

writes a recent historian, "had to rely on the spontaneous loyalty of its subjects, a loyalty which waxed cold under the prolonged strain of war; and whenever its interests came into conflict with those of an individual state the latter was sure to prevail." The result was inevitable. In the day of stress it proved a failure. And yet that is precisely the condition of things we are asked to regard as the realized ideal for the British Empire!

At the recent conference in London, the Admiralty in the memorandum they submitted, stated that the maximum of power would be gained if all parts of the Empire contributed to the maintenance of the British navy. Since, however, not only strategical but also political and economic considerations had to be taken into account, it was suggested that if any Dominion government preferred a naval force able to "take its proper place in the organization of an imperial navy distributed strategically over the whole area of British interests," it should aim at forming a distinct "fleet-unit" as "an integral part" of the imperial force. Such a fleet-unit, in the opinion of the Admiralty, should consist *at least* of one Indomitable of the Dreadnought type, to be the first vessel to be built, 3 unarmed cruisers, 6 destroyers, and 3 submarines, with the necessary auxiliaries. The estimated cost of building and arming such a complete fleet-unit would be about £3,700,000, and the cost of maintenance, about £600,000 per annum. Along with the creation of the fleet provision would also be required for ship-building and repairing docks, training schools for officers and men, and the supply of stores of every kind.

The proposals of the government have now been laid before the country. I do not propose to discuss them in detail. There are, however, some broad, general principles