

THROUGH A MONOCLE

THE MAN FROM MOROCCO

SITTING in the hotel writing-room at Tangier, I fell into conversation with an English newspaper man who had been for two years back in Morocco. He made a journey to Fez on horseback with a small party of natives and an interpreter at the very time when the Roghi was alive and besieging the present Sultan in his capital. In fact, he was shot at by the rebels on one occasion, and was only permitted to ride through a district controlled by a band of outlaws on condition that he would not draw rein until he had passed it. In Fez, the only way he could live was by renting a house from a local land agent—a fine villa in a garden which he got for some extraordinarily low figure—where he lived in the house with his interpreter while his men camped in the garden. Of course, he got to know all the chief characters in that exciting drama which so nearly plunged Europe into war, and fairly regards himself as an authority on the Moroccan question.

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THE Moroccan question, he says, is simply a matter of money. The Moorish government owes a lot of money; and the question is, how shall the Moorish people be made to pay at least the interest on it? That, by the way, is a simple formula for many a great international "question," which we usually state in more intricate terms. Incidentally, this Englishman has come to have a great admiration for the Moor. In many ways, he has been sinned against grievously. For example, the late Sultan, who got into trouble for his love of European ways, showed that love by buying many European things. He wanted a bicycle, for instance, at which the truly Christian adviser or agent who undertook to satisfy this want told him that bicycles were only sold by the dozen—or possibly by the gross—when the innocent Sultan gave this wholesale order. Phonographs he ordered by the gross for the same reason—though he only wanted one—and the result is that nearly every house in Fez now possesses one. The natives enjoy them immensely; and my friend said that when he had callers in Fez in the absence of his interpreter, all he had to do was to pass out a handful of cigarettes and turn on his phonograph and everybody was contented for an unlimited time.

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EXCEPT in times of civil war, he says that foreigners are as safe in Morocco as elsewhere. The system of government is very simple but very effective for police purposes. Each tribe is held responsible for good order in the district it controls; and when anyone is robbed in that district—if he be an outsider—the Sultan simply levies on the whole tribe for the amount lost. He does not bother his head about the individual offenders. He leaves them for the tribe to discover and deal with; and you may be very certain that they find out who is to blame when they all have to pay a share of the indemnity for the stolen goods of which they have probably not had a sight. The city of Fez is divided into wards on the same principle, and the head men in each ward are responsible to the central government for all that goes on within their precincts. After nightfall, the gates between the different wards are closed, and no one can go from one to the other without a special permit. Thus if you are robbed at night, it must be by some one in your own ward. Just what satisfaction there is in this, I do not know; but possibly in Fez neighbours do not rob each other.

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IN Tangier, it was the commonest sight to see a man, from the interior stalking down the main street with one of those tremendously long rifles in his hand which we usually find only in museums. Sometimes they are beautifully inlaid with ivory and silver, and the butt is frequently a marvel of fine carving. Now they do not carry these rifles for ornament. In certain parts of the interior, the husbandmen carry them with them even in the fields. My friend and his little party were compelled by the approach of the Roghi's men to leave the main road at one time and take to the hills. The inhabitants were just getting in their harvest; and there they were on their hill-tops literally with their sickles in one hand and their rifles in the other. Some of them immediately rushed down to the invading column, and told them that they simply must turn back. They relented somewhat, however, when they heard of the danger from the Roghi; but after they had permitted the strangers to ride on, the people on the hill-tops who had not heard the bargain, opened fire on them and wounded one of the horses so badly that they had to kill him. This all took place, of course, out of the sphere of the

Sultan's influence and among tribes accustomed to levy tribute on travellers.

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MOROCCO is a very rich country. When its trade is properly organised, it will pour a great deal of wealth into the nation which controls it. It looks to-day as if that nation would be France. Morocco may also bring great military strength to the country with which it is allied. The Moors are fine fighters; and when properly armed and trained, will make a most valuable addition to any army. France is to-day thinking of increasing the Algerian section of her army; and, if she can get a Moorish section, too, her African legions may count effectively in the scales of European military rivalry. Some parts of Morocco will be Spanish, but Spain is not likely to go in for much military adventure. My friend told me that he had the hardest possible task getting English business houses to realise the possibilities in Morocco and to reach out for trade ready for their plucking. German houses were much more enterprising, and he instanced more than one opportunity which had been rejected in London and picked up in Hamburg or Berlin.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

Statesmen—Father and Son

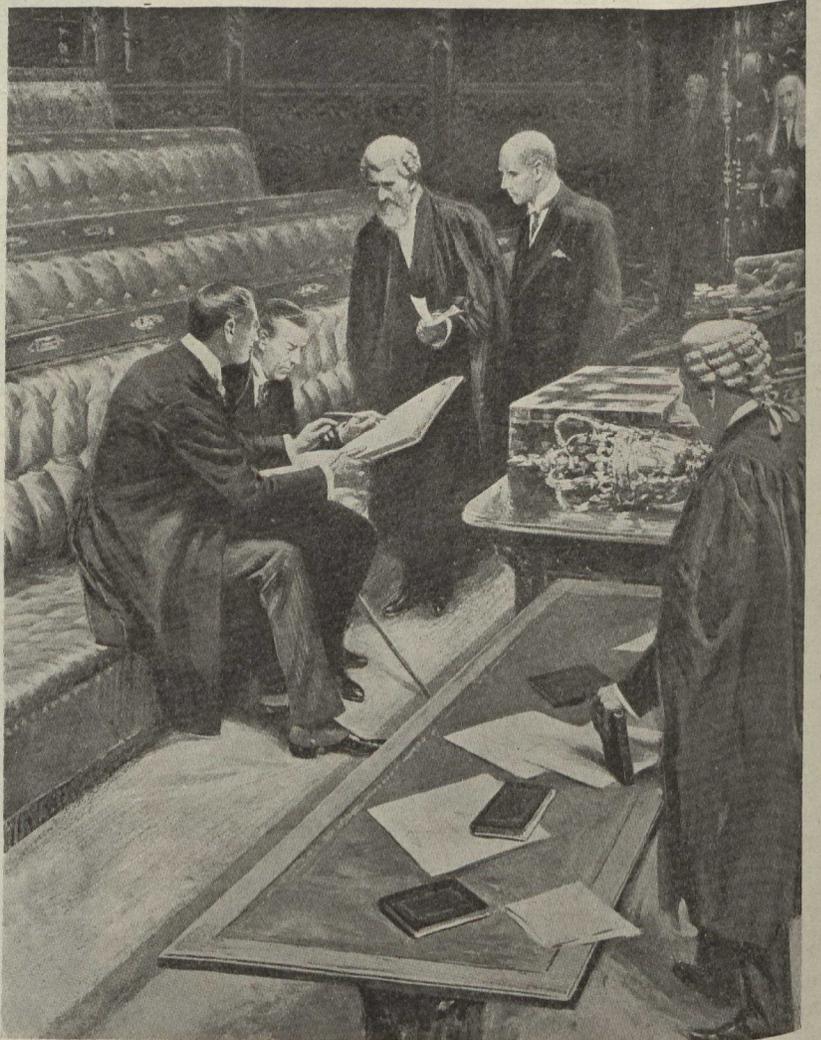
IT is not generally known that the first name of Mr. Austen Chamberlain is really Joseph. The good fellowship between father and son is well shown by an incident which occurred shortly after Mr. Chamberlain first moved to his Highbury residence. The estate was rather bare of trees, and Mr. Chamberlain sought to remedy the defect by planting a number of saplings in various parts of the grounds. Month by month he watched them grow and his heart filled with pride. This pride was slightly humbled one evening, however, when "Master Austen," having been scouring the surrounding country, arrived late for dinner.

"Where have you been?" inquired paterfamilias, fixing the well-known monocle, "and why are you late?"

"Well," replied Master Austen, without the suspicion of a smile on his countenance, "I have been out for a constitutional, but I would have been here hours ago if I had not lost myself in those woods of yours."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain was one of the most popular postmaster-generals England has ever had. An incident of his career at St. Martin's-le-Grand was his astonishing appearance one day in the refreshment room of his employees, where he lunched just as any other postal official might.

A STATESMAN AND A SIGNATURE



HON. JOS. CHAMBERLAIN SIGNING THE ROLL

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's entry into the House of Commons was as unexpected as it was welcome. The Member for West Birmingham came into the House from behind the Speaker's chair, leaning on the arm of Mr. Austen Chamberlain and accompanied by Lord Morpeth. While Sir Courtenay Ilbert read the oath, Mr. Austen Chamberlain wrote his father's name in the roll of Parliament. Then the pen was placed in Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's left hand, and he touched the signature, thus attesting its validity and "signing" the roll. The incident was responsible for many sympathetic remarks, for the chief champion of Tariff Reform has not been in the House since July, 1906. The taking of the oath by Members of both Houses is, of course, an essential formality, and there are various pains and penalties for those who neglect to take it.—*Illustrated London News*.