

Empire. "Empire is absolute rule" he claims, and the sovereign of the British Empire is by no means an absolute ruler. The real power lies in the House of Commons, which decides finally on all matters.

And yet the Queen had great power—but a power which differed in kind from that wielded by a Tudor or a Stuart, or even by George III. She kept herself always well informed upon affairs of state and insisted on knowing everything. To each of her great ministers she expressed her wishes freely and asked what she would. Whether or not she had her way, she treated them all, Whig or Tory, with good faith and simple loyalty. Every one of them learned to love and to know the sovereign who was frank with him, and never intrigued against him, who demanded the fullest confidence and gave in turn as much or more than she received. As her Empire grew, as her children married into the royal families of Europe, she became a great monarch. She was a lover of peace and undoubtedly helped to straighten many a tangle in European politics. She sympathized with the people of the United States in their long struggle to work out their destiny under a republican form of government, and her influence has always been for a good understanding between these two Anglo-Saxon peoples. It was as a diplomat and a peace-maker that the Queen wielded greater power than any other English sovereign. No other had the field at home or abroad for equal activities.

The period of the Queen's reign has been for Britain a triumphal march. A spirit of enterprise, endeavor and achievement possessed her people. Colonization, emigration, research, discovery, invention, have proceeded with unparalleled swiftness. The British Empire has increased in area nearly four millions of square miles. New nations have arisen in Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The population of the British Isles has increased from twenty-five to forty-five millions, and many millions have been added in other portions of the Empire. The trade of this great Empire has grown by leaps and bounds. Railways, canals, steamboats, telegraph lines, cables, telephone systems, electric railways and a thousand great inventions have developed trade, industry and commerce. Mrs. Browning, George Eliot, and Charlotte Bronte; Carlyle and John Stuart