

vigilant in maintaining the rights of Britain he had no aspiration to extend British territory even where he was invited to do so. It is not generally known that it is owing to Lord Aberdeen's recognition of the fact that the Pacific Slope of California was part of the natural heritage of the United States of America that the British flag is not flying at this moment over the Golden Gate. When the annexation of Texas brought the United States to the verge of war, the Mexican government offered to cede California to Great Britain. Lord Elenborough, then First Lord of the Admiralty, strongly urged upon his colleagues the importance of accepting the offer. "Let us obtain possession," he cried, "while we can, of the key of the northwest coast of America." His arguments produced some effect upon Sir Robert Peel, then Prime Minister, but Lord Aberdeen set his face as a flint against the scheme. However tempting a bait San Francisco might be to a power which had the onerous naval responsibilities of Great Britain, he peremptorily refused to permit the acceptance of an offer which would have been considered as an unfriendly act to the United States, and which might not improbably have landed the Republic and the Empire in hostilities. Such a possibility might be faced in maintaining existing rights, but nothing could justify risking such a disaster in order to establish British authority where it had not previously existed. Sufficient has been said to show that Lord Aberdeen, the Prime Minister, recognized the necessity of maintaining a good understanding between the United States and the British Empire to induce him to swerve a hair's breadth from the policy which he recognized as both just and expedient.

After the repeal of the Corn Laws, which Lord Aberdeen strongly supported, the Peel administration fell, and on the fall of Lord Derby's Government Lord Aberdeen became Prime Minister of the Queen, a post which he afterwards resigned under circumstances as honorable to him as it was discreditable to some of his colleagues. Her Majesty accepted his resignation with unfeigned regret. She immediately gave him the vacant Garter, and wrote him a letter which is worth while introducing as indicating the kind of relations which existed between the Sovereign and her Prime Minister.

WINDSOR CASTLE, February 7, 1855.

Though the Queen hopes to see Lord Aberdeen in a short while, she seizes the opportunity of approving the appointment of the Hon. and Rev. Arthur Douglas to the living of St. Olive's, Southwark, to say what she hardly trusts to do verbally, without giving way to her feelings. She wishes to say what a *pang* it is for her to separate from so kind and dear and valued a friend as Lord Aberdeen has ever been to her since she has known him. The day he became her Prime Minister was a *very happy* one for her; and throughout his ministry he has ever been the kindest and wisest adviser, one to whom she could apply for advice on all and trifling occasions even. *Thus* she is sure he will ever be—but the losing him as her first adviser in her Government is *very painful*. The pain has been to a certain extent lessened by the knowledge of *all* he has done to further the formation of this Government in so loyal, noble and disinterested a manner, and

by his friends retaining their posts, which is a *great security* against possible dangers.

The Queen is sure that the Prince and herself may ever rely upon his valuable support and advice in all times of difficulty, and she now concludes with the expression of her warmest thanks for all his kindness and devotion, as well as of her unalterable friendship and esteem for him, and with every wish for his health and happiness.

Mr. Gladstone at the same time wrote a letter of sympathy, saying that he never regretted having urged him to accept "the seat of power, to which he had a paramount claim, conferred by superior wisdom and virtue." On his resignation Lord Aberdeen remained in retirement. He kept up the relations which existed between him and his monarch and continued to bring to bear upon all questions his keen, impartial judgment, which made his counsel so valuable to statesmen of both parties. Lord Aberdeen never quite forgave himself for his share of the bringing about of the Russo-Turkish war. His one cause of regret, he wrote in 1857, was that he did not at once retire, instead of allowing himself to be dragged into a war which, though strictly justifiable in itself, was most unwise and unnecessary. So deeply did he take it to heart that he refused to rebuild the parish church of Methlick. He said he would leave the work for his son. No one knew why he refused until after his death, when it was found that he shrank from building a church owing to the share which he had in the Crimean War. The suggestion came to him from the text in the Book of Chronicles: "And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God; but the Word of the Lord came to me saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars; thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight."

Her Majesty visited him in 1857 at Haddo House. Three years afterwards he expired in London, leaving a memory of a singularly stainless career marred by no selfish or unworthy trait. No man was less of a self-advertising politician. A ripe scholar, a sagacious statesman, and a profound and prescient thinker, he constantly displayed an unshaken courage in maintaining the principles to which he was attached and defending what he believed to be true against all odds. Few British statesmen have had a greater position and a larger share in the shaping and molding of their country, and none have ever emerged from the ordeal with a higher reputation for a love of justice and an unshaken devotion to the cause of peace.

In many respects the Governor-General of Canada reminds one of his grandfather. In one respect he differs from him. The Prime Minister was so reserved that his real character was only known to his intimates. His grandson is affability itself; his urbanity, his courtesy, and his general amiability enable him to be sympathetic with all sorts and conditions of men; indeed, he has almost carried matters to the other extreme. The grandfather hid his natural kindness behind a mask of almost forbid-