

of the self-governing dominions of the King beyond the seas. My position, of course, is rather a different one from that of my colleague and good friend Mr. Haldane. As I understand, he gave you a vivid and interesting sketch of the new system of organization of the Army, and explained to you how that new scheme might be adapted to your Colonial wants and wishes. My position is quite a different one. I cannot offer any sketch. I rather lay before you a completed picture. Our history undoubtedly is closely intertwined with the history of the Naval Service from earliest days, and though it is the fact, no doubt, that from time to time we have met with reverses and we have met with accidents, yet, on the whole, from the earliest days to the present moment the Navy has been able to defend the country, to defend the growing country, that is the Empire as a whole, and I do not think that any charge can be brought against it of ever on any occasion, having failed. Well, gentlemen, that being the case, what I have in the first place to ask is, that you should place confidence in the Board of Admiralty, and in the present Government, for the future safety of the country. We welcome you, and we ask you to take some leading part in making more complete than it is at present the naval defence of the Empire. I wish to recognise all that our cousins over the sea have done in consequence of decisions of former Conferences. I know that you gave to the Government and to the Admiralty, with a free and unstinting hand, the help that you thought you could manage to give. Gentlemen, I have only one reservation to make, and in making it I ask that, as we have proved ourselves successful in the past, you should put your trust in us now. The only reservation that the Admiralty desire to make is, that they claim to have the charge of the strategical questions which are necessarily involved in Naval Defence, to hold the command of the naval forces of the country, and to arrange the distribution of ships in the best possible manner to resist attacks and to defend the Empire at large, whether it be our own islands or the dominions beyond the seas. We thoroughly recognise that we are responsible for that defence. We want you to help us in that defence. We want you to give us all the assistance you can, but we do not come to you as beggars; we gladly take all that you can give us, but at the same time, if you are not inclined to give us the help that we hope to have from you, we acknowledge our absolute obligation to defend the King's dominions across the seas to the best of our ability.

Now, there is, after all, only one sea that laps around all our shores. The sea is the link that joins us together. It was the reason of your upspringing. It is our first defence. It is the origin of our great commerce. It is the outlet and inlet of our exports and our imports, and it is to us in these islands the channel through which we get the food and raw material which are so necessary to our vast population. There is one sea, there is one Empire, and there is one Navy, and I want to claim in the first place your help, and in the second place authority for the Admiralty to manage this great service without restraint. How great a part the sea takes in all our life, in all our prosperity, is, I think, best seen from the extraordinary amount of shipping that our country puts out. Last year, in 1906, Great Britain's output of shipping amounted to no less than 1,936,793 tons. The United States had an output of 486,650 tons; Germany, 384,614 tons, and France, 58,502 tons. The output of all foreign nations amounted to 1,319,900 tons, so that last year Great Britain led by no less than 616,893 tons all the other nations in the world.

Mr. DEAKIN : Is that new shipping ?

Lord TWEEDMOUTH : New shipping.
18—A 5.

Fifth Day.
28 April 1907.
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NAVAL DEFENCE.
(Lord
Tweedmouth.)