

You cannot draw a straight demarcation between the different qualities of a man's mind. There is imagination and imagination. You may have a faculty for picturing what a given person would have done in given circumstances, and, when you begin to work in that way, you may devise the circumstances. But that imaginative quality may be totally devoid of the capacity to co-ordinate the possibilities of events, and to prepare yourself and others to act against them. You may not have what may be called projective action.

Projection is Precious Quality.

When a statesman—or a man who is in the place where a statesman ought to be—gives to those who go to him on large affairs the impression that he doesn't "catch on," he bewrays a defective imagination. He does not project himself into and take possession of the conditions that are offered to his mind. Nothing can make up for that defect. It is like the lack of an ear for music, or a void where the sense of humor ought to be. For imagination is the apprehension of things not seen.

Projection—throwing yourself into another man's circumstances—is a precious quality, which, broadly, is imagination. Take an illustration:—A general election was demanded to settle a political controversy. A free lance, who had been in much political fighting and had never been defeated, was in unaccustomed alliance with a party. There came a day when he was sure that the election demanded was going to occur. He went to a leader of his new friends and said: "The Government is going to the country soon, and our success will depend on how we prepare for the fight in the next three weeks. What have you done?"

Something had been done. Certain territory had been handed over to local men, who were competent in their own spheres. But nothing had been done to

anticipate calls for aid that would surely arise beyond the preparation from local headquarters. The Whip had not enough imagination to anticipate the unexpected. If he had been left alone he would have cut an inglorious figure in the campaign. He was short of apprehension of things not seen. Nothing could make a successful political general of him. He was born for lieutenantancy.

Imagination compels a man to throw away half the accustomed things when an unaccustomed situation arises. Every great captain in the field has at some time or other abandoned schemes, powers, positions, which his inferiors have regarded as necessary to victory. He has done it because he could project himself to an hour when the retention of these things would hamper and perhaps destroy him. He knew the difference between the detail and the all-essential.

War Will Compel Changes.

Imagination in public service teaches a public man that when real crises happen the ordinary methods of the traditional politician, whose eyes are always fixed on the dust, count for nothing. If he cannot learn that wars and the things which wars breed will make a certain fool of the sharpest little manipulator who ever mistook cuteness for character, he is not of this age: he belongs to a type that to-morrow will be as out of date as if it had been buried a dozen years.

The war will compel changes, and more changes, in the way we look at affairs. No man can tell precisely what they will be. But every man who can discern the signs of the times will know that the old order of partisan littleness, which has too long usurped the noble name of politics, is giving way speedily before a more imaginative quality of public devotion, which can see a new dawn and a fairer country over the next hill.