our common world-home.

Some measure of training in physical culture and marksmanship might be strongly advocated on other adequate grounds. In the course that promotes the sound mind in the sound body, regular physical exercise, especially in the teens and twenties, would go far to improve the stamina and general wellbeing of the race. But, looked at dispassionately, and without regard to party politics or anything other than national interests and conditions, can the impartial student of the British Empire's present-day position prevent a deepening conviction possessing him that the attitude of the veteran Field Marshall does not lack for much justification?

It may be that in building an ever-increasing navy, Germany has only the protection and extension of her extensive trade in view, together with the possible acquisition of other territory for colonizing purposes,—say, in South America;—but even if it be admitted that Germany need not be credited with any sinister intentions towards Great Britain, ought the British Empire to ignore the fact of Germany's relative strength on sea and land?

The last South African war led to a deplorable revelation of how officialdom may be misled, and how badly they may estimate the requirements of a situation. With a two-power standard navy Britain cannot be held to be any too well prepared for any combination of forces that might be assembled against her; and her standing army is but an insignificant quantity compared with the continental forces.

Why should not all young men in all ranks of society undergo some training that would at once be beneficial to them physically and the better equip them for joining the "volunteer" forces if ever the unhappy day dawn when the standing army of Britain had to be supplemented by a hastily-summoned volunteer force to oppose possible invaders?