

They do not, perhaps, except in the case of Australasia, make any direct contribution, but they have been piling up debts, for which they alone are responsible, for works and developments of Imperial, as well as of local utility. Their railways, telegraphs and harbours, subsidies for steam and cable communication, expenses for local defences, and Militia establishments, all come under this heading. In Canada, the construction of the Intercolonial and Canadian Pacific Railways, as already stated, entails an annual charge upon the country of over a million sterling. These facts should be borne in mind in considering the matter. I do not mean to say that the Colonies ought not to pay towards the cost of the Army and the Navy. No such proposal has yet been made to them; but I am sure that, if put forward, it will be taken into serious consideration. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that the proposition is only a part of a far larger subject, and really affects the solution of the whole problem of Imperial unity and representation. There seems no reason, however, why there should not be greater cohesion between the military forces in the Colonies and those at home. They certainly ought to form parts of the machinery on which the Empire could implicitly rely in times of trouble and difficulty.

As to the Navy, much more co-operation is also possible. Up to the present time, or, at any rate, until quite recently, the large seafaring populations in the United Kingdom and in the Colonies have not been utilized to any appreciable extent for the formation of a trained naval reserve. A beginning has been made in Newfoundland, and it may be extended. Speaking of my own country, no better material could be found than among the seventy thousand hardy sailors and fishermen who inhabit the long coast lines of the Dominion. We all know the part our fleet has played in the past, and the important factor it has proved in the building up of the Empire. It is regarded as our great protection and

safeguard now; but with the disappearance of the grand old wooden walls it is entirely dependent upon coal and strategic positions. And is it not the fact that the leading coal supplies of the world outside Europe and the United States are found in the Colonies? Without the advantages of these deposits, especially in times of war, the protection of British commerce, or what remained of it, would give rise to very serious problems, apart altogether from the absolute necessity of the harbours and docks the Colonies have provided.

That steps could, and perhaps should, be taken to bring the different parts of the Empire into closer touch with each other commercially I fully believe. Personally I do not think that an arrangement of the kind is either impossible or very difficult to accomplish. The time may not be yet, but I feel sure it will come, as foreshadowed by Mr. Chamberlain in his speech the other day at Birmingham, when Canada will trade with Australasia, with South Africa, and with the United Kingdom, on different terms than at present—when their commercial relations will be placed on a more friendly, or, shall I say, on a family footing. What the United Kingdom looks for is a predominance in the markets of the Empire. What the Colonies desire is the market of the mother country and of Greater Britain for their products, which they hope to see favourably regarded—all other things, such as price and quality, being equal. As to the form such an arrangement will take, it is not easy to forecast, but it is certain that we shall have to pay greater attention to the development of Imperial trade.

Such a policy cannot fail to be beneficial to the Empire, and I see no international reasons to militate against our regarding from a more favourable point of view our internal trade, as distinct from the external trade, or, let me say, our domestic trade as distinct from our foreign trade.

I must confess I do not like the word "Colonies," which I have used