

Never in the world was any State quite like the British Empire. That a foggy island in the North Atlantic, where neither grapes nor olives will ripen, should have gained the control of nearly all the vacant places on earth with a cool climate, and also of three hundred and sixteen millions of people in India, is a miracle.

Britain holds the five points on the earth's surface which dominate the face of the waters. The Straits of Dover, of Gibraltar, of Babel-Mandeb, of Singapore, with Table Bay in South Africa—these are the nerve centres of World Power. The ownership of Jamaica and Trinidad insure the rights of Britain when the Panama Canal is cut. These advantages came to Britain, not from Government plans or forecast of statesmen, but from British seamen and explorers who listened to the call of the sea.

We do not know the name of the first man who hollowed out a log and set it afloat, any more than we know who lit the first fire, who made the first wheel, who invented bedsteads, or who ate the first oyster. But the man who first floated on the salt sea in a boat dug out of a tree trunk was the man who made the British Empire possible. Even to this day the dependence of Britain upon the sea is expressed in the Articles of War which contain