

befool their Sovereign unless they had been assured of exalted support and sympathy. The whole policy of Chamberlain was to thwart German expansion in Africa. So much was known to every one. But the resort to so fantastic a device as the Raid argues such secrecy that Ministers were unable to trust their own information department. The Raid was evidently foreseen in Berlin as well as in Pretoria. The famous telegram of the Kaiser, which has puzzled so many politicians, was a perfectly simple move. It was an inexpensive method of calling the British bluff. It forced the Government to explain that this elaborate expedition was a pure accident such as might happen to any one! It forced the Government to appoint a commission of the usual fake type to investigate the affair, and to report that nobody who lived on the spot knew anything about it. The officials had been appointed in pure pity, because they were blind and deaf. The High Commissioner had supposed that Jameson was merely going after springbok!

Now there is no doubt that the Queen was really in ignorance of all that was going on. The Kaiser followed up his telegram by a private letter to Her Majesty that he knew for a positive fact that the plot was hatched in the Colonial Office. The Queen indignantly replied that, on the contrary, she knew absolutely that it was not so, that Mr. Chamberlain would never dare so gross an offence against her. (Indeed it amounted to high treason.) To all this she pledged her royal word. The Kaiser politely replied that he accepted the statement, that he was heartily glad to know that he had been misinformed, and that there the incident ended.

The imperial moustache must have twinkled as the wearer wrote it; for he thought he could count upon the patriotism of Sir William Harcourt.

This gentleman was indeed of the true breed. In his veins ran the blood of the Plantagenets. As far as England was concerned, the Guelphs were parvenus. And to him England naturally looked in this crisis. England could trust a Harcourt, as she could not trust a Chamberlain. The screwmaker of Brummagem was often cheered by the mob; the Hampshire squire was above all such. He was no demagogue. He was a real Liberal; Chamberlain was a renegade from Radicalism. So the best elements of English society turned to Sir William. He would have the truth.

Consequently, he was prompted on every point. Proofs of the complicity of the Colonial Office were put into his hands. He began his cross-examination. It was immediately evident that he spoke from knowledge. Consternation fell like thunder upon the conspirators. Hurried whispers, slips of paper scrawled in desperation: the Commission was indisposed, and adjourned the proceedings!

Unfortunately, the sun was due to rise next day, and the newspapers to appear. The arch-plotters sat quaking in a hotel in Bond Street, abject.

Yet that evening the miracle happened. Lord Cross called on Sir William Harcourt, and held out his hands. "You have it all your own way," he said in effect. "You can ruin Chamberlain, and triumph over the Government, if you like. Only, you will prove the Queen a liar." And he told the story just related of her correspondence with the Kaiser.

Sir William hesitated. He might save England for the time from her gang of swindlers, but at the cost of what a rude jolt to the Throne! In the long run this must be worse. The thieves would ultimately hang themselves; the Constitution must be saved.

So the next day it was Sir William that was indisposed; his cross-examination was first postponed, and then forgotten. The newspapers were tipped off not to comment. The

Commission announced gloriously that everybody was either ignorant of his own acts, or ill-guided by a natural but mistaken patriotism. In the meanwhile, God was in His heaven, and all was right with the world.

One is incredibly informed that some people believed all this. In the background, however, the fight continued. The Queen, bound by her own letter, could do nothing. She foresaw the Boer War, and could take no steps to prevent it.

All these things passed before the eyes of the Prince of Wales. He naturally inclined to the side of his friends, and with great perspicuity picked out Germany as the enemy.

But great perspicuity is not the whole armor of a diplomatist. To understand the true nature of his error we must first make considerations of greatness.

II.

The passive side of wisdom is understanding. Unless you "see life steadily and see it whole," you err when you take action. Great men are distinguished by these qualities, that they can separate the essential from the accidental, and that they can study nature without personal bias.

They look first at anything without reference to their own interests, so as to see what it really is. Only when they have a complete knowledge of it, do they co-ordinate it with the ego.

These rules are universal. In diplomacy they are of prime importance, because diplomacy never ends. One problem always begets another. The great man never forgets first principles.* A great chess player will not embark on any combination, however tempting, if in doing so he has to violate the main canons of strategy. "Take much thought rather than a distant pawn with your queen," said wise, brilliant old James Mason.

And thus it is necessary for a statesman to consider not merely the balance of power in Europe, but on the planet, and to keep that idea subconscious yet luminous and dominant before he decide even to annex a barren rock a thousand miles from land. Victory in a war is not always victory. Spain is stronger, America weaker, as the result of their conflict. It is one of the ironies of the gods that nations usually fight against their own best interests. However, it is not possible in this short paper to consider the planet with more than eagle-glance. Such a study would demand a lifetime, and fill a volume. (No man, perhaps, could spend a lifetime better.) Here we can only show what Edward VII. saw, and what he did not see, in European politics.

He was astute, but he was not wise. Randolph Churchill "forgot Goschen," and Edward VII. forgot the partition of Poland.

III. (a)

The really great diplomatist, if he approached the globe from Mars, would first be struck by the fact that four-fifths of the surface is covered with water. If there be an amphibian race, he would say, that race must be master of the planet. From a military point of view its advantage must be overwhelming. Its soldiers could concentrate at every important point in the world and give the land dwellers not an hour's warning. Even if repulsed, they could retire to inaccessible fastnesses to renew the attack at their leisure.

*Note: It is for this reason that the great man often fails to come to his own. The opportunist succeeds, in the eye of his contemporaries. Wisdom is justified only of her children. The great artist, the great poet, the great man of science, never stoops to formalism; the great poet, the great man of science, never stoops to formalism; the great poet, the great man of science, never stoops to formalism. And so, by a paradox, it appears in due time that he was the real incarnation of the Zeitgeist, the true representative of the thought of his age.