

themselves that at the beginning of last August we had an Expeditionary Force which could be mobilized in a few hours, and a fleet ready for action. The successful conduct of the government of an empire demands the same high qualities as any other work of note ; and we have not in fact been such muddlers as other peoples, and we ourselves, sometimes imagine. We have often seemed to be in a state of intellectual muddlement because we were trying to take all the facts into consideration, and were thinking over the permanent principles of our policy. In this sense, but in this sense only, we have always been a muddled people whenever we were engaged in empire-building.

When a man takes a few selected facts of any situation into account and rules out all the others, if those selected facts happen to dominate he will be easily and quickly successful, but otherwise he will be lost ; likewise the actions of a nation which has set its heart on achieving a certain object for a few years will be easy to follow and to appreciate, while the actions of those trained through hundreds of years will be unselfconscious and perhaps mysterious ; but if the training has been good they will be very effective.

Under Elizabeth we set ourselves with a tremendous energy to lay the foundations of the empire of the New World ; we laid them deep and systematically ; Elizabeth encouraged our sea rovers as far as she dared, she also encouraged the men of the Low Countries as her auxiliaries in the war against Spain. Burleigh, quite systematically, built up industries from the point of view of sea-power ; the fisheries were to be encouraged as a school for seamen ; we were to make our own powder and our own cannon, we were to have a plentiful supply of naval stores—and as a result, in 1588, our fleet was