

for War ceased to be also Secretary for the Colonies, and their affairs passed into the hands of a separate officer of State. It is worthy of note that the requirements of a great war which threatened the Colonies rendered it necessary to transfer in 1794 their affairs from the Home Office to the War Department, while the necessities of a smaller war which—as Russia was then weak in the Pacific—did not threaten them, caused the care of the Colonies to be transferred to an office altogether separate. The next great war will find all matters relating to Colonial defence between three stools instead of two. Now, this may account for a good deal of that fog which envelops Imperial defence.

The War Office regards it as chiefly an Admiralty or Colonial Office question: the Admiralty views it as either a War Office or Colonial Office matter; and the Colonial Office, having neither fleets nor armies at its disposal, feels quite certain it only concerns the War Office and Admiralty. The easy way out of the difficulty is to leave each Colony to provide for its own defence in any way it thinks fit, and to trust "the rest" to "English pluck" and "English spirit." There is no Colonial branch of the Admiralty or War Office, there is no war branch of the Colonial Office, and therefore it is not surprising that every military and naval change has hitherto tended to distort the English vision from taking one wide view of the whole great question; nor should we wonder that Imperial defence has been split up into little bits and strewed about the world.

The people of the United Kingdom would, I believe, spend their last shilling, and fight to their last man, to preserve the Empire intact, and would prepare to do so, and to take their full share of Imperial duty in defence, if they only knew how, if they could only grapple with that "rest," which the Colonies look to the statesmen of England to do. Englishmen in the Colonies are not different from Englishmen at home, and an Imperial commission, such as I ventured to suggest ten years ago, and have humbly pleaded for many times since, would let in a flood of Imperial light upon the "parochial" English mind, and let the world know we meant to stick together in defending each other.

It is for Home and Colonial Legislatures, it is for England's sons all over the world to make their voices heard on this matter. We of this generation are the pioneers of the next. When all Europe is an armed camp, and when one single Power like Germany, which had but one corvette and two small gunboats in 1848, bids fair to be soon the third great naval power of the world, we cannot go unarmed. We push to the front Home and Colonial