

their irrational antipathies to Frenchmen they refused to listen to warnings of German designs and ignored the evidence of Teuton ambitions to occupy the seat of England at the banquet of international life. We paid heavy indemnity to Germany in respect of the *Bundesrath* and the *Herzog* during the Boer War, although both vessels were known to be full of contraband up to the hatches. Shouting the language of patriotism in the streets and on the platforms of political meetings, and singing patriotic songs in the music-halls, the public quietly acquiesced in the humiliation accomplished by Russia when she ordered H.M.S. *Iphigenia* out of Port Arthur as a policeman orders an organ-grinder to move on. The language of patriotism, like the language of religion, is sometimes a cloak to hardness of heart and contempt of the word and commandment that enjoins strenuous exertion and personal sacrifice. The lesson of the Boer War, bitter and humiliating as it was, awoke the patriotism only of a few, but their voices are those crying in the wilderness, and our War Office is as unready for war as when England was, in truth, an Island Power. From the time England became a Continental Power, with frontiers marching with those of Russia and of France, we have shirked the sacrifices necessary to enable us to discharge our Imperial trust. Japan notes the fact. The Prime Minister said at Berwick that upon the might of Britain the right of Britain depends. All the same, the security of the Indian frontier depends on a force which does not exist, and which we have taken no steps to provide.

Under these circumstances friendship with France, the ally of Russia, is regarded by the public as a piece of heaven-born statesmanship. Having fought with France twenty-four times and refusing to lay to heart the lessons she has learned in the school of bitter experience, we eagerly avail ourselves of M. Delcassé's consummate diplomatic skill in paving the way for the *entente*, and fold the France we had flouted ecstatically in our arms. The luncheon in Westminster Hall may have been a sign of good feeling, but effusiveness was not lacking.