

freedom they use in discussing us, it might well happen that what began in a little harmless inkslinging might end in a bloody war. It is therefore much safer for the Continental nationalist to discharge his patriotic venom upon the inhabitants of these islands. Besides being safer it is also more natural. We are Islanders. We are stranger, more foreign than other foreigners. Our law and system of government are alike different from those of the rest of Europe. It is true that many countries have imitated the form of our parliamentary institutions. But the fundamental doctrines of equality of all before the law and its supremacy are understood nowhere outside the British Empire and the United States. Lastly, we alone in Europe have adopted free trade and resisted compulsory military service, and foreign nationalists, belonging as they do to the capitalist and official classes, feel bitterly how much our example adds to their difficulty in imposing on the proletariat the burdens of the blood tax and Protection.

In addition to these considerations it is commonly thought that envy of our prosperity operates to our disadvantage. This feeling undoubtedly exists. But we incline to think that its importance has been exaggerated. There are many countries such as Russia, Austria, Spain and the smaller Powers of Europe who are not seriously our commercial or colonial rivals, and in those cases envy of the British Empire if it exists can scarcely be a very active emotion. Even in France envy of us is largely mitigated by contempt. The patriotic ideal of Frenchmen has always been that their country should be glorious rather than wealthy, and they have genuinely despised our trading success as fit only for a nation of shopkeepers. In Germany no doubt we are envied. There is in that country a movement for colonial and commercial expansion, and those who are affected by it see in our widespread trade and possessions the principal obstacle to its success. But it seems unlikely that the German people if left to themselves would be seriously moved by the extravagances of their colonial party. We are sometimes told by British publicists that the