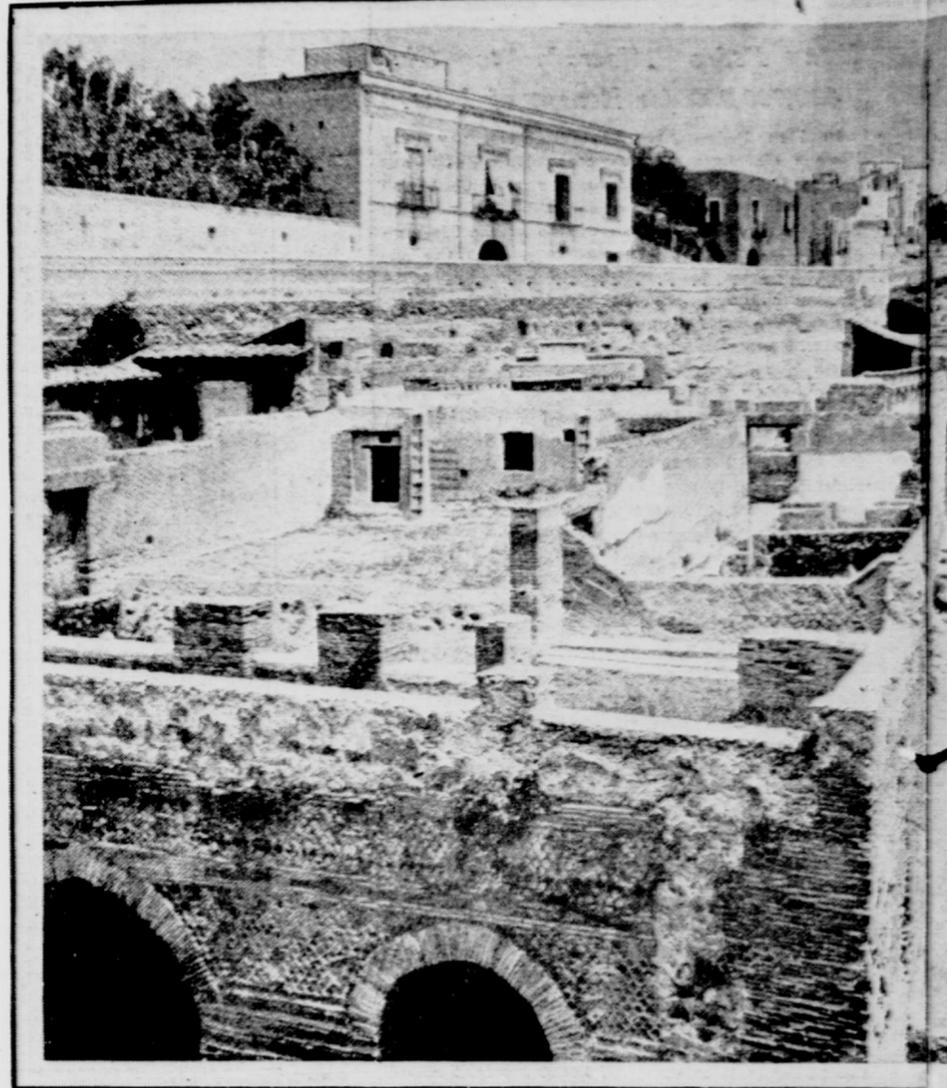


BRITISH ENVOYS.

Sir Mortimer Durand, Predecessors and Probable Successor.

Considering the peculiar relations that exist between the United States and Great Britain, and the extraordinary complexity of the questions that are continually cropping up between the two nations the post of British Ambassador at Washington may well be regarded as the most important office in the diplomatic service of King Edward. Its incumbent is required to fulfil the duties of his mission in such a manner as to promote harmony and good will with the government and people to whom he is accredited, without, however, sacrificing any of the interests confided to his care; to execute the instructions received from his London chief, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to satisfy those British colonies which by reason of their proximity to the United States are bound to become from time to time involved in controversies with the latter. This is never an easy matter; for sometimes the interests of the colonies clash with those of the mother country, while at other times the colonies put forward pretensions and claims upon the United States which the imperial government in England does not feel disposed to endorse. Indeed, the British Ambassador at Washington is always exposed to the danger of being held up to obloquy in England's North American or West Indian dependencies for having neglected to champion with sufficient vigor issues which it has been impossible to reconcile with the views of the Foreign Office. One of the most thorny problems, in fact, confronting the administration in London is the question whether popular sentiment in the colonies shall be contented at the expense of American good

Mortimer's perilous mission to Cabul in the previous year, and spoke with emphasis of "the admirable qualities of tact, patience and sincerity which he had displayed in so conspicuous a degree throughout an extremely delicate negotiation." These are eminently the virtues of an ambassador, and precisely those that were most calculated to earn for Sir Mortimer among Americans the friendly confidence enjoyed by his two predecessors, Lord Pauncefoot and Sir Michael Herbert. Then, too, there is nothing that appeals so much to the American people and to the English speaking race in general, as the virtue of courage, and of this Sir Mortimer has given several notable manifestations, enjoying the distinction, unique among England's ambassadors abroad, of having been "mentioned in the dispatches" for "conspicuous gallantry under fire" when assisting General Sir Charles Maegregor to recapture the British guns at the battle of Sherpur. He likewise took part in the historic march from Cabul to Candahar as the political member of the staff of Lord Roberts, and at the request of the latter received, although a civilian, the military decoration conferred by Queen Victoria for that splendid feat in the history of India. Still more admirable was the pluck which he displayed in connection with that subsequent mission to Cabul the successful fulfilment of which was lauded by Lord Lansdowne as above described when resigning the viceroyalty of India. The previous embassy to Cabul, under the ill fated Sir Louis Cavagnari, had succumbed to Afghan fanaticism, being massacred to the last man. Yet in spite of this Sir Mortimer refused to accept any military escort, preferring to depend on the honor of a ruler whose Moslem creed taught him that no faith need be kept with a Christian. "Confidence begets confidence. Trusting his safety and that of his mission to my care, I have protected him." These were the words of the Afghan sovereign, Abdur Rahman, the most remarkable Ameer of his line, and the opinion



THE MEAGRE EXISTING EXCAVATIONS AT HERCULANEUM.



THE FINE NEW CITY HALL AT CARDIFF, WALES.

This municipal palace cost only \$1,500,000. In its construction 157,000 tons of Portland stone were used and 11,000,000 bricks. It has 81,116 panes of glass. The corridors are magnificently decorated with mosaic and marble. The decoration of the council chamber is worked out in oak with white inlay.

—Illustrated London News.

which he expressed of Durand was to the effect that he was "a very clever statesman." It was also known when Sir Mortimer called here that he had first won fame out in India for his services on the northern border line of the Indian Empire, where he developed marvellous skill in the management of the turbulent tribes of the mountains that may be said to buttress the frontier. There he became versed in the endless intricacies of Russian intrigue among the semi-barbarous races and princes of Asia and won the good will of the authorities of Calcutta by accomplishing results without any trouble or noise. It was this, indeed that led to his being summoned to Calcutta, where, acting for a time as private secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Lytton (known in literature as "Owen Meredith"), he was advanced to the important post of Foreign Secretary of the Indian Government, which controls the latter's wonderfully organized secret service both within and beyond the Indian frontier in Asia, maintaining duly accredited agents at the courts of all the feudal rulers of Hindustan as well as in Central Asia. At the Calcutta Foreign Office he was in his element. His work was without noise or pretence, patient, flexible, and, while marked by breadth of view, yet never neglectful of details. Moreover, he managed to keep peace along the border, to restrain the too impetuous soldiers who thought Central Asia may be brought under English influence by a dash from Peshawur, acquired the confidence of a home government that has the real knowledge of the questions to which it tries to give definite answers in Parliament, and knew

will or whether the importance of retaining the latter shall be regarded as superior to all other considerations. It is this that renders the post of British Ambassador at Washington so difficult a one to fill. It is only men of altogether exceptional qualities that can be selected for the office.

These qualities Sir Mortimer Durand possesses in a marked degree, and his announcement that he is about to retire from the service of his government, which has kept him busily employed away from home for nearly two score years, has been received with such expressions of universal and sincere regret in all parts of the country that they cannot but prove a source of consolation to himself, to Lady Durand and to their daughter for the sorrow which they must necessarily feel in parting from the many warm friends whom they have made here. A little over three years have elapsed since Sir Mortimer arrived in America, the first envoy of the loftiest rank in the diplomatic service who had filled the office of a full fledged ambassador in a European capital before being appointed to the United States, and who regarded his transfer from a first class embassy abroad to Washington in the light of a highly prized promotion. He had been chosen for the post by Lord Lansdowne, then head of the Foreign Office in Downing Street, who had learned to appreciate his merits while Viceroy of India. Indeed, in the farewell speech which Lord Lansdowne delivered at Calcutta, in January, 1894, just before leaving India, he dealt largely with Sir



ARCHERY IN THE DEEP. SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS SHOOTING FISH.

In the South Seas and in various groups of islands in the Indian Ocean the aborigines shoot fish with the bow and arrow. The art is extremely difficult, as in taking aim at an object under water the archer has to allow for refraction. If he were to aim directly at the fish as he sees it he would, of course, miss. Long practice has, however, made the natives very expert in this sport.

—Illustrated London News.

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