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DYOTT'S DIARY

‘No ignoramus hypocrites drink here ;
Ye lips of saints with hands of hell forbear ;
Profane not (Regicides !) our loyall bowles,
Sacred to Charles, his health, and all true souls.’

On silver tankard in possession of R. A. Dyott, Esq.



Mr. Robert Peel

DYOTT'S DIARY

1781-1845

A SELECTION FROM THE JOURNAL OF
WILLIAM DYOTT, SOMETIME GENERAL IN
THE BRITISH ARMY AND AIDE-DE-CAMP
TO HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III.

EDITED BY

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BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

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DYOTT'S DIARY

1827-1845

THE DIARY OF GENERAL WILLIAM DYOTT

January 1.—I again commence a New Year, and with ¹⁸²⁷ the most fervent and devout mind acknowledge the blessings and protection afforded me through the past by an all-gracious Providence. _{January}

2nd.—Some snow on the second. The distress amongst the manufacturers still continues in various parts of the country, and large subscriptions entered into for their assistance. The agricultural interest under great difficulty from the scanty harvest of last year, indeed I verily believe the labourers in husbandry are undergoing as great deprivations to the full as the manufacturers.

On the 16th my dear Bill left us to return to Westminster; a sorry wet day, but thank God he escaped, though an outside passenger, without inconvenience. The death of his Royal Highness the Duke of York on the 5th of the month was an event daily expected. His loss was greatly lamented, and most sincerely regretted by the army. I believe a more kind-hearted or more benevolent man did not exist. I had not the honour of knowing much of the Duke, but always experienced from him the greatest kindness and affability.

On the 20th the last sad ceremony took place for the interment of the remains of the departed Duke of York;

ÆT. 65 the funeral procession was only in part military, there not being sufficient troops to pay due compliment to a Field-Marshal and Commander-in-chief. His Grace of Wellington was appointed to succeed to the important station. The Duke, although so great a captain and having so frequently led the British troops to victory, is not a general favourite, and he must make great exertions to obtain the popularity possessed by his royal predecessor.

25th.—Special sessions at Wichnor Bridges, Sir Oswald Mosley,¹ Mr. Hall, and Mr. Taylor, and also a meeting of deputy-lieutenants. A good deal of business, particularly respecting the new act of Parliament regarding weights and measures. We had a number of defaulters fined, and their weights and measures forfeited. A most wholesome and necessary law; the impositions practised by hucksters and others in country villages wanted correction. No news as yet from our troops at Lisbon; whether war seems uncertain, though it is thought the monkish bigotry of the Spanish court may lead to extremities.

March On the 12th March I finally bid adieu to Fotherly, and from the kind hospitality of my excellent friends at Packington I went there. My dear Eleanor having already been enjoying their hospitality for more than a week. I was really sorry to leave Fotherly, where I had enjoyed my health and friendly kind attention from my neighbours, more especially from dear Mrs. Case, whose unabated friendship and real goodness I shall cherish and admire to my dying day.

The 20th, the Anson hunt races, but I neither attended the running nor the evening revelry. Eleanor went to the

¹ See vol. i. p. 297.

ball; there was a great show of company in the stand; 1827
dashing young nobles, who came for the races and the courting.

On the 24th I at length took full occupation of dear, dear Freeford, where I slept for the first time for fourteen years. With meek and due reverence I humbly implore the divine Providence to grant me my health to enjoy the latter years of my life at the residence of my ancestors.

31st.—Sessions at Wichnor Bridges; met Sir Oswald, Hall, Inge, and Taylor. Much anxiety respecting the alterations in the corn laws. The agricultural interest greatly depressed by the last unfavourable season and alarmed lest Government may not afford land due protection. The occupying farmers (who are now become a different class from what they were fifty years ago) reason upon the subject from practical knowledge, supported by good sense and sound argument. At their meetings, instead of confining themselves to *prices* as heretofore, they reason and argue upon the best and most improved system of husbandry, and upon the laws as affecting particularly their occupations. Most boisterous weather all March, though it marched off rather more tranquil, and was succeeded on the 1st April by calm and milder weather.

April

On the 14th I took Mr. Grove in my carriage to Stafford for the quarterly meeting of the gaol committee. I was not in good trim for the expedition from a continuation of rheumatick gout; returned to a late dinner. Crime still increasing, as appears from the numerous commitments, and though no dark offences, the numbers are a sign unfavourable to the morals of the people. The great increase of population in some degree accounts for the

ÆT. 66 increase of prisoners, but does not answer the calculation of modern depravity.

On the 25th the country much agitated on account of a change of ministers, and every one in suspense during the adjournment of Parliament for the Easter holidays.

At length a new ministry was formed under Mr. Canning,¹ who was appointed first Lord of the Treasury with secession of all the late ministers, except Lord Harrowby² and Lord Bexley.³ The new cabinet all favourable to the Catholick emancipation. The Duke of Wellington resigned the situation of Commander-in-chief and Master-General of the ordnance; in the latter he was succeeded by Lord Anglesey. No individual was ever so universally regretted as Mr. Peel,⁴ as perhaps no minister was ever so universally respected.

June On the 20th I set out for Buxton, and took Dick with me. I travelled with my own horses, slept at Ashbourne, and arrived at the Great Hotel, Buxton, by one o'clock next day. The weather for some days had been raw and cold, and unlike midsummer. I found it unfavourable for an invalid on my arrival at Buxton. What an extraordinary change the country puts on after passing a few miles from Ashbourne; stone walls, without the appearance of shrub or tree. Very little company had arrived at Buxton. We found at the Great Hotel Major-General O'Neill⁵ (brother

¹ George Canning. See vol. i. p. 345.

² See vol. i. p. 330. Lord Harrowby was President of the Council.

³ Nicholas Vansittart, first Baron Bexley (1766-1851); chancellor of the exchequer 1812-23; chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

⁴ The Duke of Wellington said: 'I never knew a man in whose truth and justice I had more lively confidence.'

⁵ Major-General O'Neill was born in 1780, and succeeded his brother Charles, second Viscount O'Neill, in 1841; he died in 1855.

of Lord O'Neill's), a Mr. Lee from Cheshire, and a young man from the neighbourhood of Buxton of the name of Thornewill. We found a public table the day of our arrival (which had not previously commenced for the season), and I took a bath before dinner after consulting a Mr. Buxton, an apothecary. I found our accommodation at the hotel very good and comfortable. The weather for the season continuing cold, I found it necessary to wear my great-coat. The terms of the house were reasonable; eight shillings per day for diet of all kinds, and two shillings per night for bedroom; wine and extras to be paid for as extras. A commodious coffee-room in the house, to which you subscribe six shillings for the season, with the different London papers. I bathed in what is called the new bath for a week, but subsequently in the old common bath, which I much preferred, as I fancied I found greater relief from it. I tried the water, but found it did not agree with me, and as my complaint certainly partook as much of gout as of rheumatism, and consequently attended with inflammation, it would have been adding fuel to the flame.

I remained at Buxton nearly three weeks, that is, to the second of July, when I took my departure improved in general health and the pains in my legs and thighs considerably lessened, but the attacks in my arms and hands from the shoulder joint continuing the same. Three or four days after my arrival at Buxton my old acquaintance Sir William¹ and Lady Jane Houston arrived with her ladyship's son and daughter, Captain and Miss Long, as also

¹ Sir William Houston, G.C.B., G.C.H., general and colonel of the 20th regiment (1766-1842); married Lady Jane Maitland, daughter of James, Earl of Lauderdale, and relict of Samuel Long, Esq.

ÆT. 66 Mr. and Mrs. Langford Brook; they were a valuable addition to our society. Buxton races took place whilst I was there. I walked to the course one day; pretty good sport, I believe, but few attendants except pedestrian *populace*. Dick went to the ball in the evening; only nine ladies honoured the rooms. I found the hay harvest nearly as forward at Buxton as when I left home.

July On the 11th I went to the sessions, a full bench and a full calendar, upwards of one hundred prisoners for trial.

My son very unwell and confined to his room; he was complaining at Buxton and came home far from well. Warm dry weather, the country greatly in want of rain. Freeford I think in better plight than most of its neighbours. Lord George Cavendish¹ decided to sell the Tamhorn estate much to my surprise. It was put up to auction in London on the 13th, but no bidder, and was therefore bought in for thirty-one thousand pounds. Probably no estate had ever been so long in the occupancy of the same family, the Astleys having held it upwards of two hundred years. Mr. Peel was the only person in treaty for it, and he will probably be the purchaser. I have passed many pleasant days at Tamhorn, and shall greatly feel the disappointment of being deprived of the excellent sporting it afforded me.

August Finding that my son Dick was not obtaining the object for which I sent him to the University, I thought it right to come to some decision as to continuing.

After pointing out to him the unnecessary waste of time

¹ Lord George Cavendish (1754-1834), youngest son of the fourth Duke of Devonshire; created Baron Cavendish of Keighley and Earl of Burlington 1831. Represented the county of Derby for several years in Parliament.

at Cambridge and the equally waste of expenditure, he was not fitted for any publick office, I proposed the army to him. His duty and affection to me had ever been most exemplary, and on the present occasion he stated his anxiety to do whatever I thought best to advise. As I found it was not likely for him to succeed in the law, I determined on the army, and on the 7th I took him to London with a view to obtain an ensigncy in a marching regiment, but on my arrival in town and consulting friends I was persuaded to apply for a commission in the Guards. From the situation of my dear children it becomes a matter of moment at my time of life that my eldest son (who is to represent me, and to whom his brother and sister must naturally look up) should be so situated, that when necessary he may be within call, and which might not be the case if he belonged to a marching regiment quartered in some distant part of the world.

8th.—My friend Levett of Wichnor requested I would take up a barouche for him to London and bring a new one in return, a much more magnificent style of travelling than I had been accustomed to and at a moderate expense as he paid the heavy proportion of the post horses. We left Freeford about half past four A.M. I took my own horses to Coleshill, from whence we reached London in little more than twelve hours. What an improvement in the roads in my remembrance, and what a more than extraordinary increase of magnificent buildings of houses, etc., on approaching London by the Regent's Park. In the course of twelve months the number of houses in the direction from the end of Portland Place perfectly astounded me. We went to a hotel in Cork Street (the

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Burlington), a good house. On our changing horses at Coventry, we heard of the alarming seizure Mr. Canning, the Prime Minister, had undergone. He died in the morning of the day that we reached town.¹ We lodged at Burlington Hotel in Cork Street—a very good house.

On the 10th I had an audience of Sir Herbert Taylor² and made application respecting Dick. Sir Herbert told me that the Colonels of the Guards had the disposals of the commissions, and as I was known to the Duke of Cambridge,³ he advised my writing to him, which I did accordingly. As my dear Bill's holidays were to commence on the 15th, I called upon Dr. Goodenough⁴ to ask his permission to allow Bill leave from the 11th, which was granted, and having met my worthy friend Sir Brent Spencer⁵ in town and promised him to pay a visit at the Lee on our return home, we accordingly left town about five in the afternoon in my friend Levett's new barouche, and proceeded by way of Uxbridge, Amersham, and Missenden to the Lee, where we were received in the most hospitable manner and where we remained until Tuesday the 14th.

Left the Lee about six and proceeded by way of Uglesbury and Buckingham to Towcester and so home. We passed my friend General Fitzroy's between Buckingham and Towcester. I should have given him a call if he had not been from home. We dined at Dunchurch and reached

¹ Canning died on August 8, and Lord Goderich became prime minister.

² See vol. i. p. 317.

³ Prince Adolphus Frederick, seventh son of George III., born 1774; for some years viceroy of Hanover.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 344.

⁵ Sir Brent Spencer (1760-1828), general; commanded at Aboukir Bay and Alexandria, and served in the Peninsular War.

Freeford before seven. I should imagine that travelling as far as expedition is required must have arrived at perfection from the very fine state of the roads and goodness of the horses. We travelled from the Lee, ninety-nine miles, in little more than twelve hours, including a stoppage to dine. Lord Anglesey has journied from London to Beaudesert in something less than twelve hours ; that is one hundred and twenty-five miles.

The 23rd, the archery at Hollybush, a most splendid banquet, much more so than usual ; the company not quite so numerous as heretofore. It was a beautiful fine day and well calculated for the sports ; only Eleanor and myself, as my dear boys were not invited. We had rain the day I returned from London, which was greatly wanted, but it became very dry again, to the great injury of *my turnip* crop, as well as to the general produce of the country. The harvest this year was not abundant, particularly on the light soils, though well saved through the fineness of the weather. Corn varied little for the last three months. Wheat from 8s. to 9s. Barley from 5s. to 5s. 6d. Oats from 4s. 9d. to 5s. 6d. Butcher's meat, beef 7d., mutton 7d., veal from 6d. to 7d. Wool low. I sold mine for 27s. the tod.

On the 28th Dick set out for Liverpool to embark for Ireland on a visit to General O'Neill,¹ with whom we had formed an acquaintance at Buxton. As the General lived near Mr. and the Miss Thompsons,² I thought it a good opportunity (particularly being friends of the General's) to let Dick be in their neighbourhood, should they have any wish to notice him.

¹ See p. 4.

² Relatives of Dick Dyott's mother.

ÆT. 66
September

I called at Beaudesert on the 2nd and sat an hour with the Marquis, who gave me a full account of the late change in the administration, particularly as far as concerned himself, both as to his appointment to the ordnance and subsequently a Lord Lieutenant to Ireland. I mentioned to the Marquis that there were reports in the country unfavourable to Mr. Canning as to having obtained the Premiership by indirect means. He told me he was satisfied and *certain* that the report was unfounded, and that he knew from undoubted authority every particular (which he detailed to me), and that Canning had respectfully recommended to the King to allow the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel to form an administration, and that on their declining that he (Canning) then agreed to take the office of first Lord of the Treasury.

The next day, 12th September, Mr. William and Lady Jane Peel¹ dined at Freeford to meet the Littletons; the latter went home after the ball. I did but little this year shooting, I had been suffering long with rheumaticks, and found that 66 could not cross a stubble or fence like 26 and that the zeal for the sport had greatly subsided.

On the 18th I dined at Sir Robert Peel's to meet Mr. Peel (no longer Secretary of State), who was on a visit to his father. He had purchased the estate at Tamhorn from Lord George Cavendish for thirty-two thousand five hundred pounds, including the timber. As cheap a purchase as ever was made. I believe it was in consequence of my persuasion that he was induced to buy it. I invited him to take

¹ William Peel was the second son of the first Sir Robert Peel; born 1789; married 1819 Jane Elizabeth, second daughter of Stephen, Earl of Mountcashell; privy councillor.

a day's shooting at Tamhorn, which he did on the 22nd. 1827
We did not find so many partridges as usual.

An ensigncy being vacant by purchase in the 63rd, I applied to the Duke of Wellington to allow me to purchase it for Dick (conceiving it better to have him employed until a vacancy offered in the Guards), to which his Grace very kindly consented. I communicated the circumstances to my dear boy accordingly.

18th and 19th October again to the sessions, upwards of a ^{October} hundred prisoners for trial; how melancholy the increase of crime; when my brother was sheriff in the year 1798, at the spring sessions there was not *one* prisoner for trial. I observed what I considered a curiosity at Teddesley; green peas in as high perfection as in July. I returned from Stafford on Friday to Teddesley to call for my daughter, and home to dinner. Captain Percy had met with an accident in the morning by his gun bursting, which injured his hand considerably.

24th.—Went to Wichnor, and intended to have gone next day to the Moira Bath, but was prevented by incessant rain; not that I felt the want of a hot bath, having discovered great benefit from the use of a medicine; the prescription given me by Mr. Edmund Peel¹ (called Vances Pills). They are intended for gout or rheumatism. I have found them of infinite use to my general health since I have used them, now for more than two months. I gave the receipt to Lord Harrowby² and several other friends. I omitted meeting with Lord Anglesey at the Stafford

¹ Edmund Peel was the third son of the first Sir Robert Peel; born 1791; married 1812 Emily, second daughter of John Swinfen, Esq. of Swinfen, co. Stafford; sometime M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme.

² See vol. i. p. 330.

ÆT. 66 sessions ; his lordship was called there to give evidence on an appeal against a conviction for deer stealing, to prove that Cannock chase belonged to him and that he had given no leave to kill the deer, but to persons employed.

He invited me to Beaudesert for a few days, but I had engagements [that] interfered except to dine on the 22nd ; a large party staying in the house.

In looking over an old account-book of my grandfather's I found a memorandum stating that the pools at Freeford had been freed and cleaned in the year 1759, cost[ing] seventy pounds. A large sum in those days ; what will it cost me to do the like, I fear three times that sum. I also found in the same book that the rooks first began to build at Freeford in the year 1760.

On the 17th Miss Bakewell left us. She made rather a curious request, ' that I would allow her father's picture to be put up in the dining-room over the side-board in the place of the ox painted by Ward.'¹ I of course agreed, not knowing whether her ultimate object might not be beneficial to my children. Miss Bakewell is one of the most singular characters I know. With much good sense, much meanness of disposition, an inability of mind that leads her to acts bordering on insanity, added to great vanity and open at all points of flattery, and with but few good qualities to rebut her failings.

December On the 4th my dear Dick arrived from his long visit to his friend General O'Neill in Ireland, where he had passed his time much to his satisfaction, and although he was in the neighbourhood of his unfortunate mother's connexions and made a proper endeavour to see them, they declined.

¹ James Ward (1769-1859); engraver and painter, chiefly of animals.

On the 6th in the morning, when I first looked out from my window, I observed five or six swans upon the pool; they remained but a short time; this is a rare occurrence. 1827

On the 9th December I took Dick to London per Liverpool mail for the purpose of introducing him to the commanding officer of the Coldstream Guards, and also to take some steps respecting his appearance with the 63rd regiment. We reached town by ten o'clock, and I took up my residence with my old and valued friends in Orchard Street [the Wrights]. Dick went to Fladong's Hotel in Oxford Street.

December 10.—The next morning we called at the Horse Guards and saw Colonel McDonald.¹ I was sorry to find from him the distant prospect Dick had for obtaining a commission in the Coldstreams, there being two candidates before him and no promised vacancy. I called upon the Adjutant-General, who told me as it was probable the 63rd would come home, there was no use in Dick's going out to Portugal, and therefore I had better apply for two months' leave for him, which would be granted accordingly.

11th.—I had an audience next morning of the Commander-in-chief's Secretary, Lord Fitzroy Somerset,² to request he would present my duty to the Duke, as I had not a personal opportunity to express my thanks to his Grace for his favour both to my son and by appointing Robert Dale to the 63rd, and that his lordship would also name to the Duke my hope that the original destination of

¹ Colonel McDonald probably refers to Sir John Macdonald, adjutant-general of the Horse Guards, who died in 1850.

² Lord Fitzroy Somerset, first Baron Raglan (1788-1855); youngest son of the fifth Duke of Beaufort; secretary at the Horse Guards 1827-52; succeeded the Duke of Wellington as commander of the forces.

ÆT. 66

the 63rd might continue if it did not interfere with other arrangements. Lord Fitzroy said he did not think it likely their destination for New South Wales would be changed. We dined with my friend Stephenson. I was hurt and disappointed not to see Bill, but he had committed some *irregularity* that it was necessary to show my displeasure, and therefore I declined seeing him until his return home on the 13th. Sir W. Gordon, the Quarter-Master-General, was very kind and good-humoured respecting the destination of my regiment as to its going to New South Wales. I was much hurried during my stay in London; the improvements ever since I was last there surprised me, particularly the Treasury and Downing Street, especially the latter, which was a nest of filth, dirt, and thieves.

On the 13th I left town per Chester mail. Three nice Westminster lads inside. Charles Inge, Phillimore, and a young Bagot (a son of Dick Bagot's). Outside Andrew Gresley and Bill. On our way down we received information that the up mail had been overturned at Welford and an inside passenger, a Mr. Egerton, killed. The accident owing to driving at the rate of ten or eleven miles an hour, dark night and blind horses. Melancholy, melancholy.

1828 January 1.—The year commenced with fine open weather, though frequent rain.

On the 5th to Stafford, the quarterly meeting of the gaol committee. Lord Talbot,¹ Mr. Robert Levett, and self. The increase of crime and consequent increase of prisoners still continuing. Three hundred and fifty-eight in gaol and House of Correction, one hundred and thirty for trial. Sir Eardley Wilmot² addressed a letter to the magistrates on

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

² Sir Eardley Wilmot, probably born 1783; died 1847.

the increase of crime ; he did me the honour to transmit me a copy, in consequence of which I wrote to him my remarks and opinions on the subject. I urged the preference of *prevention* to any *effort to cure*, and that the modern system of false benevolence encouraged crime from the very slight penalty attaching to the committal, and unless *Houses of Correction* were really made what they were designated, it was in vain to expect a reaction in the number of inmates. 1828

Young Nigel Gresley came here on the 5th and stayed until the 9th, on which day a stag was turned out in the King's Piece for Sir Clifford Constable's¹ hounds. It was intended to have uncartered him on Whittington Heath, but the concourse of foot people was so great, I was requested to let him start from hence. I regretted much that I consented, as it greatly disappointed the *numbers* on the Heath. He was an uncommon fine creature ; when he leaped from the cart, he walked on a few paces most majestically, looking unconcerned at the few persons about. He then trotted round the field, alarming most dreadfully a pony at grass and two heifers. He then came towards the stables, jumped over the iron hurdles and went into nearly the middle of the pool, where he remained for a quarter of an hour, and then started across the field on the opposite side, pursued in about ten minutes by the hounds. After a circuit nearly by Sutton and Canwell he returned and took the water at Swinfen into the small pond by the Bath, where he was secured. We dined at Colonel Madan's.

14th.—My dear Bill returned to Westminster for the last

¹ Sir Thomas Aston Clifford Constable of Tixall, co. Stafford ; born 1807 ; succeeded his father as second baronet 1823 ; married the youngest daughter of Charles Joseph Chichester, Esq. of Calverleigh Court, co. Devon ; died 1870.

ÆT. 66 time with a hope that he may succeed at the election in May to a scholarship at Christ Church, Oxford. I fear there may be some unfair proceedings in order to obtain the election to Christ Church in behalf to a junior to Bill, because he (Bill) is not the son of an old Westminster. I have had a correspondence with the headmaster on the subject, and have only asked and required *fair play*.

February On the 14th February it was our petty sessions at Shenstone, but the morning was so severe, from the violence of the wind and snow, I did not stir out of the house. Great changes in the administration. The Duke of Wellington, first Lord of the Treasury, having unhorsed Lord Goderich¹ from his seat and turned out the Whigs, who had joined Mr. Canning and continued with Lord Goderich's administration. I cannot attach to the Duke of Wellington the necessary requisites for a Prime Minister, nor should I imagine his disposition is of that cast to conciliate men at all adverse to his measures. I cannot conceive that Mr. Huskisson² and he can be play-fellows, although the former is Secretary of State. They *sparred* too openly on the corn question. The agricultural interest just now is in a sad state with the prices of produce. Wheat 7s., Barley 4s., and Oats 3s. Beef 6½d., Mutton 6½d. Store pigs dear.

I went up to Beaudesert on the 24th after church to take leave of Lord Anglesey, who had arrived the previous

¹ Frederick John Robinson, Viscount Goderich, afterwards first Earl of Ripon (1782-1859); prime minister 1827; secretary for war and the colonies 1830; president of the board of control for Indian affairs 1843-6.

² William Huskisson (1770-1830); colonial agent for Ceylon 1811-23; treasurer of the navy and president of the board of trade 1823-7; reduced many import duties; supported Catholic emancipation; killed on the Manchester and Liverpool railway.

evening on his way to assume the sovereignty in Ireland, and was to proceed the following morning. I was grieved to find him so unwell, and which his looks betrayed. He had been very ill since leaving Beaudesert in December. I took the liberty of saying I wished he could give up his embassy, as his health was so precarious. He said he must go, having been so urged by all parties, Protestants and Papists. I asked him in what manner he should make his publick entry into Dublin. He said he purposed, if the weather permitted, on horseback. 1828

I replied I was glad of it, as I should like to have the Pats see him on horseback.¹ He remarked he should enter on horseback, but possibly might return in a hearse. Poor fellow! I fear I may never see him again. He mentioned to me in confidence that during the late disagreements in the ministry, he was solicited strongly by the leading men to become Prime Minister in preference to the Duke of Wellington, and which would have gratified the King. His lordship gave me a memorandum of the quantity of game killed in thirteen days in January by Lord Uxbridge and three other guns with the exception of two days when there were six guns. 1298 pheasants; 648 hares; 432 rabbits; 74 woodcock; 27 partridge. I was shocked to hear as I rode through Lichfield of the sudden death of Mr. Lister of Armitage² after only three days' illness, of what is called a constipation of the bowels. He was an able, learned man, of most agreeable and engaging conversa-

¹ Sir Walter Scott wrote in July 1821, 'The Marquis of Anglesey showed the most exquisite grace in managing his horse notwithstanding the want of his limb, which he left at Waterloo. I never saw so fine a bridle-hand in my life, and I am rather a judge of "noble horsemanship."'

² Thomas Lister, Esq. of Armitage Park, co. Stafford.

ÆT. 66 tion. He had lately undergone very singular incidents of happiness and misfortune. His eldest son had proved by his recent publications the shining acquirements he possessed in a manner highly gratifying and flattering to a parent, and his eldest daughter¹ had recently been married to Lord Ribblesdale (her cousin and head of the family), a match that must have created a degree of honourable pride in the breast of her father. On the reverse he had within a few months lost his second daughter, a blooming fine young woman of eighteen, by fever; and only the week before his own death a sister of his was called to her long home. I had a great respect and regard for Mr. Lister; he was an excellent neighbour when I lived at Hannch, and I ever found him an agreeable, intelligent companion, from whose conversation I always obtained information.

March March began with cold weather and some sharp frosty mornings. On the 5th I went to the adjourned sessions at Stafford held for the purpose of helping the judges of assize at the following week; between fifty and sixty prisoners for trial; mostly juvenile offenders and of a sad description. No proof that the modern rage for education has worked much reform. My humble opinion is 'if the lower orders are to be learned in books they will not work.'

29th.—A petty sessions at Wichnor Bridges for appointing overseers, who under the present system contribute greatly to increase pauperism instead of preventing it. If the overseer is a farmer he engages some one to perform the office; if an assistant overseer is elected he generally keeps

¹ Thomas Lister, second Baron Ribblesdale (1790-1832); married Adelaide, eldest daughter of Thomas Lister, Esq., who married secondly in 1835 Lord John Russell.

a huckster's shop, from whence is supplied to the pauper at 1828
 exorbitant gain whatever he may absolutely require for
 immediate maintenance, and for which the overseer pays
 himself. This poor system, and some change in the laws to
 repress the increase of crime, must soon be taken into the
 serious consideration of the Government or ill will befall
 the country.

On the 7th a party at dinner; amongst the rest Mr. and April
 Mrs. John Peel,¹ the son of Sir Robert; who mentioned
 an extraordinary anecdote of his father, 'that the day after
 the coronation of the King, he with thousands were gazing
 at a balloon in its ascent, when his pocket was picked of
 £520, the most extraordinary part was, (as Mr. John Peel
 remarked), that his father *with his usual luck* recovered every
 farthing.' How are we to account for what is called *luck*?
 That some men have an unusual share of good fortune is
 most evident; it is impenetrable to *man* to assign a *cause*.

I omitted that on the 5th Sir Henry Parnell² attended
 at Lichfield for the purpose of meeting a committee from
 the turnpike trustees of Liverpool road in order to consult
 on the best line of road from Lichfield to Rugeley, new lines
 being projected to the eastward by Hannch and Handsacre,
 and to the westward to pass near the entrance lodge at
 Beadesert. The latter line was agreed to, if money could
 be raised to effect the purpose. I was one of the committee,
 and exerted myself to adopt the Beadesert line in conse-
 quence of a letter I received from Lord Anglesey desiring

¹ John Peel, fourth son of the first baronet; born 1798; in holy orders, dean of Worcester; married 1824 Augusta, daughter of John Swinfen, Esq. of Swinfen, co. Stafford.

² Sir Henry Brooke Parnell, fourth baronet and first Baron Congleton (1776-1842).

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my assistance. The whole proceedings relative to the improvements on the Liverpool road have been promoted at the instance of Government, though the different trusts are to supply the needful for all alterations.

On the 8th I rode to Stafford for the quarterly meeting of the visitors of the gaol, but played a *solo* after I got there, as no one attended but myself. A miserable man had been executed at Stafford on the 5th for the horrid and unnatural crime of rape upon his two children. His name Preston. I addressed a letter to Mr. Littleton¹ on the subject of the hardship imposed on the landed interest by the present system of requiring statute duty and composition to the *turnpike* roads; likewise requiring counties to keep in repair a certain portion of the turnpike roads adjoining county bridges. I likewise called his attention to the serious tax imposed upon the landed interest by the heavy expense attending prosecutions, etc., particularly as the manufacturing districts produced three-fourths of the crime, and did not contribute one-fifth towards the expenses of preventing or curing crime. Littleton agreed to all my representations, and promised his endeavours to assist in remedying the evil.

16th.—Stafford sessions; a very gloomy meeting in consequence of the sudden death of Mr. Keen, the deputy Clerk of the Peace, a man of very superior talent, and the very corner-stone of all county proceedings, legal as well as in the civil business of the quarter sessions. There was less business than usual, and fewer prisoners, owing chiefly to the recent assizes and adjourned quarter sessions. I was interested in the event of a trial for assault, having taken

¹ See vol. i. p. 358.

the examination of the complainant, a servant of Miss Corbett's of Foothery Hall, against the guard of the Manchester coach from Birmingham. A more atrocious assault I scarce ever knew; the only defence set up was abusive language on the part of the servant. The jury, contrary to evidence, acquitted the prisoner, to the astonishment of the whole court.

I returned home on the 17th, but was recalled to Stafford on the 19th to attend a jury assembled to assess damages in a case in which I as a magistrate was concerned. I had granted a search warrant on the application of my friend Levett of Wichnor; the constable, in the execution of the warrant, seized and took possession of a *dog* (a notorious lurcher), *not named in the warrant*; the consequence was an action for trespass in the King's Bench, which Levett suffered to go by default. A *celebrated* attorney of the name of Flint¹ was employed to bring the action on the part of a determined poacher, and the attorney having with his usual cunning and chicanery made all the persons who were employed with the constable defendants, thereby preventing any of them appearing as evidence, it was suggested by the counsel (Mr. Wheatly) that I should attend in order to prove that the search was made by the authority of a warrant. Flint did proceed to try his scheme by stating to the jury that there was no warrant. My evidence therefore became necessary. The jury could not avoid finding for the plaintiff, but gave the smallest possible amount for damages, one farthing.

On the 20th I set out with my dear Dick for London on his route to join the 63rd regiment, which had arrived from

¹ See vol. i. p. 355.

ÆT. 67 Portugal about a fortnight previous, and was stationed at Dover ; I also meditated paying my duty to the King at the drawing-room announced for the 23rd, St. George's Day. We went up per Chester mail, and arrived at the Burlington Hotel *sans lit* before seven the next morning. Rainy, wet weather. We were busy in making the necessary fit-out for the young Captain. I did not attend the drawing-room in consequence of learning that his Majesty had expressed a wish that only such gentlemen as had ladies to accompany were expected. Dick and I therefore became lookers-on at the assembled crowds and the finery folks going to St. James's. I had been particularly urgent with Dick not to have money in his pockets going into the mob ; it had been better if I had applied the advice *at home*, as I had my pockets picked, though only of a small leather book in my breeches pocket containing a few trifling memorandums. My purse in the other pocket was left. Dick had a laugh against *the old cautious General*.

On Saturday the 26th my dear boy took his leave of me to enter on a new world to him, by changing from Alma Mater to the pride, pomp, etc., of a soldier's life.

May I remained in London until Friday, the 2nd May, and returned home by the Chester mail. I made my introductory bow to Lord Hill¹ (appointed to command the forces on the removal of the Duke of Wellington to be Premier), and at the same time presented my son on his appointment. I had not seen his lordship from the time we served together in Egypt. He was very civil, and told me when I wanted anything respecting my son to let him

¹ Rowland Hill (1772-1842) ; distinguished in Egypt and the Peninsular War ; elevated to the peerage 1814 ; was commander-in-chief 1828-42.

know. I met my very old friend General Hodgson in town, and dined twice with him. We have been acquainted (friends, I may [say]) fifty years lacking *one*. I found the appearance of the country much improved from the warm weather of the preceding week, and enjoyed home and the green fields far beyond the hot vapours, bustle, and noise of London, which seemed to me to have no bounds to its increase considered in my recollection. No streets beyond Portman Square, such as Baker, Gloster Place, etc., not a house between Hyde Park Corner and little Chelsea, with the exception of a few small dwellings at Brompton. No Sloane Street, no Grosvenor Place, etc.

On the 15th my dear boy Bill arrived, having bid farewell to Westminster. He did not obtain his election to Christ Church. Interest prevailed, and he was chosen to Trinity College, Cambridge. I was much disappointed, though less than I otherwise should, in consequence of Bill being so far content as to feel satisfied with the decision as far as concerned himself. At the same time nothing can justify the sort of proceeding, that of making a publick institution subservient to personal views. I hope all may be for the best, and that eventually Trinity may be as propitious to my dear boy's future prospects as Christ Church. I had intended a visit to Beaumanor on Whitmonday the 26th, to see my worthy old cousin Mr. Herrick, but in consequence of the report that the Staffordshire Yeomanry, who were to assemble at Lichfield on that day, intended to give a ball in the course of the week, I postponed my visit to gratify my dear child Eleanor for the prospect of the ball. The Yeomanry did assemble, but no ball.

The 26th my dear Dick's birthday, God bless him, and

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send him many happy returns of the day. The Yeomanry had fine weather for their field exercise, and made a good appearance. On their review day, the 31st, they gave a numerous dinner, at which I had the honour of being a guest. But what a useless expense to the county, a corps of this description. The week of their assembling (alone) costs the publick £4000. The only duty on which they are likely to be employed is on account of riots or civil commotion in manufacturing districts; and I may venture to affirm from experience during the prevailing disturbances in Nottinghamshire in the year 1812, that one troop of regular cavalry carries more efficacy than a regiment of yeomanry.¹

A repetition of *schism* in the ministry, by the *resignation* of Mr. Huskisson, or rather, as he states the matter, by his dismissal.² He, it seems, after agreeing to support what was considered a government question respecting the disfranchisement of the borough of East Retford, voted contrary. A correspondence ensued between him and the Premier, which ended in Mr. Huskisson, Lord Dudley, Mr. Lamb,³ and Lord Palmerston going out, the three latter retiring to follow their leader, the former from pleasure.⁴

June On the 16th I went with Eleanor and Bill to Wichnor to pay a visit on the return of my friends from Bath. I found

¹ See vol. i. p. 298.

² Huskisson disagreed with Wellington on the corn bill, but actually resigned on the question of the redistribution after the disfranchisement of East Retford and Penrhyn. The former was to be transferred to Birmingham, the latter to Manchester. The Government opposed the transference, and Huskisson voted against the Government.

³ Mr. Lamb was afterwards Lord Melbourne.

⁴ These men and their friends were known as the 'Canningites.' The others of the party were Charles Grant, Lord Eliot, the Duke of Portland, Lord George Bentinck, J. Evelyn Denison, and Frankland Lewis.

my old acquaintance Levett grumbling and discontented with the times ; lashing the Government on account of taxation, and dissatisfied that the general occurrences of the day sometimes fall out contrary [to] his wishes. For a sensible, well-informed man, with every comfort to contribute to happiness, there are few that puzzle and torment themselves with trifles that create misery so effectually as this good esquire ; it grieves me to observe the *self-torment* he so frequently suffers. No man more kind and hospitable, no man more capable to entertain the mind, and no man more studious to welcome his guests to his table, which is invariably splendidly stored.

On the 23rd I set out with Eleanor and Bill for a visit to my worthy old relative Mr. Herrick at Beaumanor Park. My horses took us to Ashby, and posters forward by Loughborough. We arrived soon after four. I was delighted to find the good squire as cheerful and hearty as man at eighty-five could hope or expect. I found less alteration than I could suppose in a person at his advanced age. He was, *I am sure*, happy and rejoiced to see me and my children. My cousin had made no alteration to house or grounds since my last visit ; all left for the new-comer to exercise his judgment and taste on one of the most picturesque and fine situations in England. The great *Lion* and curiosity of the place still remaining, meaning the old family coach, now upwards of one hundred years built. I took the dimensions of the *Gothick structure* as follows :— Extreme length from the splinter bar to the projection for the foot-board behind, 17 feet. Height from bottom of the door to the level of the roof, 6 feet. Width of the interior, 3 foot 6 inches. Length, 4 foot 4 inches inside. Hind

ÆT. 67 wheel, 5 foot 7 inches high. It was placed by the side of the gable end of the old barn with a thatched shed over it ; but still its present appearance gives a full emblem of what it originally was.¹

July On the 5th I went to Stafford, the quarterly meeting at the gaol. Lord Talbot² and Dick Levett attended. The celebrated Quaker, Mrs. Fry, had written to the committee to express a wish that the members of a Ladies' Association formed at Stafford might visit our female prison. I objected, not wishing to introduce *cant* into the prison, nor to suffer any person not connected with the establishment to interfere. The great increase of crime having made it necessary to use further means of punishment, the committee are to recommend to the court the erection of a building to contain eight solitary cells for the purpose of strict solitary confinement. The efficacy of which will no doubt be found useful.

16th.—Fine morning. To Stafford to quarter sessions. A full bench of magistrates and a full calendar of prisoners. The Quaker, Elizabeth Fry,³ had been visiting the gaol, and was desirous to establish a Ladies' Society at Stafford to visit the prison, but I objected to any interference of persons not connected with the establishment. Elizabeth Fry has made herself very conspicuous for several years in visiting gaols in this kingdom and in Ireland, and in other acts of a charitable nature. I daresay, in her opinion, highly beneficial, but in the opinion of *others* (*I* among the rest), not

¹ This might be compared with the ancient chariot belonging to Sydney Smith, which he called the 'Immortal,' and at which, whenever they saw it, the village boys cheered.

² See vol. i. p. 351.

³ Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845); prison reformer; induced the Government to make regulations for the voyage of convicts to New South Wales.

tending to promote the object proposed. As to the reformation of depraved character, if it cannot be effected before the individual becomes the inmate of a prison, there is little hope of material change surrounded by the essence of immorality and vice. I proposed to the court of sessions to try the effect of solitary confinement by erecting eight cells and necessary appendages for the purpose in our gaol, and obtained the consent of the court ; it is my intention to make them as irksome and lonely to the individual as possible, in order to obtain the desired effect.

I discovered a singular circumstance this morning ; going out of the front hall door, I observed a snake lying on the steps ; it was more than half a yard long, and evidently a young one. I don't remember ever to have heard of one on these premises. There was a snake's nest at Tamhorn, which I mentioned in former memorandums. Randall, the gardener, who has worked here thirty years, never heard of one until the present. A continuation of humid wet season, to the great discomfiture of those who had not made hay when the sun shone.] x

It rained more or less every day until the 24th, on which day I finished my hay after the most procrastinated harvest I ever remember. Mr. Palmer of the Bank dined with me ; he mentioned a curious circumstance respecting the care and industry of an Irish peasant, who was employed to break stones to repair the turnpike road leading to Sutton. The man, in the course of little more than a year, had lodged forty-seven pounds in their bank. The man was employed by task work. An instance what labourers may accomplish if industrious.

I sent on the 8th of August and had a better report. I August

ÆT. 67 set out with my dear Eleanor on the 8th about nine o'clock, to proceed on my sometime arranged tour to visit my noble friend the Marquis of Anglesey¹ in Dublin. The plan I had proposed was to go to Fryers in my way there, to stay a couple of days with Sir Robert Williams,² to leave Eleanor with Lady Williams ; the Baronet and I to proceed together to Dublin. After we had made our arrangements and fixed our day, Lord Anglesey wrote to Sir Robert to say he should be most happy to see us, but suggested how much pleasanter it would be for us later in the year, when he was living in the Park instead of a small villa he was at near the sea five miles from Dublin. Sir Robert sent me Lord Anglesey's letter, and stated that he certainly should decline crossing over late in the year. As I was most anxious to embrace the opportunity of making so pleasant an excursion and visit for Eleanor, I agreed to Sir Robert's wish of making our appearance in Dublin, though the Lord Lieutenant was not in state ; at the same time I felt satisfied Lord Anglesey wished us to postpone our visit. My own horses took us to the Four Crosses, from thence to Ivetsey Bank, Watling Street, and Shrewsbury, where we halted for an hour to afford me time to visit the county gaol, which I found in a very high state of regularity and good arrangement. To Oswestry to tea and stopped for the night.

9th.—Started at seven next morning to Llangollen to breakfast ; rainy morning. It had been wet most of the day before ; from thence along the new beautiful Parliamentary road by Cernioge,³ Capel Cerrig, Bangor, across the magnificent new bridge over the Menai Straits to Beaumaris

¹ See vol. i. p. 73.

² See vol. i. p. 363.

³ Patterson's *Roads* (1803) spells this Cymniogeu or Kinniogga.

and to Fryers, one mile from the latter town. It was many years since I travelled this road and only the day was constant rain [*sic*], I and my dear child (particularly dear Eleanor) were highly gratified by the grandeur and sublimity of the various prospects of rocks, mountains, and water-falls. As we drove up to the inn at Capel Cerrig to change horses, I was much surprised to find my old friend Colonel Sneyd just about to start from the inn on the box of a barouche. He was going to drive ; he was returning with his daughter and Lord Bagot's family from seeing the Menai Bridge to Lord Bagot's house, not very far from thence near Ruthin. We did not reach Fryers until near six o'clock. We found the poster slow, and the Taffeys not to be put out of their usual pace. We were received in the most kind and friendly manner both by Sir Robert and Lady Williams. We found there his second son, A.D.C. to Lord Anglesey, and a Mr. Eden and Mr. George ; they had landed in the morning from Dublin from a yacht belonging to the latter gentleman, and had come over on an excursion for a few days to Anglesey. From the A.D.C. we learnt that Lord Anglesey was gone on a tour to the south, and was not to return to Dublin until the 11th. Sir Robert had a letter from his lordship to say he was obliged to go to the south, and recommended our putting off our visit until later in the season. We agreed to postpone our trip, and Sir Robert wrote to Lord Anglesey accordingly, but in consequence of a letter I received from the Marquis next day, I wrote to him to say that as I was arrived so far, I was determined to pay my personal respects to him before I returned, and mentioned our intention to be in 1828

ÆT. 67 Dublin on the 15th or 16th. We made our arrangements accordingly.

On Sunday the 10th we attended divine service at Beaumaris, a very neat devotional old church, and heard a very good sermon. Walked afterwards to look at Baron Hill,¹ the beautiful seat of Mr. Bulkeley Williams (Sir Robert's eldest son), bequeathed to him by Lord Bulkeley to the great disappointment of my friend Sir Robert, who expected to have enjoyed it at least for his life. Baron Hill is a magnificent place; the house nothing extraordinary. Fryers belongs also to Mr. Bulkeley, being part of the Baron Hill estate. Sir Robert has a lease of it for his life. The castle of Beaumaris, close to the town, is a fine ruin. Beaumaris is a clean neat little town. I admired the tidy respectful appearance of the women of the lower class; many of them very pretty. The women in North Wales generally wear round black beaver hats; very becoming and certainly most useful for persons much accustomed to out of doors employ.

On the 11th I accompanied Sir Robert in his gig, and Eleanor Lady Williams in the barouche to Caernarvon. We passed the *eighth wonder of the world*, the Menai Bridge, and proceeded on a terrace bordering the Menai Straits, and overhung by Snowden and other Welsh mountains; highly picturesque and beautiful. We visited the fine old castle and the birth-room of the first Prince of Wales, a large new hotel, built by the late Earl of Uxbridge,² and a portrait of my much respected friend in the town-hall. On our return we dined at a beautiful cottage on the

¹ The property was bequeathed by Viscount Bulkeley in 1822.

² See vol. i. p. 1.

Anglesey side belonging to Mr. Bulkeley, overhung by rock and woods, and close on the beach of the Menai Straits with a fine view of the bridge, etc. 1828

On the 12th I rode to the bridge for the purpose of making a more minute inspection, and was most highly delighted with its magnificence, and with the powerful effect of the human mind to project and execute so wonderful an undertaking.

On the 14th we dined early, and Sir Robert and I proceeded about four in his chaise and post-chaise to Holyhead for the purpose of our intended visit to the noble Marquis. We reached Holyhead about seven, and immediately took a walk to view the new pier, etc., all of which has been done on an extensive and magnificent scale by Government for the better and more ready communication with the sister kingdom. We returned to our tea, when we were joined by Mr. Charles Wynn¹ (Sir Watkin's² brother), late president of the Board of Control, a very agreeable personage. He was also going to Dublin, and added to our agreeables on the passage. We embarked exactly at eight o'clock, and after a pleasant voyage landed at Howth quarter-past three. The mail coach was on the quay in readiness to carry the mail to Dublin, and we accordingly took seats in that conveyance, which landed us at the hotel in Sackville Street (Bilton's) in little more than an hour. On landing at Howth I immediately was reminded of the Irish *melody* by

¹ Charles Watkin Wynn (Rt. Hon.) of Llandgedwin, Denbighshire; a privy councillor; M.P. for county of Montgomery; born 1775; married Mary, eldest daughter of Sir Foster Cunliffe, Bart.

² Sir Watkin Wynn (1772-1840); M.P. for the county of Denbigh; lord-lieutenant and *custos rotulorum* of that county and of the county of Merioneth; married in 1817 Lady Henrietta Clive.

ÆT. 67 the innumerable cadets and lively *boys* who were plying with variety of conveyances to 'run your Honour up to Dublin.' I *recognised* sweet *Pat* and his happy pursuit of pleasure in the look and appearance of every cabin we passed from Howth, and was disappointed that I could not discover more traces of improvement in the general looks of the country and the natives. I found great improvements in the city, particularly Sackville Street by Nelson's column, the new post-office, etc., and likewise the new bridges between Essex Bridge and the barracks. Sir Robert and I were very comfortably lodged at Bilton's hotel in Sackville Street, and disappointed to find that Lord Anglesey was not to return to Dublin until the 18th. His lordship had a very small house near Kingstown only sufficient to lodge his own family.

In consequence of the Marquis's absence and having no particular engagement, I amused myself on the 16th with visiting and inspecting the several penitentiaries, Bridewells, Houses of Correction, etc., in Dublin, and also taking a look at my old quarters in the barracks. My companion, Sir Robert, had been an A.D.C. to three lord-lieutenants. He was with the Duke of Rutland in the year 1785, when I was quartered in Dublin, and which was the commencement of my acquaintance with the Baronet. He amused himself with visiting some of his old acquaintances and looking over his former quarters in the castle.

18th.—I called at Kilmainham upon Sir J. Byng,¹ the Commander-in-chief; he was on an inspection tour in the

¹ Sir John Byng, Earl of Strafford (1772-1860); served in Flanders, at Walcheren, and in the Peninsular War; commanded a brigade at Waterloo; commander-in-chief in Ireland 1828-31; created Earl of Strafford 1847; field-marshal 1855.

south. I found additions and improvements at Kilmainham, particularly the road from what was formerly called Bloody Bridges. Sir Robert dined on board the King's yacht with his son, who was a messmaster (?) with Lord W. Paget,¹ the commander for the summer months, and whilst the Lord Lieutenant was not in Dublin. As I was not acquainted with the officers I declined being of the party, and therefore dined alone and took a long stroll on the North Wall, etc. I omitted to notice my having been present at the celebrated Catholick association meeting on the 16th at the Corn Exchange; and a more motley group I never witnessed, with as little appearance of gentlemanlike as can be imagined; neither of the great leaders, O'Connell² or Shirley, were present, and the orators were as muddy a set of dirty fellows as Saint Patrick ever sent forth by way of speech makers. The room was spacious, and with seats forming an amphitheatre, on each side; a table in the middle with an elevated seat for the chairman with the secretary on his right. Placards were stuck up that 'no-one was to stand on the seats or table.' The Marquis returned late in the evening of the 18th, and on the 19th we passed the day with him at the Marine Villa, Richview, which was, [as] he described it in his letter, 'A nutshell.' I was rejoiced to find him so much improved in his appearance as to health. He received me with his usual kindness, I may say regard; no company. Himself, Lady Anglesey, and two daughters. Two aide-de-camps (Lord Erroll³

¹ Lord William Paget was the second son of the first Marquis of Anglesey; born 1803; captain in the royal navy.

² Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847); Irish politician; called the 'Liberator.' He was the creator of modern national feeling in Ireland.

³ William George, sixteenth Earl of Erroll (1801-46).

ÆT. 67 and Robert Williams), Sir Robert Williams and myself. I had a very long private conversation with him on the state of Ireland. He is decidedly of opinion that something must be done by way of settling the distracted state of the publick mind, urged on to every species of animosity on religious feelings, though all tranquil and quiet to outward appearance. I think his lordship has a bias for granting emancipation, at all events to settle the question; at the same time he is under no apprehension whatever as to revolt or serious disturbances. He expresses how highly he is gratified by the kind attentions he has experienced, and if one may judge by declarations and outward show, nothing can exceed his lordship's popularity.

August 20.—Finding Lord Anglesey so situated, having no accommodation for us, and having passed a day with him, Sir Robert and I determined on leaving Dublin on the 20th to return to Fryers. Accordingly we took our passage by the packet, and left the post-office in the mail coach for Howth at three o'clock and sailed about quarter after four. There had been blowing weather to occasion considerable swell of the sea, which to young sailors was uncomfortable. We landed at Holyhead at half-past eleven, had some tea and retired to rest. Lord Anglesey pressed me to pay him another visit, which I should not at all dislike if circumstances admit.

On the 25th we took leave of our good friends at Fryers after a most agreeable visit, and embarked on board a steam packet for Liverpool. A packet sails daily from Liverpool and Bangor, calling at Beaumaris to take up passengers. I sent my carriage to the old ferry house on the Anglesey

side, where it was embarked. The morning was hazy, but cleared up, and we had a very pleasant passage of nine hours. Eleanor was a little squeamish, but delighted with the *sea voyage*. The packet was crowded with passengers and three carriages on the deck. You feel a tremendous motion in a steamer¹ that is uncomfortable to young sailors, and the perpetual clack of the cogs of the paddles unpleasant, but the application of steam for the purposes of navigation is one of the greatest improvements in modern discovery. The required consumption of fuel will be a bar to long voyages. The steamers for the packets are from 80 to 100 horse power, and the consumption of coal about a ton an hour. We had rather a long passage owing to the tide. We landed about six on a magnificent quay and inquired our way to the Adelphi Hotel, where, having secured rooms and ordered dinner, we rambled about until dark. We had an agreeable companion, one of the North Wales Circuit barristers who had dined the preceding day at Fryers, a Mr. Cockrill, with whom we made more particular acquaintance in the packet and made a trio at the *hotel*; by the by, a more extravagant or less comfortable tavern I never encountered.

We rose pretty early next morning to see sights. I never was more gratified than in beholding the wonders and grandeur of this beautiful place, which must certainly be ranked as the first commercial port in the world. It is unnecessary for me to enter into particulars so much better communicated in publick descriptions. Our new friend, Mr. Cockrill, kindly attended us in all our pere-

¹ The first practical steamboat was Bell's *Comet*, which was navigated down the Clyde in 1812.

ÆT. 67 grinations through the town and docks, and I parted with, I hope, mutual good opinion of each.

26th.—We left Liverpool about two by route through Prescot, Warrington, Knutsford (where I visited the new prison, and was much pleased with its regularity and good order), Brereton Green, Newcastle, and thence reached home by half-past eleven. The servants were gone to bed, having given us up for the night, unfortunately for the wearied travellers, who had not baited by the way. I hope my dear daughter was highly pleased and satisfied with our excursion, as it was principally undertaken for her amusement, and to afford a change of scene, which her affectionate attention to her fond father justly deserved. I found my harvest all well housed, and an average crop; indeed the fine settled weather we had experienced from the day of our arrival at Fryers, indicated a favourable result. Bill had returned home from Ashbourne and Wichnor the day before our arrival. During my absence I lost my oldest friend, acquaintance, and neighbour, poor old Swinfen.¹ He was taken ill two days before I left home, and died on the 11th. I had known him from my very boyish days, and been through life on the most intimate footing. I accompanied him to Bath in 1784, where he became acquainted with Miss Ford, and married the same year. He was a man, 'take him for all in all, I never shall look upon his like again.' A man of uncultivated mind, strong natural understanding, with brilliant flashes of humour, original and totally unlike any other; hospitable and kind-hearted; living mostly for *himself* and totally regardless of the ups and downs of this life, which

¹ John Swinfen, Esq. of Swinfen, co. Stafford.

he had passed through with perhaps as little difficulty with regard to worldly troubles as any human being ever did. 1828

On the 9th of September Lichfield races, an occurrence of little moment to me. We invited the Inges, but Lady Elizabeth¹ was unwell, and the family went to Leamington. I never recollect so little company, less sport and fewer persons at the ball. Efforts are making for improvement next year, but the sport is gone by and out of fashion. Lord Anson² exerts himself, and he ought, considering how *he rules in the city*. The weather was also very unpropitious. Ned Monckton³ and his brother, the General, came to us on the Tuesday, and stayed Wednesday; as also Repington and his wife, Tuesday to dinner and stayed all night; and my old friend, Captain John Walhouse,⁴ dined on the Wednesday, went to the ball, and returned to sleep at Freeford. A very entertaining and agreeable man, Sir John Phillimore⁵ of the navy, dined and slept on Tuesday. He had distinguished himself highly; an eccentric, but a very entertaining companion.

23rd.—I went with Eleanor and Bill to Somerford on a visit to Mr. Monckton; a surprising man at his time of life, eighty-four. He mentioned having been returned from India fifty years. He, Mrs. Monckton, and all the family truly kind and attentive. We passed two pleasant days. He has acquired a very extensive landed property

¹ See vol. i. p. 141.

² See vol. i. p. 329.

³ See vol. i. p. 370.

⁴ Captain John Walhouse was probably a relative of General Dyott's friend, the first Baron Hatherton.

⁵ Sir John Phillimore (1781-1840); entered the navy 1795; advanced to post rank 1807; retired 1826. General Dyott is probably referring here to the fact that Sir John Phillimore had thrashed William James, the naval historian, for his description of Phillimore's stubborn action with the French frigate *Clorinde* in the year 1814.

ÆT. 67 around Somerford, bordered by Littleton on one side and by Chillington¹ on the other. A most regular family. Breakfast at nine, luncheon at two, dine six, prayers half-past nine, to bed at eleven. He has a large farm in his hands; a water-wheel thrashes the corn, grinds and dresses it, forces a pump to supply all the house with water. The gardens are very extensive, and are formed so as to be irrigated when requisite. There is an original painting of the death of General Wolfe. Mr. Monckton's uncle² is one of the portraits.

October On the 1st October I went with Eleanor and Bill to pay a visit to Sir Roger and Lady Sophia Gresley³ at Drakelow; a visit I had long been anxious to make from the recollection of early parts of my life having been passed with the late Sir Nigel,⁴ whose remembrance I must ever hold in respect from the very kind and truly hospitable friendship I experienced for months in succession at Drakelow. My visit brought to my recollections ideas most delightful to my feelings, when I reflected on the many many happy hours I had enjoyed under that roof. The house and grounds had undergone a complete change on Sir Nigel becoming possessor, but a more complete metamorphosis had taken place under the direction of the present owner. I was at Drakelow when the large room was built, and the inside painted by Paul Sandby.⁵ I recollected almost every shrub, now become large trees, being planted on the

¹ The property of the Giffards.

² Brigadier Monckton, who fought with Wolfe at Quebec in 1759.

³ See vol. i. p. 336.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 2.

⁵ Paul Sandby (1725-1809); water-colour painter and engraver; kept with his brother, Thomas Sandby, an academy at Nottingham; he introduced into England the 'aquatint' process of engraving.

pleasure-ground, and I remember Sir Nigel transplanting the limes to hide the present stables (then a barn), which was considered a most laborious undertaking, as they were very large trees taken out of the park. 1828

The company assembled were rather too young for me ; it consisted of Lord Chesterfield,¹ Lord Castleragh,² Colonel Crawford³ (married to a sister of Lady Sophia), Mr. and Mrs. Trevor, etc. The first Lord appeared thoroughly good-humoured, but as shallow a noble as any of his peers. Lord Castleragh is a lively pleasant young man, but none of the satire of his celebrated uncle. Sir Roger's style of living and expensive establishment is calculated for an income of twenty thousand a year ; everything on the most magnificent and costly scale. The dinner-table superb with *eight* sorts of wine, four in massive silver ice pails and four without. Dined at *eight*, and retired between two and three in the morning. I took myself to rest at midnight ; one hour too late. There is a lively vivacity about Sir Roger, with great fluency of language, and, like many men, prizes his talents rather higher than the generality of the world will admit. He was making a magnificent entrance at the south end of the house, which, added to the display inside, must require more *outgoings* than his *income* can supply. We returned on the 3rd.

On the 4th I went to Stafford to meet the gaol com-

¹ George Augustus Frederick Stanhope, sixth Earl of Chesterfield (1805-66) ; succeeded his father 1815 ; married 1830 Anne, eldest daughter of Cecil, first Lord Forester.

² Frederick William Robert, Viscount Castlereagh, eldest son of the Marquis of Londonderry, born 1805 ; married 1846 Viscountess Powerscourt.

³ Alexander Charles Crawford, only son of Sir James Crawford of Kilbirney, county Stirling ; married Barbara, fourth daughter of the seventh Earl of Coventry ; died 1838.

ÆT. 67 mittee to audit the quarterly accounts, etc. Lords Harrowby and Talbot, Levett and Monckton. We had a long discussion respecting the plans and arrangements for the new solitary cells. The spirit of mock benevolence, so much the order of the present day, has found its way into our committee, and pity is to proceed where punishment should predominate. Experience has proved to my mind that nothing but the terror of human suffering can avail to prevent crime, and the fallacious idea of reformation through the medium of moral persuasion must fail. The greatest rogues are generally the cleverest fellows; it requires talent to be a consummate villain, and when a prisoner of that description is sent to a gaol, he calls forth all the talent he possesses to employ to his advantage. He consequently puts on the garb of piety and repentance with marked regularity of conduct, and so far imposes on the governor of the prison and others to obtain the indulgence he aims at in order to accomplish the objects he has in view, namely, either escape or mitigation of his sentence. My wish was to arrange the cells in such manner that they should be a terror to the inmates by making them truly solitary, lonely, and as inconvenient and irksome as the human mind could bear. Lord Harrowby, with some *Saintish* feelings, was not disposed to go so far. I, however, carried my object in a great measure, and I trust the effect may benefit the publick hereafter.

On the 16th my dear boy Bill proceeded by coach to Ashbourne to join his cousin, Thurstan Dale, for the purpose of his matriculation at Cambridge (Trinity College), having voluntarily made choice of the clerical profession. He had been attending the Rev. Mr. Bradburn for the

purpose of his mathematicks; I therefore hope, as he is a good classick, he will do himself credit and become worthy of his calling. 1828

On the 20th a petty sessions at Shenstone to assist my friend Grove. The great politick of the day is Catholick emancipation and the situation of Ireland. What commotions and events are engendered and support[ed] by what is called a *free* press, by which means a few demagogues can create evils to nearly overturn a government.

November arrived, bringing the finest weather I ever November recollect at the season.

The 26th, my excellent old friend, Sir Brent Spencer,¹ arrived to redeem his pledge of a long-promised visit. I have known Spencer forty-four years; a more valuable man or a more sincere friend does not live. What a happiness it is to enjoy in older age the society of an early and long-continued friend. I believe our feelings were mutual on the occasion. He continued his visit until the 29th, when we parted, regretting that circumstances of business called him peremptorily home. Eleanor and I dined at Mr. Chancellor Law's² to meet the bishop of the diocese and his lady. He is an affable pleasant man; perhaps rather too much leaning to cant and *conciliation*.

On the 16th a long tedious petty sessions at Shenstone. December Assaults and parish business. One rather curious case in which a *conjurer* was concerned. A house at Shenstone had been broken open, when no one was living in it. Money, plate, and some deeds were stolen. A conjurer at Pelsall offered to make known where the deeds could be found on the payment of a premium. The premium

¹ See vol. i. p. 317.

² See vol. i. p. 366.

ÆT. 67 was paid and the deeds recovered. The owner very properly then laid an information before Grove and myself, and we conjured the *Sycophant* to Stafford gaol.

On the 18th I accompanied Dick to Sir Edward Scott's¹ at Barr for a day's shooting. My neighbour, Tom Levett, was of the party. He took us in his chaise. The morning early very unpropitious; heavy rain, it cleared at ten, and we proceeded and arrived in very good time to enjoy a good day's sport. We slaughtered 80 head of game: 58 pheasants, 14 hares, 6 rabbits, 1 woodcock, and 1 partidge. I was glad to have the opportunity of such a day's shooting for Dick. Our trio, Sir Edward and Mr. Chetwode, who married a sister of Littleton's.² I did but little, as I kept on the flanks and took my own will to guide me. The Baronet gave us a bachelor's fare and a hearty welcome. He is a good-humoured country gentleman, but possessing none of the wit and humour of his father, with whom I have passed many pleasant days.

On the 30th I received a most unwelcome letter from Collyer's office containing the melancholy account of the death of my ever esteemed, my oldest and most cordial friend, Sir Brent Spencer;³ from whom only a few days gone I received one of his usual letters. He had dined and slept at Mr. Carrington's (a neighbour) on Saturday the 27th, breakfasted next morning, walked to Missenden, where his horse was waiting for him, and was in the act of mounting when he was seized, and would have fallen had not a person supported him, and was dead in a moment. Peace to his Manes. A melancholy event for me to conclude the old year.

¹ See vol. i. p. 337.

² Charlotte Anne Littleton.

³ See p. 8.

January 1.—We began the New Year with having Captain 1829
Parker,¹ his two sisters, old and particular friends, and also January
Mr. and Mrs. Manley to dine with us. A singular circumstance occurred. My friend Parker had recently been appointed to a guardship (the *Warspite*). In my newspaper of the morning I read an account of his removal to the Prince Regent's yacht. A distinguished honour and particularly acceptable, as it made it unnecessary for him to move from home. To my great surprise on his entering the drawing-room he had not heard a word of his removal. I was therefore the cheerful harbinger of the good news.

On the 5th dined and stayed all night at Lord Harrowby's. Lord Harrowby mentioned a curious circumstance respecting the age of wine. He told us he had in his cellar in London some bottles of wine considerably more than one hundred years old. They had been in possession of him and his father for very many years. The bottles were marked 1680. He had never tasted the liquor but once, and that was when the foreign ambassadors dined with him a few years ago. He described the liquor as perfectly sound, a white wine, but unlike any wine he had ever tasted. Lord Harrowby said he believed it was the oldest wine in the world. Very possibly, I should think. Lord Harrowby, certainly a very able man, and from having filled the highest dignity in the state (President of the Council), must have had great experience in the political world. He expresses himself as most happy in not being a minister, but left to his

¹ Sir William Parker (1781-1866); entered navy 1793; settled in Staffordshire 1812-27; was senior officer on the coast of Greece 1828; in the *Tagus* 1834; lord of the admiralty 1834 and from 1835-41; commanded in China 1841; was on excellent terms with Sir Hugh Gough; created a baronet 1844; admiral of the fleet 1863.

own domestick pursuits, which his lordship appears to enjoy fully.

I returned to Stafford on the 15th for the purpose of settling the usual routine of business at the gaol, and the next morning left Teddesley and returned home for the purpose of accompanying Eleanor to a subscription ball at Lichfield. Very sharp severe frost. My highly respected friend, the noble Marquis of Anglesey, not agreeing with the *Great Captain* in political views respecting Ireland, was recalled. The Marquis addressed a letter to the Roman Catholick High Priest (calling himself Primate) on the state of Ireland with regard to the Catholick claims, subsequently to his recall. However highly I may respect Lord Anglesey, I cannot but consider this letter as injudicious, and the channel through which his lordship thought proper to promulgate his opinion much to be reprehended. I know that the two great nobles (his Grace and the Marquis) are not playfellows; there exists a rancorous jealousy in the mind of each which no time will allay. I condemn the Marquis on this principle: 'that if a man engages himself in a subordinate situation, he should either attend to the views and wishes of his employer or resign.' The Marquis states that he did not know the Duke's views respecting the Catholicks. I say he ought to have known them or not to have entered on office until he did.

Teddesley will be a fine place fifty years hence, when the extensive plantations made by its present owner have grown to maturity. No individual deserves better of his country than Mr. Littleton as an improver and beautifier of his large estate. He merits a premium from the Society of Arts for what he has already done at Teddesley. His farming is on

an extensive scale, and he employs seldom less than one hundred hands, including persons of all descriptions. 1829

Littleton is a man of good understanding and considerable acquirement, with a large share of vanity accompanied with pride and pomp, the usual result of unlooked-for elevation. He is much respected in Parliament as a distinguished member, and certainly a most useful representative of the rich and prosperous county that returns him.

The 23rd, we dined at Accrington; a dull day, which must naturally arise with dull people. Repington showed me an interesting letter from his nephew, Captain A'Court¹ (brother to Lord Heytesbury,² ambassador at St. Petersburg), written from that place, in which he mentions an anecdote of Lord Heytesbury and the Neapolitan ambassador walking together, when a Russian gentleman spoke to the Neapolitan, and as Lord Heytesbury did not understand the Russian language sufficiently, he inquired what the stranger said. 'Why he says your nose is frost bit,' which was the case, and occasioned his lordship's nose a pretty severe friction of the hand filled with snow.

My journey to town was for the sole purpose of applying for promotion for my son Dick, and for the hope of meeting him in London. I was grievously disappointed in the latter, as poor Dick had caught a violent cold which confined him to his bed for some days and prevented him venturing to town. I was in hopes of being permitted to purchase an unattached lieutenantcy for him, and then to ask the favour of the Commander-in-chief to place him in a regiment in

¹ Edward Henry A'Court; captain in the royal navy and M.P. for Tamworth; born 1783.

² William A'Court, first Baron Heytesbury (1779-1860); ambassador to Russia 1828-32; viceroy of Ireland 1844-6.

ÆT. 67 North America or the Mediterranean. The first part of my plan was completely frustrated in consequence of no more unattached lieutenancies being permitted to be sold.

I waited upon Lord Hill¹ at his levée on the 29th, having previously consulted my friend Sir Herbert Taylor.² His lordship was very courteous; he told me my son was but a young ensign and must wait a little, and 'I will see what I can do for him.' I was quite satisfied. There was no prospect of a promotion for him in the 63rd, which I was not anxious for, as I did not wish him to go to Botany Bay. I dined with my friend Colonel Stephenson to meet my agent Mr. Collyer, who mentioned a very singular circumstance respecting the fees on commissions. It seems that the King has delayed signing a great number, and although the promotions have appeared in the *Gazette* and the agents of regiments have in consequence stopped from the several individuals the usual fees, the amount had not been required from the agents until the commissions had been signed and sent to them from the war office; the consequence was the accumulation of a large amount in the agents' hands; the sum astonished me. Collyer said he had paid £1100, and that Greenwood's House had paid £23,000 into the war office on this account. Finding that my dear Dick was not likely to come to town in consequence of his indisposition, I decided to return home on the 31st, and took a place accordingly in the Chester mail.

31st.—I called upon Mr. Dunn, who married Ann Thompson. He has a house No. 2 North Bank, Regent's Place, Regent's Park. How to search out this North Bank became a matter of difficulty, and after walking and survey-

¹ See p. 22.

² See vol. i. p. 317.

ing building on building and house upon house, where for- 1829
merly I had seen the green fields. The increase of building
in this part of London for magnificent beauty unequalled in
the world.

February.—On the 1st February I arrived at home and February
found snow and sharp frost. The weather had been mild and
pleasant during the former week. Did not observe snow until
I passed Lutterworth. During my absence a gang of poachers
had attacked the Pool Tail and Swinfen wood, and one night
(seven in number) shot many pheasants. [Such] daring
lengths the poachers have arrived at, this season, [that] the
gang came a second time and began soon after nine o'clock.
If gangs of armed men are to commit depredations close to
your door, and from their numbers to intimidate resistance,
it is full time that the government of the country took some
means to put a stop to these lawless proceedings, prejudicial
alike to individuals as well as social order.

On the 5th Parliament assembled, and to the surprise and
astonishment of both Great Britain and Ireland, the King's
speech contained his Majesty's recommendation to take into
consideration the state of Ireland with a view to a settlement
of the Catholick question.¹ This communication being made
with a high Church Tory administration occasioned violent
commotions, with a most abundant share of abuse of the
Duke of Wellington, but more particularly of Mr. Peel, the
great champion of the Protestants. They were severally
attacked in the two houses for their apostasy, and for the
advice they had given the King, more especially the latter,

¹ The king said he had been coerced by his ministers 'as if a loaded pistol had
been held to my head, or I had been threatened, in case of refusal, to be thrown
from a five-pair of stairs window.'

ÆT. 67 who made an able defence grounded chiefly on the fatal consequence of a divided ministry, which had prevented the situation of Ireland being entered upon as a cabinet question, and holding out at the same time the deplorable and melancholy state of Ireland from the agitation of parties. The King's speech recommended that measures should be taken for the immediate suppression of the Catholick Association as a preliminary to the consideration of the Catholick question. Mr. Peel resigned his seat for the University of Oxford. His enemies said not supposing that it would be accepted.¹

Having been requested by Mr. Peel, the Under-Secretary of State, to give him my opinion on the present system of balloting for the militia,² I communicated with him on the subject and proposed 'that in future a ballot should take place only once in three years instead of annually, but that the parishes should be required to make an annual report of the place of residence of every man enrolled and of the casualties, in order to ascertain annually the effective strength, and also to cause more attention in the parishes as to the characters of the substitutes procured.' At the time I made this communication to the Secretary of State's office, I urged the necessity of re-enacting the clause to allow the setting of spring guns in order to check the atrocious acts of poachers; the daring conduct of these *banditts* are becoming outrageous. Mr. Peel acquainted me they had received applications at the home office from all

¹ Mr. Peel resigned his seat for Oxford on February 4, but stood again. He was defeated by Sir R. Inglis by 146 votes.

² In 1757 the militia was reorganised on a different footing by 30 George II. c. 25. Every county was to contribute a definite quota, to be chosen by ballot but this has been annually suspended since 1829.

parts of the country on the subject, but that the *cabinet* was 1829 so completely engrossed with the Catholick question they had no thought for other subjects.

March.—I returned on the 6th to dine with my old March schoolfellow, Bailye, at Lichfield. We are exactly the same age, born in the same year. A more honest, honourable, upright man never lived, nor one who enjoys his meat more heartily with his friend. We were class-fellows and allies at school, though we once fought a desperate pitched battle, in which I was worsted with a black eye and bloody nose, and the addition of a good flogging from old Price for the marks on my front.

The 12th, Stafford assizes. I and Eleanor were invited to go to Wolseley Hall to Sir James and Lady FitzGerald's for two days, but I declined from wishing not to increase my visiting friends. They have been residing at Wolseley for some time, but we have not visited. The Irish Catholick concessions have not only occupied the Parliament since its assembly, but not a syllable is spoken in any company on any other subject ; what may be the consequence of the bill it is scarcely to be conjectured. The opposition to the measure has not been such as in the times of Lord George Gordon ;¹ the seceders from the Established Church have been so numerous, particularly with the middle and lower orders of society, a class of the community most fitted to express violent dissent, that there has been no apprehension as to riot or tumult in London. There has been much speechifying in Parliament on presenting petitions pro and

¹ General Dyott is referring to the Lord George Gordon riots of 1780. Lord George Gordon was the president of the Protestant Association and stirred up the mob against concessions to the Roman Catholics.

ÆT. 67 con, with violent and personal language accompanying the debates. The Earl of Winchilsea took a prominent part as an anti-Catholick, and published a letter reflecting on the apostasy of the Duke of Wellington, which caused his Grace to demand satisfaction from the noble Earl. They met; Lord Winchilsea¹ received the Duke's fire and then discharged his pistol in the air. In my humble opinion there was no necessity for the Duke's challenge, as Lord Winchilsea's remarks attached to the *Prime Minister*, not personally to the Duke of Wellington.²

The 25th a special sessions at Wichnor for the appointment of overseers. Sir Oswald, Inge, Taylor, and self; less business than usual. I changed my tenant on the Freeford farm, Mr. Hinde having quitted because I would not reduce his rent. I let the farm to Mr. Lawrence for £60 a year more than Hinde gave me.

I cut down some of the old alders in the wood, and planted young firs, etc., by the brook side; I also thinned the trees at the end of the wood, and carried out all the old dead rubbish, etc. I had the osier beds cleaned and new planted. Mr. Lawrence, my new tenant to succeed Mr. Hinde, took possession of the farm. He appears an industrious *working* yeoman; neither *port wine*, or a *drawing-room* in his *establishment*.

The 30th. The Anson hunt races. An alteration had been made at the stand under my direction, and with the

¹ George William Finch-Hatton, ninth Earl of Winchilsea (1791-1858); a violent opponent of the Catholic Emancipation Bill; frequently spoke in the House of Lords against Liberal measures.

² The Duke intentionally fired wide, but he always said that the duel cleared away the atmosphere of calumny with which, at this time, he was surrounded. The two opponents became afterwards the firmest of friends.

concurrency of the trustees of the racing fund, by removing the wooden roof and making a flat leaden roof for the accommodation of the sporting men, to enable them to see the horses quite round. The weather was particularly unfavourable, cold and rainy, not much company except racing men, pretty good sport. Sir Robert Williams¹ came to us on the first day, but left after the second day's race. Grove dined and went with us to the ball, leaving Sir Robert to amuse himself by the fireside. We did not reach the town hall until eleven, and found only *three persons* arrived, such is the ridiculous etiquette modern folly has arrived at by aping the habits of what is termed the fine world, by turning day into night. 1829

On the 6th Mr. and Mrs. Manley, Dick Gresley, his April wife and daughter, Sir J. Phillimore,² and Captain Proby³ dined at Freeford. Will Proby had just been promoted to Master and Commander after a very long service. Sir John, as usual, kept us in a roar of laughter; he is a pleasant, agreeable fellow. The conversation at all places and on all occasions is the Catholick business; in Parliament passed the Commons and carried on the second reading in the Lords by a majority of 105 for the second reading of the bill. I think no circumstance in history ever betrayed such apostasy from selfish motives as this question; whenever brought forward by an individual it has invariably failed; but when supported by ministry, Constitutional feelings give way to selfish propensities on the speculation of loss and gain by courtly influence. Such

¹ See vol. i. p. 363.

² See p. 37.

³ A member of the family of the Earl of Carysfort, and distantly connected by marriage with the Gresleys.

ÆT. 67 is self, such has been self, and such ever will be self. No man's political change has surprised me more than the noble Marquis of Anglesey, who appears the great champion for Pat, through good report and bad report. I hope the advocates of the great question may not be disappointed in their predictions of the blessings that are to arise to Ireland in consequence of this measure. Having lived and seen so much of Ireland, I have strong doubts in my mind as to the result.

On the 8th I was riding with Dick on a thoroughbred mare I purchased from William Herrick, a skittish thing. She plunged, and threw me at the top of the lawn; I fell on my bottom, a good deal shook, but not materially hurt. I walked about until dinner time, eat my dinner heartily; in five minutes after the cloth was taken away I was seized with giddiness in my head and fainted, followed by sickness and vomiting. I soon recovered, and felt no further inconvenience. Whether this attack was occasioned by the fall, or by eating a large quantity of *savoury spinach* and *fat bacon* added to rich roast pork, I cannot tell. I am full of gratitude to Divine Providence for the protection afforded me; if I had fallen on my head, or even on my back, as the mare in plunging raised me from the saddle before I fell, the consequences might have been serious; or if the mare had been inclined to be vicious and kicked me when I was down, the Almighty alone knows what might have happened. It was particularly unlucky to have happened on the day of departure of my dear Dick to join after the expiration of his leave.

13th.—The Catholick relief bill carried in the House of Lords by a majority of 105. Time alone can determine

what may be the consequence. One circumstance is palpable, that our aristocracy are (like commoners) influenced by a minister rather than preserve their consistency. When a member of Parliament in opposition to the existing Government brought forward the measure in the *last* session, it was opposed in the Lords by a majority of 45. Now introduced by the *minister*, the peers have made no scruple to change their opinions, and those who voted *con* last year have become *pros* this. Such is *patriotism*, such is *self*. 1829

26th—Accompanied Captain Parker¹ per coach from Birmingham to London to pay my duty to his Majesty at the levée fixed for the 29th. My friend Mr. Littleton having invited me to take up my quarters at his house in Grosvenor Place, I proceeded there accordingly, and met a welcome reception from him and his beauteous wife, with most comfortable accommodation. We left Birmingham at half-past seven, and got to Grosvenor Place soon after nine next morning. I was perfectly astonished on observing the extraordinary extent of the new squares, streets, places, etc., on the back of Grosvenor Place, which I recollect wet, low, swampy meadows.

29th.—The levée, not so crowded as I have witnessed. His Majesty most graciously asked me how I did, and hoped I was quite well. This was an attention shown to few, as it was remarked that the King scarce *spoke* to one in twenty. Conjecture was afloat as to the reception of the Catholick and anti-Catholick party. Report was, that his Majesty was very reserved to all that had espoused the emancipation. The great Irish agitator, O'Connell, was at

¹ See p. 43.

ÆT. 68 the levée. His Majesty did not speak to him.¹ The day was wet and cold, and we had to walk up St. James's Street to get to Littleton's carriage. There was a drawing-room the following day, but no men were expected to attend unless they had to accompany ladies. I waited upon the Commander-in-chief's secretary and on the Adjutant-General relative to Dick, with a view to obtain promotion for him. I did not go to Lord Hill's levée, having troubled him in January.

Dick met me in town on the 30th. We dined at Mr. Monckton's. The weather cold to walk the streets, notwithstanding the town appears full; and instead of *poor* old England, the show of wealth exhibited by the splendid equipages betrayed anything but poverty. I never can calculate where the people are found to inhabit all the costly houses, and support the costly carriages, yonder in London, except one considers the extraordinary change that commerce had wrought by producing a class of community almost unknown fifty years back. Probably five-sixths of the great houses are now inhabited by persons belonging to the monied interest of the kingdom.

May I left town on the 2nd of May, after parting with Dick at Charing Cross. He proceeded per coach to Chatham, I per Chester mail homewards, which I reached by ten next morning, cleansed myself and walked to Whittington Church in the afternoon.

On the 6th I went to Wichnor for two nights to bring Eleanor home. A laughable circumstance happened in the night in my bedroom, by the falling down of part of the chimneypiece upon the fire-irons; it made a desperate

¹ The King said, 'D——n the fellow! what does he come here for?'

rattle among the tongs, poker, etc., and being quite dusk, 1829
I could not make it out until morning. My friend Levett eagerly criticising the proceedings in Parliament between the Duke of Wellington and the Marquis of Anglesey, in consequence of the latter's expose respecting his recall from Ireland. Levett advocating powerfully the cause of the Marquis. A most powerful advocate he is in any cause requiring research and talent. He is self-opinionated and unaccustomed to contend with ability equal to his own, which gives him an overbearing habit that would be highly prejudicial to him in publick speaking.

I returned on the 8th.

Sir Robert Peel and his son-in-law, the Dean of York,¹ called at Freeford on the 9th.

The Baronet desired Eleanor and I to dine at Drayton on the 12th, which we accepted. Sir Robert very cheerful and hospitable. No company except Tom Levett and his wife. The old Baronet is a wonderful man ; one looks at him with veneration and respect to consider the immense fortune that he has individually acquired, and being father to so able a man as the present secretary of state. The Dean of York mentioned a usage of which I was not previously aware respecting the ordination of Bishops. The Archbishop who officiates on the ordination or translation of a bishop claims as his fee the next presentation to whatever church benefice he may name in the disposal of the bishop in the diocese to which he is appointed. Chester being the poorest bishoprick, and of course the first to which a new-made bishop is appointed, leaves but

¹ Elizabeth Peel had married in 1805 the Very Rev. William Cockburn, dean of York ; she died 1828.

ÆT. 68 little patronage in the bishop's disposal, as all (on account of frequent translations) has been already seized by the Archbishop.

On the 16th I took Eleanor to Derby to pay a visit to my cousin, Miss Bakewell; went with my own horses, a delightful fine day. I slept at the inn. I never saw a place so enlarged as Derby in my remembrance. I formerly passed through from Ashbourne to school at Nottingham, beginning from the year 1774. Not a house at that time on what was called Nun's Green, now one entire completion of streets. We walked to Darley, where I was more struck with the magnificent effect of individual speculation and exertion, than in anything I had ever beheld as a manufactory. It is the property of Mr. Evans, who employs eight hundred hands at his cotton mills. These people, forming a colony, all live in neat small houses, with gardens adjoining, making a completely regular settlement. There are better descriptions of houses for clerks, overseers, etc. etc., and a magnificent residence for the rich owner, with beautiful pleasure-grounds adjacent, and within a few hundred yards of the mansion house an exceedingly handsome new church, built and endowed at Mr. Evans' sole expense. Nothing can exhibit the enterprise, and also the wealth, of Englishmen in stronger light than this settlement.

We paid a visit on the 18th to the china manufactory, where I made a small purchase. But as the various manufactories of porcelain have made that article so common, there is nothing particular to remark. Derby has a manufactory for shot, for lace, and for the Derbyshire spar; it consequently abounds with rich men—Evans, Strutts,

Cromptons, etc. etc. We left Derby about two, and after a warm and dusty drive reached home, pretty home (?), to dinner by six. 1829

The 26th my dear son Dick attained his twenty-first year, an event I had looked forward to with much anxiety, not alone on his account so much as avoiding the necessity for *borrowed* trustees, etc., for all my beloved children. He, I am very confident, will prove himself a steady guardian in every particular. May Almighty Providence long protect him, and send him a long life of happiness and health to enjoy dear Freeford after my days have passed away. There was a jolly day, and *beards wagged all* in the hall to celebrate the happy event. The labourers and their wives had a dinner and flowing cups of strong ale brewed for the occasion, of which they took full measure, and reached their homes by various ways, some in wheelbarrows, etc. The servants invited their friends to a ball and supper, the sports of which continued until four o'clock the next morning. There were fifty persons entertained in the course of the day, all, I trust and believe, most happy with the enjoyments of the feast. It is many years since such an event took place at Freeford. My father having been the last of the family who came of age as the heir, which must have been on the 12th April 1744, eighty-five years ago.

The month of June commenced with a continuation of June dry and cold weather for the season, with the wind invariably at north and north-east. Stock of all descriptions selling low, and butchers' meat accordingly. Beef 6d., mutton the same, wool is scarcely thought of, from the depreciation of its value, owing chiefly to the trifling duty

ÆT. 68 on importation, which may be beneficial for the manufacturers of such articles as require foreign wool, as they could not go to market at the price with others if the raw article was not equivalent. The present price of wool is not more than 23s. per tod. I sold when I lived at Tamhorn for 55s. Efforts making in Parliament to reduce the price of corn. What is to be the fate of country gentlemen is gloomy to consider. The monied and mercantile interest is likely to be all-powerful as affecting the administration of the country. The opposition on behalf of the landed interest in the House of Commons is not equal to resist, and if it was not the self-interest of the Peers, whose great state is land, it is not possible to suggest the consequence. From the extravagance of the aristocracy and the money-making of the merchant, the property in the soil will in a few years change masters.

On the 26th of June I received from Wat Sneyd a letter to acquaint me with the sad news of the death of his father, my worthy and much-lamented friend, Colonel Sneyd, whom I had known, honoured, and respected intimately for forty years; in all which time, either in his publick or private capacity, I never observed one trait in his distinguished character that was not directed and guided by the hand and heart of a truly honest man.

July *July* 18.—I was surprised by the receipt of a letter from Dick on the 19th to say he was in orders to embark for New South Wales with a detachment of the regiment on the 25th. As there was no time to lose, and as I was decided not to let him go so far from home in consideration of my advanced years, and the situation of my dear Eleanor, who must look to Dick for a protector when I am gone, I

determined to proceed to London next morning, and accordingly embarked in the Liverpool mail at half-past eight, and arrived at Islington at half-past nine, and put up at the Burlington Hotel after a pleasant drive, and what would have been considered forty years ago a laborious journey of two days. I attended early next morning at the Horse Guards ; saw Lord FitzRoy Somerset,¹ but could obtain nothing satisfactory from him. I, however, informed him that I should be obliged to request that my son might retire from the service, rather than embark on the present occasion. I went to the Adjutant-General's office (I knew Sir Herbert² was on a tour of inspection), and found Mr. Cannon, the first clerk, who told me there would be no difficulty whatever, and no inconvenience to any one by withdrawing my son's name, and that he would send an order to that effect to Chatham that night. I, however, wrote to Sir Herbert, who was to be at Chatham next day, on the subject, and received a kind letter in answer to say he should make no objection to my wishes respecting my son's embarkation, but that it could not be indefinite. I mentioned to Lord FitzRoy, Lord Hill's³ kind expression, and hoped his lordship would be pleased to give a favourable consideration of my son, by allowing him to purchase a step in some regiment to remove his present difficulty in the 63rd regiment, and I made a similar application through my friend Colonel Stephenson to Sir Herbert Taylor for his interest in my son's behalf.

Dick did not come up to town until the 22nd. He was detained on a garrison court-martial. I dined at Colonel Stephenson's, and found Dick in the evening in Cork Street.

¹ See p. 13.

² Sir Herbert Taylor.

³ See p. 22.

ÆT. 68

He was acquainted before he left Chatham by a letter from me, as well as from Sir Herbert Taylor, who was at Chatham, that he was not to embark. It is highly gratifying to me to mention with the most affectionate feeling the kind heart and generous disposition of my dear son. The late Mrs. Dyott left him £150. I wrote to him on his coming of age to tell him his legacy was at his disposal in the hands of the agent, Mr. Collyer. He acknowledged my letter immediately, and requested that he might dispose of it by purchasing a grand pianoforte for his sister. What an amiable proof of kindly feeling! A pianoforte was accordingly ordered from Broadwood, but at Dick's desire kept a profound secret from Eleanor. It arrived on the 17th. It so happened that Eleanor was passing a few days with Mrs. Ann Levett at the time. The instrument was therefore placed in the drawing-room in her absence, and where, to her utter surprise, she discovered it on her return home on the 20th.

Having satisfactorily settled Dick's business in London, I returned by the Chester mail on the evening of the 23rd, and he left town about the same hour for Chatham. Dick and I proceeded after breakfast from the Burlington to Collyer's; from thence to call in Orchard Street upon Mrs. Wright, who was in town in consequence of the death of her sister, Mrs. Skelton. The Colonel at Leamington. Walked to the upper end of Baker Street, and in a Paddington stage to the Bank [?] to call upon Mr. Newman [?], with whom I had some business. He informed me of the marriage of Louisa Thompson to a Mr. Agar. We walked from Broad Street, and called upon Charles Case at the Chester House; took a coach in Bridge Street to call upon

Mr. Floyer near the Obelisk ; walked over Waterloo Bridge 1829 to Collyer's, then to Whitehall to call upon Colonel Stephenson, and then to Cork Street, where we eat some cold meat (after a pretty good morning exercise for an old fellow) preparatory to embarking in the mail at Charing Cross.

The daily improvements in London surpass man's understanding, nor is it possible to comprehend or to calculate what it may be even fifty years hence. The weather extremely hot whilst I was in town. They began mowing again in the Bush Piece on the 21st, the day after I left home. Carried more than two-thirds of the field on the 24th. Did not finish mowing until the 29th, owing to the misconduct of the labourers that were employed. Rain on the 29th to stop hay-making. I purchased a hay-making machine made by a person at Wellesbourne, near Warwick, which I used with great success and advantage. It does the work of ten hay-makers, and in a better manner than I ever saw hay made. I mean it scatters and breaks it from the swath more effectually.

On the 11th of August I went to Drakelow for two August nights by an invite from Sir Roger to meet the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry,¹ neither of whom afforded me much amusement. He appears a vain, shallow man, full of ostentation and silly pomp, and her ladyship perfectly consistent with her lord's like. She is a fine, comely woman, superbly dressed, but without being gaudy or unlike a lady of high fashion and breeding. How the Baronet Gresley contrives to support the magnificent manner in which he

¹ Charles William Vane Stewart, third Marquis of Londonderry; born 1778; married secondly 1819 Frances Anne, only daughter and heir of Sir Henry Vane Tempest.

ÆT. 68 lives, I am quite at a loss to conjecture; and where he has found the supplies for the alterations and improvements he has made, externally and internally, perfectly astonished me.

30th.—I rode up to Beaudesert to call upon the Marquis, and was very glad to see him so well in health. Very different from his appearance when I last saw him in the same room the day before his departure to assume the Vice-Regal power in Ireland. He entered fully into the subject of his government in that country, and of his recall I have no hesitation in saying that, if he had remained to carry into effect what is called Catholick emancipation, the condition and situation of Ireland would be far different to what it at present presents. Lord Anglesey told me he had no doubt that he had the means to have attached the great demagogue O'Connell to the Government in any way he chose, and instead of having irritated and offended him and made him a *martyr*, he should have him most useful to the country. The Marquis told me that the continued kind feelings he daily received from Ireland was far beyond anything he could possibly have expected, and that these expressions of confidence and respect were alike from Protestants as well as Catholics.

September My excellent old friends the Wrights left me on the 2nd of September to go to Bosworth on a visit to his brother. Disagreeable wet weather as predicted by Moore's *Almanack*, which remarks that 'air is now to produce pluvial precipitations.'

5th.—I dined at Beaudesert to meet Sir Robert Williams. The Marquis sent for me the day before to beg I would go up and bring my nightcap; but I returned in the evening. His lordship was extremely entertaining by giving

us a long detail of the various incidents that had occurred 1829 relative to his government and recall from Ireland. He was unfairly dealt with by the ministers, and there can be no doubt if he had been suffered to remain to carry into effect the Catholick Emancipation Bill, it would have been attended with happier consequences than what have ensued.

23rd.—Will Stephenson left us, and on the 26th Dick arrived on leave of absence, the headquarters of the 63rd having embarked, leaving only a captain and a few men as a depôt.

Dick rode his roan horse from Chatham, and was only two days and a half on his route from London. I sent a fresh horse to meet him at the Harrow Inn.

October 6.—The great musical festival at Birmingham. October My children attended two days, but from my unfortunate defect in hearing I stayed at home. The company numerous, and the collection for the benefit of the charity magnificent, amounting to near £10,000.

On the 10th breakfasted at Wichnor, and attended a meeting at the Bridges to appoint surveyors of the highways. The country at this time in a state of despair and despondency; both commercial and agricultural. Manufacturers out of employ, and farmers unable to sell their product but to loss. Lean stock purchased in April not fetching its original price. Cheese twenty per cent. lower than at this time last year. All this said to be occasioned by two causes—‘what is termed free trade,’ and the contracting the paper currency.

17th.—I was invited by the Secretary of State to meet him at Tamhorn to shoot in the park and to dine after-

A. T. 68 wards at Sir Robert's, both of which I accepted; of the former I partook little, at the latter a man's party except Mrs. Peel. Sir Robert did not dine, being unwell. The Right Honourable's manner increases in pride, pomp, and ceremony as he increases in years.

On the 26th I paid a long-promised visit to Ashbourne. My excellent good old sister, Mrs. Dale, had been very unwell during the summer. I therefore felt great anxiety to see her, and was rejoiced to find her better than I expected at the great age of eighty. The worthy old squire, who is a year in advance of his wife, I never saw better, or better inclined for a glass of port wine. I called upon Sir William Boothby at Ashbourne Hall, and went with him all over the house, which did not fail to bring to my recollection many, many thoughts of my early youth. I described to him the great old hall, and the lines I remembered in Roman characters on the wall :

‘Do any manner of slavery rather than sell thy patrimony ;
Yet rather sell thy patrimony than borrow upon usury.’

The remainder was defaced when my father went to live at Ashbourne. It was written on the cornice on each side the room, and dated ‘T. Cockayne, 1560.’ When my father went to Ashbourne, and when he left it, the names of the persons occupying the several rooms, when the Pretender's headquarters were Ashbourne, were written on each door, such as *Prince*,¹ *Murray*, *Radcliffe*, etc. Only one name remained when I paid my late visit.

November We were engaged to go to Grendon² on the 18th. Dick

¹ The Prince's door is still shown.

² Grendon Hall, Atherstone, Warwickshire.

and I went to dinner, and found extreme hospitality and kindness from Sir George and Lady Chetwynd.¹ 1829

We were shooting next day, and saw great abundance of game. Sir George has expended very large sums in the alterations and additions he has made at Grendon. The house is very superb, and when completed will be magnificently furnished. The hall in which we dined is sixty feet long, with an open gallery along one side of fine old oak and extending across one end. The house is replete with conveniences; the sleeping-room commodious and comfortable. His neighbour, Mr. Dugdale, the member for the county, has just suffered a most wanton piece of malevolence by some evil-disposed person or persons having thrown poison into his dog kennel and killed all his pointers. Mr. Dugdale has been the means of prosecuting and transporting a part of an audacious gang of poachers. It is supposed some of the remainder of the gang had effected the purpose.

23rd.—I went with Eleanor to dine and stay the night at Beaudesert (the third time of asking). The strict moralist perhaps may not approve of taking my daughter to visit Lady Anglesey, but situated as I felt myself towards the noble Marquis and the obligation I owed the family, added to the circumstance of her ladyship having called here to introduce her daughter to Eleanor, I naturally concluded I must either take Eleanor or give up my acquaintance altogether. Lady Anglesey's conduct cannot be justified. She has suffered for her misdeeds; they should not be visited on her children. And as Mrs. Littleton,

¹ Sir George Chetwynd of Brocton, co. Stafford; born 1783; married 1804 Hannah Maria, daughter of John Sparrow, Esq. of Bishton Hall, co. Stafford.

ÆT. 68 Lady Sophia Gresley, etc., had been to stay at Beaudesert, I did no longer hesitate in accompanying my daughter. We met Levett of Wichnor, Captain Byng¹ and Lady Agnes, and a Colonel Walpole, and passed a pleasant, agreeable day. Poor Lady Agnes and Captain Byng! I could not help looking upon them with a glance of commiseration on account of the infamous and unfounded calumnies that had been in circulation respecting the former.

December On the 8th of December I went with Eleanor and Dick to Ashby on a visit for two nights to my old friend and school-fellow Piddock. There was a ball in the evening at the new assembly rooms under the patronage of the young Marquis of Hastings² and Lord Howe.³ The company very numerous, consisting of nobility, gentry, and *others*. A large proportion of the latter. The Dowager-Marchioness⁴ attended with two or three daughters; very plain, coarse women, and dressed in full opposition to the present costumes, especially the hair, which, instead of falling ringlets, was braced up as tight as a grenadier of the old school. The Marquis a fine-looking young man. I did not trace a look of the Rawdon. The Marchioness, lack-a-day, how changed since I first saw her Lady Loudoun. The ball was for the benefit of the person keeping the publick rooms, which are very handsome, and been built

¹ George Stevens Byng, eldest son of John Byng, Earl of Strafford; born 1806; married 1829 Lady Agnes Paget, fifth daughter of the Marquis of Anglesey.

² George Augustus Francis, second Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Rawdon (1808-44); married Barbara, Baroness Grey de Ruthyn.

³ Richard William Penn Curson Howe; born 1796; created Earl Howe 1821.

⁴ Flora Muir, Countess of Loudoun in her own right, married the first Marquis of Hastings in 1804.

for the purpose of encouragement for company to the baths supplied with water from the Moira coal-pits, of an extraordinary saline quality. 1829

December 27.—The reduced price of provisions highly favourable to the lower orders at this inclement season, and at this particular time, when evidently very great distress is attaching to all classes of labourers, agricultural and manufacturing. In my remembrance the country never was in a state of more dejection or so general a feeling of dissatisfaction and discontent prevailing with regard to the efforts of the Government on the occasion. Strong symptoms are expressed respecting the church establishment, both as to revenue as well as to various other circumstances, religious and civil, more especially as concerned with the church establishment in Ireland. It is a subject of all others requiring the most profound skill and talent to examine and correct; that there are inconsistencies and anomalies no one can doubt, and which become more conspicuous from the *march of intellect* discovering and exposing the defects. What the following years may bring forth on this subject I cannot conjecture; but that a *something* will be proposed either on the part of the *political* Government or will originate with the *civil*, there can be little doubt, or if neglected the church establishment will be shook to the foundation.

On the 31st I went with Eleanor and Dick to the Christmas ball at Derby by invite from my cousin Bake-well. Dick and I rode; Eleanor and her maid (Floren-dine) in the carriage. We found the road well tracked, but very slippery. A great ball, near three hundred people, and a very magnificent room, which I had not been in for

ÆT. 68 fifty years, when I accompanied Sir Nigel Gresley¹ to a ball at the time he was high sheriff of the county, and at which was present the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire,² who opened the ball with the present Archbishop of York,³ then Ned Vernon. We dined with our cousin Bakewell, who lives in a strange, uncomfortable, shabby way at a lodging in the Irongate. She gave Eleanor a bed in a room with a plaster floor. Dick and I dressed and slept at the King's Head Inn.

1830 January
January *January* 1.—Again a new year opens to the world; I believe a year never opened with less cheering prospects to a country than the present for old England; distress attending all classes of the community. Agriculturists particularly from the low prices. Wheat 8s., barley 4s. 8d., oats 3s. 3d., beef 4½d. to 5d., mutton the same. Meetings held in various parts of the kingdom to represent the distress of the country. Unless the minister can remove the mill-stone (the national debt) from the neck of the constitution, no abundant relief can be afforded, I fear.

On the 7th my dear Dick left me to join his new regiment at Templemore. He went in the evening by coach to Birmingham, and proceeded from thence soon after his arrival *via* Shrewsbury, and arrived at the head about eight the next evening, having travelled *outside* the whole way in severe frost and snow.

¹ See vol. i. p. 2.

² Georgiana, daughter of John, Earl Spencer; married 1774 William, fifth Duke of Devonshire; she died 1806. Her famous candidature for Charles James Fox in the Westminster election 1784 is one of many actions that have made her celebrated.

³ Edward Vernon, Lord Archbishop of York (1757-1847); assumed the name of Harcourt; married 1784 Anne, third daughter of Granville, first Marquis of Stafford.

18th.—A long, tedious petty sessions at Shenstone. It appeared that the parish of Fazeley, as represented by the overseer of the poor, was in a singular predicament occasioned by the distress of the times owing to the works and manufactories having thrown such numbers out of employ. One hundred and thirty persons, who usually paid rates, had declared themselves incapable of contributing. Those that were able have refused to pay, stating their unwillingness, unless compulsory means were preferred, to see what number of the one hundred and thirty were actually incapable. The consequence of this was an application from the overseer to know what he was to do to raise the money to support the actual starving paupers. We told him we could only follow the law, which pointed out to him how to proceed where persons refused to pay their rates. What a melancholy situation has cotton brought that unfortunate parish to. The great accumulator of endless wealth, living at the moment on the spot, to witness the misery such riches have occasioned, and suffering the circumstance laid before a court of justice to be exhibited. 1830

Parliament met on this day (4); a more *slip-slop* com-
position I never read than the speech delivered for his Majesty. I verily believe the country (that is, all classes of the middle and lower rank of the community) never suffered greater distress than at the time I am writing. Agriculture woefully depressed, and trade and manufactur[es] equally suffering, and which is greatly aggravated and increased from the severity of the season. Agricultural labourers, gardeners, and bricklayers' labourers in the most wretched state of misery. There was a noble subscription at Lich- February

ÆT. 68 field to the amount of upwards of £400 for the relief of the sufferers by the inclement season.¹

February 11.—The appalling account of the melancholy event of Lord Graves² having destroyed himself reached the country by the London papers. Reports prejudicial to the character of Lady Graves had been in circulation for some time, respecting her intercourse with the Duke of Cumberland ;³ that the King had interfered to hush the matter, and that reflexion on the event had so wrought on the feelings of Lord Graves that caused the rash act he committed. I saw Lord Anglesey the day before he left Beaudesert, the 28th January. I thought him particularly depressed in spirits, and I have now no doubt he had received unwelcome tidings respecting his sister which hastened his departure. Horrible ! horrible ! What a life of vice and immorality pervades the high world. A second instance of suicide occurred at this time in this country. Sir Trevor Wheler⁴ shot himself with an air-gun without any specifick cause being assigned, leaving several children to lament not only the fate of a father, but the like to a mother, whose life was also bereft by her own hands.

13th.—Committed, in conjunction with Mr. Smith, eight Lichfield poachers, being out armed at night at Beaudesert. It is a disgrace to our legislature that the game-laws are not

¹ The prevailing distress was recognised in the King's speech, and the ministers, probably with justice, attributed it to unavoidable causes.

² Thomas North, second Baron Graves (1775-1830); married 1803 Mary, sister of the first Marquis of Anglesey; was lord of the bedchamber, a member of Parliament, and comptroller of the household to H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.

³ Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1771-1851); fifth son of George III.; succeeded as King Ernest I. of Hanover 1837.

⁴ Sir Trevor Wheler succeeded his father 1821; married Harriet, daughter of Richard Beresford, Esq. of Ashbourne, co. Derby. He died February 14, 1830.

amended. However, if palliation can be allowed, the distress of the time mainly contributes to the depredations under this head. Here closes the volume; begun in 1814—finished this night, 13th February 1830. 1830

14th, *Sunday*.—Commenced another volume of my strange, eventful history, which perhaps may, when I am no more, afford my children some amusement, and not improbably a feeling thought for their old father.

On the 16th my much-esteemed old acquaintance and friend, Colonel Madan, died after a short illness; universally regretted as an honourable man. He had served with credit under his uncle, Lord Cornwallis,¹ in India, and brought home the news of the surrender of Seringapatam.²

24th.—Great distress in the country, affecting alike the manufacturing and agricultural interests, and notwithstanding Parliament had been some time assembled, the Ministry had taken no measures for the consideration of the state of the country.

March came in with mild, fine weather.

March

On the 2nd, Levett of Packington, Manleys, etc., dined with us, and on the 4th I went to Stafford to attend the adjourned sessions; a long list of prisoners, but very trifling as to the nature of crime. Most of the cases might as well have been settled by two magistrates at a petty sessions, but for a *Briton's* boast of the trial by jury. A sad miscreant in the gaol, a dissenting minister of the name of Mallock, who had published a most filthy, blasphemous pamphlet filled with abuse of the laws (which he had violated), and of the Staffordshire magistrates in particular. A long dissertation after dinner, respecting the truck system of paying the manu-

¹ See vol. i. p. 139.

² 1799.

ÆT. 68

facturers their wages in goods. The magistrates at sessions agreed to petition the House of Commons against the system. I had not given the subject much attention, and I did not sign the petition. I think it better to pay the men *any way* than not to employ them, consequently not to pay them at all.

14th.—This day also commences the *fiftieth* year of my service as a soldier, on which occasion I have determined to lose no time in making application in behalf of my dear Dick to obtain for him promotion. I shall go to town purposely to enforce my plea by having to say to the Commanding-General: ‘I am now in the *fiftieth* year of my service, and hope it may be sufficient claim for me to ask the favour for my son, having *purchased* his first commission, not very usual in a general officer.’

15th.—I intended to have started by the Liverpool mail on the morning of the 15th, but was disappointed in not having a place, and I therefore occupied a corner in the Chester, and reached my friend Wright’s in Orchard Street by seven next morning. Fine weather for the season. After two hours bed I breakfasted and went to the Horse Guards, where I was dismayed on finding Lord Hill had put off his levée until the 25th. I in consequence made a written application to ask an audience, which his lordship good-humouredly granted for the 18th.

On the 18th I had an audience of Lord Hill¹ for the purpose of soliciting his lordship’s influence in behalf of my dear Dick’s promotion. I found his lordship extremely friendly and kind. I therefore augur favourably for my dear ensign. I dined with Mr. Wilson, who married a

¹ See p. 22.

daughter of my friend Stephenson, and who took me to the feed as his guest. A splendid house and great doings. 1830

On the 20th I took a corner in the Chester mail and departed the great metropolis, leaving the magnificent new Post Office exactly at eight. It is really a magnificent establishment, worthy so great a nation. The order and regularity of the mail-coaches on their morning arrival and on proceeding to their several destinations, admirable.

I reached home on Sunday morning by ten and took two hours bed. London appeared very full, at least to judge by the number of fine equipages rolling about in all directions, notwithstanding the distressed state of the country as affecting both the commercial and agricultural interest; of the former I am no judge, but of the latter I can speak feelingly as I have been obliged to sell fat stock for a very trifle more than the original purchase. Wheat about 9s., barley from 4s. 6d. to 4s. 9d. I called upon Lord Anglesey and was sorry to find him so unwell. He had taken a violent cold, followed by fever, and was suffering greatly from his old complaint. He must, poor man, also be seriously affected by the melancholy event of Lord Graves' death. That lamentable circumstance appears to have been hushed, of course, by pecuniary influence over the publick press. I scarce heard the subject mentioned. Some people have doubts as to the unfortunate lady's criminality. I met his Royal Highness, the Duke of Cumberland, turning a corner under the colonnade at the Parliament's House, and absolutely was in contact with him. He went into the House of Lords, and I followed to see if anything particular was going on. There were not more than four Lords in the house hearing

ÆT. 68 appeals. The Duke sat down by Lord Eldon.¹ I left them conversing.

April The 1st April, wretched cold north-east wind, and instead of white linen pantaloons in the beginning of the week, had to reassume cloth and woollen stockings, and on the 2nd in the morning found the ground covered with *snow* three inches deep. So extraordinary a change never was remembered, indeed so extraordinary weather could not have been expected in March as the 27th, 28th, and 29th.

The 3rd and 4th, thaw and rain.

On the 5th, petty sessions at Whittington; Mr. Taylor and self. Nothing of consequence. Mr. Leach (the Vice-Chancellor's brother), who has a cotton manufactory at Alrewas, appeared to appeal against a poor-rate for a cotton-mill, which he stated that he only worked one-half of the year, and consequently considered he was not liable to pay for the whole year. Decided against him.

9th.—Good Friday. This day forty-six years gone by I accompanied poor old Swinfen to Bath. We left London at twelve o'clock, and in Piccadilly or by Hyde Park Turnpike in Brompton saw the then Duchess of Devonshire² in a scarlet habit, with a cap made of a fox's skin and the brush hanging down her Grace's back, canvassing for the celebrated Charles Fox's election.³

I purposed going to London on the 18th to attend his

¹ John Scott, first Earl of Eldon (1751-1838); very active in opposing the Reform Bill.

² See p. 68.

³ A squib-writer of the time penned the following epigram:—

‘ Arrayed in matchless beauty, Devon's fair
In Fox's favour takes a zealous part,
But oh! where'er the pilferer comes, beware,
She supplicates a vote, and steals a heart.’

Majesty's levée, but the King's sudden indisposition caused a postponement of the ceremony, which I was not sorry for, as I was busy completing my planting and ornaments in the wood, and also as I was anxious to attend the sessions at Stafford on the 21st.

30th.—The indisposition of the King occupied the public mind. The levée intended for the 5th was again put off, and the bulletins gave an unfavourable statement of his Majesty's health.

May 3.—Petty sessions, Whittington. Inge and Taylor^{May} attended; the usual routine of parish business. Dined at Mrs. Case's; a very large, *hot* party. Sir Robert Peel died. A man of most extraordinary life; having raised himself by his own intrinsic labour to vast riches and distinction. He was of coarse manners, hospitable, friendly, liberal, contributing to all charitable establishments, and as an accompaniment to the immense wealth he had obtained, he lived to see his eldest son arrive at one of the highest dignities of the state (Secretary for the Home Department). His other sons united to some of the first aristocracy of the kingdom. I knew him pretty intimately. His great object appeared to me on all occasions to be the procuring information, by collecting in his intercourse with mankind all he could. His manner was to appear as *knowing nothing* and trying to make you believe he inquired from ignorance and flattered you from that motive to tell *all you could*. His riches at the time of his death must have been great, as he told me in the year 1814 that he received forty thousand a year from Government securities, and that his landed estates and funded income were nearly alike.

ÆT. 69

On the 14th I left home for the purpose of going to London by way of Cambridge. I went in the afternoon to Birmingham, where I slept to be ready for the Cambridge coach at six next morning. Proceeded accordingly to breakfast at Coventry, dined at Northampton, and reached the seat of learning soon after nine. The cause of my taking Cambridge in my route was in consequence of the strange inattention and mysterious conduct of my son Bill, from whom, notwithstanding repeated letters from myself, from his sister and from his brother in Ireland, no account whatever had been received from him for near four months. The following morning he came to breakfast at the inn and appeared much depressed on seeing me. He was unable to assign any sufficient cause for his neglect, stating it to have proceeded in the first instance from idleness and want of resolution to devote himself to the undertaking of writing a letter, and that subsequently he felt so ashamed of the neglect. As no stage-coach for London was allowed to leave Cambridge on Sunday, and having no other business at the University than the visit to Bill for the particular purpose, I proceeded in a hack to Royston, thirteen miles, to meet a London coach. Bill accompanied me to Royston and returned in the chaise to college. A flat, unmeaning, dull country to Ware from Cambridge, where we dined, and so on by Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross to London. I arrived at my old lodgings with my good friends in Orchard Street by half-past seven to their surprise, as they did not expect me until ten, on the supposition of my travelling by the mail direct from home. I had some business to transact as trustee for my poor widowed sister,

Mrs. Burnaby, respecting the transfer of a sum of money 1830
in the Equitable Insurance office amounting to £2500 raised
by Mr. Burnaby on insuring his life, and on the further
security of my brother, and subsequently on me. There
was also a further sum of £500 in the three per cents.
(Mrs. Burnaby's fortune), both of which sums were trans-
ferred on a mortgage on the Madeley estate (bequeathed
by the late Mrs. Dyott), a singular circumstance that one
of the family should have a mortgage of *Mrs. Dyott's*
estate.

18th.—I attended Lord FitzRoy Somerset's¹ levée on
the 18th, relative to my dear Dick ; found him very civil.
To judge from appearance I *hope* his intentions correspond
with his outward show. London was in a great state of
agitation and suspense in consequence of the precarious
state of his Majesty's health ; add to which the Ministry
were perplexed by the refusal of Prince Leopold to accept
the sovereignty of Greece, which they imagined he would
start no objection to.² I never saw the gay city fuller,
to estimate by the great number of carriages, etc., in the
streets. I walked round the Regent's Park and was more
astonished by the extraordinary increase of fine, splendid
houses than I can possibly express. Where the inhabitants
come from possessing sufficient means to inhabit them is
still more extraordinary.

On the 19th employed in the city on Mrs. Burnaby's
business, and took a very long walk to gratify my curiosity
by a sight of the tunnel under the Thames, a stupendous

¹ See p. 13.

² The Sultan had acknowledged the independence of Greece in 1829. The
Crown was offered to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg in July 1830, but he became
King of Belgium in 1831.

ÆT. 69 work, but not likely to be completed, and if it should be, a matter of much uncertainty as to utility or publick advantages. Six hundred yards had been excavated (exactly half the distance) ; it must naturally, if finished, be wet and damp the whole distance, and if much used, the consequent soil from the horses, etc., will cause an effluvia in that confined space highly disagreeable. I never was a yard of the road I took after passing London Bridge [*sic*]. I expected to have procured a hackney-coach, but not one to be seen for a mile, when I observed two hackney-chariots ; into one I placed myself, but had gone fifty yards when jarvey went slap against a dray-cart, threw down one of the horses, and broke his harness all to pieces. I returning to obtain the other chariot, it was taken and gone. I had two miles further to walk, a warm day, through a more filthy, black-guard part of the metropolis than I could have conceived London to furnish. I passed the whole of Rotherhithe and Bermondsey, and fortunately fell in with a Deptford coach returning to Gracechurch Street, in which I embarked myself.

On the 23rd, after *seeing* the Bishop of Carlisle preach at Baker Street Chapel (I did not hear one word), I went for two nights to Mr. Edward Harman's at Clay Hill, near Enfield.

24th.—The next morning Harman very good-humouredly and kindly took me an excursion in his carriage to see sights. We went in his phaeton and horses to Barnet, took post-horses to Watford and on to Cashiobury, Lord Essex's,¹ a magnificent park and fine old mansion. The most picturesque and extraordinary pleasure and flower garden I ever

¹ George, fifth Earl of Essex (1757-1839).

saw. There are some fine paintings and curious relics. 1830
The handkerchief with the stain upon it that stemmed the wound of King William received at the battle of the Boyne. A lock of King Charles the First's hair, and piece of the pall that covered his Majesty's coffin. We returned to Watford, got a pair of fresh horses and went to Moor Park (lately purchased by Lord Grosvenor),¹ a beautiful, fine place; the house large but unfurnished. There are two extraordinary trees in grounds, one a spruce fir, the branches of which shade a circumference of 73 yards; the other a lime, shading a circumference of 135 yards. The effect of the thunderstorm of the preceding day had made havock on the trees, as well as on all the gravel walks and roads in the gardens and park. We returned to Watford and partook of some luncheon, and changed for our Barnet horses that had waited for us to bring back to that place. We went through Ellstree and a pretty country, and returned by Shenley Hill to Barnet, having passed the house returning, where the unfortunate Wasse was murdered by Thenlett. Hooked on Mr. Harman's horses to his carriage, and reached Clay Hill to eight o'clock dinner after a delightful excursion on a fine summer day. The King's continued illness precluded all expectation of a drawing-room. A bulletin was expected by a lord and groom of the bedchamber daily at St. James's Palace, where inquiries were made, and the names of inquirers written down, on which list I entered my name. I visited the exhibition at Somerset House, and also that of Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait pictures exhibited in Pall

¹ Robert, second Earl Grosvenor (1767-1845); created Marquis of Westminster July 1831.

ÆT. 69 Mall. I was most amused with the latter ; they were chiefly living characters, many of distinguished celebrity.

I left town per Chester mail on the 28th, and reached home sweet home by ten next morning. I was surprised in stopping at Islington to find we were to have the company of no *less* a man than our Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Talbot,¹ large in size and large in consequence, but an extremely agreeable companion (notwithstanding the space he occupies) in a stage-coach. We had fine growing weather during the whole fortnight I was absent. I brought but indifferent weather into the country ; found it chill and cold. His Majesty's mail was an overflowing bumper. Earl Talbot and I on one seat, a lady and gentleman opposite, with the son of the former, and the lady had a package as large as a good-sized bolster to fill up the trifling space left for our legs. Lord Talbot very good-humouredly placed the package between his legs until we were clear of London, and then the guard took charge of it. As Lord Talbot did not protest against the admission of the fifth body, I could offer no objection.

June *June 2.*—Lord Talbot invited me to Ingestre for the second June, his day to exhibit his show of rams to let. I went accordingly ; he was quite as a bachelor, his family and servants being all in London. Mr. Lambert² (the late Lady Talbot's brother), Dick Levett, and myself, the quartette at dinner. We walked out in the evening to look over the rams previous to the next day's exhibition.

Next morning Lord Aylesford³ and Frank Newdigate

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

² Son of Charles Lambert, Esq. of Beau Park, co. Meath.

³ Heneage Finch, fifth Earl of Aylesford ; born 1786 ; succeeded 1812 ; married Augusta, daughter of George, second Earl of Brooke and Warwick.

arrived after breakfast and stayed the day. A number of the principal farmers and sheep breeders in the neighbourhood and some from Leicestershire attended. His lordship gave a dinner in the large dining-room to about thirty ; we all dined at four o'clock. The nobility and gentry sat about two hours and then we retired, leaving the bold yeomen to the full enjoyment of their bottle and *breeding*, details which they enlarged upon until a late hour. The noble lord did the hospitalities of his table most admirably, and of course must have gained high popularity from his guests. 1830

On the 26th of June his Majesty King George the Fourth departed this mortal life after long suffering under various complaints, asthma, etc., occasioned probably by the liberty he had taken with a powerful constitution, for certainly few of his subjects had exercised the intestines with the stimulants his Majesty had. I always found his Majesty most gracious and condescending. A more accomplished Prince could not be as to address and manner, but as King of a great empire future historians will not have material to supply many princely traits of a great man.¹

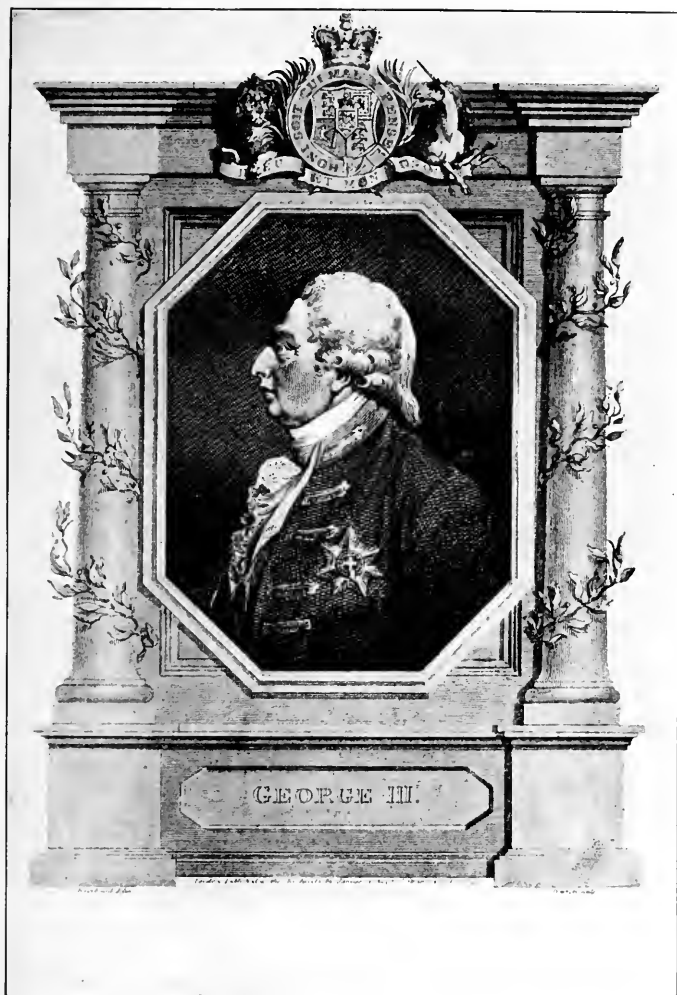
A humble individual has no opportunity of remarking on the private character of a great monarch, unless he is in the King's confidence or habits of intimacy. I had the honour of seeing his late Majesty occasionally, when I was visiting at Windsor ; the opinion I formed of him was, his being the most accomplished gentleman I ever saw, kind-hearted, affable and condescending when necessary, but perhaps too

¹ Sir Robert Peel, nevertheless, stated in Parliament that George IV. 'never exercised or wished to exercise a prerogative of the Crown except for the advantage of his people.' The Duke of Wellington always affirmed that George was a marvelous compound of virtues and defects. There can, however, be no question that his moral vices outweighed all his merits.

ÆT. 69 eager after self-gratifications to allow thought for the affairs of a great nation. I wish his successor may guide the state with as little *discredit* as George the Fourth. Having in younger days seen much of King William the Fourth and partaken of several weeks' familiar intercourse as far as Prince and subject was allowable, I have little hesitation in auguring that William's will not be a reign to which any great benefits are likely to accrue to the nation from kingly exertion. He has neither consistency, firmness, nor discretion. I hope I may be mistaken. The instance his Majesty gave at Lord Js. Lyon's table at Portsmouth in his *unqualified abuse* of the Duke of Wellington, the Master-General of the Ordnance, addressed to an officer of the artillery, was so undignified, so indiscreet, to take place at the table of the Lieutenant-Governor of Portsmouth, to offer no favourable sample of future excellence as a King.

He certainly was not in favour with the good, the great, the glorious George the Third, and if ever man judged right, judged impartially, it was King George the Third. His present Majesty three and forty years ago has more than once said to me, 'I shall be glad if I can ever be of any service to you.' Prince's promises are not permanent proofs.

July On the 20th my old friend Colonel Wright arrived to pass some time at Freeford. Fine seasonable weather, of which the crops were in great want after such continual rain. Busy preparations for the election, Parliament having been dissolved on the 24th. Parliament had been prorogued in person by King William on the 23rd. In the gazette of that day my name appeared in the list of brevets as *full general*, the only promotion I can ever look to; it is all honour and glory, as it brings no profit. It was necessary



HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III.

that I should attend the levée, not only to pay my duty to the King on his accession, but also to kiss hands on my promotion, and accordingly I proceeded to London by the Liverpool mail on the 26th, and reached friend Wright's house in Orchard Street a quarter before ten in the evening, a very hot sultry day. I took a hackney-coach at Islington, and on arriving in Orchard Street *left* it to my *servant* to get the things out of the coach; he thought I had my great-coat, which *I had not*, and left it in the coach, as also my travelling cap, both of which I lost. If I had not had a servant, *I* should have taken care of my goods myself; but as Wright had his servant with him in the country, I took mine up. The weather in town most overwhelming hot. I had new clothing to provide and arrangements to make to get to St. James's. I dined with my friend M. General Stephenson, who had previously been promoted by his Majesty to that rank in the Hanoverian service, as a mark of his Majesty's favourable opinion. 1830

28th.—I accompanied my friend Parker¹ to the levée. He was to be presented on occasion of his promotion to rear-admiral. The levée appeared to consist of soldiers, sailors, and clergy, a vast crowd, and intensely hot. His Majesty very gracious; shook me by the hand cordially and inquired where I lived. When I told him in Staffordshire, he said, 'Oh, where you used to live.' He then remarked, 'It's a long time since we were at Halifax.' I made my bow and so ended my interview with my American *play-fellow*, now the monarch of England. I dined at Mr. Wilson's, son-in-law of my friend Stephenson. A sumptuous dinner, and too much *iced champaign* and *hock*.

¹ See p. 43.

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On the 29th I attended Lord Hill's levée, having waited in town for the purpose in order to repeat my application in behalf of my dear Dick. I mentioned to his lordship that several *juniors* had been put over Dick, and was sorry to find that my remark greatly displeased the noble lord, as he said, 'I don't like your complaining in that manner ; I have shown my inclination to accommodate you by moving your son from the 63rd to 70th regiment.' I replied I was only induced to make the remark in consequence of his lordship's having said on my previous application that my son was too young for promotion, that I was exceedingly sorry if what I had said was improper, that after my long service it could not be supposed I was likely to show disrespect to my superior, that I hoped his lordship would not imagine that I had the most distant intention of so doing, and that I trusted he would not consider it in that light. He assured me he should think no more of it, and shook me by the hand and said he would do what he could for my son when opportunity offered. I was quite contented and shook his lordship's hand in token of amity.

30th.—I left London by the Chester mail in the evening, and reached home by the next morning so much fatigued by the journey, by the extreme heat of the weather, and by the hurry and bustle of London, that I was quite unwell and obliged to go to bed and send for Mr. Morgan, who found considerable fever on me and treated me accordingly. However, thank God, quiet and care the next day restored me. I found that the old blue spirit at Lichfield had been to work and obtained a candidate to oppose the Anson interest in the person of my friend Sir Edward Scott.¹ I was not

¹ Of Great Barr, co. Stafford.

able to go to the city, which I particularly regretted, and 1830
 more especially as it was thought by some that I had
 deserted their cause.

On Monday the 2nd I went to the city to the committee August
 to attend Sir Edward to the hustings. On going to the
 Swan I found from the committee that negotiations had
 been entered into with the opposition to permit Vernon to
 be returned on consideration that no opposition whatever
 would in future be offered to the Independent interest
 returning one member. Before I gave an opinion on the
 subject I desired to ascertain from Sir Edward if the pro-
 posal met his perfect approbation ; he told me it had. I
 then desired to know whether any one could show me a pro-
 bability of our succeeding. I was told it was not possible.
 I then gave my consent ; considering the expense of carrying
 on the contest, the source from whence the supplies arose,
 and the having obtained the object of all our efforts, though
 not immediately, to a certainty hereafter ; and this without
 a compromise of our influence, feeling it to be a *capitulation*
 on the part of the enemy. I hope and trust it may prove
 what has been intended, the emancipation of the city from
 the undue influence of the aristocracy. Captain Anson, who
 was present when I met Sir George¹ and Mr. Vernon to
 make a final adjustment, told me ‘that Lord Anson would
 not have interfered at the last election in the return of *two*
 members, but from particular circumstances of irritation and
 menace from our party.’ Captain Anson mentioned
 this by way of proof of Lord Anson’s² willingness not
 to interfere in future. Matters being adjusted, on the 3rd
 the polling continued a short time in the morning and Sir

¹ See vol. i. p. 375.

² See vol. i. p. 329.

ÆT. 69

George and Vernon were returned. Thus finished a contest that had been kept up more or less for seventy years, ever since Mr. Levett's memorable election in 1791.

5th.—Inge came to dinner and stayed the night. I accompanied him next morning to Stafford to the county election. The old member Littleton and Sir John Wrottesley¹ returned without opposition.

News arrived of the great revolution in France by the abdication of King Charles and of the dreadful slaughter of the troops and of the populace of Paris; a melancholy lesson to the despotick Governments of Europe; it behoves them to take warning; it may also perhaps be a useful hint to the ministers of this country how they tamper with the *vox populi*.²

August 13.—I called upon Sir Robert Peel, my first visit on his accession to Drayton Manor. Found the Right Honourable the Secretary of State uncommon civil. He mentioned how joyously he looked forward to the becoming settled as a country gentleman, and his hope that his neighbours would accept him as a friend amongst them, and as a proof of his intentions to reside at Drayton he expected Mr. Smart, the architect, that day to give him a plan to make additions to the house. I asked the Secretary if he did not consider it a most extraordinary event the return of Mr. Brougham³ for the county of York and Mr. O'Connell⁴ for the county of Waterford. I observed at the same time

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

² Charles x. and the Dauphin renounced their rights on the 2nd of August after a three-days street-fight; on August 7 Louis Philippe was proclaimed 'King of the French.'

³ Henry Brougham, Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868); statesman.

⁴ See p. 33.

that the lawyers were getting the upper hand in the House of Commons by frightening the county gentlemen, bullying the Government, and paid by the commercial and monied interest. He said it was certainly most unexpected and most unaccountable, but what he thought equally so was the outrageous conduct of the deputation from the Birmingham Political Union in their daring attempt to overawe the nomination of representatives at Warwick. I did not join with him, as I considered the politicians from *Brum* as an ebullition of party spirit, whereas the election at York and Waterford is a violence on the constitution assisted by aristocratic timidity on the part of the Yorkshire nobility. 1830

On the 24th I went to Barr to dine and sleep for the purpose of attending Sir Edward Scott's publick entry to Lichfield to a dinner given by the True Blue Club. A grand procession took place accordingly the next day. We left Barr about ten o'clock to arrive at the canal bridge near Lichfield before twelve. Sir Edward, Mr. The. Levett, Mr. Burnes Floyer, and myself in an open carriage belonging to the former. The horses were immediately taken off, and twenty-four freemen in blue jackets and blue ropes were attached to the carriage, and drew us into town and through the principal streets to the Swan Inn, accompanied by the largest collection of persons I ever saw assembled at Lichfield. Triumphant arches were formed in various parts with applicable mottoes and also abundance of blue flags of all descriptions. Nearly five hundred dined; a most abundant supply was provided; Sir Edward Scott, Sir Roger Gresley, Sir George Chetwynd, and Mr. Levett (Recorder) each sent a buck. A fine jollification of punch and ale with

ÆT. 69 shouting and singing to make the welkin roar. I never witnessed so enthusiastick a display of zeal in a cause in my life.

October *October 7.*—I walked with Bill to show him Okeover, a favourite spot of mine, and where in early youth I passed happy days. I had not been inside the house for many years, not since the old part had been taken down. I found difficulty in tracing the old buildings, and was sorry to observe the neglected state of the park and grounds, and the general appearance of gloom superseding its former cheerful display. I thought of olden times, when Walhouse Okeover came into possession, and found in the cellar upwards of *two thousand* dozen of bottled ale, the general beverage of the squirearchy of that day.

On the 17th Bill set out to sleep at Birmingham in his way to Cambridge to resume his theological studies. God send he may do well. No promotion yet for my dear Dick, which hurts and disappoints me greatly. I wrote to consult Sir Herbert Taylor¹ as to whether he thought there would be any impropriety in an application personally or by writing to the King. He advised not, stating that his Majesty had determined not to interfere with the departments, and that he, Sir Herbert, would speak to Lord FitzRoy Somerset,² who was then at Brighton, respecting my wishes for Dick's promotion. There is a report that Lord Hill³ is to be removed from the Horse Guards. I wait the result before I again make an effort in my dear boy's behalf. I feel myself ill-used after fifty years' service and a general officer, not to be able to procure a lieutenantancy for my son after being three years ensign and purchasing

¹ See vol i. p. 317.

² See p. 13.

³ See p. 22.

his commission. He has hitherto not proved one of 1830
fortune's favourites in his profession, as far as promotion of
good quarters may be considered, or indeed good society.
Regimentally the 63rd as a corps was greatly injured by their
destination to Botany Bay, and his present regiment, the
70th, consists of all the field officers and captains being
married men, and the subs. not the flower of the army.

20th.—Staffordshire sessions. A remarkable warm day.
I felt it quite uncomfortable as I rode Roany, who was
ever a rough goer. A very full bench of magistrates, and
a full bar of prisoners. No crimes of great magnitude,
and crime will certainly increase from the effect of the new
Beer Bill, which came into operation on the 18th. The
state of the country is sufficiently demoralised without
further incitement ; and the effect of the Beer Bill must, to
a certainty, add to the licentiousness of the populace, by
affording them the means to be dissolute, from the readily
obtaining sufficient to get drink at a cheap rate. Licensing
Ale Shops in every village, which must become a rendezvous
for vice in all its bearings !

29th.—The following day we went to Dudley to view
the celebrated old castle and the extraordinary excavations
into the rock for the purpose of getting limestone. They
have worked under the rock the distance of 800 yards, and
formed a cave from ten to twenty feet high, measuring from
the narrow path left on our side, bordering on which is a
canal five feet deep and nine from the surface up to the
side path. The canal is for the purpose of conveying the
limestone, which is carried on a railroad half way and then
put into boats and navigated underground, and so into one
of the adjoining canals. We traversed the cavern, each

ÆT. 69 holding a candle, over a very slippery, dirty passage. At the extremity the people were at work blasting the limestone rock. It was singularly curious to observe the indifference as to precaution respecting the effect of gunpowder. A charge was prepared for blasting. One of the workmen, desirous to show us the mode of proceeding, took his candle and without reflection held the light immediately over the fuze, to show it as forming the final process of the operation; if a particle of the wick of *unsnuffed* farthing candles had *dropped*, the whole party must have *dropped* as dead as dried figs. The old castle is a vestige of antiquity mouldering to decay. I had never been in the neighbourhood, and was glad to have seen the extraordinary numerous population of the surrounding country, accounting at once for the cause of crime and consequent commitments to our county gaol. It was grievous to learn the little effort made to moralise the lower order through the means of religion as attaching to the Established Church, and it is not to be wondered that dissenters of every description have found numerous followers from the indifference of the established clergy to their duty. A strong proof was exhibited at the new erected church at Wolverhampton, made to contain three thousand sittings; two-thirds of which were free and the remainder let as a remuneration to the incumbent. As soon as it was known that a clergyman of irregular, idle habits was appointed, every person who had subscribed for seats withdrew their names, and one and all relinquished their subscription.

We returned home on the 30th. We were blessed with delightful weather all October. Agricultural pro-

duce looking up in price. Wheat from 9s. to 10s., barley 1830 6s., oats from 4s. to 5s. 3d. Beef 5d. and 5½d., mutton 5d. to 6d. per pound. The two trees I had planted within the gate at the Heath having died, I had two handsome young beech planted the end of this month. I made an experiment in planting strawberries by the raised mounts with tiles, and rows one above the other. Exhibited one at the end of the drawing-room.

On the 7th I took a seat which I had sent to secure at November Liverpool in that mail and proceeded to London, principally to exert myself in behalf of my dear Dick for his promotion, and to take the opportunity being in town to pay my duty to the King, who was to hold a levée on the 10th. I reached my good friends in Orchard Street by ten o'clock without let or hindrance, and a fine day. One of our companions from Coventry was a person employed in surveying and taking levels of the line for the proposed railway from Birmingham to London. An undertaking that depended on the result of the one from Liverpool to Manchester. It will be a work of great magnitude and extent, and if carried into effect will render highways, horses, and canals useless.

8th.—To the surprise of the town on the morning of the 8th, Monday, it was publickly announced that his Majesty's visit to dine the following day with the Lord Mayor was given up in consequence of a communication made to the Duke of Wellington (Prime Minister) by the Mayor, 'that from the information he had received he was fearful of tumult and uproar in the city, and that some serious injury was intended towards the Duke.' I suppose never was greater disappointment experienced, and many people thought it

ÆT. 69 was unnecessarily put off.¹ Others were of opinion that some mischief might have arisen from the unpopularity of the Duke in consequence of his declaration in the House of Lords that he should oppose Parliamentary reform. It was also mentioned that the resentment of the populace was aimed chiefly at the new police, from their activity in preventing crime and seizing the perpetrators. Great crowds were assembled in the city and in the evening about the Houses of Parliament and in Downing Street, but they were dispersed by the police, and wherever resistance was offered the knaves and pickpockets received a severe drubbing from the former. The new established police is said to work well; the only complaint is the heavy expense to which the parishes are liable for their support. This will in some measure cure itself, by lessening the number of thieves, which will naturally admit a reduction in the police. I found I had a preparation to make for my appearance at the levée, in consequence of another change in the clothing for the general officers. Blue cloth pantaloons with gold lace, instead of white and a gold sash. I made a complaint at the Adjutant-General's office on the subject of the general orders not being officially communicated to general officers, and that it was not possible for officers to comply with regulations of which they were not apprized. The business of the King's not visiting the Lord Mayor was warmly taken up by the opposition in both Houses of Parliament, and but lamely defended by ministers.

On the 9th there was numbers of people assembled in

¹ This caused a panic, and consols fell three per cent. in an hour and a half. The Marquis Wellesley declared the postponement of the dinner to be 'the boldest act of cowardice' that he had ever heard of in his life.

the city. A friend of mine made an effort to proceed down Cheapside, but was prevented by the dense crowd. In the evening a body proceeded over Blackfriars Bridge, heated and influenced by the oratory of Hunt,¹ one of the demagogues of the day, and were making their way towards the Parliament House, but were brought into collision with the police, who again gave them a second edition of hard blows. 1830

On the 10th I attended a crowded levée, and had a gracious shake of the hand from his Majesty. I thought the King looking ill. Their Royal Highnesses, the Dukes of Cumberland² and Sussex,³ were in attendance, and two uglier men are not to be found in Great Britain, particularly the former, whose countenance is more horrifying than any human being I ever beheld. I went in a *hackney coach* and back in my *boots* a pied. I met Sir George Chetwynd⁴ in the morning, who said he was prepared for the levée with everything but one article, that was a carriage. I told him I would give him a *seat in mine*, for which he appeared rejoiced, but when he found what my mode of conveyance was, he *declined* my offer. I remarked to him that he might be assured the King would not know whether he came in a coach or a cart.

On the 11th I attended Lord Hill's levée to renew my application in behalf of my dear Dick, and from his lordship's kind manner and expressions, unless his lordship is

¹ Henry Hunt (1773-1835); Radical politician; fined and imprisoned several times; commonly known as ‘Orator’ Hunt.

² ‘A tall, powerful man, with a hideous face; can't see two inches before him; one eye turned quite out of its place.’—*Memoirs of Baron Stockmar*.

³ Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex (1773-1843), sixth son of George III.

⁴ See p. 65.

ÆT. 69 filled with deceit, I cannot but hope that my dearest boy must ere long obtain the object he deserves. I had a letter from him the day after I arrived in town to tell me his regiment was ordered to Dublin. I wrote to him the result of my interview with the Commander-in-chief.

On the 12th I attended Lord FitzRoy¹ (three levées in three successive days), and received from him every assurance of his readiness to forward my wishes. He told me *Lord Hill had* named my son, and that he was sure his lordship was well inclined towards him. I stated that although I considered it hard, from my standing in the service, to be obliged to purchase every step for my son, I was notwithstanding prepared to purchase an unattached lieutenancy, and to pay also the difference to place him on permanent rank.

In the evening of the 13th I left London per Chester mail, and arrived by ten next morning at home, sweet home. I went to afternoon service at Whittington Church.

18th.—We dined at Thickbroom, a small party. The Shaws, etc. And on the 19th we dined at Packington to meet John Levett and his wife. The Duke of Wellington and his administration resigned office in consequence of a defeat in the House of Commons on a motion of Sir Henry Parnell's² for the appointment of a committee to take the civil list into their consideration, which was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he having submitted a plan to the House for the disposition of that expense.³

¹ Lord Fitzroy Somerset.

² See p. 19.

³ There was a majority of twenty-nine against the Government in a house of four hundred and thirty-seven members.

This defeat, added to the declaration of the Duke on a recent occasion in the House of Lords 'that he should oppose reform,' placed the ministry in an unfavourable situation with the country, and made a change of them necessary. An administration exclusively Whigs succeeded, what their measures may produce time only can tell. Earl Grey¹ became first Lord and Premier, and my friend the gallant Marquis² was re-chosen to administer in Ireland. I remember the day when he was very opposite to the Whigs, and abused them unsparingly. I sincerely hope he may have *health* for the undertaking, but I doubt it much. He has a *puzzled card* to play with a singular *shuffled* pack to confront. The disaffected tumultuous *demagogues* are now his old Catholick friends. If he employs strong measures to put them down, the tide of popularity, that flowed so strongly in his favour during his former government, will ebb, and will return with increased agitation to his discomfiture. On my knowing of his appointment, I wrote by first post to request of him to put my dear Dick on his list for one of his A.D.C.'s. He wrote to me by return to say how grieved he was that he could not comply with my wish, that he was pulled to pieces by application, and that he had many old friends that had been turned adrift at the time he was, who looked up for re-election to their old situations. I wrote immediately to my dear Dick, and enclosed him Lord Anglesey's letter.

At this time, and for some months past, there has been

¹ Charles Grey, second Earl Grey (1764-1845); statesman; prime minister
1830-34.

² The Marquis of Anglesey.

ÆT. 69

very considerable ill-blood exhibited in Kent, Sussex, Hants,¹ and Wilts by breaking threshing machines belonging to the farmers, and by incendiaries burning corn-ricks to a grievous extent, supposed to have been perpetrated by the agricultural labourers in those districts, who have undoubtedly been suffering great deprivations from the necessitous low price of labourers' wages occasioned by the hard times as affecting agricultural produce. There does not appear to have been any co-operation of resistance either by the inhabitants or by Government. We, thank God, have been quiet in all this neighbourhood, and our labouring poor pretty well employed; but this kind of disorder is too apt to spread its bad effects unless vigorously and timely checked.

I had a letter from my old friend and acquaintance Lord Combermere² to say he proposed paying me a visit on the 25th in his way into Cheshire. He and I were quartered together in Dublin in 1805. He in command of the cavalry and I of the infantry. He has since obtained high and well-merited honours not only in the field of Waterloo, but having been Commander-in-chief in the East and West Indies, and also in Ireland. He arrived between three and four o'clock. We walked until it was dark. I had no party to meet him except Tom Levett and his wife, whom he knew from the circumstance of Mr. Levett's cousin Heathcote having lived at Combermere when Lord Combermere was in the East Indies. He seemed to

¹ The Duke of Wellington went down to Hampshire and took a leading part in quelling these disorders.

² Stapleton Cotton, Viscount Combermere (1773-1865); saw much service in Flanders, India, the Cape, and Peninsular War; commander-in-chief in Ireland 1822-25; commander-in-chief in India 1825-30; field-marshal 1855.

delight in his visit, and to enjoy the company of his old friend. 1830

He told me he had saved £120,000 in India, but that he was obliged to bring it home mostly in indigo, the exchange was so unfavourable. He was in excellent spirits, and told me many anecdotes of the court and new administration, he having been Gold Stick in waiting as Colonel of the Life Guards for the month. There were two turnips of extraordinary size grown from seed dropped by chance amongst the mangel worzels in the upper field next the lawn. They were taken up this week, one was thirty-eight inches round, the other thirty-four ; they were of the White Norfolk kind.

On the 1st December we dined at Packington, and on the December 2nd went to Wichnor for two nights.

I went next morning to High Bridges to meet (by appointment) Sir Oswald Mosley to look at the works of the new iron bridge erecting by the county, but the Baronet did not keep his appointment. Reports were in circulation that a threatening letter had been received by Mr. Charles Arkwright to break his threshing machine, and similar to the practices pursued by the unlawful mobs in Kent and Sussex, who had for some time been committing acts of outrage upon the publick by destroying threshing machines and setting fire to corn-ricks. On my return home from Wichnor, and from many reports having reached me indicating that the troubles of the south were reaching our county, I considered it proper to address a letter to the Lord Lieutenant (Lord Talbot¹) on the subject of the taking some steps to prevent mischief, or at all events to

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

ÆT. 69 be prepared to meet it. By the same post I had a very handsome letter from Lord Talbot thanking me for 'my judicious and excellent letter,' and requesting of me to go there the following day to dine and sleep, and that he would assemble some neighbouring magistrates the next morning to consult on the subject.

Having written to Lord Talbot to say I would be at Ingestre on the 8th, I set out by eight from Thorpe and posted to the meeting. The Bishop of the diocese, High Sheriff, Lord Dartmouth,¹ with twelve or fourteen magistrates assembled. It was reported that considerable tumult had taken place amongst the colliers near Newcastle,² urged on by a set of turbulent turn outs from Lancashire; and also that symptoms of disorder had appeared in the manufacturing iron districts about Wolverhampton. It was agreed on my suggestion to request the Lord Lieutenant to take the necessary steps for the holding a special sessions in each hundred, for the purpose of the magistrates ascertaining as far as they could the state of the country; and to consult on the means most likely to prevent the existing contagion in other counties spreading its baneful effects into ours. Further, to adjourn the meeting until the sessions on the 5th January, then to take the matter into further consideration. This was adopted. I returned to dinner to Thorpe, and came home the next day, the 9th, to dine at Packington.

I am disappointed that my dear Dick has not ere this obtained his promotion to lieutenant, particularly after the

¹ William Legge, Earl and Baron of Dartmouth, born 1784; succeeded as fourth earl 1810; married 1821 Frances, daughter of the second Earl Talbot.

² Newcastle-under-Lyme.

great encouragement Lord Hill gave me when I first presented Dick on his appointment. He bears his ill-luck manfully; added to which he has experienced since he joined the army the being quartered in the most unpleasant detached situation that could befall a poor sub. He was stationed many months at Templemore, County Tipy. Neither town nor neighbourhood to furnish society; from thence to Ballinasloe, where Lord Clancarty¹ would have been attentive to him, but the regiment was suddenly ordered to Dublin, unfortunately the company to which he was attached was halted at Trim. There again he found no society. He applied for leave of absence, but was not able to obtain it on account of the disturbed state of the country.

On the 12th I rode up to Beaudesert to call upon Lord Anglesey, who had arrived the day before on his way to Ireland. He looked ill, and did not appear in high delight with his appointment. He said he was going into a hornet's nest, and should not be surprised if he was insulted on his entrance to Dublin. I spoke to him respecting Dick as one of his A.D.C.'s, and told him that it was not profit or emolument I looked to so much as the having my son attached to his person. He seemed to regret that it was not in his power to comply with my wish. A sharp frost with the first snow for the year.

The meeting of justices on the 18th at Wichnor for the purpose of considering the state of the county and to take such measures as might be thought necessary as far as respected the hundred of Offlow North. We had present

¹ Richard Trench, Lord Clancarty (1767-1837); diplomatist; opposed Catholic Emancipation.

ÆT. 69 Sir Oswald Mosley,¹ Inge, Hall, Taylor, Mosley² junior, and Mr. Levett of Wichnor. We had given orders for the attendance of the constables of each parish for the purpose of inquiring as to the state of their labourers, whether all employed, and the condition of their paupers. We obtained a favourable report; directions were given them as to their several duties as conservators of the peace, and to keep a good watch upon stragglers or strangers. They were also directed to send lists of the names of all persons liable to serve the office of constable, and the names of all the out-pensioners in their parishes.

On the 27th proceeded with my dear Eleanor at eight to a splendid and magnificent ball at Drakelow to celebrate Sir Roger Gresley's³ birthday. The Duke of Devonshire,⁴ Marquis and Marchioness Londonderry,⁵ Lord Castlereagh,⁶ Lord Waterford,⁷ etc. etc. About one hundred and forty people; altogether a splendid fête. The Baronet opened his new rooms. Hall of entrance, library, and apartments of Lady Sophia and himself. What strange revolutions, alterations, and changes have taken place in that house since I first knew it fifty years ago. How the Baronet supports his expensive establishment seems a mystery to the world. The road from Walton to Drakelow so rough and uneven from the frost that one of the springs of my carriage gave way; however, it held together to bring us safe home. A heavy fall of snow in the night.

Farewell to the old year.

¹ See vol. i. p. 297. ² Oswald Mosley, born 1804. ³ See vol. i. p. 336.

⁴ William Spencer Cavendish, sixth Duke of Devonshire, born 1790; succeeded 1811.

⁵ See p. 61.

⁶ See p. 39.

⁷ Henry de la Poer Beresford, Marquis of Waterford, born 1811; succeeded 1826.

January 1.—Frost in the night, but mild morning. I ¹⁸³¹ now begin the year in which, if it pleases Divine Provi-^{January}dence, I shall reach the *age of man*, three score and ten. What vicissitudes and what strange events have I witnessed. Let me implore the Omnipotent Ruler of all to spare me my health, a blessing I have so amply enjoyed through the past year, for which I feel daily thankful, and which every good man should consider the first of all earthly enjoyments, and for which on my bended knees night and morning I humbly offer my prayers and thanksgivings.

On the 5th Inge called, and we went together to the sessions, the time for which was earlier than usual by a late act of Parliament. I never witnessed so large an assembly of magistrates, occasioned in the first place by attendance to qualify, and in the next in consequence of the general state of the country from the acts of insubordination, but which to the credit of our county had not been manifest in one single instance. There was a long desultory conversation after dinner on the subject of the gaol as regards the crowded situation of the prisoners. It was built to contain one hundred and fifty, and now tenanted by three hundred and seventy. There were one hundred and twenty session prisoners. Probably fifty of which were for offences for which a good horse-whipping would have been infinitely more beneficial to the culprit, and saved an unusual expense to the county. It is presumed that some legislative measure must be enacted to cure the evil attending commitments for trivial offences.

On the 11th Eleanor and I dined at Sir Robert Peel's, and in the evening to the Tamworth ball. Broad cloth and Baronet, Members of Parliament and Master Masons,

ÆT. 69 farriers and farmers, etc. etc. Motley's your only wear. The Baronet Peel, though an ex-minister, was anxious to make himself agreeable in his own borough. There were staying in the house at Drayton Mr. Croker,¹ late secretary to the Admiralty, Mr. Horace Twiss,² late Under Secretary of State, and Sir Alexander Grant;³ the two former gentlemen I had never seen, notwithstanding the conspicuous situation they had held, and the display they made in Parliament.

The 19th a ball and supper at the George Inn, Lichfield; numerous attended, but consisting of many strangers unknown to me. In consequence of a rick having been burnt near West Bromwich and one at Highlands Park, supposed to have been the act of incendiaries, the Lord Lieutenant issued a circular requesting the magistrates to cause all vagrants to be apprehended, and a description of their persons, clothes, etc., to be sent weekly to the Clerk of the Peace at Stafford. A petty sessions to be held weekly for the purpose. As we in Offlow North had given particular instructions personally and by written communication to all the petty constables of the hundred to apprehend vagrants or suspicious persons, but after apprehension not to be released but by a magistrate, I considered we had already performed all that was necessary, and therefore did not take further steps, thinking that all was acquired by our previous arrangement.

24th.—I proceeded with Eleanor to pay a visit to my old acquaintance, Lord Combermere,⁴ at Combermere Abbey.

¹ John Wilson Croker (1780-1857); politician and essayist.

² Horace Twiss (1787-1849); politician and wit.

³ Sir Alexander Grant (1782-1854); civil servant.

⁴ See p. 96.

The weather had been untoward and snowy for two or three days, which made the roads indifferent. I took my own horses to Wolsey Bridge, from thence by Stowe and Woore to Combermere; forty-four miles. We arrived about five o'clock and were received by Miss Cotton, sister to Lord Combermere. A fine old house and beautiful grounds with noble lake and beautiful woods. We met a Mr. Greville,¹ uncle to Lady Combermere; Lord Charles Greville,² brother of Lord Warwick's; Colonel Finch,³ brother of Lord Aylesford; and Sir Robert Hill,⁴ brother of Lord Hill. Lord Combermere is separated from his wife, at least they live apart. His eldest daughter⁵ and only son⁶ live with him, the other daughter⁷ with her mother. The eldest, about fifteen, promises to make a fine woman. The boy looks sickly and not so promising as his poor lad, whom I knew in Dublin, and who died just before he attained the age of twenty-one.

The next day I walked about. His lordship and I called upon his brother, the Rev. William Cotton,⁸ who lives at the Royals, three miles from Combermere, on a farm belonging to the noble Lord. The Reverend is celebrated as a good farmer, a cock-fighter, and horse-racer. We were previously acquainted from the circumstances of my having

¹ Brother of William Fulke Greville, Esq.

² Charles John Greville, a major-general in the army; died 1836.

³ John Finch, born 1793; colonel in the army, C.B.; married 1835 Katherine, daughter of Alexander Ellice, Esq.

⁴ Sir Robert Chambre Hill, C.B., born 1778; colonel in the army; married 1801 Eliza, daughter of Henry Lumley, Esq.

⁵ Caroline; married 1837 Arthur, Earl of Hillsborough.

⁶ Wellington Henry, born 1818; captain in the army; married 1844 Susan, daughter of Sir George Sitwell.

⁷ Meliora Emily Anna Maria.

⁸ Second son of Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton.

ÆT. 69 been employed to purchase the famous racehorse Diamond for him, for which he paid £2100. The estate at Combermere consists of nine thousand acres nearly in a ring fence. The estate was heavily incumbered by electioneering debts of his father's, but as my friend has made upwards of £100,000 in the East Indies, he will be able to clear off a good part. He lives comfortably and splendidly.

His lordship and I went shooting the following day, which sport he has in superb perfection. We had nine spaniels to beat the coverts in the highest possible state of discipline and perfection. After shooting we dined and slept at a Mr. Poole's, a neighbour and friend of his, a man party. Walked to Combermere next morning and started for home about eleven by way of Shavington (Lord Kilmorey's),¹ Drayton, Eccleshall, Stafford, etc., reached Freeford by five. A pleasant excursion, though frost and snow. Shavington, Lord Kilmorey's, appeared a capacious comfortable residence. The road goes through the Park not five hundred yards from the house.

The 31st I dined at Sir Robert Peel's; a man party of his neighbours (the *Squirearchy*). The Baronet made himself very agreeable, quite a country gentleman, but interlarded his conversation with entertaining anecdotes from the Secretary of State's office. He spoke in praise of Hunt, lately returned to Parliament for Preston, and also remarked that he did not think O'Connell's talent rated as it deserved in the House of Commons. It was dreary, wild winter day of heavy snow, no track to be seen on part of the road. Tom Levett's coachman missed his line and was pulled from

¹ Francis Needham, first Earl of Kilmorey (1748-1832); general 1812; created Earl of Kilmorey 1822.

the box by the falling of one of the horses ; Inge's carriage 1831
got off the road in the Park on to some ground trench dug
for planting, and Manley's post-boy's horse fell and the lad
under him. I scarce ever was out in a more turbulent day.
It bettered in the evening to return home.

22nd.—I wrote to Lord Hill, the Commander of the February
forces, to urge my claim for Dick's promotion. I had a
sort of demi civil official reply expressing that he was very
desirous to promote my son, but stated some silly unmeaning
difficulty with respect to promoting an ensign out of his
own regiment. I have felt very indignant by the treatment
I have received respecting Dick, particularly after the *humbug*
promise, or rather offer, Lord Hill made to me : ' to let him
know when I wanted anything for my son.' And after his
lordship putting *ten* or a *dozen* juniors over his head, what
confidence is to be placed in such promises. Every praise
is due to my dear Dick for the fortitude and good feeling
he has shown from his disappointed hope by a strict attention
to his professional duties, and his unwearied affection for me.
The subject of Parliamentary reform engrosses the whole
country at this time. Lord J. Russell¹ brought in his bill,
and which occasioned six nights' debate. There is only one
observation I have ever offered on the subject, which is, that
let the House of Commons be composed in whatever manner
contrivance may fabricate, it will never be formed of in-
dividuals less prone to corruption or more calculated to
perform the functions of their station than the present
representatives. That many evils exist in the present Par-
liamentary system, which require amending, nobody can
deny ; but whether in the effort to *mend*, you may not *mar*,

¹ Lord John Russell (1792-1878).

ÆT. 69 is for future events to determine. If too much power is in possession of *the people*, the worst of consequences must ensue. That power is making great strides, and the check that should operate to curb it, is (it is to be dreaded) lending it undue support. A few years will show the effect of this *power of the people*.

March *March 22.*—Lichfield spring races. Lady Chetwynd and her daughter, Mr. Edward Monckton and his nephew came to us; a very meagre meeting. Little company on the heath and less in the stand, and very moderate sport. There was a curious circumstance occurred. Lord Wilton,¹ who had exhibited a whining oration at a publick meeting in Cheshire on 'the want of due respect to the aristocracy prevailing at this time among the lower ranks of society,' did not add much to the noble ranks by exhibiting himself on two occasions as a jockey in two races with the commonest members of the stables. So much for pride, pomp and circumstance, and *consistency*. The race continued a second day, but still less company. As my company left in the morning, we dined the second day with Admiral Parker.²

25th.—Dined at Mr. Lane's, King's Bromley. I had not visited since the death of Mr. Lane, as I imagined the young man had not been quite attentive in not acknowledging my early notice of condolence on his father's death. We met Lord Bagot,³ his son and unmarried daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Hall, etc. etc. The pervading subject in all society and all company, *reform*. Ministry having carried the motion for introducing this notable reform bill by a virtuous majority of one. Our county Whigs got up a county meet-

¹ Thomas Egerton, Earl of Wilton, born 1799; succeeded 1814.

² See p. 43.

³ See vol. i. p. 333.

ing to present an address to the King and to the House of Commons. The meeting was whig, whig, from Earl Gower¹ to the county *groom* [?]. The Marquis of Stafford signed the requisition to the sheriff, but sent his son as representative. This noble Marquis, as long as he returned one member for the city of Lichfield (which he sold for prompt payment), two for Newcastle and *one* for the county, never thought of *reform*, what a dignified *patriot*!!

28th.—To Stafford. I rode there and back again, pretty stout for three score and ten. The quarterly meeting at the gaol. A full committee. Lord Talbot, Ned Monckton, Broughton, and Grove. We had to consider a plan for enlarging the gaol in consequence of the great increase of crime. It was originally built to accommodate one hundred and sixty prisoners. At the late assizes there were four hundred and four.

April.—The Bill for Parliamentary reform was again brought forward on the reassembling of Parliament after the adjournment for the holydays on the 12th April. The motion for bringing in the bill having been carried by a majority of *one* only. On a subsequent [motion] of General Gascoyne's,² ministers were left in a minority of eight; this caused them to carry their threat of dissolving Parliament into execution on the 21st.³

The King adjourned the House in person on the 20th and the dissolution took place next day. A mischievous ill-judged procedure, considering the state of the country, and of Ireland in particular. The publick mind at this period

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

² General Gascoyne (1770-1841).

³ As a matter of fact Parliament was suddenly dissolved on April 22 by the King in person, so as to prevent Lord Wharncliffe's address in the Lords against the dissolution being carried.

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was wrought up to the greatest excitement ; I allude more especially to the *sovereign people*. This class, I fear, will ere long decide the fate of poor old England, which will not many years be, as it has long been, the first country in the world. The Whigs have been at work since '92, and the language of the leader of that party, in those days Lord Grey, has created a power in the *people* that is now (uncontrolled) at work for the basest purposes. In 1792 Lord Grey, then Mr. Grey, brought forward a motion for reform in Parliament. Gibbon, in one of his letters (published) to Lord Sheffield, says : 'I shuddered when I read Grey's motion.'¹

On the 25th Sir Edward Scott² again came forward to canvass Lichfield. Mr. Harcourt, late Vernon, having handsomely redeemed his pledge of not again offering himself after a dissolution of Parliament.

Sir George Anson did not canvass until the 27th.

The election took place on the 29th, when the old independent interest of the city obtained the long-looked-for result of their endeavours by electing a member of their choice in the person of Sir Edward Scott. I believe him to be an honest honourable man, and certainly obtained a seat in Parliament by the most honourable means that ever member was returned. He was nominated by Tom Levett and I seconded the nomination, though I did not altogether admire his politicks with regard to the reform bill. I don't approve the proposed clause in the bill that disfranchises the freemen. I think that class of electors as old and respect-

¹ This motion was lost by a very large majority, but Mr. Grey's motion in the year 1793 was thrown out by a majority of one hundred and ninety-one.

² See p. 84.

able as any of the constituency attaching to cities or boroughs, and far preferable to granting the elective franchise to a stranger, who because he has occupied a house for a year rated at £10 to the poor rate is entitled to a vote. I did not attend Sir Edward on his canvass, but dined the day of election, and as the intended reform bill is to prevent me having a vote for the city by being non-resident, I gave my vote, the first person who voted, for Sir Edward. 1831

On the 9th of May Lord Combermere, his son, daughter, ^{May} governess, and tutor arrived in their way to London, passed the day, and proceeded early next morning. I followed in the afternoon per Chester mail, and reached my old quarters in Orchard Street at seven next morning. Found my respected old friends the Wrights tolerably well. Mrs. Wright altered from increasing years, and on the decline both as to mind and memory. My journey to London was for the purpose of accomplishing two objects, the first to use every effort to procure my dear Dick a lieutenantancy, and the next to pay my duty to their Majesties at St. James's. I did not expect to have performed the latter ceremony the day I reached town; but soon after I left Orchard Street for my morning ramble, I fell in with Admiral Parker, who told me he was going to the levée with Mr. Tenant, who he had no doubt would give me a seat in his coach to St. James's. Too good a hint to lose, and accordingly I paid a visit to my old neighbour Tenant, who most cheerfully gave me a seat to Court, which we attended at two o'clock. His Majesty, on observing that I put up my hand to my ear, said, 'Ah! what, are you hit? We are getting old fellows.' The levée was not crowded. A good number of the

ÆT. 70 embroidered coats and the bag wigs might have been spared attendance.

The next day, the 12th, I and my old, very old, friend General Hodgson went together to the drawing-room to be presented to our gracious Queen Adelaide ; I made my bow—it is not etiquette now to kiss the Queen's hand on presentation. Her Majesty appeared to have a good-humoured countenance, a white unmeaning German face. The Princesses graciously condescended to acknowledge the *old* General.

A large party at dinner at Wright's after the drawing-room. The assemblage of persons both at the levée and drawing-room appeared to me to be a mixture unlike what used formerly to pay their respects to the beloved George the Third and Queen Charlotte ; but King William courts popularity ; King George the Third caused popularity to court him. His present Majesty (I hope I may be mistaken in my conjecture) proceeds to fill the Royal office in a manner very different from his adored father. I cannot help fearing that evil consequences may be expected either to the King or to the country from the want of dignity and stability that attaches to his Majesty's character. London appeared very full, notwithstanding the dissolution of Parliament and the re-election of members going forward.

I dined on the 13th with Hodgson. I found from Lord Combermere that he had taken an opportunity of speaking to Lord Hill respecting Dick, and though no promise was made, the latter expressed his anxious wish to attend to my claim in favour of my son. Lord Talbot called upon me, and left a message that he wanted to speak to me. He wanted to consult me respecting a proposed declaration

from the county of Stafford expressive of dissent of the reform bill. I agreed to the principle, but did not altogether approve the wording of the declaration, and made my remarks accordingly. 1831

On the 17th I attended Lord FitzRoy Somerset's levée, and was received most graciously and kindly with an assurance of his effort in my favour. He mentioned that he thought I declined *purchasing an unattached Lieutenancy*. I said no, I had not *declined*. I had remarked to him that it was unusual for an old general officer to purchase every step for his son.

The 19th I attended Lord Hill's levée, and was particularly kindly received. After the usual compliments he said, 'You want to purchase an unattached lieutenancy for your son. I will do what I can, and make a note accordingly, which you may see.' His lordship then asked me if I should make any stay in town, as he wished much to invite me to dinner, and he was engaged all the following week. I told him I should leave town in a few days, and made my bow. I was called back by the aide-de-camp, when the noble Lord said if I was not engaged he would be glad if I would dine with him that day, which I of course accepted. I found that my friend General Pigot¹ was to be of the party. I therefore got him to take me in his carriage. Lord Hill had a house two miles from town, Wilsborn House. Nineteen at dinner, the table well supplied, the whole arrangement becoming the dignity of Commander-in-chief. His lordship extremely civil and attentive.

24th.—I dined with Inge, and met there an agreeable young man, just returned overland from the East Indies, a

¹ Sir Henry Pigot (1750-1840); general 1812.

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brother of Sir James Graham.¹ I called upon Disbrowe, who told me there was a vacancy in the 53rd regiment, and that he had mentioned it for Dick. This was additional good news, as the 53rd was a regiment I should much prefer, not only from the respectability of the corps, but from its foreign station, Gibraltar. Would that my efforts for my unfortunate son at Cambridge were as prosperous as this result. But alas! how different! My fears on his account are daily more alarming. Not a line can I obtain from him either through his tutor, by my own letters, or by the persuasion of his sister or brother.

27th.—I dined with General Pigot in Wilton Crescent; fine houses, and spacious new streets and squares in a situation that I remember as swampy, low, partly uncultivated pastures.

28th.—The King's birth kept. I did not go to court, having so recently paid my duty to his Majesty, and left London in the evening per Chester mail. Nothing said, heard, or seen in London but reform. But no one ever venturing to tell what is to be obtained by it. I cannot help predicting *evil*. There is nothing to be more dreaded than *popular power*. To me it appears to be the order of the day that every circumstance connected with the Government of the country is to be swayed by the opinions of the *people* without due consideration as to the general good. The sovereign people to become *rulers* instead of being *ruled*. Popular power carried the Catholick emancipation bill, popular [power] will do the like respecting reform. Popular power will overawe Parliament, and then ends the glorious constitution of England, which will be extinct through its

¹ Sir James Graham, born 1792; succeeded 1824.

Parliament. I reached home soon after ten, and attended 1831
Divine Service at Whittington Church in the afternoon.

The month of June begins with the like dry weather, not June
hot, but seasonable. The markets pretty steady. Wheat
from 10s. to 10s. 6d., beef and mutton from 6½d. to 7d.
I had suffered a great mortality in my sheep, having lost
near forty hoggerils from a disease that attacked the head
and affected the brain. On opening the head, the brain was
reduced to a perfect fluid like milk and water; various
remedies were tried, but without effect. The only cause
assigned was from having had too many, which occasioned
poverty, but that cause did not satisfy me, nor do I believe
it to have occasioned the disease. There had been great rot
amongst sheep in the county; mine were perfectly sound,
except a foot rot, which plagued my flock for a very long
time, and which, I believe, prejudiced their growth and
improvement very materially.

The new Parliament met on the 15th, but did not pro-
ceed to business until the 22nd, when his Majesty went in
person to deliver his ministers' speech. The rage for reform
has effected great changes in the members of the new Parlia-
ment. Popular power has ejected some of the old members,
and it is much to be feared that the encouragement given
to that power by the supporters of the reform bill may
ultimately occasion troublesome times for old England.

On the 8th a most extraordinary discovery took place. July
A poor hen was found at the bottom of a waggon loaded
with batten straw, and must have been in the situation for
more than a month. The waggon had been placed by the
barn doors for the purpose of receiving straw as it was
thrashed. The hen must have been at the bottom of the

ÆT. 70 waggon at the time the first two or three battens were thrown into the waggon. She was discovered in a space of about a yard long and a foot wide, and had picked the straw and made a quantity of chaff as if done by rats or mice. I was in the rick-yard in two minutes after the discovery, and saw the hen on the ground near the waggon; she was pecking grass, and appeared as though nothing ailed her. The labourer (John Bagnall) who unloaded the straw was the same person who had thrashed the wheat and placed the straw on the waggon. The poor creature was not heavier than a sparrow. She soon recovered herself.

9th.—A special sessions at Wichnor to receive the population returns. It will appear that in the agricultural districts the population has not materially increased, that there is no redundancy of population in those districts, and consequently no occasion for Wilmot-Horton's¹ emigration bill. In Lichfield the increase of the male population has exceeded the female.

22nd.—I went with Eleanor to Mr. Charles Arkwright's to dine and sleep. He has a farm of six hundred acres in hand, which he appears to manage extremely well. A great difference in the habits and pursuits of the two great cotton-spinners, the Peels and the Arkwrights, the former linking themselves in bonds of marriage with the noble females and living in high life, the latter contenting themselves with rural and domestick engagements with their county neighbours, quite unassuming, unostentatious, though fuller of wealth and riches than the Peels.

August On the 9th of August I began reaping wheat. My mangelwurzels were better this year than any I had previously

¹ Sir Robert Wilmot Horton (1784-1841); politician.

grown. It was sown on the level ground after ploughing 1831
in the manure and harrowing, and then sowing the seed by
line as you do peas. The surplus plants, after they were fit
for transplanting, were put out to the adjoining ground previ-
ously prepared as for the seed. The whole was only once
horse hoed, and the seed plants once weeded. Those trans-
planted did not require weeding.

Carried my wheat home on the 13th. A pretty fair crop.
The country very busy in harvest with the usual number of
assistants from Ireland.

September 10.—Dined at Sir Robert Peel's; Eleanor and September
Dick also. We met Sir George Murray,¹ Sir J. Clerk, Sir
Henry Hardinge,² and Mr. Holmes;³ an agreeable party.
We had no politicks, though such great politicians, and
the reform bill then engrossing all and every description
of person. I asked the ex-secretary whether he thought it
would be thrown out in the Lords; his answer was, that he
thought it would. I then asked him if so, would it throw
out the ministry. He said he could not answer that.

I rode over on the 26th to Beaudesert to show the place
to Mr. Harman, and was greatly surprised at the lodge to
hear that the noble Marquis had most unexpectedly arrived
that morning from Ireland, and that post horses were gone
up to the house to proceed to London. I did not go near
the house, as I concluded from his short stay he would
not wish for intruders. He overtook me and stopped his

¹ Sir George Murray (1772-1846); general and statesman.

² Sir Henry Hardinge, first Viscount Hardinge of Lahore (1785-1856); field-
marshal; M.P. for Durham 1820-30; for Newport (Cornwall) 1830-34; for
Launceston 1834-44. He took part in sixteen general actions, for which medals
were granted.

³ This is probably Mr. William Holmes, who was for thirty years Tory whip
and died in 1851.

ÆT. 70 carriage. He looked haggard and aged. He was on his way to support the reform bill, for which he is a strong advocate. I remember the day when he used to *damn* the Whigs and all their *measures*. *Time*, they say, works wonders. *Vanity* and *circumstance* prevail over *self*, and too frequently make *self* forget *self*, and commit all sorts of inconsistency to *serve self*.

October October 16.—To Stafford. Meeting of the committee at the gaol; only Monckton to meet me. Disgraceful proceedings at Nottingham and Derby just now on the subject of reform, encouraged by persons whose zeal might be engaged in a better cause than urging the lower orders to commit acts of depredation on the upper classes; perhaps it may not be intended; but if by the language employed by persons of distinction at the publick meetings tends to set forth the parties not inclined to agree to their wild schemes as the *enemies of the state*, no wonder if the lower orders proceed to acts of outrage by such encouragement.¹

19th.—My much esteemed friend and old acquaintance General Charles Fitzroy died. A worthy good man, and one who had been ill-requited for his unceasing devotion to that glorious monarch, King George the Third, and to whom he was first favourite. Fitzroy and the late Princess Amelia were much attached, and I have no doubt were married from my own observation at Windsor. I have little or no reason to think otherwise. Upon the death of the Princess, Fitzroy was shamefully ill-treated by King George the Fourth.

¹ The riots at Nottingham were very serious, and the castle was burnt down by the mob to wreak their vengeance on the Duke of Newcastle. Further outrages were fortunately prevented by the timely appearance of a regiment of hussars. At Derby matters were quite as bad, and the rioters stormed the city gaol and released the prisoners.

21st.—Eleanor and I went to dine and sleep at Wichnor ; met there Mr. and Mrs. Meynell. He is an anti-reformer, and in the course of argument after dinner with Levett, who is a violent reformer, Meynell mentioned a curious circumstance relative to the great [advocate]¹ of reform, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Althorp.² Meynell said he was class fellow with him at school, they were afterwards with the same tutor at college, that his lordship from a boy had the strongest propensity to republicanism, and that in his mature years he had heard him declare, he should wish to live under a republick and be glad to become *Mr. Spencer*. Yet this man is one of the cabinet under a monarchical Government. We were prevailed on to stay at Wichnor the next day, and intended to have heard Divine Service on the 23rd at their church, but the rain prevented. The weather cleared in the afternoon and we returned home to dinner.

A meeting at Stafford on the 25th of the friends of reform, called by the sheriff (FitzHerbert of Swynnerton) in consequence of a requisition numerously signed by a sorry collection of names, got up by the chairman of the quarter sessions, Sir Oswald Mosley, a blustering reformer. The meeting was called amongst others of the *inhabitants*. How far the sheriff is empowered to call the inhabitants of a county to assemble is thought a matter of doubt. Strong inflammatory language was used, as has been much practised lately on similar occasions, with much abuse of the peers and the bishops, which no doubt has had great influence on the

¹ Word uncertain.

² John Charles, third Earl Spencer and Viscount Althorp (1782-1845) ; a distinguished member of the House of Commons, and Chancellor of the Exchequer 1830-34 ; succeeded his father as third earl 1834.

ÆT. 70 class of people to whom such language had been addressed, and has caused serious mischief to individuals, and will I fear be attended with calamities of a more serious nature. The meeting was formed of course of *friends* only, and consequently carried their *own* measures their *own* way.

November 15th.—Mr. Shaw's hounds found a fox in the Pool Tail, but it was a stormy cold morning and they could not run him across one field. Mr. and Mrs. Shaw came to dine and sleep at Freeford on the 14th, as also Sir Edward Scott and Mr. William Herrick. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Levett dined.

The Shaws stayed. The Manleys, Lady Clayton,¹ Dick Clayton, Mrs. and Miss Case came to dinner. Our sleeping party left us the next morning. I begin to find the attendance on company for two days in succession is rather more than old *seventy* can manage.

The 16th we dined at Packington; a small party invited to meet Dr. Gardiner (Canon of the Cathedral), who from ill-health dined at four o'clock. The day being winterly he did not venture to dinner. He is an agreeable man, with a good deal of prebendal pomposity. He has the new church at Birmingham.

17th.—We dined at Drayton. I called there on the previous Sunday, when he asked us to dine *en famille*. We met Sir A. Grant,² Mr. George Dawson,³ who married Miss Peel, Mr. Herries,⁴ the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Edmund Peel.⁵ I had never been in company with Mr. Dawson or Mr. Herries, the former agreeable

¹ See p. 137.

² See p. 102.

³ The Right Hon. George Robert Dawson, of Castle Dawson, co Derry; married 1816 Mary, eldest daughter of the first Sir Robert Peel.

⁴ John Charles Herries (1778-1855); chancellor of the exchequer 1827-8.

⁵ See p. 11.

and most truly Hibernian. Mr. Herries not much favoured 1831
by looks or manner, but full of information, which he details
both to edify and to amuse. We were all anti-reformers,
and of course the big-wigs criticised unsparingly the measures
of the Whig administration. Sir Robert seemed to speak
of the meeting of Parliament before Christmas as a very
unnecessary event from the circumstance of the almost
impossibility of their being able to get through the new
reform bill in the Commons before the holydays.

December 5.—Very considerable tumults at this time with December
the colliers in our manufacturing districts, standing out for
increase of wages. They committed some outrages in and
about Wolverhampton. The yeomanry were called out,
and additional dragoons quartered. Insubordination prevails
throughout the community, and all the advantage the most
arduous reformer could describe, would never compensate
for the evil the subject has occasioned to the country. Our
nobility in point of respectability are much on the decline ;
their Parliamentary interest will be taken away by the
reform bill, and the democrattick principles become so
general with the *sovereign* people, that little of dignity will
remain with the aristocracy beyond the name.

On the 9th Eleanor and I went to Wichnor to dine and
pass the night. I had in the morning been to Fazeley at
the request of Mr. Edmund Peel, to meet Grove for the
purpose of swearing in special constables under the late
constabulary act. There had been no rioting or tumult at
Fazeley or in the neighbourhood immediate, but from the
disturbed state of the colliers, and I believe from a feeling
on the part of the ex-Secretary of State, Sir Robert ; it was
considered advisable to be prepared.

ÆT. 70

On the 13th Lord John Russell introduced his reform bill. It was received and agreed to be read a second time on the 16th January.

25th.—Christmas Day. I had hopes to have collected all my dear children round my table on this day, but was disappointed. Dick could not obtain leave, and his unfortunate wretched brother's extraordinary conduct, continuing to prevail to the exclusion of his presence at Freeford, I had only my beloved Eleanor to accompany me in paying our humble obedience to Divine Providence on this holy day. My sister Mary came to us as usual to pass her Christmas.

29th.—Petty sessions at Shenstone. A poaching case of some atrocity from Aston. Fourteen men had attacked Mr. Lee's keepers, most of them armed with guns and others with bayonets and swords. They beat one of the keepers most outrageously, one in particular, who was enabled some days subsequently to identify the individual who committed the assault. He was brought before us on my warrant, and committed for trial at the assizes. There has lately been several instances of violent proceedings on the part of poachers. I think it probable the new game act has for the present rather encouraged the poachers. How it may apply if the game licensed sellers are sufficiently supplied by gentlemen will be seen hereafter. Fine open mild weather to the end of the year; but grievous to relate a dissatisfied people, full of political excitement, ripe for riot and outrage. The colliers on the Wolverhampton side have struck for higher wages, and have been called to a sense of their misconduct, and put down only by force of military power.

January.—I commence another year with the most devout ¹⁸³² and heartfelt gratitude for the blessings of the past, and if ^{January} I should have a continuance for the year that is to come of the health I have enjoyed, it will be the utmost hope of the protection of an all-ruling and Divine Providence.

Fine open weather until the 4th. Sharp frost. I rode to Stafford to the quarter sessions, a full bench. Our gaol committee had to select the persons to fill the vacant appointments, and met in consequence at eleven o'clock. Lords Harrowby¹ and Talbot,² Sir O. Mosley,³ Monckton,⁴ Dick Levett, Grove, and self. After we had finished our business I mentioned to the committee my intention to resign the *chair* from age and inability to attend in the manner I had hitherto done. I was much importuned to continue, and very flattering kind expressions used. After I had read the gaol report, etc., I again mentioned to the court that I hoped I might be allowed to resign from the same causes I had mentioned to the committee in the morning. The flattering compliments were again repeated, and Lord Talbot came to me and begged that I would continue my name, and that my colleagues would take all the labours. I could not refuse so complimentary an agreement. The chairman then proposed the thanks should be given in the unanimous name of the magistrates in court at the quarter sessions for my services to the county. Rode home on the 5th; a pleasant day, though sharpish frost.

On the 9th a ball and supper at the George, Lichfield; not very brilliant; under the patronage of Mrs. Shaw, Sir Edward Scott, and Mr. Lee of Aston. Lichfield in former

¹ See vol. i. p. 330.

³ See vol. i. p. 297.

² See vol. i. p. 351.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 370.

ÆT. 70 days took the lead in this sort of amusement, but alas, now it is quite the reverse, and the mighty are fallen.

On the 10th I went to meet Sir Oswald Mosley at Yoxall Woodhouses to inquire into an act of incendiarism by firing a straw rick belonging to Mr. Skipton, a tenant of Levett of Wichnor. Levett attended our meeting. We sat four hours and took all the evidence we could collect without obtaining any clue whatsoever to lead to discovery. It was evidently the work of an incendiary, as the case that had contained the matter that ignited was found under the rick frame. It consisted of a piece of woollen rag that is supposed to have contained some combustible ingredients. The circumstances created much feeling and anxiety with Levett being so near home. I have no doubt it was the work of revenge. I did not leave Sir Oswald until after four o'clock and rode to Thorpe, fifteen miles, to dinner. Met there Sir Robert and Lady Peel, Sir Roger Gresley, Mundy of Shipley's eldest son; an agreeable day. I had a long conversation *tête-à-tête* with Sir Robert respecting the reform bill, particularly as affecting the constituency of Lichfield. A clause in the new bill reinstates the annuitant voters in their former unlimited right of voting without reference to residence. Sir Robert remarked it was a *trick* evidently to serve the new created peer, the Earl of Lichfield.¹ I told Sir Robert that a meeting was held at Lichfield for the purpose of presenting a petition to the House on the subject. I asked him if he would present it. He said he would. But as Sir Edward Scott attended the meeting, he of course was applied to for the purpose. Sir

¹ Thomas William Anson, first Earl of Lichfield (1795-1854); created earl 1831.

Robert was very warm in denouncing the reform bill as replete with mischief and trickery. 1832

The 19th brought me a most unwelcome letter from Cambridge, from a person of the name of Faulkner, a dealer in horses, and who had, when a boy, lived with me during my residence in Lichfield. The letter contained a calamitous account of my unfortunate son.

On the 26th Eleanor and Dick and I dined at William Hartopp's. We were invited to sleep, but I declined. Very fine open weather during [Jan]uary. The ministry forcing their reform bill through the House of Commons. By a clause in the new bill, the annuitant voters for the city of Lichfield were to continue as before, and in consequence a meeting was held to petition Parliament on the subject. I had conversed with Sir Robert Peel on the abuse of this clause. He agreed in the shameful tendency as affecting the freedom of the city election, and completely placing it under the entire control of Lord Lichfield as a nomination borough. When the clause was debated in the House, Sir Robert pointed out the effect it would have, and the ministers gave way. The Anson interest has thereby received a blow it will not readily recover.

On the 30th Dick and I beat the Pool Tail to see how the pheasants escaped. We found plenty; the young esquire killed five brace and the old general *one*. The foxhounds had been the week before, and might have driven some away. We took our leave of shooting for the season on the two following days at Foofen and in Whittington, but did not make much havoc. The poachers had been friendly towards me, but had made woeful depredations in the neighbourhood. They had assembled in

ÆT. 70 such force at Aston, (Mr. Lee's); and repeated their visits with such perseverance, that they defeated Mr. Lee, and he in consequence gave up preserving and dismissed his game-keeper.

The great Italian fiddler, Paganini,¹ performed at Birmingham after filching John Bull's pocket in London, Liverpool, etc. Eleanor went to William Hartopp's to dine, and accompanied them to Birmingham to the concert.

February On the 3rd Dick and I called for Eleanor and went to dinner to Edmund Hartopp's. The last day that Dick and I were sporting in the Pool Tail, Dick shot a bittern in the osier bed. I had seen it several times during the winter. As it is a bird not frequent in this part of the world, I employed Mr. Manley's servant to stuff it, for the purpose of placing it in a case.

19th.—I went to London by the Chester mail. I should have preferred the Liverpool, (the day), but it was full. The weather, cold chill easterly wind. I reached my friend Wright's about seven on Monday morning. Went to bed for two hours and rose as gay as a lark, having slept uninterrupted from Northampton to town.

I attended the King's levée on the 22nd, and her Majesty's birthday on the 24th. A repetition of old sights and ceremonies, notwithstanding cholera morbus,² the reform bill, and Ireland all but in a state of rebellion. The former has been a bugbear that has caused infinite injury to the commerce of the country, without, as is now generally believed, sufficient cause for alarm. The disease that has

¹ Nicolo Paganini (1784-1840).

² This broke out in Sunderland October 26, 1831; it first appeared in London February 1832, and although the death-rate was not as high as in 1849, yet the epidemic was of appalling character.

appeared under the name of cholera has not in scarce any instance attacked persons above the lowest orders of the community,¹ the best possible proof that it is not of a decided contagious description. If it was, it would be no respecter of persons. The reform bill is slowly lingering through the House of Commons with a doubt as to finding its way through the House of Lords, unless the King's ministers induce his Majesty to create additional peers for the purpose, and which will create much offence with the existing peerage. This bill is a deadweight on all procedure relative to the essential concerns of the country. The situation of Ireland is perilous ;² in many parts the system of resisting the payment of tithes has been universal, and no determined effort on the part of Government to enforce payment. My highly respected friend the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland³ has united himself with the Roman Catholick party and forgotten his old principles and the high-church feelings he and his father possessed. I accompanied Sir Edward Scott to the levée to present him, and my friend Littleton gave me a seat in his carriage to the drawing-room.

I left London on the 25th per Chester mail and reached old Freeford, and rejoiced to find all my children to welcome me home. The cold easterly wind continued all the week with a fog in London that even rendered the lamps at night nearly useless.

A good deal of rain on the 6th and 7th [of March].^{March} Bad accounts from the West Indies of an insurrection of

¹ This was due to improved sanitation.

² The Irish 'tithe-war' was stained with terrible atrocities.

³ The Marquis of Anglesey.

ÆT. 70 the negroes in the island of Jamaica. This was to be expected from the encouragement to the slaves by the meetings and speaking of persons in this country. They denounced slavery, some no doubt actuated by benevolent motives, however fallacious the reasoning, and without due consideration of the predicament in which they place the white population by their advocacy. Our ministers driving on their reform bill to the neglect of every other concern of the country. Ireland in a most alarming state. The Roman Catholic and Protestant at the very point of action. Tithes refused to be paid in two-thirds of the kingdom, with the most appalling murders hourly (almost) perpetrated.¹ All this passing on notwithstanding the promise that peace and tranquillity were to reign universal in the Green Island on the passing the emancipation bill.

On the 12th I went with Dick and Eleanor to pass two nights at Drakelow. We returned home on the 14th, as my dear Dick was to start next morning for Macclesfield. He had a sharp ride on the 13th. My roan came from Freeford in the morning to carry him to Muchley corner, where he met Shaw's hounds, and his own mare from Freeford. They had no sport. He left them at Sutton Park, rode his mare to Freeford, and there mounted a fresh hack (his sister's mare), and reached Drakelow and dressed just as we sat down to dinner.²

16th.—Meeting of the committee at Lichfield relative to the intended new road to Rugeley. We are going to Parliament to obtain an act for the purpose, but after it

¹ Tithe proctors were tortured or murdered, tithe payers were maltreated or intimidated, twelve police were massacred in cold blood, and on another occasion five were shot dead.

² A very hard day.

is obtained it is a matter of doubt whether we shall be able to raise money to carry it into effect. Cold boisterous March winds prevail, but fine seasonable weather. The cholera that has occasioned alarm continues to affect the very lowest classes of the community. 1832

30th.—We went to dine and sleep at Wichnor *en famille*, and next day the special sessions at the Bridges for the appointment of the overseers of the poor. A full bench; Sir Oswald Mosley and his son, Messrs. Inge, Hall, Taylor, and the *General*. I was glad to find that Mr. Hall, who has large estates in Jamaica, had not materially suffered from the late serious insurrection of the negroes in that island. It is to be hoped that violent advocates for the abolition of slavery will pause in their proceedings on this subject, ere the lives and properties of the white inhabitants are at the disposal of the black population, which sooner or later must be the case, if the system is pursued to the encouragement of disobedience and consequent revolt. No persons can be prepared to give an opinion on the treatment of the black in the West Indies, unless having previously been an eye-witness of what passes. Leaving Eleanor at Wichnor, returned home to dinner.

17th.—On this day I entered my threescore and twelfth April year, and do most humbly offer my devout thanks to Almighty Providence for the blessings bestowed upon me during the past year, and beseeching our Heavenly Father graciously to continue (if it should please the Divine Will to prolong my life for another year) his holy protection. Not my will, Thy will be done.

I purchased a *buggy*, yclept in modern tongue a *Stanhope*, from Charles Floyer, a present to my dear Dick, he having

ÆT. 71 expressed anxiety for a two-wheeled conveyance at his present quarters, having met so many kind friends in the neighbourhood, and feeling the inconvenience of either riding to dinner or the greater inconvenience of paying for a hack chaise. My excellent son deserves all my indulgence.

May *May 1.*—On May morning (a more gloomy one I have seldom witnessed) I set out to pass a few days at Ashbourne. I took Eleanor and proceeded in an open carriage lent by the coachmakers and drawn by my own horses. Furious rain and hard gale from the north-east on the starboard quarter, wet and uncomfortable as need be. I contrived to drive the old blacks in little more than four hours. My dear Dick was to meet us, and I took his new carriage drawn by the grey horse I had given him, and which followed us driven by a servant. Notwithstanding the badness of the day, Dick had arrived before us, but most thoroughly soaked, having rode his bay mare. I was glad to find my highly esteemed brother-in-law, Mr. Dale, tolerably well at his great age of eighty-four. Not having seen him for some time he appeared broken and aged, but cheerful and [in] tolerable good spirits.

The 3rd, Dick returned to his quarters at Macclesfield in his *own carriage*, with which he appeared much pleased. Ashbourne brought to my recollection the early days of my youth, having gone to live there in boyhood and continued until the eve of becoming my own master. It grieves me much to reflect how ill-spent these years were, not from any fault of mine, but from the want of proper inducement and authority to read, learn, and digest, instead of throwing away the most essential years for improvement. My poor

dear father, with an excellent understanding and a good scholar, had been so accustomed to a life of pleasure and ease to bereave him of all power for exertion in the education of his children. It is true *I* was at *school*, but at such a school as fitted youth for no pursuit in life beyond a *retail* shop board. My holidays were passed more in making myself acceptable to the servants, than in obtaining beneficial instruction in *mind* or manners. 1832

9th.—We dined at Packington to meet Inge and his daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Dugdale, etc. Lord Grey's administration resigned¹ in consequence of being outvoted on the reform bill in the House of Lords, which has occasioned great excitement again throughout the country, and afforded unjust cause for the most inflammatory speeches and resolves of the political animus to urge the people to revolt. The Brummigan politicians took the lead. They caused a meeting at Birmingham on the 7th, at which it was calculated that 200,000 persons assembled. The resignation of ministers had not taken place; this meeting was only a prelude to the second edition, which occurred on the 9th. At the first they *only* proclaimed a resolution not to suffer *the reform bill to be defeated*, but at the second, on the resignation of the ministers, they resolved at once to *arm* in defence of *their rights*. What a pass we are come to, if a few Birmingham bucklemakers are to promulgate laws for the Government of their own happy country. The ministry resigned because the King would not consent to create a sufficient number of peers to carry the reform bill.

¹ A motion in committee adverse to the Reform Bill was carried in the Lords by thirty-five. The King refused to make new peers, and so the ministers resigned. Lord Ebrington brought forward a motion regretting the resignation of the ministry, and this was carried by a majority of eighty. ||

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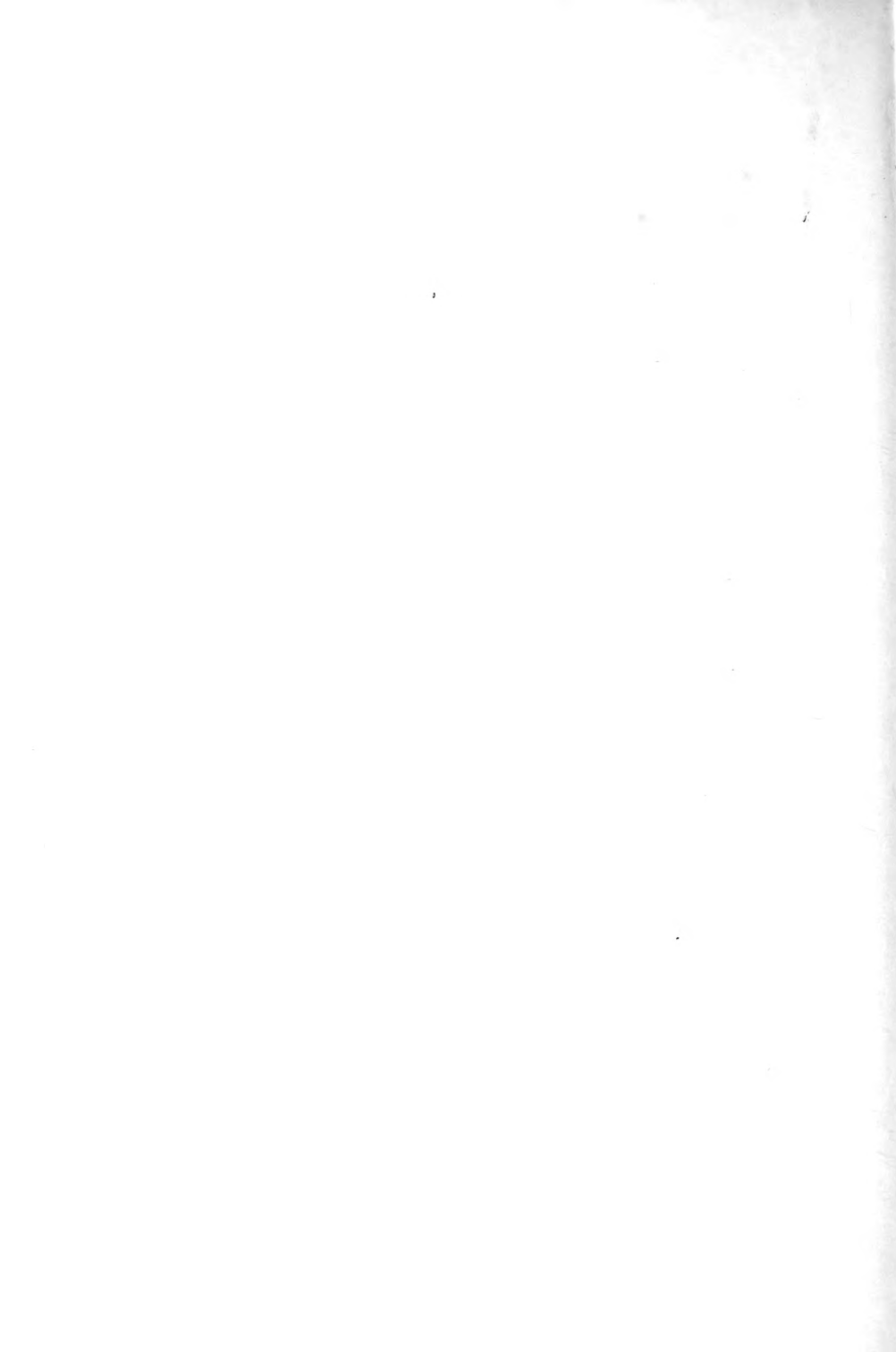
What in argument can be more inconsistent than the conduct of these self-created constitution doctors. Radical rascals. Their reform, as they profess, is to abolish the, what they call, rotten boroughs, by taking away all power of nomination, and yet they most eagerly urge the necessity of the King's introducing nominees into the House of Lords for the minister to use for the purpose of carrying any measure a reform House of Commons may send up to the Lords. The country is in a deplorable state; the sister Kingdom still more wretched. It must either end in a military despotism or a republick. I would prefer the former to the latter.

13th.—I cut down forty-eight oak trees of various size and substance, mostly in the hedge-rows and a few decayed in the wood. I hope not much to the prejudice of whoever comes after me. Some heavy charges this year for my regiment, for caps and accoutrements, drew hard upon the *off reckonings*, together with a large Cambridge account to settle for Bill, induced me to raise a little money from the old oaks.

The ministry resumed the reins of Government in consequence of the Tories not being able to form a ministry. Lord Grey and his friends were only out five days; when the riot [and] rabble of reformers created such an uproar in the country, that even his Grace of Wellington was not able to prevail to form an administration, notwithstanding the King's sending for him for the purpose. The Royal William has not brought forth many instances of advantage to the country during his reign. I never expected he would. A mob monarch can never be dignified. Hitherto King William has not shown one act to make his name worthy of remembrance.



HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.



On the 1st June I attended a petty sessions at Barr on the request of Mr. Leigh, who was unable to be present on account of indisposition. The chief business was occasioned by numerous informations for not having the name of the owner of carts and waggons in the proper place on the carriage. One of the great orators of the Birmingham Political Union appeared as advocate for the proprietor of a beer shop on a charge of having his house open at improper hours. Notwithstanding the pleading of the great reformer (Mr. Edmonds), he was convicted.

15th.—Captain and Mrs. Proby dined and stayed the night. We had besides at dinner Mrs. Parker and her daughter, Floyers, etc. The Captain, a lucky sailor in having obtained the good wife he has. I had a letter from Sir Robert Peel to ask my opinion respecting Walsall being preferred to Lichfield as the place of nomination for the south division under the new system. I wrote to the Right Honourable to say that as the reform bill *had* passed, it became a matter of indifference to me what auxiliaries accompanied. I certainly thought Lichfield more eligible than Walsall as affecting the landed interest, from the circumstance of the proximity of Walsall to the headquarters of that Hydra Political Union at Birmingham, a detachment of which exists at Walsall. And as the next proceeding of this head of democrats would be the repeal of the corn laws and a free trade in that article, they would not show much courtesy to the bold yeomen, who might assemble at Walsall on the occasion of the nomination of two representatives. We must now soon expect a dissolution and subsequent new Parliament under the reform bill. I think it should be called the *Royal Reform Bill*, as it

ÆT. 71 has evidently been the work of our pretended patriot King, whose sole object since he ascended the throne has been to obtain a paltry popularity without a reflexion as to the means, never once exhibiting the dignified principle of a mighty monarch, or the common prudence of a country gentleman.

23rd.—Attended the quarterly meeting of the gaol committee at Stafford. Lord Talbot, Broughton, and Dick Levett present. Nothing much requiring our attention except the crowded state of the gaol, which fully justifies the committee in recommending the additional buildings for further accommodation. Our Lord Lieutenant, Lord Talbot,¹ seems almost in despair with the situation of the county on account of political unions and the general propensity in the lower orders, aided and abetted by the present ministers, to create confusion in the land, particularly as the new elections for the new reformed Parliament are approaching. Sir Oswald Mosley and Mr. Buller, both radical reformers, and of course staunch whigs, have offered themselves as candidates for the north division of the county. Whether we old tories shall be able to find an opponent to enter against them is not yet known. In the boundary bill, annexed as a companion to the reform bill, Walsall was inserted as the place of nomination for the south division of this county. Sir Robert Peel wrote to me on the subject, stating the impropriety of not having preferred Lichfield as affecting the landed interest; Walsall being almost close adjoining headquarters of political unions and revolt, and of course prepared to insult and intimidate the supporters of the landed interest. Sir Robert moved in the committee

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

to have the places changed, and his motion was carried in 1832 favour of Lichfield.

July 4.—To the sessions, Stafford. A thin bench of July magistrates, but very long calendar of prisoners (generally minor offences). In consequence of the passing the reform bill and the county being thereby divided into north and south, Sir Oswald Mosley and Mr. Buller (reformers), Mr. Watts Russell (Conservative or *Tory*), [stood as candidates]. The latter offered himself some time after the two former. I wrote to Ralph Sneyd to urge him to come forward on the old Tory interest. I had an excellent letter from him declining for various reasons and strongly recommending Russell. The three candidates dined, and after drinking the health of the members for the county, I proposed the health of the three respectable candidates; they each returned thanks and made a fine speech. We received an account of the death of a highly respected magistrate, Mr. Monckton, at the great age of eighty-seven. He died at Meriden of apoplexy on his way from London. Sir Oswald Mosley in his charge to the Grand Jury, as chairman, introduced the subject of the reform bill, very inadvisedly, and in my opinion very improperly. Politicks forms no part of judicial proceeding and at a quarter sessions of the peace.

23rd, Monday.—A meeting of the trustees of Shuttington Charity at Tamworth for the purpose of letting a farm, etc., Repington, Boulton, and Tom Levett. I expected Inge to have attended, as I wanted to see him respecting our candidate, Mr. Russell, in order that we might conjointly use our endeavours in his behalf. I had a few days previously seen my friend young Ralph Sneyd, whom I found warm in the cause. He and I called upon

ÆT. 71 Colonel Howard at Elford, who professes himself a conservative, but did not show much zeal, at least I conjecture so from Sneyd's account, I did not see him. Sir Robert Peel, by a letter I received from him, recommended forming a committee of the neighbouring gentlemen in this part of the north, but as Inge is the only conservative near me, and he having been in town, and my not seeing him, delayed proceedings.

On the 24th I proceeded by a new day coach set up at Lichfield on the discontinuance of the Chester mail coach to London. Got into the coach at my gate at five minutes after seven, reached Northampton ten minutes after one, and arrived to Islington soon after nine. The day was fine. I went on the box to St. Alban's and never travelled more agreeably or so expeditiously in my life. The best conveyance I have yet known.

My friends the Wrights had their house repairing, I therefore made a domicile at Fladong's hotel, Oxford Street, where I took a good breakfast daily and had a comfortable bed. I had business with Collyer respecting the clothing and accoutrements of the 63rd, and business with Mr. Harman relative to St. Croix, and I was desirous of seeing the Commander-in-chief to recommend Major Fairtlough for the Lieutenant-Colonelcy on the augmentation of the 63rd, when proceeding next year to Madras. Lord Hill unfortunately was out of town. I had a private audience of the secretary, Lord FitzRoy Somerset; very satisfactory. I was only in town until early morning of the 28th. Three whole days, two of which I had to assign to the city. I called upon Sir Robert Peel and had a conversation with him on our county politicks. He spoke warmly of Mr.

Russell and urged the forming a committee in our neighbourhood for his support. London appeared dull. The cholera still continuing, but did not seem to create much alarm. The Whig ministry carrying on the publick concerns with a sweeping majority in the House of Commons, although it was said they were in a large minority in the House of Lords, and if the Tories were unanimous and could make up an efficient ministry, they could turn out the Whigs. London improving in size and grandeur every month, and notwithstanding the general complaint of want of trade, the trade of building appears most prosperous. I took my departure on the 28th per the same 'Rocket' that conveyed me to town. Could not obtain an inside, and therefore again seated myself on the box, where I continued to my place from whence I started on the 24th, and arrived soon after nine without the least fatigue whatever. A fine day, though very cold in the morning leaving London. Breakfasted at Redburn and dined on *filthy linen* and lean lamb at Northampton. I left Miss Bakewell at Freeford (who arrived on the 23rd), and found her on my return. I was not sorry to be absent during her visit. She remained with us until the 30th and returned to Derby. My hay had been all saved in my absence. The corn was beginning to be cut in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, where it had been layed, but the general harvest not commenced. I met abundance of hands from the Emerald Isle on the road, tendering their services for the purpose.

On the 4th Mr. Watts Russell, the conservative candidate ^{August} for our north division, called and breakfasted at Freeford. He was accompanied by young Cave, son of Sir William.¹

¹ Sir William Cave Brown Cave (1765-1838)

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Russell appeared too quiet for a canvasser. He stated his satisfactory success on his canvass. I hope the result may be alike successful. He proceeded to Tamworth, Thorpe, Clifton, etc.

6th.—Petty sessions at Elford. Inge a warm friend to Russell. Taylor a bit of a reformer, and a consequent Mosley, but not interfering to prevent Mr. Watkins' tenants being canvassed for Russell, which service Inge intended to perform. He and I called upon John Sneyd, a steady friend for Russell. Sneyd agreed as to the extraordinary conduct of Colonel Howard of Elford, a man professing his detestation of the Whigs, and who has been deprived of his borough, and who, now that he has an opportunity of serving the cause opposed to the Whigs, shrinks from acting or even encouraging his tenants to vote for the Tory candidate. Out upon such tinsel stuff, as moves to action such beings as the Honourable Colonel Greville Howard.

9th.—I called upon Sir Robert Peel. He showed me his magnificent new house now building, and walked me over his new stables, farmyard, etc. etc. We had a conversation on county politicks. He is a supporter of Mr. Russell and a reviler of Howard's conduct. He invited us to dine for the 11th; indeed he gave me my choice, either 10th or 11th.

11th.—Carried my oats and finished hoeing turnips. Dined with Eleanor and Bill at Drayton, a party from Tamworth and the neighbourhood. Walked about before dinner to see the new flower-gardens, etc., adjoining the new house, layed out by the famous Gilpin. The ground made the most of.

On Monday the 13th set out with my dear Eleanor on a visit to Sir William and Lady Clayton¹ at Harleyford in Bucks. I had received a pressing invitation verbally and by letter from Lady Clayton for this excursion. She is the mother of our neighbour, Mrs. Manley,² where I had frequently met her ladyship. Bill with pony and the little pony carriage proceeded same morning on a visit to Ashbourne. We proceeded in my carriage, accompanied by Florendine and the coachmen, by way of Coleshill, Warwick, Hartford Bridge, Chapel House, and Woodstock to Oxford, having taken Blenheim in our way. We turned out of the road and entered the park at a miserable *broken* gate adjoining the lodge fronting the house. The approach road along the park so bad that carriages were obliged to quit it and proceed along the turf. It was quite grievous to observe the ruinous state of dilapidation everything presented. The statue of the Grand Duke and the pedestal on which it is placed going to decay; the inscriptions scarce legible. The fine sheets of water full of weeds, some actually supplied by mud and grown over. The magnificent princely mansion fast going to decay and neglect, to the utter disgrace of the present owner, and an object of marked insult to the nation. The Duke³ was there, but living secluded with a mistress, a scandal to his order and a scorn of all that's noble. His only pursuit is a flower-garden, of which he is supposed to possess the first in the world. We were much gratified by

¹ Sir William Clayton of Marden Park, co. Surrey, and Harleyford, co. Buckingham; born 1762; married 1785 Mary, only daughter of Sir William East, Bart., of Hall Place, Berkshire. She died 1835. Sir William died 1834.

² Catherine Emilia, only daughter of Sir William Clayton; married John Shawe Manley, Esq.

³ George, fourth Duke of Marlborough (1766-1840).

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the sight of this monument of national gratitude. We reached Oxford between eight and nine ; had some tea and retired to our beds.

14th.—We devoted four hours to see the great seat of learning, having obtained a conductor for the purpose, who took us to all the grand colleges, libraries, etc. etc., with which this famed University abounds. I was surprised to observe a want of attention of care and preservation of the two great libraries, Christ Church and Radcliffe's ; the books and paintings appeared neglected greatly with accumulated dust, etc. We left Oxford about two and proceeded by Benson and Henley to Harleyford, where we were received by Sir William and Lady Clayton with great kindness. The house is seated on the bank of the Thames, and in a situation most picturesque and beautiful, a fine expanse of the river with a rich valley of great extent, terminated each way by large woods. The house is not a good one, and must be very inconvenient from want of offices, the few there are being below the basement storey.

On the 15th Mr. Manley drove us in his pony carriage with Mrs. Manley to see the magnificent beautiful garden at Dropmore (Lord Granville's),¹ twenty-six acres in extent, all laid out in the finest style of modern gardening. There is a collection of curious firs from all parts of the world.

16th.—A great archery meeting. I tired of looking at the flying arrows, and got a boat to cross the Thames, and walked about a quarter of a mile to see a very curious old house called Lady Place, near the village of Henley ; it is the remains and ruin of a very ancient monastery, and also celebrated for being a house belonging to the Lovelace

¹ Lord Granville, Viscount Granville, and first Earl Granville (1773-1846).

family, where the parties met and secreted themselves that 1832 brought about the revolution of 1688. The house, though modernised since that time, is singularly curious. Beautiful fine weather.

17th.—A large water party on the Thames. Sir William had three or four large fine boats. Two six-oared cutters, in which the company embarked, consisting of all in the house with the addition of some neighbours. Rowed five miles down the river and landed first at Clifden, and climbed the hill to look at the fine new house Sir George Warrender¹ is building on the site of the house of the Duke of Buckingham, famed by Pope in his essay on riches.² We embarked again and crossed the water to a pleasant spot in the front of a house belonging to Sir George Young,³ a captain in the navy, where a table was laid out and cold collation provided for a hundred. We dined nearly seventy. Plenty of champagne, singing, etc. The band of the Blues had arrived at Harleyford, played one piece on the lawn in front of the house, when an express arrived from Windsor to order their immediate return, as the King had sent to have them on an excursion to Virginia Water. We were informed that when the King heard of the band having been lent to a party, he was much disappointed that the circumstance was not made known to him, as he certainly should not have had them. I am sure if the great and good George the Third had not been told previously in such a case, his Majesty would have

¹ The Right Hon. Sir George Warrender (1782-1849) of Lochend, Dunbar, and Clifden Park, Bucks.

² ‘Gallant and gay, in Cliveden’s proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury, and love;
Or just as gay, at council, in a ring
Of mimick’d statesmen, and their merry King.’

³ Sir George Young (1797-1848) of Formosa Place, co. Bucks.

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made the *welkin ring*. By the failure of the band the young people's dancing was prevented. Lady Clayton was so obliging to send her carriage to carry home Eleanor and myself (my dear child having a cough), and I being *old* and not much fancying an open boat at ten o'clock at night.

18th.—The next morning Mr. Manley sent his open carriage round by the bridge at Marlow across the Thames for the purpose of carrying us to see Hall Place, a very magnificent house belonging to Mr. East,¹ the second son of William Clayton, who succeeded to the estate at Hall Place on the death of his uncle, Sir Gilbert East. It is a magnificent mansion; the drawing-room a superb apartment. There are two fine avenues of lime-trees leading to the house.

19th, Sunday. — Part of the company in the house crossed the Thames and attended Divine Service in the church at Henley, which I mentioned above, a singularly curious edifice, been built upwards of four hundred years. In the afternoon we rowed down the river two miles to Bisham Abbey, the residence of the Vansittart family, and attended service in the old church. As I was coming out of the pew a lady from the adjoining one accosted me with, 'I had the pleasure of knowing you some years ago.' I did not at all recollect the fair dame, who retained sufficient good looks to recognise former beauty. She said, 'You remember Mrs. East at Portsmouth.' Immediately the remembrance of *Pretty Mrs. East* of the Berkshire Militia rose up in my recollection. She was the wife of a captain of the regiment and much admired at Portsmouth. She was

¹ East George, second son of Sir William Clayton; assumed the surname of East by sign-manual in 1829, and was created a baronet in 1838.

a Miss Vansittart,¹ and married the brother of the late Sir William East and Lady Clayton, and was residing at Bisham Abbey. She very good humouredly called at Harleyford next morning and left a card for Eleanor and myself. 1832

I wrote a note to Sir Herbert Taylor² on the 18th to obtain permission to see Windsor Castle. There had been a grand fête given by the King on the 13th. An encampment in the Park and review of the troops. The Claytons, Manleys, etc., had been at the evening party. (There was a second party on the 22nd.)

22nd.—If I had considered in time it is probable I might have obtained an invitation for Eleanor and myself. I regretted I had not taken an opportunity of leaving my name at the castle the preceding week on Eleanor's account; as for myself, I had seen sufficient of princely parties, but in truth I felt that after the terms of familiarity with which I had been honoured by Prince William Henry when I was *useful*, and the neglect (if I may so write) of William the Fourth, King of England, I felt no inclination to push myself into the royal presence. In hopes, however, of obtaining a gratification for my dear Eleanor, I despatched a messenger at an early hour to my old friend Sir Andrew Barnard,³ to try if it was possible to procure an invite for the royal party. I had a kind answer from Sir Andrew to say he had done all in his power, but that no more names could be submitted for the King's approval. Barnard offered to show us the Castle, and I had a note from Lady

¹ Caroline Anne, eldest daughter of George Vansittart, Esq., of Bisham Abbey; married in 1793 Augustus Henry East (who died 1828), second son of Sir William East, first baronet, of Hall Place, co. Berks.

² See vol. i. p. 317.

³ Sir Andrew Barnard, general (1773-1855).

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Taylor in reply to mine to Sir Herbert to the like effect. On the 22nd I placed a pair of post horses to Manley's open carriage, and we proceeded with a quartette to see Windsor Castle. I called upon Sir Herbert; he was confined with gout, but Lady Taylor, with her usual good humour, showed us all over the Palace. The alterations and magnificent interior improvements appeared like magic when I reflected on what it was in my days of royal visiting. We drove by Fern Hill and entered the Park at the top of the long walk in order to show Eleanor the grand view from thence.

24th.—An archery party on the lawn. I walked with Sir William over his farm. The ploughs of the county appear very clumsy. They grow a great quantity of the Tartarian oats in Bucks and in Oxfordshire, which they invariably reap. A great proportion of the oats and barley harvest not gathered, and from the heavy rain much must be greatly damaged. I scarce think it possible that the oats in the sheaves could ever dry without being previously opened.

On Saturday the 25th I took my leave of Harleyford, and proceeded sixteen miles by Henley, etc., to Braziers in Oxfordshire (Admiral Manley's) in company with Mr. and Mrs. Manley, where I passed two very agreeable days at a snug, retired, comfortable residence.

I left Braziers at half-past six on the 27th to Oxford, Banbury (breakfasted badly), Southam, Coventry, Coleshill, where my horses met me, and home soon after six; ninety-two miles. I met on the road near Weeford Park my very old and esteemed friend General Lyons. He had landed at Liverpool from his command in the West Indies, and had been informed at Lichfield of the probability of his meeting me. I was much gratified to see him, and to see him so

well. He is an excellent friend and very able officer. I 1832
was glad to reach home, and to find so much of my harvest
saved considering the weather. It had rained all the way I
came from Braziers, and it continued to rain most heavily
on the 28th and 29th.

On the 11th of September our races commenced. We September
had Inge, his daughter Susan, and son George, and at dinner
Mr. and Mrs. John Clayton and Mr. Shaw. A thin display
of company on the Heath, with little racing amusement, but
a tolerable show at the ball; at least better than of late
years. The light-fingered gentry were on the alert on the
course. A hand was placed in my trowsers' pocket as I
came out of the stand, but my hand being dropped in upon
the *unknown*, the latter escaped, and I escaped *unfilched*.
Eleanor was carrying on her arm one of the *nonsenses* of the
modern day, a reticule, of which a nimble finger deprived
her as she left the carriage to go into the stand.

24th.—A meeting of the subscribers to the Lichfield per-
manent library to consider on changing the situation from
the close into Market Street, and to extend the hours of
having the library open, it being very inconvenient to county
subscribers to be limited to *two hours*, from twelve to two,
to get books. I made a proposal for disposing of a number
of the books, which had been many of them on the shelves
for five-and-twenty years, and by the produce to purchase
modern publications. Dean Woodhouse had been the chief
promoter of the library, and had been president from its
institution, but he, like every institution, was subject to
decay, and feeling that decay approaching, he resigned the
chair, to the regret of the subscribers.

On the 4th Sister Mary brought Miss Burdett, a sister October

ÆT. 71 of Sir Francis's,¹ to visit Freeford. Mary was on a visit to old Miss Fanny Burdett, where Miss Burdett was also staying; and the latter having expressed a wish to see Mary's old house, and to visit this place, she supplied horses and carriage, and accompanied Mary. I was out of the way during their visit. Miss Burdett expressed great regard and affection for our family, and hoped I would call upon Sir Francis when I was next in London.

17th.—Monckton and I went to Stafford, as we had some matters to settle at the gaol. We met Lord Lichfield² shooting on our return. The Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria were to be at Shugborough on the 23rd, and as Colonel Littleton had proposed to assemble the yeomanry at Shugborough in honour of the royal visitors, the Lieutenant-Colonel (Lord Lieutenant) and the Major Monckton halted for a consultation. The noble Earl did me the honour of an invite to luncheon the day of the show. Dined and slept at Teddesley, and returned home on the 19th. Sir John and Lady Wrottesley invited us to Wrottesley for the 31st for the purpose of a grand charity ball at [*Wolver*]hampton on the 1st November.

On the 25th the Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria paid a visit from Shugborough to the city. They drove to the town hall, and received an address from the High Bailiff and corporation; from thence to the Cathedral, where they had the like ceremony tendered by the Dean and Chapter; then to the Deanery to *lunch*. As I did not go to Shugborough, I did not make my appearance in the city.

¹ Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844); politician; imprisoned on political charges 1810 and 1820; after Reform Bill inclined towards the conservatives.

² See vol. i. p. 329.

Her Royal Highness and suite returned to Lichfield the following day in order to hear the service of the cathedral, which was necessarily interrupted by the vast crowd of persons inside the church. The *cortège* proceeded from Lichfield *en route* for Lord Liverpool's in Shropshire.

On the 30th I went with Eleanor to Teddesley on our way to pay a visit at Wrottesley. I had promised Littleton to call there for a night in order to look over his improvements with him, and which certainly do him great credit. No spot in the Kingdom has undergone such a change from a perfect wilderness when he came into possession twenty years ago. We found at Teddesley Sir James and Lady FitzGerald,¹ who are now residing at Armitage, and who previously lived at Wolseley Hall, Lord Uxbridge,² Lord Ernest Bruce³ (intended from appearances for Littleton's second daughter), Mr. Lushington, and a Mr. Finch, the latter a great coal-proprietor. Littleton had that day by the post received a letter from the Prime Minister, Lord Grey, to notify the intention of the minister to support him, Littleton, as the candidate for the dignity of Speaker of the new House of Commons. No schoolboy was ever more vain of a school prize than my friend of the announcement. It was certainly driving at a post of high distinction, but the vain ostentation exhibited, betrayed rather a want of the proper feeling of a great mind. I don't consider Littleton well qualified for the situation. He wants temper; he is deficient in acquirement; he is haughty and peevish in

¹ Sir James Fitzgerald married 1826 Augusta, daughter of Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Freemantle.

² Eldest son of the first Marquis of Anglesey.

³ Lord Ernest Bruce, second son of the Marquis of Ailesbury, married in 1834 the Hon. Louisa Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Decies.

ÆT. 71 manner, with a want of suavity in general deportment. I hope I may be mistaken, but I predict that he never will be either a popular or prevailing ruler over the House of Commons.

We proceeded next day to Wrottesley, and were received with great kindness and hospitality by the Baronet and his lady. Sir James and Lady FitzGerald came from Teddesley, and there were a Mr. and Mrs. Taylor,¹ pleasant people (she was a sister of Lord Waterpark), a Baron Osten (Major of the 16th Dragoons, a German), Major Wrottesley, Sir John's third son, and his two daughters. Wrottesley is a fine old seat, and large good-living house; not very fashionably furnished in modern arrangements, nor adorned exteriorly with variety of pleasure-grounds. The Baronet is a large farmer, having eight hundred acres highly cultivated in his own hand. I rode over his farm with him the following morning with great satisfaction and pleasure.

November *November 1.*—He is a decided Whig, but we kept clear of politicks. After looking over the farm I rode accompanied by Mr. Taylor to Patshull, which I had never seen. I had a most kind note from Sir George Pigot in the morning inviting us to pass a few days, being in his neighbourhood. I should gladly have accepted the invitation, but we were engaged to dine at Packington. I was much delighted with Patshull; the house and place altogether very magnificent; the former, like the owner, worse for wear; and like an old coat, out at elbows.

We left Wrottesley next morning (2nd) after an agreeable visit, and dined with our neighbours at Packington to meet

¹ Juliana, third daughter of the second Lord Waterpark, married in 1816 Farmer Taylor, Esq., of Chicknell House, co. Salop.

General and Mrs. Campbell, and Archdeacon and Mrs. Hamilton, very agreeable pleasant people. The newspapers reported that a mutiny had broken out in the 7th Hussars, but which had been immediately quelled by the firmness of the officer commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel Kean. The circumstance must occasion very considerable anxiety in the minds of our rulers. It is said to have been occasioned by the severe discipline of the Lieutenant-Colonel. I give no attention to such suppositions. I cannot help feeling that the modern discipline of the army has a great tendency to encourage insubordination, from what is called, and too much practised—*Liberal ideas*. The circumstance that recently occurred in the Scotch Greys, and the manner in which it was taken up by the Government, shook the discipline of the army in a way that will require some changes before good order is restored.

On the 6th we dined at Archdeacon Hamilton's, and on the 8th at Grove's to meet Lord and Lady Ribblesdale.¹ The Lord a good plain country gentleman; my lady the veriest stiff display of conceit and vanity I ever beheld. A quiet unassuming country girl when Miss Lister, now assuming all pride, pomp, and silly vanity of a fine lady.

On the 9th we dined at Mrs. Madan's. The Hamiltons, the General, and Mrs. Campbell, etc. etc. I never go into that house without calling to remembrance the excellent man Colonel Madan, once lord of the mansion. Our reforming ministers appear determined to plunge the country into an unnecessary war by having layed an embargo on all Dutch shipping in our ports, a ruinous proceeding against our old and faithful allies. Add to this a mutiny in our

¹ See p. 295.

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army by a disgraceful disobedience of orders on parade of three troops of the 7th Hussars. The Marquis of Anglesey's regiment. I have been some time under apprehension that the slack state of discipline that has taken root, and appears flourishing in our army, must some day '*bring forth fruit meet for repentance.*'

21st.—I rode with Sir John to call upon Sir Robert Peel, and to show Sir John the new building at Drayton. Sir Robert was not at home.

The Wrottesleys left us the next morning with every sign of having passed a pleasant visit. The Baronet and I don't agree in our politicks, otherwise we are on the best of terms. He is a man of good understanding, rather austere in manner, a man of business, and a proper person to represent this county.

On the 24th I received a letter from Mr. Watts Russell to say he proposed making a personal canvass of the electors for the North district resident at Lichfield on the 29th.

I rode over next day to communicate the circumstance to Sir Robert Peel, who expressed much disappointment that he could not attend, him as he was going to London the next morning, or he certainly should have accompanied Russell on his canvass.

December

On the 12th I dined by invitation with Sir Robert Peel at Tamworth to celebrate his election. One hundred and fifty at dinner. On the Baronet's health being drank, he spoke most admirably for half an hour expressing his political views and perfect independence. He did me the unexpected honour of proposing my health.

He called at Freeford the next morning to make inquiries as to the proceedings for the following day (the nomination

at Stafford), and stated his full intention of going to Sandon 1832 to meet Russell, and to accompany him to Stafford.

Inge came to Freeford in the evening to sleep, and we started, Dick of the party, at six o'clock on the 14th, and arrived at Sandon by half-past eight, where we found a multitude assembled and formed the procession to Stafford. A hustings was erected in the market-place with a barricade to keep off horses and carriages. Russell was proposed by young Ralph Sneyd of Keel in a very good maiden speech, seconded by Inge, short and to the purpose. Sir O.¹ was proposed by Sir Cotton Sheppard² in a very dry dull harangue, and seconded by the eloquent and dignified Divine, Mr. Gisborne,³ and in set speech without much matter, and with less than usual material or delivery to admire. Buller was proposed by Tollet, seconded by Swinnerton of Butterton,⁴ but I was too far from the spot to hear one word. Sir Oswald's address, prosey, lengthy and violent and extremely tiresome. Buller flowery and well delivered. Our Cock, very short, but to the purpose. He is not an orator, though I believe a worthy and most excellent man.

It must have been highly gratifying to him to find himself accompanied in his part of the hustings by eleven acting magistrates of the county ; proving, if he had not the *people* with him, he had the property. It is a sad reflexion to find generally throughout the kingdom that the county elections have been carried by the power of the people in opposition to property and the county gentlemen. A bad omen for old England.

¹ Sir Oswald Mosley.

² Sir Thomas Cotton Sheppard of Thornton Hall, co. Bucks (1785-1848).

³ See vol. i. p. 373.

⁴ T. Swinnerton, Esq., of Butterton Hall, Acton.

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The 17th was fixed for the polling to commence for the North division. I and Dick went to Abbots Bromley, where houses had been hired instead of erecting Booths for the purpose. We gave our votes accordingly *plumpers* for Russell.

On the 18th Miss Bakewell arrived to pass the Christmas. The High Sheriff on the 20th proclaimed Sir Oswald Mosley and Mr. Buller as duly elected to represent the county. They were each more than one thousand ahead of Russell, owing in some measure to the coalition they had formed, but which was described by Sir Oswald in a way not greatly to his credit, and which occasioned some severe animadversions from more than one of his brother magistrates. The circumstance, it is probable, may lead to events not favourable to the chairman.

23rd, *Sunday*.—The rain was so continual, we could not get to Church; a circumstance that does not occur more than once in a month. A severe contest for the division of Warwickshire, with serious rioting at Nuneaton and Coventry. My friend Inge was attacked by the mob opposed to Dugdale, and narrowly escaped a *pummelling*.

Farewell 1832; a year replete with many extraordinary publick events; memorable for England for the great change effected in the British Constitution by the enactment of the reform bill, whether propitious or otherwise as affecting the country generally, time only can determine. The passing events of the year pretty clearly demonstrate the power and influence the great mass of the *people* have assumed, and practised; betokening the democrattick feeling to prevail to an extent much to be feared as leading to revolt, or perhaps something worse. The general elections, particularly in the

counties, have shown the effect of popular power opposed to property; the latter having been obliged to give way to clamour and mob authority. The assembling [of] the new reformed Parliament will present to the country a new modelled branch of the legislature, and is looked forward to naturally with great anxiety, especially when the *heterogeneous* composition of the house is considered, and the momentous affairs that must occupy its attention. 1832

January 1.—I am now commencing another year of my pilgrimage in this world. How transitory and uncertain are all the ways of Divine Providence, and how truly thankful ought we to feel for the manifold blessings we enjoy. 1833
January

The following day was the quarter sessions at Stafford. I expected rather a turbulent meeting from the clashing of political interests, the result of the late election; Sir Oswald Mosley¹ having created many enemies amongst the magistrates, occasioned by what was considered prevarication relative to his having coalesced with Mr. Buller. Wisely the subject was not introduced at dinner, but there was an evident shyness on the brow of many of the bench intended for the chairman. A subject was discussed on a motion from Lord Sandon,² ‘to alter the present system of auditing the county accounts after dinner, and in future to have that business performed in open court.’ I objected to the change proposed, and asked the noble Lord what was the object to be gained. The only reason assigned was that the times required that all transactions of the kind required to be made as publick as possible. I took the liberty of stating

¹ See vol. i. p. 297.

² Dudley Ryder, second Earl of Harrowby, Viscount Sandon of Sandon, co. Stafford; born 1798; succeeded as second earl 1847; died 1882.

ÆT. 71 my opinion that no good whatever could arise from the proposed alteration, and that I could see no object likely to ensue, unless to accommodate the penny-a-line gusty editors of newspapers to have an opportunity of animadverting upon the opinions and declarations of different individuals, and that our county papers had already too much encouragement to publish that sort of remark. I said I considered the proposed alteration as reflecting on the bench of Justices, who had hitherto taken the trouble, and I added that as I humbly conceived that as the magistrates were by law empowered to levy and appropriate the rate, they only by law should be the persons to superintend the expenditure. It was suggested that every ratepayer had a right to know how the rate was applied. He does know by a published annual statement. But who are the principal ratepayers? Certainly the *proprietors of the land*, and are not the gentlemen in the commission of the Peace more materially concerned than any other class of the community, and consequently more eligible, and personally more likely to protect the expenditure than any other persons. I was however in a virtuous minority of ONE. No other magistrate having spoken, the motion of the noble Lord was therefore not put to the vote. I shall certainly decline the chair of the gaol committee, as I don't wish to have myself exhibited to read the report in publick court for the editor of the county paper to make his facetious remarks.

On the 6th dined at Packington. The Rev. in his usual high spirits. The day following was dined and slept at Captain Proby's¹ at Barton. Met Sir Roger Gresley,²

¹ See p. 51.

² See vol. i. p. 336.

Colonel Crawford,¹ and Mr. Charles Arkwright. The Baronet Gresley sour and sore in consequence of having lost his election for the county of Derby; his opponents Mr. Vernon and Lord Waterpark² having been returned. Sir Roger complained of broken promises and perjured voters. 1833

On the 11th Bill returned to Cambridge for the purpose of his examination for his degree. I had corresponded for some time previously with Mr. Peacock, and had also written to the Master of Trinity, Dr. Wordsworth.³ He did not condescend to answer my letter except by message through Mr. Peacock. The Doctor declined to give encouragement to Bill for obtaining college testimonials should he obtain his degree. There was much shuffling and contradiction in my correspondence with these dignitaries, before I could make an arrangement for Bill's return. His promises of future good conduct and steady attendance were apparently as sound and sincere as could possibly be entered into. God send he may turn out well, I have great apprehension on his account.

February 15.—We dined at Mrs. Case's, and when coming home it snowed furiously. I made the plantation by the side of the lower end of the Long Stew, and planted quick round the round plantation with some larch and spruce inside. Our reforming House of Commons have laid their hands on the Irish Church, and will of course do the like to our Ecclesiastick establishment in this country as February

¹ Colonel Crawford, son of Sir J. Crawford of Kilbirney; married in 1818 Barbara, daughter of the seventh Earl of Coventry and sister of Lady Sophia Gresley.

² Henry Manners Cavendish, third Baron Waterpark, born 1793; succeeded his father 1830; married 1837 Eliza Jane, sister of the Earl of Lichfield; died 1863.

³ Dr. Christopher Wordsworth (1774-1846); Master of Trinity College, Cambridge; brother of William Wordsworth.

ÆT. 71 soon as they have settled with our neighbours.¹ The troubles of the present times not confined to Europe ; discontent and the *power of the people* is at work in the East Indies, and as to our West Indian colonies, the hubbub respecting slavery emancipation is such that those islands will soon be rid of English control, and will either be in possession of the black population, and placed under some other Government ; the American probably, unless the job-masters find work at home.²

21st. — General Campbell, his lady and his A.D.C. Pocklington, Grove and Mrs. Grove and our neighbours from Packington dined ; a large and expensive party in these trying times. Sir Roger is a particularly agreeable man in society, and a man of most polished manners. If I had wanted incitement to show him kindness and hospitality, the remembrance of the long friendship I experienced from his father³ in my early [life], would have urged me to every exertion. We passed two pleasant days, and I hope they enjoyed their visit, indeed the professions and appearances confirmed my hopes. The House of Commons since assembling has been wholly and incessantly engaged with Irish affairs. The Reformed Parliament has not improved the courtesy of the members towards each other, nor does the course or style of debate give much token or probability of the change benefitting the country. Ministry at length find the necessity of employing strong coercive measures to put down the dreadful outrages daily committed in that

¹ The Church Temporalities (Ireland) Act, reducing and reforming the Irish Church and appointing a commission, was passed this year.

² The Act for the Emancipation of Slaves was passed in the August of this year.

³ Sir Nigel Gresley.

infatuated country.¹ If proceedings of that description had 1833
been employed twelve months ago, much blood and treasure
might have been spared. My respected friend the Lord
Lieutenant has been most unfortunate in his government
and must have been guided by bad council. The noble
Marquis² had better to have stuck to his party, rather than
to have allowed his resentment to an individual (the Duke
of Wellington), to induce him to become an apostate.

Agricultural produce has been much depressed in price
lately. Wheat from 7s. 6d. to 8s. ; barley from 4s. to 5s. ;
oats 2s. 8d. to 3s. ; butcher's meat keeps its price, beef 6d.
to 6½d., mutton 7d.

The 1st of March was the most continued day of storm March
and rain I ever remember. Sad havoc made by the weather
on the Scotch fir-trees by the side of Whittington Heath ;
many of them stripped of the lofty branches, but not one
tumbled from his majestick position. I finished the new
plantation at the end of the Long Stew. Lengthened
debates in Parliament relative to the coercive measures to
be pursued in Ireland. The reformers, alias Radicals,
giving strong show what their ulterior object is, that is,
the administration of affairs to be subject to mobs, bludgeons,
and political unions. Our rulers are beginning to find the
uses likely to follow the power they have created, and the
difficulty to control that power.

18th.—To Stonebridge at six A.M. to proceed per day
coach to the great Babylon. Left Stonebridge at nine and

¹ Lord Grey stated that in the previous year 1832 over nine thousand crimes
had been committed in Ireland. To prevent the disturbances in that country, the
Coercion Act for Ireland was passed.

² The Marquis of Anglesey.

ÆT. 71 reached my old quarters, Orchard Street, before nine in the evening. Found my friend Wright in his usual tranquil mind and pretty good health. Poor Mrs. Wright had undergone a serious attack, and was much altered.

My object for going to town was first to attend a levée and drawing-room, second to settle regimental business with Collyer, third to do the like with Mr. Harman.

On the 20th I attended the King's levée. His Majesty did not recognise my regiment, as he asked me, 'What my regiment was.' I wore my 63rd uniform. The levée was thinly attended, and by very few civilians indeed. The drawing-room on the following day was very unlike the brilliancy and splendour of former times. The women appeared to me of an *inferior cast*; meanly attired and more meanly in personal appearance.

23rd.—I dined at Sir John Wrottesley's.¹

The Parliament daily and hourly engaged with a bill of coercive nature respecting the state of Ireland, and that unfortunate country has wholly engrossed the attention of the House since the meeting.² Measures of a coercive nature should have been taken twelve months ago, and have prevented all the dreadful murders, burnings, and destructions that have taken place; but the Whig ministry were afraid to offend the political unions and *nobility*, and did not venture to act until they found their friends were about to get the upper hand, and to pull down all laws and all order. Extreme cold weather in London, with a heavy fall of snow on the 26th. I dined with Mr. Wilson, son-

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

² The Coercion Act was passed this month, giving special powers to prevent disturbances.

in-law to my old friend Sir Benjamin Stephenson, a very splendid feast. Two Frenchmen of the party; one a mercantile man, the most egregious fop I ever beheld, filled with foolery and French farce. 1833

On the 28th I dined at Colonel Crawford's,¹ who has paid us a visit at Freeford with Sir Roger and Lady Sophia² Gresley, married to a sister of the latter. I met at dinner an old Egyptian comrade, General Chown (formerly Tilson). He was wounded in Egypt; some time after, when he was recovering, he came to my tent, imagining it was out of the line of fire (*feeling like a dog that had burnt his tail*), when a shot fell in my servant's close to mine, and startled him (poor fellow) uncommonly; fortunately it did not explode. I had not seen him since the campaign. We had an agreeable pleasant party, with much kindness from the Colonel and his agreeable wife. I attended Lord Hill's³ levée the same day, merely to pay my respects. His lordship as usual courteous and kind.

There was a report very prevalent in London that the Reform Ministry had determined on a large reduction of the establishment at the Horse Guards, by placing the whole under the control of the Secretary of War, and having no Commander-in-chief, except a Lieutenant-General on the staff to receive reports and attend to the general routine of the service; the new arrangement was said to have been stopped by the King. It was also in agitation to take away the clothing of regiments from their Colonels, and allow a compensation in lieu. I should have no objec-

¹ See p. 153.

² Lady Sophia Gresley was the youngest daughter of the seventh Earl of Coventry.

³ See p. 22.

tion, I believe there would have been no saving on the score of economy.

I left town per Chester mail on the 30th. Extremely cold, dreary, uncomfortable weather all the time I was from home ; most heartily glad to return to my own snug home. My dear Bill passed his examination and obtained his degree, B.A. A great satisfaction to me, and no doubt a high gratification to himself.

April 29th.—A meeting of trustees of Lichfield racing fund for the purpose of examining accounts, which were found in a most disastrous state. The trust in debt £300, and no means of payment. The clerk of the course much too consequential a personage for the situation, and mainly contributing to increase the expenditure. Lichfield races are going, and must very soon be *gone*, and the stand sold to pay encumbrances. Strange proceedings in the House of Commons ; passing a vote on the 26th for a reduction of half the Malt Tax, and rescinding the vote on the Tuesday following.¹ Well done, good and gracious reform Parliament.

May 7th.—A turnpike meeting at Lichfield (special) relative to a proposed alteration in the new line of road from the end of Sandford Street, which has been, as is too frequent, made a complete job to please one or two individuals and for the better accommodation of the *coal carts* to the city. I went with Eleanor and Bill to Leicester to pay a visit to my relatives in that borough and neighbourhood. Took post-horses to Hinckley, having sent forward my own in the morning. We reached my sister's, Mrs. Burnaby, by five o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont Burnaby and Mr.

¹ The motion was rescinded because Lord Althorp tendered his resignation, which was not received.

and Mrs. Oliver joined at dinner ; a beautiful fine day for our journey, and warm reception on our arrival. Having known Leicester for *three score years*, I was desirous (particularly) to bring to my recollection early boyish days passed by visiting places of resort in my youth, especially Wesy Coates [?], where my uncle Herrick at that time resided. The extent of the town must be considerably more than doubled since I first knew it, with an increase in population in proportion. My nephew Robert Burnaby was curate of the new church lately erected for the better accommodation of the vastly increased parish of St. Margaret's. A handsome edifice, and equally handsome interior. We attended Divine Service, and we were gratified to hear it extremely well performed.

10th.—I visited the new county gaol, and was highly gratified with the establishment.

The gaoler appeared proud to exhibit the irons in which the body of the wretched Cook had been gibbeted for the barbarous murder he had recently committed at Leicester of a person of the name of Pass, and afterwards consumed by fire a great part of his unfortunate victim. Cook's body only remained exposed thirty-six hours.

13th.—We paid a visit for two nights at Beaumanor to my cousin Will Herrick on succeeding to the family estate. Never was a place so neglected or in such a state of dilapidation. No place possesses more capability of becoming more beautiful or more to be desired, but I fear my cousin has not the necessary zeal for improvements to predict great alteration. I venerate Beaumanor as the cradle of my maternal ancestors, long distinguished for respectability of character.

ÆT. 72

June

June the 1st was the day appointed for the nomination of a representative for the south division of the county in consequence of Mr. Littleton's having accepted the situation of chief secretary for Ireland.¹ I had received two letters from Sir Robert Peel on the subject of the vacancy respecting the idea of Lord Ingestre's offering himself, and wishing for my opinion. I told him I did not think that Lord Ingestre² was much known in the county, and that much must depend on the registry, whether the manufacturing interest (which was greatly displeased with Littleton) had been more numerously registered than the agricultural, the latter having neglected greatly. The whole amount of the registry was little more than 3000 out of 11,000 electors. I had a letter from Arthur Talbot³ to beg of me to attend his brother at the nomination. I wrote to say I had no vote, and did not intend to interfere. I mentioned the same to Sir Robert Peel, and in answer to a letter from Littleton, I told him I had no vote, and if I had, I should not give it to a *Whig*. I certainly should never oppose Littleton in consequence of the great kindness I experienced from him on a very trying occasion. He was proposed by Grove (to my utter astonishment; I have heard Grove speak more ungraciously of Littleton than any man I know), seconded by a Mr. Forster from the Worcestershire side of the county. Lord Ingestre attended, and was put in nomination by the Rev. Mr. Bonney, Master of Rugeley School, seconded by Mr. Gall of Rugeley.

The day of election was fixed for the 4th, but on the

¹ See vol. i. p. 358.

² Lord Ingestre was the eldest surviving son of Earl Talbot, born 1803.

³ Arthur Talbot was the third son of Earl Talbot, born 1805; in holy orders.

previous evening Lord Ingestre resigned the contest. His lordship came forward too late, if he had started in time, the result might have been dubious. It was our petty sessions at Elford. I was surprised to find Colonel Howard had arrived to support Lord Ingestre, and also Mr. Robert Curzon.¹ I saw Howard, he told me there was nothing settled or known in London as to an opposition, or that Lord Ingestre would come forward until the 2nd. He left London immediately. I dined at Mr. Mott's, where Littleton was staying, and of course was highly gratified with the result of the election. In my humble opinion he has not the requirements nor the tact necessary for the Irish Secretary. He is florid in expression, with a full flow of language, but neither powerful in argument nor deep in erudition. He has a large share of ambition, supported by self-approbation. Lorraine Smith was at Mott's, aged and infirm as a man at eighty-two must expect to be. I was glad to meet him, though a remnant only of his former brilliancy of sociability remained.

16th.—I was engaged in attending to the workmen employed in the alterations of the kitchen, and in building a blacksmith's shop in the fold yard. On looking over the old writings in the long depending cause between the proprietor of Swinfen and my grandfather respecting the ownership of the piece of ground by the Coleshill road, which my brother exchanged with the late Esquire of Swinfen, I found in the bill filed in Chancery the date when my grandfather built this house, which was in *the year* 1734, a circumstance I had been long anxious to ascertain, but which I had never been able to make out.

¹ See p. 196.

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July

On Tuesday the 23rd, at half-past five A.M., I proceeded with Eleanor in my chaise, and my long-time trusty house-keeper Florendine, and my butler (Bearsmore), outside with my own horses to Coleshill; with posters from thence by the usual route to London, where we arrived at a hotel in Albemarle Street soon after eight. My intention on leaving home was to embark at Brighton for Dieppe, and so to Paris, but in consequence of the warm weather and the fatigue of the journey to town, I did not find myself quite well, and therefore dreading the situation of being laid up from home as affecting my dear Eleanor, I gave up the long route to Paris.

We stayed in London from the 23rd until the 31st, and went to Brighton, where we found our country neighbours, the Levetts of Wichnor. During our stay in town we dined at Sir B. Stephenson's, and three times with Colonel and Lady Barbara Crawford.¹ Eleanor saw all the sights and shows; the opera, etc. I hope was delighted.

August

We remained at Brighton ten days. On our arrival I decided to make a tour along the coast to Hastings, and from thence to visit my old friend Sir Henry Montessor near Canterbury, and nine miles from Dover, from whence I proposed to embark for Calais. We lodged at Brighton at an excellent hotel, the Norfolk, near Levett, who had a house adjoining, where we found the usual Wichnor hospitality by an invitation to dine every day during our stay. Indeed, my chief object for going to Brighton was on account of the Levetts. I was all amazement and wonder to observe the extraordinary increase and alteration that had taken place since I was last at Brighton five-and-twenty

¹ See p. 39.

years, when I was in command as a Major-General. The change was so extraordinary, that it was with much difficulty I could find the house, scarcely the street, in which I had then lodged. The races took place, three days' sport; I went to the course one day; great crowd of people, and an interesting show from the Downs. The chain-pier is amongst the great improvements, and the enormous pile of buildings at the King's palace (the Pavilion) dazzles the sight. 1833

We left Brighton on the 10th by way of Lewis and Battle to my old quarter at Hastings, or rather to the new town of St. Leonard's adjoining the former, which has sprung up like a mushroom since I left Hastings. We found Mr. and Mrs. Floyer at St. Leonard's. Hastings I found grown in size and ornament nearly as much as Brighton. I went to look at the house I had lived in, and where I first resided with an establishment as a family man. 'Alas, how dreary the recollection.' The mansion brought many serious reflections to my mind.

12th.—From Hastings we coasted by Winchelsea, Rye, Romney, Hythe, Folkestone, and by a cross road from the latter to visit my old friend Sir Henry Montessor at Denne Hill, between Canterbury and Dover. The General had heard of my intended visit to France, and most kindly wrote to request I would take him *en route*. He has an extremely good house and pretty place, and his better half (Lady Montessor), an agreeable good-humoured woman.

We had gay doings, with great hospitality, good-humour, and warm reception. I don't greatly admire the country about him; open, wild, and poorish land. My old friend

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has a considerable farm in his hands, which engages his time, though probably not very profitable, especially as the riotous miscreants two years ago had broken his threshing machine to pieces. Labourers' wages were high, 2s. 3d. per day in the winter. Their ploughs are particularly clumsy, and their farming in general *not worth copying*. We met some pleasant neighbours of Montessor's. Sir Henry Oxenden,¹ a perfect well-bred old English gentleman of the old school, a close adjoining neighbour of my friend, Sir Henry, a farmer on a large scale; his flock of sheep amounting to 1300, besides feeding beasts, dairy and extensive agricultural pursuits. He showed me his farming horses, huge animals of Flanders breed; I did not admire them, and told the Baronet that I thought there was not one of them that could walk more than a mile in an hour. Sir Henry Oxenden's is a beautiful place and large old house. He long since invented a machine to sail on land; it is simply a boat, placed on four wheels, and rigged like a cutter. It is calculated only for *plain* sailing, that is, on a large plain like Barham Downs.

We remained at Denne Hill until the 17th, when Montessor sent us in his carriage to Dover. We drove to the quay and embarked on board a steamer packet, and landed at Calais in four hours from the time we left Denne Hill. The packet was crowded; we had a delightful passage, and found ourselves at Monsieur Dessin's hotel without a difficulty of any sort. We proceeded to look at the town, and to view all the lions, which I need not be at the trouble to describe. I ordered dinner at six, at four francs per head.

¹ Sir Henry Oxenden (1756-1838); married Mary, daughter of Colonel Graham of St. Lawrence, near Canterbury; dwelt at Broome House, Kent.

We had most comfortable apartments and splendid dinner 1833
à la Français. We walked in the evening on the ramparts, and lodged ourselves *au lit* about ten.

August 18.—The next day we paraded the town of Boulogne, to our great amusement. Mr. Manley drove us in his open carriage to view the environs, particularly to see Buonaparte's pillar, erected on a plain immediately above the town in remembrance of his threatened invasion of England, and being the spot where he hoisted his standard, and from whence he had full inspection of the troops encamped and flat boats, etc. etc. I accompanied Eleanor to the top of the pillar, upwards of 200 feet high; the labour of the ascent was repaid by the magnificence of the prospect of sea and land. I purchased a French clock for my drawing-room, and had great plague and trouble to get it home; not safe, as the frame was much broken. I had intended to return by the coast road to Calais from Boulogne, having a carriage that I hired at Calais, but finding that a packet was to sail from Boulogne for Dover the following morning, I left the carriage at Boulogne (Mr. Manley having undertaken to settle for it with Dessin at Calais), and proceeded about two o'clock on the 21st per packet. We had a crowded *ship* and most turbulent passage. It blew very fresh, with a tremendous high sea, which broke over the vessel pretty frequently, to the great dismay of young sailors. My poor Eleanor dolefully sick. She had long been wishing to see a *storm*. I believe she was quite satisfied with what she *saw* and felt *in the steamer*. However, we landed safely at Dover between six and seven. After getting some comfortable refreshment and waiting for our luggage from the custom-

ÆT. 72 house, we proceeded to my old friend Montessor's, where I found another old friend and brother soldier, General Gosselin, and his daughter staying for Canterbury races. I was very glad to meet Gosselin, not having seen him for some years. They were all preparing for the race ball at Canterbury, and when they departed for the ball I took to my bed.

The next day we all went to the race on Barham Downs ; not much company, and less sport. In the evening to the ball at Canterbury ; very full of robes and feathers, but a very indifferent room. I met a very old acquaintance, Lord Guilford,¹ whom I had known as Frank North, a Prebend at Winchester. His lordship was extremely courteous, and invited me to his place, three miles from Denne Hill.

On the 23rd a grand archery meeting at Denne Hill, neighbours and friends of the Montessor's. During the shooting I walked all over Sir Henry Oxenden's park, a beautiful place. We had a large party at dinner, and Lady Montessor made me *stand up*, and go through the *ceremony of dancing* in the evening, a performance I had not attempted for at least twenty years.

On the 27th we took our departure, after passing a most agreeable stay with my excellent friend, whose kindness, hospitality, good-humour, and everything to create happiness I shall always remember. Sir Henry has put up very extensive wire fences in all parts of his pleasure-ground, as well as other enclosures. Sir Henry Oxenden has also a great deal of the like fence. I was much pleased with

¹ Francis North, sixth Earl of Guilford, born 1772 ; in holy orders ; died 1861. His seat was Waldershare Park, Kent.

and decided to use it at Freeford, particularly as a fence by the side of the wood, as it appeared to answer most perfectly in that particular situation both at Denne Hill and at Sir Henry Oxenden's. My friend General Gosselin having pressed me to give him a call on our way to London, we paid him a visit at a snug house he had near Ospring. We stopped at Canterbury to show Eleanor the grand old cathedral, etc. etc., and reached Gosselin's about five. His son (who was a little boy when I commanded at Waterford, where Gosselin was stationed), was married and settled at Feversham, close by Ospring, with his wife dined, as also Mr. Hans Mortimer, who had lived much in the neighbourhood of Lichfield, whom I had known ages back.

Next day I walked with Gosselin to Feversham and then to his farm, where he was busied getting in his harvest. He employs the same description of enormous Flanders horse in his husbandry as my friend Montessor and his neighbour the Baronet Oxenden.

We left Ospring on the 29th after passing two very agreeable days for London. We were halted at Westminster Bridge by the police to prevent the interrupting the procession of the King's closing the sessions of Parliament in his way to and from Westminster. We reached Albemarle Street by three o'clock, and made shop errands in the afternoon.

Eleanor and I dined at Drayton on the 27th. I was invited to meet Lord Talbot, but his lordship was called away. I wished to have met him, as I was desirous to see him on the subject of the proceedings afloat respecting the county rates. A petition was got up, originating at

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Uttoxeter, to be presented to the magistrates in sessions to reduce the county rates. (This results from the *open court* for auditing the county accounts.) The proceedings originated with some political unionists and radicals, a continuation of a system too prevalent in modern times for debasing and putting down the magistracy of the county. I fear the system progresses, and will drive country gentlemen from acting at all. The respectability of the bench at Stafford, I am quite sure, is greatly on the decline compared to a few years gone by, and the new proceeding in open court will not *better* the *bench*. I was desirous to see Lord Talbot to ask what was likely to take place at the ensuing sessions on the presentation of the petition from Uttoxeter. To my astonishment Levett (?) of Wichnor put his name to the petition, with Mr. Swinnerton and Sir Charles Wolseley,¹ the only three names of independent character as gentlemen.

October

On the 8th Miss Bakewell came to us ; she had been low in spirits and kept to the house for some weeks. She was altered in appearance and in her manner, having shown no symptom of violence or ill-behaviour to any one. She stayed at Freeford until the 19th. My highly respected noble friend, Lord Anglesey, was relieved in Ireland by the Marquis Wellesley.² Poor Lord Anglesey's sad sufferings from tic-doloureux continuing, he, this month, by the advice of faculty went to Italy for the warm climate during the winter. I fear his days are drawing

¹ Sir Charles Wolseley (1769-1846) of Wolseley, co. Stafford; married Mary, daughter of the Hon. Thomas Clifford of Tixall, co. Stafford, in 1792; and secondly Anne, daughter of Anthony Wright, Esq., co. Essex.

² Richard Colley, Marquis Wellesley (1760-1842); governor-general of India 1797-1805; lord-lieutenant of Ireland 1821-8, and again 1833-4.

nigh a conclusion.¹ Vexations and troubles of a domestick nature must have borne hard upon his constitution, and the recent marriage of his son, Lord Uxbridge,² to a young girl of eighteen, a daughter of Sir Charles Bagot, could not contribute much consolation to the Marquis's declining days. 1833

We dined at Packington on the 29th to meet the Gresleys of Meriden, who came to Freeford on the 31st, as did old Nigel Gresley and his wife from Seal, and remained until the 2nd November, on which day we had our annual visit to dine at the Deanery. The Dean in his eighty-fifth year; a fine dignified old man, cheerful and attentive to his guests. Her Grace, the Duchess of Sutherland,³ had called in the morning at the Deanery *en route* to Trentham to visit her son. The Dean had been tutor to the late Duke, and owes his preferment in the church to that circumstance. I began this week to prepare for putting up a wire fence by the side of the wood, by taking down the old temporary hedge and levelling the bank. I found the fixing the wire fence less expense than the putting up a post and three rail fence. My man, John Cottrill, with a blacksmith and wheelwright completed the job in four days. I made the plantation by the side of the wood, where the old fence stood.

On the 7th Mr. Hand, Bill's friend, left us, and Eleanor November went to Wichnor for a few nights. The upper part of the

¹ As a matter of fact, the Marquis of Anglesey outlived the General by seven years, dying in 1854.

² Lord Uxbridge married secondly, in August 1833, Henrietta Maria, fourth daughter of the Right Hon. Sir Charles Bagot, who was the second son of the first Baron Bagot, of Bagot's Bromley, co. Stafford.

³ Harriet Elizabeth Georgiana, third daughter of George, sixth Earl of Carlisle, married 1823 George Granville Sutherland Leveson-Gower, Marquis of Stafford, who succeeded as second Duke of Sutherland in July 1833.

ÆT. 72 Swinfen meadow was this year partly in carrots and cabbages; one of the latter was cut for the feeding bullocks this week and weighed upwards of forty pounds after the lower leaves and the stalk were taken off; it measured five feet round. The new game act has proved a fine harvest for the poachers, and a great temptation to commence the trade; the consequence arising has been more commitments under the act than were before known.

On the 17th Captain Gossett, who had been employed last year stationed at Lichfield on the ordnance survey service called, stayed dinner, and slept on his way inspecting the party employed making the general survey for a map of England, under the direction of the ordnance. The Dean of Lichfield (Woodhouse) died at the age of eighty-four.

28th.—Crawfurd and Lady Barbara came for two days. Sir Robert, Lady Peel, and the Hamiltons¹ dined. The Right Honourable particularly affable and entertaining. He related an anecdote that occurred when he was Secretary of State. He was sent for by King George Fourth a day or two before his death. Sir Robert found him sitting in a large chair wrapped up in not a very cleanly blanket,² and not shaved for a length of time. After he had been a short time in the room, the King desired him to wheel his chair to the window; after looking out into the garden, he said, 'This is the last time I shall look into the garden'; he then remarked to Sir Robert, 'You are just returned from your father's funeral; you will soon have to pay the like

¹ Archdeacon of Lichfield.

² Moore's *Diary* records 'the King in bed in a dirty flannel waistcoat and cotton nightcap.'

ceremony to me.' Sir Robert had returned only the day 1833 before.

On the 4th Eleanor and I went to Wrottesley for two December nights. It is a dreary country and lacks the cheerful comforts of Freeford, to which I always rejoice to return. Violent tempestuous weather just now, though mild for the season. The colliers in the great coal district of the county made a turn out for an increase of wages. They were encouraged and assisted by a set of radicals, the trades union and political unions all deriving their name and calling from the spirit of reform. Our ministers in order to obtain their places *appealed to the people*. *The people* will in turn share *their power* and overturn the constitution.

14th.—A new bridge is constructing across the Trent at Walton, which will be great publick convenience. I went on the 14th to attend a special sessions at Wichnor Bridges. Sir Oswald,¹ Hall, Taylor, and self; not much business. The meeting was for the purpose of allotting the proportions from the highways to the turnpike surveyors.

December 22.—To my joy and delight, as I was walking in the afternoon across the King's Piece, I saw some one coming towards me and little suspected it to be my dear Dick, who had obtained a very short leave in order to pass Christmas Day at home, and as my sister Mary had arrived the previous day, I was made most happy by sitting down to partake my Christmas dinner with such a family party. It was a great comfort to have my dear children around me on Christmas Day. Dick left Hull on the 24th by a steamer up the Humber that conveyed him to Thorne, from thence per coach to Doncaster and Sheffield, where

¹ Sir Oswald Mosley.

ÆT. 72 he slept, and by Birmingham mail from thence next morning home.

1834
January *January 1.*—On the 1st I and Bill went in Dick's buggy to Birmingham shopping. I wished also to call upon Lieutenant-Colonel Storey of the 3rd Dragoon Guards quartered there. He is the nephew of my old master General Stevens,¹ and also of a highly respected friend in my very youthful days when at Nottingham School, John Storey, Esq., whose Sunday dinners I shall never forget. I invited the Lieutenant-Colonel to Freeford for the 9th to attend a ball at Lichfield on the 10th. I looked at the gigantick room they have built at Birmingham as a town hall, to be also appropriated for a musick room, etc. It is magnificent, and when finished, with the splendid grand organ intended to be erected in one end of it, will make it the most superb room in Europe.

A ludicrous circumstance happened to me when I was at Birmingham on the 1st. I went into a shop to make a purchase; being accomplished I had intended to proceed to the further end of the shop, which appeared to me of considerable extent. I had not gone two paces, when I imagined a gentleman was coming from the other end and that I should meet him. In order to avoid him I stepped aside, he did the like. I made a bow; the like was repeated. I then looked a little closer and observed the gentleman had on a yellow neck handkerchief the like of my own, and then discovered it was my dear self I had been bowing to, represented in a mirror which crossed the end of the shop.

19th.—An atrocious poaching case occurred in Tom

¹ See vol. i. p. 316.

Levett's wood at Hopwas Hays. His keepers were on the look-out, and at two o'clock in the night of Sunday they fell in with six men, three of them armed with guns. One of the keepers in pursuit of a poacher had a miraculous escape. The fellow, finding he was likely to be taken, turned round, levelled his gun and fired. The muzzle of the gun was so close to the keeper that his neck handkerchief was blackened by the powder, and his jacket near the collar singed. A slug was discovered in the jacket, and his shoulder, or rather collar-bone, grazed. The rascal made his escape. Three of the poachers were taken and brought before me, and committed for trial.

On the 22nd the facetious and witty Mr. Matthews¹ exhibited his at home at Lichfield. Bill and his sister attended, and were much delighted. He is an extraordinary instance of individual mental power to be able to afford entertainment for three hours to a full audience at the theatre by his singular acquirements.

On the 24th a quartette of the first-rate vocal performers from the metropolis gave a concert in the morning at the George Inn. Repington, Miss Cholmondley,² and Mr. and Mrs. William Hartopp came here to dine and sleep after the concert. My daughter went to the concert and was much gratified. The performers were Bochsa,³ Naldi, and Mr. and Mrs. Bishop.⁴

¹ Thomas Matthews (1805-89); actor and pantomimist; coached by Grimaldi; retired 1865.

² Mrs. Repington's sister.

³ Bochsa, the famous harp player.

⁴ Anne Bishop (1814-84), soprano singer; married Henry Rowley Bishop 1831; eloped with Bochsa 1839; died at New York.

Henry Rowley Bishop (1786-1855); musical composer; Mus. Bac., Oxford, 1832; knighted 1842; particularly famous for his glees.

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February *February* 10.—Dick drove me to Birmingham in his buggy to do a little shopping. The trade in good employ and good wages to the working class, but sad complaints from the masters of the extreme insubordination of the artisans in consequence of the trades unions that are formed, and which are supposed to be connected throughout Europe. Edwards the silversmith told me they were to a certain degree subject to the whim and caprice of their men, and frequently obliged to give way to have their orders supplied.

March *6th*.—Dick dined at Packington. I meditated a trip to London for the purpose of making some effort in favour of my dear Dick as to promotion; and to pay my duty to their Majesties. I do not like travelling on Sunday, but from the uncertainty of procuring places in the Liverpool mail, I took the chance of the 16th Sunday, and proceeded; Dick having an outside place. We reached town about nine. I went to my old quarters in Orchard Street; Dick to Ibbetson's Hotel. I found my good friends Wright and his wife both far from as well as when I last saw them; the latter in particular, who is become nearly imbecile and a woeful misery to her amiable husband.

18th.—I went with Dick to Lord FitzRoy Somerset's¹ levée to secure his interest. He was kind and obliging, but feared there was no early prospect of promotion in his regiment.

19th.—I attended the King's levée. His Majesty very gracious; told me he was glad to see me looking so well. I returned the compliment. He said he was very well, and then asked me which was youngest. I said it is in favour of your Majesty by some years.²

¹ See p. 13.

² William IV. was born in 1765; General Dyott in 1761.

20th.—I attended her Majesty's drawing-room; not full, and the females I saw were sorry samples of English beauty. 1834

21st.—Friday was the usual day for Lord Hill's¹ levée, but he had not one. I went to the Horse Guards to inquire when he was likely to have a levée. George Disbrowe good-humouredly went to Colonel Egerton, Lord Hill's private secretary, to make the inquiry; he (Egerton) told Lord Hill I was there, and his lordship most kindly sent for me. I took Dick in my hand, and was cordially received. I asked to allow me to purchase an unattached company. He said he would do what he could, and I must write to him official. Lord Hill then told Dick he might retire. It was for the purpose of paying him a high compliment, as he assured me he had not seen so fine-looking a young man for a long time, and added, 'there was a smartness and soldier-like appearance that had struck him forcibly.' I wrote to the noble Lord consequently to ask to purchase an unattached company. A day or two after I received a kind answer in his lordship's own writing to say he had put my son's name on his list.

We remained in London until the 26th, when we took our departure by the Chester mail, and reached home safely by ten next morning. I was not fatigued with my night journey, and felt myself all the better for my London trip. I forgot to mention my having taken Dick to the assizes at Stafford to introduce him on the Grand Inquest of the county, having previously had his name placed on the Grand Jury list. Dick being in the Commission of the Peace we dined as usual with the judges, which was an

¹ See p. 22.

ÆT. 73 additional object I had in view for accompanying him to the assizes. Lord Ingestre¹ was foreman. I have oft witnessed a more respectable, or rather men of higher grade on the jury. In consequence of the depressed state of the agricultural interest, I brought forward motion for the High Sheriff and Grand Jury to present a petition to the House of Commons to represent our grievance, which was agreed to. I then asked, to whom should the petition be entrusted to present to the House. No one being named, I proposed that Sir Robert Peel should be requested to present it, which was carried with one dissenting voice (Mr. Wedgewood, jun.). The circumstance was not at all acceptable to our county members and particularly to Littleton, who attacked me several times in London on the subject. A paragraph appeared in the London papers, stating that a petition had been agreed to by the Grand Jury on the subject of the Corn Laws, proposed by General Dyott (a Tory), who also proposed that it should be entrusted to Sir Robert Peel, to the exclusion of the four Whig members. It occasioned much talk in London. I met several acquaintances, who accosted me as the Staffordshire Tory.

April *April 11.*—Fine mild spring weather all this week, with the exception of wanting some showers.

Here ends a volume of four years' proceedings with the enjoyment of health, and comforts of my dear children partaking the like enjoyment. *Praised be God.*

May *May 12.*—Here begins another *volume* of my '*strange eventful history.*' Whether I may live to complete the numerous pages, God only knows. I feel truly grateful to the Almighty Providence for having vouchsafed to protect

¹ See p. 160.

me to my present age with the enjoyment of health and the blessing of my three beloved children. Their society I have been lately enjoying for a longer time than I can ever hope to see them together again. Dick is fast recovering from his accident, and must soon return to his regiment. Bill making preparations for his ordination on the 26th, and after to settle at his curacy at Glen. I must then be left with my darling dear daughter, the solace and comfort of my life.

Being desirous of affording my dear Eleanor every opportunity of enjoyment, and having expressed a wish to attend the grand commemoration of Handel in Westminster Abbey, I wrote to my friend Wright (as I knew both he and Mrs. Wright were out of town) to ask for the use of his house for a fortnight, to which he most kindly assented.

We left on Saturday morning, the 21st, at seven o'clock with my own horses as far as Coleshill, and by the usual route, and arrived in Orchard Street soon after nine. We only stopped to change horses; Eleanor never left the carriage. Sir Benjamin Stephenson, one of the directors, had been so good to reserve a place for two performances for Eleanor in the directors' box, and had also engaged us to dine in Hertford Street the day after our arrival in town. It was particular kind and fortunate for Eleanor the having the entry to the directors' box, the access to it being by the same way as the Royal Family entered the Abbey. We found all prepared for us on our arrival in Orchard Street; Wright having left his cook and housemaid; the former had provided tea, etc. etc. We were as comfortable as we could have been in our own home.

June 23.—Sir Benjamin gave us an admission order to see the Abbey fitted out for the grand performance on the

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following day. A gallery behind the choir organ laid out for the Royal Family; the throne, etc., very magnificent. A gallery in front of the great west window erected for the performers; the remainder of the nave with two side-galleries prepared for the auditory to contain two thousand persons. The tickets on the parterre two guineas, as also the front rows of the gallery, the back seats of which were one guinea. I was in London on the former commemoration in 1784, but did not attend the performance; my purse would not serve me then, and my *ears* would not serve me on the present occasion.

24th.—My dear child attended the performance the next day chaperoned by Lady Stephenson, and was most highly gratified with sight and sound. It was generally said that the vocal parts were inferior to those in '84, but that the instrumental was greatly superior. There were six hundred performers. The receipts for the four days amounted to eighteen thousand pounds. Payment to the performers eight, and the fitting up five. Cleared for charity nearly six.

Being in London and having a carriage, I thought I might as well attend the King's levée, which I did on the 8th. His Majesty highly gracious. A thin levée; all reds and blues. The extreme heat during our stay in town was oppressive; if we had not been most comfortably lodged, it would have been worse than oppressive. There was a blow-up amongst the ministry, occasioned in a great measure by the indiscretion of our county member, the Right Honourable the Secretary for Ireland, Littleton,¹ who had been corresponding with his father-in-law, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,² unknown to the Prime Minister, Lord Grey;

¹ See vol. i. p. 358.

² Marquis of Wellesley.

and had also made a communication to the great agitator (O'Connell), without the knowledge of Lord Grey, thereby betraying the secrets of the cabinet. Littleton's conduct was highly censured, and deservedly; his motive was vanity and an effort to appear of supreme consequence. Lord Grey and Lord Althorp¹ resigned; the latter thought better of it, and clung to office and to the Whigs.²

We left London on the 11th, and brought with us July Frances Stephenson, my friend Sir Benjamin's eldest daughter, to pass some time at Freeford. Whilst I was in London I went with Sir Robert Peel, Ralph Sneyd, and Inge to see a piece of plate (ordered by Sneyd) to be presented to Watts Russell. The cost, twelve hundred pounds, raised by a subscription amongst his supporters in North Staffordshire. It is a magnificent candelabra to contain eighteen candles, beautifully wrought. Sir Robert Peel sent me a copy (confidentially) of the report of a committee of which he was chairman, on the subject of the county rates, particularly as affected by the expenses on account of all criminal proceedings, and requested my remarks, which I enclosed to him; agreeing generally to the report, and adding some further circumstances, as likely to be useful, to which the committee had not reverted.

The 18th a most remarkably hot day; the thermometer being hung by the side of the window of the library at three o'clock P.M. was at 100, and on the 20th in the afternoon, in the same situation, it was 56. We dined at Packington on the 22nd to meet Rear-Admiral Sir William Parker³ and

¹ See p. 117.

² Lord Melbourne became prime minister with Althorp as chancellor of the exchequer.

³ See p. 43.

ÆT. 73 Lady Parker, the former having arrived at home on the 17th, after an absence of three years, with well-merited honours on his head, having been created a K.C.B. and appointed a Lord of the Admiralty. An excellent man; no one ever better deserving his rewards. He gave us after dinner a most interesting account of all the very extraordinary proceedings in Portugal during his eventful command in the Tagus, etc.

On the 30th my old friend Lord Combermere,¹ with his son and daughter and my friend Sir Samuel Hawker, arrived from London to pass a couple of nights in their way to Combermere. Hawker is an old soldier, a good-humoured and agreeable man, and married to a daughter of the once celebrated Mrs. Jordan.² My old chum the Viscount had been living abroad for a year in consequence of his losses by the failure of the House of Alexander at Calcutta to the amount of upwards of £40,000.

August On the 6th John Floyer and John Nuttall dined to meet Bill. A human skeleton was discovered in Hopwas Hays by some labourers getting stone near the bank of the canal. From appearance it was conjectured to have been in the ground twenty years. A report was in circulation that a man had been murdered near the spot about that time, and that the supposed murderer had died about a year ago, but nothing authentick could be traced. Tom Levett's man came to ask my advice what was to be done, as his master was out of the county. Knowing that Tom Levett would be naturally anxious to have proper steps taken as to

¹ See p. 96.

² Dorothea Jordan (1762-1816); actress; for many years the mistress of the Duke of Clarence (William IV.); died at St. Cloud.

Coroner's Inquest, etc., in consequence of the Hays being extra-parochial, I caused the circumstance and particulars to be communicated to the coroner, and to have his opinion as to an inquest. He decided that as there was no evidence to inquire into, he saw no necessity for holding an inquest. The mouldering remains were therefore conveyed to the bone-house in Tamworth Church, and there deposited. 1834

29th.—Inge called upon me. We journeyed together to Ilam to attend the presentation of the splendid testimonial to Mr. Russell from a subscription amounting to £1200 by individuals in the Conservative interest at the election in 1832; 347 subscribers. It was a splendid candelabra weighing 1640 ounces. It was determined at a meeting of Russell's committee for the presentation to be made at Ilam by such members of the committee as could make it convenient to attend. About twenty met. The magnificent piece of plate was placed in the dining-room, and Ralph Sneyd, who proposed Russell, delivered a most eloquent energetic speech on presenting the tribute, which was acknowledged in a neat short speech, most feelingly eloquent. We had a sumptuous dinner at seven o'clock, and Sneyd, Inge, myself, and eight or ten more slept there. The house is new and most magnificent; splendidly furnished, and a most picturesque, beautiful summer residence. The day we went was wet and dismal in the extreme; the next morning fine, when we had an opportunity of viewing the rich beautiful scenery with which Ilam is adorned.

A letter from my dear Dick on the 23rd announced his September departure for Malta. He was to sail from Plymouth on the 22nd. The whole of the 68th regiment with two depots,

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exclusive of the detachment of the 53rd, were all embarked on board the *Romney*, fifty-gun ship. May Divine Providence protect my dear boy, and restore him safe again to his old father at Freeford.

29th.—We set out for Combermere, taking with us the honest agent, George Collyer, by way of Stone and Woore. We were brought up at Burleydam to partake the sports of the village wake. Lord Combermere, his daughter, Lord Kilmorey,¹ etc. etc., we found in a booth filled with the Combermere tenants, their wives and daughters, etc., witnessing the performance of a play by some strollers. The performance was nearly over; we partook of the last act, and then a horse race for a Cheshire cheese.

The following day we had a coursing party for the wake; great abundance of hares, but the enclosures too small to afford sport. Lord Combermere had expected a house full, having invited Lord Kenyon,² his wife and son's wife,³ General Robert Taylor, and a Cheshire gentleman and lady whose name I forgot.

October

October 1.—We turned out for pheasant shooting. The agent Collyer not much of a sportsman, but amused greatly as a cockney. We only went to the outskirts, to the hedge-rows and small coverts; a great abundance of pheasants and hares. A Mr. and Mrs. Pool, agreeable people, dined. My former visit to Combermere was in winter, with snow on the ground. Therefore I had no opportunity of seeing the

¹ Francis Jack Needham, Earl and Viscount of Kilmorey; born 1787; succeeded his father 1832.

² George Kenyon, Lord Kenyon, Baron of Gredington; born 1776; married 1803 Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Hamner.

³ Georgina de Grey, daughter of Lord Walsingham; married 1833 Lloyd Kenyon, eldest son of Lord Kenyon.

place in its rich beauty of which it pre-eminently partakes as 1834
to verdures, woods, and fine water.

We were shooting on the 2nd ; the weather oppressively hot for the season. I found myself too old to attempt much walking. Lord Kilmorey dined ; a gentlemanlike man ; lately succeeded his father to the title and estate at Shav-
ington.¹

3rd.—We coursed at the Royals (William Cotton's). Lunched there. Miss Cotton and Eleanor were out both days coursing on horseback. Miss Cotton, a most daring intrepid horsewoman. The neighbouring farmers were in better plight as to produce than those employed on arable farms ; cheese being the chief produce and fetching a fair price. Lord Combermere has an estate of nine thousand acres in a ring fence, averaging from 23s. to 25s. per acre. He had been desirous of building a new house, but having just sustained a loss of £20,000 by the failure of Alexander at Calcutta, he had given it up ; indeed he might be content, as the old abbey is an excellent fine old building.

18th.—Accounts arrived of the total destruction of the two Houses of Parliament by fire ; it broke out on the evening of the 16th, but how occasioned, not yet discovered.² May it not be an indication of Divine Providence to the reformers of the lower House to reform themselves

¹ Lord Kilmorey's seats were Shavington Hall, Salop, and Morne Park, co. Down.

² The fire was due to the burning of the old wooden tallies of the exchequer in the stoves of the House of Lords. The flues became overheated, and the woodwork near the flues smouldered for some hours and then burst into flame. In less than half an hour the House of Lords was a mass of fire, and owing to a change of wind the flames were thrown upon the House of Commons. That House was almost entirely destroyed ; parts of the House of Lords were, however, saved, and it was in these that Parliament found a temporary home.

ÆT. 73 instead of reforming the habits of the people by the encouragement given to insubordination and the neglect of the religious principles of their forefathers.

25th.—Eleanor went to Mr. Hamilton's in the Close for two nights. This day and the former were as cold as any days during the past winter. I sold a load of barley this week at 4s. 6d. per strike. Wheat but little more in value, about 5s. 6d. My mangelwurzels this year very good; my turnips likewise, the swedes particularly. I made a present of a ram lamb to my friend Lord Combermere, and one also (sent by the canal) to my old chum and campaigner, Sir H. Montessor, into Kent.

November 3rd.—Petty sessions, Whittington. Inge, Taylor, and self. An application was made by Mr. Wyatt, the solicitor, in behalf of the parish of Whittington, for the justices to make an order requiring the township of Haselour to appoint an overseer of the poor. At the same time the solicitor Wyatt expressed his wish that the justices might refuse, stating as a lawyer that the same end would be obtained legally, and at less expense. The case arose out of the following circumstance. A pauper residing at Whittington had been removed by an order to his legal settlement at Haselour, and had been received and acknowledged (*but not certified*). On the pauper being taken, Haselour having no means whatever of accommodating the pauper, requested the parish officer of Whittington to take him back to his residence at Whittington, and Haselour agreed to maintain him, which was continued for two years, when the pauper died, leaving a widow and family, who continued to be supported by Haselour for some time. But on a sudden the township set up a plea that it was extra-parochial, and

refused any longer to continue the support. A fresh order was made to remove the widow and family, but Haselour refused to receive them. In consequence, after various proceedings, the above application was made to us by Wyatt in order to obtain a mandamus from the King's Bench to know why we refused to appoint an overseer.

On the 5th Eleanor and I went to Wrottesley¹ for two nights.

The foxhounds met at Wrottesley on the 6th. I walked all over Sir John's farm, and was greatly pleased and amused with his extensive and well-conducted system extending over one thousand three hundred acres. He made me a present of a sow from his famous herd of swine. I met the son of an old schoolfellow and brother officer (General Popham), who was on a visit at Wrottesley, a friend of Walter Wrottesley.²

On the 10th my friend Montessor's present of a young Neapolitan boar arrived by a canal boat, which landed him at Bromley. Wherefore I expect great improvement in my herd.

12th.—We dined at Little Aston; a large party, but dull discourse. The Earl of Dartmouth³ and his Lady; the latter I had never seen. Her ladyship is handsome, with a most pleasing countenance. Her Lord a shy silent peer, and not conducive to the pride of aristocracy.

16th, *Sunday*.—A pleasant walk to church. Phill dined as usual, and brought the news of dissolution of the Whig Ministry; Lord Spencer having died this week the Chan-

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

² Walter Wrottesley, fourth son of the first Baron Wrottesley; born 1810; sometime fellow of All Souls', Oxon.

³ See p. 98.

ÆT. 73 cellor of the Exchequer became a peer of Parliament (Lord Althorp), and of course no longer continued in the House of Commons. This circumstance was said to be the cause of the break up, though it was generally believed there had been schism and dissension in the Cabinet to make a blow up inevitable. I rejoice these boasting reforming Whigs are turned out.¹ The Duke of Wellington has been called forward by the King, but no arrangement of a new ministry can immediately be made in consequence of Sir Robert Peel being on a tour on the Continent.² It is likely the Duke will give way so that Sir Robert may become Prime Minister.

December *December 5.*—We dined at Shenstone Park. Mrs. Lister and her daughter, the novel writer (authoress of *Dacre*), Spencer Madan and his sister, and William Hartopp, the party. Nothing engaging. William Hartopp, an obstinate reformer; pretty nearly a rank radical. Sir Robert Peel not yet arrived. The great Captain carrying on *all the duties of all* the publick offices until the new administration is formed. Great talk of a dissolution of Parliament; stirring and movement-making in many parts to give token of fearful preparation, but, humble politician as I am, I do not think, if it can possibly be avoided, the new ministry will act so unpopular a part, unless the reform House of Commons *powerfully* opposes them. Singularly mild season;

¹ Lord Melbourne was suddenly dismissed by the King on November 14. Erskine May writes: 'All the accustomed grounds for dismissing a ministry were wanting. There was no immediate difference between them and the King, there was no disunion among themselves, nor were there any indications that they had lost the confidence of Parliament.'

² The Duke of Wellington acted for Sir Robert Peel, who was at the time abroad. Peel started at once from Rome on November 26, and, travelling with a speed which was then considered marvellous, reached Dover within twelve days.

I scarce recollect such open weather as the last week at this time of the year. 1834

Sir Robert Peel arrived in London on the 9th, and in a day or two afterwards became Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and shortly afterwards formed an administration of exclusive Tories,¹ the great Captain the Duke having accepted the office of Secretary of State for the foreign department. An expectation of an immediate dissolution of Parliament was fully expected.

21st.—Extraordinary mild weather for the season. My usual walk to Divine Service at Whittington. Sir Robert Peel's ministry finally settled. Every true friend to his country must be rejoiced the kingdom having escaped from the hands of the reform Whigs. Whether the new ministry will stand their ground with a new House of Commons, time only can tell. An effort was made at Lichfield by a radical, Finch, to turn out Scott.² If the Baronet's friends had not rallied round him in a manner he scarcely deserved, he must have gone. I told Scott I would not oppose him, but that I could not vote for him.

On the 1st of January 1835, having been solicited to attend the canvass of Sir Robert Peel at Tamworth, I^{January} readily and cheerfully made my appearance accordingly. The Right Honourable Baronet from the multiplicity of business in his office was unable to attend. His relation General Yates³ was his representative, attended by all the respectability of the borough and number of the neighbouring gentry. Lord Charles Townshend⁴ resigned his seat

¹ Croker to Mrs. Croker, *Croker Papers*, ii. 249. Peel complained that after all 'it would be only the duke's old cabinet.'

² See p. 84.

³ A relation of the wife of the first Sir Robert Peel.

⁴ Charles Vere, second son of the second Marquis of Townshend.

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for the borough. Sir Robert had made known to the electors his full determination not to interfere with their choice of a second member. William Peel having been strongly solicited to offer himself, and from his universal popularity at Tamworth there could be no doubt of his success.

Parliament was dissolved on Tuesday the 30th ult. Many of the borough elections of course will take place during the following week. I have much doubt and fear as to the result of the elections. A power has been created by the means employed to carry the late reform Act that will not easily be controlled, and radicalism and democratic principles are consequently so tampered and encouraged, that unless a check is given on this momentous occasion, I doubt the Glory of old England's Constitution will be assailed by so strongly united a factious democracy to be fatal to its continuance.

The polling began on the 7th and ended next day, leaving the poor Finch 180 in the rear; how he obtained that number of voters I cannot imagine. He was (it was said) much imposed upon and deceived by those who encouraged him to come forward, and was ill-used by those who partook largely of his beer and bread, and afterwards voted for Scott. The mania of the day has crept into Lichfield, the dissenters now forming a large class of the constituency; together with the freemen, who had been worked upon, made collectively a powerful band, pressing forward as *Liberals* and the *People*. I did not interfere. I had never the least apprehension of Finch succeeding; at the same time I told Scott if he was driven *to a vote*, I would poll for him. Scott had sunk in favour with

many of his friends. If he had not shown symptoms of accommodating himself to their views, and thereby lost their support, he would not have been returned. I believe I was the means of reconciling them. I prevented strong language in the intended first communication made to him respecting his political views; and also by submitting to the influential persons, who met for the above purpose, the necessity for not withdrawing the support Scott naturally might expect, by which event the Radical candidate Finch would become the representative. Sir Robert Peel and his brother William were returned for Tamworth on the 6th, and Edmund Peel for Newcastle on the same day. Sharp frost continued until the evening of the 8th, and was succeeded by rain on the 9th.

The 10th was the nomination at Lichfield for the south division of Staffordshire; the old members were returned without opposition. Mr. Lister of Armitage proposed Littleton¹ in a flimsy ultra-reform speech, eulogising the Whig ministry because, I suppose, he enjoyed an appointment under them, of which he was deprived. Captain Chetwynd² seconded the nomination. Sir Francis Lawley³ proposed Sir John Wrottesley⁴ in a select *Whig speech*, and was seconded by Mr. Wightwick,⁵ a radical. Littleton made a long harangue. *Ego*, the *chief* topick. Wrottesley, a short good speech, plain and professing his Whig politicks in a manly manner. I did not attend.

¹ See vol. i. p. 358.

² William Fawkenor Chetwynd, second son of the first baronet, Sir George Chetwynd of Brocton Hall, co. Stafford.

³ Sir Francis Lawley, of Spoonhill in Shropshire, succeeded to the baronetcy in 1833; brother of Lord Wenlock.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 130.

⁵ A member of an old Staffordshire family.

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16th.—I dined at Tamworth by invitation from Sir Robert Peel to meet his constituents. There were between two and three hundred at dinner. Sir Robert's health was proposed by the Rev. Mr. Woolley, and drunk with enthusiastick cheers; after which the Right Honourable Baronet made one of the most eloquent and interesting speeches I ever heard, or ever shall hear. He spoke for an hour and twenty minutes; detailed the proceedings that caused him to take office; of the formation of the new ministry, of the offer he had made to Lord Stanley¹ to join him.² He complimented the late administration, and said he hoped the present administration would proceed in a manner to obtain the good opinion of the country. He expressed himself grateful for the favour done him by his relations, and declared he should ever prefer being returned for the borough of [Tamworth] to that of any other constituency whatever. In the course of the evening Sir Robert, after paying me higher compliments than I fear I deserve, was pleased to propose my health together with those friends not connected with Tamworth who had favoured him on the occasion. I was of course to be *speechified* to return thanks, which I performed as well as I could. Soon after, with a short preface, I proposed the health of the first Lord of the Treasury and success to his Majesty's ministers. The toast was drunk and succeeded by thundering roars for a very considerable continuance.

23rd.—A dinner at Tamworth to celebrate Mr. William

¹ Edward George, Lord Stanley, tenth earl of Derby (1799-1869); statesman.

² Lord Stanley had refused Peel's overtures in a friendly spirit, but declared that in his judgment 'the sudden conversion of long political opposition into the most intimate alliance would shock public opinion, would be ruinous to his own character,' and would be detrimental to the new government.

Peel's election. Nearly the same party as at Sir Robert's dinner. Poor William Peel suffering most seriously from the gout. He was carried into the room, unable to stand. There was great *speechifying* and much hilarity, but lacking elocution when compared to the Right Honourable Premier.

5th.—I rode to Rugeley to have a conversation with Mr. Landor, Lord Anglesey's agent, who has succeeded Mr. Hinckley, respecting the high rent put upon my copyhold cottages at Whittington, and also relative to the chief rent payable from Fulfin; the former was to be lowered. As to the chief rent, I fear my pretension to set that aside may not succeed. I likewise represented the necessity for some steps being taken to put a stop to the burning the gorse on Whittington Heath, which has lately [been] carried on to a great extent. I caused a discovery of a trespasser, and have left the matter with the Lord of the Manor to determine if the freeholders have the right to burn at certain periods. Agricultural pursuits suffering greatly. Stock of all descriptions much lowered in the last ten days. It is impossible to conjecture what is to become of the landed interest. Mild open weather with high winds.

The new Parliament assembled on the 19th. To the disgust of all loyal men, the House rejected the great unequalled speaker,¹ and elected by a majority of radicals, reformers, and rebels, Mr. Abercrombie as the new chairman.² How this event is to affect the new ministry time

¹ Sir Charles Manners Sutton, afterwards Viscount Canterbury (1780-1845); speaker of the House of Commons (1817-35).

² James Abercrombie, first Baron Dunfermline (1776-1858); son of Sir Ralph Abercrombie; speaker of the House of Commons (1835-9); raised to the peerage on retirement 1839.

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will exhibit. They had looked for a majority, and must of course be greatly disappointed. Corn markets continue ruinously low. I sold wheat ten score and ten per bag of three strike at 17s. per bag, about 5s. 4d. the imperial bushel. Barley and oats nearly alike, about 4s. the imperial.

25th.—We dined at Mrs. Case's. Sir George Pigot, old Lady Cork,¹ Mr. and Mrs. Manley, etc. etc. The venerable countess a surprising woman in her *ninetieth* year. I remember her with her lord the Colonel of the Somerset militia at Plymouth in the year 1793. Her ladyship was then commanding officer both of her lord and his lordship's regiment. Her ladyship's oddities and strange eccentricities were at that time peculiarly amusing, and I believe have not departed even in her *ninetieth* year.

March

On the 14th I went to Stafford to pay my respects to the High Sheriff (Ned Monckton²). Commission day for the spring assizes. Between sixty and seventy dined with the Sheriff at half-past one. Littleton,³ our county member, was at dinner. I sat next to him, and could pick from him that the Whigs find themselves so beaten they now pretend to say they are satisfied with Sir Robert, and would rather have him than their old coadjutor Lord Stanley.⁴ I imagine the noble lord was pretty well tired of his radical Whig allies, and glad to shake them off.

19th.—We dined at William Gresley's at Stowe; a parsonic dinner, bad cheer, and no conversation to improve or amuse. The late elected member for Derbyshire, my *cousin* Sir Roger Gresley,⁵ has been making a sad ass of

¹ Mary, youngest daughter of John, first Viscount Galway, married in 1786 the seventh Earl of Cork and Orrery; she died May 1840.

² Edward Monckton of Somerford Hall, co. Stafford; died 1848.

³ See p. 358.

⁴ See p. 190.

⁵ See vol. i. p. 336.

himself in Parliament; just what I expected. On the motion for the repeal of the malt tax, for which he had pledged *his honour* to his constituents in the county he would vote, on the division the Baronet voted with ministers after exposing himself the more in a silly, shallow, snivelling speech. He subsequently published an address to the electors still more disgustingly absurd.

20th.—A meeting of the trustees of the racing fund at Lichfield. Grove, Mott, and self. It was for the purpose of removing Mr. Henry Cato from the situation of clerk of the course. Nothing was settled. A Conservative club proposed to be established called the Staffordshire Conservative Club. I spoke to Watts Russell and Kinnersley to set it agoing at the assizes.

26th.—Eleanor and I went to Thorpe for two nights. Lord Talbot,¹ Sir George Pigot and his son Henry staying in the house; besides a party each day at dinner. Inge, Lord Talbot, and Pigot went to Bretby on the 27th to see Lord Chesterfield's² racing stud, consisting of nineteen brood mares, three first-rate stallions, besides twenty brood mares taken in from strangers to be put to the stallions. The arrangements most princely, and the expense unbounded. Sir George Pigot mentioned an instance of his lordship's extravagance that at a grand dinner he gave a short time ago there were eighteen servants waiting at table. It is reported that Arkwright has a mortgage on his lordship's estates for three hundred thousand pounds. I went from Thorpe to a justice meeting at Wichnor

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

² George Augustus Frederick Stanhope, sixth Earl of Chesterfield, born 1805; succeeded 1815.

AT. 73 Bridges, and called previously upon Levett, whom I had not seen since the loss of his poor good wife. He looked ill, but was more cheerful than I expected. Our meeting was for the appointment of overseers. Hall, Taylor, Pye, and self. Pye an acquisition as a magistrate.

3^{1st}.—To Tamworth to a turnpike meeting respecting the final settlement regarding the alteration and improvement of the road at Mallet's corner; an alteration long wanted, and now to be accomplished by my individual exertion.

April We rode next day [April 2] to Bretby to see Lord Chesterfield's fine stud. I was much surprised to observe the extraordinary increase of population in the parish of Church Gresley, which we passed in our ride to Bretby. The whole of that parish in early days belonged to the Drakelow family. I thought the present representative (my friend Sir Roger) had recently sold the last remaining acre, but I found from Nigel that he had reserved the manorial and mineral rights, and that all the piles of ovens and other buildings on the waste for the purpose of the earthenware manufactory, together with the coalpits, belonged to the baronet. He needs all, and I was glad to hear [of] so flourishing a concern. The day was beautiful, and as warm as June. We were overtaken by a thunder-shower (notwithstanding) before we reached Seal.

We returned to Freeford on the 3rd.

5th.—Sunday. Account arrived of the defeat of the ministry on the motion of opposition for appropriating the surplus of the Irish Church Revenue at the disposal of the state.¹ This business was brought forward by a junction

¹ Lord John Russell carried his motion, which involved the appropriation of the surplus revenues of the Church of Ireland to general moral and religious purposes.

of the Whigs, the Irish Catholicks, and the radicals entirely with a view of turning out the administration. Such a factious coalition of discordant parties never was yet meditated or put in practice. It may be that the opposition by this unstatesmanlike occurrence may defeat their machinations by fixing the ministry firmer in place when the country is made aware of the infamy of the proceeding. Sir Robert Peel has exhibited the most wonderful pleading and most profound skill as Prime Minister of the country, and raised himself, if possible, higher in the estimation of all good Englishmen by his matchless ability on the great trial. 1835

6th.—Petty sessions at Whittington. I went for a short time, but was engaged to attend at Lichfield a meeting got up for the purpose of an address to the King and another to Sir Robert Peel on the present alarming state of the county councils. The meeting was highly respectable, and the address carried *nem. con.* I received an application to beg of me to attend a meeting at Tamworth for the like purpose on the following day, but having been named as one of the committee of three to meet for the purpose of adjusting the necessary arrangements respecting the Lichfield addresses, I was obliged to decline being at Tamworth.

I went with Inge to Stafford on the 8th, the first day of the sessions, but did not take any part in the proceedings of the court. Sir Oswald Mosley¹ gave notice of his intention to resign the situation of chairman at the next session on account of health. He looked like a ghost. Inge and I proceeded to Ingestre to dinner and to sleep

¹ See vol. i. p. 297.

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by previous invitation. The party; Lord Dartmouth,¹ Sneyd, Kinnersley, Watts Russell, his son, Inge, Mr. Gustavus, Talbot, and myself. Our meeting at Ingestre was in part to consult as to proceedings for the morrow relative to the new-formed Conservative county association.

On arriving at Stafford the next morning we were dismayed on learning the report of Sir Robert Peel's having resigned the premiership.² We went into court, and found a large bench of magistrates assembled. There were but few appeals, and a slight calendar of prisoners. The Conservative meeting was fixed for one o'clock at the George Inn. A most respectable assembly was collected. Lords Talbot and Dartmouth, Honourables Curzon³ and Howard, etc. etc. etc. I was requested to move that Ralph Sneyd should take the chair. Applause. The first business was to move an address to Sir Robert Peel expressing our unfeigned regret at the loss the country must sustain if deprived of his transcendent abilities, etc. etc. Agreed to unanimously. As it was considered most advisable, if possible, that the address should be forwarded by post that day, Sneyd proposed to relinquish the chair for a short time in order to write a few lines to Sir Robert and to despatch the address, and that I should take the chair during his absence, which I did, and took the opportunity to say that as the business of the original meeting had been relinquished to make way for an urgent proceeding, I should take that opportunity of proposing that Ralph Sneyd, Esq., might be elected perpetual president of the intended Conservative Association. Carried unanimously.

¹ See p. 98.

² Sir Robert Peel resigned on April 8.

³ Hon. Robert Curzon, M.P., son of the first Viscount Curzon.

On Sneyd's return he proposed an address to the King, 1835 which was received with powerful plaudits. We then proceeded with the original business of the day by confirming Sneyd permanent president, with Watts Russell and Giffard¹ as vice-presidents. A general committee was elected of twenty-four gentlemen, and a subscription (annual) of from 5s. and not exceeding £2 from the members. Four hundred names appeared to have joined the association. District committees were to be formed for the purpose of attending to the registering of votes and other electioneering purposes. I returned home, and went to dine at the Dean's. A dullish party.

9th.—A confirmation of the loss of Sir Robert Peel's splendid talents. A majority of the House of Commons on Lord John Russell's motion respecting the appropriation of the surplus revenues of the Irish Church determined the ministry to resign. How successors are to be formed time only can tell.

14th.—Turnpike meeting at Lichfield for the purpose of making some further arrangements for carrying on the new line of road from Saint Michael's Church, Lichfield, to Streethay, an alteration I strongly objected to, but having been outvoted, I felt anxious to have the work carried on without imposing on the publick, which urged me to introduce better means for lessening the expenditure. I met Hall of Hollybush, a brother justice. He related a very extraordinary and awful circumstance that had occurred a few days previously. A woman had been before him to lodge an information against a man for having by violence violated her person. On his being apprehended and brought

¹ See p. 258.

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forward there appeared some circumstance that induced Hall to commit him for further examination in the care of the constable for two days. The constable very improperly took the prisoner's word for his appearance at the stated time. The man went home to his father's house, and on being asked some questions relative to the case, he in reply to the charge made use of the most solemn asseveration, exclaiming, 'I wish my hand to drop off if I know anything about it.' In the course of the day he took a gun to frighten the crows from a cornfield, and on firing, it burst and shattered his hand in a dreadful manner. A warning instance of the mighty power of Divine Providence.

23rd.—Rode to Shenstone to call upon Vice-Admiral Sir William Parker,¹ who had arrived at home for a few days to make further arrangements for fixing himself again at the Admiralty in consequence of the change of the administration; all the *worthless* old Whigs having again scrambled into their former berths. Parker was luck personified; never having quitted his lordly mansion at the Admiralty notwithstanding his supersessor, Sir George Cockburn,² who was to follow Parker, was in command in the West Indies, and did not assume his seat at the board previous to the formation of the new Melbourne Administration. Parker had the favour not to be dislodged.

May May 3.—In consequence of a letter from Ralph Sneyd containing the information that Littleton³ was immediately

¹ See p. 43.

² Sir George Cockburn (1772-1853); admiral; put on the ships' books 1781.

³ See vol. i. p. 358.

to be made a peer, I started after my return from Divine Service to Drayton to consult Sir Robert Peel, who I knew was in the country for a short time at his steward's house. I found the Baronet at home; after stating my excuse he said he had also received a letter that morning to the like effect, but that he could scarce credit the report, as Littleton a few days previous had told William Peel there would be no vacancy for the county at present. Sir Robert said he would write to London by the day's post, and should have an answer on Tuesday. I told him I would see him again on Tuesday. Sir Robert appeared to express much anxiety to procure a Conservative candidate to succeed Littleton. I mentioned his brother William. He said his health was so precarious he could not undertake it, but added, 'My brother Edmund is stout.' I considered the remark as a sort of hint to encourage the idea in favour of Edmund Peel. I wrote to Sneyd on my return home with an account of what had passed.

4th.—Petty sessions at Elford. Inge, Pye, and Taylor; a tedious day. Long examination in a sheep-stealing case. I related to Inge what had passed at Drayton the previous day, and asked him to meet me there the following morning.

5th.—Edmund Peel joined us. Sir Robert had letters repeating the former. He still would not credit the possibility of Littleton's duplicity, and advised our making all possible exertion to find out a candidate. I asked Edmund Peel if he would come forward. He gave me no satisfactory reply, but was prepared to give every assistance to a Conservative candidate.

On the 6th I received a letter from Sir Robert enclosing

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one from Lord Granville Somerset¹ to say that Littleton was immediately to be made a peer, and that George Anson² was to start for the county. Sneyd in his letter had mentioned the like report.

On the 8th Sir Robert called at Freeford. I was from home. He left a card, and wrote upon it, 'Littleton is to be in the *Gazette* to-night.' I determined to communicate with the Wolverhampton committee to state my opinion that no one could be more proper to become a candidate than Edmund Peel. He having publickly avowed his strong support of the landed interest, and from his connexions must be well acquainted with commercial affairs. Add to which the circumstance of Sir Robert Peel's having indirectly named him to me; this I did not make known. Edward Simpson volunteered to go over express to Wolverhampton on the 9th, but on his arrival found that the committee had prevailed on Sir Francis Goodriche³ to come forward; member for Stafford; a popular man; steady conservative.

11th.—My old friend Lord Combermere and his two daughters came for a couple of nights on their way to London. I invited Lord Talbot to meet Lord Combermere, but he was prevented by an accidental fall out of his open carriage.

12th.—Next day we went to look at Beaudesert. Lord Combermere had not seen it. He was highly delighted. I had not been there for an age; many a pleasant day I had

¹ Lord Granville Charles Henry Somerset (1792-1848), son of the sixth Duke of Beaufort.

² Brother of the first Earl of Lichfield.

³ Sir Francis Goodriche of Studley Castle, co. Warwick; born 1797; created a baronet 1835.

passed there. What a melancholy reflection for the possessor of that noble place with a princely fortune to be in a situation from extravagance unable to reside at his Baronial Palace, but compelled to wander on the continent. 1835

23rd.—The nomination at Lichfield for a representative for the south division in the room of Littleton (now Lord Hatherton). Having no vote I did not attend. I rode up to Pipe Green to meet Goodriche and his cavalcade appointed to assemble there, and which was most numerous, a vast string of carriages extending more than a quarter of a mile. I shook hands with the Baronet, wished him success, and returned home. Goodriche was proposed by Mr. Edmund Peel, seconded by Giffard of Chillington.¹ Colonel Anson² was proposed by Mr. Hodgetts Foley, and seconded in a democratick speech by the radical Tom Lister.³

On the 25th at half-past six left Freeford to start with my dear Eleanor for the great metropolis. Took my own horses to Coleshill, and without let or hindrance reached the Admiralty at half-past nine, where I left my dear companion according to invitation from our old neighbours and friends, the Admiral and Lady Parker, to take up her abode during our stay in town. I had previously written to secure a lodging, which was taken for me, No. 24 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, which, though very small, I found sufficiently accommodating. I ordered some tea, and whilst it was cooking, I went to Oxford Street to inquire after my excellent old friend poor Wright; not a favourable report.

26th.—The next morning I made an effort to attend

¹ See p. 258.

² See p. 200.

³ Son of the General's old friend Thomas Lister of Armitage.

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Lord FitzRoy Somerset's levée, but was too late on the list. I dined with the Parkers at the Admiralty. My worthy friend one of the Lords, most comfortably lodged with his family, and I have no doubt one of the most useful officers at the board.

I saw Lord FitzRoy Somerset the following day for the purpose of using all my endeavour in behalf of Dick. He however gave the same advice he had done last year, and that was to let him remain in the 53rd as the most probable and most satisfactory means of promotion. He repeated that if I purchased an unattached rank for him, it could only be done with the condition of purchasing for him immediate full pay at a great cost and at a great uncertainty as to the regiment, which might be in a quarter of the world to which great objection might be taken.

27th.—The King's levée; not crowded. I accompanied Inge, and presented his son Charles, ensign in the 53rd. His Majesty very gracious. Asked me how long he and I had been acquainted. The following day I accompanied Inge and his daughter to the drawing-room; very brilliant and much crowded. The election for the south division of our county took place on the 25th and 26th. Sir F. Goodriche returned by a majority of more than 200, to the dismay of the Ansons and of the ministry, who, it is firmly believed, were led by Littleton, *alias* Lord Hatherton, to make sure of Anson's being returned. Serious riots both at Wolverhampton and at Lichfield; at the former place the military were required, and obliged to fire, by which some mob were wounded. At the latter a most disgraceful mob committed disgusting acts by throwing rotten eggs at the new elected member. The proceedings

at Wolverhampton were brought before the House of Commons, and the chief magistrate at Bow Street, Sir J. Roe, sent to investigate the matter. Sir J. Wrottesley took a leading part in the House of Commons, and was principally instrumental in the Secretary of State agreeing to send a commission of inquiry to Wolverhampton. It did not appear that the magistrate could be blamed, or that the troops had at all overstepped the line of their duty. The manner of taking up the business by the interference of the House of Commons, appeared to me to be an abominable attempt to reflect on the magistrate (Mr. Clare), and an act of great injustice both to the civil and to the military service.

The new created peer, Lord Hatherton, has lost the respectable situation he once held in the county by his unsteadiness as a political character and by his proceedings towards his electioneering friends in his collusion with Colonel Anson on obtaining his peerage. The weather intensely hot during the whole time I was in London, and the dining at *eight o'clock*, drinking more wine than did me good (perhaps a glass or two of champagne which was abounding wherever I dined), almost knocked me up. A grand dinner at William Peel's, and a sumptuous feast at Sir Robert's. I was engaged to dinner with the exception of two days from the day we reached London until the day we took our departure on the 15th June. I paid a visit daily to my poor friend Colonel Wright. I fear I shall never see him again. Poor good man, notwithstanding his sufferings, he appeared the same mild, tranquil, kind, hearty being he had been through life.

Having received a pressing invitation from Mr. and Mrs.

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Augustus Clayton¹ to go to Woolley Hall for Ascot races, we left London on the 15th accordingly about one o'clock by way of Hounslow, Salt Hill, and through Maidenhead to the end of the Thicket. Twenty-nine miles to Mr. Clayton's. The party assembled Mr. and Mrs. Manley, Mr. and Mrs. John Clayton, Sir William Clayton, Mr. Richard Clayton, and Mr. Codrington,² a young man in Parliament and son of Sir Bethell Codrington.³ A neat pretty house, and very good style of living with the exception of unseasonable hours, dining at eight o'clock.

The following day in three carriages to Ascot Heath races. A sight I had once before partaken of when encamped on Bagshot Heath. A vast assemblage of people, with clouds of dust enamelled on faces by the extreme heat of the sun. His Majesty and suite paid the usual royal visit, but how different was the monarch's reception by his subjects when compared with the astounding cheers that welcomed his royal father, when I witnessed the good King George the Third's reception. There was not much racing by way of sport. We returned to an eight o'clock dinner, the distance about eight miles.

The gentlemen went again to the race the following day; I amused myself otherwise, but went on the 18th. The same royal cortège with the exception of the King, who was to dine with the Duke of Wellington to commemorate the battle of Waterloo. A much greater crowd than on the former day. I, as I was, took to the race my

¹ Augustus Philip Clayton, fourth son of Sir William Clayton; in holy orders; of Woolley Hall, Berkshire; married 1828, Georgiana, daughter of Dr. Talbot, dean of Salisbury.

² Christopher Codrington, born 1805.

³ Christopher Bethell Codrington, died 1843.

pocket-book and my purse, and with those *valuables* (the latter containing £15) mixed in a mob to see the horses come in, and was *eased* of my money by a knowing one, I suppose from the metropolis. I felt the knave at work, but was stupefied with the consideration that he could not find the way to the deposit in my small clothes. 1835

June 22.—We left Hall Place to return home. We had received a pressing invitation to pay a visit to Admiral Manley at Braziers in our way; but I made an excuse, having already been so long absent, and no one left at home to control but a stranger. We reached Freeford soon after nine by way of Oxford and Birmingham, halting for half an hour at Stratford. Our journey very warm and very dusty; found all well.

July 1.—A meeting of the general committee of the July Conservative association at Stafford. Ralph Sneyd the chairman and about twenty members attended. Not much business; it was considered not advisable to have a dinner meeting, which had been proposed to take place some time this month, but to use the utmost vigilance as to the registry and look after the objectionable voters who may register. It was the first day of the sessions and a new chairman to be elected. I went to the meeting of magistrates at the judges' house for the purpose. No chairman was permanently elected. Frank Twemlow was nominated for the day. It was expected that Mr. Buller,¹ the member, would have been proposed, in which case I was desired to move that the senior magistrate present should take the chair, on the ground that although the late chairman was a member of Parliament, it was thought improper for the two situations

¹ Probably Charles Buller, Esq., secretary to Lord Durham in 1839.

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to be united in the same individual. I did not go into Court to hear the finance committee and the Uttoxeter committee dispute on the county expenditure. I returned home in the evening.

6th.—Miss Bakewell arrived. I sent horses to meet her at Burton; a dreadful torment she is, and worse than the plague.

17th.—Parliament still sitting, occupied by the Whig Ministry with a bill to pull to pieces old establishments by remodelling the municipalities by an introduction, of additional democrattick spirit into the constitution, of which it is greatly overburthened at present. Add to which their Irish Tithe Bill to pull down the established church and substitute the Roman Catholick religion. I do hope the Conservatives begin to feel the powerful necessity of exertion to frustrate the efforts of the *radical rogues* in, and out of, Parliament.

20th.—Mr. M'Neil, the gentleman who is agent for our Irish property in the county of Antrim, called on his way to Liverpool to pass a day here. He is a well-informed pleasant man, possessing sound good judgment. He gave a pitiable account of the state of Ireland on the score of religious dissensions, particularly by the effect on a most useful and valuable class of the community, by inducing the emigration of great numbers of respectable, though not wealthy, Protestants to abandon their country to preserve their religion.

31st.—We dined at King's Bromley; invited to meet Lord Bagot¹ and Mr. and Mrs. Planta.² I was not

¹ See vol. i. p. 333.

² Joseph Planta (1787-1847); diplomatist; secretary to both Canning and Castlereagh.

previously acquainted with the latter ; though I remember 1835
 his aunt Miss Planta at Windsor, a lady-in-waiting on the
 good old Queen Charlotte. He, a very agreeable man ; a
 publick character both foreign and domestick. He had
 been private secretary to the late Lord Londonderry.¹ The
 Houses of Parliament continue their sittings, principally
 engaged with the Irish Church Bill and the Municipal
 Corporation Bill ; the former to support the Papists and to
 conciliate O'Connell ; the latter to give countenance and
 support to democracy, that must ultimately subvert the
 Constitution. I am much disappointed this week in not
 hearing from my dear Dick.

August 3.—A petty sessions at Whittington. Mr. Pye, ^{August}
 Mr. Taylor, and self. Not much business ; indeed, it is
 proper to remark that the call on Justices in this neighbour-
 hood appears much on the decrease. The alteration in the
 Poor Laws has lessened parish business both as regards
 settlement cases and cases of bastardy.² Crime, it may be
 hoped, is likewise on the decrease. As the game season
 approaches, we may expect some employment from that
 source.

On the 6th we dined at William Hartopp's to meet Lord
 and Lady Bloomfield.³ His lordship had been for five-and-
 twenty years private secretary and keeper of the privy purse
 to King George the Fourth, and was dismissed with a
 certain degree of mystery that people did not discover.
 The King, when Prince of Wales, first noticed him at

¹ See vol. i. p. 263.

² The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

³ Benjamin Bloomfield (1768-1846) ; first Baron Bloomfield ; lieutenant-general ; married 1797 Harriet, daughter of Thomas Douglas, Esq. of Grantham ; he was minister plenipotentiary at Stockholm 1824.

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Brighton, a lieutenant of artillery quartered there. He was a very good musician, which caused his introduction, and from that circumstance he became for many years the singularly attached favourite. Reports stated that he became so regardless of his situation, and practised such unguarded familiarity, royalty could no longer submit. I heard the Marquis Anglesey mentioned that Bloomfield's fancied consequence induced him to open a letter addressed to the Prince from Mr. Pitt when Prime Minister. His retirement was attended by a peerage and being appointed Ambassador to the Court of Sweden; after accumulating great wealth; *how*, was a question. Lord Bloomfield, it was said, possessed secrets concerning the King, which required privacy and for which he was largely paid not to divulge. When I first knew Bloomfield he was a sub. in the artillery quartered at Plymouth in the year 1793 with nothing attaching to him but '*Jolly Ben Bloomfield.*' When we met at Hartopp's he appeared glad to renew an old acquaintance. I did not feel any particular charm. Ben having acted the *Great Man* when he was in full *council* at Carlton, scarcely acknowledging his brother sub. of Plymouth.

13th.—We dined at Hints; met Mr. William and Lady Jane Peel,¹ and Mr. and Mrs. St. George, the latter a sister of Mr. Shaw's. Mr. St. George an agreeable sensible man, residing in the county of Galway; a conservative, using his best endeavours to save Ireland from the plague, pestilence, and famine of the O'Connell rule; but which he fears will predominate, and be the destruction of *Ould* Ireland.

¹ See p. 10.

14th.—Walked to Whittington to my usual attendance on Divine Service. Rode afterwards to call upon Sir Robert Peel, who had been a week in the country, having abandoned the Rads. and Rabble in St. Stephen's to legislate for the *people* as they pleased. The Right Honourable was gone out. I called upon William Peel, and chatted with him for ten minutes. 1835

23rd.—A warm dusty walk to Holy Church at Whittington, and a disagreeable ride afterwards to Beaudesert to call upon the noble Marquis on his return to the mansion of his ancestors. I found him uncommonly well in health; no person but his two youngest sons with him. He appeared pretty well tired of politicks, though I fought shy of entering or saying much on the subject. He mentioned that a gentleman had called in the morning of the name of Hamilton to ask him to subscribe for a piece of plate, as a testimonial to Lord Hatherton for his service to the county. He inquired if I knew anything about it. I told him I had heard of it, but it having originated with a person unknown to the county, I could not consider the undertaking as any great compliment, but that at all events I should not contribute, as I considered that Littleton had not used his late constituents in a manner they deserved. Lord Anglesey said he told Mr. Hamilton that if he subscribed, he did it totally averted of political feelings, but in consideration that he thought Littleton had been a good working county member. Lord Anglesey mentioned to me, that when he left Ireland the last words he said to Littleton were, 'Beware of O'Connell, and under no pretence whatsoever venture to place the smallest degree of confidence in anything

ÆT. 74 he says.' How did the Secretary profit by his lordship's advice?

September 6th.—Attended Divine Service at Whittington; a hot dusty walk; and after I returned home I drove Dick's buggy to call at Beaudesert to thank the Marquis for half a buck and three brace of black game he had sent me for the races. Lord Uxbridge¹ and two of his younger brothers were at Beaudesert, one of them, Clarence,² in the Navy. The Marquis mentioned how anxious he was to get a ship for him, and how greatly he was disappointed by the first Lord of the Admiralty neglecting him. I told him I would write to my particular friend Sir William Parker on the subject, which I did accordingly, and obtained an answer by return of post. Parker kindly and good-humouredly expressed his wish to give every help, but stated that the first Lord took all these appointments to his own immediate appropriation, and as Lord Auckland³ was on the eve of quitting the Admiralty, he regretted (*pretended to regret*) he had not the means of appointing Lord Clarence to a ship.

7th.—Petty sessions at Elford. Pye and self. No very particular business. Bill came home for the races, which commenced the following day. Notwithstanding there were two stewards (men of renown), Lord Lichfield and Sir Robert Peel, the meeting had little of the look on the old Heath that former days produced. I never saw so few horsemen at any race at Lichfield on the first day. I dined at the Ordinary out of compliment to Sir Robert

¹ See p. 145.

² Clarence Edward, born June 1811; became a captain in the navy.

³ George Eden, first Earl of Auckland (1784-1849); first lord of the admiralty 1834.

Peel. It was more numerous than latterly, about forty. 1835
Lord Lichfield¹ did not attend. He was prevented by being obliged, as a minister (Postmaster-General), to remain in London.

16th.—I walked with Monckton to Brewood in remembrance of my father, and begged a holiday for the boys at school, where he probably had enjoyed a similar treat. The church at Brewood is particularly fine as to building, and most devotionally handsome and neat in the inside. Splendid monuments of the Giffard family.² At dinner Vernon Graham, his two sons and daughter; the former an extraordinary character, always wandering about the world. He is a colonel in the army, and has been occasionally employed on the staff. He has a look of his father, but none of his peculiar genius. Ned Monckton³ lives most comfortably. He has been improving the house, the offices in particular. The old Honourable, his father, left a good deal of dilapidation for his son to restore. When old Monckton purchased Somerford it was a small estate. He increased the property greatly, having purchased and laid together nearly 5000 acres of land.

23rd.—I went with Eleanor shopping to Birmingham. The trade of the place in a most prosperous state,¹ but a large mass of the people maddened with radical politicks and ripe for riot and confusion. I called upon Sir George Teesdale, commanding the 1st Dragoon Guards, in the barracks; a brother to my old friend and fellow staff officer, Harry Teesdale. He was not in quarters. We visited the exhibition of paintings at the Birmingham

¹ See p. 129.

² See p. 258.

³ See p. 192.

ÆT. 74 Institution. Some good pictures. Two bad ones of Sir Francis Lawley,¹ and his brother, Mr. B. Thompson.² It unfortunately was wet, which prevented our walking about. Our errands were therefore performed in a hackney coach.

October On the 1st October we dined at Manley. A small party. On the 1st I invited Mr. and Mrs. Pye of Clifton; Colonel Sir George Teesdale, commanding 1st Dragoon Guards at Birmingham; Mr. Shirley, a Warwickshire man, in the 7th Hussars at Derby, a nice young fellow; George Chetwynd (son of Sir George);³ General Monckton, and Mary Madan; a party to be present during the yeomanry displays. My house quite full. A grand parade on Whittington Heath, on account of the presentation of five new standards to the regiment, took place on the 2nd. A platform was erected in front of the winning chair to accommodate the ladies who were to deliver the standards. The Duchess of Sutherland,⁴ Countess Dartmouth,⁵ Countess Lichfield,⁶ Baroness Hather-ton,⁷ and Lady Peel.⁸ The regiment forming five sides of a hexagon drawn up in front, and the standards delivered by each fair lady in succession. The Duchess made a speech on delivering the King's standard. After which Lord Lichfield commanding the regiment addressed the regiment in an excellent speech, talking in some high

¹ See p. 189.

² Mr. Paul Beilby Lawley Thompson; assumed the surname Thompson in 1820; raised to the peerage as Baron Wenlock in 1839.

³ See p. 65.

⁴ See p. 169.

⁵ See p. 98.

⁶ Louisa Catherine, daughter of Nathaniel Philips, Esq.; married 1819 Thomas William Anson, created Earl of Lichfield 1831.

⁷ Hyacinth Mary, daughter of the Marquis Wellesley; married 1812 Edward Littleton, elevated to the peerage 1830.

⁸ Julia, youngest daughter of General Sir John Floyd, Bart.; married 1820 the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel.

eulogium of the circumstance as attending the distinguished personages from whose fair hands their standards had been received. There were present a vast concourse of people ; both high and low, peers and plebeians. In the evening the Earl of Lichfield gave a superb ball and supper to all the county in the Old Guild Hall, Lichfield. I scarce ever saw the old room so brilliantly filled ; peers, peeresses, colonels and captains of dragoons from the adjoining quarters, with esquires, doctors, deans, lawyers, and all the belles of the neighbourhood. Nothing could exceed the fête, and kept up to a late hour. The Freeford party did not get to their roosts until near five. Lack-a-day for the old General.

On the 4th Teesdale and the two soldiers took their departure, when my dear child and I set out on our walk to old Whittington church. In the afternoon my friend and agent, Collyer, arrived to accompany us the next morning on our annual visit to Combermere.

We took our departure accordingly on the 5th, *via* Stafford, Eccleshall, Drayton, etc. *Nota Bene* : The worst post horses in England at Eccleshall, notwithstanding the residence of the Lord Bishop of the diocese. We did not reach the old abbey until after six, and were received by our noble host with the usual hospitality. We found there Lady Mexborough¹ and her daughter, Lady Sarah Saville ;² Mr. Crewe,³ Lord Crewe's⁴ only son ; Mrs.

¹ Anne, eldest daughter of Philip, third Earl of Hardwicke, married John Savile, Earl of Mexborough, 1807.

² Lady Sarah Elizabeth, married in 1845 the Hon. James Lindsay, M.P.

³ Hungerford Crewe ; born 1812 ; succeeded his father as third lord, December 1835.

⁴ John, Lord Crewe, a general officer in the army ; died 1835.

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Mainwaring,¹ wife to a brother of Sir Henry² (serving in India in the clerical department), and Sir Sam Hawker. The Countess was pleased to recognise me as an old Dublin acquaintance. She is a daughter of Lord Hardwicke, who was Lord Lieutenant when I was on the Irish staff; an agreeable woman. Her daughter, a smart lively girl. Mr. Crewe, young, shy, and sappy. Mrs. Mainwaring, ladylike, but melancholy, having recently lost a son. Sam Hawker, good-humoured and agreeable as usual. We passed four days most pleasantly. Shooting Tuesday and Thursday in high perfection, and looking over the farm and his various improvements on the intermediate day. George Collyer in high glee, and keeping us as ever on the *roar*.

On the 12th my sisters Mary, Ann, and Lucy, the latter with her two daughters Lucy and Emily, came to Freeford. We had not assembled for some years, and when my brother Phill joined us, we made the five remaining of the originals, and perhaps few families better united, or having had the good fortune to live such an uninterrupted life of health. Our united ages amount to 365. Our elder sister the only one ailing, and she much better than she had been.

We made a family rubber in an evening; the three sisters and the old General. Most glorious fine autumnal season. The farmers gravely grumbling at the depressed prices of agriculture, and with good reason. Wheat being at this time lower than it was one hundred years ago.

¹ Elizabeth, daughter of James Fenton, Esq. of Doncaster; married 1820 Edward Mainwaring, who was in holy orders.

² Sir Henry Mainwaring of Over Peover, co. Chester; born 1782; married the sister of Lord Combermere.

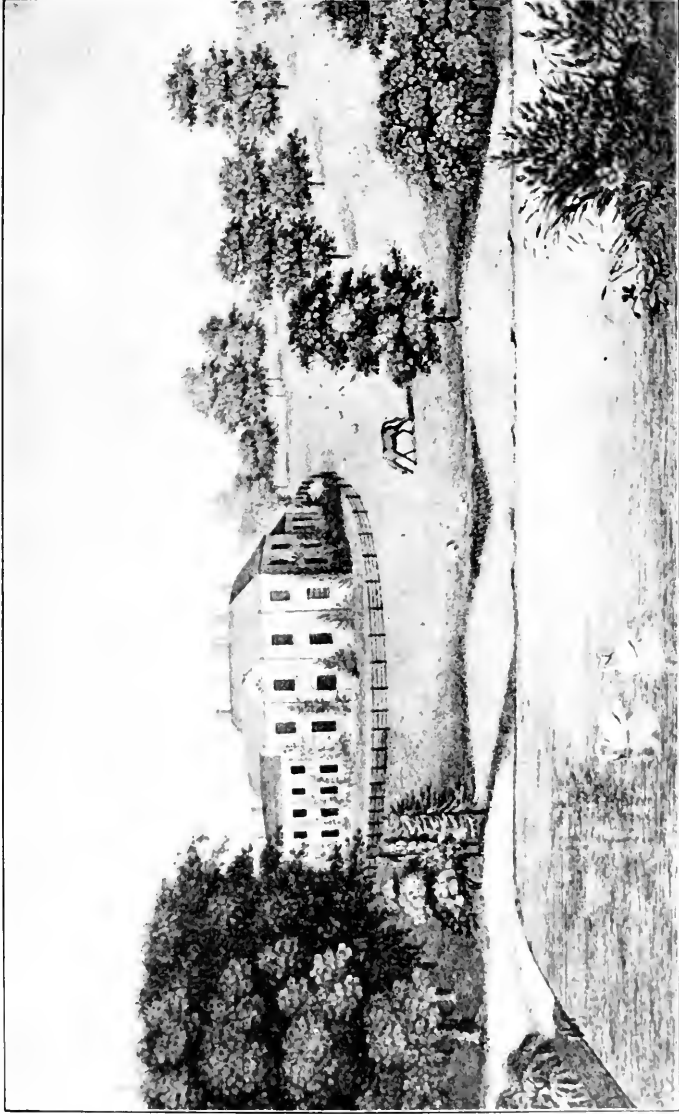
Barley about 4s. 6d.; oats, new, 3s. Butcher's meat, 1835
beef 5½d. to 6d.; mutton the like.

On the 19th a Mr. Smith, an official of Lord Anglesey's, called respecting the settlement of his lordship's claim respecting the chief rent for Fulfin, and for the cottages at Whittington. The former I resisted in consequence of having repeatedly made an application for a hearing as to the particulars of my objection, under an impression that the agents to the Lord had blended Freeford and Fulfin together, and that as I imagined the former to be exonerated in consequence of land near Beaudesert having been transferred by my ancestor for that purpose, I required from the Court of Longdon the particulars of the amount charged upon Fulfin before the estate was purchased by Sir Richard Dyott. The rent put upon the cottages some years ago amounted to £2, 10s. per annum. This I resisted as enormous, and made an offer to pay the same as other cottages similarly situated, or even more. I fixed with Mr. Smith to be at Beaudesert on the following Monday (the 19th), he stating that he would let me know previously if that day would be convenient to Lord Anglesey. He, notwithstanding, omitted to write to me, and I of course did not attend; it was unfortunate, as Lord Anglesey was at home expecting me. Smith sent a messenger over next morning expressing the disappointment of my not attending, and adding that Lord Anglesey would be ready to receive me the following morning at ten.

I made my appearance accordingly, but to my surprise his lordship had started to London at seven. I was horridly annoyed. Mr. Smith made his appearance, but I turned

ÆT. 74 my back, and turned my horse homeward without speaking to him, and immediately wrote to Lord Anglesey to London to state all particulars, and throw off my shoulders any blame that he might attach to me for apparent neglect. I received next post a most kind reply from the noble Lord, and requesting that I would see his agents, to whom he had left the final arrangement of the whole concern.

November *November* 9.—Went to Rugeley to meet Mr. Saunderson and Mr. Landor for the purpose of settling the dispute relative to Lord Anglesey's claim of chief rent for Freeford and Fulfin, and for the two cottages in Whittington. I was desirous to obtain an extract from the court-roll of Longdon, particulars of each separate demand, and in particular the amount paid for Fulfin previous to its coming into the possession of my family in 1689. This would have alone decided the amount chargeable on Freeford, but I could obtain no information prior to the 20th of Charles the Second, since which period the sum of £2, 19s. 7d. has been paid for both places without stating the proportion for each. I was unable to cope with the professional men, and therefore paid up the arrears due, but I shall make further investigation. I refused to pay the rent demanded for the two cottages at Whittington. The ground on which they are erected was transferred by Lord J. Chichester to my brother, on which the cottages were built by him, paying an amercement of 3s. a year. Some years subsequently a chief rent was imposed by Lord Anglesey's agent of £2, 16s. per annum, which I resisted. However, like the former case, I was overwhelmed by the lawyers, and compromised to pay 30s.



FREEFORD HALL, STAFFORDSHIRE.

1794.

From an old print.



per annum. Their manorial rights want *reform*, and much as I abhor the term, now it affects *self*, I feel my stupid *obstinacy*. 1835

17th.—I rode with Eleanor to Canwell to call upon Lady Wenlock.¹ She is aged greatly. Her ladyship has given up the cares of the world; seeing no company and living alone, with the exception of a single female companion. What a change from one of the belles of her day in the enjoyment of splendour and first-rate society. The fine place looked as gloomy as the hostess who occupies it.

26th.—A turnpike meeting at Tamworth; I attended to ascertain whether I was liable to pay at the new toll gate at the bridge, on the idea that, as I could have access to the road from my own grounds on each side the gate, I had only to erect a gate for the purpose. The commissioners properly enough signified that the matter did not rest with them, but with the master of the toll. I also made a complaint of the canal bridge being too steep; and order was made for the clerk to make a representation to the clerk of the proprietors. Sir Robert Peel attended the meeting, and took his share in the business of the day.

December 3.—Dined at Sir Robert Peel's; the first in December his new house, which certainly is a splendid mansion; perhaps not a more magnificent room in the kingdom than the library. I cannot admire the *tout ensemble*; the two lengthened galleries on entrance are not in harmony with a country gentleman's country residence. The party was numerous, twenty at dinner. The persons staying in the

¹ Maria, daughter of the late Joseph Denison, Esq.; married Sir Robert Lawley, who was raised to the peerage as Baron Wenlock in 1831; he died in 1832.

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house: Lord FitzGerald,¹ Sir Henry Hardinge,² Sir — Chantrey,³ Mr. Lawrence Peel,⁴ and Lady Jane (a granddaughter of my old respected friends Lord George and Lady Louisa Lennox⁵). The remainder of the company from the neighbourhood. I had a conversation with Sir Robert on the subject of the present state of the agricultural interest, and was proud to find my poor opinion to agree with the Right Honourable Baronet's, 'that the formation of the agricultural associations can lead to no good; on the contrary their sayings and doings only tend to disquiet the minds of the farmers, under the idea that they are injured, and especially from the neglect of the Government to remedy their sufferings.' I mentioned to Sir Robert that from my own little experience as a farmer, I was convinced that the discontent amongst the farmers in this neighbourhood was without just cause, for that they were not suffering to the extent imagined, except from neglect or where there was not capital equal to the farming pursuit.

9th.—Eleanor and I went for two nights to Wichnor. Sad and gloomy all the household; only Mary Levett at home. John Levett and his wife and three nice boys staying with the Esquire, as also his sister and Miss Wilmot. Old Levett discontented, and just now particularly so, in consequence of a projected railway road intended to cut through the meadows at Wichnor. A line from Derby to Sheffield. It is not generally expected to be executed. Sir Robert Peel supports the project from the probability of its

¹ William Vesey, Baron Fitzgerald and Vesey (1783-1843); created an English peer by Peel 1835.

² See p. 115.

³ Sir F. L. Chantrey (1781-1842); sculptor; knighted 1835.

⁴ Lawrence Peel married 1822 Jane, daughter of the fourth Duke of Richmond.

⁵ See vol. i. p. 79.

benefiting Tamworth. A Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne,¹ residing at Walton, dined at Wichnor. He is son to the Rev. Gisborne the Prebend. Rather an agreeable man. He had made money in the East Indies. 1835

20th.—Extremely cold with sleet and snow. I walked to church. My dear Eleanor was prevented attending by the weather. We had a charity sermon delivered by Mr. Keeney in behalf of the society for instructing the negroes in our West India Colonies. I could not hear one word of the discourse. I am not over friendly to the system now so prevailing for general education, and having been in the West Indies, I am very doubtful of its efficacy with the class of mortals intended to instruct. I think they will not thank their instructors.

22nd.—I rode to Beaudesert. The Marquis had been unwell from rather a severe attack of his old complaint. I wanted some talk respecting the chief rent and the rent of the cottages. He professed to know little about the matter, in consequence of my stating that I was no match for his agent and law-adviser. He called up Mr. Saunderson, and the result was to let me see either the original deed of conveyance of the piece of land adjoining his park that belonged to my ancestor, or a copy and extract. He also consented that I should pay rent for the cottages as others did; I agreed to pay five shillings a year for each beyond any other similarly situated. With this arrangement I was satisfied, for the *present*.

Very sharp frost continued until the 27th. On Xmas Day we attended divine service, and received the Holy

¹ Thomas Gisborne (1794-1852); politician; M.P. for Stafford 1830-1, North Derbyshire 1832-7, Carlow 1839-41, Nottingham 1843-52.

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Sacrament after a good discourse from the Rev. T. Levett. My sister Mary returned in the carriage with Miss Bakewell and Eleanor to pass the Xmas. Lord Anglesey wanted me to pay him a visit during the week, but as he mentioned the large party he had in the house, I made my excuse by telling him that my unfortunate deafness precluded any enjoyment of large parties. He said if I could *hear*, I should be delighted with a man staying in the house, Lord Alvanley,¹ one of the most entertaining men of the day. It did not tempt me.

31st.—A meeting at the George Inn, Lichfield, called for the purpose of affording relief to the unfortunate clergy of Ireland. The Dean of Lichfield was in the chair; the assembly not very numerous, but the collection most liberal. I was requested to second the first resolution moved by Archdeacon Hodson, that a subscription be entered into. The Rev. Gentleman made a long and good speech representing the deplorable condition to which the Protestant clergy were reduced, calling upon the company for their benevolence to assuage their distress. In seconding the resolution I merely stated my having, in early life from my professional duty, passed many years in Ireland, I had opportunities of witnessing the kind feeling and exemplary conduct of the now unfortunate class of the community the meeting was called upon to assist; that I then little expected I should be engaged in contributing to their necessities, but which I should now gladly do to the best of my ability. I should have enlarged, but that I felt politicks had better be avoided. I might have stated that I considered the unfortunate gentlemen in question had been robbed and deprived

¹ William Arden, second Baron Alvanley of Alvanley, co. Chester.

of their lawful property without any effort from the power 1835
 whose duty it was to have afforded protection, and that they
 had positively been excluded from the benefit (as a class of
 the community) from the support to which any individual
 had a right to appeal who was encountered by a highway-
 man and his purse forcibly taken from him. The collection
 amounted to between five and six hundred pounds.

On the 1st of the month the Lichfield Radicals usurped 1836
 the municipal power in the city, having succeeded in the January
 choice of the new council according to the provisions of the
 Municipal Act.¹ They proceeded this day to nominate
 the Mayor in the person of Dr. Rowley. These worthies
 also nominated the new aldermen from the scum of
 democracy and radicalism. Poor Lichfield, respectability
 has flown from thy people, distrust and hatred must dwell
 in thy community.

6th.—To Stafford. The sessions and committee meeting
 of the conservative association, which was the errand I
 went for; a thin attendance. I had a private conversation
 with Lord Sandon,² and asked him if a requisition was made
 to him, whether he would become a candidate for the North
 Division. He told me he could not possibly desert his kind
 and friendly constituents at Liverpool. He asked my
 opinion as to a communication being made to Sir O. Mosley³
 (in consequence of the Baronet's having almost generally
 during the last sessions voted with Sir Robert Peel's friends),
 to know what his political opinions now were, and if he
 intended to act in the succeeding sessions as in the last. I
 gave him my private opinion that Sir Oswald's late votes

¹ The Municipal Reform Act was finally passed in September 1835.

² See p. 151.

³ See vol. i. p. 297.

ÆT. 74 had not increased his popularity with the Conservatives. His lordship brought the subject before the committee on our assembling ; it was agreed that a communication might be had with Sir Oswald, and that the most courteous means would be through some political friend of his ; but as such person was not then to be met with, the meeting was adjourned until the 13th. Having resigned my situation as chairman of the gaol committee, I did not attend any of the business of the quarter sessions, and returned home ; a very dark evening and in the *buggy*, which I shall not repeat.

7th.—Eleanor and I went to Wrottesley for two nights ; found a large party, seventeen at dinner ; a majority of Wrottesleys. Amongst the company was the young Lord Ward,¹ who on account of the recent death of his father will succeed to the very large estates of the late Lord Dudley. He appears a fine good-tempered youngster of nineteen, and very good-looking. There was a younger son of Lord Talbot's (William),² a very comic blade with abundance of fun. One of the company, a Captain Glegg, claimed acquaintance with me, but I did not recollect him until he explained. He had been quartered at the Island of Jersey in the 49th regiment, a youngster in '98, when I was there with the 25th. He had lately married Miss Coates, who was at Wrottesley.

8th.—Sir John mentioned to me an extraordinary combination of his tenants with a view to having their rents lowered by having presented a document signed by them all, to the purport that from the depression in the price of

¹ Lord Ward ; born 1817 ; succeeded his father as eleventh lord 1835.

² William Whitworth, sixth son of the second Earl Talbot ; born 1814.

agricultural produce they could not continue on their farms. This was intended as a sort of bullying threat, but which the Baronet treated with the greatest indignity by sending for them, and in the presence of the whole returning the document, telling them he should not be compelled to lower their rent, and that they might have quit their farms if they thought proper. This comes of the agricultural associations, and of the cry that the landed interest is ruined, which has caused so much excitement amongst the farmers, that they are prepared to use any means to obtain their end, that of '*reduction of rent.*' Sir John is determined to make a stand against such combination, and may probably conduce to prevent the like in other tenantry.

On the 12th Inge came to dinner and sleep for the purpose of our going the next morning to Stafford to attend a Conservative meeting. We started accordingly at nine for the meeting at half-past eleven, which was but thinly attended. Lord Sandon in the chair. Arthur Talbot, Kinnersley and son, Child, Salt, Oldham, etc. etc. The chief business was the late registration, and the state of the Association Fund, on neither of which subjects were we able to obtain much information on the account of the absence of the Secretary Smith from illness. A resolution was proposed that each division should in future act by itself, and have a separate secretary. The idea of having a communication with Sir Oswald as to his future politicks was abandoned. Our meeting did not appear to progress towards any favourable prospect of finding a candidate for the North to oppose our Whig member. Inge and I returned to Freeford to prepare to dine with Sir Robert Peel to meet one of the commissioners under the new

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amended Poor Law Act,¹ a Mr. Earle, a barrister. There was a large party at dinner ; the Corporation of Tamworth, etc. The entire conversation after dinner consisted of question and answer between individuals and said commissioner as to the subject of proceedings under the new act. It is an experiment that may be beneficial to check pauperism, and to lessen the expenses to parishes, but I have my doubts if the effect will remunerate the cost and confusion it may create.

23rd.—Nat Pass (keeper), with two of the men, were out at night on the look-out for poachers, and fell in with three; two of them made their escape; they seized one, and made prize of twenty hare-nets and a brace of hares; they were a Lichfield gang. The man secured was taken before *Mister Mayor*, the new municipality, and sentenced to three months imprisonment; the trespass having taken place in Lawrence's farm within the boundary of the city.

27th.—His Grace the Duke of Wellington arrived at Sir Robert Peel's on the 19th, and on the 22nd was out with the foxhounds in scarlet and leather brigs. On his arrival in the field, he was received with three hearty cheers by a very numerous company, and afterwards enjoyed the chase, a first-rate sportsman. The following day the Duke, accompanied by Lord Jersey² and others staying at the Manor, went shooting. Seven guns and killed 280 head of game.

February *February 1.*—Petty sessions at Whittington; only Pye attended. Little business. A game case from Tamworth and a petty assault or two. I went afterwards with Eleanor

¹ The Poor Law Amendment Act had been passed in 1834.

² George Child Villiers, fifth Earl of Jersey (1773-1859).

to Dunstall to dine and sleep. A large party of Arkwright's 1836 neighbours to dinner.

Next morning took a look at Arkwright's feeding stock, consisting of eighty-one tied up, mostly heifers and barren cows, fat and fit for the butcher; all in prime order and doing credit to the feeder. Eleanor and I proceeded to Derby on a visit to my cousin Miss Bakewell, and to attend the Meynell Hunt Ball. We arrived about three, and found my wild cousin in one of her hateful fits of ill-humour and insanity. I never saw her more detestable. W. Herrick of Beaumanor and his neighbour Mr. Farnham came for the ball, and dined at Miss Bakewell's, if the mess provided could be called *dinner*. A more wretched meal I never saw. We went to the ball, which was numerous, but the company not particularly choice.

Parliament having assembled on the 4th, great anxiety was felt for the King's speech. It was a meagre production, as might be expected. An amendment was moved by Sir Robert Peel to that part of the speech which recommended proceedings similar to those passed for England and Scotland respecting municipal corporations [in Ireland]. Sir Robert objected to similar proceedings.¹ The amendment was negatived by a majority of forty-seven to the surprise and dismay of the Conservatives, who expected a more favourable result of their strength. It was said by the friends of the Conservative cause to have been owing to want of exertion in the attendance of Tory members.

6th.—A Staffordshire Agricultural Association is forming.

¹ The amendment to the address, unwillingly moved by Peel, condemned the anticipated reform of Irish corporations on the principles already adopted for England.

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I have been applied to to become one of the committee, to which I have consented. If it is formed with a view to raise expectations as to improving prices disappointment will follow.

8th.—Turnpike meeting respecting the new road to Streethay; the contractor for which having failed in the fulfilment of his contract, and the termination not having been noticed at the time, the trustees were compelled to make the best terms they could by granting a renewal for three months. A gentleman from the projected railroad company from Birmingham to Derby attended the meeting to know if the trustees assented or dissented to the railroad crossing the turnpike road. The trustees dissented, considering that it might injure the mortgagees, who had advanced money on the trust security.

9th.—The Dean, Mrs. Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Manley, the Rev. Francis Paget dined at Freeford; the latter a son of Sir Edward Paget, and who has succeeded to the living of Elford on the death of John Sneyd.

There was a meeting at Stafford on the 20th of the Staffordshire new agricultural association. I did not attend, though appointed one of the committee. I should have declined being a member at all, if I had been aware of the nature of the association, being averse to mingling up the currency question with their proceedings, and joining the central association in London. If the present state of the currency is an evil, it does not attach exclusively to the landed interest. All that the landed interest can expect on the part of Government is relief from the taxes that affect the land partially, and throwing such taxes on the community at large. The prevailing cry of the 'distressed state

of agriculture' makes the farmer (who would otherwise be contented) full of agitation and discontent, being *sure* of *certain ruin* according to the general persuasion of the publick newspapers.¹ The meeting at Stafford was the silliest poor concern that ever was proceeded; evinced by the stupidest of all stupid addresses to both Houses of Parliament. My friend Leigh of Aston chairman, who must be ashamed of the whole proceedings, particularly as it happened that all descriptions of agricultural produce are rising in price. 1836

25th.—A ball and grand doings at Mr. Mott's in consequence of his son coming of age. Eleanor attended; I excused. Cold uncomfortable weather with a good deal of snow in the course of a week. Old Randall, the labourer, prognosticated foul weather from an observation he had made respecting the rooks beginning to build their nests in the rookery. He says, 'If they begin to build and discontinue their labours by leaving the rookery, it is a sign of bad weather approaching.' He remarked that they had begun several days before he mentioned the subject to me, and said, 'You see, sir, there are no rooks to be seen, and what cold severe weather we have had for the last week; they'll come again when the weather gets more settled.' I altered the flower garden in front of the drawing-room window to please Miss Eleanor, by removing some of the beds and making a broad gravel walk and new entrance to the garden of flowers on the back of the house.

28th, Sunday.—Lengthened debates just now in the House of Commons on the subject of military flogging. I cannot

¹ A committee on agricultural distress was appointed this month, but after sitting for about four months, made no report.

ÆT. 74 know now of what stuff the army is composed, but when I was a regimental officer, if the like proceedings in Parliament had occurred at that time, there would certainly have been a death-blow to military discipline. I am positive if, at that time I allude to, flogging had not been allowed when the service was composed of the very outcast of society, the dregs of gaols and prisons, that the civil power had not the means to control, no regulations could preserve order amongst such a class of the community, unless supported by the severest discipline. Civilians are not competent to give an opinion on the subject. Let a man be placed for four or five years in the command of eight hundred or a thousand men in various situations, and hear his judgment. The discipline of the army is greatly relaxed compared with thirty years ago, and a total different rule of Government to what existed when I first entered *fifty-five years gone by*.

March *March* 1.—Turnpike meeting at Lichfield to settle the annual accounts. Also to take into consideration the situation of the trust as affected by the intended railroad from Birmingham to Derby, which, if effected, must in a great measure injure materially the revenue of the tolls to the prejudice of the mortgagees. A petition to both Houses of Parliament was agreed to and signed, praying protection for the mortgagees. The wasteful expenditure on the roads has long been an object that I have animadverted to in vain, and though almost too late, I prevailed on the meeting to appoint a finance committee to endeavour to reduce the expenditure and other abuses.

23rd.—Lichfield March races; a complete failure; a parcel of hacks, and a hurdle race, a new-fashioned sport much in vogue with the foxhunters; a wretched affair over

old Whittington. I did not go to the Heath, but went to dine and pass the day with my old friend and his afflicted family at Thorpe. I found them better than I expected, though poor Inge sadly worn by grief and sorrow. The Duchess of Marlborough¹ had been there some days, and we made up a rubber in the evening and afforded a little cheerful change. Never was a happy family so sorely visited with more melancholy sorrow than this unfortunate calamity had occasioned. I returned next morning and dined at Mr. Edmund Peel's. William Peel, Lady Jane, Manley, and Mrs. Manley made up the party. The two brothers are miserably afflicted with the gout, neither having a sound leg to stand upon. The riches of the family does not exempt some of them from disease and trouble; these two owe their sufferings in some degree to their partaking to excess of the luxuries of the table.

April 15.—Admiral Sir William Parker arrived to pass a April few days. We took him with us to dine at Hints, and the day following we took him to dine at Mrs. Case's. The Admiral came down from his calling at the Admiralty to look over his domestick country concerns at Shenstone Lodge; the latter residence I think he yearned after to return to. I imagine the Lords find him too useful to forego his helping hand.

20th.—We dined at Manley's to meet the party from Hints; the last dinner-party at the old mansion of Thickbroom Cottage; their next will be at Manley Hall, their newly christened new residence.

¹ Susan, daughter of the seventh Earl of Galloway, married 1791 George, fourth Duke of Marlborough. Her sister, Elizabeth, married William Phillips Inge, Esq. of Thorpe Constantine, co. Stafford.

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 May *May 9.*—My old friend, Lord Combermere, with his two daughters, their governess and Sir Sam Hawker, came to Freeford on their annual visit in their way to London; all in high force.

17th.—Eleanor and I dined at King's Bromley. We met there Lord Hillsborough¹ (a friend of Leveson Lane's), a quiet gentlemanlike man. He is the same who unfortunately caused the death of the young Lord Osborne² at Oxford a few years ago. I had not been at King's Bromley by day for three or four years; the improvements out of doors have grown to almost forget the original.

My old brother Justice Lane made great and good alterations, which have been carried on by the present possessor with good effect.

On the morning of the 25th, soon after one o'clock, my poor sister Mary breathed her last, after a calm and uninterrupted sleep of more than twenty-four hours without a groan or a sigh; what a blessing to be thus released from a troubled world.

30th.—My poor sister Mary's remains interred in the family cemetery in St. Mary, Lichfield, according to the ceremony used by our family on such mournful occasions, at night.

31st.—Mr. Inge and his son William called late in the day, and though I was not in tune for company I could not avoid asking them to stay dinner, which they accepted. Inge's troubles on account of the melancholy loss of his

¹ Arthur Wills, Lord Hillsborough, eldest son of the third Marquis of Downshire; married Caroline, eldest daughter of Viscount Combermere; and succeeded as Marquis 1845.

² Conyers George Thomas, Lord Osborne, second son of the sixth Duke of Leeds; born 1812; killed accidentally at Oxford while wrestling, 1831.

1836

daughter had been renewed in consequence of Mr. Moore having commenced criminal proceedings against the editor of the *Sentinel* newspaper for a libel, accusing Moore of being the cause of his wife's death. When the matter gets into court, it will compel the production of circumstances of a delicate and distressing nature.

On the 13th June I started with my dear Eleanor to June make my annual visit to the great metropolis; my horses took us to Coleshill, from thence post to town, which we reached in thirteen hours without let or hindrance. Lodged my dear companion with our good friends the Parkers at the Admiralty, and proceeded to my last year's lodgings, 24 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, where I found tea ready and a good bed to receive me before eleven. We had fine weather for our journey.

The following day making preparations to attend his Majesty's levée, and dined with my old friend General Hodgson, who had kindly pressed me to accept a billet at his house in Welbeck Street; my old quarter in Orchard Street being closed by the death of poor Colonel Wright. Sir William Parker and my lady having both entreated my consent to have Eleanor presented at the ensuing drawing-room, and believing that it would be a gratification to my dear child, I could offer no objection, and accordingly, however short the notice, as difficulties are all to be overcome in London, the drapery and trimmings were put in requisition and the robes accomplished for the exhibition.

15th.—I accompanied Hodgson to the levée, which was not crowded. His Majesty as usual very courteous, and inquisitive to know how many years I was older than him. I dined at Sir William Parker's, a large party, many

ÆT. 75 strangers to me. A first-rate style of dinner with iced champagne and all other delicacies to correspond. One great evil of these great dinners was feeding at eight o'clock.

Next day I again accompanied Hodgson to the drawing-room. We assembled at the Admiralty to join and assist in the chaperoning the young ones, as two of the Parker girls were of the party. Charlotte to be presented with Eleanor, whose dress was handsome, very becoming, and she looked (what she is) ladylike. We were late going; the court crowded; poor Eleanor had the misfortune of a wounded foot, which accompanied her from the country, from which she suffered much, notwithstanding a large shoe. His Majesty, when she was presented, was most gracious; asked her if her father was there, and then said, 'He is a very old acquaintance of mine.' The Queen did not speak, not knowing either daughter or father. My dear child appeared delighted with the exhibition, and I was gratified she had made her *début*.

The weather was warm, particularly in the entrance-rooms at St. James's. I dined after the drawing-room with Hodgson, and had a good rubber at whist in the evening.

20th.—Dined at Lord Colville's.¹ Oh, what a change has Lady Colville undergone since I first knew her fifty-two years ago; she shone then in all the pride and beauty of a lovely woman, at which time I was a half-pay lieutenant, and daring to be in love with her. Now, alas, the veriest little old withered female, creeping like a snail across the drawing-room.

¹ John Colville, Baron Colville of Culross; born 1768; married 1790 Elizabeth, daughter of Francis Ford, Esq.; admiral of the white; succeeded his father 1811.

21st.—Lord FitzRoy Somerset's¹ levée for the purpose of inquiry for promotion for my dear Dick; nothing cheering to learn. One lieutenant above him for purchase. I believe he might purchase him unattached rank, but how to get him back on full pay and to so respectable a regiment was the great difficulty: therefore all circumstances considered, I deemed it best to wait for a move in his present corps.

23rd.—Lord Hill's² levée. His lordship as usual very civil and friendly. I told him I had nothing to ask for myself, but I hoped to have his support for my son when promotion offered. He said there had lately been two steps in the 53rd. I told him yes, but I wanted one move more.

24th.—I dined at Sir Alexander Dickson's³ (father-in-law to Dick Burnaby). The knight a good-humoured jolly fellow, and gives iced champagne, etc. etc. etc.

26th.—I went again to Vere Street Chapel, and obtained a good *sitting* for *hearing* a good sermon; the day tremendous hot. I accompanied Lady Dickson to the Zoological Gardens to see the new curiosities lately added to the collection, the giraffes most surprising animals, but so shapen they can be of [no] use to employ, and whether eatable I did not inquire. Dined afterwards with Hodgson.

We got under weigh at eight the following morning, July 4th July, and proceeded by way of Oxford and Banbury and Coventry to my beloved residence at Freeford; in all my travels abroad and at home I have seen nothing like it. We reached home soon after eight after an exceedingly

¹ See p. 13.

² See p. 22.

³ Sir Alexander Dickson (1777-1840); major-general.

ÆT. 75 hot journey. Found all things in order with the exception of great want of rain. I never have had so woeful a crop of hay since I have been at Freeford.

August *August 4.*—Sir George Pigot and two Miss Cases, Mr. Shaw and two Floyers dined at Freeford. The Baronet was on a visit at Mrs. Case's, and had long promised to partake of Freeford cheer. He is a good-humoured county gentleman, and although an old full general, partakes more of the farmer than the soldier. He raised the 130th regiment towards the end of the war, but has not been employed since. He pays great attention to the widow, Mrs. Case, but how matters are carried on between them affords conversation for the neighbourhood. I received a letter from my friend Sir William Parker expressly for the purpose of transcribing a paragraph from one he had received from Admiral Sir Thomas Briggs at Malta; the purport of which gratified me more than any event lately experienced, as follows:—

'Extract of a letter from Sir Thomas Briggs to W. P., dated Malta, 9th July 1836.

'We are going to lose your young friend Dyott in a day or two. His regiment is ordered to Corfu. I do assure you we all regret parting with Dyott; he is a general favourite, and one of the finest young men I ever met. Lady Briggs joins me in good wishes, etc. etc.'

MY DEAR GENERAL,—I think the foregoing will be gratifying; it is therefore copied and forwarded with sincere pleasure by yours most faithfully,

W. PARKER.

ADMIRALTY, 2nd August.

What can excuse a parent's feelings on so welcome an

announcement? May his career continue through a long life with the like credit. Some months ago I wrote to St. Croix by the desire of my friend Lord Combermere¹ for some pineapple plants; the island being famed for the fruit. I have just heard of their arrival in London in six cases. I have ordered four of them to Combermere, and have given two to my friend Clayton East² at Hall Place.

27th.—I went up to Beaudesert to call upon the Marquis. He had been down a week for grouse shooting with three of his sons. I thought him looking thin, *grey headed* and ancient. He has been adding to the great hall by a sort of nave, one end to be a billiard-room, the other an ante-room to communicate with that side of the house. The world are pleased to talk of his lordship's distressed circumstances, but brick, stone, wood, and mortar are not the usual indicatives. Heavy rain in the forenoon. The weather has impeded the harvest. The crops generally reported light, and a small insect has attacked and much injured the turnips. The insect has made havock with my cabbages.

On the 2nd Eleanor and I dined at Packington. Met the squire of Wichnor and his daughter Mary. Inge and his daughter, Lady Parker and her daughter, and Mr. Grove; a pleasant party. I had a letter from my dear Dick at Corfu. Thank God, at the time he wrote he reported all well and written in good spirits. I hope to see him home by Xmas. I have met a disappointment in my hopes that Bill might have obtained the curacy of Twickenham, of which parish Charles Proby, son of the dean, is vicar. He wanted the immediate attendance of

¹ See vol. i. p. 244.

² See p. 140.

ÆT. 75 his curate, and Bill could not quit at a day's notice. I must remove him from Glenn; he has become too great a favourite with the sporting parsons. Some dropping weather this week that must retard the harvest in the north. The turnips have been materially injured by the fly, grub, and smother-fly. Whole fields looking prosperous and well have been cleaned and look like a fallow field. On the 4th rain in the morning, but I made my feet perform their office by carrying me my weekly walk to church.

On the 8th, the first time of the season, I took my musket in hand and walked over part of Freeford. I was aware the rogues had ransacked all my fields and purloined most of my partridge. My expectation was not disappointed. Only two coveys to be seen. I had two shots, and did execution each time, and pleased to find that at seventy-five I can walk shooting and kill all I shoot at.

15th.—The Manleys gave a ball by way of house-warming of their new mansion; a very splendid route, in a very splendid and handsome house. It deserved the name of *house-warming*, as they had seventeen friends and relatives staying in the house. The Moncktons accompanied us, and left us the following day. I left the ball soon after twelve, but the remainder of the party did not arrive at Freeford until near seven.

19th.—We dined at Lady Parker's.¹ Met her father Sir Theophilus Biddulph² and his eldest son.³ The Admiral still kept at quarters at the Admiralty. The county yeo-

¹ Frances Anne, youngest daughter of Sir Theophilus Biddulph; married 1810 Sir William Parker, Bart.

² Sir Theophilus Biddulph of Westcombe, co. Kent; died 1841.

³ Sir Theophilus Biddulph, succeeded his father as sixth baronet; born 1785.

manry assembled at Lichfield on the 18th for a week's 1836
drill under the orders of their Lieutenant-Colonel Com-
mandant, the Earl of Lichfield.¹ They appeared in very
good state of training for that description of force. I was
honoured with an invite to dine with them on their review
day, the 24th, but I had enough of messes when a regi-
mental officer.

21st.—The devastation amongst the turnips still con-
tinuing; the like never remembered by any person with
whom I have conversed on the subject. The common
turnips mostly suffer. Myriads of insects appear on the
under part of the leaves. They work to the heart of the
plant and destroy the roots. Many acres that looked most
promising are attacked; the leaf becomes yellow, and the
turnips disappear altogether. There has been a miraculous
dearth of wasps this year. I have scarce seen one in the
garden.

28th.—The ladies drove to Lichfield. Lady Parker, Sir
Theophilus Biddulph, Miss Biddulph, Grove and his son
Edward dined with us. Old Sir Theophilus is the last
remaining stem of the old-fashioned English country gentle-
man; occupied solely by country pursuits, and living
entirely at the seat of his ancestors dispensing and doing
all the good he can in his neighbourhood.

October 18.—Inge came to dinner. Tom Levett and October
Phill to meet him. Inge and I went next morning to
Stafford for the sessions. I had given up sessional business,
and went to Stafford chiefly to attend a meeting of the
Conservative Association. We found at the meeting Ralph
Sneyd (president), with about half a dozen members; the

¹ See vol. i. p. 329.

ÆT. 75 business was mostly to consider the state of the finances and to collect subscriptions due, and likewise to select a secretary for the north division. It is grievous to observe the want of energy that ought to prevail, unless the Radicals are to ride triumphant. Sneyd spoke to me on the subject of a Conservative dinner, knowing how warmly I had hitherto on all occasions urged the propriety of such measure. He proposed a general meeting of the whole county Conservatives in summer, and that the nobles should be invited, nay insisted upon, to attend, such as were members of the society in order to make a show of the power we possess. I did not go into the *Finance Court* to hear the remarks of Mr. *Blenton* and the *Uttoxeter Committee*. I am of opinion our bench has not attended to the respectability of the judicial seat by the new system of performing the county business. There were about twenty magistrates dined; a motley group with the exception of about eight; Lord Harrowby,¹ Wrottesley,² Buller,³ Scott,⁴ Inge, Pye, and Ned Monckton.⁵ A different meeting to what the sessions first day dinner was formerly.

I went into court next morning, but from my unfortunate deafness, as I was of no use, I could not interfere. There was abundance of criminal business; upwards of a hundred prisoners for trial. I visited the gaol, and felt a little proud of what I had done there. I did not observe improvement; on the contrary, marks of want of order and system. The crimes of the commitments were of a trifling nature, but at the same time denoting an increase of dissoluteness, which I am more and more convinced from

¹ See vol. i. p. 330.

² See vol. i. p. 130.

³ See p. 205.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 84.

⁵ See p. 192.

daily experience can alone be checked by a preventive police. The Pottery manufacturers are now in a state of disgraceful insubordination, created, encouraged, and kept in existence by the mighty efforts continuing to be supported by the present ministry as incentives to demonocracy. Inge dropped me at my gate on the 20th in good time for my dinner.

22nd.—I attended the revising barrister's court of registry for the city of Lichfield to support my dear Dick's claim for his vote; objection having been made from his not being resident. I stated the impossibility of a person serving in either the army or navy having a place of *residence*, and urged the extraordinary circumstance that no man serving his country should thereby be deprived of his elective franchise. The barrister admitted his claim.

24th.—I was much surprised by a communication from Phill, as the under sheriff for the city, to inform me that the revising barristers after more mature consideration had disallowed Dick's claim, and had taken his name from the list of voters. I thought the *subsequent* decision so extraordinary that I addressed a letter on the subject to the Secretary of State, detailing the circumstances, and particularly calling attention to the *change* in the barrister's decision without affording me an opportunity of further argument after the determination in favour of the claim. I had a civil answer to my letter by return post, to say that Lord John Russell regretted that he did not feel at liberty to express an opinion on the subject, as a case arising out of an Act of Parliament. I have not done with the business, and mean to take an opportunity of asking Sir

ÆT. 75

Robert Peel's opinion on the proceedings. I attended a petty sessions at Shenstone for Manley ; little business, and of no material consequence.

We are in some dilemma respecting our visit to Combermere, which I intended for the past week, but was interrupted by a letter from my noble friend the Viscount, the purport of which places, for want of explanation, the two Generals playing cross purposes.

The uncertainty was cleared up by a letter on the 31st to fix finally the 2nd November for our visit.

November

Accordingly we proceeded about ten by way of Stone and Woore to pay our annual visit to my old friend at his beautiful residence, where we arrived at five, calling in our way upon Lady Chetwynd,¹ now residing at Armitage.

Saturday the 5th we took our departure ; our friends as well as ourselves much regretting the shortness of our visit ; the Viscount particularly, as he expected Lord Hill and a large party the following week, and wished us to have added to the company. We returned by the way we went, which I prefer to the route by Stafford and Drayton, and reached Freeford before five. We were pretty fortunate in our weather. Just as we were entering the town of Woore, and at the moment we came along the road, Sir Rowland Hill's² hounds had caught their fox, and the huntsman dismounted and in the act of holding up poor Reynard for the eager longing of the dogs preparatory to his being devoured.

On the 7th Eleanor and I went to Thorpe for two

¹ Hannah Maria, daughter of John Sparrow, Esq. of Bishton Hall, co. Stafford ; married 1804 Sir George Chetwynd of Brocton, co. Stafford.

² Sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkestone and Hardwicke, co. Salop ; born 1800 ; succeeded as fourth baronet 1824 ; succeeded as second viscount 1842.

nights. We found Lord Talbot and his son,¹ a fine youth, just entered the service as ensign in the 36th regiment. Repington, Pye, and Mrs. Pye at dinner. Lord Talbot had come from Stone, where he had attended a meeting of a deputation from the chief manufacturers in the potteries in consequence of the turn-out of the operatives, who have for some time been in a state of disgraceful insubordination, in my humble opinion, proceeding from the trades unions, mechanick institutions, and democrattick assemblies of the description, encouraging the lower classes of the community (and there must be lower classes), to suspect they are ill-treated by their employers. Proposals of accommodation had been offered and order at length restored.

1836

I called upon Sir Robert on the 6th after church, and was received with great cordiality. He gave me a message to Inge and Lord Talbot at Thorpe the following day, to hope they would dine at Drayton on Wednesday. We found staying in the house at Drayton Sir H. and Lady Emily Hardinge,² Wilson Croker,³ Sir Alexander Grant.⁴ We met also at dinner Sir E. Hartopp, young Addersley, and Tom Levett. A very agreeable day. The house splendidly finished, but the magnificent library from the dark melancholy bookcases does not light up cheerfully. Mr. Croker a particularly entertaining man, and Sir H. Hardinge an able and most agreeable personage, and in the right way of thinking as to very many circumstances now in course of proceeding as affecting the army.

¹ William Patrick Manners, the eighth son of the second Earl Talbot; born 1817.

² See p. 115.

³ See p. 102.

⁴ See p. 102.

ÆT. 75 On the 17th my old friend and brother soldier, General Hodgson, arrived with his daughter and granddaughter. I had expected him for some time. He is by far the oldest soldier friend I have now living. We were at Lockie's Academy together in the year 1780. We were ensigns in the same regiment, and have kept up close acquaintance through life. A sincere friend, but not a happy disposition. As my nephew Thurstan was in the 4th regiment during Hodgson's time, we had much *prateing on parish concerns*.

26th.—I went the following morning to attend a special sessions at Wichnor, and for the first time in my life had recourse to my post-chaise to perform the journey. It rained all morning and caused a land flood, and consequently sad bad travelling. The meeting was for the purpose of considering a letter and queries from the Secretary of State relative to an alteration in the constabulary establishment with a view to the formation of an extensive police.¹

Sir Oswald Mosley,² Inge, Pye, and self. We had assembled a certain number of the constables of the hundred for the purpose of inquiry from them as to particular circumstances concerning their immediate duty. I am decidedly of opinion that a *preventive* police, on an extended and respectable scale, is the only means now left to prevent increasing crime, and in some degree to re-establish order and safety to society.

December I returned from Sir Edward Scott's³ on the 1st Decem-

¹ In 1829 the London police were reorganised, but not without a severe struggle. Cobbett raved against a police establishment, and believed that Sir Robert Peel had laid the foundation of an Austrian slavery. The principle of centralisation was not, however, applied to the whole country until the Permissive Act of 1839, which allowed justices of the peace at the Quarter Sessions to create a paid constabulary. This permission became compulsion in the year 1856.

² See vol. i. p. 297.

³ See p. 84.

ber, and we dined at Packington to meet Sir W. Parker¹ and family, and Manley and wife. The proposed railway from the pottery to join the Derby and Birmingham is projected to pass through the Fulfin farm. If it is carried, it will be an inconvenience without any benefit, nor can I fancy how on publick grounds it can by [any] possibility be beneficial.

7th.—We dined at Drayton. Lord and Lady Jersey,² Lord FitzGerald,³ Lord Aberdeen,⁴ staying in the house; besides Manley and his wife, Dr. Lalley and Wolferson. Lord Jersey appeared good-humoured and gentlemanlike, his lady possessing the remains of much beauty, and said to be very clever and agreeable; from my unfortunate deafness, I did not hear the sound of her ladyship's sweet melody. Lord FitzGerald, I had previously met at the Manor. Lord Aberdeen, on first view, I supposed to be a starch stiff Divine. I cannot say *how he talks*, not having heard him speak, though after dinner there appeared no lack of conversation. I sat at the opposite end of the table to where all the talk was around Sir Robert. Mr. Wynn, brother of Sir Watkin,⁵ was staying at Drayton, with whom I renewed my acquaintance, having (when visiting Sir Robert Williams⁶) been a shipmate on the passage to Ireland.

Proceedings going on to carry into effect the Amended Poor Law Act. Freeford, being extra-parochial, I had little to attend to, except as concerned that part in the parish of St. Michael's, where considerable schism existed as

¹ See p. 43.

² See p. 224.

³ See p. 218.

⁴ George Hamilton Gordon, fourth Earl of Aberdeen (1784-1860); statesman.

⁵ See p. 31.

⁶ See vol. i. p. 363.

ÆT. 75 to the choice of the two guardians. Mr. Richard Green has been named as one, but the radicals, in order to introduce politicks into every proceeding, chose to declare their leader (Mr. Stultyer) for the office ; consequently an election must ensue fixed for the 21st.

14th.—I went with Tom Levett to a meeting at Tamworth respecting the new railroad proposed from Manchester through the potteries, Rugeley, Lichfield, and Tamworth, and on to Rugby, there to join the Birmingham and London railroad. As the projected line is intended to pass through Fulfin, and being desirous to *oppose*, I attended Tamworth, but as the company there consisting of agents, etc., all favourable to the new project, my intended opposition was useless. I should think the proposal cannot succeed ; indeed the sole object appears merely to benefit Manchester. The intended railway is to reach Lane End, which is within ten or twelve miles of the great railroad between Birmingham and Liverpool, where the object of a conveyance to London is obtained, without the needless inconvenience arising to landowners on the great distance proposed. We dined at the Deanery, a large (fourteen) party, not *four* agreeables, with the exception of the Dean, a very pleasant cheerful Divine.

16th.—I called upon Mr. Greville Howard ; sat an hour with him. He is a decided enemy to the railroads, and joins as a good Conservative in the hearty effort being made to '*frustrate the knavish tricks*' of the growing democratticks.

25th.—Christmas Day. Snow in the morning and deep snow in the course of the day. We attended Divine Service and Sacrament, and for (I believe) the first time in my life, I went in the carriage. I had been mostly confined to the

house during the week, and with the ground covered with snow I was afraid to attempt my weekly walk. I have been looking out for the past two days for my dear Dick. My hopes are disappointed by not having him to pass Christmas Day at home. The Mediterranean Packet is, I think, due on the 25th. I look forward with anxiety for New Year's Day in the hope of having all my dear children at my table on that day. In the course of Christmas night, a tremendous blow, with a heavy fall of snow, causing unusual drifts. 1836

No mail arrived at Lichfield on the 26th or 27th, a complete stoppage having taken place at Chalk Hill near Dunstable, again near Dunchurch and near Welford. Communication was cut off in all directions for two days, 26th and 27th, with hard blowing weather and continued snow.

January 1, Sunday. New Year's Day.

2nd.—Miss Bakewell left us. I sent my horses to convey her to Stapenhill on a visit to Mrs. Abney, calling in her way at Drakelow. My horses did not return until seven o'clock in the evening. I and Eleanor did not lament the loss of our guest. She is the most accomplished tiresome being that nature ever manufactured. My poor Eleanor had more of her plague and torment than I had. Indeed I would not have supported *ten* hours a day of such a repetition of plague and pestilence. 1837
January

3rd.—I dined at Sir Robert Peel's, a man party who had been shooting. The company all neighbours. I spoke to Sir Robert about Dick's vote. He told me nothing could be done either by petition or otherwise. If any amendments took place respecting the registry, or in any other way, I might depend on his writing to me from London. The

ÆT. 75

Right Honourable Baronet was to proceed next morning on his way to Glasgow to be installed,¹ and to partake of a dinner from the town and neighbourhood. The country had been for the last week or ten days in a deplorable state from the snow, communication being nearly cut off in many parts.

12th.—We dined at Packington. An epidemick influenza is prevailing which interfered with the attendance of some of the party.

13th.—A county ball at the George under the patronage of Lady Lichfield, and assisted by Lord Ward. Edmund Littleton and George Chetwynd as stewards. I did not attend; Eleanor went. The influenza affected the brilliancy of the night by preventing the lady patroness and many others being present.

17th.—We went on a visit to Beaumanor by invite from Mr. Herrick for the purpose of a charity ball at Loughborough. My horses took us to Ashby. I never found the roads in a heavier state. A frost on the 14th, and dripping foggy weather since, broke up the roads greatly. We reached our good cousin's by four o'clock. Found Mrs. Palmer, her son and daughter, and a Miss Hincks from the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton staying in the house, as also two Miss Erskines from Leicester, young Palmer, a candidate for the army at the Military College at Sandhurst. I gave him a letter on his entrance of introduction to the Governor, Sir Edward Paget.² At dinner, in addition, there came Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose Philips, neigh-

¹ Sir Robert Peel was elected as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in November 1836.

² Sir Edward Paget (1775-1849); brother of the first Marquis of Anglesey.

bours of Herrick. I was desirous to be in company with the gentleman from the peculiarity of his apostasy. He being the son and heir of one of the oldest, richest, and respectable protestant families in Leicestershire, became an enthusiastick Roman Catholick, and married a catholick, a daughter of Lord de Clifford's. There is something singular in his appearance, though gentlemanlike, and seems, from what I could hear, an agreeable sensible man. He made a convert of a brother of the present Lord Spencer's, who I believe became a catholick priest. 1837

We took our departure on the 20th, Mr. Herrick having us convoy with his horses to Loughborough. We called on Mr. and Mrs. Oliver whilst changing horses. On arrival at Ashby I had a letter from my dear Dick (brought by my coachman), from London to announce his arrival. I wrote to him from Tamworth the same post to bid him hearty welcome. A general epidemick prevailed throughout England at this time, both in town and country. It was said there were ten thousand persons ill at Leicester, with the misfortune of only one of the faculty able to attend the sick list. I and my dear Eleanor have hitherto escaped, but all the servants are complaining.

22nd, Sunday.—The weather so very unpropitious we could not get to church, and said our prayers at home. A gratifying letter from Dick to report his intention of being at home on Thursday. I have to record a week of the most inclement and cheerless weather I can remember. Cold damp north-east wind, with continued downfall of sleet and rain, consequently promoting the continuance and increase of the almost general influenza prevailing almost generally throughout not only England,

ÆT. 75 but the continent of Europe. All my domestick servants have been attacked, and suffered from pains in the head and back, and from debility extreme.

My dear Eleanor held up stoutly until the 27th, when an attack of the malady seized her in the usual way. My dear Dick arrived on the same day, to our great joy in perfect health, notwithstanding his expeditious travelling from Corfu by way of Ancona, Bologna, Tunis, Lyons, and Paris; passing ten days' quarantine in the *Lugaretta* at Ancona. The influenza prevailing throughout Italy and France. A letter from Bill on the 27th, written from sick quarters under the general complaint.

February 14th.—A large party at dinner. The Dean, Mrs. Howard, and her brother Mr. Wright, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes (late Miss Chetwynd),¹ young Adderley of Hams (the Grimes and Adderley slept), Mr., Mrs. and Miss Grove, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hinckley. An event recently occurred highly to the disparagement of our upper classes, Lord ——— having been tried and found guilty of cheating at cards. His lordship brought his action against a Mr. Cumming for libel. A melancholy exposure of the gambling habits of persons in high life was produced on the trial, greatly to the injury of the community in general, as holding out a wretched example of the practices of the great, whose duty requires them to be 'not the law breakers.'

24th.—The intended railway (the South Union), which is to pass through Fulfin, and which I oppose, has been employing some of my time by letter-writing, but I am

¹ Maria Elizabeth Chetwynd, married 1836 Henry Grimes, Esq. of Coton House, co. Warwick.

sorry to observe in the paper that the Bill had been pre- 1837
sented to the House and agreed to a second reading.
Sir Robert Peel, to my great surprise, supporting the
measure after coquetting with both pros and cons not to
interfere.

13th.—We dined at Elford, a pleasant visit. Colonel March
Howard,¹ an agreeable pleasant man, follows the old
system of dress. Leather breeches in a morning, and
breeches again in an evening. The only company, Mr.
and Mrs. Braddyl,² his mother was a Bagot, and thereby
makes him and Mrs. Howard cousins.

20th.—A brother of Lord Foley's,³ a lieutenant in the
53rd regiment, and a friend of Dick's, arrived by mail on
a visit to my lieutenant, a very gentlemanlike young man,
and appeared much attached to Dick.

April 5.—I took Dick with me to Stafford for the April
purpose of attending a meeting of the Conservative
association. I was grievously disappointed to find the
boasted zeal in the Conservative cause fast evaporating.
No president attended and only two members, Mr.
Briscoe and Mr. Oldham, together with the secretary,
Mr. Smith of Rugeley, and the treasurer. Heavy com-
plaints exhibited by Mr. Smith as to the urgent necessity
for paying agents for past services. I took the liberty of
saying I should not become party to any proceeding what-
ever; as the president of the society did not attend, I

¹ Colonel Howard assumed the name Howard, his real name being Hon. Fulke Greville Upton; he married Mary, daughter of Richard Bagot.

² Frances Bagot married in 1803 Thomas Richmond Gale Braddyl, Esq. of Conishead Priory.

³ This is probably St. George Gerald Foley, born 1814; in 1849 he was a Captain in the 44th regiment.

ÆT. 76 considered the proceedings irregular in his absence. I added that certainly I should not take the trouble of attending any more. It was the first day of the sessions, but as my views of county business are not in unison with many of the Justices of the present day, and also my sad defect in hearing, I have relinquished altogether the *Shire Hall*.

On the 10th most extraordinary and severe weather. Snow every day and sharp frost at night. The distress occasioned by the want of *keep* for stock of all descriptions is becoming most grievous; cows, sheep, and lambs absolutely perishing for want. I have hitherto been most fortunate with my ewes and lambs, having only lost one of the latter from my flock. I have greatly to regret having sold turnips to Inge; feeling now the want of them. Hay, which I am reduced to purchase, selling at from £8 to £9 per ton. The corn markets remain steady, at very little alteration of prices. Wheat 8s., barley 4s. 6d., oats 4s. to 4s. 4d. Great exertions afloat with regard to railways. I fear the overwhelming monied interest will subdue all effort of country Esquires to continue their character and consequence in the country, by obliging them to submit to every measure advantageous to money speculation, however prejudicial to landowners. The Manchester South Union cuts Fulfin into potato gardens.

28th.—Dick went to dine and sleep at Mr. Grimes's¹ (an early school-fellow). He married one of Sir George Chetwynd's daughters. Rain most of the day 28th and 29th. The Bill in Parliament for the South Union Rail-

¹ Henry Grimes, Esq. of Coton Hall, co. Warwick; married 1836 Maria Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Chetwynd of Brocton, co. Stafford.

way intended to pass through Fulfin was thrown out, to my great joy; had it passed it would, in my humble opinion, have been a gross abuse and great hardship on the proprietors, who had embarked large stakes in the Birmingham and Liverpool Railway under the sanction of Parliament that no competing line should be allowed. 1837

Dick went to London on the 12th to prepare lodgings, May etc.

Eleanor and I followed on the 15th. Started with my horses to Coleshill at quarter-past seven, and reached the Admiralty, where I dropped my companion at quarter-past nine. Dick had taken a lodging at 35 Duke Street, St. James's, to which I repaired and found tea and toast all ready on my arrival, when Dick soon after joined. I felt fatigued with the *swing* of the carriage continuing in my head, like the motion of a boat after landing from sea. A comfortable bed and good sleep set me pretty well right. I remained in London three weeks, but feeling much the effect of age and consequent debility, compared to my former visits to the now overgrown metropolis. The weather was most unusual for the season; chill easterly and north wind with dripping rain. A great-coat the order of the day all the time I was in London.

I attended the King's levée on the 17th, and a drawing-room on the 19th; at the latter the Princess Augusta presided in consequence of the indisposition of the Queen. His Majesty very gracious. 'Well, Dyott, how are you?' — 'Tolerably well, but getting old.' 'We are none of us getting younger, as you and I have been acquainted half a century.' I thought the King aged. His Majesty was seated to receive company, from having been indisposed.

ÆT. 76 I attended Lord Hill's¹ levée, and his secretary Lord FitzRoy Somerset's twice; on all occasions in behalf of my dear Dick's promotion. Lord Hill as usual very kind, very complimentary of Dick, and very big in promise, expressing his wish to serve him. Lord FitzRoy,² Dick's colonel, paid him high compliments, and expressions of desire to serve him, but nothing further to depend upon. If anything should turn up that might place Dick in a position for promotion, both the nobles are pledged to further the object. My valued neighbour, Sir William Parker,³ I found with his usual friendly hospitality and kindness to me and mine. Lady Parker was not at the Admiralty in consequence of the illness of Sir Theophilus Biddulph,⁴ her father, with whom she was staying at Birbury.⁵ I dined at the Admiralty several times, and had a general invite when I was [not] otherwise engaged. In consequence of the []⁶ report that Sir J. Wrottesley⁷ was to be created a peer, a meeting took place, consisting of Staffordshire lords and commons, to endeavour to procure a Conservative candidate; amongst the former were Lords Bradford,⁸ Dartmouth,⁹ Ingestre,¹⁰ Sandon,¹¹ with Sir Robert Peel, etc. etc., but as no individual could be named (with the exception of Lord Ingestre) likely to come forward, the meetings terminated *nil*. Lord Ingestre professed having *no* cash, and there did not show much disposition to *shell out* in his lordship's behalf. Wrottesley's coming dignities fell to the ground. Dick

¹ See p. 22.² See p. 13.³ See p. 43.⁴ See p. 236.⁵ Birbury Hall, co. Warwick, was Sir Theophilus Biddulph's seat.⁶ Illegible.⁷ See vol. i. p. 130.⁸ George Augustus, second Earl of Bradford (1789-1865).⁹ See vol. i. p. 329.¹⁰ See p. 160.¹¹ See p. 151.

attended Epsom races, but did not appear much gratified with his excursion. One of the novelties of the day was a new invented cab to carry two persons, a close carriage and the driver sitting on the roof. I did not venture my person with a journey, though they appeared a convenient conveyance.¹ The omnibuses increased in number, and equally increased in demand. I had two trips to the city, with fourteen fellow-passengers each time. *Two too* many according to law.

Having sojourned three weeks lacking a day in the great metropolis, and great it may be well called from its extraordinary increase and increasing size, I took my departure for home on Saturday the 3rd June, at quarter-June past seven A.M., leaving Dick and Eleanor, who were engaged to go to Hall Place on the Monday for Ascot races; Eleanor intending to pass three weeks with her friends the Easts.² I proceeded in the post-chaise (I had engaged at Lichfield), and as the morning was rainy, I gave my worthy good housekeeper, Florendine, a berth inside, which continued during the journey.

23rd.—I received a note from Miss Cholmondley³ to say my friend Repington was alarmingly [ill], and at the same time to inform me she had been desired by Repington to inform me that in consequence of William Peel having resigned his seat for Tamworth, Captain A'Court⁴ had consented to offer himself, and requesting I would attend his canvass, and give him support.

I accordingly went to Tamworth the next day, and attended the party canvassing to Fazeley, etc. Captain

¹ The hansom cab.

² See p. 140.

³ Mrs. Repington's sister.

⁴ Captain Edward Henry A'Court, R.N., born 1783.

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A'Court brought a very unfavourable account of Repington.¹ I called upon William Peel, who had been suffering from a dreadful attack of gout. He said the state of his health was such as to make it impossible to attend to his duty, and that the attendance when he was able at the House was such as greatly to contribute to injure his health.

24th.—King William the 4th began to decline in his health after the drawing-room on the 23rd May, but did not confine himself. His Majesty continued on the decline until the beginning of June, when and on the 20th he departed this mortal life. I did not expect, when his Majesty made the significant remark to me at the drawing-room on the 19th May respecting 'our having been acquainted half a century,' that he was so near his end. When I reflect on the familiar intercourse with which I was graciously favoured at one time with the departed monarch, and the pursuits and propensities of his early days, the course of his Majesty's reign had been less chequered with *personal* imprudence than might have been expected. I was on such terms of acquaintance with the King as to enable me to form an opinion of his natural talent and disposition. There was a quickness of apprehension on subjects of business or professional proceedings in which the Prince would deliver himself with fluency and good judgment. He had strong partialities, and more violent in his prejudices, and was apt to censure in the latter case too freely on *personal character*, showing occasionally want of feeling for those who could not vindicate a false aspersion. This great country could have 'better spared a better man.' A very young

¹ The Repington family, of Amington Hall, near Tamworth, were connected by marriage with the A'Courts.

Queen coming to the throne of this mighty empire (just 1837 eighteen years of age), brought up, and subject to the control of a weak, capricious mother, surrounded by the parent's chosen advisers from distinguished democrattick councillors, gives token of unpropitious times to come.

28th.—Dick went to Stafford; the sessions. His visit was to attend a Conservative meeting. Ralph Sneyd and a large party present. The business was mostly taken up on finance in consequence of the debt contracted with law agents from neglect of both President Sneyd and agent Smith; more of the confusion of accounts and want of any system for the furthering electioneering purposes was owing to want of energy and attention in President Sneyd than to any other cause. Nothing was done as to candidates or proceedings for an election, which must speedily take place. The North Stafford will consequently be left to succumb to the two wise Whigs and their adherents.

The 7th I attended as a bearer to pay the last tribute to July my poor old friend Repington. He was interred in the chancel of the church at Tamworth, the resting-place of his ancient family, of which my friend was the last remains.

On the 9th, for the first time, I rode to church at Whittington; loath to give up my walk, but necessity said yes. Our late Royal Master, King William, was conveyed to his long home at Windsor on the 8th. His Majesty was a merry Prince in his youthful days, and at that day, he could promise, if ever in power, to serve a *young, giddy, foolish friend*. Thank God, I have travelled on without obligation to the man or the Monarch, which was not the case with the Prince to the then jolly *Lieutenant*.

Very busy this week in my hay harvest; carried a great

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part without rain; pretty good crops. On the 12th I received an invitation to breakfast at the King's Arms Inn, Tamworth, the following morning, and afterwards to accompany Sir Robert Peel on his canvass of the Borough.

I attended accordingly; stayed with the Right Honourable Baronet and his friends on the canvass until twelve o'clock, and then proceeded to Wichnor Bridges for the Shuttington Charity meeting; the two Levetts and Boulbee attended. I found Sir J. Fowler at Wichnor employed as an electioneering agent in behalf of Lord Alfred Paget,¹ who it appeared was about to offer himself a candidate to oppose Sir Edward Scott² under the auspices of the democrats of Lichfield. To my utter astonishment Fowler delivered a letter from Lady Anglesey applying for my support of her son, Lord Alfred (in Lord Anglesey's absence). The Levett had also had a letter through the same channel. We agreed in our sentiments on the subject by informing Fowler that under the auspices of the Lichfield radicals, it was not possible to afford assistance to such disreputable a party. I wrote to Lord Anglesey to that effect the next day. Sir Edward Scott had not been at Lichfield, but was daily expected. Parliament expected to be dissolved on the 18th. After dinner at the Bridges I sent my carriage on to Dunstall for Mary Dale, who had been visiting at Arkwright's. She called for me, and I brought her to Freeford in the evening. My two dear children, Dick and his sister, arrived after I was in bed. They had travelled from Hall Place 104 miles in hack chaises; did not start until after nine o'clock.

¹ Lord Alfred Paget (1816-88); son of the Marquis of Anglesey; M.P. for Lichfield 1837-66.

² See p. 84.

13th.—Dick went to Tamworth to accompany Sir Robert Peel on his canvass ; little doubts of his success.

On the 14th Dick went to Lichfield in consequence of a handbill from Sir Edward Scott to assemble his friends at the Swan Inn ; not that Dick or I had any intention of supporting the Baronet, but to find out how matters were going on. Sir Edward did not attend, but wrote a silly letter to avow his wish to resign rather [than] encounter opposition ; however he changed his design, and canvassed the city next day. I believe if Scott had made known to his friends at Lichfield his inclination to withdraw, there is little doubt but that Dick might have been elected without opposition. However gratifying it might be, I did not feel anxious for the occasion. He had better reserve himself until I have made way for him at Freeford.

16th.—Mary and I and my children attended to our duty and holy religion at Whittington. Mary Dale came to Freeford on the 15th. Mighty busy all the following week on electioneering matters. Dick attended at the assizes, serving on the Grand Jury, and was there strongly entreated by the influentials in the South Division of the county to allow himself to be put in nomination with Lord Ingestre for the south. They stated having a subscription of £4000 ensured in London, and they called upon him to add £1000 with the fair prospect of returning him. They appointed a meeting at Wolverhampton for the 21st to know Dick's decision ; having at the meeting stated they should only ask for £500. I consulted Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Edmund Peel before I gave an answer, and in consequence of the result I made an immediate application to Mr. Richard Hinckley to ask his advice and assistance, and to proceed

ÆT. 76 with Dick to Wolverhampton to make the necessary inquiry. Hinckley's opinion being favourable, Dick acceded and lost no time in publishing an excellent address (unassisted by any one) to the electors. Although I could little afford to produce £500 for electioneering purposes, I considered it my duty to such an affectionate, dutiful, and beloved child to gratify his wish, and if he was not returned, the application of so influential a list of electors would naturally introduce him to the county, and place him in a situation of high respectability in future life. Sir Edward Scott, finding on his canvass that the meddling interference of Burns Floyer had mainly assisted to withdraw the support of Levett of Wichnor, and others who had enlisted under the Radical flag, the Baronet resigned, and Lord Alfred Paget (wonders, wonders) walked over Lichfield on the shoulders of democracy.

On the 22nd Dick published his address, and on the 23rd went to Wolverhampton to visit the central committee. A previous committee of his friends had been named at Lichfield, highly respectable, and chose Mr. Mott for their chairman. Dick proceeded to Somerford that evening. The three Moncktons, Ned and his two brothers, being powerful friends to his cause, assisting and accompanying him on his canvass. The great landed proprietors, Giffard,¹ Boughey,² Lord Ward,³ Lord Dartmouth,⁴ Lord Stamford,⁵ Lord Bradford⁶ were all alike hearty. That and the two following days he was busy engaged canvassing all that side of the South Division, making Sandwell, Lord Dartmouth's, his headquarters on the evening of the 25th.

¹ Thomas Giffard, of Chillington, Esq.

² Sir T. F. F. Boughey of Betly Court, co. Stafford.

³ See p. 222.

⁵ George Harry, sixth Earl of Stamford (1765-1845).

⁴ See p. 98.

⁶ See p. 252.

The next evening he came home, but started again the following morning to meet his colleague at Wolverhampton (his friend Captain Inge accompanying him as A.D.C.). In the meantime there was no lack of effort in his behalf in the home neighbourhood. My dear child Eleanor's exertions exceeding all that ever was performed in the annals of electioneering contests, and I verily believe her arduous endeavours obtained for her brother more votes than any six agents employed.

Mary Dale most fortunately happened to be at Freeford, and accompanied and partook the evil with her cousin. Indeed all the neighbourhood appeared to favour my dear son. The praises bestowed upon him, whenever he was spoken of, quite overcame his old father; every encouragement to favour success was manifested.

Dick returned home on the 28th, bringing with him his colleague, John Talbot,¹ officiating for his brother, Lord Ingestre, and in the evening arrived Mr. Briscowe, the great leader of the Conservatives in the south, who was to nominate Dick, accompanied by Mr. Campbell from the Wolverhampton side, who was to nominate Lord Ingestre.

On the 24th I received a letter to request my attendance at Stafford on the 26th; the messenger had also a letter for Inge, to whom I sent to say I would accompany him if he felt inclined to attend. Sir Robert Peel and Inge called here next morning on the subject; in consequence of subsequent communications to us mentioning that Mr. Baring,² who had lost his election for the borough of Stafford, was thought

¹ John Talbot, barrister-at-law, fourth son of the second Earl Talbot; born 1806; attorney-general to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

² William Bingham Baring, afterwards Lord Ashburton.

ÆT. 76 a proper man to be put in nomination for the North Division. Inge and I accordingly went to Stafford, where we met Lord Sandon,¹ and a highly respectable body, when it was settled to start Mr. Baring forthwith at the nomination to take place for the north on the 28th, when Baring was proposed by Lord Sandon, and subsequently elected in the room of Sir Oswald Mosley.² I went to Burton, and polled a plumper for Baring.

29th.—The morning, heavy rain and unfortunate for the procession to attend my dear son and his colleague to the hustings for the nomination for the South Division. Sir Robert Peel had invited nearly a hundred voters to breakfast at the Manor, and to proceed *en masse* to join the Conservative candidates at the entrance of Lichfield. The weather prevented the attendance of a large concourse from the Wolverhampton side. Hustings were erected in the dean's field adjoining the close. To the astonishment of every one, Sir John Wrottesley³ issued a handbill in the morning to announce his intention of again offering himself as a candidate; an event betraying weakness on the part of Colonel Anson. Sir John was proposed by Major Chetwynd,⁴ M.P. for Stafford; seconded by Mr. Finch, M.P. for Walsall, an ironmaster from Wolverhampton. Anson was proposed by young Littleton, Lord Hatherton's⁵ son; seconded by Mr. Barker from Wolverhampton. Lord Ingestre⁶ was nominated by Mr. Campbell from the Kings Winford side, and seconded by Mr. Horderin, the banker of Wolverhampton. My dear Dick was then proposed by

¹ See p. 151.

² See vol. i. p. 297.

³ See vol. i. p. 130.

⁴ William Fawkener Chetwynd; born 1788; major in the army; married 1843 Mary, fourth daughter of Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart.

⁵ See vol. i. p. 358.

⁶ See p. 160.

neighbour Wolferstan,¹ and seconded by the King of Conservatives, Briscoe. Much speechifying took place, and from the newspaper report and from many friends I was highly gratified to learn that my dear boy had acquitted himself with great credit, though the Anson hired mob made use of all the noise and tumult they could raise to interrupt the Conservative candidates being heard. The show of hands was determined to be in favour of Anson and the Baronet in consequence of Anson from the hustings having invited and justified the right of non-electors to attend.

30th, *Sunday*.—Mary Dale, Eleanor, and I attended our usual duty at Whittington church. Dick proceeded to attend his committee at Wolverhampton, and to sleep at Sandford; nothing could exceed the great assiduity of the three Moncktons, Ned, the General, and George. Giffard was equally kind and serviceable, as also Sir T. Boughey;² indeed nearly every country gentleman in the south made the most ample exertions in Dick's favour.

On the 1st August polling commenced; at the close August Anson ahead. I was in a sad state of excitement and agitation, and made myself quite unwell. At the final close of the poll the second day Anson first, Ingestre next, and my dear Dick third. Ingestre having nearly sixty ahead, I however felt satisfied with the expectation the Conservatives had formed for inducing Dick to become a candidate, as nothing but the unexpected and unlooked-for circumstance of Wrottesley coming forward at the eleventh hour could have prevented his election. He bore the dis-

¹ A member of a very old Staffordshire family.

² See p. 258.

ÆT. 76 appointment manfully. For myself, I considered that the high credit he had obtained in the county, together with the circumstance of his favourable introduction to the acquaintance, and I may add friendship, of his countrymen, amply repaid whatever expense may have been incurred, and it has opened wide a door for further honours. A circumstance occurred from the election which no time can ever eradicate from my memory, and that is, that my old and long-established friend Levett of Wichnor should have opposed my son and given his vote to Anson and Wrottesley.

4th.—The Sheriff declared the state of poll. Anson and Ingestre elected, and Sir John, where he deserved to be, at the bottom of the poll. Thus ended the contest in which my dear Dick gained great credit for his conduct throughout, and obtained for himself high distinction throughout the county, and particularly from the first man of the age, Sir Robert Peel, who was pleased to say on proposing my son's health at Tamworth in a very large company invited by Sir Robert to celebrate his election, 'He wished he could have proposed the health of a gentleman now present as the chosen member rather than the late candidate for the South Division of Staffordshire, who, though he had not altogether succeeded in his return, I never can acknowledge he has failed in the attempt he has made. He succeeded to exhibit a degree of activity, of energy, and of good sense which showed him to be well qualified for the high trust which he sought, and which have recommended him to a most numerous and powerful body of the constituency of South Staffordshire.' The flattering mention of my son from such a quarter gratified

all my best hopes, and fully contented and repaid all the excitement and agitation I had undergone. 1837

On the 5th, dined, a large party, ladies and gentlemen twenty-six, at the Manor. Sir Robert very kind in speaking to me respecting the late contest, and highly complimenting my dear Dick.

11th.—Captain A’Court gave his election dinner at Tamworth. Dick attended, when his health was proposed by a flattering speech, and which was extremely well received and as well acknowledged by my dear boy. I may not live to enjoy the occasion, but it may so happen that Dick some time or other will exhibit in St. Stephen’s; let me hope his good sense may be propitious. Rather dropping weather for the harvest. I began my oats and barley on the 11th, carried the former on the 18th and some barley the 19th; about an average crop. Grass most plentiful. Wheat from 23s. to 25s. a bag; oats 4s. to 4s. 6d.; beef and mutton 7d.

21st.—Bill came for a few days. The Radicals of Lichfield gave a dinner to the new Radical member, Lord Alfred Paget. Oh! Paget, Paget, how hast thou changed!!

On the 30th I set out on an excursion to Liverpool per the railway with Eleanor. We left home about nine to arrive at Birmingham in time for the start at half-past eleven. Bill accompanied us to Birmingham to bring back the phaeton. We found the train of carriages all prepared, and took our places in the one distinguished as the mail. In addition to the usual formed coach, it had two sittings in front, forming a comfortable post-chaise commodious and quite pleasant. We left Birmingham at half-past eleven, and arrived at Liverpool precisely at four without

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the smallest inconvenience ; the trains stopped for five minutes at the different stations merely to deliver and to take up passengers and parcels. The speed is so great it is scarce possible to gauge of the country you pass. The tunnel into Liverpool is a grand production of human effort. We found Major Dale waiting our arrival ; he with his family having lately arrived to take occupation of their new residence in the neighbourhood adjoining the house of his son-in-law Challoner. Tom Levett's footman was also in waiting to conduct us across the water to New Brighton, where we proposed to sojourn to join them by previous arrangement. We embarked in the New Brighton steamer that crosses every half hour, a cruise from fifteen to twenty minutes. Levett, Mrs. Levett, Miss Proby, and John Heathcote were waiting our arrival on the beach. New Brighton is a new settlement of new houses on the barrier and high sands to the westward of the Liverpool lighthouse on the Cheshire coast ; quite in its infancy, and may in time become a situation of resort for invalids seeking sea air. The bathing is not good in consequence of the low sandy beach causing tides to recede to so great a distance. We found comfortable quarters, and joined the Levett party for the table arrangements. The great lion, and the great object of our excursion, was the great Liverpool, to which place our views were regularly daily attracted (save the Sabbath). I was never more entertained than in visiting the wonders of this wonderful place ; the docks, the shipping, the streets, the publick buildings, the quays, the markets, the cemeteries, the charitable institutions are all equally magnificent and superb. The railways from Manchester and Birmingham must contribute greatly to its

increasing wealth and commerce. The Grand Junction, as it is called, from Birmingham collected, I was told, full six thousand pounds per week. 1837

8th.—After passing our time very agreeably, we left New Brighton at ten in a jaunting car, which brought us to Seacombe, immediately opposite Liverpool, to suit time to start with the train on the railway at half-past eleven. September

The chief proprietor of New Brighton is a Mr. Atherton, a retired Liverpool merchant, who resides at his new settlement; a well-informed agreeable man. He invited Tom Levett and I to a whist party, and a jolly Liverpool merchant's hot supper. We were rather delayed on our return by the boiler having been somewhat out of order, and in consequence did not reach Stafford, where my carriage met us on the 8th, until four o'clock instead of three. We got home to a late dinner, and found all right.

12th.—Lichfield races; lack-a-day, what a falling off both as to company and sport. The Whig nobles made a show for political reasons, the Ansons and Pagets having joined the unhallowed crew of what they term *liberals*, alias the *licentious*.

16th.—We went to Thorpe for two nights to meet Sir James and Lady Graham¹ by special invitation from Captain William² to officiate and entertain her ladyship on the part of Eleanor. I was desirous of knowing both the Baronet and his lady, the former as a great political character and the latter as the sister of my two friends George and James Callander. Sir James, a highly agreeable man; his wife

¹ Sir James Robert Graham (1792-1861); statesman; married 1819 Fanny, eldest daughter of Colonel Callander.

² Captain William Inge.

ÆT. 76 not only the like, but also uncommon pretty. We passed two agreeable days; A'Court dined one day, and Egerton Bagot and Will Cave the other.

October *October* 1.—Paid my duty at Whittington church. Sir Samuel Hawker and Mr. Collyer arrived to dinner, and proceeded with us the following day to pay my annual visit to my old friend Lord Combermere. Hawker and Collyer went by the railway to Crewe. Eleanor, Dick, and myself per chaise. My horses to Wolseley Bridge, and on by Stone, etc. We did not reach our noble host quite in good time, but the railway travellers did not arrive in pudding time. The new married pair, Lord and Lady Hillsborough,¹ had arrived the same day. The Rev. W. Cotton² and Wellington Cotton³ made up the party. Lord Hillsborough appeared an unaffected person; a silent man and unassuming. Matrimony appears to sit easy on the young bride. We extended our visit until the 6th after passing an agreeable time; returned by way of Drayton and Stafford.

15th.—Sir Roger Gresley⁴ died suddenly at Drakelow on the 14th. He had been unwell both in body and mind for a considerable time. There was company staying in the house. The party was in the drawing-room after dinner; he went for a book of roads for the purpose of reference, and was seized in his dressing-room and died without a groan, and only spoke one word to Lady Sophia (who had been apprised of his seizure and run up to his room) by saying, 'Sophy.'

¹ See p. 230.

² Rev. W. Cotton, brother of Lord Combermere.

³ Wellington Henry, eldest son of the first Viscount Combermere.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 336.

17th.—A conservative dinner at Burton to Mr. Baring,¹ 1837
 the new member for North Staffordshire. Charles Arkwright president, and filled the chair admirably. Nearly four hundred dined in a large capacious loft belonging to the brewery establishment of Mr. Allsop, which afforded ample accommodation, and was extremely fitted up for the occasion. The great lion of the day was Sir Francis Burdett,² who delivered two excellent speeches, lashing the Queen's ministers most severely. Dick's health was given from the chair, coupled with Lord Ingestre³ and the Conservatives for the south. I was greatly flattered by the reception the toast acquired from the company, and more so from the report communicated of the speech, which from my situation at table and unfortunate defect I could not hear. I fear the unsuccessful candidate was over severe on the noble Marquis Anglesey for the interference of his lordship's agents with the tenants at the late election.

The new Parliament assembled on the 15th. Big with November event, but what may be the produce time must show.

Dick came home per Chester mail on the morning of the 17th, but with no cheerful tidings from Lord FitzRoy. My dear son has not quite completed the period of his father's apprenticeship as a sub. My only hope is, if he pursues the profession, he may hereafter experience as rapid a rise as the *old General*.

My dear Bill mounted his pony at eight o'clock on the December morning of the 9th to renew his sacred callings at Glenn. Bill had employed a *clipper* to clip, singe, *crop*, *cut*, and make very smart his pony for Leicestershire. A strange

¹ See p. 259.

² See p. 144.

³ See p. 160.

ÆT. 76 fashion of the present day to shave poor horses' coats as close as *shaving a beard*.

Dick came home on the 11th, and on the 12th we dined at Hints. Met Mr. St. George and his wife. He is a right good Conservative; has just undergone the resentments and oppression of the Irish Government by being dismissed from the magistracy in consequence of his zealous efforts as a respected Protestant, resident, independent country gentlemen in support of church and state. A correspondence took place on the subject betwixt the Lord Lieutenant and St. George, in which the latter most ably and effectually established his own character and showed up fully the outrageous, unjustifiable proceedings of the Government.

The markets low for all agricultural produce, wheat from 21s. to 23s. per bag; barley 4s. 0½d. per strike; oats 5s. old, and 2s. 6d. to 2s. 10d. new. Beef 5½d. to 6d.; mutton 6d. The Parliament just now busied without doing much business for the country. Personal abuse with vulgar declamatives from the radicals making up the full account of the proceedings. The city of Lichfield become a democracy under the encouragement of a radical Mayor and republick council. The representation in the hands of two whig Lords, Beaudesert and Shugborough, who have united after being inveterate enemies, to subvert and overcome the independent electors.

26th.—We dined at Sir W. Parker's; a full Christmas party. The Admiral enjoying his holidays and relaxation from the hard duty at the Admiralty. I have known him from a boy of twelve years old, first going to sea the year I returned from America, anno 1793. A worthy good man, and an excellent officer.

28th.—Eleanor and I dined at Manley's ; a large party. 1837
 Sir Robert and Lady Peel, the Shaws, Chandos Poles, St. Georges, etc. etc. Manley's new drawing-room opened for the occasion, a very handsome apartment, and somewhat ornamented by three beautiful chairs worked by my dear Eleanor. I called in the morning at Drayton, and sat a full hour with Sir Robert Peel ; very cordially received in his usual warm and friendly manner. He asked me if I could guess who was coming to visit him. I answered no, unless it was *O'Connell*. He said no, but Sir Francis Burdett ; certainly an unlikely visitor.

31st.—I and my children attended to pay our devout prayers to Divine Providence on the conclusion of the year, and I now offer my most profound thanksgiving to the God of mercy for all the blessings I have enjoyed for the year that has passed, beseeching the Divine Providence, if it is his will that I should continue through the year that is to come, to be graciously pleased to continue the blessings attending me through the year that has gone by.

Here I close, with an earnest prayer for health and prosperity to attend my dear children throughout 1838.

January 1.—I begin the new year by offering a devout 1838
 prayer to Divine Providence to continue the blessing of ^{January} health experienced by me during the year that has past [*sic*], if it so pleases the Almighty Will.

On the 8th, Dick by invitation went to dine with the Operative Conservative association at Wolverhampton to meet the new elected member for S. Staffordshire, Lord Ingestre ; a numerous meeting, hearty in the cause of Conservatism and good friends to Dick.

Tuesday the 9th, I expected Captain A'Court to dine, and

ÆT. 76 invited my good neighbour Tom Levett to meet him. The Captain sent an excuse, which I did not regret, as I was not in trim to entertain company.

10th.—Dick and Eleanor went to Beaumanor for a ball at Loughborough; I was too unwell to accompany them, and the weather much too severe for a giddy old head like mine. They met at Beaumanor, Lord Charles Manners,¹ Mr. and Miss Palmer, etc. etc., a pleasant party. The noble Lord they found a very agreeable man.

My dear Dick went to London per Chester mail on the evening of the 28th for a few days in order to make arrangements with his Colonel, Lord FitzRoy Somerset,² to join the depot in Ireland in preference to the Mediterranean on the expiration of his leave in March, which he effected to his satisfaction, and returned on the 4th February.

March *March* 18.—A further effort is making to attempt the formation of a railway by the Manchester monied men on the former proposed line of the South Union to Rugby, with a branch extending from Armitage to join the Derby and Birmingham at Wichnor. Strong opposition will be made by the Grand Union Liverpool and Birmingham, aided, I hope, by a majority of landowners on the intended line. As I don't want my farm at Fulfin to be cut into potatoe beds, it shall have my hearty dissent.

28th.—Another uncommonly fine spring day. Dick hunted and had a long trip to covert. He went in his gig to Shipley, and from thence to meet the hounds at Sibson, having sent his horse early in the morning. They had a good run, killed the fox within six miles of Leicester, from

¹ Charles Cecil John, sixth Duke of Rutland (1815-88); M.P.; succeeded to dukedom 1857.

² See p. 13.

whence he had to ride home, which he did not reach until 1838 ten o'clock.

On the 14th my dear Dick took his departure to join his April depot in Dublin to my great grief and sorrow in parting with him, not alone for my sincere for his amiable qualities [*sic*], but for the great assistance and help he affords me in all my worldly affairs. He possesses great good sense, with indefatigable attention to whatever object he undertakes, with most manly honourable feelings in whatever actions of life he may be engaged, and with less vanity and less anxiety for any personal display than usually attends men at his age. God bless him, and may every happiness attend him.

The Chester mail-coach was discontinued on the 11th of this month; there is now no coach conveyance whatever direct from Lichfield to London. The London letters are brought by mail-cart from Stone Bridge. A day coach is now established from Lichfield to Stafford for the convenience of the railroad to Liverpool, by which conveyance Dick proceeded *en route* to Liverpool for Dublin, where he would arrive on the following morning, nearly as expeditious as a journey to London.

On the 17th Bill arrived to pass a few days, but particularly to congratulate his old father on his natal day, having this day entered on my seventy-eighth year. Old age and consequent infirmity has made me feel what I am this winter very keenly, infinitely more than I ever yet experienced.

21st.—Milder weather. I rode to call upon Sir Robert Peel; found him at home (he had come into the country for the Easter holydays), and sat half an hour with him. I asked him if they would turn out the ministers; he said

ÆT. 77 they had nearly done it, and should have [had] a majority over them on two late occasions if the Conservative members had done their duty by giving their attendance in the House. He mentioned that he thought ministers were likely to continue until after the coronation.

May Thurston Dale came to Freeford on the 9th, and brought accounts of the unfortunate effect of the weather on the wheat in that neighbourhood. He mentioned that in the tempestuous gales in April there were instances of the young wheat plants being really blown up by the roots. Thurstan travelled by railway to Stafford with *convenient speed*.

16th.—I and Eleanor went to Thorpe for two nights ; a melancholy first visit since the death of my esteemed friend, the late owner of the Hall. We found Lord and Lady Crofton¹ staying there, waiting the recovery of their children from the small-pox. Every turn of a servant or opening of a door brought to my recollection my excellent friend. Lord Crofton is a staunch conservative, and mainly disgusted with the proceedings of the Irish Government.

We returned home on the 18th and dined at Packington on the 19th. A Mr. Stevens, one of the poor law commissioners, dined, who appeared to me to answer the description Lord Stanhope gave in the House of Lords in one of his lordship's angry speeches on the establishment of the new poor law act, comparing the assistant commissioners to 'briefless barristers without brains.'

23rd.—I received a letter from Dick in the morning to say he was in great hopes of his long looked for promotion.

¹ Edward Crofton, Baron Crofton ; born 1806 ; married 1833 Lady Georgiana Paget, third daughter of the first Marquis of Anglesey.

Captain Gambier has communicated his intention to quit, 1838
 in consequence of which he (Dick) purposed starting immediately by steamer, and desiring I would send the buggy to meet him at Stafford (the day I received his letter). I despatched the carriage accordingly, and in two hours afterwards to my surprise the Lieutenant arrived *à pied*, having left the buggy to bring his kit. I did not get his letter sufficiently early to despatch in time. Dick was *en route* for London, but in consequence of Charles Inge and his sister Harriet having fixed to come to Freeford for two nights on the 23rd, he postponed his proceeding to London until the 25th. It was fortunate their meeting, the three being such particular friends.

Dick started at half-past six on the 25th in a new established coach from Lichfield to Denbigh Hall, from whence per railway he arrived in London at six in the evening without let or hindrance ; a speedy and safe conveyance for £1, 10s.

Wishing to urge the Horse Guards in behalf of my dear June Dick, and feeling it proper to pay my duty to our virgin Queen at her last levée for the season on the 20th, I started for London on the 18th per the Lichfield day coach to Denbigh Hall, there to embark on the railway for London. What strange changes in the mode of travelling. I left home exactly at half-past six. We took up at Fazeley General Yates, and a companion of his, that I took for his trainer, and at Atherstone Sir Nigel Gresley,¹ making us a full freight. Pulled up for a quarter of an hour at Northampton for lunch and reached the railway station

¹ Rev. Sir William Nigel Gresley (1806-47); succeeded Sir Roger Gresley in 1837.

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about three and arrived at the Euston station soon after six. Almost the first person I saw was my friend General Hodgson, who had brought his gig to carry me to his house, after a pleasant journey of twelve hours. The great object of my visit to London was the promotion of my dear Dick.

I accordingly went early the following morning to the Horse Guards to use my best endeavours. It was unfortunately Lord FitzRoy Somerset's levée day, and as my name was not on the list, I could not see him, but made an arrangement for a private audience the day following. I also found that Lord Hill would not have his usual Thursday levée, and therefore wrote a note to his private secretary to procure an audience, which I obtained. I found both lords courteous and kind, and both promising that the plan proposed for Dick's promotion should have the most favourable consideration. I urged my claim to Lord Hill as forceably as I was able and as far as words go, I trust with effect.

On the 20th I accompanied Hodgson to the levée to be presented to our young Queen. The crowd was *so obstreperous* and the hurry of the presentation so rapid, I really found it impossible to look her Majesty in the face. The instant of my approach the hand was already stretched out; I made my salute and floated on with the rapid stream. However, I performed my duty and was satisfied.

The next day there was a drawing-room, but I did not attend. London was a bumper in consequence of the preparation for the coronation on the 28th. Foreigners in abundance.

25th.—In London all descriptions of preparation for the

coronation on the 28th progressing, such as galleries and outside seats to all the houses by which the procession was to pass. I started from the busy scene by railroad on the 25th at half-past nine from the Euston station after a week of friendly reception with my oldest friend and brother soldier, Hodgson. We were chums at Lockie's Academy at Little Chelsea in 1781. A pleasant conveyance by the railway to Denbigh Hall, and forward by the Lichfield coach, from which I descended at my gate at half-past nine, where I was greeted by my dear child Eleanor with an affectionate welcome. 1838

Mr. Ed. Simpson called upon me the day after my return upon Conservative concerns, particularly respecting arrangements for our district Conservative dinner on the 27th July, when we expect a large meeting.

The 28th ; the coronation of our young Queen ; grand proceedings at Lichfield ; but as they were chiefly under the projection of the Mayor, Mr. Hultzer, a rank radical, and his worship to preside at the dinner, I did not feel disposed to join a party under a leader for whom I had a contemptible opinion. I did not go near the city.

August 2.—The mechanics' institutions established in August many parts of the Kingdom, but mostly in the manufacturing districts, are in my opinion a very serious evil, by congesting that class of the community (more prone to mischief than to mend), for the purpose of overaweing their employers, and showing by their numbers their subsequent power, leading to combinations to demand what wages they choose to fix. I am an enemy to the prevailing system of universal education ; it has been tried for twenty years, and has produced twenty degrees more vice and dissolute

ÆT. 77 manners than previously existed. I speak from experience as a pretty active magistrate, as such I am satisfied, education, either of the male or female community of the lower classes in society, has in nowise tended to benefit social order.

9th.—We had a dinner party. Mr. and Mrs. Pye, Geo. and Chs. Inge, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hinckley and Acland. Hinckley took great pains and rendered great assistance to Dick in winding up the money concerns of the late election, which from great neglect on the part of what was called the finance committee, caused the expenses to exceed the amount of the sum subscribed (although it amounted to £6400) by upwards of £600. Lord Ingestre and Dick were the unfortunate sufferers to clear the amount. The noble lord as the winning candidate should have settled the debt without calling upon the unsuccessful candidate.

On the 14th a statue was erected to represent the great Dr. Johnson in the market-place, Lichfield, a gift of Chancellor Law's¹ to the city; a very bad likeness, and in my opinion a worse piece of sculpture; of the former, I can speak from remembrance of the mighty man, of the latter, my judgment is of little consequence.

23rd.—The next day we had the Shaws, Edmund and Mrs. Peel, Captain Majendie and his half, and a Mr. Greathead, a friend of Majendie's. The Pease and their Peascod (their little daughter) left us. A letter from Dick to say there was a demur respecting his promotion in consequence of Major Butler not having fixed Captain Philips, who succeeds to the Majority; therefore some hitch and

¹ See vol. i. p. 366.

delay occurs as to the amount of the sum Major Butler 1838 expects to obtain for his Majority. It will, however, ultimately, I hope, take place, and my dear Dick be enabled to write Captain after his name.

31st.—We dined at Sir Robert Peel's. The Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury¹ and Lord Talbot² staying in the house. Sir Robert by way of introducing me to the Marquis in the drawing-room said, 'General, do you know ——' but the name I did not hear. I fancied it was sounding like Sir Charles somebody, and did not discover the stranger until we went to coffee. The noble Marquis's figure and appearance is not favourable. He is gentleman-like and good-humoured. Sir Robert and my Lady as usual truly kind and friendly.

On the 8th we went to Leamington for a fortnight, first September to be out of the way of the races, and second to have variety of jobbing, cleansing and repairing to the house within and without. We arrived at the Regent's Hotel about five, having sent to engage rooms. I took a stroll for half an hour filled with wonder and astonishment at the vast alteration and additions to the town. We dined and lived in private, no public table being established. Eleanor placed herself under the direction of one of the faculty, a Mr. Jones, to remove the headaches that occasionally plagued her. The gentleman recommended warm shower baths, from which she *fancied* she received benefit. Being at Leamington, I thought I must not omit consulting the great Galen of the [place], Dr. Jephson. I called upon him, and

¹ James William Gascoyne Cecil, second Marquis of Salisbury (1791-1868); married 1821 Frances, daughter of Bamber Gascoyne, Esq.

² See vol. i. p. 351.

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after he had gone through the regular routine of squeezing the wrist and beholding the tongue, he said, 'All I have to prescribe is, consult no doctors, there is not a man in England of your age in better health.' My acknowledgement was, 'I conclude, as you don't write me a prescription, I may keep the fee in my pocket.' 'Certainly,' replied the doctor. When I considered what I recollected of Leamington, I was perfectly lost in wonder wherever I walked. The new streets, squares, places, cottages, villas, etc. etc., without end were nearly magical. The skill of Dr. Jephson, it is said, I believe with reason, has greatly contributed to the wonder of the increased population, and from being considered what I recollect him, a sangrado in physick, he is a man of first-rate practice and makes, it is believed, £10,000 per annum. We found much kind attention from Miss Cholmondley (the sister of poor Mrs. Repington), who has a house and resides altogether at Leamington. I met several old acquaintances and particularly two Nova Scotia friends, Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton,¹ a midshipman on board the *Dido* at Halifax, and his cousin, a lawyer living at Halifax in 1787. Fifty-one years of retrospect brings numerous recollections. I called upon Mr. Greenway at Warwick, with whose father my late dear brother was clerk threescore years and more gone by. No lawyer's clerk was ever more beloved by a community than my excellent brother. He was one of the original promoters of Leamington. He delighted greatly in his visits there, but unfortunately his companion for life (as in all other cases) disliked whatever he liked.

We drove to Birbury to make call upon the old Baronet

¹ Sir Jahleel Brenton (1770-1844); rear-admiral 1830; vice-admiral 1840.

Sir The. Biddulph.¹ I was surprised to find so dilapidated and forlorn a residence. The grounds are cheerful, but all appear miserably neglected. The Baronet and his daughter received us with great kindness. He is quite the Sir Roger de Coverley of modern day. 1838

Bill went to his duties on the 15th and returned on the 17th, and remained until our departure on the 22nd.

Quite enough of Leamington, and rejoiced to reach Freeford between two and three o'clock.

26th.—We dined at Drayton; a full table; amongst the guests, Lord Ellenborough,² a very agreeable man; much talked of in the world as a politician and otherwise; something particular in his appearance. Three savants, Chantrey,³ Shee,⁴ and Smirke.⁵ I had never previously seen [any] of the trio, and as I had no close conversation and could not hear their talk, I can say nothing about them. Croker⁶ was there, as full of grimace and gab as usual. Sir William Follett⁷ I had the good fortune to converse with, and with great delight. The Saxon Minister, his voice I never heard. Sir Alexander Grant⁸ and Captain A'Court,⁹ old acquaintances. Poor Lady Peel did not show from having rheumatism. Sir Robert as usual particularly kind and attentive. Charming fine autumnal weather. The agricultural interest prosperous, and the prices for produce

¹ See p. 236.

² Edward Law, first Earl of Ellenborough (1790-1871); governor-general of India.

³ See p. 218.

⁴ Possibly Sir Martin Archer Shee (1769-1850), portrait painter.

⁵ Possibly one of the famous architects of this period.

⁶ See p. 102.

⁷ Sir William Webb Follett (1798-1845); attorney-general; solicitor-general under Peel 1834-5, and again in 1841.

⁸ See p. 102.

⁹ See p. 253.

ÆT. 77 satisfactory. Beef 6d. to 6½d., mutton the same. Wheat from 9s. 6d. to 10s. I never had so much grass at this season, and I certainly never had so large a stock of cattle and sheep.

4th.—Lord Wrottesley¹ (the *new Baron*) and his two daughters came for two nights for the purpose of attending the yeomanry ball, which was reported good.

October 6th.—The review of the yeomanry by Lieut.-Colonel Townsend. A large concourse attended to see the corps in their new uniform, which has been changed in consequence of having obtained the distinguished honour of being called the Queen's Own. The regiment gained high credit from the inspecting officer. The Marquis of Anglesey had attended their drill the previous day and commended their *doings*. After the review a crowd came to Freeford to *lunch, three and twenty* in number. That being accomplished, the Wrottesleys took their departure. The noble Lord did not mention the late election to me, but he had some conversation with Eleanor on the subject. He told her how averse he was to coming forward; that they got him into their committee-room on the Saturday, and told [him] they had a doubtful case, and that unless he came forward they would [*illegible*], and that unless he had done his best for them he should not have obtained his peerage.

17th.—I received the most unwelcome letter I had opened for a great length of time; it was from the assistant-surgeon of the 53rd regiment, with the disastrous report of my poor dear son Dick having had the misfortune to fracture his right leg by being thrown out of a gig on the road

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

from Naas to Dublin. Poor Dick was on his way to Dublin with a brother officer, whose horse was harnessed to the gig to relieve Dick's. He had not gone more than a mile when he began kicking, broke the gig, and threw the two out. The assistant-surgeon wrote to me with the particulars, and assured me his poor patient was doing well. If I don't hear favourable accounts, I shall start for Naas. 1838

On the 22nd, having had comfortable reports of my dear Dick, I set forward with Eleanor to pay my long promised visit to my old friend Lord Combermere.¹ I took my horses to Sandon, from thence I posted by Stone and Woore. We arrived at five, and were ushered into the sitting-room, where we found the new bride, the Viscountess. I really can write nothing particularly pleasing respecting my old friend's *partner for life*, and therefore least said is soonest mended. We found Lord Kenyon,² his son and son's wife in the house; all prominently pleasing, most particularly so the peer. I never met a more agreeable man, with less pomp and pride of aristocratic superiority than usually falls to his grade. They stayed the next day, and I heartily wished they had remained the two following. The noble Baron did me the honour of favouring me with great attention. I found him the just representative of the English country gentleman. A Mr. Egerton of the Tatton family,³ and a Mr. Long, were in the house.

We remained at Combermere until the 26th; happy to say with a daily favourable report of my dear Dick. We had beautiful fine weather; a very comfortable requisite. We returned by the railway from the Crewe station to

¹ See vol. i. p. 244.

² See p. 182.

³ Of the family of Egerton of Tatton Park.

ÆT. 77 Stafford, where my horses met us. The Crewe station, four miles from Nantwich; twelve from Combermere. The road from the latter to Nantwich paved and most horrible. We saved an hour in time by the railway, and *two shillings* in expense. Found all well at home on the 26th.

November Very heavy rain during the night of the 3rd of November. On the 2nd a calamitous fire took place in the Castle Inn, Tamworth. How occasioned, is unknown. Almost the entire inside of the house consumed, and melancholy to relate, six females lost their lives. They were sleeping in the garret; five of them suffocated in one room; the other poor creature burnt. She was a daughter of farmer Smith of Whittington.

6th.—I, accompanied by brother Phil, went to join a Conservative dinner of the North Staffordshire association at Stone. Lord Sandon¹ chairman; between two and three hundred dined. A pavilion was prepared in the yard adjoining the Crown Inn for the purpose. Baring,² the county member, Lord St. Vincent,³ Alderman Copeland, etc. etc., speechified. I returned thanks on behalf of the navy and army, for the toast in their favour. Lord Sandon, on proposing to drink Lord Ingestre and the Conservatives of the south, introduced Dick's name very appropriately, with a hearty wish that he had been the colleague of Lord Ingestre. Mr. Meek announced from authority the favourable result of the last registry, by which it appeared a majority of more than a thousand votes in favour of Conservatism. I returned at night before eleven.

¹ See p. 151.

² See p. 259.

³ Edward Jervis, second Viscount St. Vincent, succeeded at the decease of his uncle in 1823.

On the 8th I and Eleanor dined at Hinckley's; a very large party, and sumptuous fare. Lord St. Vincent was expected, but substituted his daughter, a most accomplished, clever creature, excelling greatly in musick and singing. Will Inge dined. *On dit* that the Captain was smitten with the fair siren, but alas, she did not appear captivated with the Captain's 'whiskies.' 1838

I was now plagued to decide pro or con, whether to continue my objection to the projected new railway through Fulfin, Lord St. Vincent having called upon me, and mentioned his having withdrawn his opposition, and recommending me to do the like, and to make the best terms I could for the land and damage. William Peel also advised the like, but I could not discover what Sir Robert Peel's intentions were.

5th.—I called upon Sir Robert Peel to ask his advice relative to the new proposed railway from Stone. I found the Right Honourable Baronet as usual most kind. He advised me not deciding one way or the other as to pro or con. I took his advice, and acted accordingly. December

On the 11th Eleanor and Bill went to Dunstall to dine and sleep at Mr. Arkwright's. I stayed at home to nurse lumbago, but more especially as I had promised to dine and sleep the next day at Pye's (Clifton Hall), to meet Colonel Thomas of the 20th regiment, who had married a daughter of Mr. Taylor and my brother Justice. Thomas is in Parliament for Kinsale, a good-humoured and gentleman-like man, seemingly more attached to the old school than the modern system of discipline. Sir J. Cave¹ and a Mr. and Mrs. Clements dined. Cave, since the death of his

¹ Sir J. Cave of Stanford, co. Northampton; born 1797; died 1855.

ÆT. 77 father (riotous Will Brown),¹ is in possession of Stretton.² The Baronet apes his sire in size and talk. It appears, from the weekly gazettes of military promotions, that an unusual number of non-commissioned officers are promoted to ensigncys; in my humble opinion to the serious prejudice of the army, unless that class of persons are of a different description compared with what they were in my time. In nine cases out of ten you spoil a good serjeant and make a bad officer.

14th.—The Duchess of Marlborough³ and Harriet Inge called and lunched, to return Eleanor's visit. Her Grace is always particular kind to Eleanor, and invariably brings her an annual present when her Grace visits at Thorpe.

1839
January *January 1.*—My dear Dick arrived to welcome the New Year upon crutches. Poor fellow, he was greatly disappointed by not being accompanied by his doctor, the assistant-surgeon of his regiment, whom he had flattered himself might have obtained leave for the journey, but it could not be allowed. He hired a carriage in Dublin, in the which he was placed at Naas, and proceeded in that situation until he arrived at Freeford. The carriage was lashed on the deck of the steamer, a tarpaulin thrown over it, and a lamp inside to keep him warm. He suffered less than could be expected, and made no complaint of any inconvenience whatever. I was rejoiced to find him safe at home, and looking, after such an accident and so long confinement, better than I hoped for. We got him some tea, and his own home and comfortable room gave him a superior night's rest to what he had experienced for ten weeks.

¹ Sir William Cave Brown-Cave (1765-1838).
Stretton Hall, Derbyshire.

³ See p. 229.

16th.—Eleanor and I dined at Drayton Manor ; found 1839
 as usual a warm reception both from Sir Robert and Lady Peel ; a large party in the house ; the Duke of Newcastle¹ and three daughters, Lord Ellenborough,² Lord Villiers,³ Sir George Clerk,⁴ Mr. Daly,⁵ Bonham,⁶ Newdigate. His Grace of Newcastle was pleased to recognise me the moment I entered the drawing-room, though I had not seen him since I was in command at Nottingham in 1811. He is a heavy, dull, pompous noble. Mr. Daly proposed knowing me when I was on the staff in Dublin ; I was not aware of the honour of being known to him ; the remaining part of the company were strangers, with the exception of Lord Ellenborough, whom I had only met at Drayton at a previous dinner-party. Sir Robert made a rubber, I believe kindly, for my amusement. Eleanor reported favourably of the three Lady Clintons as being unaffected and good-humoured. The night on our return was uncommonly light (as much as a fine quarter of the moon), occasioned by a strong aurora borealis.

Corn continuing high price, which has occasioned violent proceedings with the commercial and manufacturing communities, who are using all means, backed by the monied interest, to depress and to ruin land proprietors, and will eventually, to a moral certainty, bring ruin on the country. It is greatly feared that the present Ministers will support

¹ Henry Pelham Fiennes Clinton, fourth Duke of Newcastle (under-Lyme) (1785-1851) ; lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire 1809-39.

² See p. 279.

³ George Augustus Frederick, Viscount Villiers, sixth Earl of Jersey (1808-59) ; married Julia, eldest daughter of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart.

⁴ The Right Hon. Sir George Clerk (1787-1867) ; sixth Baronet.

⁵ Mr. Daly was M.P. for Galway.

⁶ Mr. Bonham was member of Parliament and friend of Lord Stanley.

ÆT. 77 these anti-corn law speculators in order to retain their places. The Whigs and Radicals will uphold the gang of Melbourne and Co.

23rd.—Lord Ingestre and his brother, Arthur Talbot, came to dine and sleep. I received a letter two days [ago] from his lordship to offer himself and his brother for the visit; rather free and easy. It was under the pretext of wishing to see Dick, but in reality to attend a great meeting at Lichfield the following day on the subject of education. Lord Ingestre is a shallow man, and in his profession, tyrannical; his manners neither courteous or highly polished. As my humble opinion on the prevailing system of general education differs widely from those who supported the principles advocated at the Lichfield meeting, I did not attend, and until I hear better reasons than those advanced in modern times, I shall continue my sentiments as to *general education*.

24th.—I went with Eleanor to pay a visit at Beaumanor Park, for the purpose of the annual Loughborough Ball; took my horses to Ashby, and posters from thence.

Saturday 26th.—Mr. Danvers, Miss Taylor and Miss Freemantle with him, and Lady Heygate dined.¹ Mr. Danvers an agreeable good-humoured man. Miss Taylor the daughter of an old acquaintance of mine in the 25th regiment; a lively agreeable girl.

On the Saturday I walked to call upon Tom Burnaby and Mr. Oliver, both residing at Quorndon, the former at his school, surrounded by a numerous flock of his own, as well as a full complement of pupils. Mr. Oliver (con-

¹ Isabella, fourth daughter of Edward Mackmurdo, Esq., married in 1821 Sir William Heygate, alderman of the city of London, and M.P. for Sudbury.

valescent from serious illness) living in a house once of 1839 great celebrity, having been the seat of the distinguished sportsman, Meynell. The stables, kennels, etc. etc., now in the occupation of Lords Suffield¹ and Gardner.² I had never seen these buildings, and did not obtain either amusement or pleasure from the sight.

28th, Monday.—We left our hospitable host after passing a visit pleasantly. The weather had been winterly with snow and frost. We reached home between three and four, and found both my dear boys awaiting our arrival.

February 1, Friday.—A good deal of snow and sharp February frost. Corn markets lower; wheat 10s. 6d. large measure; barley 5s. 3d. I sold two fat cows, bought for £12 each in August, for £40. Violent efforts now making for the repeal of the corn laws by the manufacturing interest, aided by corn jobbers and monied knaves. The great argument used in support is the low price of wages in Germany and on the continent, and consequently by the cheapness of bread. Notwithstanding this, our manufacturers are amassing vast fortunes unknown to an agriculturist. What is to become of England if dependant on foreigners for maintenance.

8th.—In consequence of the exertions now making by the most violent meetings of the manufacturing and monied community for the repeal of the corn laws, we had a meeting at Lichfield at which I presided, to prepare a petition to both houses of Parliament, praying for protection of the landed interest so unjustly and so injuriously attacked. It is

¹ Edward Vernon Harbord, fourth Baron Sulfield; born 1813; married Charlotte, daughter of the second Lord Gardner.

² Alan Legge Gardner, third Baron Gardner (1810-83).

ÆT. 77 not possible to conjecture what might be the consequence of repeal of the existing corn laws by causing England to depend on *food* from its neighbours. Remarkable fine weather just now for the season.

On the 15th I rode to call upon two suffering invalids, Misters W. and Edmund Peel; they were each just risen from a tormenting, tedious fit of the gout. I had a long *tête-à-tête* with each, occupied mostly on the subject of the corn laws. William Peel, like his brother Sir Robert, friendly to the existing system. Edmund, *au contraire*. His son says, 'his father argues with an eye to the manufacturing interest.' Ministers appear to be shuffling most singularly on the subject; fearful of the Conservatives and under complete control of the Radicals.

16th.—A Mr. Baxter, a solicitor, employed against the projected railway from Stone to Rugby, with a petition to Parliament for my signature, *sixty feet long*. I cheerfully added my name to the lengthy roll.

25th.—Captain Carnegie of the 53rd regiment came to pay his friend Dick a visit. The Captain was on his way from the north of Scotland to join the 53rd in the Mediterranean; a quiet, good-humoured Scotchman, with an unamiable impediment in his speech. William and Charles Inge came in the evening, the latter (like a good-humoured obliging soldier as he is) expressly for the purpose of escorting my dear Eleanor the following day by railway to London, *en route* to Hall Place¹ for the fulfilment of an engagement to attend the marriage of Miss East² as one of

¹ See p. 137.

² Marianne Gilbertha East married John Joseph Peyton, Esq., of Wakehurst Park, co. Sussex.

the bridesmaids. Miss accordingly left home in my carriage soon after ten to Birmingham, and from thence by railway to London, where she arrived by seven, and found the Miss Madan's carriage at the station to receive her on arrival, and to conduct her to their house in Regent's Park still under convoy of excellent Charles. 1839

She slept at the Madans', who were kind enough to take her in their carriage to the station, from whence the trains start to convey her to Maidenhead in fifty minutes, where she was welcomed by Lady East *en carrosse* to carry her to Hall Place. The gallant Charles Inge did not resign his charge until lodged in a coach in the train to Maidenhead. My dear child's journey was thus accomplished most agreeably, and without let or hindrance of any description.

March 3, Sunday.—Walked to Whittington Church in March preference to a seat with my dear Dick in the phaeton. A continuation of fine mild open weather for the season. Corn markets at a stand as to prices. Buyers and sellers not knowing what to do in consequence of the agitation respecting the corn laws; the manufacturing and monied men continuing their efforts to injure the agricultural pursuits by persevering [in] their endeavours in the House of Commons to repeal the protection afforded the landed interest by abolishing the corn laws, and granting free importation of all sorts of grain. Woe to old England should that ever take place. Notwithstanding the complaints of the manufacturers, exportation increases yearly, and these gentry are acquiring and retiring with their hundreds of thousands, but, alack-a-day, an agriculturist retiring with a tenth of that sum is never heard of.

The assizes at Stafford on the 12th of March. A melan-

ÆT. 78 choly calendar of crime of increasing magnitude as to numbers as well as offences. The two men committed for the horrid burglary, felony, and arson at Wood's Whittington, pleaded guilty. The judge, Erskine,¹ thought proper to sentence them to *transportation for life*; from the nature of the crime, it was fully expected they would have undergone the utmost penalty of the law, which, if ever merited, was fully deserved in this disgraceful case. What a falling off in the attendance of our gentry at our country assizes!

A long debate in Parliament continuing five nights on the subject of the existing corn laws.² The manufacturing and monied interest making every exertion to effect a free trade corn to the utter ruin of the agricultural interest, and probably, if it took effect, might occasion the downfall of the country by revolution and subsequent ruin. Fine open weather with occasional March east wind.

April 21st.—My dear Dick improving daily in health and in *gait*, having abandoned his long crutches and making way with the help of two sticks.

He and I proceeded in the phaeton on the 24th to pay a long-promised visit to my nieces at Ashbourne, where we arrived, after facing a sharp north-easter across the old forest of Needwood, between four and five o'clock. We found the settlers, consisting of Bess and Mary Dale, Kitty Dalby and her brother, comfortably fixed in the house where formerly the Haynes's dwelt in Church Street. They received us joyfully and with much hospitality. The magnificent old church at Ashbourne was undergoing great

¹ Thomas Erskine (1788-1864); judge.

² Sir Robert Peel wrote on the 19th March 1839 to the Duke of Wellington, 'You will have seen we had an excellent division on the Corn Laws last night, about seventy of our usual opponents voted with us.'

improvements by being new pewed. The structure is one 1839
of the finest I have seen, and according to report it is
intended that the inside shall be made worthy of the exterior.
The family at Ashburn Hall were in London. I went over
the lower apartments with Dick, pointing out the various
alterations that had taken place since it was the residence of
my father, etc.

May 1.—Our petty sessions at Whittington. Pye and May
Taylor attended; nothing of consequence; two assault
cases, and the commitment of a very young thief, quite a
child, only nine years old, for stealing and carrying away
from a plough a ploughshare. We agreed on account of
the youth of the *felon* to admit him to bail. The plough-
share was nearly as long as the boy was high. He was
detected when carrying it off, and seen to throw it into the
canal. I dined at Little Aston. Lady Oakeley¹ and her
daughter and son-in-law of the party. My lady, the
widow of the eldest son of the late Sir Charles Oakeley, a
Dutch woman, and *ci-devant* beauty; rather a dull party.

On the 9th some cold rain, hail, and sleet. A joyous
report reached us on the ninth that the Whig ministers
had resigned, and Sir Robert Peel been sent for by the
Queen to form an administration. The ministry resigned
in consequence of being able to obtain only a majority of
five in the House of Commons on the second reading their
bill for dissolving the constitution of Jamaica.² A singular

¹ Charlotte Augusta Ramadier de Lormet of the Château de Meysembrock in the Netherlands, only daughter of Colonel de Lormet; married in 1820 Sir Charles Oakley, who died in 1829.

² Hume, the radicals and Sir Robert Peel opposed the bill, the object of which was to suspend the constitution of Jamaica for five years in consequence of the difficulties made about the emancipation of the slaves.

ÆT. 78

circumstance occurred to me. I was desirous of obtaining Sir Robert's opinion with respect to the proceedings relative to the proposed railway passing through Fulfin, and wrote to him on the 8th, little imagining the honour that was awaiting him at the time I was writing. Notwithstanding the extraordinary event that must naturally engage the *Prime Minister* at the moment, he replied to my letter by return of post, a proof of his condescending kindness to so humble an individual as myself.

Eleanor wrote on the 10th from the Admiralty, and sent a list of the new administration that was expected to take place. The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert had been sent for by the Queen on the late ministers' resignations having been accepted.¹

12th.—The happy event of Sir Robert Peel's becoming Prime Minister was marred by the arrival on the 12th with the news that his ministry was not to succeed, and that the Queen had again accepted the services of Lord Melbourne and the Whigs, in consequence, it is said, that her Majesty insisted on retaining two of the ladies of the bedchamber, to which Sir Robert would not agree. London was in a most extraordinary state of excitement, naturally indeed, by so extraordinary an event. How it is to end cannot be conjectured. The Queen has lost all her popularity. It is to be feared that trouble and perplexity may await the violence that these unheard-of proceedings may occasion.²

¹ 'The Queen requests Sir Robert Peel to come to her as soon as he can, if possible by two o'clock.'

² 'The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the ladies of her bedchamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings.' Letter from the Queen to Sir Robert Peel, May 10.

On Monday 13th Sir Robert Peel in the House made a powerful speech to exhibit the particulars that had led to his resigning the situation of Premier, a luminous and grand display of oratory, and a severe animadversion on the Queen's ministers, under whose control her Majesty had acted.

The following day Lord Melbourne made an exposé in the House of Lords, poor and paltry. He was replied to by the Duke of Wellington in a masterly speech reporting the particulars that had occurred as far as he was concerned, relating his interviews with the Queen, and severely lashing the minister for his proceedings.

15th, *Wednesday*.—Severe sharp frost, with ice as thick as a half-crown piece; the like on the 16th. The former day Dick and I dined at Packington; a small party; Tom Levett in his usual high spirits well put up by goblets of sherry. I had a letter from Mr. Tootal to say he could not accede to the proposal he had formerly made respecting the land to be occupied by the railway at Fulfin. Having consulted Dick and taken Sir Robert Peel's letter into consideration, I wrote again to Mr. Tootal to say that as I understood the promoters of the railway would be inclined to offer more to the opponents on their Bill getting into the House of Lords, I would consent to withdraw on the terms he had proposed. I received an answer approving of my offer. I was glad of it, as the subject kept me in a state of agitation.

Florendine set out for London on the 15th per coach to Coventry, to join the railway from Birmingham for the purpose of escorting home my darling Eleanor after the longest absence she had ever made from me.

Tumults and rioting have been displayed in Lancashire,

ÆT. 78 and attempts at Birmingham by a gang of discontented unprincipled fellows calling themselves Chartists¹ and national conventionists, all the effect of that curse on the country, the reform bill, dovetailed and clinched by the still greater evil, the municipal act. These two laws have established a disorder in the constitution, that will prevent this country ever again enjoying the social happiness of days past and never to return.

20th.—Whitmonday and Old Green Hill Bower. Dick attended the jollity and fun, which his father, when of the son's age, delighted to partake. An overflowing company with the usual shows of wild beasts and other pastimes, the day was conspicuous. I had the usual visit from the Morrice dancers in their party-coloured robes, but the old musick of tabor and pipe was missing.

Dick and I called upon Sir Robert Peel on the 22nd, but did not see him. I thought an early visit due to the Baronet for his very kind attention to my letter alluded to heretofore. Strange times as to the situation of the agitated state of the country, and still more agitated state of the Governors, meaning the Queen and her ministers. Tumultuous meetings of the disaffected in many parts of the kingdom, and language used, unheard of in former days; mischief I fear is brewing; *nous verrons*.

Fine summer day on the 26th. I was prevented accompanying my children to church by being taken suddenly unwell from smoking some new ill-flavoured tobacco before breakfast, which overcame me, and for two or three hours

¹ The people's charter had been finally agreed upon and adopted by the Chartists in 1838. It consisted of six main points. (1) Universal suffrage. (2) Vote by ballot. (3) Annual Parliaments. (4) Payment of members. (5) The abolition of the property qualification. (6) Equal electoral districts.

caused so complete a depression and lassitude, I could scarce walk ; it went off. I had only to regret my not being able to attend as usual my devotions at Whittington.

29th.—Began to sow turnips notwithstanding the continuance of dry weather. Dick, self, and Eleanor dined at Shenstone Park ; a daughter of the late Tom Lister's staying there. She is now a person of rank and consequence, having become maid of honour to our capricious Queen, in consequence of her late sister's marriage (Lady J. Russell) with Lord John, the Secretary of State. She was the widow of Lord Ribblesdale and died last year.¹

30th.—John Dalby, his sister, and the two Dale girls came to pass a week with us. The general state of the country, and the very uncertain situation of the ministry, occasions excitement as to a dissolution of Parliament. Dick having in consequence just received a letter from Mr. Benbow, marked 'private' (he is Lord Ward's trustee), to mention that some influential men having been consulting respecting South Staffordshire, and to request to know what Dick's views as to the representation in case of a vacancy. This communication must be considered as highly flattering to Dick, Lord Ward being both the great monied man as well as possessing the greatest individual interest in the south. If his lordship is disposed, his money-bags will drive the Whigs out of the field ; but I shall advise, that if he becomes a candidate, better care is taken of the expenses, and more security for his not being called upon for further demand than what he originally undertakes. Dick of

¹ Adelaide, eldest daughter of Thomas Lister, Esq., of Armitage Park, co. Stafford ; married the second Baron Ribblesdale in 1826 ; he died in 1832 ; she married secondly in 1835 Lord John Russell, and died in 1838.

ÆT. 78 course relinquished all proposals as to his becoming a candidate for Lichfield.

June On the 5th our monthly petty sessions at Elford. Pye, Taylor, and self; little business and of a trifling nature. Pye was obliged to return home early from being unwell. He is a weakly constitution, a worthy good man, and an excellent magistrate. Mr. Briscoe came here to hold some conversation on electioneering business, and in consequence of a letter he had received from Mr. Benbow advising that no contest should be pursued for the south division. This advice was thought by us a little extraordinary after that gentleman's letter to Dick giving a sort of encouragement for an opposition to Colonel Anson.¹ We have pretty good reason to believe that Mr. Benbow is a snake in the grass, and using underhand means to secure Lord Ingestre's seat. I advised Dick to write to Sir Robert Peel to communicate what had passed. The Baronet kindly replied to Dick's letter by return post, to say he had not been consulted at all on the subject, that he did not think a dissolution at present probable, and that at all events he did not consider a contest desirable. There is no probability of an individual Conservative coming forward with a large purse to sustain a contest, which might probably be successful, and it is rumoured that Hodgetts Foley,² a determined Whig, full of money, is not an unlikely man to be prevailed on to offer himself if the Conservative party make an attempt for a second member. Dick relinquished all views on the county, and has turned his attention to the city, but the

¹ See p. 200.

² John Hodgetts Foley, born 1797; grandson of the first Baron Foley; married Charlotte, daughter of John Gage, Esq.

Lichfield present constituency will require cautious consideration before embarking in so troublesome a sea. 1839

Dry harsh uncomfortable weather until the 13th, on which day Dick returned from Leamington, and a friend of his (Mr. Ormsby Gore,¹ a youngster in the 53rd regiment) arrived to pass some days, and brought rain, and on the 14th we had an extraordinary thunderstorm, with uncommon large drops of rain and frozen pieces of ice of considerable size and rough uneven surface. Pieces were picked up in front of the house measuring an *inch* across. Much damage done to the hothouses in the neighbourhood. I took in the waste ground by the gate of entrance at the London road, and finished the railing and paling on the 15th.

3rd.—Our petty sessions at Whittington and the general July quarter sessions at Stafford. My colleagues Pye and Taylor went to the latter and joined me at Whittington on their way back. The petty session was petty, but at Stafford the business was next to overwhelming from the sad increase of crime. Our Whig ministry hold on their places notwithstanding the small majorities of five and two on two great questions, the former the Education Bill, the latter the Jamaica.² The Royal Monarch not gaining favour with the people, and her Majesty's popularity greatly on the decline from the death of Lady Flora Hastings³ (lady-in-waiting on the Duchess of Kent), occasioned by sufferings from calumnious reports originating with the

¹ Probably of Porkington, co. Salop.

² The General makes a slip in his figures, for the Jamaica Bill was carried by five votes.

³ Lady Flora Elizabeth Hastings (1806-39); lady of the bedchamber to the Duchess of Kent; daughter of the first Marquis of Hastings; subject of a court scandal 1839.

ÆT. 78 court, in which the Queen is supposed to have had a share. I am in uncertainty as to a trip to town to attend a levée. Doubts exist if there is to be another this year. I am desirous to present Dick; but he thinks it might not be proper to appear at Court under the circumstances of his being on sick leave.

15th, Monday.—A serious riot of the Chartist mob at Birmingham, two houses burned and property destroyed to the amount of £30,000. Very great neglect ascribed to the new magistrates recently appointed under the Municipal Bill. The Mayor and magistrates should be described as tools of the existing administration, being in fact nominated by the Secretary of State, home department.¹

21st.—I and my dear children made our weekly walk to Whittington Church.

Here ends this volume. The journal must be drawing to an end.

August August 5.—I sent four fat oxen to Lichfield cattle market, a new meeting established to be held the first Monday in the month. It was but thinly attended; the price was not offered that I expected for my bullocks.

7th.—Our monthly petty sessions at Elford. Pye and Taylor attended; not much business. From the unsettled state of the weather, corn has been rising in price, and unless the season becomes more propitious, I fear wheat may assume an alarming price, and at these times, with the confused state of the manufacturing population already shown by the riotous and tumultuous assembling of the

¹ The mob held possession of Birmingham for some hours, and the Duke of Wellington declared he had never seen a stormed and sacked town in so bad a plight.

people, events of an alarming nature may be looked for. 1839
Hopes may be entertained that the examples at the late
Warwick assizes by the condemnation of three of the rioters
at the Birmingham break-out and burnings, may have a
salutary effect.

On the 19th Dick and I drove over to Drayton to call
upon Sir Robert Peel on his arrival in the country after the
long Parliamentary campaign. We did not find the Baronet
at home. A very heavy thunder-shower just caught us as
we entered Freeford grounds. Notwithstanding the sad
unsettled state of the weather, I began my harvest on the
20th with good crops of all sorts of grain, which is pretty
general in the neighbourhood.

The Chartist disturbances that have occurred in the
manufacturing districts are subsiding. The trial and con-
demnation of the three rioters and incendiaries at Warwick
for the Birmingham tumult has alarmed the mob re-
formers. As is usual, the heads and promoters of these
confusions in the country escape; and the poor dupes of
their workings become the victims. If the Government of
the kingdom encourages, and indeed promotes anarchy to
serve their own ends, what can be expected. Ministers
have created a power they are unable to control.

24th.—Sir Robert Peel paid a visit, and as usual expressed
himself cordially, and complimented me on looking in good
health.

Having felt desirous to make a trip to Derby by the new
railway, I and Dick started after breakfast for Tamworth on
the 31st to meet the Birmingham train at a quarter before
nine. We left the station at that time, and arrived in Derby
five minutes before ten. The work is a wonderful display

ÆT. 78 of man's exertion, and of the vast wealth of this country ; but as we *flew* along, I could not but feel the forlorn and dilapidation exhibited all the way on the immediate sides of the railway from the clearings and cuttings for the embankments, the removal of fences, and the small partitions left in the many fields on the line.

We left Derby at twenty minutes before twelve, and we were at Freeford a quarter after *two*.

September *September* 9.—Mr. Ormsby Gore¹ (Dick's friend) of the 53rd regiment came for the purpose of seeing the sports of Lichfield races. He was on his way to join the regiment at Corfu. What a woeful change Whittington Heath exhibited on the 10th, the first day of Lichfield races, not one nobleman's carriage where I have seen eleven coaches drawn by six splendid horses, and the stand filled to overflowing with all the fair belles of the county ; on this occasion not occupied by more than threescore persons. The Great Commoner, Sir Robert Peel, was present, and with Lords Bradford² and St. Vincent³ were all the great. The day was uncommonly fine, and brought to the Heath a considerable assemblage of horse and foot. There was little sport to gratify them. The stewards were Mr. Manley and Mr. D. W. Russell.

The second day was most unfavourable from continued rain ; not one lady in the stand, and not more than ten men. The glory of Lichfield races is gone by. My son Dick is elected steward for next year, if his redcoat does not require him elsewhere. Success to a good benefit.

Gore left us to proceed by railway to London. I received an invitation from Sir Robert Peel to dine at Drayton on

¹ See p. 297.

² See p. 252.

³ See p. 282.

the 18th to meet his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge,¹ and at the same time a card from Sir Robert and Lady Peel to invite (for a ball) self and children; but unfortunately both parties were postponed in consequence of the measles having appeared, Miss Peel having been taken ill. A continuation of melancholy unseasonable wet weather.

Michaelmas Day. Dick and his sister attended divine service at Whittington. I was prevented by attack of lumbago. In the evening my dear Dick left us to take his departure by Birmingham mail for Plymouth to join the depôt. I was grieved to lose him, finding my infirmities thickening about me, and the great benefit I found in having my son's assistance on all business concerns, private as well as publick; but considering how much it was for his advantage at his age to have employment that must benefit his future life, my feelings must of course give way to so excellent and affectionate a son.

On the 1st October I sent a ram lamb to my old friend October Lord Combermere. It was delivered to his man at the Stafford railway station, and my man returned with a present of two Neapolitan pigs of the *Combermere Breed*.

On the 3rd Eleanor and I dined at Manley's; a long table party, but nothing lively or entertaining.

The following day we dined at Drayton; eighteen at dinner. The Right Honourable Baronet I thought looking thin and wan. Lord Ellenborough,² Sir George Murray,³ Alexander Grant,⁴ Chantrey,⁵ Messrs. Horne Took, Drummond, A'Court,⁶ etc. etc., neighbours Shaw and Manley.

¹ See p. 330.

² See p. 279.

³ Sir George Murray (1772-1846); general and statesman.

⁴ See p. 102.

⁵ See p. 218.

⁶ See p. 253.

ÆT. 78

Reported that the schisms at Court will drive the Duchess of Kent to a foreign country, and that the chopping and changing resignations and radical reformers must ere long upset the ministry.

On the 8th a newly formed agricultural society had their first meeting and cattle show. Mr. Pye came to Freeford in the morning. We went together in[to] the meeting. The show of cattle was nothing extraordinary, and the dinner, with Mr. Mott as chairman, a dull but noisy concern. The yeomanry regiment being assembled at Lichfield, many of the members partook of the dinner. The society was not well formed, and partook a good deal of electioneering politicks by the friends of Lord Lichfield. Pye was particularly anxious to have introduced the subject of the existing efforts now making for the repeal of the corn laws, but he could not prevail on the chairman or secretary to permit the matter being discussed after dinner. I believe the secretary, Chawner, was tinged with some political feeling towards Lord Lichfield, who is not friendly to the existing corn laws.

On the 16th I proceeded per railway from Tamworth to Derby, and immediately *changed horses* and on to Nottingham, in my way to pay a visit to Sir Jukes Clifton,¹ and to bring home my dear Eleanor. The railway conveyance for expedition is quite wondrous. One hour from Derby to Tamworth, and thirty-five minutes from there to Nottingham. I met a kind welcome at Clifton, a magnificent country gentleman's residence; the house very large, but incommodious. The place altogether wanting the requisite

¹ Sir Jukes Granville Jukes Clifton, married secondly 1821 Marianne, daughter of John Swinfen, Esq. of Swinfen, in Staffordshire.

repairs and improvements occasioned by many years of neglect. I reached Nottingham by one o'clock, and took the opportunity of an idle hour or two to wander about the town to gratify the associations of juvenile days of three-score years past. The old academy in Howard's Gate and the new one in Parliament Street alike drew my attention, and brought the schoolboy to my thoughts. I was lounging in the market-place, and observed a smart carriage at a distance with two ladies, both of whom on seeing me kissed their hands to my surprise. They proved to be Lady Clifton and Eleanor, who had come on purpose to carry me to Clifton. They had been to the railway station and were on the look-out.

I remained at Clifton until the 19th, and after a pleasant visit Sir Jukes very kindly escorted self and daughter to the railway, and we were at Derby in just half an hour from leaving Nottingham. We reached home by four o'clock much to my satisfaction, as I find it the best place for my time of life.

Eleanor and I dined at William Hartopp's on the 30th, and were half perished returning at night. My keeper, that I took with a high character from Mr. Boulton King (Bellows), gave me just at this time [*sic*], in consequence of having discovered him to be a very great rascal, being in league with a notorious poacher, and sweeping away all my game. He also pursued other game by carrying off my cook. I was obliged to discharge them both at an hour's notice.

November 6.—Mr. Wolferstan, who qualified last sessions November for our Hundred, joined us. I do not augur any great advantage from obtaining the returns called for under the

ÆT. 78 act. The surveyors will fill them up to suit their convenience, and it cannot be expected of magistrates to audit and correct the number of returns presented. We took into consideration the New Constabulary Act, which no doubt may be of great publick use in the manufacturing districts, but for the present not required in agricultural divisions as in North Offlow.¹ Crime is created in a great measure with the manufacturing population in the proportion of ten to one; therefore the expense for prosecution and prevention should be rated accordingly, and in my humble opinion the Hundred of Offlow North should decline (at all events for the present) being influenced in the provisions of the act.

An adjourned quarter sessions is to be held at Stafford on the 20th expressly for the purpose of considering the act. I should like to attend, but for the defect of my hearing, which debars my taking any part in publick business.

Serious riots and rebellious proceedings at Newport (Wales) this week by a vast assembly of the manufacturing population under the new traitorous title of chartists, headed by a person of the name of Frost,² a radical and friend of the present ministers, by whom he had been made a magistrate. Upwards of twenty of the mob shot by the troops, and perhaps if there had been ten times twenty, it might ultimately save the spilling of blood. Such is the effect of the reform act, and more especially the municipal reform.

¹ The constabulary was to a certain extent reorganised at this time to check the riots.

² Frost, a linen-draper at Newport, had been created a magistrate, but had been removed by Lord John Russell. On the 4th of November with a mob he assaulted the town, but he was beaten off by Mr. Philips, the mayor. The leaders of the mob were captured and brought to trial.

Her Majesty Queen Adelaide arrived at Sir Robert Peel's 1839
on the 11th from Lord Howe's¹ at Gopsall, and on the 13th
paid a visit to the city of Lichfield.

I and Eleanor went to Dunstall on a visit to the Arkwrights on the 12th for two nights. It was not known at Lichfield, when we left home, whether the Queen would honour the city. I received a letter from my brother Phil early in the morning of the 13th that her Majesty was expected at two o'clock, and that a procession was proposed to meet her at my lodge gate. I accordingly started off and joined the procession in my phaeton. The attendance was more numerous than could have been expected on so short notice, and the display of blue flags and green arches did the city great credit. The Queen went to the cathedral and attended the evening service, placed by the Dean in his stall. Her Majesty was pleased to express her grateful acknowledgments by letter from Lord Howe for the loyal attention she had experienced. I returned to Dunstall to dinner, and home the following morning; a pleasant agreeable visit.

16th.—I was called to Elford to meet Mr. Pye for the purpose of hearing an atrocious case of poaching by a violent attack on Colonel Howard's² keepers at Elford by five armed villains, three of them with guns, which they discharged at the keepers, wounding two of them, one seriously and dangerously. The contest was five and five; three of the poachers taken, and committed by us to Stafford for murder.

On the 18th I and Eleanor dined at Kings Bromley; a wearisome way at such a season. We met Lord and Lady

¹ Richard William Penn Curzon Howe obtained the earldom of Howe by creation 1821.

² See p. 249.

ÆT. 78

Wrottesley¹ and daughter, and Lord Bagot² and son. Lane has made great alterations by changing the entrance to the house by the rear instead of the old front ; and improvement certain, both as [to] exterior and interior. The change of approach occasioned us some delay in consequence of missing the carriage-way, or rather mistaking it. I never saw four finer children than the four sons. Poor old Mrs. Lane, cheerful as usual.

19th.—At Lichfield to meet Richard Hinckley in consultation respecting the city municipality as regarded the recent nomination of magistrates in the persons of the Rev. J. Muckleston and Mr. Chawner. A remonstrance had been sent to the Secretary of State by the conservative members of the town council, and a memorial from nearly five hundred householders of the city against the appointment, and at the same time naming Mr. Mott and Mr. Richard Greene as more fit persons. Hinckley was desirous that I should see Sir Robert Peel to solicit his opinion respecting the remonstrance, etc., the main object being with a view to electioneering purposes, as a means to turn out Lord Alfred and to place Dick in his stead.

I called at Drayton on the 20th, and had a long tête-à-tête with the Baronet, who good humouredly allowed a *hearing*. He approved what had been done, but added that the persons in power were so full of *trick* they would not interfere. Sir Robert thought that possibly the Minister might object to Muckleston as a clergyman. An answer was received from the Secretary of State declining to stir the appointments, to the great dismay of the Conservatives, who meditated making some remarks in reply to

¹ See vol. i. p. 130.

² See vol. i. p. 333.

the Secretary of State's official. I promised Sir Robert to acquaint him with the answer from the Home Office, and called at Drayton on the 23rd, but did not find the Baronet at home. 1839

Richard Hinckley was urgent to press Dick's coming forward and offering himself as a candidate on a vacancy, and expressed a wish that Dick should attend a general meeting of the electors on the 10th December for the purpose of making a declaration to that effect. I wrote to Dick in consequence, recommending that if he came forward at all, it should only be with an implied understanding that an invitation agreed to by the most respectable and influential should be presented to him, and with some specific terms as to expenses. I stated that I thought it not advisable for him to attend the meeting, and I added that he of course was aware that Lord Lichfield, holding the situation he did, must of course use all his interest at Lichfield by forming a junction with Lord Alfred.

On the 23rd a very numerous meeting of the magistrates of the county for the purpose of taking into consideration the new Constabulary Act,¹ and how far it might be necessary to carry it into effect generally throughout the county. The court agreed not to adopt it for the present, excepting for the south division of Offlow South, on the motion of Lord Dartmouth.² I was glad to find the magistrates had objected to employing the act generally from the circumstance that far the greater extent of crime existed in the manufacturing districts, and that it was not just to load the agricultural divisions of the county with

¹ See p. 304.

² See p. 98.

ÆT. 78 expense to prevent evils, the origin of which had so small a share attaching to the latter districts.

26th, Tuesday.—Eleanor went to a musical party at Mrs. Simpson's, Lichfield. My ears kept me at home. The party proceedings at Lichfield engaged me a good deal; the projected supper to be given to the electors generally that will accept a Conservative ticket are to be invited. Richard Hinckley, chairman, most anxious for Dick's attendance for the purpose of declaring his willingness to become a candidate the next election in opposition to Lord A. Paget.¹ I don't approve his coming forward unless by the solicitation of *all* the leading men of the party, and then only on conditions to be guaranteed. The supper has been put off from the 10th to the 17th under the expectation of Dick's obtaining leave for a fortnight from the 15th. I hope he may not attend. This donation supper is intended chiefly to acknowledge the obligation to the voters who supported the conservatives in the election for town councillors. I communicated to Hinckley confidentially some hints that Sir Robert Peel had given me with regard to a second remonstrance to the Secretary of State relative to the appointment of magistrates. Sir Robert was so obliging as to write me a long and most useful detail as to the purport of a rejoinder to the Secretary's refusal to change the nomination, and which was pretty nearly adopted. Almost continual heavy rain since the 24th with the exception of the night of the 28th; a sharp frost; rain again on the 29th.

December My very old friend Levett of Wichnor was found dead in his bed on the morning of this day; a happy release

¹ See p. 256.

to himself and those around him. Unhappily no man's 1839
latter days were ever more miserable than his.

10th.—I attended the funeral of my old acquaintance Theo. Levett at Wichnor by invitation as an old friend. He was buried in a vault in the chancel without ostentation or parade. He has left great riches to his younger children with the exception of his son Arthur, to whom he has bequeathed £4000.

14th.—We dined at Richard Hinckley's; a splendid dinner and large party with all the usual good accompaniments of that establishment. As it was agreed by the committee of Dick's friends that he should be requested to offer himself as a candidate to represent the city in opposition to Lord Alfred Paget, it was arranged (by my wish) that he should not attend the proposed supper to be given at the Swan on the 17th, but that a requisition should at the meeting be proposed by the chairman, a copy of which he, Dick Hinckley, was to produce, and to be handed round for signatures. I proposed this mode of introducing Dick, rather than being present at the Swan supper, when he must have given an immediate answer to accept or decline; besides, I considered it much more respectable, as otherwise it might be thought he attended purposely to be proposed.

17th.—The supper at the Swan was attended with all the good effect the Conservatives could wish. Richard Hinckley in the chair with upwards of 400 Conservatives joyously assembled. Hinckley proposed that a requisition should be made to Captain Dyott to become a candidate to oppose Lord Alfred Paget, which was received with every demonstration of applause; a written requisition was

ÆT. 78 produced, and handed round by ten of the influential electors for signature, when the names of 150 electors were subscribed, a grand effort of the party, but from the preliminaries were missing, previous to a final answer to the requisition, a full and particular account of the state of the registry and some arrangement as to finance.

21st.—I went to Lichfield to a meeting of the conservative committee for the Lichfield district of the south division. Few attended. It was to submit a letter I had received from Lord Ingestre to ask a subscription from our district to the general district committee, which was declined on the plea that as our district composed part of the north as well as the south division, and as we maintained our own expenses, we could not contribute to any other fund. In the evening Dick arrived heartily tired of his sojourn in London.

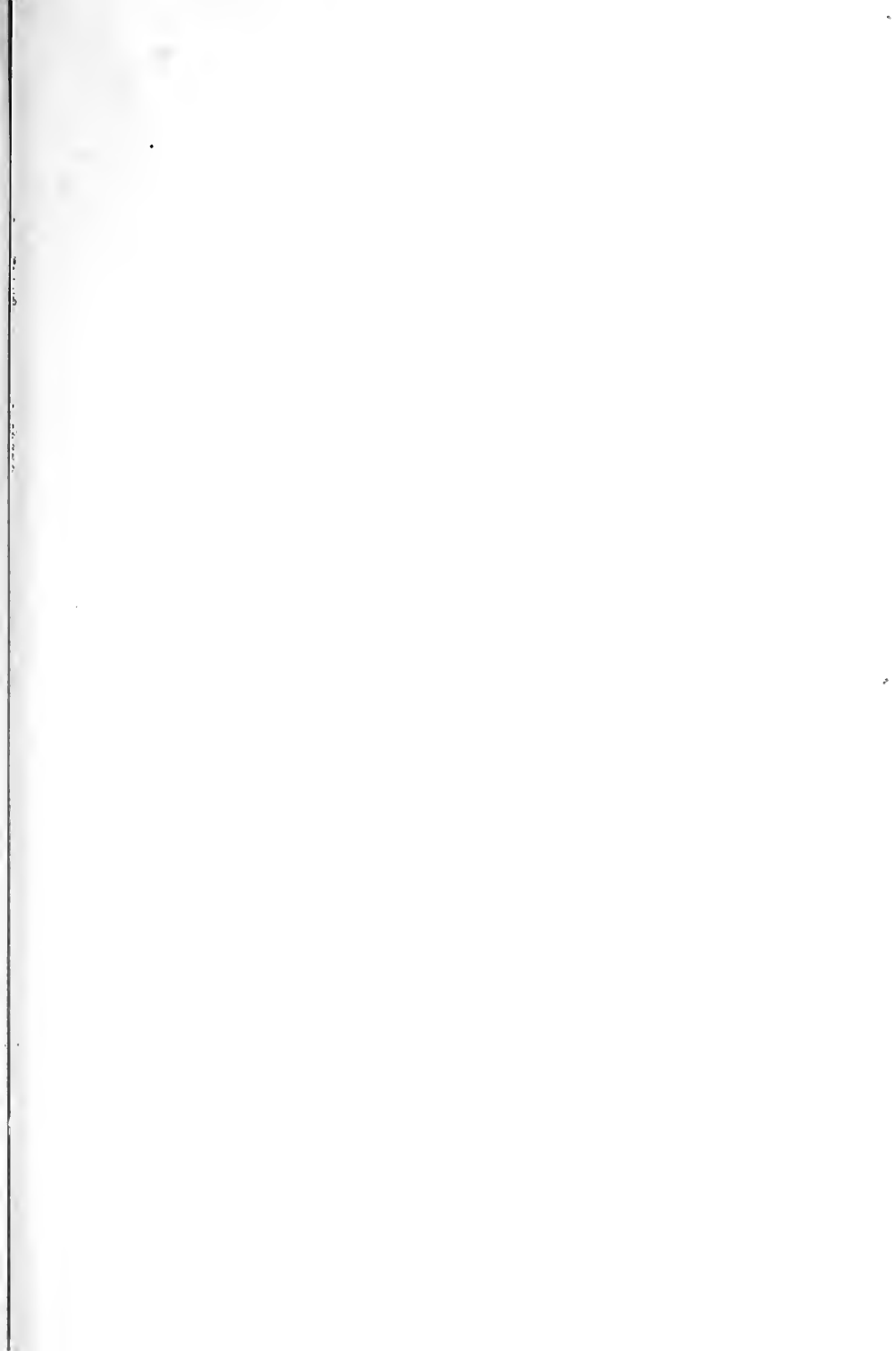
1840
January *January 1.*—I am about to commence the detail and journal of another new year, which perhaps may hereafter be read by my dear children, I hope with some veneration for their old father's memory. We had a petty sessions at Whittington; only Mr. Taylor and self on the bench.

I and Dick went afterwards to call upon Sir Robert Peel. I told him of Dick's progressing favourably as a candidate for Lichfield. He mentioned to me the probability of an early dissolution after the meeting of Parliament on the 16th.

7th.—I and Eleanor went to Beaumanor for the Loughborough ball (which of course I did not attend). My good cousin received us with his usual friendly hospitality. A Mr. Palmer and his son, Lady Heygate¹ and her son dined, and Mr. Butler Danvers.²

¹ See p. 286.

² Afterwards fifth Earl of Lanesborough.





COLONEL RICHARD DYOTT.
"DICK."

From an oil-painting in the possession of Richard A. Dyott, Esq.

The following day the ball. Butler Danvers, Lady Something Nugent, Miss Taylor Moss, Captain Colquitt dined. I called upon my nephews and nieces at Quorndon in the morning, and when the dinner-party set out for the ball, I went to bed. Miss Hincks was staying at Beaumanor; she was a warm friend of Dick's at his county election.

13th.—We dined at Packington to meet Sir Nigel and Lady Gresley;¹ a small party. Mr. Richard Hinckley called in the morning to tell me it was the intention of the committee for conducting Dick's election, to forward to him the next day the requisition signed by nearly 400 names, 250 of which were electors. Mr. Hinckley at the same time told me that after the most minute calculation it was calculated that 600 might possibly poll, and it was believed that 342 were *probably* safe and 381 said to be quite secure.

Dick's answer was received on the 17th, and immediately circulated in town and county. (Hereby affixed.)

To the
ELECTORS
of the
CITY and COUNTY
of the
CITY OF LICHFIELD.

GENTLEMEN,

It becomes now my duty thus publicly to address you, in reply to a Requisition adopted at the late Conservative Festival, and which I have this day received, inviting me

¹ See p. 273.

ÆT. 78 to come forward at the next Parliamentary Election, in opposition to one of our present Representatives.

The first consideration which a candidate is bound to determine, before he presents himself as such to any Constituency, as well for his own satisfaction as the interest of the party whose cause he espouses, is, that he will not be an unwelcome one.

This question, Gentlemen, I am proud indeed to say, is triumphantly answered by the very numerous signatures to the flattering invitation now before me—a demonstration which I may well call overwhelming, alike from the personal influence it embodies, and the still more decisive argument of numbers justifying a belief that success is certain.

ELECTORS OF LICHFIELD! from henceforth I am at your service; and when the time shall come, which cannot be far distant, let us hope it is very nigh, I shall then hasten to the Conservative Standard already planted on the scene of action; a scene endeared to me by every possible tie, and now drawn yet closer by the generous confidence of so large a body of citizens, neighbours, and friends.

I am, Gentlemen,

With every assurance of regard and respect,

Your devoted Servant,

RICHARD DYOTT.

PLYMOUTH CITADEL,

January 15th, 1840.

Success attend him. I fear the expense, but I hope I have saved from my income sufficient to prevent any injury to my dear children.

Parliament met on the 16th, wholly engaged in the

business of Stockdale and Hansard about the breach of 1840 privilege.¹

On the 16th Eleanor and I dined and slept at Grendon, a visit to Sir George Chetwynd;² a large party at dinner. Lady J. Peel,³ son and daughter, Sir J. and Lady Hanmer,⁴ Sir A. Burney, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes, Mr. Applethwaites, Mr. Hanmer; a sumptuous feast with every accompaniment in the very first style of magnificence as to house, furniture, etc. etc. The Baronet extremely kind and hospitable, but witnessing the presence of his two married daughters and son, and feeling for the absence of their mother, rather marred the merry meeting.

25th.—On the 25th the weather was so boisterous and wet I was prevented attending divine service. The disputed point between the privilege of the House of Commons and the power of the Court of Queen's Bench carried on with strong feelings. Law versus Parliament; but the latter carried their point of privilege, and they were right in my humble opinion. The Commons represent the

¹ This case continued for about four years (1836-40). 'An action for libel was brought against Messrs. Hansard, the parliamentary printers, for printing a report, by order of the Commons, in which a book by Stockdale was described as "disgusting and obscene." The defence was the order and privilege of the Commons; the Court of Queen's Bench refused to admit this plea, and Lord Denman laid down that no one who published a parliamentary report containing a libel on any man might plead the authority of the Lower House as a justification. The threatened collision between Parliament and the law courts was averted by the passing of an Act (3 and 4 Vict. c. 9) which provided that all proceedings against persons who had published reports under the authority of either House should be stayed on production of a certificate stating that such publication was sanctioned by Parliament' (Fielden, *A Short Constitutional History of England*).

² See p. 65.

³ See p. 10.

⁴ Sir John Hanmer, Baron Hanmer (1809-81); Whig M.P.; succeeded as third baronet 1828; married 1833 Georgiana, daughter of Sir George Chetwynd, Bart., of Grendon Hall, co. Warwick.

ÆT. 78 community at large, and of course ought to possess the power the latter delegates to the former, that is to frame *laws* for their guidance as a society.

February 10th.—Great rejoicings all over the country on account of the Queen's marriage with Prince Albert; Lichfield stood conspicuous; a subscription amounting to £300 was collected, which enabled the feeding of four thousand hungry souls with beef and pudding, ale and tea in the evening for the fair (or foul) sex.

On the 11th a ball at the town hall for all sorts and conditions; upwards of four hundred merry hearts joined in the dance. I had a dinner-party by long previous engagement. Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. St. George, Mr. and Mrs. William Mott, Miss —, a fine singer, I forget her name, and Miss Inge, George, and a cousin Graham, a son of Sir James's. Also Mr. Kynaston, father to Mrs. William Mott and father to the headmaster of St. Paul's School,¹ who, when at Westminster School, was dreadfully burnt by some fireworks igniting in his pocket.

On the 20th I and Eleanor went to Thorpe for two nights. We met Sir F. and Lady Lawley,² Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Hill, 53rd regiment, Sir Norbery and his daughter, Sir A. Burney and Sir J. and Lady Cave.³ An agreeable party. Lieutenant-Colonel Hill is Dick's commander; a soldierlike good sort of man, though not exactly of the mould and fashions of the old sort of thirty years gone by.

23rd.—Walked with my dear daughter to church. Lord

¹ Herbert Kynaston (1809-78); highmaster of St. Paul's School 1838-76.

² See p. 189.

³ See p. 283.

Skelmersdale¹ had most kindly sent me what he called a *Scotch ear* to assist my deafness, but I could obtain little or no assistance. It was made of copper, in shape like an oyster shell, and to hang on the ear. I have previously tried the like in London. It was not possible to feel more kindness than Lord Skelmersdale showed on the occasion on learning my defect. 1840

25th.—The privilege just now claimed by the House of Commons relative to Stockdale and Hansard just now occupying the minds and opinion of the publick, affording argument, and of course conversation, of all the companies one goes into. Notwithstanding all the threats and all the expectations of the opposition, ministers still keep their places, and the Queen's wedding is likely to assist their efforts to retain office, and what is more of consequence, emolument, to many of them some time longer.

29th.—I went to an agricultural meeting at Tamworth for the purpose of using endeavours to resist the clamour now raising against the landed and agricultural interest. A very respectable assemblage of yeomanry. My friend, Pye, president. It was agreed to petition Parliament, claiming protection of the House to resist the repeal of the corn laws. Every effort being employed by the mercantile, the monied and manufacturing community to injure the landed interest by means of associations, lectures by itinerant brawlers all over the country, and petitions for repealing the existing corn laws. I regret to remark the supineness and want of exertion that prevails with landed

¹ Edward Bootle Wilbraham, first Baron Skelmersdale; born 1771; raised to the peerage 1828; died 1853.

ÆT. 78 proprietors in defence of their rights. Cold east wind all the preceding week, with sharp frost.

March 9th.—I went to Shenstone to the petty sessions for the purpose of mentioning to my neighbours, who I knew would be there assembled, my opinion as to the necessity of pursuing some means by way of petition or otherwise in defence of the agricultural interest, now so grievously attacked by the enemies to the existing corn laws by way of calumnious and unfounded efforts of itinerant lecturers and otherwise for the repeal of the laws, the effect of which must bring ruin on landed property. We agreed to petition the House of Commons by parishes, as having the best effect by supplying the greatest number. I agreed to attend to Whittington and hamlets adjacent; Grove and Manley to Shenstone, and Tee to Aldridge, and Woodhouse to Longdon.

15th.—My dear Eleanor and I walked to church; a trifle of rain on our return.

A continuation of very cold north-east wind, but favourable for lambing. I was engaged in promoting a petition to the House of Commons from the parish of Whittington and the hamlets adjacent, consisting of Packington, Tamhorn, Fisherwick, Streathay, Fulfin, and Freeford. I wrote to Sir Robert Peel to ask if he chose to sign, and also to request him to present it to the House; in answer he said he should very willingly present it, but it was not consistent with the usage of Parliament to speak on a petition the member had subscribed his name to. The petition was generally signed by all owners and occupiers of land.

On the 24th I and Eleanor went to pay a long-promised

visit to my friend Monckton at Somerford.¹ Took my horses to Four Crosses, and posters from thence. We met there Lord and Lady Hatherton,² a Mr. and Mrs. Russell (relations of the Moncktons), the General³ and his new-married lady; a pleasant party. I had not been in company with Lord and Lady Hatherton for a long time (electioneering politicks having kept us apart). I found them kind and civil, and apparently anxious to renew old times by their in a friendly way inviting us to go to Teddesley on our return home, which we declined, but engaged ourselves for a summer visit.

The following day I walked with the General to Stretton, purchased by George Monckton from his father some years ago for £60,000. The General and George have agreed to live together at Stretton, where the latter is making great alterations and improvements, particularly outside by extensive drainage. The house will be very comfortable, but not a cheerful situation. Lord Hatherton and I had some conversation respecting Dick's county election. He told me if Anson's party had failed with regard to Wrottesley's coming forward, it was agreed to prefer Dick for Anson's second votes rather than Ingestre.

31st.—We dined at Mr. Edmund Peel's to meet Sir Jukes,⁴ Lady Clifton,⁵ and Mr. and Mrs. John Peel.⁶ It was many years since I had been in company with the three married sisters (Swinfens); they remind me of former times and olden days. The agitation of the day is now the discussion going forward in Parliament respecting the corn

¹ See p. 192.

² See vol. i. p. 358.

³ Henry Monckton, lieutenant-general in the army, married in December 1839 the only daughter of John Groome Smythe, Esq., of Hilton, co. Salop.

⁴ See p. 302.

⁵ See p. 302.

⁶ See p. 19.

ÆT. 79 laws. Edmund Peel is inclined to an alteration, but with no persuasive argument to induce me to alter my opinion as regards the positive necessity that exists for the protection of the landed interest of the community under the present laws.

April On the 4th of April ripe rumours of a dissolution of Parliament. The ministry enabled to hold their places entirely by having the support of the Queen, and that is said to be slackening by the influence of the Consort Prince Albert exhibiting symptoms of attachment to the Conservatives.

15th.—I was much amused in seeing Mr. Arkwright's very superior fat cattle all fit for the butcher, *eighty-six* in number, *stalled and groomed* like racers.

17th.—The old General's natal day. My prayers and thanksgivings to Divine Providence for the protection hitherto afforded me, humbly imploring a continuance of the Almighty Blessing if pleased by Divine Will to prevail the blessing of health for the coming year. I made a good feed of roast beef and plum pudding for the labourers to enjoy themselves. Although I find the winter has pinched me and curtailed me in a degree of my strength and agility, I trust and hope I may still weather on.

20th.—I called upon Sir Robert Peel, and sat with him some time. I ventured to ask him if there was a probability of turning out the ministers, he answered, 'The opportunity had been marred by the precipitation of Sir J. Yarde-Buller's motion of censure.'¹ Sir Robert also mentioned that he did not think it probable that Mr.

¹ Sir John Yarde-Buller's motion of want of confidence in the government was rejected by 308 to 287.

Villiers'¹ motion renewed respecting the corn laws would 1840
have any effect whatever.

On the 29th Eleanor and I paid a visit to Miss Hincks at Tattenhill for three days; an extremely pretty place; a most comfortable beautifully furnished house in the old-fashioned style, and living in the first order of luxury and high feasting, champagne, red and white hermitage, ices, pines, with every delicacy to correspond. The good and generous hostess exhibiting without ostentation all hospitality, attention, and kindness to the numerous guests. We found staying in the house Sir F. and Lady Goodrick;² Colonel Dickson of the Guards, a widower; Mrs. Dickson, widow, wife to the late brother of the Colonel; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Henry Broughton; Mr. and Mrs. Moore, rector of Eccleshall; Mr. Howard, a clergyman from Northampton; and Mr. and Mrs. Whateley, brother to the Archbishop of Dublin.³ Altogether an agreeable and pleasant party. I had not seen my old colleague, the visiting justice at our county gaol, Henry Broughton, for a long time, and was glad to meet him. We were fully agreed in opinion as to the change in the description of the Stafford bench of justices since our days of attendance. I was never in company with Sir Francis Goodrick; he appears an unaffected good-natured man, his lady very much resembling her brother (the friend of Bill), Billy Paine.

May 2.—We returned home after an agreeable visit. May
The weather still continued hot and dry, with the prevailing

¹ Charles Pelham Villiers (1802-98); statesman; moved a resolution against the corn laws, 1838, repeating it each year, until the laws were abolished in 1846.

² See p. 200.

³ Richard Whateley (1787-1863).

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north and north-east wind. We passed through Wolverhampton on the two market days, and had difficulty to twine our way from the vast population in which the street was crowded. Trade dull from the state of money affairs in America; the principal market for Wolverhampton produce.

In consequence of the defeat of the ministry on Lord Stanley's Bill relative to the Irish constituent registry, reports were rife on the expectation of a dissolution of Parliament.

25th, *Monday*.—We started for the great metropolis by the railroad from Tamworth, from whence we took our departure shortly after one o'clock, and arrived at the Euston Station quarter before seven. Dick had procured a lodging for us in Welbeck Street, and having sent the servants by the early train in the morning, we found everything comfortably arranged, and under Dick's direction dinner prepared. I felt fatigued with the journey; the sort of cross motion in the railway carriage, and the extraordinary speed wearies, though perhaps not in so great degree as posting. One motive for my journey was the wish to have attended a levée in order to present Dick, but I was disappointed, as our gracious young Queen postponed her courts beyond my stay. I found London full to an overflowing, at least judging from the vast influx of people crowding the streets in all manner of ways in cabs, coaches, and various vehicles new to a country clod. I was unwell during my sojourn and glad to return home. I had an opportunity of seeing the Queen and her consort driving in a low phaeton in the Park twice; their appearance did not partake much of Royalty; their equipage and attend-

ance altogether was inferior to many of those to be seen 1840
in the Park. Dick and I had an opportunity of a full
view of the Queen getting into the phaeton from a visit
to the Duchess of Kent. I could not see much to admire
as to countenance or Princely character. The proceedings
of the Court contrasted with the days of George the Third
of gracious remembrance is not favourable to the modern
monarch. The driving daily in the Park and mixing with
the commonalty opens a means for insult by word or deed.
We found great kindness and attention from my old friend
General Hodgson, with whom we dined three or four
times, as also with many of our friends. Dick joined a
party to Epsom races, an exhibition I was not equal to.

Our lodgings were engaged by the week. As two weeks June
expired on the 8th June (Whitmonday), I took my depar-
ture on that day by the one o'clock train and reached home
before eight.

An attempt was made on the 10th June to shoot the
Queen or Prince Albert, or both, by a wretched maniac,
who fired two pistols at them as they were in a carriage
driving up Constitution Hill from Buckingham Palace.
The event has, of course, caused great sensation throughout
the country, and called forth the loyalty of all descriptions,
as far as addresses from the community of all classes
express. Lichfield exhibited from the Mayor and council,
but nothing has been done by the county.

A horrid murder was committed by a Swiss servant of
Lord William Russell's,¹ who cut his master's throat when
in bed and asleep. The murderer, with a view to escape

¹ Lord William Russell (1767-1840); third son of the Marquis of Tavistock; married Charlotte, daughter of the fourth Earl of Jersey.

ÆT. 79 detection, secreted valuables to a large amount, and by making impressions on the door to indicate the house having been broken into, remained until the discovery was made by a female servant, who rose early and found the plate and other articles in confusion and called the Swiss. Circumstantial evidence convicted him, and confession followed. He was executed.

July On the 29th I and Eleanor went to Ashbourne on a visit to my nieces. Our route was by Burton and across the disafforested Needwood, now become full of the produce of every description of rich cultivation, though despoiled of the natural beauty it formerly possessed when I have formerly traversed it horse and foot. I took my horses to Draycot and had posters to enable me to proceed.

We passed two days very agreeably. Major Dale and his wife were staying, and there were few friends to dinner the second day. My very old acquaintance, Mrs. Buckstone, made up a rubber. She reports our acquaintance to have continued sixty-five years.

31st.—The Queen Dowager was to pass through Ashbourne the day we left. Great preparations as far as *laurel* and posies could contribute to receive her Majesty with hearty welcome. I visited the old church at Ashbourne to admire the new pewing, and other highly ornamental improvements. The weather quite delightful; summer actually commenced.

August On the 15th I, accompanied by Mr. Mott, went to Hednesford to call upon Mr. Edmund Peel, our colleague as trustee for our races, in consequence of the deranged state of preparation for that coming event; and as I did not like making any arrangements authorised by Mott

and myself only, and as Edmund Peel's last report was made from gout in bed, we decided to go to him. I should not have troubled myself at all, but on account of Dick being one of the stewards. Mr. H. Cato had taken no steps for erecting posts and rails, notwithstanding Lord Anglesey's interference, nor was a plan concluded as to letting the stand. We found Peel convalescent, and prepared to give us all help. I had not seen his *training lodge*, a remarkable snug box on the border of Cannock Chase, where he had formerly trained all his stud, but now a great reduction made in his racers, and changed to training black-faced sheep. 1840

On the 17th and 18th almost continual rain both days, which occasioned considerable alarm as to harvest. The political state of the country considered externally with regard to threats and appearances from the French, and internally as affects the trade and monetary system, a failure in the harvest and consequent rise in the price of wheat, might urge the disaffected to acts of tumult and outrage.

On the 26th I called upon Sir Robert Peel and accompanied him to his farmyard to look at a famous bull he had purchased; a fine animal. He mentioned having ordered from Stirling a Scotch subsoil plough. Sir Robert told me he was anxious to become a farmer, not for profit, but for the purpose of encouraging the neighbouring farmers, and his tenants in particular, by purchasing superior stock and all agricultural implements of new invention.

The 8th Mr. W. and Lady Jane Peel dined with us to September go to the ball, as also their son in the Rifle Brigade. I happened to mention to Mr. Copeland in the stand that

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I remembered the famous horse Eclipse running at Lichfield seventy years ago.¹ The great event of the old man's memory was blazoned in the newspapers. A young Mr. Wilmot that Eleanor invited to the race, that she met at Miss Hincks's, came on the 7th. Lord Milltown² attended the race and was named for Steward next year. His lordship subscribed one hundred guineas towards a plate. I ordered a Scotch subsoil plough from Stirling, which my bailiff and waggoner with usual obstinacy made all sorts of difficulty in accomplishing the setting it to work, but by perseverance succeeded and liked the article much.

Dick set out on the 12th to return to quarters with a new, what he called, a dog cart, what I should term a common butcher's cart. I did not like the machine; it was something similar to the one he had the accident from in Ireland.

15th.—Eleanor and I dined at Hints. Mr. and Mrs. St. George of the party. He is a constant resident in Ireland, and one of the best in the land. He mentioned the extraordinary change that had taken place in the habits of the lower orders by having become temperate, sober, and orderly, all under the influence of the priests controlled by the great O'Connell. He quoted an instance of some dissolute depraved men in his own village, that are now changed to the most regular. Stock selling well and the markets keeping their price. Wheat, 9s.; barley, 5s.; and oats, 4s. Beef and mutton from 6½d. to 7d. The com-

¹ Haydn says, 'Eclipse was the fleetest horse that ran in England since the time of Childers; he was never beaten, and died in February 1789, aged twenty-five years. His heart weighed 14 lbs., which accounted for his wonderful spirit and courage.'

² Joseph Leeson, fourth Earl of Milltown, born 1799.

plaint amongst the cattle that had prevailed alarmingly has 1840
subsided in this part of the country.

The Lichfield agricultural meeting took place on the 22nd. I had been requested to send my subsoil plough to be exhibited at work, which seemed pretty generally approved. Some persons liked the ploughs with a wheel. I had written to the party in Scotland from whom I purchased my plough on the subject of the wheel; the answer was, 'English ploughmen *follow* the plough instead of *wielding* it to save the pressure on their arms; it is an encumbrance to the subsoil plough, which in soils abounding with large stones must occasionally be required to act as a lever.' The stock exhibited was not super-excellent. Lord Talbot presided at the dinner and Sir Francis Lawley vice. I did not attend; there was a numerous company of yeomen, but a slight show of the neighbouring county gentlemen.

On the 24th Eleanor and Bill repeated their visit to the Birmingham musicals and were as highly satisfied as on the former occasion. The meeting has been well attended and the collection amounting to upwards of £14,000 notwithstanding the death of the poor Princess Augusta,¹ which took place on the 22nd and prevented the Duke of Cambridge and various others from attending. I had the honour of a gracious intimacy with her Royal Highness at one time, and ever received marks of great kindness and attention.

On the 2nd the regiment was inspected by a Lieutenant-October
Colonel Kennedy of the 7th Dragoon Guards. I looked on for a short time. Lord Anglesey and two of his sons

¹ See vol. i. p. 133.

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attended, but we did not recognise. The Marquis's grandson appeared as Captain of the Burton troop (young Lord Paget¹), son of Lord Uxbridge. The appearance of the regiment did great credit to the county, as to men, horses, and military exhibition in the field. The news of the calamitous fire in the naval yard at Devonport arrived, to the dismay of every one. I received the first account from Dick and went to Shenstone to communicate the letter to Admiral Parker. I found he had received some particulars, but none more explicit than Dick's letter. There remained little or no doubt of its being the work of an incendiary. Add to the dire event the like attempt being made at the yard at Sheerness, decidedly the work of an incendiary.

On the 9th we dined at Mr. William Peel's. Sir Robert and Lady Peel and Miss Peel and Lady Hartopp all the strangers. We were only a trio after dinner. Sir Robert very agreeable. The recent court-martial on a captain 11th Dragoons brought to trial on a charge preferred by the Lieutenant-Colonel of his regiment, the Earl of Cardigan, was mentioned. Sir Robert gave his opinion 'that he considered the Earl blameable in not having answered Captain Reynolds' first letter.' At the same time Sir Robert mentioned what an unfortunate disposition Lord Cardigan² had, but that he was clever and succeeded in most undertakings. Sir Robert remarked in course of conversation, 'that there was scarcely a person in existence that had not put forth or said something of an individual that he would regret should

¹ Henry William George, Lord Paget, born 1821; afterwards third Marquis of Anglesey; died 1880.

² James Thomas Brudenell, seventh Earl of Cardigan (1797-1868); lieutenant-general; a man of domineering temper, and always quarrelling with his brother officers.

[it] be repeated to that individual, though it might not be 1840
offensive.'

The country appears to me just now in a state of much anxiety ; rebellion in Ireland, or something very like unto, from the proceedings of the meddlesome knave O'Connell respecting repeal.¹ War in Syria,² in which Old England, as usual, must have a turn ; and our neighbours the French are preparing with every appearance of reality to provoke a war with us.

23rd.—We dined at Drayton Manor. Sixteen at dinner. Lord and Lady Bradford³ and their son Lord Newport, a youngster. I was but little acquainted with Lord Bradford. He appears good-humoured and affable, but I should not suppose him a brilliant man.

The chief topick of conversation was the recent court-martial on Captain Reynolds of the 11th Dragoons, prosecuted by the Earl of Cardigan, Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the regiment, for addressing a most insolent letter to his lordship subservient of every shadow of discipline. The conduct of the Lieutenant-Colonel appears to have been highly blameable, insulting and oppressive, and as far as my experience enables me to have an opinion, unbecoming a commanding officer and replete with all prejudice to the service. The captain was cashiered.

27th.—Eleanor and I went to pay a visit at Wrottesley by pressing invitation from the noble Baron.⁴

I was much amused two days in visiting the extensive farm of two thousand acres in his own hands ; appearing

¹ This refers to the repeal of the Union.

² This refers to the war with Egypt and the defeat of Mehemet Ali.

³ See p. 252.

⁴ See vol. i. p. 130.

ÆT. 79 throughout in a most flourishing state of high cultivation. Turnips in particular, I never saw surpassed. I saw his lordship's subsoil plough at work; effecting the object required successfully. Many of the cattle were tied up with the prevailing disease. It had not been fatal in any instance. Captain Dicken, Lord Wrottesley's principal steward, and a Mr. Duncan, the clerk, attended me; both intelligent well-informed agriculturists.

On the 30th we returned home after experiencing all manner of kind and hospitable attention from the peer and noble family. I doubt if I shall ever see poor Lord Wrottesley again; under the impression that his days are numbered to short account in this world.¹

November On the 6th my dear Dick arrived from Plymouth in his cart, being five days on his journey. He travelled by railway from Gloucester to near Birmingham, which eased his team as well as the driver.

I should not neglect the arduous struggle that took place at Lichfield on the 9th, at the municipal election of the town council. The radicals made all effort, corrupt and lawless, and returned their *butteys*, four to two. Richard Hinckley and Richard Greene the only two Conservatives that succeeded. It was, however, considered as a great event, bringing two respectable men to keep in awe the rabble councillors. Webb, formerly mine host of the George, was elected Mayor; alas, alas, poor Lichfield!

December 4th.—Dick and I dined at Sir Robert Peel's; the company Sir Charles Bagot,² whom I had not seen for some

¹ Lord Wrottesley died March 16, 1841.

² Sir Charles Bagot (1781-1843); governor-general of Canada; second son of the first Baron Bagot.

years, a haughty proud knight; Sir Robert Wilson,¹ of 1840 Queen Caroline notoriety, but a gallant clever fellow; Sir Edmund Hartopp,² looking like treble-distilled vinegar; Mr. Bonham,³ of Parliamentary publicity; and a Mr. Baring,⁴ but of what bearing I am ignorant. I sat next him at dinner; a deaf man can make no new acquaintance unless with great assistance from the new-comer. Sir Robert, as usual, particularly kind and attentive.

5th.—Dick went to meet Meynell's hounds at Black Slough, but the ground was too hard for the sport.

6th.—Sunday; mild soft morning. I and my children walked to Whittington church. Shocking accidents reported in almost every day's newspapers happening on the railways. A coroner's inquest recently awarded a deodand of £2000 on a train; two lives having been lost from shameful neglect.

9th.—Dick dined at Mr. Greene's, and on the 10th at Grove's. On the 11th he and Eleanor dined at Packington. A renewal just now of an attempt to procure an act of Parliament to establish a railway from Stafford to Rugby; the agents pro and con have plagued me, but I came to no answer to either. I mentioned the subject to Sir Robert Peel, and also what I had done; he agreed with me, having himself acted in the like way.

15th.—A meeting of the Lichfield district Conservative association to consider of a resolution of the general committee of the north division recommending Mr. Charles Adderley as a candidate at the next election in the room of

¹ Sir Robert Wilson (1777-1849); general; dismissed from the army for action against the mob at Queen Caroline's funeral 1821; reinstated 1830.

² See vol. i. p. 375.

³ See p. 285.

⁴ See p. 259.

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Mr. Baring, who had made known his intention of resigning. We agreed to support Adderley, at the same time I made known my wishes to prefer a *resident* country gentleman in preference to having a second non-resident member. However, as a Conservative was the object rather than continuing the radical Buller, we were unanimous in our recommendation.

1841
January

January 1.—On new year's day more genial weather. I and Eleanor went per railway from Tamworth to Derby. We made our journey without let or hindrance, having left Freeford at half-past ten A.M. and at home again before four. The buildings at the Derby station are greatly increased, and becoming magnificently extensive.

I sent my waggon on the 2nd to Birmingham for a load of drill-bones, for the purpose of making a trial for turnips in pursuit of improved agriculture. I was much pleased with the effect of the manure, as Wrottesley wished for a trial.

On the 6th a friend of Dick's, Mr. Phillpotts, a son of the Bishop of Exeter's,¹ came for two nights, and was an able help in assisting at our party the following day. He had been in the navy, but on account of his father's politicks could not obtain promotion and quitted, and was employing himself in a colliery and in iron works at Dudley. Dick made acquaintance with him at Plymouth when he was serving as midshipman. He is a nice gentlemanlike youngster.

I was invited to dine at Sir Robert Peel's on the 9th to meet his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, but from pains in my face and the extreme severity of the weather I

¹ Henry Phillpotts (1778-1869); bishop of Exeter 1830-69.

sent an excuse. His Royal Highness was expected from Belvoir to arrive at Drayton on the 7th; his visit was prevented by an attack of gout. 1841

Notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, Dick and his sister proceeded on the 13th to Beaumanor to be present at the annual Leicestershire Ball at Loughborough, and it became a matter of serious consideration how they were to affect the journey, whether by *railway* or roadway. It was finally arranged to employ my two carriage-horses and Dick's two horses of all work and my phaeton, being lighter than the close carriage, Dick driving the wheelers with reins and my coachman the leaders. It has snowed, rained, and frozen in the night; I was apprehensive they would find it very indifferent travelling.

On the 19th Dick went to Stone to attend a meeting of the Conservative annual dinner. Lord St. Vincent¹ had invited Dick and I to accept beds at Meaford² for the occasion, which was, of course, accepted by Dick. A numerous party assembled, Lord Sandon in the chair. Dick's health was proposed by the president with the Conservative electors of Lichfield, and success to him as a candidate; the toast was received rapturously, and responded to in a good speech by the Captain.

21st.—The Groves, Tom Levett, Sir Nigel Gresley,³ Banger Adderley, etc., dined at Freeford; the two latter in order to attend Dick the following day at a Conservative dinner at Lichfield, at which the candidate for the city representation was to preside. Upwards of two hundred dined, a most flattering assembly for Dick's future expecta-

¹ See p. 282.

² Meaford was Lord Vincent's seat in Staffordshire.

³ See p. 273.

ÆT. 79 tions. The two candidates for the north division of the county (Adderley and W. Russell) attended. Sir N. Gresley proposed Dick's health, which was drunk with enthusiastick *uproar*, and to which an excellent reply of thanks was made by Dick. On the health of the two county candidates being given, they each replied most satisfactory. The proceedings of the day augured most favourably for Dick's undertaking at Lichfield.

SONG

Sing! hurrah for Dick Dyott and good St. Chad,
 My honest, true Church-going people,
 The bold frank-hearted Soldier Lad,
 And the Saint of the tall sky-scraping steeple;
 It has weathered the storm a thousand years,
 Despite of Heathen, Rebel, or Rad,
 It shall weather it still, my trusty freres,
 Hurrah for Dick Dyott and good St. Chad.

Have you not heard, when Robert Brooke
 Battered the fair cathedral wall,
 How deadly an aim The Dyott took
 And saw the mad fanatic fall?
 'Twas on Chad's own day the deed was done,
 'And a guerdon meet the spoiler had.'
 Oh! the Dyotts are trumps from Sire to Son,
 Hurrah for Dick Dyott and good St. Chad.

Aye! they've ever been trumps from Sire to Son,
 As the City of Martyrs proudly tells,
 And when she recounts the deeds they've done,
 Her heart with grateful rapture swells;
 They've guarded oft each sacred right
 And she'll trust them again with heart full glad,
 As wise in the Council as brave in the fight,
 Hurrah for Dick Dyott and good St. Chad.

When Whigs, to gain their private ends,
 With filthy Socialists combine,
 And his aid the cold Socinian lends
 To wage foul war on things divine,
 We must up and be doing, my masters all,
 We must up with the good and down with the bad,
 We'll stand by the Church, or together we'll fall,
 Hurrah for Dick Dyott and good St. Chad.

1841

February 1.—Severe frost and fall of snow during the February night with continued snow on the 2nd, on which day the contest for the borough of Walsall between the ruffian radicals and the conservatives took place. The candidate for the former was a Mr. Smith, a manufacturer from Manchester, and chairman of the chamber of commerce, and a Mr. Gladstones from Liverpool in the conservative interest. Smith was brought forward to support the anti-corn law league, and was backed by a bully from Manchester of the name of Acland, chairman of the great corn law league at Manchester. A more severe contest had not latterly taken place, every effort that villainy and intimidation could suggest was employed by the radicals, assisted in some degree by radicals from Lichfield. Riot and probably bloodshed would have ensued, but for the appearance of the Scotch Greys. Gladstones was returned by a majority of forty-one. William Inge was passing through Walsall just at the close of the poll to change post-horses. His carriage windows and two panels were broken by huge stones, and his servant, who was inside, cut on the head.

I went to Lichfield on the 20th to look how things were going on. Agents report all well ; but I fear the coalition

ÆT. 79 of the peers; to the infamous disgrace of both, if they attempt it, and the Whigs will do anything.

24th. — Ash Wednesday; Lichfield Old Fair. I remember when the day was one of great events at Lichfield School, St. John's Street being the receptacle for the horses, and consequently affording fun for schoolboys.

27th.—Went to Lichfield on electioneering business, in consequence of reports from all quarters of immediate dissolution of Parliament, waiting the result of the debate on Lord Morpeth's¹ Irish Registration Bill,² which was only ended on the 26th after four nights' debate in favour of the ministry by a majority of five. I believe Dick's election must mainly depend on coalition or no coalition of the two Lords. As far as calculation can be depended upon, Dick maintains a favourable position. If Lord Lichfield has a contest to support in the county, which is expected, it will be a good event for the conservatives at Lichfield.

March March commenced with weather to fulfil the old saying of coming in like a lion, but the lion's rage abated on the 2nd to moderate fine weather.

On the 3rd petty sessions at Whittington; a full bench in consequence of the High Sheriff Pye being out of office and returning to his magisterial duties; very little business. The ministers having obtained a majority of three on their bill respecting the Irish registration having checked the prevailing expectation of an immediate dissolution of Parliament. On the expectation of a dissolution, I received

¹ George William Frederick Howard, Lord Morpeth, seventh Earl of Carlisle (1802-64); statesman; as Irish secretary under Lord Melbourne (1835-41) carried Irish Tithe, Irish Municipal Reform, and Irish Poor Law Bills.

² Lord Morpeth proposed a definition of the franchise, which was to be given to every man rated at £5 to the poor rate.

a letter from Lord Ingestre to ask me to attend a meeting at Wolverhampton for the purpose of considering what steps might be necessary to take, and asking me to invite the attendance of some neighbours. *Age, etc., forbid my attendance.* My friend Richard Hinckley informed me of the proceedings. There was a large party assembled. Monckton made the opening by proposing that unless two Whigs were attempted, the Tories should be quiet; this was unanimously rejected. It was pretty generally believed this proposal originated with Ingestre to spare a contest. It was then proposed that the meeting should support a conservative candidate to oppose Colonel Anson, which was carried; on which after a desultory conversation Lord Ingestre proposed that in case of a subscription he considered it right and proper that on account of former services, he thought they could not withhold making an offer of their support to Captain Dyott; received with cheers. The next proposal was the terms of the offer to be to call upon the candidate to supply £1000, and the meeting to guarantee all further expenses. Should Captain Dyott decline the other candidates were next. The next on the list was Forster of Walsall and several others. I lost no time in communicating with Dick, and at the same post wrote to Sir Robert Peel for his opinion, and was glad to find that the opinion of Sir Robert and also of my dear Dick confirmed my own, which was on no account to resign his views at Lichfield. Hinckley in the meantime had mentioned the subject to our leading friends in the city, who good-humouredly made no scruples in case of Dick's wishing to try the county. In consequence of Dick's declining the honour proposed to him, Forster accepted the

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invitation to come forward under the above conditions. I felt much gratified with Dick's determination communicated to Hinckley in an excellent letter.

15th.—I called at Elford to return Lord Bagot's¹ visit, who had called upon me whilst visiting at Colonel Howard's.² His lordship had taken his departure. The peer is a good-natured man, and ever kind and attentive towards me. He, like many of his order, has *outripped* his income greatly, and consequently obliged to curtail the splendour of his establishment.

17th.—I received a letter from Walter written by desire of his brother to announce the death of his father my old friend Lord Wrottesley, who had died on the 15th after long suffering.

I called on the 18th at the Moss, and was glad to find the case altered, meaning that the poor suffering girls were progressing satisfactory towards perfect re-establishment of their health from scarlet fever. My old friend from his boyish days, Sir William Parker, having been appointed to the command on the India station, causes a doleful break-up for the female branch of the family at the Admiralty with a sad parting of the admiral to so distant a station, however flattering the distinguished appointment may be to the person and accumulation to the purse. My lambing season has hitherto not been prosperous, though my flock has not had the visitation of some of my neighbours, who have had the dreadful prevalent malady, and lost a large number both of ewes and their lambs.

The plaguing railway intended from Stafford to Rugby, and to pass through Fulfin, has been got rid of in the House

¹ See vol. i. p. 333.

² See p. 249.

of Commons by a majority against it of seventy or eighty. 1841
 I hope there is now a final finish. The Marquis of Anglesey for a length of time was an opponent, but in order to curry favour for his son with some blockheads at Lichfield, who favoured the railway passing near might be of service, having petitioned his lordship to withdraw his opposition, he complied. It is not improbable the proceeding may have been a ruse to oppose, for the purpose of granting the favour *to the good citizens* by subsequently withdrawing.

On the 25th a meeting at Lichfield of the Diocesan school society. The system of *general* education is gaining ground ; I wish I could be satisfied of its general utility either at present or likely to benefit in time to come.

A continuation of fine mild weather occasioning for the farmers a superabundance of turnips unusual at this season. My tenant at Fulfin mentioned that he could find turnip keep for a hundred more sheep than his immediate stock. The Liberal patriot, viz. Whig, the Earl of Lichfield, is making an effort (as report goes) to *swamp* the electors by adding plots of land for gardens to small houses, and thereby making the rent £10 per annum. If this is practised, it must be done either from the motive of weakness or to enhance the value of his property *in toto* for the purpose of sale which is talked of, and that Lord Ward is to become purchaser.

April 4.—I trudged to Whittington to say my prayers. April
 The Lichfield *Radical* magistrates added just now to their usual proceedings by declining to elect from the list of names selected at the vestry of the different parishes of persons to be appointed overseers of the poor, by nominating radicals, not one of which has appeared on the list given in, contrary

ÆT. 80 to usage and directly at variance with the intention of the law. This is one of the sad effects of the new municipality act.

My company broke up on the 15th. I called upon Sir Robert Peel; the Right Honourable most gracious. Sir Francis Lawley¹ called whilst I was there. We walked to look at some draining Sir Robert was making, which I did not altogether approve. I have been engaged sowing the white Belgian carrot on part of Ingle Hill, a new experiment; and also this week sowing a new collection of seeds with clover on the barley procured from Liverpool. I have also been very particular this season with sowing mangelwurzels from seed from Mr. Chawner (a son of the late doctor's), an experimental farmer at Wall, and not the better for being one of the radical magistrates of Lichfield.

17th.—My having now to number octogenary; blessed be God for the general enjoyment of health and for the happiness that divine providence has bestowed upon me, for which I most gratefully adore and praise the Almighty father of all. My esteemed good friend Mrs. Thomas Lister has for several years presented me with a silk purse, her own work; she has not forgotten the anniversary.

May *May Day*.—High debates in the Commons' house respecting Irish constituency. A defeat of the ministry in two instances, and compelled to abandon and withdraw a bill they had brought forward, and which it was thought would have turned them out; but *stick* they seem determined as long as they can.

6th.—To Dunstan. Met there Mr. and Mrs. Peter Arkwright, two agreeable good-humoured people; the lady

¹ See p. 189.

a daughter of an old schoolfellow, Charles Hunt, whom I never met since I left Price's school nearly seventy years ago. A large party at dinner each day with abundance of good cheer and good hospitality. Arkwright's stock of fat and feeding cattle, I should imagine, cannot be equalled in England; upwards of eighty magnificent head of fat heifers and cows to be sold on the 17th; likely to be bought at from £25 to £30 each, in the highest possible condition and *groomed* like racehorses; besides seventy out at grass, lately purchased in York and Lincolnshire.

Great expectations of a *turning out* of the ministry by being defeated on their finance plan; but they stick like bird-lime.¹

14th.—A *seven nights'* debate in the House of Commons on the ministers' budget with reference to admitting foreign sugar on a reduced duty,² and a repeal of the corn laws. The ministry must be in a minority, and it is hoped will resign. Many persons expect they will dissolve Parliament, a measure I hope they may not effect, as an election at Lichfield under a Conservative minister would probably [be] more propitious for Dick than with the present Government. Fine seasonable weather and luxuriant appearance of all nature's works.

On the 19th a meeting was held at the Town Hall called by the Mayor, Mr. Webb (late mine host of the George), for the purpose of sending a petition to Parliament to repeal the corn laws; the only persons of respectability who signed the requisition or attended the meeting were Dr. Harwood,

¹ The whigs were consistent to the end in their love of office, and were determined to risk a dissolution.

² The conservatives, headed by Lord Sandon, attacked the alteration in the sugar duties.

ÆT. 80 Dr. Rowley, and Mr. Chawner, the three leading radicals, and whose object was electioneering purposes under the impression of an immediate dissolution of Parliament; in consequence of the defeat of the ministry in the house on the sugar duties and corn laws, that object for the present has died away; but it is very commonly believed that a change of administration must shortly take place, whether dissolution or no dissolution.¹

28th.—A meeting at Lichfield to petition Parliament in favour of the corn laws; called by landowners and occupiers in the city and immediate vicinity. It was well attended. The Rev. T. Levett took the chair on my proposal. After the meeting I found an old American acquaintance, his wife and daughter, at the Swan Hotel, Sir Jahleel Brenton, Vice-Admiral and Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich.²

I invited them to Freeford, which they accepted for the following day. Her ladyship a good-humoured woman, the daughter a young shy thing.³ Both the Admiral and his lady being natives of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and both there when I was.⁴ He a middy in the *Dido* frigate and she a child. The visit afforded me an opportunity of bringing to recollection boyish days and giddy proceedings with a turbulent youth, his late Majesty William the Fourth.

June June 4.—I returned home to welcome my dear sons. Dick arriving in the evening on short leave to prepare for

¹ The ministry determined to risk a dissolution and go to the country with the cry of cheap bread and free trade.

² See p. 278.

³ Harriet-Mary Brenton married in 1846 Adolphus Carey, Esq.

⁴ The General is wrong here, for Sir Jahleel was born in Rhode Island, but his wife was the daughter of James Brenton, judge of the Supreme Court of Halifax.

election contest at Lichfield; the Ministers [were discredited] in consequence of Sir Robert Peel having carried his motion by a majority of one 'for want of confidence in the ministers' and [so] the consequent dissolution of Parliament.¹ 1841

On the 6th I and Dick walked to pay our duty and make our prayers to divine providence at Whittington. In consequence of the absence of Richard Hinckley from Lichfield, the chairman of Dick's committee and chief support, matters were rather awkwardly situated as to the proceedings, and a delay occasioned for commencing the canvass. He arrived late on the evening of the 8th, and on Wednesday morning early an address from Dick was published to announce his intention of beginning his canvass at twelve o'clock.

To the Worthy and Independent Electors of the City and County of Lichfield.

GENTLEMEN,—A dissolution of the present Parliament being no longer doubtful, I hasten to redeem my pledge, and present myself before you as a candidate, for the high honor of representing your interests in the next.

In common with other electors, you will be called upon to affirm or deny the justice of the position in which a majority of the House of Commons have already placed Her Majesty's Ministers, viz. 'they are unworthy of public confidence.'

Their late attempt to kindle the flame of agitation throughout this great kingdom, by a sudden Anti-Corn Law movement—as an expiring effort—as a last hope—vain, I rejoice to say it has proved to be, is quite sufficient evidence, in my mind, upon which to find a verdict of 'guilty.'

¹ The voting was 312 to 311. Peel had known what he was about, and that the ministry was utterly discredited.

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It would be superfluous now to enter into political explanations ; other and more fitting opportunities will offer.

I shall endeavour to wait upon every elector, and I have to request my friends will meet at the Swan Hotel, to-morrow, Wednesday, at twelve o'clock, to accompany me on my canvass.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

RICHARD DYOTT.

FREEFORD, *June 8th*, 1841.

9th.—I accompanied Dick to the Swan, where we met a most respectable attendance of the chief tradesmen of the town. I accompanied them a short time and repeated my attendance again the following day. Nothing could be more gratifying to a parent than the universal kindness with which his son was received ; there was not an instance in word or act of the most distant appearance of ought but good humour towards the candidate.

Dick visited the out-voters on the 11th and 12th, and on the latter day came home to a late dinner with three *unpaid* agents, and in the evening all repaired to Lichfield for further exertion. Indeed, Dick from the first day had not got home until between eleven and twelve at night.

On the 14th I attended a petty sessions at Shenstone for my friend Grove. I met Forster of Walsall (now residing at Barr, lent him by Scott).¹ We had not a great deal of business, though rather tiresome. Forster showed me a letter from Mr. Gladstones, the member for Walsall, mentioning a meeting that had taken place in London respecting the representation of South Stafford for the purpose of effecting a compromise of parties to prevent

¹ See vol. i. p. 337.

a contest. I had subsequently a letter from Ned Monckton on the like subject, in answer to which I expressed my most decided dissent that any meeting of individuals should for a moment entertain the idea of settling the representation without ever consulting the district conservative association, which had been working vigorously since last election in the cause. There was no difficulty in discovering the cause of this *daring* attempt at compromise, which was done at the instigation of Lord Ingestre's friends, headed by (I believe) Monckton to prevent a contest, which must occasion a considerable material which his lordship lacked, *Money*. Dick hard at work day and night; at his canvass all the week, seldom returning from Lichfield before twelve or one o'clock. 1841

To the Worthy and Independent Electors of the City and County of Lichfield.

GENTLEMEN,—Having now completed my canvass, it is indeed a pleasing duty, gratefully to acknowledge the assurances of support I have met with from my friends, the kindness and courtesy with which I have been received by all.

The expectations I had formed from the very flattering terms, and many signatures attached to your invitation, have been realised to an extent, and with a cordiality of feeling, which I am bound to attribute to the influence of the cause I advocate, rather than to any merit of my own; and whilst it is with deep satisfaction that I have witnessed the steady increase of conservative feeling, still more do I rejoice to have been the means of eliciting an avowal of such principles in Lichfield.

It is not because I proclaim myself a conservative, that I enter the garden of the constitution, and leave the sickle behind me; but my care would be, so to use it, that in plucking the tares, I did not root up the wheat with them.

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Having already expressed an abhorrence of the actions which have swayed the present Government in their attack on landed property, I now protest against the measure itself. I ask for no more than justice to the British farmer, and I will be content with nothing less.

On the subject of the amended Poor Law, I will not lend myself to oppose that or any other measure, for mere party considerations. I offer no objections to the assembling of Boards of Guardians on the principle of popular election, but I should give them more power to act, and less power, and less pay to the higher authorities of the establishment,—above all, no encroachment on the Divine precept—‘Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.’

The question of the ballot I should scarce condescend to notice, but that I perceive a candidate for your suffrages, in any exposition of his views, has expressed himself ready to adopt it; I therefore announce my unqualified, uncompromising opposition, and declare my desire to test at the Poll, the real value of such extreme opinions.

I feel assured my friends will not relax their exertions, that they will favour me with their attendance on the day of Nomination, and that on the day of election they will record their votes as freely as they have made their promises.

‘THE INDEPENDENCE OF LICHFIELD IS CERTAIN.’

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

RICHARD DYOTT.

SWAN HOTEL, *June 14th*, 1841.

On the 22nd Parliament prorogued and dissolved; the country consequently in a strange state of agitation. North Stafford turns out Buller and the representatives supplied by two conservatives without opposition. The

South, at least in this neighbourhood, in great wrath and endeavouring to obtain a candidate to oppose Colonel Anson. My friend Pye is proposed and accepted conditionally that he is secured in expense beyond a specified sum. Sir Robert Peel is highly indignant at the attempted London compromise, but declines taking an active part. 1841

An awful thunderstorm on the 23rd. A poor cow killed under a tree at Whittington. Lord A. Paget and Sir George Anson both canvassed the city; the latter called here. I put the question to him, ‘whether he came *independent*,’ if he did, I told him I would give him a vote. He avowed he was independent, and issued a handbill to that effect, but report says that the Anson tenants have been canvassed for Paget by Paget’s agents and friends.

29th.—On Tuesday 29th, the day of nomination, I accompanied my dear Dick to Lichfield. His friends assembled at the Swan at ten o’clock, and we proceeded to the town hall with as highly respectable an attendance as the occasion could possibly have mustered. The opponents made a woeful display. Sir George was proposed by Mr. Webb the Mayor, who must have felt his consequence, having many a time and oft waited behind Sir George’s chair when footman to Sir George’s brother. The seconder Mr. Hewitt, a wine merchant. Lord Alfred nominated by the Rev. Burns Floyer and seconded by Dr. Rowley. My dear Dick was proposed in a masterly speech by Mr. Richard Hinckley and seconded by Mr. Richard Green. Dick spoke extremely well and was loudly cheered.

The fight took place next day, and, grievous to relate, my beloved son was defeated by treachery, fraud, bribery, and every scandalous invention that villainy could suggest.

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One circumstance more disgraceful than all was the coalition of the Anson interest with the Paget after the treaty with the former at Scott's election confirmed by Sir George Anson's declaration made by Mr. Richard Hinckley previous to Sir George's canvass, and although the gallant knight might not have used his individual interest, he permitted agents to solicit Lord Anson's tenants to vote for Paget. I felt grievously the disappointment on poor Dick's account, who had buoyed himself up with the fullest expectation of success, in which he was justified from the reports of his supporters and agents. There is no use in retrospect, where there is no remedy. Captain Majendie and the Rev. Burns Floyer made a conspicuous figure in their exertions for Paget, which will not be lost on me hereafter.

July *July 1.*—All my friends and neighbours called upon me to regret the defeat, and amongst them Sir Robert Peel did me the favour and was very comforting on the occasion.¹

28th.—Dick dined by invitation from Sir Robert Peel at a dinner he gave at Tamworth to his constituents. The Baronet was pleased to propose Dick's health with a most flattering and highly complimentary introduction referring to the late proceedings at Lichfield, and the distinguished battle he had fought in the cause of Conservatism; upwards of three hundred dined and all the neighbouring gentlemen, etc. etc.

August Dick went on the 5th to Gloster to meet Mr. John Talbot (accompanied by Mr. Richard Hinckley and Mr.

¹ Sir Robert Peel wrote on July 29, 1841, to Mr. Goulburn: 'I gained strength as I went on, and having carried Tamworth, am now doing what I can in North Warwickshire for Dugdale, in South Staffordshire for Ingestre and Dyott, and in North Staffordshire for W. Baring.'

Eggington), for the purpose of a consultation respecting the feasibility of petitioning Parliament relative to the Lichfield election. Talbot took all the papers and all the information obtained from the trio, and was to make his report after consulting Mr. Austin, a brother barrister. Dick came back to Miss Hinckes's on the 5th. 1841

On the 7th Dick dined at Drayton Manor; Croker,¹ Bonham,² Holmes,³ etc. etc. Sir Francis Burdett⁴ staying there, but was gone to dine at a large Conservative dinner at Burton. Mr. Bonham had some conversation with Dick relative to Lichfield election, and promised to see Talbot and Austin in London and to assist the consultation, as he said he knew how to judge of Parliamentary petitions as well as they did.

On the 9th to my great surprise Sir Francis Burdett called at Freeford from Drayton. He had not been at Freeford for nearly threescore years. The last time he said was with his grandfather. He mentioned an anecdote of my father when staying at Foremark. My father in those days was fond of setting; the youngster used to accompany him and had promised overnight to take him with him the following day. Being most eager for the sport he made an early visit to my father's bedroom, by knocking at his chamber door at six o'clock to the great annoyance of both my father and mother. I was much flattered by Sir Francis's visit. Dick and I drove over to Drayton the following morning, as Dick was desirous to see Mr. Bonham again. We found Lord Lincoln,⁵ Lord Villiers; Sir Francis Burdett,

¹ See p. 102.

² See p. 285.

³ William Holmes; thirty years tory whip; died 1851.

⁴ See p. 144.

⁵ Henry Pelham, Earl of Lincoln, eldest son of the Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

ÆT. 80 Sir Thomas Freemantle,¹ Bonham, etc. etc. Sir Robert very kind and friendly, and entered into Dick's electioneering matters with Sir Thomas Freemantle and Bonham by his opinions and advice.

26th.—A glorious harvest day. Dick to Birmingham to the celebration of a long-established society, the Beau club, and came home in the evening. He has been much occupied in preparation for a petition to Parliament respecting the late election. He has obtained the opinion of two learned civilians, Messrs. J. Talbot and Austin, both favourable in their reports. He has also received a friendly letter from Mr. Bonham with encouraging detail.

28th.—Dick went to London in pursuance of his petition in order to consult lawyers and friends. A great and welcome event, in Parliament, on conclusion of a four nights' debate on the address to the Queen on the opening Parliament on the 27th, on a division for an amendment proposed by Mr. Wortley,² the Conservatives carried it by a majority of *ninety-one*. *Huzza!*

On the 31st Dick returned, having arranged to present a petition against the return of Lord A. Paget. He found great kindness and good assistance from Mr. Bonham, and obtained the opinion of Mr. J. Talbot and also Mr. Austin, both celebrated Parliamentary barristers. Mr. Watts Russell, his daughter, and a Miss Barker came to us for two nights.

September *September* 7.—Sir George Anson resigned his seat for Lichfield. Calculations made as to the chance of Dick's

¹ The Right Hon. Sir Thomas Freemantle of Swanbourne, co. Bucks (1798-1890); raised to the peerage 1874 as first Baron Cottesloe.

² John Stuart Wortley, second Baron Wharnccliffe (1801-85); M.P. for the West Riding 1841-5.

succeeding, but on the most minute calculations it was found 1841
on a poll, he would be beat by three and probably more. Dick
held a long consultation with the Conservative leaders, who
all considered it prudent not to make the attempt. Sir
Thomas Freemantle and Mr. Bonham very friendly on the
occasion ; the latter obtained £250 to assist and Lord St.
Vincent £25 ; Watts Russell £50. Lord Leveson issued
a handbill on the 7th tendering his services and commenced
a canvass on the 8th. His lordship called upon me ; *I
did not see him.*

Dick went on the 14th for two nights to Beaumanor
and took a ride over with Herrick the following day to
Leicester races. Herrick had taken down and rebuilt the offices
to the old house, which was destined to follow the office and
a magnificent new mansion to be erected on the old site.

On the 18th Mrs. Burnaby, her son and daughter, left
us ; as also young Thomson. Fanny Gresley, daughter of
the late William Gresley, came to pass a week by way of
assistant to my dear Eleanor, who was deeply engaged to
promote a bazaar for the benefit of contributing to the
building a new church at Wall. The yeomanry cavalry
assembled at Lichfield under the command of Lieutenant-
Colonel Lord Lichfield. I omitted the election of Lord
Leveson for Lichfield on the 15th without opposition in the
room of poor old Sir George Anson, who had been made
the *puppet* for the whole proceeding. Dick's friends were
eager to have brought him forward, and from their calcula-
tion the contest would have been a very close-run race, but
as Dick was pledged to the petition against the return of
Lord Alfred Paget, it was thought better to decline than to
risk an uncertainty.

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22nd.—The Lichfield agricultural meeting; there was a good show of animals; particularly of beasts. Old Richard Randall obtained the first prize on my certificate, having lived as labourer at Freeford upwards of thirty years, bringing up a family of seven children, and never having applied for parish relief. I did not attend the dinner; Dick did, and reported the whole proceedings as tintured materially with *political Whiggery*.

28th.—My dear Dick took his departure to join his regiment at Edinburgh by way of Liverpool and Glasgow. Little did I expect when he came home in June that he would have left home again without having M.P. after his name. Poor fellow! he feels grievously the disappointment, and it grieves and saddens me to see how materially he suffers from the unpleasant reflection at what has passed.

October On the 19th I attended a turnpike meeting at Tamworth to propose moving the toll-gate from Freeford Bridge to the hill above the cottage; proposal postponed. We dined at Lady Cawdor's¹ at Elmhurst; a fine handsome woman; must have been beautiful in younger days; a pleasant party. Her ladyship most agreeable, and splendid performance in the culinary art. Stafford sessions; I sent my resignation as a [member] on the gaol committee of Justices by letter to the chairman, which was read by him to the court with a handsome compliment to my former services.

Extreme cold N.E. wind all this week, and until the 31st. I did not venture to church on that day. Took up the finest crop of white carrots from Ingle Hill that was ever grown, and also a good crop of mangel-worzel from the same field.

Here ends another volume of the old General's journal.

¹ Probably Lady Caroline Howard, who married the first Earl Cawdor in 1789.

November 1.—Commenced the month with good ¹⁸⁴¹ autumnal weather after having had a melancholy month ^{November} of constant rain in October.

The 9th great excitement at Lichfield in consequence of the annual appointment of the municipal officers. The Radicals, mayor, aldermen, and councillors, all united to oppress and deprive the Conservatives of their rights in the most unjust and most offensive manner. It is intended to commence legal proceedings for the purpose of setting aside proceedings employed by the Body Corporate to deprive sixty-seven burgesses of their right of voting for councillors in consequence of not having paid street rates, for which these people had never been called upon to contribute.

On the 16th I invited Mr. Mott and his son William to shoot at Freeford. The Motts had better sport than I expected, having killed seven pheasants and four hares. Dick's constituents at Lichfield *occasionally paid a night visit*, which I found it necessary not to prosecute.

December 1.—Petty sessions at Elford.

December

We proceeded from Elford to Tamworth to an auction of furniture belonging to the late Lady Kintore,¹ who had married a physician at Tamworth, Dr. Arnold. I was disappointed in my expectation of purchasing a dinner service of china, which on inspection would not do.

On the 9th I called at Drayton Manor; Sir Robert had returned to London. I met Lady Peel walking in the park, who received me with usual kindness and friendly civility. She mentioned Sir Robert having been called to

¹ Louisa, youngest daughter of Francis Hawkins, Esq., married the Earl of Kintore in 1821, from whom she obtained a divorce, and married in 1840 B. North Arnold, Esq., son of the Rev. C. Arnold of Mellor and Langho, Lancashire, and died November 1841.

ÆT. 80 town, and that she expected they would not be stationary for any time in the country.

Her ladyship mentioned that from the multiplicity of business the late ministry had left on leaving office, Sir Robert had found more left on his hands than he was entitled to. I called upon William Peel and found him suffering misery from a long and violent attack of gout, which had confined him to his bed six weeks.

On the 13th I went to call upon Richard Hinckley on the subject of my dear Dick's petition to Parliament. Hinckley had looked over all the evidence and also the Parliamentary agent's report, which appeared favourable. The Radical Council of Lichfield had received a check in their career by Government having appointed four additional justices to act in the borough. Four steady Conservatives.

16th.—An old American acquaintance (Halifax) and his daughter, Mr. Brenton came on a visit for two nights. He is a cousin and brother-in-law to the Admiral Sir Jahleel.¹ He was Judge Advocate General in Nova Scotia, and subsequently judge of the criminal court at Newfoundland. I met him at Leamington the last time I was there. We had party at dinner.

On the 22nd December I received a letter from Mr. Edward Harman to acquaint me of the death of my dear childrens' unfortunate mother, who, as Mr. Harman informed me, had been ailing for some time, but expired suddenly from paralysis. She had occupied lodgings and board with a Doctor Hallet at Holloway for about three months for medical advice and assistance. She left a will

¹ See p. 278.

making my two sons executors, and leaving all she had to them and to their sister. I lost no time in communicating the event to Dick, who arrived on the 25th, having accomplished the journey from Edinburgh in little more than twenty-four hours. 1841

He proceeded on the 27th to London, followed by Bill on the 28th, for the purpose of executing their executorship.

The wretched remains of the once-loved being were deposited in the adjoining cemetery on Friday the 31st December.

I had no intimation of the indisposition of the poor unfortunate, or I should certainly have made a proposal for an interview, however melancholy the event. I trust every assistance was afforded and the last sad remains received proper attention. The corpse was deposited in the new cemetery at Highgate.

On the 3rd Dick and Eleanor went to Thorpe; the former proceeded by railway from Tamworth at twelve at night on his return to Edinburgh *via* Lancaster. I was engaged to Thorpe, but having two days previously received an invitation to dine at Drayton to meet H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge,¹ I, of course, obeyed the summons to attend upon Royalty. Sir Robert told me, on his mentioning to the Duke that I was to be at dinner, that he should be glad to renew a very old acquaintance. I must say, I found his Highness most gracious, as was also the Prime Minister. The Duke talked to me a good deal about Windsor, and the good and gracious old King, and remarked that I was the only one remaining of the old attendants. I mentioned one or two anecdotes of his late 1842
January

¹ See p. 330.

ÆT. 80 Majesty George Third, with which he appeared much delighted. A large party at dinner, *twenty*.

January 25.—The christening of the baby Prince of Wales; ¹ great rejoicing throughout the country. A party of the citizens dined at the Swan Inn, Lichfield; my brother Phill, chairman, and a city ball at the George in the evening.

February *7th, Monday.*—We dined at William Gresley's; a large party, but not brilliant. Great excitement respecting the corn laws; tumult and disturbance in the manufacturing district, but not affecting the prices on the markets. Wheat, 9s. large measure; barley, 2s. 6d. The meat market from 6½d. to 7d., beef and mutton.

20th, Sunday.—I was unwell, and did not accompany my dear children to Whittington to attend Divine Service. Remarkable cheerful fine weather during the preceding week. Sir Robert Peel carried his motion in the House of Commons by a splendid majority respecting his proposed alteration of the corn laws.²

March On the 2nd Dick received great civility and kindness from Sir Thomas Freemantle by offering every assistance respecting the petition, and placed at Dick's disposal a situation in the customs for a good Lichfield Conservative. Counsellor Talbot, with whom he passed some time, gave a favourable opinion as to the result of the committee. Dick was also engaged on the business of his executorship, but could not obtain probate in consequence of not having a copy of the Divorce Act. I have been obliged to apply

¹ Our present King, Edward VII.

² Peel's sliding scale consisted of a 20s. duty at 51s., decreasing to 12s. at 60s., and 1s. at 73s.; the duty was never to exceed 20s., even if the price fell below 51s.

through the House of Lord's Parliamentary office for a written attested copy. 1842

17th.—We dined at Mr. Grove's. Sir Robert Peel introduced his Bill for an income-tax, which, as might be expected, was strongly opposed in the House of Commons, and not very well received in the country.¹

Farmers much alarmed from the expected income-tax, attended by the alteration of the Corn Laws. I don't imagine the latter will do them any very great injury.

The 9th Sir Robert Peel carried his corn bill motion notwithstanding the clamour in the House. It does not appear to have had much effect in prices; wheat continues about 9s. April

21st.—Eleanor went to Derby by railway to see Miss Bakewell; found her much as usual, and in bed. On Eleanor's return in the phaeton, she was stopped at the Lodge gate by Mr. Edward Bond and presented with a speaker's summons to attend and give evidence on a petition to be heard on the 22nd. A most disgraceful blackguard proceeding on the part of the Pagets. Mr. Bond also served a summons on my bailiff Chilwill, and enquired particularly for me. I fortunately was out of the way. However, if they had served me, I was much too unwell to attend.

My dear Eleanor was not in the least alarmed on the occasion, and prepared accordingly to proceed to London the following day. Fortunately Mr. Greene, the Banker, was summoned, and very good-humouredly undertook to convey my dear child. I was delighted to hear of her safe arrival and finding dear Dick tolerably well.

¹ Sir Robert Peel proposed and later carried a revision of the customs tariff, the repeal of many duties, and the substitution of an income-tax for a limited period.

ÆT. 81

On the 22nd the committee assembled ; unluckily the chairman was a Whig ; his support was of the first possible consequence ; however, matters went on pretty fairly the two first days, but with an evident leaning to our opponent.

On the 25th I received a letter from dear Dick to prepare me for bad tidings. He wrote to say the proceedings of the committee were so directly hostile, their chance of success became most doubtful ; that they were to have a consultation that night, and that as the daily expense was very great, with a possibility of the committee declaring the petition was vexatious (exposing us to their costs), my poor dear Dick was advised by counsel to give it up next morning, which was done accordingly. This fate has thrown such a gloom over [me] on my dearest son's account, I know not how to rally. It gives cause for disappointment on the part of Dick, that I am almost afraid to consider.

May On the 2nd May my dear Dick returned from London after the grievous disappointment by the decision of the election committee. It is evident that neither truth or justice pervades that jurisdiction, which is evidently guided by the politicks of the chairman. If *seven* freemen's votes, which had been tendered for Dick at the election and rejected, had been allowed by the committee (which ought to have been) the determination would have been in Dick's favour, but as only three were allowed, Dick's counsel advised him to retire in order to save overwhelming expense. I suffered greatly from the disappointment, which brought on gout and other ailings, from which I continued very unwell for a long time, and has interfered greatly with attention to my journal, which I have been unable to post for the last fortnight. Little, however, has

occurred worthy of an entry. In consequence of the result of the petition I proposed to Dick to retire from the service, either on half-pay or to quit altogether ; my age and growing infirmities making it necessary that he should not be out of the way for present assistance, and to be prepared for an event that must require his presence on his own account and on that of my child Eleanor.

16th.—Greenhill Bower. What a happy day I have found it. I believe, like all other rural sports, it is fast decaying, and the reformed corporation are not likely to feel much disposed to support the ancient charters of the city. Sir Robert Peel came in the country for a few days at Drayton. I wrote a short note to ask him to give me an audience for ten minutes. He returned a most friendly note, requesting me to *write*, which I did accordingly ; the purport was to mention that in consequence of the result of the Lichfield election with my age and ailings, I felt it necessary, in order to have my son near at home, to propose his retiring from the army, on which account I took the liberty of asking the favour of Sir Robert to appoint him to a situation in any of the Publick departments to give him employ. I added that pecuniary reward was not my object. He wrote a most kind and friendly answer immediately, stating his regret that he had it not in his power to fulfil my wishes, and mentioned that he had been nine months in office and had had only the disposal of one civil office, and that only £150 per annum. Sir Robert also stated in his letter that he was obliged to employ his interest in a great measure for political purposes. I own I felt disappointed. Dick's regiment will embark for foreign service next year, and I really

ÆT. 81 feel for various reasons the absolute necessity to have him within reach, not on my account only, but for his own, and my other dear children.

On the 27th I set out with my dear Eleanor once more to visit the great metropolis, and for the purpose of making my bow to my sovereign, and to present my dear Dick. We left Tamworth by the railway about 12, and reached the Euston station soon after five; a pleasant journey as we had the coupé to ourselves.

JUNE Dick having decided to retire from the service in the manner most preferable to himself, I addressed a letter to Lord Hill to request his interest to allow Dick to purchase an unattached majority. I received a friendly and kindly worded reply, but expressing his regret at not being able to comply with my wishes. I afterwards attended Lord Hill's levée to renew my application; I found him most friendly in expressions of sorrow that he was obliged to disappoint my wishes, which he assured me most solemnly he should have been most ready and happy to have accomplished. I subsequently attended his lordship's levée and received a repetition of the regret expressed in his letter, but no expectation of any favourable result. I called (after seeing the chief) upon his secretary, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, without any better success. I paid my respects to the Duke of Sussex,¹ in consequence of H.R.H. having, when at Drayton, desired I would call upon him when I went to London. I found his Royal Highness most gracious. I took the opportunity of reminding his R.H. of the gracious condescension of his Royal Father towards me, and begged permission to introduce the subject of

¹ The General probably means the Duke of Cambridge, see p. 331.

my son's present situation, and to ask the favour of H.R.H.'s interest in his behalf either to an appointment in his own family or in any way H.R.H. might be pleased to look favourably on my service. I added that I wanted nothing for myself; my sole object was my son. I could draw no hope in reply. 1842

I attended her Majesty's levée for the purpose chiefly of presenting my dear Dick; it was the last of the season and crowded. Just after passing the Queen, the *Prime Minister* Sir Robert did me the honour of stepping out from his station by the side of her Majesty and shook me cordially by the hand. A high compliment in *so high* a place.

The extreme heat of the weather was as oppressive as I ever felt it in any country. I found my strength failing me in attempting to walk the streets in the usual way, and not having found myself quite in my usual health, and having done all that I could with respecting to forwarding Dick's wishes for his retreat from soldiering, I took my departure from the great Babylon on Friday the 10th per railway by the 11 o'clock train, and reached Freeford by five, which I found in more than usual beauty, and was happy to return to the seat of my ancestors.

On the 22nd my dear Dick arrived, but had not quite arranged the business of his retirement from the army. He was, thank God, in good health, though evidently feeling dispirited from the unfavourable events that have baffled his hopes respecting Parliament and his giving up the active life he has hitherto engaged. It is a great comfort to me his being with me. Age and infirmity creep on apace, and naturally require help and assistance, which my

ÆT. 81 dear boy very ably supplies. My butler (Stokes) returned home with me from London much out of health, which proved to be occasioned by the smallpox, which broke out upon him violently, notwithstanding him having been vaccinated when young. He soon recovered, to me a great object, being an excellent servant. My doors kept shut for some time in consequence, in the first place, of the absence of my dear Eleanor, and in the next on account of smallpox, fearing infection being communicated to visitors, who might be alarmed to enter a house where the disease had prevailed.

July My dear Eleanor arrived home on the 12th by railway from London. I, very stupidly, did not reflect on the disease in the house, as I should not have encouraged her coming home at present. She had been passing a most agreeable visit with her friends the Easts at Hall Place,¹ etc., and had made a halt in London to be present at the wedding of her friend Miss Clifton, wed on the 10th to Sir Hervey Bruce.²

17th.—Dick and I attended divine service at Whittington. My dear Eleanor had not been well since her return home, and unable to accompany us. Thank God, nothing serious.

August 15th.—My old friend Lord Combermere and his daughter came to us in his way to the Abbey. Lady C. remained in London with her father. The noble Viscount in high force. He drove his daughter the following day and Eleanor to Drayton Manor. Sir Robert had been down for two

¹ See p. 137.

² Sir Henry Hervey Bruce of Dounhill, co. Londonderry, married on July 12, 1842, Marianne Margaret, only daughter of Sir J. Jukes Clifton, Bart.

days, but returned to his duty that morning on her Majesty's Majesty 1842
in London.

Lord C. left us on the 17th for his harvest at home in Cheshire.

22nd, Sunday.—Divine service at Whittington. The potters' and colliers' tumults still unsettled. No coals to be had at Lichfield, the discontented rabble having prevented the colliers at Brownhills, Pelshall, etc., to go to work. They have been driven off by Mr. Manley and Mr. Leigh with military and civil power once, but the Wyrley Birch boys by threats are afraid to encounter the Dudley, Tipton, and Bilston boys' attack.

On the 4th Dick and I paid our duty in attending September divine service at Whittington. A meeting of all the county magistrates and deputy-lieutenants was called for by the Lord-Lieutenant to take into consideration the state of the county. I of course did not attend; their proceedings I heard were not very unanimous, but, on the contrary, warm disputations, and ended in a code of resolutions and one for forming horse patrols in various situations. Great discontent has prevailed in the mining and manufacturing districts, and in my opinion to be expected from the unqualified encouragement of speeches in the House of Commons delivered by the enemies to the agricultural interests, and emissaries employed throughout the Kingdom disseminating and encouraging the excesses.

12th.—The disturbances in the collieries and potteries have subsided, but the population has not satisfactorily settled to quiet and sober tranquillity; the unlawful large assemblages have been put down and work recommenced,

ÆT. 81 but only conditionally on the part of the operatives. There never was known a more glorious summer or more genial weather. Harvest all well housed, and though perhaps not abundant, what may be deficient in quantity is well recompensed by the quality.

17th, *Sunday*.—I was still on the sick list, and though the weather quite perfect and most divine, I was unequal to pay my weekly duty at Whittington church. Our gracious young Queen has been receiving the joyous welcome of her Caledonian subjects on a tour in that country, and received every possible mark of high respect and loyalty from the *Bonnets of Blue*. My old friend Sir Edward Scott¹ sent me his usual mark of friendship to celebrate the annual Lichfield races (the *last*, I opine) commencing on the 19th.

22nd.—The agricultural annual meeting. I was not well enough either to see the exhibition of stock or to attend the dinner. My friend Pye, president; Dick and Colville dined; a numerous assembling and loquacious oratory from Lords Talbot,² Hatherton,³ and from Colonel Anson,⁴ Sir F. Lawley,⁵ Lord Sandon,⁶ and the chairman. The show of animals was good, and some useful new inventions of implements, particularly a revolving harrow on the principle of the hay-making machine.

On the 30th I proceeded with my dear children to pay a long-promised engagement to visit my old esteemed friend Lord Combermere.⁷ We went to Stafford and embarked on board a train on the Grand Junction Railway to the Crewe Station, where we obtained horses to my carriage,

¹ See p. 84.

² See vol. i. p. 351.

³ See vol. i. p. 358.

⁴ See p. 335.

⁵ See p. 189.

⁶ See p. 151.

⁷ See p. 96.

that conveyed us to the old Abbey of Combermere, where we found a warm and most friendly reception from the Viscount and his lady. I had been unwell for some time with a violent cough and was not in order to enjoy my visit. We found Mr. and Mrs. Best (son of Lord Wynford),¹ Rev. W. Cotton,² a Mr. Hammond, Sir Henry Mainwaring³ and daughter, and Mr. Penn, staying in the house. 1842

The following day was the commencement of destruction of the poor pheasants, a fortunate day for my dear Dick. The party took the field and had great *sport*. We had glorious weather. I never saw the old Abbey and its beauteous domains appearing so delightful; nothing can exceed the views and landscapes furnishing the grand lake and surrounding woods. October

We remained enjoying the noble Viscount's hospitality until the 6th, when we returned by the railway from Whitmore station to Stafford, where my horses met us and conveyed us home. The special sessions for the trial of the rioters was sitting at Stafford; 170 prisoners for trial. I found a letter at home from Sir Robert Peel in answer to my application to obtain the Baronet's influence for the living of Nailstone for Bill on its becoming vacant. Sir Robert's reply was full of kind expressions, but declining to make a promise under expected vacancies which he had laid it down as [a] rule never to depart from. I found all well on my return.

The special commission at Stafford concluded their labours on the 15th, finding a great majority of the refrac-

¹ William Draper Best, first Baron Wynford (1767-1845).

² See p. 103.

³ See p. 214.

ÆT. 81 tory mob prisoners guilty, and sentencing a large portion to transportation. Query, 'Has the general system of education affected reform?'

On the 17th I called at Drayton to pay my respects to the Prime Minister. I found him engaged in a praiseworthy pursuit. Dr. Buckland, the great agricultural chemist, was staying at Drayton with other learned savants. Sir Robert had collected his tenants and neighbouring farmers for the purpose of hearing a disquisition on the effects of manures and other agricultural subjects, which was going on in front of the house. Sir Robert one of the *listeners*. He received me with his usual cordiality. Whilst I was waiting in the carriage, Lady Peel did me the honour of coming to receive me, and did me the honour of placing my arm under her ladyship's and conducting me to the library. Sir Robert told me that I and my son and daughter must dine there on the following Saturday to meet H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloster.¹

The quarter sessions this week at Stafford, when a long discussion took place relative to the state of the county, and whether the police act should be put in effect generally throughout the country. My humble opinion is that it is not required in the agricultural hundreds, particularly in Offlow North. Nine-tenths of crime committed in the mining and manufacturing districts, to the prevention and punishment of which the agriculturists contribute a fair proportion, which should be sufficient for checking crime they don't create.

29th.—We dined at Sir Robert Peel's; the invite to

¹ Mary, Princess, and Duchess of Gloucester (1776-1857); fourth daughter of George III.; married in 1816 William Frederick, second Duke of Gloucester.

meet H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloster ; a large party. 1842
 Twenty at dinner. Mostly from the neighbourhood. One of the Lady Legges,¹ in attendance on her Royal Highness, who was pleased to express much satisfaction to see me with many expressions of kindness and familiar condescension. Her Highness was also particularly gracious to Dick and Eleanor ; the latter we left at Manley's the day we dined there ; she came with them to dinner and returned at night.

The second Nov. Stafford sessions. Owing to neglect November on the part of Mr. Keen (Clerk of the Peace) in not having procured a dedimus for Dick, he could not qualify at the sessions, which he fully proposed. A very long dissertation took place with the magistrates relative to the Police Act, 'whether it should be enforced generally throughout the county, or partially in those districts (in which) disturbances had taken place.' Nothing decisive was concluded, and an adjournment was agreed to take place at an adjourned sessions.

On the 15th Dick rode over to Birmingham to look at some new invented agricultural implements, and also a portable handmill for grinding and dressing wheat.

20th.—Went to Whittington in Dick's car (never ride in it again) to attend divine service. Very cold, and in the night heavy fall of snow.

24th.—Accounts arrived with glorious news of peace with China² and great success of the army in India.³ The terms of peace with the celestials highly favourable and most humiliating to the great Emperor and his vassals. I

¹ One of the daughters of the Earl of Dartmouth.

² The Treaty of Nankin between China and England.

³ Cabul was re-occupied in September.

ÆT. 81 was plagued with tithe commissioners respecting the modus I paid in lieu of tithes, but I secured my claim to their satisfaction.

December On the 1st December a full gazette account of the glorious news arrived from China and India. Peace concluded with the former, and important victory obtained by our troops over the Afghanistans.

1843 *January 1, Sunday.*—Dick and I attended church at
January Whittington. My dear Eleanor unwell with a bad cold and influenza. The fine mild open weather continued. Dick persuaded me to move the beautiful young oak, planted an acorn by my dear Eleanor, from the spot at the end of the Pool Dam betwixt the upper stew and the pool, to the upper part of the lawn, where I hope it may long flourish.

I begin a New Year beseeching Divine Providence to bestow health and happiness to myself and my dear children and to continue the Divine protection to us all.

I rode to Lichfield on the 2nd to pay a few visits, and lamented the appearance of the deserted city, which I remember in times past a town abounding with good company, sociability, and general prosperity of inhabitants.

On the 25th Eleanor and I dined at William Gresley's at Stow; a heavyish party; improved somewhat by a rubber of whist in the evening. A horrid event took place by the assassination of Mr. Drummond,¹ private secretary to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, who was shot by a man of the name of Macnaghten, a Scotchman, who

¹ Edward Drummond (1793-1843); private secretary to the Earl of Ripon, Mr. Canning, the Duke of Wellington, and Sir Robert Peel; shot in mistake for Peel.

deliberately took a pistol out of his breeches pocket within three yards of his victim and shot him through the body and died in a few days. The murder took place on the foot pavement near Charing Cross about four o'clock in the afternoon. Dick returned from his excursion and visit to Hall Place. 1843

The keeper this morning (the 29th) early saw what he conjectured to be an otter swimming across the pool to the island. He got into the boat, and on landing on the island, he started a poor hare which, on being alarmed, took again to the water and swam to the other side the pool. He found a form on the island, which the poor Puss must have made her home for a long time.

Parliament assembled on the 2nd. Her Majesty did not February attend the opening for family reasons. There is reason to expect a boisterous session on the corn laws. The corn league making strange efforts by meetings and assemblings, making treasonable speeches and instigating to every species of discontent the working populace in the large manufacturing districts. The agriculturists suffering materially from the reduced prices of their produce; wheat last week at Birmingham only 16s. 6d. a bag (three strike).

On the 15th we expected Major Philips of the 53rd regiment, George and Charles Inge and Lieutenant Mytton of the 53rd; the former sent an excuse; the latter is a youngster, a son of a person of some celebrity in Shropshire at one time.¹ A gentleman-like youth; he has lost both father and mother; the latter was a beautiful woman.

2nd.—The Manleys and Motts dined with us. The March

¹ John Mytton (1796-1834); sportsman; served in the army 1816-17; M.P. for Shrewsbury 1818-20; ran through a fortune and died in the King's Bench Prison.

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second a memorable day, being two hundred years since on this day *Dumby Dyott* shot Lord Brooke from the battlements of Lichfield Cathedral.¹ The Ringers from Lichfield called upon me the evening previous to ask a trifle to celebrate the following day. A merry peal was rung accordingly.

March 22.—The agricultural markets continue much depressed. Wheat little more than 6s. a strike; barley from 3s. to 3s. 8d. The season fine for farming pursuits, but a disease still continuing amongst the cattle. My ewes have suffered by the loss of five soon after lambing. I have been fortunate not having lost one lamb.

The assizes at Stafford that commenced on the 11th are still continuing, owing to the great number of prisoners, and to a prolonged trial of Cooper² (of celebrity) and two other chartists for sedition. The trial commenced on the 20th and is likely to continue another week. The circumstance had occasioned considerable disarrangement as to the judges proceeding on circuit.

April On the 5th Dick went to the quarter sessions at Stafford; there was considerable criminal business and upwards of twenty appeal cases. A great change in the attendance of magistrates and of the description of the personages composing the bench. I have repeatedly remarked that during the many years I regularly was present, the meeting at the quarter sessions was by far the most agreeable of any society I ever met. The business was executed in a

¹ See vol. i. p. 295.

² Thomas Cooper (1805-92); chartist; apprenticed to a shoemaker; engaged in journalistic work in Lincoln and London; became a chartist in 1840, and edited the *Chartist Midland Counties Illuminator*; imprisoned on charge of sedition and conspiracy 1843-5.

manner consistent with the transactions of perfect good-breeding and the convivial part of the proceedings highly agreeable. The modern assembly from the report I hear bears a different character. My highly respected friend the chairman (Mr. F. Twemlow) accompanied Dick to pass a couple of nights at Freeford together with his son. I believe the chair has never been better occupied by any more respected by bench and bar. 1843

On the 17th the return of my natal day. How thankful I feel and ought to be for the protection of an all-ruling providence to have preserved me in health to the great age at which I have arrived; humbly do I offer up my prayers daily for the blessings bestowed. My dear Bill came home for a parson's week and congratulated his old father. Dick very busy in taking in the piece of waste ground adjoining the milestone piece corner of Barker's Lane.

29th.—His R.H. the Duke of Sussex¹ died in the course of the past week, the sixth son of ever to be revered good old King George the Third. I had less acquaintance with him than with any of his Royal brothers. He was rarely at Windsor when I have been there. I never heard him much spoken of by the Royal Family. I don't imagine he was in much favour with the good king.

I sold at Tamworth fair on the 4th eight ewes and eleven lambs for £12; and ten hogs for ten pounds. A woeful price. I have sold lambs of the description three years ago for a pound each. Fat stock very low; beef and mutton scarcely fetching 5d. a pound.

¹ Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex (1773-1843); sixth son of George III.; married 1793 Lady Augusta Murray.

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May

On the 6th Dick and Eleanor dined at Hinckley's ; quite *en famille*. I stayed at home, not quite equal to visiting. Farmers' clubs seem the order of the day. One just formed at Tamworth under the presidency of Sir Robert Peel to which I and Dick have become members, but at the same time I am not quite satisfied of the utility of these sort of meetings ; they induce the farmers to feelings above their caste in society and perhaps don't amuse them as practical agriculturalists.

7th, Sunday.—Attended the duty of the Sabbath at Whittington. A heavy shower just as service was over. Great excitement existing in Parliament and in the country respecting the corn laws. The truth is, the subject is become a *fight* between the manufacturing and the agricultural interests, or rather with the radicals to upset the government of the country. The only hope left us is the firmness and excellent talent of Sir Robert Peel. The growing wheat not looking healthy in consequence of rain and want of settled spring weather. Corn markets continue low and will not improve unless an unfavourable appearance of the ensuing harvest should prevail.

May 14, Sunday.—Dick in London preparing for a lodging to receive my dear Eleanor, whom I am anxious to gratify with enjoying the gaieties of the London season, for which I find myself too old, but may perhaps take a peep before the children return. The landed interest alarmed relative to the importation of corn from Canada, perhaps without reason. The subject has been the effect of lowering Sir Robert Peel's popularity and raising the expectations of the blustering Corn League.

June My dear boy Bill returned to me on the 5th. I received

a melancholy account from Major Pole commanding the 63rd regiment from Belloya [?] to report that in ten days on their march the regiment had lost by the cholera, 1 lady (Captain Carew's wife), 1 captain, 1 subaltern, 6 sergeants, 3 corporals, 1 drummer and 72 privates. 1843

On the 6th I received a most kind and friendly letter from a very old friend and schoolfellow, Richard Gresley, with a present of a landing-net fitted up in a neat handsome manner with a steel rim and a portable staff. The *net*, the work of his own fingers at, as he says, 77 years of age. What can be more gratifying than the remembrance of an old friend.

5th.—The great comfort I have is hearing from my two children in London, who appear to be enjoying the gaieties of the gay metropolis. I am just now disappointed by the non-arrival of some rape cake for manure coming from Hull, occasioned by the floods on the Trent, and the stoppage on the canals for a week will add to the delay until the 19th.

The Yeomanry assembled at Lichfield for a week's drill on the 10th. I hope they may have better weather than for the week past, or they will have wet jackets.

On the 12th of July finished carrying home the hay from July the Bush Piece. A very good crop and good quality, save a part that suffered from the violent thunder storm. Dick and I proceeded by railway from Oakley Gate to Derby *en route* to pay a visit to Beaumanor. It was the opening day for the great show and exhibition of the general agricultural meeting at Derby, which we found crowded to excess. We went to look at the very extensive show of agricultural implements, an exhibition denoting

ÆT. 82 the extraordinary efforts now pursuing with regard to agriculture. We proceeded by railway to Loughborough and by *fly* to Beaumanor, where we were most welcomingly received by the hospitable Esquire and his excellent sister. Bill was at Beaumanor.

The following day (the 12th) Herrick and my sons went to Derby to see the sights, animals and implements, and to dine with a company of 1800 people in a most superb pavilion erected for the purpose. They were highly gratified with all they had seen, and returned as they went by railway to Loughborough.

On the 13th Dick drove me in Herrick's phaeton to Leicester, where I went purposely to see my sister Mrs. Burnaby,¹ and was rejoiced to find her looking so well. I had not been that road for many years, and was consequently greatly surprised by the change in the appearance of the country by the extensive enclosures. Herrick is building a superb new house on the site of the old one. The offices were finished and occupied for the family to reside; the main building has reached only to the first storey. We, however, were accommodated most comfortably by occupying the servants' hall as is to be as dining-room, and the housekeeper's room as drawing-room. If it please God that I should live to see it finished, it will be a high gratification to witness the worthy owner in so superb a dwelling raised by himself.

August I rode to Lichfield on the 15th. My journeys to the city are now very rare, and as to the walking so far, alas, alas, the infirmities of age checks the usual travels in that way. Some extremely hot weather at this time, and on the

¹ Lucy Dyott. See Pedigree.

19th at about three o'clock P.M. the thermometer in the sun was at 100, and in an hour after in the shade at 80. The heat during the day was excessive. Very busy now in harvest assisted by the Irish labourers, who have lately arrived in numbers, who must probably have been set at liberty by O'Connell, or rather by *hunger*, finding the meeting called by the arch-traitor will *not fill their bellies*.¹ They are well welcomed here; the farmers finding them highly beneficial in furthering the busy gathering the harvest. 1843

September brought glorious harvest weather with extreme warmth. My dear Dick grievously disappointed as to sporting. Poaching is become so profitable an employment that unless a country gentleman can support a battalion of keepers to preserve his game, he must rest content with having his game carried off. The existing game-laws have done more to create vice amongst the lower orders than can be imagined. Dick went over Fulfin without having a shot. September

On the 3rd I and my children attended our usual place of divine worship. Mr. Oldacres officiated, and he is so very indifferent a performer that he generally encourages sleep by his sermons, and on this day the clerk availed himself like others by taking a nap, but unfortunately he fancied himself in the performance of that part of his duty that requires his service, and he drawled out Amen during the sermon.

¹ O'Connell was working hard to bring about the repeal of the Union. A monster meeting at Clontarf, near Dublin, was forbidden by the Government, and O'Connell and others were arrested. He was tried in the next year (1844), and sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of £2000. In September of that year the Lords reversed the sentence, owing to a technical error in the indictment.

ÆT. 82

September 18, Monday.—Lichfield races. But, oh! what a falling off from what was once Lichfield races. I have witnessed more persons on the Heath on a Sunday previous to the race Tuesday. Not a single lady in the stand nor evening ball, and sad lack of racers. An unfortunate accident occurred by a man crossing the course on horseback, and coming in contact with one of the racers, which was thrown and killed on the spot. Mr. Blackstone (member for Wallingford), his sister, Mr. Tenant and his sister, Mr. Ricketts (a friend of Bill), and Bill himself, came to us for the great Birmingham musical festival, which the whole party attended the following day.

On the 26th the annual meeting of the Lichfield agricultural took place. The competition of ploughmen was in [a] field of mine by the side of Whittington Heath. There were twenty ploughs at work, but the ground was so dry and hard there was not much skill exhibited. The day following was the grand display of stock and also of agricultural implements. Some bulls and fat cows highly extolled, but the sheep moderate. The implements, many very praiseworthy. Lord Hatherton¹ as president, and Sir Robert Peel vice. Both attended in the show field, and afterwards at the dinner, where they each spoke on the business of the day in most eloquent and instructive harangues.

October *The 24th.*—The meeting of the Tamworth farmers club dinner. Sir Robert Peel president. Dick attended; upwards of 240 at dinner. The chairman made a long speech on agricultural pursuits, and brought with him

¹ See vol. i. p. 358.

Dr. Buckland, the celebrated professor of agricultural chemistry.¹ 1843

The Premier repeated his opinions on the subject of granting leases to tenants. I very humbly differ from so great a man. I conceive the tenants in the neighbourhood are quite content under the present system of renting, and that the agitating subject unsettles the mind of the tenant and withdraws that respect and confidence he should have in his landlord, and also depriving the landowner of power over his own property. Mr. Twemlow came here from the meeting and stayed two nights.

26th.—Dined at Drayton Basset by invitation from Sir Robert to meet the young Dutch Prince. The Dutch Minister and the Prince's A.D.C. the only foreigners. Sir George Murray² and Dr. Buckland³ staying in the house. Captain A'Court⁴ and Dick the neighbouring gentry. Dick reported having passed a very agreeable day. In consequence of the proceedings of Lord Lichfield's⁵ agent and the radicals of the town council of the city, who are trustees for various charities, having issued notice to quit at

¹ This reference should be compared with Sir Robert Peel's letter to Prince Albert written on December 17, 1844: 'I have some very distinguished scientific men on a visit here—Dr. Buckland, Dr. Lyon Playfair (the translator of Liebig), Professor Wheatstone (the inventor of the electric telegraph), Professor Owen, of the College of Surgeons, Mr. George Stephenson, the engineer, Mr. Pusey, Mr. Smith of Deanston.

'I showed them the manufactures from the alpaca wool, with which they were much pleased.

'I invited yesterday all my principal tenants to meet them at dinner and acquire information, which was most kindly and liberally given them by all the philosophers, on practical points connected with vegetation, manure, the feeding of animals, draining, etc. The meeting was a most interesting one.'—*Sir Robert Peel*, iii. 162.

² See p. 115.

³ Dean of Westminster 1845-56.

⁴ See p. 45.

⁵ See vol. i. p. 329.

ÆT. 82 Lady Day to the various tenants who have voted in the Conservative interest, a meeting of the Conservative friends took place at the Swan on the evening of the 28th. A strong assembly; Dick in the chair; and came to unanimous resolutions to use their property within the city to assist any persons that might be injured by the proceeding of Lord Lichfield and the corporation. John Levett dined here and accompanied Dick to the meeting.

November *November* 1.—The municipal election at Lichfield to choose town councillors. The Conservatives victorious after eight years of tyrannical sway by the Radicals. An event of great consequence as to the Parliamentary election and caused great rejoicing. A jolly set dined at the Swan; Dick again in the chair, which it was reported he filled to the high gratification of the company.

26th, *Sunday*.—I was again unable to attend divine service on account of the continued discharge from my breast. All pain has ceased, and the *attending faculty* pronounces all well for the general system. Great preparations for the Queen's visit to the Premier at Drayton Manor, where her Majesty is expected on the 28th. A county meeting called by the High Sheriff on a requisition from the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Talbot,¹ for the purpose of an address to the Queen to be presented on her Majesty's arrival at Drayton. Dick went to Stafford; a thin meeting. An address proposed by Lord Talbot and seconded by Lord Dartmouth.² An address to Prince Albert proposed by Lord Sandon³ and seconded by Major Chetwynd.⁴ Dick accompanied the High Sheriff and Grove to Stafford.

¹ See vol. i. p. 351.

² See vol. i. p. 329.

³ See p. 151.

⁴ See p. 260.

A beautiful fine morning, the 28th, to await the arrival of the Queen's Majesty and august consort Prince Albert. Her Majesty on arriving at Tamworth was received at the station with every demonstration of welcome, grandeur by the High Sheriff and Lord-Lieutenant of the county together with Sir Robert and Lady Peel, and every demonstration of welcome by multitudes of persons, aristocratick and plebeians. Three troops of the county yeomanry had assembled to attend on the Queen. 1843

On the 30th her Majesty and the Prince paid a visit to Lichfield to see the cathedral, and although the intention was not communicated to the authorities until the day previous, it was not possible that the honours intended for her Majesty's reception could have been better arranged as to the grand decoration of the city by triumphal arches, flags, and every possible description to note the occasion. The carriages of the neighbouring gentry and the gallant show of equestrians was splendid, added to which the concourse of people on foot crowding the streets exceeded all calculation. The Queen was pleased to signify by letter to the mayor her Majesty's high gratification with the reception shown on her visit to Lichfield, and the satisfaction the welcome shown to herself and Prince Albert. I and Eleanor attended in the procession. Dick on horseback.

The Queen left Drayton on the 1st December and proceeded by railway from Tamworth *via* Derby to Chesterfield, from thence to Chatsworth, where her Majesty stayed until the 4th, on which day the court proceeded to visit his Grace of Rutland¹ at the ancient chateau of

¹ John Henry Manners, fifth Duke of Rutland (1778-1857).

ÆT. 82 Belvoir, and remained until the 7th, which completed the Royal tour of visits.

14th.—The anti-corn league making great efforts for a repeal of the corn laws.¹ To the astonishment of the supporters of the landed interest, one of the great promoters of that interest, as was supposed from the conduct and proceedings of a noble Lord (Lord Spencer); his lordship at a late agricultural dinner declared himself favourable to an abolition of the corn laws, a conversion based solely from political whig feelings.

26th.—The new arranged commission of assizes. Dick attended on the Grand Jury at Stafford; a heavy calendar. An atrocious poaching case from Thorpe, Inge's keeper nearly murdered. A woman convicted of poisoning her husband. Four men tried for throwing a woman into a coal-pit; acquitted.

Dick dined and slept at Lord Harrowby's² on the 27th, and did not get home until near 7 o'clock on the 28th. We were engaged to dine at Sir Robert Peel's, and just reached in time as the company was on the way to dinner. The Premier as kind and gracious as usual. I ventured to take the liberty of giving him my opinion, decidedly opposed to his newly advocated ideas respecting the granting leases to farming tenants. Sir Robert was very candid, and did not appear very zealous in supporting his argument on former occasion.

1844 January 1, 1844.—I pray to the Almighty for the blessing of Divine Providence to continue the like blessings

¹ It was in this year that the Anti-Corn Law League (formed in 1838) began monthly meetings in Covent Garden Theatre.

² See vol. i. p. 330.

of health bestowed upon me during the past year, considering the great age at which I have arrived. 1844

On the 4th my very old friend (of 63 years' acquaintance), General Hodgson and his daughter came to pay us a visit. We served as subalterns in the King's Own regiment twelve years, and have always been on the most friendly footing.

February 2.—Dick and Eleanor dined at Mr. Richard Green's, Lichfield. Great meetings now prevailing in opposition to the corn League and for the protection of the agricultural interest. February

Parliament assembled on the 31st, when to the great joy of the landed interest the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, avowed his determination to propose no alteration in the existing corn laws.¹ The state trials going on in Ireland.²

11th.—They attended divine worship at Whittington. I was unable to pay my duty from continued indisposition and very cold unfavourable weather. The proceedings of the anti-corn league have at length roused the farmers and landed gentry to take some steps in their own defence by assembling meetings all over England in order to devise means for the protection of agriculture. A numerous assemblage took place at the Town Hall, Lichfield, which Dick attended, when most unanimous resolutions were entered into and a petition to Parliament, proposed by Dick, agreed to. Agricultural markets improving; wheat from 22s. to 24s. per bag; barley 38s. per quarter; oats 24s.; beef 6d.; mutton 6d.

¹ Peel remained resolute in his maintenance of the Corn Laws, but it is to be noticed that he continued to introduce modifications in other directions, all of which tended towards free trade.

² The trial of O'Connell. See p. 373.

ÆT. 82 Mr. O'Connell and his rebellious colleague found guilty of conspiracy. Sentence postponed until next term.

March 14th.—Petty sessions Whittington. Dick and Wolferston the only Justices; they had but little business. Eleanor went to pass the day at Wichnor and stayed the night. Sir Ed. and Lady Disbrowe on a visit there. I lamented greatly that I could not invite the Disbrow's here, having known him from the time of the white frock and his father ages before him. My continued indisposition prevented my going to or inviting them to come to Freeford.

23rd.—Eleanor went to Packington to stay the following day. I completed the purchase of two fields at Fulfin from Bind the gardener of Lichfield. They are two fields sold by my father and grandfather jointly in the year 1761 for two hundred and fifty, for which I have now paid £700. The whole manor was purchased in 1639 by Sir Richard Dyott for £748. I thought it might be an acquisition to Dick, and I did *not* borrow the money to pay for it.

April On the 1st April my dear Eleanor set out to pay a promised visit to Lady Henley¹ in Northamptonshire (a sister of Sir Robert Peel's). She travelled per railway from Tamworth to meet Lady Henley's carriage near Rugby, three miles from her ladyship's house at Watford Court. Much pleased with her excursion and by the kind reception shown her.

On the 4th a petty sessions at Elford. Dick attended to meet the only colleague the neighbourhood now affords (Wolferston). The small bench had a large share of business, appointing parish constables, etc. etc. My

¹ Harriet Eleonora Peel married in 1824 the second Lord Henley.

troublesome, tiresome neighbour Sam Swinfen just now 1844
renewing his plagues respecting the new fence in Barker's
Lane. I have not entered into his *messages* transmitted by
his servant Standley, but referred the matter to Dick with
the one remark, 'that Barker's Lane is acknowledged being
in the county of Lichfield, and any complaint the *complaining*
squire has taken to conjure up, he must plead before Lich-
field jurisdiction.'

On the 17th I completed my 83rd year. Thanks to
Divine Providence for prolonging my life to this great age,
and suffer me to implore the blessed protection of the
Supreme Being if it pleases the heavenly power to continue
me another year.

On the 7th I received from Sir Robert Peel the most ^{May}
friendly and highly gratifying letter that ever was
received, to inform me he had obtained from the Lord
Chancellor¹ the presentation of the living of Austrey for my
dear son Bill. This mark of friendship and true benevo-
lence, taken in all its bearing, is perhaps, from the style of
Sir Robert's letter of communication to me, the perfection
of friendly composition, as such I shall retain it, and
I trust it may be preserved and valued by my followers
hereafter.

On the 8th of July my dear Eleanor drove to Austrey ^{July}
and took Florendine with her to see how matters were
going on at my dear Bill's vicarage. He is waiting to be
inducted at the Bishop's call. Eleanor stopped at Thorpe
on her return for luncheon. Poor Lady Elizabeth Inge²
in tribulation on account of her son Charles being ordered
to the East Indies with his regiment the 53rd, of which he

¹ Lord Lyndhurst (1772-1863).

² See p. 229.

ÆT. 83 is captain. He had expectation of being appointed aide-de-camp to Lord Heytesbury,¹ lately named as Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland in the place of Lord de Grey,² removed from ill-health.

On the 9th I rode to Lichfield for some business at the bank. I rarely visit the city, and every time I do I see reason to regret the melancholy gloom in appearance compared with my remembrance of its lively society and well-doing some years gone by.

July 24.—Dick went to attend the adjourned quarter sessions Stafford, and the day following he proceeded to Manchester to take leave of his old friends of the 53rd, assembled for embarkation at Liverpool for the East Indies. Eleanor went to Austrey to make preparations for Bill's settlement by arranging furniture, etc. The weather during the past week has been remarkably hot, and brought on the harvest greatly, but the defect in the turnip crops has been ruinous to the farmers.

29th.—Eleanor went on a visit to Lady Henley. I accompanied her to the railway station at Tamworth, but we were too late, having mistaken the hour of its departure; had therefore to wait two hours. We drove to Edmund Peel's to fill up the time, and returned to Tamworth, from whence Eleanor proceeded at three o'clock. Dick left Manchester by an early train for the intention of serving on the Grand Jury; but on arriving at Stafford, in consequence of a new arrangement of the High Sheriff and his deputy, to place such persons only on the list as had previously consented to serve, Dick's name was omitted, he not having made

¹ See p. 45.

² Thomas Philip de Grey, Earl de Grey, of Wrest, co. Bedford.

known his intention of serving. I conceive the alteration 1844
improper and illegal. I was much surprised, just as I sat
down to my dinner, when Dick walked into the dining-room.

On the 19th I left home with Dick in order to pass a ^{August}
week at Buxton. I felt anxious for a change and thought
the water might in some degree relieve my gouty limbs.
We proceeded to Tamworth for the railway, but on our
arrival they had no truck for the carriage. We went on
to Derby, leaving my man to follow by next train. We
called upon Miss Bakewell, who admitted us to a visit in
her bed-room. I thought her looking better than when I
last saw her near two years past. We went on by railway
to Ambergate, and posted from thence by Matlock and
Bakewell to St. Ann's Hotel, Buxton, where we found Mr.
and Mrs. Edmund Peel lodged. I had not been at Buxton
for many years, and almost forgot all about it. I consulted
a physician, Sir Charles Sanderson, who recommended my
taking a bath by way of trial and gave me a box of pills.
I did not find either water or pill having the least effect.

I went to Chatsworth, which I had never seen, and was
rather disappointed. An immense house on a grand scale,
but not to my mind.

We dined at the publick table, a full board, but very few
acquaintances. We had our coffee and a rubber of whist in
Edmund Peel's private room. I made a slight acquaintance
with a Miss Cole at the dinner-table, a daughter of the late
Sir Lowry Cole,¹ and also with Lady de Grey,² a sister of

¹ Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole (1772-1842); second son of the second Baron Enniskillen; a general in the army; colonel of the 27th foot; received the repeated thanks of both Houses of Parliament for his gallant services in the Peninsular War.

² Henrietta Frances Cole, married 1805 Thomas Philip, Earl de Grey.

ÆT. 83 his. They both appeared well acquainted with my name and seemed happy to talk of Florence Court and Firmanagh in former days. We were most unfortunate as to weather, as it rained more or less every day.

On the 26th I left Buxton and posted home, calling for an hour on Thurston Dale at Ashbourne, and reached Freeford at five o'clock much fagged with my journey, and in consequence was tormented with lumbago.

Bill came home for a night or two. He is very busy completing his vicarial residence. Dick and I dined at Drayton Manor; the party consisted chiefly of neighbours. Sir Robert as usual most gracious and kind, as was her ladyship. I was not quite equal to the visit, but there is no saying nay to the Premier.

September 13th.—I made a purchase of the Bispill farm, a most desirable addition to Freeford and particularly happy circumstance for my dear Dick. I take possession at Michaelmas. Fine seasonable weather all the week, and particularly for agricultural pursuits.

21st.—I rode to call upon Edmund Peel, who has been suffering severely from gout notwithstanding his stay at Buxton. I was fatigued with my ride, not having made so lengthy a riding excursion for many weeks, having been much tormented with rheumatism and gout. I need not neglect to attribute bodily complaints to *fourscore*. That will tell without my remarks. Eleanor went to Thorpe for two nights to visit Lady Elizabeth Inge, whose kindness to my dear Eleanor as well as to myself demands all attention.

October 29th.—The *burgesses* of Lichfield are all riot and confusion on account of the annual municipal election for town councillors, which took place on the 1st November, which

produced unusual discord. The Radicals, however, were beaten, notwithstanding the supply of force from Beaudesert of a dozen gamekeepers in full costume of their order, and who made an attempt to prevent the Conservative voters to come up to poll. They were roughly cudgelled and driven from their effort with loss of teeth and bloody faces. 1844

In the evening, after the victory of the Conservatives was announced, a party of upwards of sixty dined at the Swan to celebrate the event. Dick one of the jolly company to partake the joy. Eleanor went to Austrey to visit Bill and to afford her able and useful assistance in his domestick arrangements, and remained until the 4th. November

Eleanor returned home on the 4th. I applied to my old friend Lord Combermere [that Bill might be] one of his lordship's domestick chaplains, and by return of post I received a truly kind and most friendly answer expressing the pleasure and satisfaction it gave him to comply with my request. My dear Bill may, therefore, now adorn his clerical dress with the scarlet scarf,¹ and be ready if it should offer to hold a second living.

19th.—A dinner given by subscription at the Town Hall to the Lichfield burgesses in the Conservative interest; upwards of 400 assembled. The new mayor in the chair. Dick dined and was *uproariously* cheered on his health being drunk.

The day following, the 20th, a tea and ball to the female Conservatives; upwards of 700 males and females under the management of stewards selected from the Corporation; done by subscription, except for the better

¹ It is the privilege of chaplains to bishops and noblemen to wear scarves.

ÆT. 83 class, who paid 1s. admission. A most joyous party. Dick at his post dancing away.

In the morning Dick invited Richard Green and young Palmer to shoot the Freeford's coverts. They had great sport, killed twenty brace of pheasants and five brace hares. The two sportsmen dined at Freeford and proceeded after to the ladies' party at the Town Hall.

21st.—Eleanor and Dick went to dine and sleep at Ingestre. Lord and Lady Ingestre there and a pleasant party. The Earl exceedingly kind and attentive.

Dick remained to shoot the next morning and returned home to dinner, as we had Archdeacon Hamilton and Mrs. Sir E. Hartopp,¹ Lady Clerk² and daughter (the Baronet unable to come from indisposition; new neighbours), Mr. Edmund Peel and son to dine. Bill came home to dine and sleep. He received his appointment as domestick chaplain from the registry at Doctors Commons.

December

December 3.—I gave the like feast as last year to the city corporation on the accession of the new council and the dismissal of the old, giving a complete majority of conservative friends to the municipality. We had twenty-two honest men and true with a joyous party, and handseld my new cup with my brother's medals, which are preserved for his dear memory. Drinking *pottles* deep was the order of the evening.

25th.—I went to church and received the Holy Sacrament with my two dear children. My dear Bill after the performance of his duty to his parishioners at the Vicarage came home to dinner to join our Christmas party with my brother Phillip. There was the usual entertainment in the

¹ See vol. i. p. 375.

² See p. 285.

servants' hall of roast beef and plum pudding, and I hope 1844
no lack of jollity and Christmas festivity.

28th.—Dick was shooting with Sir Robert at Tamhorn and dined at Drayton ; a large party.

January 1, *Wednesday*.—It pleased Almighty Provi- 1845
dence to allow me to commence another year in this January
world. For although the decay of old age has naturally occasioned aches and pains, I have grateful feelings for the blessings of the year now passed.

13th.—Dick started for Beaumanor Park. He drove my carriage horses tandem to Appleby, having sent his own two forward in the morning, which he also drove tandem to Squire Herrick's. Neither a very safe or sightly team.

The present rage for railways affects more or less most landed property. A railway is just now meditated to pass across my estate at Fulfin. All I have to consider is the obtaining a fair remuneration for the land and for the damage and great inconvenience it will occasion.

February 4.—We had a dinner party ; the Dean, Miss and February
young Mr. Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Pole Shaw and Miss ; Mr., Mrs., and Miss W. Hartopp, and Sir W. Parker and his daughter Charlotte ; the Baronet and his family having returned to the lodge a few days previously. Sir William looking very well after all his fights and honours obtained in China and elsewhere. He has been a most fortunate man, but well deserving his good fortune. Bill came home for a couple of nights.

19th.—An old brother-officer of Dick's (Col. Hill) came rather suddenly for the purpose of looking at Sir W. Parker's house, which the Admiral is desirous to let on

ÆT. 83 taking his command in the Mediterranean, to which he is appointed since returning from China. The appointment is a mark of distinction by way of reward for his eminent services.

March 9th, *Sunday*.—I rode to church at Whittington notwithstanding bitter black frost. Lady Elizabeth Inge was pleased to present me with a silk cap to keep my head guarded, and Lady Parker presented me with a pair of muffaters, (her ladyship's knitting), for the benefit of my wrists and arms. What a fortunate old general!!

11th.—A dinner at the Swan of the members of a society formed for the protection of agricultural interests, in my opinion a very unmeaning concern, composed of a large majority of neighbouring farmers assembled to hear themselves talk nonsense and to presume to dictate to the Prime Minister by a petition to the House of Commons for relief in the present distressed [state] of the agricultural interest. My poor brother was always averse to the agricultural meetings pushing forward farmers to mix too familiarly with a class of society above their level, and giving them a feeling of consequence above their rank in the community.

12th.—My old friend Mr. Grove was buried at Shensstone. I was invited to the funeral, and in case of my declining to attend, Dick received an invitation. There was a highly respectable attendance of the neighbours, which was well merited as a mark of favour to the departure of an excellent man.

27th.—Eleanor and Dick dined at Mr. Lonsdale's to meet his brother the Bishop of Lichfield, a very worthy man and excellent Divine.¹ I should like to have been of the dining

¹ John Lonsdale (1788-1867), Bishop of Lichfield; Principal of King's College, London, 1839; Bishop of Lichfield 1843.

party, but *deaf*, *blind*, and *gouty* are woeful companions on a visiting company. The Bishop did me the honour to call at Freeford on the day following, when I took the opportunity of mentioning how I was situated, having no legal place to attend divine worship. His lordship regretted the circumstance, but as I was situated in a dwelling that was extra-parochial, he found there was no redress. 1845

On the 3rd of April began sowing barley.¹

¹ With these words the diary of sixty-four years concludes.

THE END



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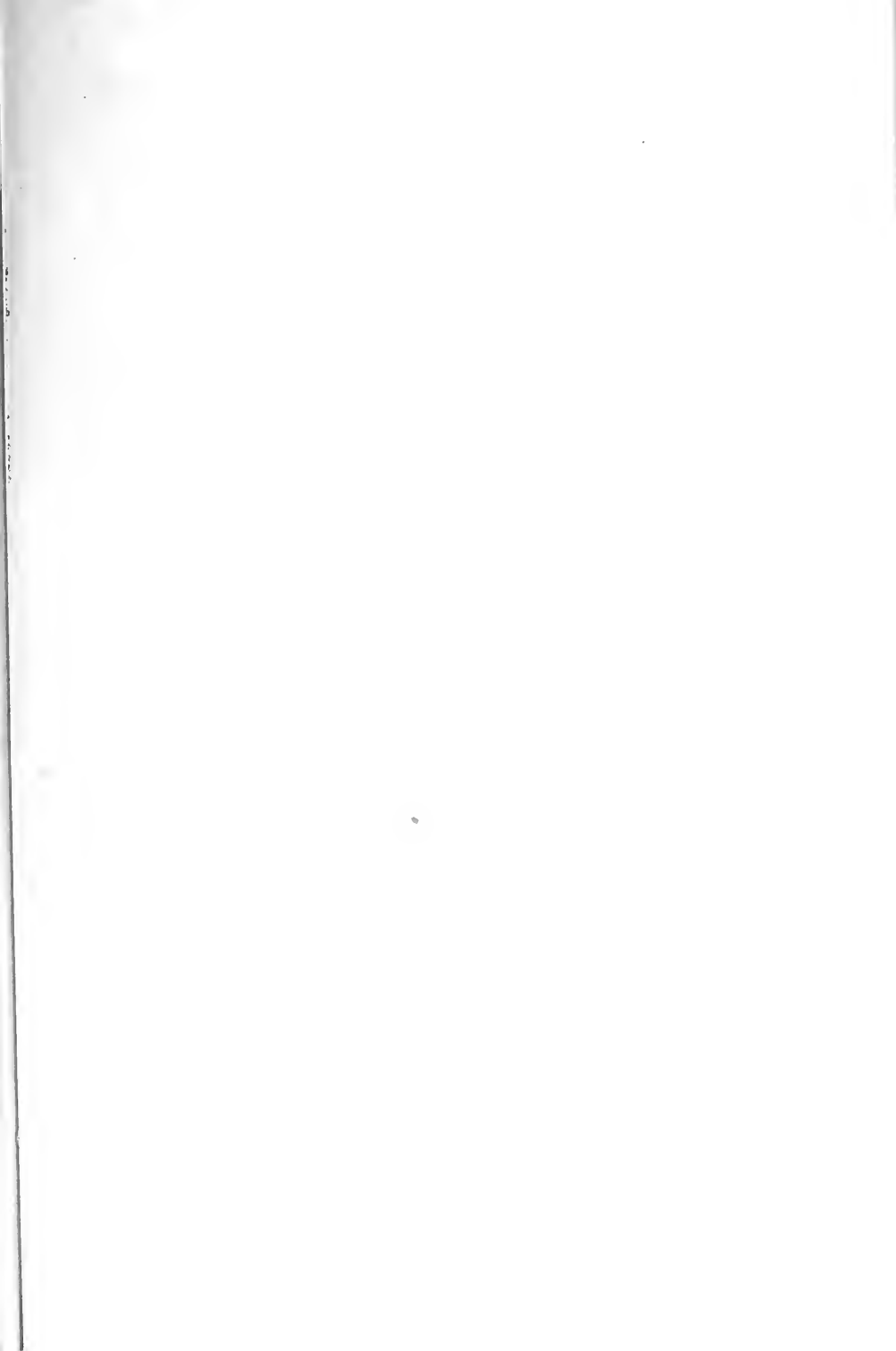
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