

that from the day of her accession to the Throne, the Queen exhibited, under all available circumstances, an abounding and lasting friendship towards that country which but for the fault of a vicious government would still have formed part of her dominions—a friendship which could not fail to touch the minds and hearts of a sensitive people. This was manifest in times of peace, but still more in time of war, and especially in the supreme hour of trial of the United States during the civil war. In the early months of the civil war, as perhaps few now remember, an event took place which almost led to hostilities between Great Britain and the United States. An American man-of-war stopped a British merchant ship on the high sea, and forcibly abducted from it two envoys of the confederate government on their way to Europe. That act was a violation of the territory of England, because England has always held the decks of her ships to be part of her territory. It not only caused excitement in England, but it caused excitement of a different kind in the United States. The action of the commander of the war vessel in making the abduction aroused a great deal of enthusiasm among the people of the United States, which was reflected even on the floor of Congress, and evoked many meetings and resolutions of commendation. Lord Palmerston was at that time the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and he was not the man to brook such an affront. He had a despatch prepared by the Foreign Minister, who, if I remember rightly, was at that time Lord Russell, peremptorily demanding the return of the prisoners and an apology. The despatch which had been prepared was submitted to the Queen; and then was revealed the good sense and the kind heart of the wise and good woman at the head of the British nation. She sent back the despatch remarking that it was couched in too harsh terms, and that it ought to be modified to make possible the surrender of the prisoners without any surrender of dignity on the part of the United States. This wise counsel was followed; the despatch was modified accordingly; the prisoners were released, and the danger of war was averted. That act on the part of the Queen made a most favourable impression on the minds of the people of the United States. But that was not all. Three years, or a little more afterwards, at the close of the civil war, when the union of the United States had been confirmed, when slavery had been abolished, when rebellion had been put down, the civilized world was shocked to hear of the foul assassination of the wise and good man who had carried his country through that ordeal. Then the good heart and sound judgment of the Queen were again manifested. She sent a letter to the widow of the martyred president—not as the Queen of Great Britain to the widow

of the president of the United States; but she sent a letter of sympathy from a widow to a widow, herself being then in the first years of her own bereavement. That action on her part made a very deep impression upon the minds of the American people; it touched not only the heart of the widowed wife, but the heart of the widowed nation; it stirred the souls of strong men; it caused tears to course down the cheeks of veterans who had courted death during the previous four years on a thousand battlefields. I do not say that it brought about reconciliation, but it made reconciliation possible. It was the first rift in the clouds; and to-day, in the time of England's mourning, the American people flock to their churches, pouring their blessings upon the memory of Britain's Queen. I do not hope, I do not believe it possible, that the two countries which were severed in the eighteenth century, can ever be again united politically; but perhaps it is not too much to hope that the friendship thus inaugurated by the hand of the Queen may continue to grow until the two nations are united again, not by legal bonds, but by ties of affection as strong, perhaps, as if sanctioned by all the majesty of the laws of the two countries; and if such an event were ever to take place, the credit of it would be due to the wise and noble woman who thus would have proved herself to be one of the greatest of statesmen, simply by following the instincts of her heart.

Sir, in a life in which there is so much to be admired, perhaps the one thing most to be admired is that naturalness, that simplicity in the character of the Queen which showed itself in such actions as I have just described. From the first day of her reign to the last, she conquered and kept the affections of her people, simply because under all circumstances, and on all occasions, whether important or trivial, she did the one thing that ought to be done, and did it in the way most natural and simple. Thus, on the day of her accession to the Throne, when she had to hold her first Council of State, when she had to meet veterans of the army and dignitaries of the church and the state, she performed all her duties in such a way as at once to win the hearts of all present. The Duke of Wellington expressed his gratification in the blunt language of an old soldier by remarking that if she had been his own daughter, he could not have expected her to have done better. So it was on the first day, so it was every day, so it was on the last day of her reign.

She was a Queen, she was also a wife and a mother. She had her full share of the joys and sorrows of life. She loved, she suffered. Perhaps, though a Queen, she had a larger share of the sorrows than of the joys of life, for as Chateaubriand somewhere says, we have come to know how much there is of tears

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