

tenant of some one higher than he. In lieu of rent, the vassal or tenant usually gave military service: usually, for in a very small percentage of cases the rent was paid in another way.

Feudalism gave way, in the 16th century, to the great national monarchies. Compulsory military service, in a still another stage, accounts for the ascendancy, first, of Spain, then of France, then of Germany. Even in England, from the fyrd, or country, force of Alfred the Great, down to the modern press-gangs and modern militia, the idea of compulsory service of a sort was predominant. The thing has always existed.

Is not the fact that all nations adopted some kind of forced military service and its very rise a tacit admission of its advantage, a general evidence in favor of its necessity.

There might seem to be no advantage in conscription for Great Britain, secure, as she is, in her insular isolation. So far the British navy, manned by purely voluntary recruits, claims invincibility. But this quality has not undergone any recent test. The battle of Navarino, in 1827, was the latest in which an English fleet was engaged. The so-called invincibility will not bear close scrutiny. In 1798 General Humbert, with 1,000 men, raided Ireland, and successfully evaded the British fleet. In 1796 a French fleet successfully harried Boutry Bay. Later in the Napoleonic wars, not only did Napoleon actually evade Nelson, and land in Italy, but, according to the latest documents, issued by Capt. Rose, Napoleon seemed to see clearly the feasibility of descending upon England. Examined under existing conditions, the boasted invincibility of British force will be seen to dwindle to a shadow.

What, to-day, is England's task? Not only has she to defend her own shores, but she also has to guard an empire with a population of 400,000,000, and frontiers surpassing those of any other power. Are the means at her disposal commensurate for the purpose? What are the solid facts? The Boer war, though an experiment, was an experiment that affords information as startling as it is useful. It was found that in the regular army, and in the reserves, there were not sufficient trained men, and that new forces of raw recruits had to be hastily improvised, with much useless waste of blood and money. If in past years the regular forces have proved inefficient, how inefficient must be the volunteers? Little wonder that during the Crimean war Lord Raglan complained of the volunteer recruits sent to him, that they died like flees, so unfit and unformed were they. Sir John Burgoyne, speaking of similar recruits,