

Russia, with the support of the war party in Germany, should decide that the line of least resistance is through Constantinople, the Persian Gulf, or Afghanistan, or all three, Britain will be on her mettle. According to the best military authorities about twelve years will be required from the time when Britain begins in earnest the work of reorganising her army. Five years have been lost, and if the indubitable strength of Russia should be organised by German brains, as the resources of China are evoked and arrayed by Japanese instructors, it might go hard with England but for the Japanese alliance. We cannot expect French or American troops to fight for the retention of India under the British flag. We do not possess the troops ourselves to withstand a combined German and Russian attack, or even an attack by Russia single-handed, and therefore our dependence upon Japan is complete—a sinister comment upon the Prime Minister's declaration as to the sufficiency of British might. Our treaty with Japan is dangerous, because it is an opiate that lulls to sleep a people that should be up and doing.

The Japanese Treaty, moreover, enables the Mikado to call upon the British fleet for use in the Far East—a departure from established practice without a parallel in history. The Japanese Treaty, while barring the way to an understanding with regenerated Russia, not only prevents the federation of the British Empire, but hastens the establishment of the Australian Republic under the suzerainty of the United States, which is the ideal of many Australian working men. For these reasons I hold that the Japanese Treaty of Alliance is an instrument showing, not wisdom but cunning; not strength but decadence; and that the appearance of Japanese troops in the Hooghly is more likely to break than consolidate the British Empire.

“COLONIENSIS.”