

naval resources at the strategic points in cases where that object can be secured by land batteries and military force. It also includes similar provision for the protection of Colonial mercantile ports to prevent their commercial reduction by enormous requisitions.

3. The defence of the soil of all Colonies and places not necessary to the Empire as military and strategic positions.

Having thus briefly viewed the nature of our requirements, it is desirable to draw some practical conclusions as to how they can best be met.

The communications of the Empire being the common property of all its component parts, each portion, according to the use it makes of them, has a direct interest in their defence, and should contribute to that object.

The forces intended for the defence of the communications must be Imperial and not Colonial. They must be prepared to act at any point on the Imperial lines where they may happen to be required. Naval Colonial forces created under the Naval Defence Act of 1865 are only of value, and that to a very limited extent, to meet the necessities of the second or interior line of Colonial defence.

The forces necessary for the defence of the Imperial communications should be under the control of one directing head. As military force is necessary to the support of naval power, and as in our case military force is in its turn dependent upon naval power, the distribution of the one must have reference to that of the other. If, therefore, the military force is under the control of one department, and the naval force under that of another, the defence of our communications is, to use a homely phrase, "between two stools." In vain might our "Admiralty" despatch fleets to distant seas, if the bases of their operation are not secured by the "War Office;" equally valueless would be the distribution of military force for the protection of those places by the War Office, if the Admiralty do not keep the communications between them open. Unless there be a war minister responsible for, and controlling the general