

"A HEAVEN-BORN STATESMAN."

That there are men specially endowed with gifts of government there can be no question, any more than we can question that some men are specially gifted as to poetry, or music, or eloquence of speech, or philosophical or scientific research. But as many rhymesters are called poets, and many dull men are called eloquent, and many mere dreamers are called philosophers, and many mere dabblers in science get called scientific by the undiscerning crowd—so many a poor halting politician gets called and believed to be sent of heaven, or at least to have heaven on his side. Popular instincts often blunder. A man is held to be great when he is only suave, and governs by the power of smiles and familiar nods. Another is held to be great and wise because he is stern, speaks only now and then, and when he speaks is sententious. Another is taken to be a great politician when he simply has a boundless conceit, or a resistless ambition. In this world of men with half-opened eyes, the seeming is often taken for the real, and the merely blatant as the expounder of wisdom. The world is ordained to government; the need for kingship, some ruler, some man with natural capacity for guiding his fellows, is a fact of human consciousness, as truly as is immortality or the being of God. All devils are at the bottom of all being, and among them there is no kingship, no system, no organized rule. Above them the beast, with less fury, a little more light, and a faint shadow of rule. Above the beast, the most barbarous of men, each one a law to himself, all acknowledging a chief, it may be, in time of war, but the strongest of arm is the chief. As the masses rise in culture, in reverence for law and order, so do they recognise the demand for a responsible executive, who shall make right laws and justly administer them. The great *idea* is that the ablest man, that is, the wisest, the most peaceful, the most just, the most pious, shall give guidance to all those below him. Quite naturally we call God, the all of wisdom and justice and truth, by the highest name, KING—the German *König*, which means *can-ning*, able-man. So quite naturally did people get to acknowledge some kind of capacity as that which fitted a man to rule; he took the supreme place by right of his own nature. It seems natural and just that the man *able* to rule should be invested with all the symbols of rulership. But, as Carlyle puts it, "the finding of your able man, and getting him invested with the symbols of ability, with dignity, worship, royalty, kingship, or whatever we call it, so that *he* may actually have room to guide according to his faculty of doing it, is the business, well or ill accomplished, of all social procedure whatsoever in this world. Hastings speeches, parliamentary motions, Reform bills, French Revolutions, all mean at heart this, or else nothing. Find in any country the ablest man that exists there; raise *him* to the supreme place, and loyally reverence him: you have a perfect government for that country." That is so; for Mr. Carlyle is careful to say that by the ablest man he means the truest-hearted, the noblest and justest *man*. Human nature reverences great men, and often honours many a little one under the mistake that he is great. If mankind could have been content to seek for its great man until it had found him and then placed him in the place of power, it would have led the world quickly to its ideal state, and made of earth a very heaven of order and good rule. But wearying of the constant recurring need, it vested the power in a family, or in a class—a blunder always, yet a national one, since the nature of us tends to indifference, if not to laziness. But the world may not perpetuate a blunder long—God interferes. Supreme power vested in the able man makes of him a true king. Supreme power vested in the *unable* man makes of him a despot. And genius for government can no more be transmitted from parent to son than can the gifts of poetry or eloquence. So the King got to have one he called Prime Minister. The King wore the symbols, the Premier bore the rule. The King might take his throne by right of birth, or point of sword, but the idea was that the Premier should take his place by right of his capacity. He is the mind of the nation, as the Church is its conscience, and the King is its will. That is the "heaven born statesman," who can demonstrate by the policy he has, that he is possessed of insight, and instinct and culture of mind and heart to govern the people for their lasting good.

But we must carefully distinguish between the mere politician and the true statesman. The mere politician is a fortune hunter; place or fame is the end of his hopes; he will embrace any policy that shall promise him that end: he takes his inspiration from a party—takes counsel of his leaders, and not of the wants of the people. But the true statesman is a man of heart as well as head; his principle inspires and governs his policy—his action is determined by his deep and sober conviction. His first and last thoughts are not how to have place—but how to *do* for the people. He will uphold the prerogatives of the crown, if the upholding of them tend to the popular good, or, if broad and just rights demand, he will smite royal prerogatives to the dust. The true statesman will be a pious man, for he cannot conceive of just rulership until he has consciousness of the sovereignty of Almighty God. He will have no reverence for law and order unless he has put himself under law, and in the way of good order as to mind and heart

and outward conduct. The basis of a people's life is religion—the inspiration of their life is a true thought of God—the quickening hope of their life is heaven—the strong impulse of their life is faith: and the man who is not in sympathy with what is soberest and truest and best in the people cannot guide them well, for he cannot elevate them. Nothing on earth is more majestic than the majesty of government—nothing on earth is blacker with shame, and more humiliating than the prostitution of it. When it is good, it is also great, and God-like—when it is bad, it is also mean, and devil-like. Mere ecclesiasticism may be separated from true statesmanship, but Religion never. That is the root soil in which the great trees and the delicate flowers must grow.

Where shall we find this MAN—this *able*-man to guide the people? The royal public in the sublime exercise of its own power will take no trouble to find if heaven has let such a man down into its midst or no. King multitude is great and wise by the light of nature, and takes men as representatives who recommend themselves: men who have hardly skimmed the surface of political life with sober, serious thought of bringing peace and a blessing to the land. They have thought of the honour accruing—of possible increase in business—of social position—but little, if at all, of the deep needs of the people. We are flung into chaos, and some of us are crying up through this din of confused tongues, this clash and collision of parties, that heaven would send the able man to rule us for our good. A Despot with a wise mind, a good heart—and only one life—would do the work needed to be done, for Despotism is not an unmitigated evil any more than Democracy is an unmitigated good.

WHEREIN LIES THE MERIT OF OUR INDIAN POLICY?

In a recent number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, a writer in the "Contributor's Club" applies himself to meet an impression which appears from his statement to be prevalent in the United States, that the Indian policy of Canada is very greatly superior to that of our American friends. He endeavours to meet this idea with a recital of the advantages—real or supposed—which we enjoy in Canada, which in his opinion fully account for our greater success in dealing with our red man. First of these advantages is placed that of the different antecedents which are assigned to us and ourselves in this connexion. The writer remarks that the American colonists inherited the ill-will and hostility enkindled between the two races by the oppressive conduct of the early British fur-traders, while Canada, on the other hand, has, more fortunate, fallen heir to the more friendly traditions of the French *régime*. But, while it is certainly true that the French were not such thoroughly selfish colonists, as the British traders, still we would think that the bitter and cruel wars under Frontenac and other French governors must have left pretty deep impressions also, and that the British conquest of Canada did by no means leave us with a docile and friendly Indian population that had buried the hatchet and desired henceforth only to smoke the pipe of peace. Not a little assuredly was left to be done, in transforming men who had been excited to massacres and maddened by breaches of faith, into peaceable and friendly neighbours.

We may quite admit the next advantage pointed out as existing on our side, that, namely, of the much smaller number of Indians with which we have to deal. But against this we must set the much larger population of the United States, *as a whole*, although, of course, we must not forget how rapidly it has grown; and also that the difficulty of dealing with a very large body of wandering savages does not by any means diminish in the exact ratio of the increased numbers of a white population. But we certainly cannot accept the position that our Indians, as a whole, are "tame Indians," while the American Indians are "wild" ones, or that the rough work of taming and civilizing had all been done before we began to deal with them at all. The Iroquois of Canada were as bloodthirsty and savage as any tribe under United States dominion, and were so at the time when De Vaudreuil escaped as a refugee to France. And we find, moreover, that they were very nearly as numerous in 1812 as they were in 1760. Nor, even now, are our Indians all wild basket-makers and fishermen when not civilized altogether, as this writer would lead his readers to suppose. In the appendix to the last edition of "Ocean to Ocean," Principal Grant tells us that "The Blackfeet have always taken rank as perhaps the boldest and bravest tribe in America, and it was generally thought that they would give trouble sooner or later, but we have learned that they desire our friendship and protection." Clearly then, the different character of Canadian and American Indians cannot be the true explanation of our greater success.

We may admit, also, to some extent, the great advantage it has been to Canada to have a great United organization like the Hudson's Bay Company, which has been of such important service in establishing a firm and broad basis of friendly trading relations with the Indians of the North-west. But it has been successful in doing this, just because it has acted upon a principle which our American friends have too much overlooked, that of a *faithful discharge of obligations*. The superiority of our Indian policy may have been overrated, and we may not have allowed sufficiently for exceptionally favouring circumstances; but the main cause of the tranquillity and good order which have characterized our Indian relations has been simply that whatever arrangements we have made we have strictly adhered to, or have trusted the fulfilment of them to thoroughly trustworthy agents, while if in any case the agent should act oppressively, the Indians can appeal to their superiors with full certainty of redress. Of this we had an instance the other day, when a deputation from the Tuscarora Indian Reserve presented an appeal to the Minister of the Interior against alleged malpractices of the agent, and were cordially received and dismissed with promise of an official enquiry.

How matters stand in this respect on the other side of the line, may be