

Also, the growing Imperial sentiment will operate in the same direction. During recent years—dating from the South African War, and then accentuated by the victory of the Japanese over the Russians—there has been a growing recognition of the fact that Australia cannot stand in "splendid isolation," that her life depends on the maintenance of the British Empire. Not so long ago this idea was absent from the public mind—even now it is possible to touch a stratum of opinion that Australia should keep outside the range of international complications.

To the mass of people, Europe presents a picture of an armed camp—and that makes them shudder. The conquest of Australia was a peaceful annexation. The Australians have never had to fight for their national existence, and they have never had the terrors of war on their borders. In the main they have been a prosperous people, living in a part of the world far removed from the storm centres of racial difference. Things have gone so easily with them that the prospect of invasion never entered their minds; whilst to a considerable section of the people the money paid for the upkeep of the British Navy was just so much cash thrown into the sea.

I am not going to say I did not come across people who jibbed at the idea of Australia being under Britain—the word "Colony" is offensive to them—and who talked about independence. I came across men of influential position who argued that as the British investor has so much money locked