

concentration on the New World and aloofness from the Old World affected the spirit of our nation and the quality of the work we did. In the Modern Age we have never wished or attempted to conquer Europe, we have not wished to be supreme on the Continent, we have taken part in continental strife only to the extent that ourselves and our supremacy in the New World was at stake.

Oliver Cromwell might have been beguiled into taking up the sword of Gustavus Adolphus and leading the Protestant armies of Europe, rightly or wrongly he resisted the temptation, and instead we fell to quarrelling with the Dutch—our religious allies—over the prize of maritime supremacy; on the surface this looks like the policy of the backslider, but it is possible that fundamentally we were never more true to our mission. So, as a matter of fact, we addressed ourselves to a possible problem instead of an impossible one. It was necessary that the world should be opened up to the vital civilization of Europe, means of communication had to be established over all the seas radiating out from and returning to Europe; the streams of commerce with their collecting and distributing centres had to be organized, and derelict continents peopled with emigrants from the progressive nations—the primal command must be obeyed, 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth', and the human family thus extended must be kept in touch the one part with the other, or brought into touch where it had been for ages separated, so that in material, intellectual, and spiritual things there should be interchange and co-operation.

As the leading nations had not learnt to co-operate in equality and peace, it seemed necessary that the work should proceed under the supremacy of one, and it was