

European statesmen knew that when advice was offered them it was given them for their own good, that no selfish scheme lay behind it, but they knew also that if they ventured to stray from the path of political rectitude there was a power supporting that kindly advice, and those words of wisdom, it would be not well for them to have to reckon with. They knew how stern that friendly visage could become, how quickly that open hand could close, and how hard that hand could strike if any attempt was made to presume upon its usual attitude of peace and goodwill. They knew that, however peaceful the inclination of the King might be, and however unwilling his people might be to engage in hostilities, the warlike instinct dormant there would brook no wrong, and suffer no injustice.

Thus it came about that on many occasions when the peace of Europe was threatened the well-timed and friendly mediation of the British Sovereign averted what might have led to terrible consequences.

But no monarch, however gifted, can be powerful abroad who is not loved and respected at home. And at home the King was both loved and respected. The great secret of his success lay in the mutual confidence which existed between him and his people. The King knew and trusted his people, and the people knew and trusted their King. They loved him as a man because he sympathized with them in their sorrows and rejoiced with them in their happiness. They respected him as a King for his wisdom and moderation. They felt that the affairs of state were safe in his hands, and that, however slight his actual power might be, it would always be exercised for the good of the people at large, and not for the benefit of any class, however influential.

One great element in the King's success was his versatility, and the tact which enabled him always to say and do the right thing. He never made the stupid mistakes that very clever people often do. Nor did he ever allow his kindly and affable demeanour to be taken as allowing any undue familiarity. Even as Prince of Wales his dignity was as carefully maintained as