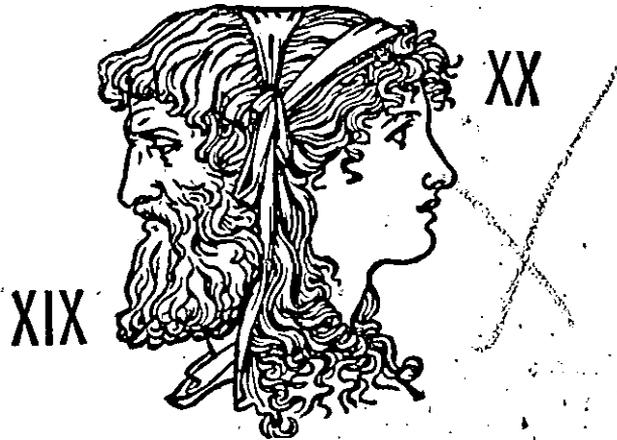


THE
NINETEENTH
CENTURY
AND AFTER



[o. CCCLXVII—SEPTEMBER 1907.]

THE ANTI-BRITISH POLICY OF GERMANY

(A REJOINDER TO LORD EVERSLEY)

It is on the British Navy, under the good Providence of God, the wealth, safety, and strength of the Kingdom chiefly depend.—ARTICLES OF WAR.

Other nations, which were formerly great and powerful at sea, have, by negligence and mismanagement, lost their trade and seen their maritime strength entirely ruined. Therefore we do in the most earnest manner beseech your Majesty that the sea affairs may be always your first and most peculiar care.—ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS TO QUEEN ANNE, 1708.

THE August issue of this Review contained a paper by Lord Eversley entitled 'Teutophobia.' In that paper he attempted to show that Germany had no designs upon Great Britain, that, as the completion of the Kiel Canal would take eight years, Germany was 'under security for good behaviour for at least eight years to come,' and that, therefore, Great Britain could, and ought to, make further economies on her navy and restrict the output of new warships. Lord Eversley's paper was noteworthy for three reasons: Firstly, because it contained a detailed and authoritative statement of the Philo-German view of Germany's foreign policy and of the probable development of Anglo-German

relations; secondly, because it contained a detailed and authoritative statement as to the naval policy which, according to the Philo-German section of the ruling party, Great Britain ought to pursue; thirdly, because it was received with such marked applause by the leading Liberal statesmen and the whole Liberal press that it has been believed, and apparently not without justification, that it was inspired by the Government.

Unfortunately Lord Eversley shows in his paper an insufficient acquaintance not only with German affairs and with recent history, but, also with the realities of foreign and of naval policy. As the accuracy of his statements must be questioned, the soundness of his conclusions, which are based on these statements, must necessarily be questioned too, and his conclusions are all the more dangerous as they have been widely quoted and as, rightly or wrongly, they are generally believed to reflect the views of the present Government. Therefore it seems necessary firstly to point out some of the numerous misstatements and fallacies contained in Lord Eversley's paper, then to give a survey of Germany's policy based on the most reliable information obtainable, and lastly to enquire into the naval policy which, in view of the position of the British Empire and of Germany's policy, this country ought to pursue.

Various writers, among others Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, have lately pointed out that Germany possesses an insufficient number of commercial harbours and that she ought therefore, logically, to strive to secure the control over Rotterdam and Antwerp which handle the larger part of Germany's foreign trade. Others have shown that Germany may wish in some way or other to secure the control over the narrow entrances to the Baltic which at present are in Danish hands, in order to strengthen her position in that sea where Kiel, her chief naval harbour, lies and where, at present, she is most susceptible to a naval attack. Lord Eversley wishes to prove that Germany has no ambitions either upon Holland or upon Denmark, and he 'proves' this by some extraordinary arguments. For instance, he dismisses the views of Sir Rowland Blennerhassett by saying on page 187-188 'His arguments are not founded on the statements of responsible Ministers of Germany.' Apparently Lord Eversley will believe that Germany wishes to incorporate Holland only when Germany's responsible Ministers make a solemn official declaration to that effect. However, in Germany as in other countries the management of foreign affairs is not left to brainless simpletons who talk of their most secret plans, but to shrewd diplomats. If a German Chancellor, a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or an Ambassador should fulfil Lord Eversley's expectations and state on his own authority that Germany wishes to incorporate Holland, he would probably find himself in a lunatic asylum within twenty-four hours. If such a statement should be made by authority of the Emperor,

it would lead almost as quickly to the disappearance of the Emperor from the public view and to the appointment of a Regent in his stead. There are precedents for such a step in German history. It is difficult to believe that a politician who, during many years, has occupied a position of responsibility and of considerable influence and who apparently wishes to be taken seriously should say to his readers: It is clear that Germany has no intentions upon the harbours of Holland, for her responsible Ministers have as yet made no official statement to that effect.

On page 188 Lord Eversley writes: 'Not a single act of the German Government has been adduced in support of these alleged ambitious intentions' (upon Holland). Is Lord Eversley not aware that Germany is completing at a cost of more than 10,000,000*l.* the Rhine-Emden Canal (details of this canal and of Germany's policy towards Holland will be found in this Review for July 1906), a canal which will be run at a large loss and which has been constructed with the avowed intention of diverting the enormous German transit trade, the chief trade of Holland, from Rotterdam and Antwerp to Emden in order to force Holland into the German Customs Union by economic pressure? On page 188 we read: 'There is no indication whatever that the Dutch desire to be swallowed up by their potent neighbour.' The wealthiest and the most influential class in Holland are the merchants. Their market is practically limited to less than six million Dutchmen because high customs walls surround the neighbouring countries. If Lord Eversley should have taken the trouble of travelling through Holland and of talking to a large number of business men before writing his article, as the writer of these pages has done, he would have found a widespread desire among them to gain sixty million new customers by their country being received into the German Customs Union. Following the foregoing phrase, Lord Eversley writes: 'The Dutch have indeed in the past shown more affinity to France than to Germany.' I do not know how a nation can 'show affinity' to another nation, but I do know that France has six times made war upon the Dutch whilst Germany has always been at peace with them. Therefore the Dutch have little love for France, and it requires, to say the least, great boldness to state in print that the Dutch incline rather towards their ancient oppressors than towards Germany to which they belong by race, language, character, national genius, and long historical connexion. On pages 187 and 190 Lord Eversley speaks of Germany 'expropriating' Holland and 'expropriating' Denmark, and he tells his readers that these countries have not the slightest desire to be expropriated. To 'expropriate' means to deprive of property by force, a process which is naturally resisted by States as well as by individuals. If Lord Eversley was sufficiently acquainted with the history and the constitution of Germany, he would know that Germany need not, and

certainly would not, 'expropriate' Holland or Denmark in order to gain control over the harbours of the former and over the narrows held by the latter. He would know that Germany is not a single State, but a voluntary union of independent Sovereign States; that Germany would as little think of 'expropriating' Holland and Denmark as Prussia thought of 'expropriating' Bavaria and Württemberg in 1871. He would know that the kingdoms of Holland and Denmark could find room in the German Federation side by side with the kingdoms of Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony; that Holland and Denmark might voluntarily enter into the German Federation and that they need not lose their distinct individuality and their language or any of their cherished national peculiarities and institutions.

I think the foregoing few examples, which could be greatly increased in number, will suffice to show that Lord Eversley's statements are not to be trusted, being apparently founded rather upon fancy than upon fact.

Now let us look into Germany's policy and especially into that part of her policy which chiefly concerns this country.

It may be considered as an axiom that the policy of a modern constitutional State is shaped in the first place by necessity, that means by its natural circumstances; in the second place, by the ambitions of its rulers and of its ruling classes; in the third place by its history and traditions and by the examples of its greatest men. Let us therefore briefly survey the natural circumstances of Germany, the ambitions of her leading men, and her historical traditions, in order to understand the drift and aim of her policy.

If we examine the natural circumstances and conditions of Germany we are immediately struck by the fact that her population increases at a most astonishing rate, that it grows proportionately much faster than that of any other great European State. Since 1871 the population of Germany has increased from 39,000,000 to 62,000,000. At present her population expands by almost a million a year whilst ours increases only by about 300,000 a year. In the enormous increase of her population lies Germany's greatest hope and her most serious problem. If she can keep her people together, Germany will become one of the greatest nations, perhaps the greatest nation, in the world. As the German mother has more children than has the English mother and the American mother, the German Empire may easily rival the British Empire and the American Empire, for men, not possessions, constitute the wealth and power of a State. Therefore Germany's greatest problem is how to find room and food for her rapidly increasing population.

At present Germany is exceedingly prosperous. Her industries are so flourishing that she suffers chronically not from unemployment as we do, but from lack of labour. Immigration into Germany is

greater than emigration from Germany. Per thousand inhabitants emigration from Great Britain is exactly twelve times larger than it is from Germany. However, it seems doubtful whether the German manufacturing industries will continue expanding at the present rate so as to enable Germany to house, clothe, and feed another million people every year. Manufacturing industries are springing up in countries which hitherto did not manufacture. Germany's export industries, like those of Great Britain, meet an ever keener competition in foreign markets. Besides, nearly all civilised countries have copied the fiscal policy which Bismarck introduced into Germany in 1879 and which created Germany's industrial greatness. The customs walls are rising higher from year to year. By far the largest and most valuable market of Germany, the British Empire, may, in a few years, cease to be an open market to her manufacturers. Earlier or later emigration from Germany on the very largest scale is bound to set in, and Germany is determined not to strengthen her national rivals with her surplus population. As it would lead too far to quote in this place numerous declarations to this effect which have been made by Germany's political and economic leaders, I merely append the latest of these declarations, that published in the 1907 issue of the German semi-official Navy Year Book *Nauticus* which appeared a few days ago.

Not money, but men constitute the wealth of a State, and the future greatness of a nation will depend upon the extent of territory which it has been able to bring under its control. . . . We have more than sixty million inhabitants, and our population increases every year by almost a million. We are determined not to allow our surplus population to emigrate to foreign countries, for the wealth of the nation lies in the number of its productive workers. An appeal to the sword is justified only then when an attempt should be made to impede our economic expansion. Peace is threatened not by ourselves but by those who may try to stop the natural and justified expansion of Germany.

Germany can continue to nourish her rapidly growing population only by acquiring large territories in a temperate zone which are suitable for the settlement of white men and by greatly strengthening the position of her manufacturing industries. For both purposes she must have a powerful navy, as both purposes are likely to bring her into conflict with Great Britain.

All the best colonial territories situated in the temperate zone are in the possession of the British Empire. If Germany wishes to acquire settlement colonies, she must follow England's example and acquire them by force. Holland became a colonial empire by conquering the colonies of Spain; England became a colonial empire by conquering the colonies of Holland and France; Germany may become a colonial empire by conquering the colonies of Great Britain. Colonies can be kept only by a State which possesses a strong navy. Otherwise they may at any moment be taken by a Power which is

strong at sea. Only one Power, that Power which rules the sea, can hope to acquire and retain extensive and valuable colonies. A colonial empire must be based on the rule of the sea or it will collapse. That is the teaching of three thousand years of history. If Germany wishes to acquire large colonies in a temperate zone, she must first acquire the rule of the sea.

Manufacturing industries, and especially manufacturing industries which work up foreign raw produce and sell a large quantity of the finished articles abroad, as do the German manufacturing industries, require an adequate number of well-situated commercial harbours. Germany has only one large commercial harbour, Hamburg, and that port is badly situated inasmuch as her most important manufacturing centres lie not on the Elbe, but on or near the Rhine. The Rhine is the most important artery of Germany's foreign trade, and the Rhine harbours, especially Rotterdam and Antwerp, handle by far the largest and the most valuable part of Germany's exports and imports. It is a most undesirable state of affairs for Germany that she has to rely for the largest part of her foreign trade on foreign harbours. Holland and Belgium are able to exact a heavy tribute from German labour. Besides, they certainly hamper, and to some extent restrain, the German industries which have to work for the benefit of foreign merchants and shippers. We can easiest realise Germany's peculiar position by imagining that the most important harbours of England were in foreign hands, that Lancashire had to rely for its whole foreign trade on foreign railway-companies, foreign merchants, foreign forwarding agents and foreign shipowners. This is a disadvantageous, a humiliating and, worst of all, an unsafe position for a great industrial nation. By nature Holland belongs undoubtedly to the German Hinterland. The nation which possesses practically the whole Rhine and which has made it the greatest industrial river in the world seems to be entitled to possess also the mouths of that river which are a necessary outlet to its industries. Prusso-Germany is the direct heir to the ancient German Empire of which Holland was as much a part as was Alsace-Lorraine. The Dutch belong to the German race and speak a German dialect. Economically, geographically, historically, and ethnographically Holland belongs to Germany and Germany has an excellent claim upon the control of the Dutch harbours. Holland might possibly be induced voluntarily to join the union of German States. However, from the naval-strategical point of view, the Netherlands occupy a position of the greatest importance. From the numerous Dutch and Belgian harbours an invasion of England could comparatively easily be undertaken. Hence England is bound to resist to the utmost Holland's absorption by Germany in whatever form it may be proposed, and Germany is aware of it. Consequently Germany can expect to improve her economic position by acquiring the control over the Dutch harbours which she needs only if she is so

strong on the sea as to be able to overcome the opposition which, in the interest of self-preservation, this country is compelled to offer.'

The foregoing proves clearly that Germany's future as a great nation lies upon the water; that compelling natural circumstances, namely, the prolificness of her population and her lack of harbours, have placed Germany into a position of direct antagonism to that country which rules the sea; that Germany's desire to live forces her, perhaps against her will, to encroach upon Great Britain's most vital interests.

Providence has placed Great Britain across Germany's path, exactly as it had placed Carthage across the path of Rome. The leading men and the leading circles of Germany are fully aware that Germany's future as a great nation depends upon her fleet, that, if Germany wishes to continue to be a great nation, a conflict with Great Britain is inevitable, that the irresistible forces of Nature must at some time or other bring about a collision between Great Britain and Germany, and Germany is preparing herself for such an event with all her might. Nevertheless Lord Eversley has ventured to suggest in his paper (on pages 187 and 191) that merely a few irresponsible pressmen have sought to make mischief between Great Britain and Germany, that Germany harbours no maritime ambitions and designs dangerous to this country. As he attaches so much value to the 'statements of responsible ministers of Germany,' who, according to him, are quite innocent of the suspicion with which many Englishmen regard Germany and Germany's political aims, I will sum up Germany's policy in the words of her own statesmen.

Germany's policy is directed not by public opinion or by parliamentary majorities and committees, as is our own policy, but by the Emperor and his ministers whom he chooses personally. Therefore the Emperor's political utterances carry the greatest weight and are of the greatest interest and importance. William the Second has again and again declared that Germany's future depends on the strength of her navy and that Germany must rule the sea because Great Britain is considered to be an obstacle in Germany's path which can be removed only by superior force. On the 24th of April 1897, for instance, his Majesty said at a banquet in Cologne: 'Neptune with the trident in his hand is a symbol for us that we have new tasks to fulfil since the Empire has been welded together. Everywhere we must protect German citizens, everywhere we must maintain German honour: that trident must be in our fist!' On other occasions the Emperor coined the winged words 'Our future lies upon the water' . . . 'Without the consent of Germany nothing must happen in any part of the world.' Imperial aphorisms such as these are known by heart by every German schoolchild into whose memory they are instilled by his teachers, and they have become the leading maxims of Germany's policy. That the trident, the British trident, must be in Germany's

fist has not merely been asserted by the 'Admiral of the Atlantic.' His responsible ministers also have frequently expressed the same idea in weighty official documents and verbal declarations of policy. For instance, the great German Navy Bill of 1900, by which about 200,000,000*l.* were voted for naval purposes, was prefaced by the explanatory statement 'Germany must have a fleet of such strength that a war against the mightiest naval Power would involve risks threatening the supremacy of that Power.' This statement makes it clear that Germany's naval preparations are directed in the first instance against this country. It officially confirms the metaphorical and somewhat cryptic statement previously made by the Emperor that 'the trident must be in our fist,' and it proves that his Majesty was referring to the British trident. A further confirmation of the anti-British aim of Germany's naval policy was officially supplied by the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Bülow who stated in the Reichstag, on the 11th of December 1899, 'We must create a fleet strong enough to exclude attack from *any* Power,' and by the Secretary of State for the Imperial Navy, Admiral von Tirpitz, who proclaimed in the Reichstag, 'We must arm with a view to entering the most dangerous naval conflict in which we may possibly be involved.' Perhaps these official declarations will suffice to convince Lord Eversley that not a few obscure pressmen have initiated an anti-British campaign in Germany, but that the Emperor and his advisers have premeditatedly and deliberately embarked upon an anti-British policy, and that they have done so not because they dislike or fear Great Britain, for sentiment should not direct policy, but because they believe that German ambitions and British interests are incompatible, because they believe that the British Empire is an obstruction to Germany's national progress.

Nominally Germany requires a powerful fleet 'for the defence of her maritime interests,' but her maritime interests are so ludicrously small if compared with those of Great Britain and they are so little threatened that she hardly requires for that purpose 'a fleet of such strength that a war against the mightiest naval Power would threaten the supremacy of that Power.' A comparison of the position and maritime interests of Germany and Great Britain will make this absolutely clear. Germany has a small coast line and a huge army; Great Britain has an enormous coast line and a very small army. The German coasts are protected by most extensive sandbanks and shallows whilst ours can easily be approached. Therefore the danger of invasion is very great for Great Britain but very small in the case of Germany. A partial blockade of the British islands would mean "starvation for our population; a complete blockade of the German coast would hurt Germany very little, as she could carry on her foreign trade through the neutral ports of her neighbour States. As regards shipping, Great Britain has a gross tonnage of 15,000,000 tons to

protect, Germany has merely 3,000,000 tons to protect. Lastly Great Britain possesses all the most valuable colonies in the world; Germany possesses practically no colonies at all. To sum up: In a struggle between Great Britain and Germany, Germany can lose little, but Great Britain may lose all. The maritime interests of Great Britain and Germany are not comparable and the German statesmen can deceive nobody in this country when they declare that Germany requires a fleet able to challenge our own 'for the defence of her maritime interests.' It is clear that Germany's fleet is meant for conquest.

As regards the leading classes of Germany, I would say that the Prussian aristocracy and the University Professors have for many years been preaching *Britanniam esse delendam* whilst the loyal and well-disciplined official class naturally follows the unmistakable lead which the Emperor, his Chancellor, and his ministers have given them. The policy of the German Navy League, with its million members, the largest and the most powerful political organisation in Germany, which is patronised by the Emperor, is too well known in this country to require summing up.

The policy of a great State is largely influenced by its history and traditions. The old German Empire was a peaceful and powerless Republic of independent States which slumbered through centuries. Modern Germany, Prusso-Germany, has been created by conquest and is of a different mould. Three centuries ago the Hohenzollerns ruled a desert and a swamp peopled by a small number of poor savages; now they rule the strongest and the wealthiest State on the Continent. Modern Germany owes her political and economic greatness to her warlike successes. Her national heroes are no longer cosmopolitan philosophers, poets, and musicians from Southern Germany, but Prussian men of action and men of the sword, such as the Great Elector, Frederick the Great, Bismarck. Those Germans who would see Germany grow and increase, and who wish her to become a great colonial empire, naturally endeavour to apply the successful methods of Frederick the Second and of Bismarck to her present problems. The policy of modern Germany is *Machtpolitik*—'the policy of force.'

The foregoing shows that compelling natural circumstances, the policy of her rulers and her ruling classes, and her history and traditions have caused Germany to embark upon that anti-British policy which she follows at present.

Many competent foreign observers have predicted that an Anglo-German war for the rule of the sea is inevitable. Monsieur Lockroy, the former Navy Minister of France, for instance, wrote in his *Lettres sur la Marine allemande* :

Germany will be a great naval power in spite of her geographical position and history. Her claim to rule the waves will, earlier or later, bring on a war

with Great Britain. That war will be one of the most terrible conflicts of the twentieth century. What its result will be no one can foretell, but so much is sure—that Germany does everything that human forethought and the patience and energy of a nation can suggest.

Lord Eversley and his friends may say, 'It is true that Germany is hostile to us in words and intentions. Yet we should not distrust her, for she has so far never hurt us by her action.' Is this true? What does recent history tell us? Has Germany not been notoriously unfriendly to this country and has she not tried to involve it in countless difficulties? From the innumerable diplomatic incidents which come to one's mind, I will select only one. After the Jameson raid and the despatch of the celebrated Krüger telegram, the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made to Great Britain the astonishing declaration in an official document that 'the continued independence of the Boer Republics was a German interest.' Why was the continued independence of the Boer Republics a German interest? Because Germany saw in the independent Boer Republics a thorn in Great Britain's side which was likely to bring about in time a festering sore which might endanger the very life of the British Empire. Therefore the continued independence of the Boer Republics was a German interest. Therefore the Boers were flattered to the top of their bent, and were encouraged in every way in their resistance to all British demands. Had it not been for Germany's support, the South African War would probably not have broken out. Germany's anti-British policy cost this country twenty thousand lives and 250,000,000*l.* Lord Eversley and his friends seem to have forgotten these facts, although they belong not exactly to ancient history.

Another fact of more recent date will serve to elucidate Germany's policy towards this country. Germany has lately suppressed great strikes in Hamburg, Dresden, and Stettin by importing large numbers of half-starved English unemployed and making them act as strike-breakers. Why has she not imported Germans from another part of the country, or Poles, Russians, Austrians, and Italians? She imported English unemployed firstly because the German Government intended to give to the German people an ocular demonstration of what is usually called 'the blessings of Free Trade'; secondly and principally, because the German Government wished to exasperate the German labouring masses against Great Britain and to convert the liking of the German masses for this country into a bitter hatred for England and everything English. The German Social Democratic Party has hitherto offered the strongest opposition to Germany's anti-British naval policy, largely because the German workers saw in England the home of liberty and a friend of struggling democracy. Through the action of the German Government, the German workers are being taught to see in this country the home of 'scabs and black-

legs' as they are called in Germany and they have begun to curse the name of England.

Lord Eversley must admit that Germany has endeavoured to harm us, that she has sometimes failed in her attempts, and that, sometimes, she has succeeded only too well. He must also admit that Germany wishes to wrest from Great Britain the rule of the sea, for the pronouncements of her leaders are unmistakable. Now the question arises: Is the naval policy which Lord Eversley recommends in his paper, which apparently reflects the views of the present Government, a wise one? His recommendations, contained on pages 192-197, may briefly be summed up as follows: 'Germany is hardly likely to become dangerous to us. She has as yet no powerful fleet. Our superiority in ships is overwhelming. Great Britain can build more quickly than Germany. Only in eight years will the Kiel Canal be finished. Hence Germany is under security for good behaviour for at least eight years to come. Let us reduce our output of new ships and see what the Germans are doing. We can always easily catch them up at our leisure, and build more and more powerful ships than they can build.'

Let us examine one by one Lord Eversley's arguments.

The picture of British naval and shipbuilding supremacy which Lord Eversley has given us in his paper is a very pleasing one, but unfortunately it is as inaccurate and as unreliable as is his exposition of Germany's policy. It is true that, according to the last Dilke Return, Great Britain has sixty battleships whilst Germany has only thirty-two battleships, and it is also true that the British ships are much larger and more heavily armed than are the German ships. However, it must not be forgotten that, of our sixty battleships, thirty-four have no armour protection whatever to the bow and stern, thirteen have no armour protection to the stern alone, and but thirteen have a complete armoured belt, whilst all the German ships possess a complete armoured belt. According to the best German authority, the British partly armoured ships may in battle easily be disabled by a few shots directed upon the unarmoured parts. Besides it should be remembered that superiority in numbers and weight alone is no certain guarantee of victory. Lastly, the unexpected is apt to happen in war, as we have found out to our cost in the Peninsula, in the Crimea, and in South Africa.

Some time ago an excellent book, *La Lutte pour l'Empire de la mer*, by René Daveluy, was published which gives perhaps the clearest account of the Russo-Japanese War which has appeared hitherto. A perusal of Captain Daveluy's work makes it clear that superior numbers may be defeated by a small but active and well-prepared opponent, and when we ask Why were the Russians defeated, notwithstanding their great superiority in ships of war? we are told, 'All attention had been concentrated upon the ships, none on the human factor. People had forgotten that the value of the floating

material depends largely on the value of the human material. They had forgotten that a navy which has gone to sleep cannot possess good material, because its mind dwells in the past.' Are we too not dwelling too confidently on the mere number and size of our ships, on the might of our empire in the abstract and on our victories of the past as the Russians did before the war? It is true that in the past we had a Blake and a Nelson, but may not other nations have their Blakes and their Nelsons, too, and may we not be caught unprepared at the outbreak of a naval war, as we were in most of our land wars and as the Russians were before Port Arthur? Is not our very Constitution opposed to military efficiency, to readiness for war, and to celerity and energy in action?

Germany is stronger at sea than is generally known. * On paper France possesses the second strongest and Germany the third strongest fleet in Europe. In reality Germany has already outstripped France. This appears from a recent report of the French Government on the French Navy (No. 2666) in which we read :

At first sight, and especially when one looks only at the number of ships, the French fleet appears to be greatly superior to the German fleet. An analytical comparison, however, makes it clear that, as regards large units, France is in a position of inferiority if compared with Germany. We have allowed Germany to overtake us. Will it be possible for us to make up for the time which we have lost? Without a mighty effort we shall sink to the third, and perhaps to the fourth or fifth, rank among naval powers.

This report was written more than a year ago. As France is spending much less on shipbuilding than Germany, our ally is rapidly and irretrievably sinking to the position of a weak third-class naval Power in Europe.

Germany's confidence in her fleet in case of a conflict with this country is not without justification. Germany believes her navy to be better organised, better concentrated and better disciplined than our own. Moreover, she counts upon being first in the field and upon gaining victory by surprise as she did when, under Moltke's direction, she attacked Austria in 1866 and France in 1870. Lastly, she reckons upon using simultaneously her fleet and her army. General von der Goltz, one of the most talented officers of Germany, wrote some years ago :

. . . . We must contradict the opinion which has so frequently been expressed that a war between Germany and Great Britain is impossible. Great Britain is compelled to distribute her fleets over many seas in peace as well as in war. In the necessary distribution of her strength lies Great Britain's weakness. Germany is in a better position. Her navy is small, but it can be kept together in Europe. For the moment Great Britain's superiority over us is striking; but when the projected increase of our fleet has been effected, the outlook for us will be bright. The British fleet will no longer be an irresistible opponent to us. Numbers decide as little on the sea as they do on land. Numerical inferiority can be compensated for by greater efficiency. Besides,

as places are not wanting where England's defences are weak, it is a mistake to consider a landing in England a chimera. The material basis of our power is large enough to destroy the present superiority of Great Britain, but Germany must prepare beforehand for the coming struggle, and must arm in time without losing a day, for victories on the sea cannot be improvised.

We allow on our troopships space equivalent to from two to three tons per man, and it has been calculated that, if we allow two or three tons per man, Germany has not enough shipping of her own in her harbours to embark a large army. That calculation is utterly misleading. In the first place, it must be expected that, at the outbreak of a war with England, Germany will 'commandeer' all ships found in the German ports of whatever nationality, indemnifying the owners, and thus double or more than double her shipping. In the second place, it must be remembered that our transport requirements for long-distance journeys in the tropics cannot be compared with the transport requirements for a short voyage in European waters. In crossing merely the North Sea, the German troops would have to be satisfied with the minimum of room, and, if need be, with standing room only. According to a statement made by a member of the German General Staff, von Edelsheim, 'Germany is able to ship at the shortest notice six infantry divisions (100,000 men) to England, and, if the weather be fair, the transport from the German North Sea harbours should be effected in little more than thirty hours.'* The statements of von der Goltz and von Edelsheim seem to indicate that in Germany an invasion of England is by no means thought to be impossible, and those who believe that an Anglo-German war would merely lead to some very fine target-practice by the English ships upon a few obsolete German armour-clads and a tedious blockade are likely to be as much mistaken as were those numerous Englishmen who, in October 1899, at the outbreak of the Boer War, despatched to British officers Christmas puddings to Pretoria, 'care of the Post Office, to be called for.'

We have frequently been told that the shipbuilding resources of Great Britain are infinitely superior to those of Germany, that Great Britain can lay down more ships than Germany and build them far more quickly. The Cawdor Memorandum, for instance, stated, 'We can always overtake foreign shipbuilding programmes in consequence of our resources and our power of rapid construction.' We have been told *ad nauseam* that the *Dreadnought* has been built in fourteen months and we have been informed by Lord Eversley, who, as usual, makes statements somewhat at random, that Germany requires three years for building *Dreadnoughts* (page 196). How much truth is in these pleasing statements? The building of the *Dreadnought* in fourteen months is no fair test of our shipbuilding capacity. During about half a year before the *Dreadnought* was 'officially' begun, material were 'collected' and castings made, so that rightly considered it took

about twenty months to build that ship. Besides, on an average, 1200, and sometimes over 1500, men worked overtime on that ship, causing an unnecessary expenditure of several hundred thousand pounds. Those who try to make the public believe that we can build all our ships at the rate at which the *Dreadnought* was nominally constructed are deceiving the British public, but not our national competitors, least of all the Germans. The Germans are not by any means of opinion that we build warships more quickly than they do, for the 1907 issue of *Nauticus* states 'The average time of building for German battleships has been forty-three months, or exactly the same time as it has been for seventeen British battleships, the *Dreadnought* included. The average time of building for the English armoured cruisers has been forty-four months, whilst it has been only forty months for the German armoured cruisers.' Apparently Germany is building, not more slowly, as Lord Eversley asserts, but more quickly than this country.

It seems also a delusion that, as is often stated, Germany can build but a few ships simultaneously, for we read in the German periodical *Die Flotte* for August 1907 :

More than a year ago five private shipbuilders in Germany have declared that they are able to lay down every year seventeen large battleships, and to complete them within from twenty to twenty-four months [that would be approximately the time in which our own *Dreadnought* was in reality constructed], and besides these we have available for shipbuilding two other large private builders and the three imperial shipyards in Kiel, Wilhelmshaven, and Danzig. The manufacturers of guns and armour have declared that they could provide, during the same time, more armour and guns than are required for seventeen battleships.

I am afraid that Germany's shipbuilding capacity has been very seriously underestimated, not only by private writers, but by our Admiralty as well.

On page 196, Lord Eversley writes, 'The deepening of the Kiel Canal cannot be effected in less than eight years. . . . It seems to follow that Germany will be under security for good behaviour for at least eight years to come.' I am afraid I must again express dissent. From the latest information I have received, it appears that, although the completion of the canal will take eight years, the German authorities hope that it will much earlier be available for the large warships which Germany is building. With this object in view, the most urgent work, the enlargement of the locks, is first to be taken in hand, and it is hoped that, by the time when the first German *Dreadnoughts* are finished, the Kiel Canal will be usable though possibly the ships must for a short time not be fully laden

The foregoing shows :

- (1) That Germany is much stronger at sea than is generally known.
- (2) That her shipbuilding capacity is very much greater than

has been assumed by the British Admiralty and by private writers.

(3) That it would be unsafe to conclude that 'Germany will be under security for good behaviour for at least eight years' because she may require eight years for finishing the Kiel Canal.

Now let us take note of Germany's naval preparations and of the naval policy which, in the immediate future, she means to pursue with regard to this country so as to be able to understand the measures which we ought to take in self-defence.

Lord Eversley tells his readers on page 196 that Great Britain has nothing to fear from Germany because, according to her naval programme, Germany will build only eighteen *Dreadnoughts* during the next fourteen years. I am afraid this is another pleasing illusion of Lord Eversley's. It seems likely that the German naval programme will soon be amended. It is a well-known fact that the German Navy League is a semi-official organisation, and that its policy is inspired by the German Government. Therefore it is worth noting that, at the recent annual meeting in Cologne, the following resolution was unanimously passed by that body :

In view of the fact that other nations constantly strengthen their fleet in such a degree as to increase the disadvantage of our naval position, and in view of the serious dangers in which the insufficient strength of our naval forces involves Germany, the seventh annual general meeting of the German Navy League hereby resolves as follows : It is absolutely necessary to accelerate the completion of the naval programmes of 1900 and 1906.

This semi-official resolution has been supported by numerous articles to the same effect which have lately appeared in the inspired section of the German press. Their coincidence is hardly fortuitous, and it appears likely that the German Government, as is generally believed in Germany, intends greatly to extend the shipbuilding programme of 1900-1906, and especially to accelerate the completion of the ships already voted. It is also noteworthy that a petition covered with more than three hundred thousand signatures, the largest petition that has been drawn up ever since the foundation of the Empire, was sent to the Reichstag in which it was prayed that the building of the German fleet should be greatly accelerated. These are straws which show in which direction the official wind is blowing in Germany.

The present shipbuilding programme of Germany makes provisions not merely for the eighteen battleships of the *Dreadnought* type of which Lord Eversley speaks, but also for six cruiser-battleships of the *Invincible* type of about 20,000 tons and some 50,000 horse-power, which Lord Eversley omits to mention. The eighteen new German battleships are to be larger and more powerfully armed than our own *Dreadnought*; the six new German cruisers are to be larger, faster, and more powerfully armed than our own *Invincible*. It is believed that these twenty-four ships will cost on an average about

2,000,000*l.* each, or about 50,000,000*l.* in all, but they may cost considerably more. Germany is rich enough to build those warships and many more. The fact that Germany spends more than 35,000,000*l.* a year on workmen's insurance, a much larger sum than we spend on our Navy, and the fact that the German Savings Banks contain almost four times more money than do the British Savings Banks indicate that Germany has not only the will to compete with Great Britain for the rule of the sea, but also the means of doing so.

Great Britain and Germany have begun a determined preliminary duel which will be fought with their money-bags, implements of warfare with which very heavy blows can be given. Much money, which might be spent on social reforms and the relief of the poor, will be spent on ships and guns, and the question naturally suggests itself: Will it not be possible to stop the ruinous expenditure on naval armaments by some international agreement? Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has recently made proposals in this direction, but he has not succeeded in persuading Germany to limit her naval armaments, because Germany, in the Emperor's picturesque words, wishes to conquer for herself 'a place in the sun.' Therefore, she not only opposes the English proposal in favour of the limitation of naval armaments, but is impressing upon other nations the necessity of destroying the naval supremacy of Great Britain. We read in the semi-official Year Book *Nauticus* for 1907:

The limitation of armaments, as applied to warships, for in that branch of disarmament alone is Great Britain interested, has only the object of confirming the present maritime superiority of Great Britain and making it permanent. However, other States cannot be expected to guarantee that Great Britain shall rule the sea for ever, and that they are to receive the advantages springing from maritime commerce at Great Britain's hands and as an act of grace. To limit naval armaments, to accept the *status quo* and to make it permanent would mean to make the whole world economically and politically subservient to Great Britain; and if a difference of opinion should arise as to maritime affairs, the rights of other nations might find scant consideration from Great Britain because of the supremacy of her fleet.

Germany is as yet too weak on the sea to challenge Great Britain to single combat. At the present moment she will fight Great Britain single-handed only if she must. Therefore she wishes to persuade other nations to assist her in destroying the naval supremacy of Great Britain and in replacing our supremacy by a balance of power, which, during the period of Germany's transition from a second-class naval Power to a first-class naval Power, shall make Great Britain impotent for action and secure Germany's position. The Year Book *Nauticus* tells us:

The rule of the sea by a single nation is insupportable. The sea must be free to all nations. The freedom of the sea cannot be established by the recognition of a kind of British Monroe Doctrine, by the acceptance of British naval

supremacy, but only by the establishment of a balance of power among the maritime States.

In other words, Germany requires an ally or allies to help her in laming Great Britain's right arm. Whom will she choose to help her? The Triple Alliance exists merely in name, for its *raison d'être*, an aggressive Russia of overwhelming strength, has disappeared. Besides, the fleets of Austria and Italy are weak. Russia has no fleet. France is no longer a first-class naval power, and, in case of an Anglo-German war, she is likely either to support Great Britain or to remain neutral, fearing a German invasion. Therefore Germany has logically turned towards the United States, whose fleet is exceedingly strong and rapidly growing. The semi-official German Navy Year Book tells us with refreshing candour :

The attitude of the United States towards Germany is a friendly one, whilst Anglo-American relations have lost sensibly in cordiality. In Algeciras Germany has worked for the benefit of the United States. An Anglo-German war would weaken the position of Great Britain and strengthen that of the United States. Therefore the wisdom of maintaining good relations with the United States is clear, and it is evident that gradually a balance of power will be formed on the sea similar to the balance of power on the Continent of Europe among the Land Powers.

America is to help Germany in taking away from Great Britain her naval supremacy—and perhaps more. Vast German-American schemes of naval and military co-operation may well occupy the minds of the statesmen in Berlin. Not without reason is the Emperor assiduously courting the United States, notwithstanding the humiliating rebuffs which he has repeatedly received. Not without reason is every American who is supposed to have some influence sure to be personally and most cordially received by the Emperor.

Lord Eversley gives in his paper a table by which he wishes to demonstrate the overwhelming strength of the British Navy and to prove that we have so greatly exceeded the Two-Power Standard that we can safely relax our efforts in shipbuilding and retrench on the fleet. Unfortunately his table, on page 192, is quite misleading. He credits Germany with only eleven modern battleships of over 10,000 tons, although she has eighteen, and he substitutes for the United States with twenty-two such battleships France with eleven modern battleships of over 10,000 tons, although she has more. Thus he arrives at the following satisfactory result, which is to prove to his readers England's overwhelming naval superiority under the Two-Power Standard :

	Battleships. First-Class.
England	39
France and Germany combined	22

By means such as these anything may, of course, be 'proved.'

A fair statement of England's position, as measured by the Two-Power Standard, would, however, be as follows :

	Battleships. First-Class.
England ¹	39
United States and Germany combined ¹	40

These figures, which support Germany's balance-of-power policy, are not to be found in Lord Eversley's table.

What is the meaning of the Two-Power Standard ?

According to the generally accepted doctrine the Two-Power Standard means that Great Britain ought to have a Navy superior in strength to the combined navies of the two second strongest maritime Powers. In his speech introducing the celebrated Naval Defence Act of 1889, Lord George Hamilton said : 'The paramount idea has been that our establishment should be on such a scale that it should at least be equal to the naval strength of any two other countries. No amount of foresight and calculation can anticipate naval combinations and naval movements. For the purpose of meeting such unexpected blows we should have a considerable margin of reserve.' Sir Edward Grey said on the 3rd of March 1894, 'Under the Naval Defence Act the standard changed and there came the Two-Power Standard. That standard must not be taken to apply to any two Powers in particular, but to the two Powers which had the largest navies.' Lord Selborne declared on the 21st of March 1905 : 'The Two-Power Standard never had applied to any two particular nations but always to the two strongest naval Powers.'

The foregoing three declarations make the meaning of the Two-Power Standard, as accepted by both political parties, absolutely clear to all except Lord Eversley. Wishing to prove that the British Navy may safely be reduced, he does not take note of the rapid growth of the American Navy which now ranges immediately after our own in strength, although it is not unthinkable that the United States might side with our opponents, and, treating the American fleet as a negligible quantity, he shows in his Two-Power Standard table what everyone knows—that the British fleet is superior to the combined navies of France and Germany. He tacitly abandons the Two-Power Standard. Has he been authorised to do so ? Is Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as willing to abandon the Two-Power Standard, as is Lord Eversley ? This should immediately be ascertained. If he means to abandon the Two-Power Standard, the decline and fall of the British Empire will ever be associated with the name of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

¹ The figures relating to England are taken from the last Government Return (No. 111) of July 1907 ; for the figures relating to the United States and Germany I have preferred relying on American and German statements.

I venture to assert that the abandonment of the Two-Power Standard would mean the end of the British Empire. The sea, in the words of Lord Tweedmouth, is the link that joins together Great Britain and her colonies. If we are no longer supreme on the sea, if the connexion between Great Britain and the British States beyond the seas may be broken at will by another Power or by a combination of Powers, the British Empire must fall. Colonial supremacy presupposes naval supremacy. We must maintain our naval supremacy at all costs and against all comers, or we shall lose the Empire and Great Britain will sink to the level of Holland. The British Empire stands at the parting of the ways. The next few years seem likely to decide its fate. According to Lord Eversley we are to have eight years' grace, but we may have less. We seem to be entering upon the most critical period of our history, and we must use the present moment by preparing ourselves with all our might against all eventualities so as to pass safely through the critical period upon which we are entering. Let us bear in mind the wise maxim: *Si vis pacem para bellum; si vis bellum para pacem.* We must at all costs maintain the Two-Power Standard, even if it be against Germany and the United States combined.

It may be objected that it is hopeless for us to compete on the sea with Germany and the United States combined, because these two nations with their 150,000,000 inhabitants are richer than Great Britain and can outbuild us. That may be, but it does not alter the stern fact that Providence has placed before us the alternative either of maintaining our naval supremacy or of losing our Empire. There is only one way out of our difficulties. If Great Britain is not rich enough or not strong enough to defend the Empire single-handed, she must call upon her sons to aid her and they will come to their mother's assistance. The latent resources of the British Empire are greater than are the latent resources of the United States and Germany combined, but they must not remain merely latent resources. They must be transformed from resources *in posse* into resources *in esse*. The great imperial domain must be systematically developed and be filled with white men. The United States and Germany combined cannot possibly outbuild the British Empire if the British Empire possesses the firm will to live.

At present we are at peace with Germany, and Germany observes towards Great Britain an attitude of friendly, one might almost say of anxious, solicitude. Nevertheless we must not relax our watchfulness as long as Germany shows no sign of relinquishing her ambition of competing with us for the rule of the sea. The most cordial and the most affectionate words from the Emperor and Prince Bülow and their messages of goodwill to this country will fail to carry conviction as long as Germany continues her gigantic

preparations for a struggle with England. Acts, not words, will convince us of Germany's friendliness towards us.

Germany's foreign policy is based not upon the example of Bismarck but upon the teachings of Frederick the Great who was Bismarck's master. The fundamental principles of Germany's foreign policy were laid down by Frederick the Great in his *Exposé du Gouvernement Prussien, des Principes sur lesquels il roule, avec quelques Réflexions Politiques*, in which we read :

Constant attention must be paid to hiding as far as possible one's plans and ambitions. Secrecy is an indispensable virtue in politics as well as in the art of war.

If possible the Powers of Europe should be made envious and be set against one another in order to give occasion for a *coup* when opportunity offers.

It is one of the first political principles to endeavour to become an ally of that one of one's neighbours who may become most dangerous to one's State. For that reason we have an alliance with Russia, and thus we have our back free as long as it lasts.

These three principles have been the guiding principles of Prusso-German diplomacy during the last century and a half. Germany seeks our friendship for the same reason for which she has cultivated the friendship of Russia. Therefore our attitude towards Germany must ever be one of cautious reserve and of sleepless vigilance.

We have no cause to complain of Germany's aggressive designs. On the contrary. Germany's antagonism is likely to be to us a blessing in disguise. History teaches us that fear of hostility breeds union whilst peace and security breed disunion. The fear of British aggressiveness created the United States of America; the fear of French aggressiveness created the United States of Germany called the German Empire; the fear of German aggressiveness may create the United States of Great Britain and make the British Empire a reality.

J. ELLIS BARKER.