

of military disintegration. Mr. Forster comforts them with the assurance that the British Government at home "is bound to protect them in war." But faith in the logic of these words is somewhat disturbed by the logic of these facts—that the British Government at home ties up its military forces and omits mentioning such places altogether in its great mobilisation scheme. This creates alarm, and then we quiet them by pointing to our fleet. We give all our Colonies to understand that the fleet will, without any army, make up for every deficiency in the matter of land defence here, there, and everywhere, all over the world, and they believe it. But they must remember we ourselves do not believe it. We have created a military immovable force 300,000 strong because our Channel fleet cannot be relied on to protect an assailable coast line from the Humber to Penzance, only 750 miles in length. How, then, are ships scattered over a world of water to be relied on single-handed to protect territories with thousands of miles of undefended shores? Further, our fleets cannot keep the sea without the support of an army distributed strategically over the face of the globe to secure their bases. Our existing arrangements lock up our military forces, and provide no garrisons for the Imperial strategic points. Our fleets cannot move far away, therefore, from those places when expeditionary forces are on the sea. They cannot leave their coals to be taken or burned, nor risk the capture of their stores and means of repair. The truth is, the principle which ties up our military forces in immovable detachments also will bind with strong chains of necessity our fleets to their own depôts. In adopting this principle of fragmentary defence, which deprives us of the power of concentrating naval power or military force, we are forgetting our past history, and doing our best to deprive all British territory and all British sea lines of inter-communication of efficient naval protection in war. Our military weakness is not so much a want of force as a self-imposed inability to apply it where it is wanted. This system was not devised by the British Government, though it sprung from its neglect. Englishmen at home armed themselves because the Governments had not provided for the defence of the United Kingdom; Englishmen abroad followed their example because the same Governments left them "naked to their enemies." Those abroad "will do yeomen's service on their own ground;" those at home will only resist invasion. Between them lie our Imperial water roads, which our fleets cannot protect unless the "strategic points" which command them are efficiently garrisoned in war. The armed Englishmen abroad think it is no affair of theirs, those at home think it is