

The SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE SECTION

A Magazine for your Reading Table

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS' PAGE



I'M NOT one of those people who are particularly fond of the artificial peace movements between nations.

They're often engineered by well-meaning and worthy folk who do not take the facts of human nature into account. On both sides of the Atlantic there is a large and increasing number of individuals, of whom I delight to be one, who desire to see the continuance of good relations between the four hundred and ten millions of people in the British Empire and the hundred millions of people in the United States and its dependencies.

It seems to me that one of the obstacles to good relations between the United States and Great Britain is the immense ignorance regarding each other prevailing among the masses of the people on both sides of the Atlantic. It would be hard to say whether the Americans are more ignorant than the British, or the British more ignorant than the Americans. There is certainly a colossal and abysmal lack of general knowledge and of even general desire to know each other. The vast masses of people in both the new and the old worlds are really islanders—they rarely travel out of their own country. I suppose that the number of Americans who know anything of the British Empire, by actual personal travel throughout it, is less than half of one per cent.

I am not referring to the summer butterflies who flutter across the ocean to Paris and London, or to the English globe-trotters who, having seen New York Harbor, Niagara Falls, the Grand Cañon of the Colorado and the Golden Gate, feel themselves competent to write a book on Americans and American habits and character.

When I refer to the half of one per cent, I mean business men, trained observers, newspaper men, people with family ties in both countries, who know something beyond the hotel and surface life of the travelers.

THERE is an old Chinese saying: Once seeing is far better than a thousand times hearing or reading. An Englishman who has lived here three or four months amidst American family life, or an American who has resided in any part of the British Empire, begins to realize that the people are singularly alike. The fact that they speak the same language, with variations, renders it speedily possible for those who have not advanced in years of prejudice, to understand, and therefore to like, each other; but unfortunately, taking the mass of the whole peoples, those who get wise—to use the American phrase—are at least as limited in number as asserted.

To travel as much as possible and to make known the result of



Lord Northcliffe

HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

By the Right Hon. Alfred Harmsworth

Baron Northcliffe

their observations is the duty of those, who, like myself, think that good relations of English-speaking peoples are good for the rest of the world.

It is only a small drop of knowledge in the sea of ignorance, but it is better than nothing at all.

The reading of books, written by representative authors of other countries, I believe to be a very excellent means of forging bonds of better understanding. Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, for instance, is a book that has performed a great service in showing English people a real, though considerably exaggerated, type of the American woman—it is a book that I think has done good. That America reads such a great and growing

number of books by British authors, and that thinking, book-reading Americans have their attachments to England based on knowledge gathered through established works like those of Dickens and Thackeray, is a reassuring fact. Certainly such knowledge cements and makes for a better mutual understanding.

The importance of international games as a coalescing factor is, in my opinion, over-emphasized. At the time the Olympic games were

held in London, I was staying with some Quaker friends in Germantown, Pennsylvania, and they begged me to use my influence at home to bring about their suppression. Unfortunately I did not possess the influence and, also unfortunately, the altruistic Frenchman with whom the idea of the Olympic revival originated, knew very little about games and did not consider the complexities of international relationship.

I am one of those who shall advocate that after the next Olympic games, Great Britain shall retire from them; but Great Britain cannot do so at present, because the English are in honor bound to participate at Berlin in 1916.

[T is only those international games in which the rules and system of the competitive peoples, and the spirit, are exactly the same—as in polo, golf, lawn tennis, yachting, chess and others—that are distinctly productive of good.

Without being pessimistic, I regard the matter of international relations as one of the most delicate and difficult problems of statesmanship; but the British Empire and the suzerain American Republic do possess a tremendous asset in a common language; and if, using a common language, they cannot, in moments of difficulty, arrive at a common understanding, it is because one or the other does not want to.

Northcliffe

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