

portion of that number of regular troops are necessary to guard against invasion, no force is available for garrisons of places on which the safety of our communications depends. The command of the sea is nothing more or less than the command of the Imperial roads, the securing of the first lines of colonial defences.

It is important to observe that there is no proportion between the force used in the interruption of sea communications, as compared with the amount of force required to secure them. To cripple the action of a single steamer we find it acknowledged, by one who ought to know best, that several cruisers would be required at certain points. A regular attack upon sea communications, therefore, involves the employment of an enormous force in their defence; and as the stations and positions are necessarily filled, so must bases of operation be at hand to supply the wants of that defending force.

The lines of colonial defences may be thus summarized:—

1. The defence of their communications, which involves fortifying the Imperial strategic points, and the existence of a purely naval and a purely military force; the one equal to the task of keeping open the roads between the points, the other sufficient to secure those points from capture in the necessary absence of the fleet.

2. The interior line of sea-defence, which must provide against the destruction, by bombardment from the sea, of naval resources at the strategic points in cases where that object cannot be secured by land batteries and military force. It also includes similar provision for the protection of colonial mercantile ports to prevent their commercial reduction by enormous requisitions.

3. The defence of the soil of all colonies and places not necessary to the Empire as military and strategic positions.

Having thus briefly viewed the nature of our requirements, it is desirable to draw some practical conclusions as to how they can best be met.

The communications of the Empire being the common property of all its component parts, each portion according to the use it makes of them, has a direct interest in their defence, and should contribute to that object.

The forces intended for the defence of the communications must be Imperial, and not colonial. They must be prepared to act at any point on the Imperial lines where they may happen to be required. Naval colonial volunteer forces which may be created under the Naval Defence Act of 1865 are only of value, and that to a very limited extent, to meet the necessities of the second or interior line of colonial defence.

The forces necessary for the defence of the Imperial communications should be under the control of one directing head.

If the colonies are really in earnest in matters relating to their defence, it is time they should combine to force on the attention of the Imperial Parliament the neglected state of the Imperial roads, and the necessity for devising adequate means for their security. They must, however, be prepared to bear their fair share of the burden.

With the creation of Imperial fortresses commanding the Imperial roads would grow up a feeling of common security. They would be links in the chain which binds together the military forces of our Empire; stepping stones by which those forces can cross to afford mutual assistance and support.

It would be easier in a given time to collect forces from all parts of the Empire at a given point now, than it was to concentrate the military forces in the United Kingdom on any particular place on the coast line sixty years ago. It is singular that when science has done, and is doing, so much to increase our power of concentration, Imperial policy should be undoing her work by persisting in the creation of local forces which it is impossible to move, and all this at a time when concentration is the great principle of attack, and the power of concentration is the great power of defence. Though by nature and by science we possess all the physical means necessary for the concentration of military forces, we have neglected to turn them to account, and further, by limiting the action of military

forces to the particular portions of the Empire where they are raised, we wilfully destroy the necessary power of resisting concentrated attack by a combination of Imperial resources; which is in these days the true source of strength.

It is only in maintaining the second line of colonial defences that local forces are of real value, but it is the duty of the Empire to see that they are provided with the means and weapons to enable them to act. For the first and third lines they are of no avail, so long as the necessary power of concentration at the weakest point is absent. It is military necessity, and not constitutional law, which determines where the greatest power of resistance is to be applied.

While we acknowledge and applaud the principle, that it is every man's duty to defend his home, it is to be regretted that our ideas of its practical application are lamentably indistinct. The mother country has put her own construction on the word "home," in applying the principle of calling into existence military forces which can only be used to put up her shop shutters and to bar her doors. She calls on her children to adopt her definition of its meaning and to follow her example, and some have done so. But who among the armies thus organized, for what she is pleased to call "home defence," can determine the exact distance from a man's home at which the obligation ends? Who can draw the magic circle which is to include the territorial area of his duty to die for his country? Home is something more than an abstract idea having reference only to locality; its foundations are laid in common interests, nor can miles of ocean sever the strong ties of affection and of sympathy. Hence it is that from whatever quarter of the Empire a cry for help comes—wherever the British flag waves over Englishmen struggling on their own ground for all they hold dear—it is there our home is in danger, there is the rallying point of forces created for its defence. While we boast of armed hosts here and in the colonies, whose proud motto is "home defence," they must "survey the Empire" to "behold our home."

(To be continued.)

#### Militia Items.

—The Inspector of Artillery has received a cable gram from England announcing the successful trial of the new Palliser 7 inch breech loading gun.

—General Luard, accompanied by Col. Van Straubenzee, D. A. G., inspected the 15th Battalion at Belleville on the 26th ultimo.

—The Major General Commanding inspected A. Battery, R. S. G., at Quebec on the 30th ultimo, and proceeded to Clifton, Ont. the following day.

The annual inspection of the Montreal Field Battery took place on the 21st August at the Exhibition Grounds. At half-past ten precisely Gen. Luard and staff arrived on the grounds and the inspection was proceeded with. Lieut.-Col. Irwin, Inspector of Artillery for the Province of Quebec, was the inspecting officer, and Lieut.-Colonels Fletcher and Amyrauld were the officers to call the roll, as it was a muster parade. After going through the different movements in an excellent manner, the battery was drawn up on the grounds and addressed by Lt.-Col. Irwin. He noticed, he said, a great improvement in the field movements, and he was gratified at the answers received to his questions about gun drill, etc., but on future occasions he would ask them many questions, and if they would study their manuals they would find no difficulty in answering. He expressed a wish to see all non-commissioned officers come to Quebec in winter for a two or three month's course in the school of instruction. They would then be able to properly instruct their men. He closed by expressing his pleasure to Col. Stevenson and the battery at the presence of General Luard.