

some brilliant exceptions, vehemently opposed to the war with France, and had many of them come, by the strange perversity of partizanship, to regard Napoleon—who detested parliamentary government, and who had reduced the greater number of European States to something like vassals of his Empire—as the representative of freedom. The economic conditions of the time were trying. The poor suffered greatly from taxation. The working of the Poor Law, which warded off immediate discontent as it banished the fear of starvation, was undermining the independence of the country labourer. The poorer classes in London, even in 1803, longed for peace, applauded the French minister who came to negotiate the Treaty of Amiens, and dragged his carriage in triumph to his house. England stood all but alone; no colony aided her with troops or money; the United States were unfriendly; Russia was the ally of France. Large portions of Europe formed technically part of the French Empire, so that it was possible to go from Paris to Hamburg without leaving the dominions subject to Napoleon. Germany, Switzerland, almost every continental State, was in truth subject to his will; fortune favoured him. Wherever he fought on land he gained new victories. The belief prevailed in England that, except on the sea, he was invincible. The maintenance of hope was not only a paramount duty, but a duty hard to perform.

Contrast the state of things in 1914. The whole of the United Kingdom is unanimous in support of the war. England is full of resources. The population of the United Kingdom has risen to more than 45,000,000. The United Kingdom has been transformed into the British Empire. We are waging our first great Imperial war. The most powerful of the British dominions,