

She had an extraordinary knowledge of what her people would think; so much so that I have said for years that I always thought when I knew what the Queen thought I knew pretty certainly what her subjects would think, especially the middle classes. She had extraordinary penetration, yet she never adhered to her own conception obstinately. On the contrary, she was full of concession and consideration. She spared no effort, I might almost say she shrank from no sacrifice, to make the task of conducting this difficult government easier to her advisers than might otherwise have been.

"My Lords: I feel sure my testimony will be abundantly sustained by all who were called to counsel with her. We owe her a debt of gratitude for her influence in elevating the people, and gratitude for her power over foreign courts and sovereigns in removing difficulties and misrepresentations which sometimes prevailed, but, above all, I think we owe her gratitude for this. By a happy dispensation her reign coincides with the great change which has come over the political structure and institutions of this country. She bridged over the great interval separating old England and new England. Other nations have had to pass through the same ordeal, but they seldom passed it so peacefully, easily, and with so much prosperity. I think that future historians will look upon her reign as the boundary separating the two constitutions of England, which has changed so much. We have done it with a constant increase of public prosperity, without friction and without endangering peace or the stability of civil life, with, at the same time, a constant expansion of the Empire, which grows more and more. We owe all these blessings to the tact, wisdom, passionate patriotism and incomparable judgment of our late sovereign."

The most conspicuous feature of the numerous tributes to the memory of Queen Victoria was the almost universal exaltation of her personal virtues above her influence as Queen. President McKinley in his message of condolence spoke of her "noble life which has won the affection of the world." Sir Thomas Lipton said: "She exalted the womanhood of the world." Labouchere, who rarely agreed with her policy as Queen, said she was "the mother of her people." Ex-President Harrison said, "More hearts pulsated with love for her and more knees bowed before her queenly personality than before the Queen of Great Britain." Bishop Potter said, "People who had never been to England and never expect to go felt the same personal devotion to her." Pro-