

A long talk with Steed in regard to Disarmament Conference. The Times will throw its influence towards keeping the U.S. and Eng. together, feels that the most serious catastrophe for the world would be a break between them. To do that Japan must be made to understand that in spite of her treaty, if she forces trouble with us - and my own feeling is that we may be the ones that force the trouble though I didn't have a chance to tell S. that - England will stand with the U.S. Steed thinks Japan is diligently preparing along our coast, says he got evidence in British Columbia that they had knowledge of the strategic points, submarine stations, etc., etc., planned. Thinks they are very cocky in British Columbia. Warned the Admiral of our fleet who was in the harbor of what he had found, cabled Beatty also. Is convinced that Western Canada, as far East as Winnipeg, feels as Columbia does about the Japs and would stand in with us in case of trouble, whatever England did. Says that Montreal and Toronto docks and the Canadian Pacific railroads are the supporters of Japanese labor in British Columbia. Thinks the success of the Conference will depend largely on delegations. Wants to get Churchill, Balfour (?) and Cecil for England, but thinks they very likely will appoint Curzon and Lloyd George; that it would be impossible for the Times to criticize the delegation once it was appointed; i.e., they must stand by commissioners as you do by ambassadors; but they propose to do their utmost to discredit Lloyd George and Curzon beforehand, which is of course what they are doing.

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Describes Curzon as bumptious and reactionary. Tells very amusing tale about Times' review of Margot's Reminiscences. She wanted Morley to do the book. Steed asked him. He said, Yes, he had not read it but thought he should do it because it was Margot. After reading it he told Steed that he thought his age

would prevent his reviewing it. Steed then turned it over to the Times' chief reviewer, a most competent and experienced man, gave him two weeks and told him to treat it as he would a new volume of Mme. de Sevigne's letters. Says the review was masterly, filled four columns, ended with comment that, after all, as she had always dramatized herself, one should not be too hard on her. Asquiths very angry. Tried to find out who wrote it. Steed tells them all Times' reviews are anonymous. They fix on Curzon. Finally go so far that writer of review suggests that the Times deny that Curzon did it. Steed says, No, that Curzon is just the kind of person to be pleased because the public thinks that he could do so brilliant a thing and that he will take the credit. He does so, and it goes on until the recent break between the Times and the foreign office, and the refusal of latter to give the Times news. Then in an editorial describing the kind of person that Curzon is, they mention the fact that he was not the author of the review of which he has been taking credit.

Steed's idea is that the serious press will have to steer the Conference; says he doesn't believe that there will be definite plans to start with. Take it that he is a little doubtful about Hughes. Says Hughes has never had an experience of a conference, particularly that he doesn't know the wear and tear that it means. Says very wisely that Hughes has been sticking in Washington through this intolerable summer and will not come fresh to the fray.

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Out of the talk I am more convinced than ever that the great function of the press ought to be fighting suspicion, stamping out anything like baiting the Japs, fostering anti-British feeling; that its great business should be trying to clear away suspicion, having facts and demonstrations for any intrigue that goes on. Steed calls Lodge a rattlesnake.