

in military strength proportionately to its growth in wealth and population, and if we can organize some comprehensive system of Imperial strategy based upon the idea of mutual support by land and sea, the time cannot be far distant when we shall be practically unassailable.

Naval and  
military  
strength  
interdepen-  
dent.

4. In the case of a world-wide Power like the British Empire, our armies, without naval protection, would be chained to their own shores, unable to move to the point of danger or to co-operate in any way. Similarly, our fleets, without the support of sufficiently numerous and adequately trained defensive armies, would be fettered in their action by the want of naval bases and by the fears of a defenceless population, whilst, without strong and well-organized military forces available for expeditionary action, we should be powerless to protect our land frontiers, to co-operate with an allied power, to carry a war into an enemy's country, or to bring it to a decisive issue.

The whole history of the British Empire is an illustration of the fact that the two services are interdependent, and that its safety hinges upon their combined action and cordial co-operation.

The best  
military  
system.

5. It is to the question of the most suitable military organization for such combined action that the General Staff desire upon this occasion to direct attention.

Owing to conditions peculiar to the British Empire, the Regular Forces of the Crown, which are raised in the United Kingdom, differ in two essential respects from those of nearly every foreign country, service in them being voluntary and of comparatively long duration. The system of enlistment and the terms of service in the Regular Army do not, therefore, admit of the accumulation of those vast reserves of trained men, which are at the disposal of Continental nations, and they compel us to look outside the Regular Army for that expansion which would become necessary directly we were engaged in a serious war. Outside the Regular Forces the troops are raised upon a non-permanent basis, and are only liable, as a rule, for service in defence of their own portion of the Empire. Consequently, we are likely to find ourselves face to face, in time of national emergency, with the necessity, subsequent to the outbreak of war, of supplementing the Regular Forces by means of improvised organizations and units for service over-sea. The adoption of this expedient may perhaps be unavoidable in certain cases under the peculiar conditions of the British Empire, but the General Staff can only look upon such a procedure as involving the acceptance of risks dangerously prejudicial to success. The evils which arise from it were made evident in the long-drawn-out struggle in South Africa, a conflict wherein our need for a proper Imperial military organization was plainly revealed. "The true lesson of the war" (so runs the report of the Royal Commission) "is that no military system will be satisfactory which does not contain powers of expansion outside the limits of the Regular Forces of the Crown, whatever that limit may be."

The opinion then expressed is now generally accepted, and the efforts of those responsible for military organization have since been directed to the task of creating some system by which our comparatively small Regular Army can be supported and expanded to the extent which is necessary in time of war.

Provision  
for service  
over-sea.

6. The most important of the measures recently adopted in the United Kingdom has been the reorganization of the Militia as a Special Reserve capable of making good the wastage of war, either as drafts or as complete units. Beyond this it has been made possible both for units and for individuals of the Territorial Force to undertake liability on an emergency for foreign service.

Since the last Conference in 1907 progress has no doubt been made in all the self-governing Dominions in regard to the provision of military forces for local defence, increased attention is being paid to military training and education, and the importance of similarity of armament and organization has been recognised, whilst the foundations have been laid of an Imperial General Staff which, it is hoped, will direct the military policy of the Empire upon accepted principles.