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### The Queen's Wish.

"If, when I am dead," said Victoria several years ago, "the English people honor me enough to think of what I would wish and what I would pray for on their behalf, I would have them always associate my name with peace and the amity that promotes the ends of justice and of right. The English people have been exceptionally blessed by Providence, and greater things, I believe, are expected of them by the Almighty; and in what way could they please Him more than promoting the ends which, during my reign, have been the means of causing so much general happiness, so much widespread content? I have the confidence to believe that such is their destiny, and nothing that I know of would give me so much pleasure as to be assured that my spirit could in any way watch over and aid in the accomplishment of that noble work."

These remarks were made in the course of a conversation with a maid of honor, who wrote an account of it for a British magazine. According to her report, Victoria was seated at a window of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, looking out on Spithead, which was crowded with ships.

"I have often been struck with the sight," said the queen, "but it never appeared, I think, so wonderful as today. Just now it seemed so astonishing to me as to be hardly real. I suppose I am getting an old woman; and as one nears the end of the chapter that closes this earthly pilgrimage the underlying spiritual fact is apt to strike one more than it formerly did, while the hard material shell, with its tendency to corrode and drop away, becomes less and less important."

"Just now, when you came in, I was dreaming, day-dreaming. Seeing all those ships coming and going, my spirit seemed to be carried away, first by one and then by another. Now I was in Australia, now in India, Africa I saw, and Canada; then all the islands and their people; the rocks of Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Aden and Seychellers passed before me. And at every port I saw ships entering and leaving, and men at desks receiving and transmitting messages. And it was everywhere: 'What are they doing—what are they thinking—in England?' When I was a child, my dear mother took me about a great deal, and I saw people at work in all kinds of ways and in every sort of industry. The things I saw made a deep impression upon me, and I have never ceased to think of them. All these people ask is to be allowed to do their daily task in peace, to earn their daily bread, and to have a little fringe of play. See what they have done since I came to the throne by their thought and toil; they have made this empire what it is."

"The work will continue after I am gone, but I sometimes wonder in what way. Sovereigns have their influence, and when they die it stops, or seems to. In only a few instances it is otherwise. King Alfred turned the national mind to learning, and perhaps the influence he exerted never wholly died. William I. set a hammer going that in the end turned a nation of iron into a nation of steel. The last Henry made the country Protestant. Elizabeth—the great Elizabeth—transformed it into a nation of heroes."

"Her influence surely has not died," observed the maid of honor.

"No; it would seem as if something of her spirit still inspires the people who speak the tongue she spoke—still sends them in those winged ships around the world. I can hardly hope to leave such an influence; and yet under my rule the people who were counted by hundreds have grown to thousands, the thousands to millions; and that has come about because, for the most part, my reign has

been one of peace. There have been wars; but they have been to establish peace, to give people security in pursuing the arts of peace.

"Wars for that end are justifiable, but for no other. My influence has ever been for peace. Only under a regime of peace can the people grow in those graces and virtues which is the aim of our religion to inculcate. There is no reason why a nation devoted to peace should become weak and effeminate. The labors of men in their peaceful callings, in mines and quarries, on the sea, in the furnaces and iron works, building railways and laying submarine and other cables, exploring and planting new colonies—all these labors are as arduous as those of the soldier, and they call out stronger and more enduring qualities. I would not have the English people study less and practice themselves less in the art of war; I would not have them show one whit less of that high spirit that has carried them so far; but, if it were in my power, I would have all these ships, when they meet in the ocean, and when they touch at a port—I would have them say to each other, 'Friends, the watchword is Peace.'"

A critic of Victoria, W. T. Stead, editor of the British Review of Reviews, declares that she has prevented two wars and would have prevented a third had she been able to have given close attention to the circumstances leading up to it. Her moderation, combined with that of her husband, did much to prevent war with America over the Trent affair. In 1863 Lord Russell and Lord Palmerson would have committed England to war with Germany in defense of Denmark if the queen had not compelled them to take back their warlike dispatches and adopt a policy of neutrality. Her failing eyesight, in Mr. Stead's opinion, kept her from watching the dispatches to South Africa, which resulted in the recent war. At the time of the Crimean trouble she was for fighting. On all other occasions her influence was on the side of peace. Victoria was not expressing an unreasonable request when she uttered the wish that her name should always be associated with peace and amity.

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