

which not a drop of blood is shed in anger, but in which, however, the last drop is extracted from the living body by the lancets of the European statesmen. There are features in this general preparation for war which must cause special anxiety to the friends of Great Britain and the British Empire, but I will not dwell upon these. I will only ask you who have come to this country to compare carefully the armaments of Europe with our preparations to meet them, and give your impressions to the Empire in return. I myself feel confident in the resolution and power of this country to meet any reasonable conjunction of forces. But when I see this bursting out of navies everywhere, when I see one country alone asking for 25 millions of extra taxation for warlike preparation, when I see the absolutely unprecedented sacrifices which are asked from us on the same ground, I do begin to feel uneasy at the outcome of it all and wonder where it will stop, or if it is nearly going to bring back Europe into a state of barbarism, or whether it will cause a catastrophe in which the working men of the world will say, "We will have no more of this madness, this foolery which is grinding us to powder."

The Message.

We can and will build Dreadnoughts — or whatever the newest type of ship may be—as long as we have a shilling to spend on them or a man to put into them. All that we can and will do; but I am not sure that even that will be enough, and I think it may be your duty to take back to your young dominions across the seas this message and this impression—that some personal duty and responsibility for national defence rests on every man and citizen. Yes, take that message back with you.

Tell your people—if they can believe it—the deplorable way in which Europe is lapsing into militarism and the pressure which is put upon this little island to defend its liberties—and yours. But take this message also back with you—that the old country is right at heart, that there is no failing or weakness in heart, that she rejoices in renewing her youth in her giant dominions beyond the seas. For her own salvation she must look to you.

Well, I would ask your pardon for having detained you so long. I know that, whatever may be the outcome of this visit, you will return strengthened to your high functions as the guides of your communities in matters of information. And you will return convinced of the necessity of the mission of that communion of commonwealths which constitutes the British Empire. Having come, as I hope, believers in that faith, you will return to your homes missionaries of Empire—missionaries of the most extensive and the most unselfish Empire which is known to history.

I will end as I began. After all I might speak to you for hours, and I could only sum up what I have to say in the two simple words with which I began, "Welcome home"—welcome home to the home of your language, your liberties, and your race, welcome home to the source of your parliaments, of your free institutions, and of this immeasurable Empire, welcome home to the supreme head of all these dominions, your Sovereign and mine, who is not merely the King of Great Britain but the King of hearts; welcome home to this and to anything besides that we in all brotherhood and affection can offer you. Welcome home! I beg to propose the health of our guests, coupled with the name of Sir Hugh Graham.