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978-1-107-59433-3 - Cromwell on Foreign Affairs: Together with Four Essays on
International Matters

F. W. Payn

Frontmatter

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ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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TOGETHER WITH

FOUR ESSAYS
ON INTERNATIONAL MATTERS

BY

F. W. PAYN.

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PREFACE.

THE *Times* newspaper of Feb. 18th, 1901, contained an article by its Cologne correspondent in which the writer observed, "The German hatred of England has never been greater than it is to-day."

Now in connection with this statement the author of these essays would make two observations. The first is that the one faculty which in his judgment is more essential than all others to anyone who wishes to apprehend the truth about international matters consists in being able to look at and to judge of facts in the *mass* as opposed to *details* and in preventing the judgment from being misled by those lesser details which are constantly being drawn like red herrings across the trail which is followed by the seeker after truth in international affairs. What are the most salient facts in the international politics of the world at the beginning of this century? The author would reply, "The rivalry for Empire between England, Germany and Russia." Now of these three nations we believe that the latter owing to the barbarism from which the vast majority alike of its peasantry and of its *noblesse* are but slowly emerging is not yet sufficiently matured to be in the running with the other two. Consequently we are brought to the question of the probable result of the contest for Empire between the English and the Germans and it is a question highly interesting for any Englishman worthy of the name. It is idle to deny the existence of that contest, alike in trade and in imperial concerns. It may be masked at one time or openly confessed at another, but it is going on all the time. It is

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but recently that the Kaiser in an unguarded moment of “ivresse” told the Reichstag when demanding more warships that “they were to be used against England, his great rival.”

And again (vide the *Figaro*, Feb. 15th) in another such moment he spoke of “England the trade rival and the political adversary of Germany.”

The *Times* of May 31st published a luminous letter from an Afrikaner whose racial dislike of the English is self-evident, but whose eyes have been wonderfully cleared by the bitter uses of adversity. The words of people in this frame of mind are usually worthy of attention. He says: “If the English left South Africa to-morrow our land would be immediately occupied by the Germans, who boast that they can land 50,000 men per month in South Africa, all completely equipped, and that they can easily keep half a million of soldiers there for five years. I know now why that astute statesman the late Prince Bismarck said that Africa would be the grave of the British Empire. Between 1882 and 1888 he sent experts to the Transvaal to gather information of its mineral wealth. The German geologist and the foreign gold-mining engineer both agreed that the gold reefs of South Africa would prove far richer than any others ever known, and *German policy has ever since then been directed to getting possession of the Transvaal by any means and at any cost.*”

“Hence the constant encouragement we received to flout Great Britain. Hence the celebrated telegram to Kruger. The strong disgust at that telegram shown by the English was so unlike their usual humble submission to insults and interference that the hopes of the Germans to obtain the Transvaal without fighting for it were seriously upset. Then arose the great German craze to obtain sea power at any cost, for the Transvaal gold would pay for a hundred of the biggest fleets the world has ever seen. But fleets cannot be created in a very few years, however lavish the expenditure may be.”

“The world had grown accustomed to see the British Government and people act more cowardly, currish, and

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submissive than the Chinese or any other people on earth, and no man living would have believed or could have foreseen that even a very small majority of English people would possess sufficient patriotism to endure war for any cause whatever if it would cost 20,000 lives and 60 million sterling. (Editor's Note. All this about "humble submission to insults" and "cowardly curish acts" merely spells one name—Gladstone. "If I had humiliated my countrymen before the world as often as Gladstone has," said Bismarck, "I should never dare to look them in the face again." To think of the mighty English people with Gladstone as their figurehead!) Therefore when the general election showed that a considerable majority of the burghers of England and Scotland were still loyal to their own land, even in spite of the war, it was necessary for Germany to temporize, so when Kruger arrived in Europe it suited German policy to flout him publicly. This was done to delay war with England *until the German fleets shall be strong enough to overmaster the fragments of the British Navy* which may remain after the big war which France and Russia will be cajoled into waging against England. Germany's one object is to take the place of England in South Africa. Germans love not the Afrikaners, but they love the African gold."

At a time when the English Press is but slowly recovering from a severe attack of Kaiser-mania (brought on by a cleverly-timed visit to this country), it is as well occasionally to look ugly facts in the face.

As regards the probable issue of the Anglo-German struggle the author believes that two passages in this book may be found to possess some significance, because the facts there set out throw light on the German national spirit. They are on pages 63 and 72. It is the difference in national spirit which alone determines the result in the long run.

INNER TEMPLE.

May, 1901.

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