

was thus cushioned and made easy in order that it might be willing to give it a continued acquiescence. The hinge of the whole situation was this: the government itself was not to be a substantive power in matters of finance, but was to leave the money power supreme and unquestioned. In the conditions of that situation I was reluctant to acquiesce, and I began to fight against it by financial self-assertion from the first, though it was only by the establishment of the Post Office Savings Banks and their great progressive development that the finance minister has been provided with an instrument sufficiently powerful to make him independent of the Bank and the City power when he has occasion for sums in seven figures. I was tenaciously opposed by the governor and deputy-governor of the Bank, who had seats in parliament, and I had the City for an antagonist on almost every occasion. — *Undated fragment.*

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With reference to the Crimean war, I may give a curious example of the power of self-deception in the most upright men. The offices of colonial secretary and war minister were, in conformity with usage, united in the hands of the Duke of Newcastle. On the outbreak of war it became necessary to separate them. It evidently lay with the holder to choose which he would keep. The duke elected for the war department, and publicly declared that he did this in compliance with the unanimous desire of his colleagues. And no one contradicted him. We could only 'grin and bear it.' I cannot pretend to know the sentiments of each and every minister on the matter. But I myself, and every one with whom I happened to communicate, were very strongly of an opposite opinion. The duke was *well* qualified for the colonial seals, for he was a statesman; *ill* for the war office, as he was no administrator. I believe we all desired that Lord Palmerston should have been war minister. It might have made a difference as to the tolerance of the feeble and incapable administration of our army before Sebastopol. Indeed, I remember hearing Lord Palmerston suggest in cabinet the recall of Sir Richard Airy.

In that crisis one man suffered most unjustly. I mean Sidney Herbert. To some extent, perhaps, his extraordinary and most just popularity led people to refrain from pouring on him those vials of wrath to which his office exposed him in the eyes especially of the uninformed. The duties of his department were really financial. I suppose it to be doubtful whether it was not the duty of the secretary of state's department to deal with the question of supply for the army, leaving to him only the management of the purchasing part. But I conceive it could be subject to no doubt at all that it was the duty of the administrative department of the army on the spot to anticipate and make known their wants for the coming winter. This, if my memory serves me, they wholly