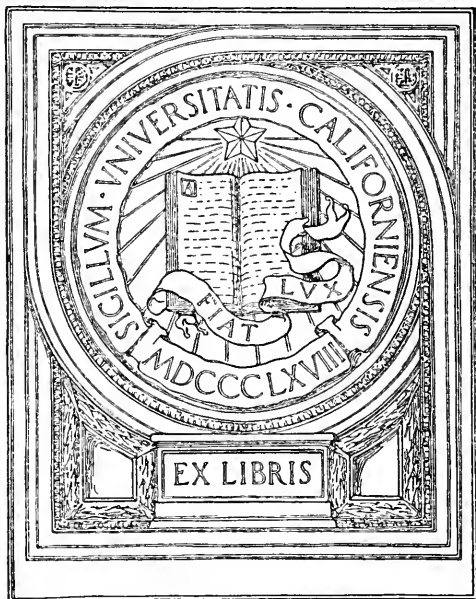
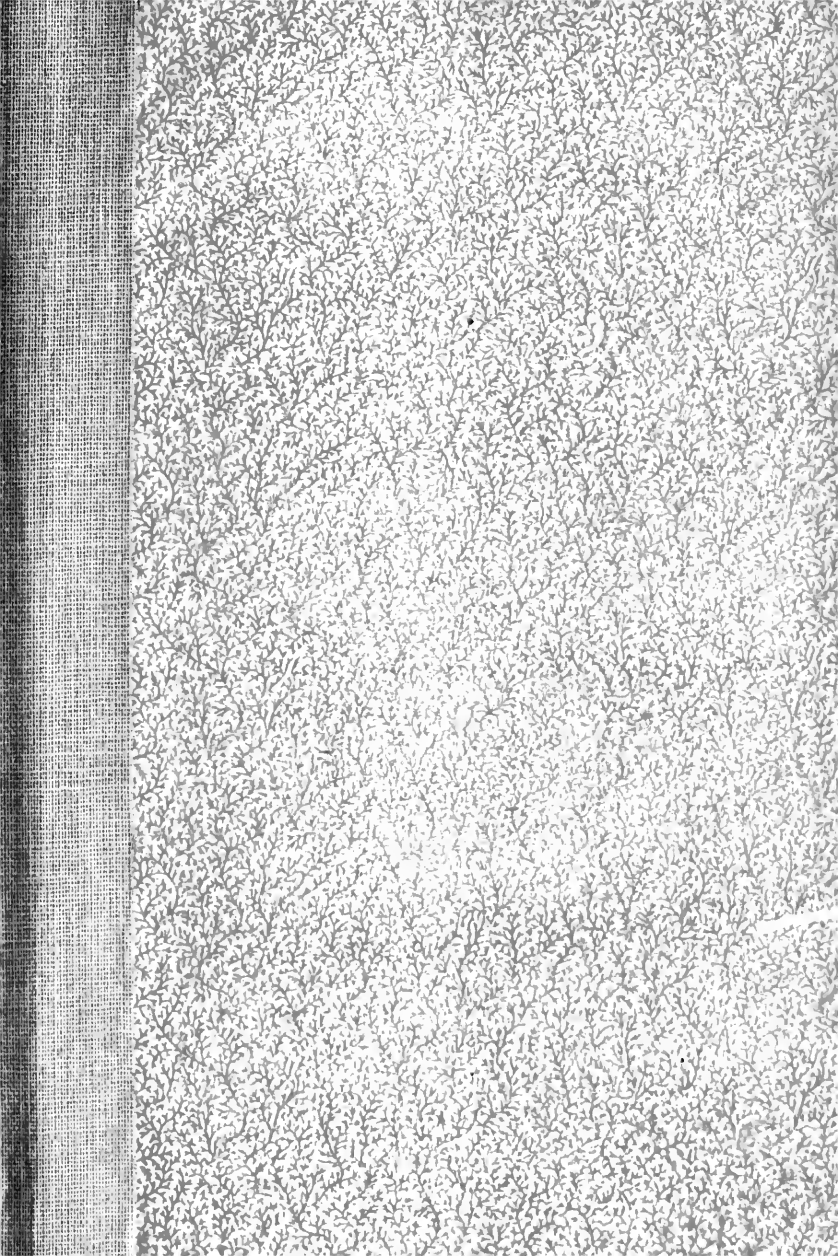


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JUSTIN McCARTHY.

A HISTORY  
OF  
OUR OWN TIMES.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA TO THE  
GENERAL ELECTION OF 1880.

By JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

A NEW EDITION WITH AN APPENDIX OF EVENTS TO THE END OF 1886.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

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# A History of our Own Times.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE KING IS DEAD! LONG LIVE THE QUEEN!

BEFORE half-past two o'clock on the morning of June 20, 1837, William IV. was lying dead in Windsor Castle, while the messengers were already hurrying off to Kensington Palace to bear to his successor her summons to the throne. The illness of the king had been but short, and at one time, even after it had been pronounced alarming, it seemed to take so hopeful a turn that the physicians began to think it would pass harmlessly away. But the king was an old man—was an old man even when he came to the throne, and when the dangerous symptoms again exhibited themselves, their warning was very soon followed by fulfillment. The death of King William may be fairly regarded as having closed an era of our history. With him, we may believe, ended the reign of personal government in England. William was indeed a constitutional king in more than mere name. He was to the best of his lights a faithful representative of the constitutional principle. He was as far in advance of his two predecessors in understanding and acceptance of the principle as his successor has proved herself beyond him. Constitutional government has developed itself gradually, as everything else has done in English politics. The written principle and code of its system it would be as vain to look for as for the British constitution itself. King William still held to and exercised the right to dismiss his ministers when he pleased and because he pleased. His father had held to the right of maintaining favorite ministers in defiance of repeated votes of the House of Commons. It would not be easy to find any written rule or declaration of constitutional law pronouncing decisively that either was in the wrong. But in our

day we should believe that the constitutional freedom of England was outraged, or at least put in the extremest danger, if a sovereign were to dismiss a ministry at mere pleasure, or to retain it in despite of the expressed wish of the House of Commons. Virtually, therefore, there was still personal government in the reign of William IV. With his death the long chapter of its history came to an end. We find it difficult now to believe that it was a living principle, openly at work among us, if not openly acknowledged, so lately as in the reign of King William.

The closing scenes of King William's life were undoubtedly characterized by some personal dignity. As a rule, sovereigns show that they know how to die. Perhaps the necessary consequence of their training, by virtue of which they come to regard themselves always as the central figure in great state pageantry, is to make them assume a manner of dignity on all occasions when the eyes of their subjects may be supposed to be on them, even if the dignity of bearing is not the free gift of nature. The manners of William IV. had been, like those of most of his brothers, somewhat rough and overbearing. He had been an unmanageable naval officer. He had again and again disregarded or disobeyed orders, and at last it had been found convenient to withdraw him from active service altogether, and allow him to rise through the successive ranks of his profession by a merely formal and technical process of ascent. In his more private capacity he had, when younger, indulged more than once in unseemly and insufferable freaks of temper. He had made himself unpopular while Duke of Clarence by his strenuous opposition to some of the measures which were especially desired by all the enlightenment of the country. He was, for example, a determined opponent of the measures for the abolition of the slave trade. He had wrangled publicly, in open debate, with some of his brothers in the House of Lords; and words had been interchanged among the royal princes which could not be heard in our day even in the hottest debates of the more turbulent House of Commons. But William seems to have been one of the men whom increased responsibility improves. He was far better as a king than as a prince. He proved that he was able at least to understand that first duty of a constitutional sovereign which, to the last day of his active life, his father, George III., never could be brought to com-

prehend—that the personal predilections and prejudices of the king must sometimes give way to the public interest.

Nothing perhaps in life became him like to the leaving of it. His closing days were marked by gentleness and kindly consideration for the feelings of those around him. When he awoke on June 18 he remembered that it was the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. He expressed a strong, pathetic wish to live over that day, even if he were never to see another sunset. He called for the flag which the Duke of Wellington always sent him on that anniversary in homage for Strathfieldsaye, and he laid his hand upon the eagle which adorned it and said he felt revived by the touch. He had himself attended since his accession the Waterloo banquet; but this time the Duke of Wellington thought it would perhaps be more seemly to have the dinner put off, and sent accordingly to take the wishes of his majesty. The king declared that the dinner must go on as usual, and sent to the duke a friendly, simple message, expressing his hope that the guests might have a pleasant day. He talked in his homely way to those about him, his direct language seeming to acquire a sort of tragic dignity from the approach of the death that was so near. He had prayers read to him again and again, and called those near him to witness that he had always been a faithful believer in the truths of religion. He had his despatch-boxes brought to him, and tried to get through some business with his private secretary. It was remarked with some interest that the last official act he ever performed was to sign with his trembling hand the pardon of a condemned criminal. Even a far nobler reign than his would have received new dignity if it closed with a deed of mercy. When some of those around him endeavored to encourage him with the idea that he might recover and live many years yet, he declared, with a simplicity which had something oddly pathetic in it, that he would be willing to live ten years yet for the sake of the country. The poor king was evidently under the sincere conviction that England could hardly get on without him. His consideration for his country, whatever whimsical thoughts it may suggest, is entitled to some at least of the respect which we give to the dying groan of a Pitt or a Mirabeau, who fears, with too much reason, that he leaves a blank not easily to be filled. “Young royal tarry-brecks,” William had been joe-



ularly called by Robert Burns fifty years before, when there was yet a popular belief that he would come all right and do brilliant and gallant things, and become a stout sailor in whom a seafaring nation might feel pride. He disappointed all such expectations; but it must be owned that when responsibility came upon him he disappointed expectation anew in a different way, and was a better sovereign, more deserving of the complimentary title of patriot-king, than even his friends would have ventured to anticipate.

There were eulogies pronounced upon him after his death in both Houses of Parliament as a matter of course. It is not necessary, however, to set down to mere court homage or parliamentary form some of the praises that were bestowed on the dead king by Lord Melbourne and Lord Brougham and Lord Grey. A certain tone of sincerity, not quite free perhaps from surprise, appears to run through some of these expressions of admiration. They seem to say that the speakers were at one time or another considerably surprised to find that, after all, William really was able and willing on grave occasions to subordinate his personal likings and dislikings to considerations of state policy and to what was shown to him to be for the good of the nation. In this sense at least he may be called a patriot-king. We have advanced a good deal since that time, and we require somewhat higher and more positive qualities in a sovereign now to excite our political wonder. But we must judge William by the reigns that went before, and not the reign that came after him; and, with that consideration borne in mind, we may accept the panegyric of Lord Melbourne and of Lord Grey, and admit that on the whole he was better than his education, his early opportunities, and his early promise.

William IV. (third son of George III.) had left no children who could have succeeded to the throne, and the crown passed therefore to the daughter of his brother (fourth son of George), the Duke of Kent. This was the Princess Alexandrina Victoria, who was born at Kensington Palace on May 24, 1819. The princess was therefore at this time little more than eighteen years of age. The Duke of Kent died a few months after the birth of his daughter, and the child was brought up under the care of his widow. She was well brought up; both as regards her intellect and her character her training was excellent. She was taught to be self-reliant, brave, and systematical. Prudence and

economy were inculcated on her as though she had been born to be poor. One is not generally inclined to attach much importance to what historians tell us of the education of contemporary princes or princesses; but it cannot be doubted that the Princess Victoria was trained for intelligence and goodness.

“The death of the king of England has everywhere caused the greatest sensation. . . . Cousin Victoria is said to have shown astonishing self-possession. She undertakes a heavy responsibility, especially at the present moment, when parties are so excited, and all rest their hopes on her.” These words are an extract from a letter written on July 4, 1837, by the late Prince Albert, the prince consort of so many happy years. The letter was written to the prince’s father, from Bonn. The young queen had indeed behaved with remarkable self-possession. There is a pretty description, which has been often quoted, but will bear citing once more, given by Miss Wynn of the manner in which the young sovereign received the news of her accession to a throne. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Howley, and the Lord Chamberlain, the Marquis of Conyngham, left Windsor for Kensington Palace, where the Princess Victoria had been residing, to inform her of the king’s death. It was two hours after midnight when they started, and they did not reach Kensington until five o’clock in the morning. “They knocked, they rang, they thumped for a considerable time before they could rouse the porter at the gate; they were again kept waiting in the courtyard, then turned into one of the lower rooms, where they seemed forgotten by everybody. They rang the bell, and desired that the attendant of the Princess Victoria might be sent to inform her royal highness that they requested an audience on business of importance. After another delay, and another ringing to inquire the cause, the attendant was summoned, who stated that the princess was in such a sweet sleep that she could not venture to disturb her. Then they said, ‘We are come on business of state to the queen, and even her sleep must give way to that.’ It did; and to prove that she did not keep them waiting, in a few minutes she came into the room in a loose white nightgown and shawl, her nightcap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified.” The Prime Minis-

ter, Lord Melbourne, was presently sent for, and a meeting of the privy council summoned for eleven o'clock, when the lord chancellor administered the usual oaths to the queen, and her majesty received in return the oaths of allegiance of the cabinet ministers and other privy councillors present. Mr. Greville, who was usually as little disposed to record any enthusiastic admiration of royalty and royal personages as Humboldt or Varnhagen von Ense could have been, has described the scene in words well worthy of quotation.

“The king died at twenty minutes after two yesterday morning, and the young queen met the council at Kensington Palace at eleven. Never was anything like the first impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which it raised about her manner and behavior; and certainly not without justice. It was very extraordinary, and something far beyond what was looked for. Her extreme youth and inexperience, and the ignorance of the world concerning her, naturally excited intense curiosity to see how she would act on this trying occasion, and there was a considerable assemblage at the palace, notwithstanding the short notice which was given. The first thing to be done was to teach her her lesson, which for this purpose Melbourne had himself to learn. . . . She bowed to the lords, took her seat, and then read her speech in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, and without any appearance of fear or embarrassment. She was quite plainly dressed, and in mourning. After she had read her speech, and taken and signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, the privy councillors were sworn, the two royal dukes first by themselves; and as these two old men, her uncles, knelt before her, swearing allegiance and kissing her hand, I saw her blush up to the eyes, as if she felt the contrast between their civil and their natural relations, and this was the only sign of emotion which she evinced. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging; she kissed them both, and rose from her chair and moved toward the Duke of Sussex, who was farthest from her, and too infirm to reach her. She seemed rather bewildered at the multitude of men who were sworn, and who came, one after another, to kiss her hand, but she did not speak to anybody, nor did she make the slightest difference in her manner, or show any in her countenance, to any individual of any

rank, station or party. I particularly watched her when Melbourne and the ministers, and the Duke of Wellington and Peel approached her. She went through the whole ceremony, occasionally looking at Melbourne for instruction when she had any doubt what to do, which hardly ever occurred, and with perfect calmness and self-possession, but at the same time with a graceful modesty and propriety particularly interesting and ingratiating."

Sir Robert Peel told Mr. Greville that he was amazed at "her manner and behavior, at her apparent deep sense of her situation, and at the same time her firmness." The Duke of Wellington said in his blunt way that if she had been his own daughter he could not have desired to see her perform her part better. "At twelve," says Mr. Greville, "she held a council, at which she presided with as much ease as if she had been doing nothing else all her life; and though Lord Lansdowne and my colleague had contrived between them to make some confusion with the council papers, she was not put out by it. She looked very well; and though so small in stature, and without much pretension to beauty, the gracefulness of her manner and the good expression of her countenance give her on the whole a very agreeable appearance, and with her youth inspire an excessive interest in all who approach her, and which I can't help feeling myself. . . . In short, she appears to act with every sort of good taste and good feelings, as well as good sense; and as far as it has gone nothing can be more favorable than the impression she has made, and nothing can promise better than her manner and conduct do; though," Mr. Greville somewhat superfluously adds, "it would be rash to count too confidently upon her judgment and discretion in more weighty matters."

The interest or curiosity with which the demeanor of the young queen was watched was all the keener because the world in general knew so little about her. Not merely was the world in general thus ignorant, but even the statesmen and officials in closest communication with court circles were in almost absolute ignorance. According to Mr. Greville, whose authority, however, is not to be taken too implicitly except as to matters which he actually saw, the young queen had been previously kept in such seclusion by her mother—"never," he says, "having slept out of her bedroom, nor been alone with anybody but herself and the

Baroness Lehzen"—that "not one of her acquaintance, none of the attendants at Kensington, not even the Duchess of Northumberland, her governess, have any idea what she is or what she promises to be." There was enough in the court of the two sovereigns who went before Queen Victoria to justify any strictness of seclusion which the Duchess of Kent might desire for her daughter. George IV. was a Charles II. without the education or the talents; William IV. was a Frederick William of Prussia without the genius. The ordinary manners of the society at the court of either had a full flavor, to put it in the softest way, such as a decent taproom would hardly exhibit in a time like the present. No one can read even the most favorable descriptions given by contemporaries of the manners of those two courts without feeling grateful to the Duchess of Kent for resolving that her daughter should see as little as possible of their ways and their company.

It was remarked with some interest that the queen subscribed herself simply "Victoria," and not, as had been expected, "Alexandrina Victoria." Mr. Greville mentions in his diary of December 24, 1819, that "the Duke of Kent gave the name of Alexandrina to his daughter in compliment to the emperor of Russia. She was to have had the name of Georgiana, but the duke insisted upon Alexandrina being her first name. The regent sent for Lieven" (the Russian ambassador, husband of the famous Princess de Lieven), "and made him a great many compliments, *en le persiflant*, on the emperor's being godfather, but informed him that the name of Georgiana could be second to no other in this country, and therefore she could not bear it at all." It was a very wise choice to employ simply the name of Victoria, around which no ungenial associations of any kind hung at that time, and which can have only grateful associations in the history of this country for the future.

It is not necessary to go into any formal description of the various ceremonials and pageantries which celebrated the accession of the new sovereign. The proclamation of the queen, her appearance for the first time on the throne in the House of Lords when she prorogued Parliament in person, and even the gorgeous festival of her coronation, which took place on June 28, in the following year, 1838, may be passed over with a mere word of record. It is



worth mentioning, however, that at the coronation procession one of the most conspicuous figures was that of Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, the opponent of Moore and Wellington in the Peninsula, the commander of the Old Guard at Lützen, and one of the strong arms of Napoleon at Waterloo. Soult had been sent as ambassador extraordinary to represent the French government and people at the coronation of Queen Victoria, and nothing could exceed the enthusiasm with which he was received by the crowds in the streets of London on that day. The white-haired soldier was cheered wherever a glimpse of his face or figure could be caught. He appeared in the procession in a carriage, the frame of which had been used on occasions of state by some of the princes of the house of Condé, and which Soult had had splendidly decorated for the ceremony of the coronation. Even the Austrian ambassador, says an eye witness, attracted less attention than Soult, although the dress of the Austrian, Prince Esterhazy, "down to his very boot heels sparkled with diamonds." The comparison savors now of the ridiculous, but is remarkably expressive and effective. Prince Esterhazy's name in those days suggested nothing but diamonds. His diamonds may be said to glitter through all the light literature of the time. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wanted a comparison with which to illustrate excessive splendor and brightness, she found it in "Governor Pitt's diamonds." Prince Esterhazy's served the same purpose for the writers of the early years of the present reign. It was therefore, perhaps, no very poor tribute to the stout old *moustache* of the republic and the empire to say that at a London pageant his war-worn face drew attention away from Prince Esterhazy's diamonds. Soult himself felt very warmly the genuine kindness of the reception given to him. Years after, in a debate in the French Chamber, when M. Guizot was accused of too much partiality for the English alliance, Marshal Soult declared himself a warm champion of that alliance. "I fought the English down to Toulouse," he said, "when I fired the last cannon in defense of the national independence; in the meantime I have been in London, and France knows the reception which I had there. The English themselves cried, 'Vive Soult!'—they cried, 'Soult for ever!' I had learned to estimate the English on the field of battle; I have learned to estimate them in peace;

and I repeat that I am a warm partisan of the English alliance." History is not exclusively made by cabinets and professional diplomatists. It is highly probable that the cheers of a London crowd on the day of the queen's coronation did something genuine and substantial to restore the good feeling between this country and France, and efface the bitter memories of Waterloo.

It is a fact well worthy of note amid whatever records of court ceremonial and of political change, that a few days after the accession of the queen, Mr. Montefiore was elected sheriff of London, the first Jew who had ever been chosen for that office; and that he received knighthood at the hands of her majesty when she visited the city on the following Lord Mayor's day. He was the first Jew whom royalty had honored in this country since the good old times when royalty was pleased to borrow the Jew's money, or order instead the extraction of his teeth. The expansion of the principle of religious liberty and equality which has been one of the most remarkable characteristics of the reign of Queen Victoria, could hardly have been more becomingly inaugurated than by the compliment which sovereign and city paid to Sir Moses Montefiore.

The first signature attached to the Act of Allegiance presented to the queen at Kensington Palace was that of her eldest surviving uncle, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The fact may be taken as an excuse for introducing a few words here to record the severance that then took place between the interests of this country, or at least the reigning family of these realms, and another state, which had for a long time been bound up together in a manner seldom satisfactory to the English people. In the whole history of England it will be observed that few things have provoked greater popular dissatisfaction than the connection of a reigning family with the crown or rulership of some foreign state. There is an instinctive jealousy on such a point, which even when it is unreasonable is not unnatural. A sovereign of England had better be sovereign of England, and of no foreign state. Many favorable auspices attended the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne; some at least of these were associated with her sex. The country was in general disposed to think that the accession of a woman to the throne would somewhat clarify and purify the atmosphere of the court. It had another good effect as

well, and one of a strictly political nature. It severed the connection which had existed for some generations between this country and Hanover. The connection was only personal, the successive kings of England being also by succession sovereigns of Hanover.

The crown of Hanover was limited in its descent to the male line, and it passed on the death of William IV. to his eldest surviving brother, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The change was in almost every way satisfactory to the English people. The indirect connection between England and Hanover had at no time been a matter of gratification to the public of this country. Many cooler and more enlightened persons than honest Squire Western had viewed with disfavor, and at one time with distrust, the division of interests which the ownership of the two crowns seemed almost of necessity to create in our English sovereigns. Besides, it must be owned that the people of this country were not by any means sorry to be rid of the Duke of Cumberland. Not many of George III.'s sons were popular; the Duke of Cumberland was probably the least popular of all. He was believed by many persons to have had something more than an indirect, or passive, or innocent share in the Orange plot, discovered and exposed by Joseph Hume in 1835, for setting aside the claims of the young Princess Victoria and putting himself, the Duke of Cumberland, on the throne; a scheme which its authors pretended to justify by the preposterous assertion that they feared the Duke of Wellington would otherwise seize the crown for himself. His manners were rude, overbearing, and sometimes even brutal. He had personal habits which seemed rather fitted for the days of Tiberius, or for the court of Peter the Great, than for the time and sphere to which he belonged. Rumor not unnaturally exaggerated his defects, and in the mouths of many his name was the symbol of the darkest and fiercest passions and even crimes. Some of the popular reports with regard to him had their foundation only in the common detestation of his character and dread of his influence. But it is certain that he was profligate, selfish, overbearing and quarrelsome. A man with these qualities would usually be described in fiction as, at all events, bluntly honest and outspoken; but the Duke of Cumberland was deceitful and treacherous. He was outspoken in his abuse of those with whom he quar

relled, and in his style of anecdote and jocular conversation; but in no other sense. The Duke of Wellington, whom he hated, told Mr. Greville that he once asked George IV. why the Duke of Cumberland was so unpopular, and the king replied, "Because there never was a father well with his son, or husband with his wife, or lover with his mistress, or friend with his friend, that he did not try to make mischief between them." The first thing he did on his accession to the throne of Hanover was to abrogate the constitution which had been agreed to by the estates of the kingdom, and sanctioned by the late king, William IV. "Radicalism," said the king, writing to an English nobleman, "has been here all the order of the day, and all the lower class appointed to office were more or less imbued with these laudable principles. . . . But I have cut the wings of this democracy." He went indeed pretty vigorously to work, for he dismissed from their offices seven of the most distinguished professors of the University of Göttingen, because they signed a protest against his arbitrary abrogation of the constitution. Among the men thus pushed from their stools were—Gervinus, the celebrated historian and Shakespearian critic, at that time professor of history and literature; Ewald, the orientalist and theologian; Jacob Grimm; and Frederick Dahlmann, professor of political science. Gervinus, Grimm and Dahlmann were not merely deprived of their offices, but were actually sent into exile. The exiles were accompanied across the frontier by an immense concourse of students, who gave them a triumphant *Geleit* in true student fashion, and converted what was meant for degradation and punishment into a procession of honor. The offense against all rational principles of civil government in these arbitrary proceedings on the part of the new king was the more flagrant because it could not even be pretended that the professors were interfering with political matters outside their province, or that they were issuing manifestoes calculated to disturb the public peace. The University of Göttingen at that time sent a representative to the estates of the kingdom, and the protest to which the seven professors attached their names was addressed to the academical senate, and simply declared that they would take no part in the ensuing election, because of the suspension of the constitution. All this led to somewhat serious disturbances in Hanover, which it needed the employment of military force to suppress.

It was felt in England that the mere departure of the Duke of Cumberland from this country would have made the severance of the connection with Hanover desirable, even if it had not been in other ways an advantage to us. Later times have shown how much we have gained by the separation. It would have been exceedingly inconvenient, to say the least, if the crown worn by a sovereign of England had been hazarded in the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. Our reigning family must have seemed to suffer in dignity, if that crown had been roughly knocked off the head of its wearer who happened to be an English sovereign; and it would have been absurd to expect that the English people could engage in a quarrel with which their interests and honor had absolutely nothing to do, for the sake of a mere family possession of their ruling house.

Looking back from this distance of time and across a change of political and social manners far greater than the distance of time might seem to explain, it appears difficult to understand the passionate emotions which the accession of the young queen seems to have excited on all sides. Some influential and prominent politicians talked and wrote as if there were really a possibility of the Tories attempting a revolution in favor of the Hanoverian branch of the royal family; as if some such crisis had again come round as that which tried the nation when Queen Anne died. On the other hand, there were heard loud and shrill cries that the queen was destined to be conducted by her constitutional advisers into a precipitate pathway leading sheer down into popery and anarchy. The *Times* insisted that "the anticipations of certain Irish Roman Catholics respecting the success of their warfare against church and state under the auspices of these not untried ministers into whose hands the all but infant queen has been compelled by her unhappy condition to deliver herself and her indignant people are to be taken for nothing, and as nothing, but the chimeras of a band of visionary traitors." The *Times* even thought it necessary to point out that for her majesty to turn papist, to marry a papist, "or in any manner follow the footsteps of the Coburg family whom these incendiaries describe as papists," would involve an "immediate forfeiture of the British crown." On the other hand, some of the Radical, and more especially Irish papers talked in the plainest terms of Tory plots to depose or even to assassinate

the queen and put the Duke of Cumberland in her place. O'Connell, the great Irish agitator, declared in a public speech that if it were necessary he could get "five hundred thousand brave Irishmen to defend the life, the honor, and the person of the beloved young lady by whom England's throne is now filled." Mr. Henry Grattan, the son of the famous orator, and like his father a Protestant, declared at a meeting in Dublin, that "if her majesty were once fairly placed in the hands of the Tories, I would not give an orange peel for her life." He even went on to put his rhetorical declaration into a more distinct form; "if some of the low miscreants of the party got round her majesty and had the mixing of the royal bowl at night, I fear she would have a long sleep." This language seems almost too absurd for sober record, and yet was hardly more absurd than many things said on what may be called the other side. A Mr. Bradshaw, Tory member for Canterbury, declared at a public meeting in that ancient city that the sheet-anchor of the Liberal Ministry was the body of "Irish papists and rapparees whom the priests return to the House of Commons." "These are the men who represent the bigoted savages, hardly more civilized than the natives of New Zealand, but animated with a fierce, undying hatred of England. Yet on these men are bestowed the countenance and support of the queen of Protestant England. For, alas! her majesty is queen only of a faction, and is as much of a partisan as the lord chancellor himself." At a Conservative dinner in Lancashire, a speaker denounced the queen and her ministers on the same ground so vehemently, that the commander-in-chief addressed a remonstrance to some military officers who were among the guests at this excited banquet, pointing out to them the serious responsibility they incurred by remaining in any assembly when such language was uttered and such sentiments were expressed.

No one, of course, would take impassioned and inflated harangues of this kind on either side as a representation of the general feeling. Sober persons all over the country must have known perfectly well that there was not the slightest fear that the young queen would turn a Roman Catholic, or that her ministry intended to deliver the country up as a prey to Rome. Sober persons everywhere, too, must have known equally well that there was no longer

the slightest cause to feel any alarm about a Tory plot to hand over the throne of England to the detested Duke of Cumberland. We only desire in quoting such outrageous declarations to make more clear the condition of the public mind, and to show what the state of the political world must have been when such extravagance and such delusions were possible. We have done this partly to show what were the trials and difficulties under which her majesty came to the throne, and partly for the mere purpose of illustrating the condition of the country and of political education. There can be no doubt that all over the country passion and ignorance were at work to make the task of constitutional government peculiarly difficult. A vast number of the followers of the Tories in country places really believed that the Liberals were determined to hurry the sovereign into some policy tending to the degradation of the monarchy. If any cool and enlightened reasoner were to argue with them on this point and endeavor to convince them of the folly of ascribing such purposes to a number of English statesmen, whose interests, position, and honor were absolutely bound up with the success and the glory of the state, the indignant and unreasoning Tories would be able to cite the very words of so great and so sober-minded a statesman as Sir Robert Peel, who in his famous speech to the electors of Tamworth promised to rescue the constitution from being made the "victim of false friends," and the country from being "trampled under the hoof of a ruthless democracy." If, on the other hand, a sensible person were to try to persuade hot-headed people on the opposite side that it was absurd to suppose the Tories really meant any harm to the freedom and the peace of the country and the security of the succession, he might be invited with significant expression to read the manifesto issued by Lord Durham to the electors of Sunderland, in which that eminent statesman declared that "in all circumstances, at all hazards, be the personal consequences what they may," he would ever be found ready when called upon to defend the principles on which the constitution of the country was then settled. We know now very well that Sir Robert Peel and Lord Durham were using the language of innocent metaphor. Sir Robert Peel did not really fear much the hoof of the ruthless democracy; Lord Durham did not actually expect to be called upon at any terrible risk to

himself to fight the battle of freedom on English soil. But when those whose minds had been bewildered and whose passions had been inflamed by the language of the *Times* on the one side, and that of O'Connell on the other, came to read the calmer and yet sufficiently impassioned words of responsible statesmen like Sir Robert Peel and Lord Durham, they might be excused if they found rather a confirmation than a refutation of their arguments and their fears.

The truth is, that the country was in a very excited condition, and that it is easy to imagine a succession of events which might in a moment have thrown it into utter confusion. At home and abroad things were looking ominous for the new reign. To begin with, the last two reigns had, on the whole, done much to loosen not only the personal feeling of allegiance, but even the general confidence in the virtue of monarchical rule. The old plan of personal government had become an anomaly, and the system of a genuine constitutional government, such as we know, had not yet been tried. The very manner in which the Reform Bill had been carried, the political stratagem which had been resorted to when further resistance seemed dangerous, was not likely to exalt in popular estimate the value of what was then gracefully called constitutional government. Only a short time before the country had seen Catholic emancipation conceded, not from a sense of justice on the part of ministers, but avowedly because further resistance must lead to civil disturbance. There was not much in all this to impress an intelligent and independent people with a sense of the great wisdom of the rulers of the country, or of the indispensable advantages of the system which they represented. Social discontent prevailed almost everywhere. Economic laws were hardly understood by the country in general. Class interests were fiercely arrayed against each other. The cause of each man's class filled him with a positive fanaticism. He was not a mere selfish and grasping partisan, but he sincerely believed that each other class was arrayed against his, and that the natural duty of self-defense and self-preservation compelled him to stand firmly by his own.



## CHAPTER II.

## STATESMEN AND PARTIES.

LORD MELBOURNE was the first minister of the crown when the queen succeeded to the throne. He was a man who then and always after made himself particularly dear to the queen, and for whom she had the strongest regard. He was of kindly, somewhat indolent nature; fair and even generous toward his political opponents; of the most genial disposition toward his friends. He was emphatically not a strong man. He was not a man to make good grow where it was not already growing, to adopt the expression of a great author. Long before that time his eccentric wife, Lady Caroline Lamb, had excused herself for some of her follies and frailties by pleading that her husband was not a man to watch over anyone's morals. He was a kindly counsellor to a young queen; and, happily for herself, the young queen in this case had strong clear sense enough of her own not to be absolutely dependent on any counsel. Lord Melbourne was not a statesman. His best qualities, personal kindness and good nature apart, were purely negative. He was unfortunately not content even with the reputation for a sort of indolent good nature which he might have well deserved. He strove to make himself appear hopelessly idle, trivial, and careless. When he really was serious and earnest he seemed to make it his business to look like one in whom no human affairs could call up a gleam of interest. He became the *fanfaron* of levities which he never had. We have amusing pictures of him as he occupied himself in blowing a feather or nursing a sofa-cushion while receiving an important and perhaps highly sensitive deputation from this or that commercial "interest." Those who knew him insisted that he really was listening with all his might and main; that he had sat up the whole night before, studying the question which he seemed to think so unworthy of any attention; and that so far from being, like Horace, wholly absorbed in his trifles, he was at very great pains to keep up the appearance of a trifler. A brilliant critic has made a lively and amusing attack on this alleged peculiarity. "If the truth must be told," says Sydney Smith, "our viscount is somewhat of an impostor. Everything about him seems to betoken

careless desolation; any one would suppose from his manner that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness; that he was always on the heel of pastime; that he would giggle away the great charter, and decide by the method of tectotum whether my lords the bishops should or should not retain their seats in the House of Lords. All this is but the mere vanity of surprising, and making us believe that he can play with kingdoms as other men can with ninepins. . . . I am sorry to hurt any man's feelings, and to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but I accuse our minister of honesty and diligence; I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding and good principle, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*."

Such a masquerading might perhaps have been excusable, or even attractive in the case of a man of really brilliant and commanding talents. Lookers-on are always rather apt to be fascinated by the spectacle of a man of well-recognized strength and force of character playing for the moment the part of an indolent trifler. The contrast is charming in a brilliant Prince Hal or such a Sardanapalus as Byron drew. In our own time a considerable amount of the popularity of Lord Palmerston was inspired by the amusing antagonism between his assumed levity and his well-known force of intellect and strength of will. But in Lord Melbourne's case the affectation had no such excuse or happy effect. He was not by any means a Palmerston. He was only fitted to rule in the quietest times. He was a poor speaker, utterly unable to encounter the keen penetrating criticisms of Lyndhurst or the vehement and remorseless invectives of Brougham. Debates were then conducted with a bitterness of personality unknown, or at all events very rarely known, in our days. Even in the House of Lords language was often interchanged of the most virulent hostility. The rushing impetuosity and fury of Brougham's style had done much then to inflame the atmosphere which in our days is usually so cool and moderate.

It probably added to the warmth of the attacks on the ministry of Lord Melbourne that the prime minister was supposed to be an especial favorite with the young queen. When Victoria came to the throne the Duke of Wellington

gave frank expression to his feelings as to the future of his party. He was of opinion that the Tories would never have any chance with a young woman for sovereign. "I have no small talk," he said, "and Peel has no manners." It had probably not occurred to the Duke of Wellington to think that a woman could be capable of as sound a constitutional policy and could show as little regard for personal predilections in the business of government as any man. All this, however, only tended to embitter the feeling against the Whig government. Lord Melbourne's constant attendance on the young queen was regarded with keen jealousy and dissatisfaction. According to some critics the prime minister was endeavoring to inspire her with all his own gay heedlessness of character and temperament. According to others, Lord Melbourne's purpose was to make himself agreeable and indispensable to the queen; to surround her with his friends, relations and creatures, and thus to get a lifelong hold of power in England, in defiance of political changes and parties. It is curious now to look back on much that was said in the political and personal heats and bitterness of the time. If Lord Melbourne had been a French mayor of the palace, whose real object was to make himself virtual ruler of the state and to hold the sovereign as a puppet in his hands, there could not have been greater anger, fear and jealousy. Since that time we have all learned on the very best authority that Lord Melbourne actually was himself the person to advise the queen to show some confidence in the Tories—to "hold out the olive branch a little to them," as he expressed it. He does not appear to have been greedy of power, or to have used any unfair means of getting or keeping it. The character of the young sovereign seems to have impressed him deeply. His real or affected levity gave way to a genuine and lasting desire to make her life as happy and her reign as successful as he could. The queen always felt the warmest affection and gratitude for him, and showed it long after the public had given up the suspicion that she could be a puppet in the hands of a minister.

Still, it is certain that the queen's prime minister was by no means a popular man at the time of her accession. Even observers who had no political or personal interest whatever in the condition of cabinets were displeased to see the open-

ing of the new reign so much to all appearance under the influence of one who either was or tried to be a mere loungeur. The deputations went away offended and disgusted when Lord Melbourne played with feathers or dandled sofa-cushions in their presence. The almost fierce energy and stenuousness of a man like Brougham showed in overwhelming contrast to the happy-go-lucky airs and graces of the premier. It is likely that there was quite as much of affectation in the one case as in the other; but the affectation of a devouring zeal for the public service told at least far better than the other in the heat and strength of debate. When the new reign began, the ministry had two enemies or critics in the House of Lords of the most formidable character. Either alone would have been a trouble to a minister of far stronger mold than Lord Melbourne; but circumstances threw them both for the moment into a chance alliance against him.

One of these was Lord Brougham. No stronger and stranger a figure than his is described in the modern history of England. He was gifted with the most varied and striking talents, and with a capacity for labor which sometimes seemed almost superhuman. Not merely had he the capacity for labor, but he appeared to have a positive passion for work. His restless energy seemed as if it must stretch itself out on every side seeking new fields of conquest. The study that was enough to occupy the whole time and wear out the frame of other men was only recreation to him. He might have been described as one possessed by a very demon of work. His physical strength never gave way. His high spirits never deserted him. His self-confidence was boundless. He thought he knew everything and could do everything better than any other man. He delighted in giving evidence that he understood the business of the specialist better than the specialist himself. His vanity was overweening, and made him ridiculous almost as often and as much as his genius made him admired. The comic literature of more than a generation had no subject more fruitful than the vanity and restlessness of Lord Brougham. He was beyond doubt a great parliamentary orator. His style was too diffuse and sometimes too uncouth to suit a day like our own, when form counts for more than substance, when passion seems out of place in debate, and not to exaggerate is far more the

object than to try to be great. Brougham's action was wild and sometimes even furious; his gestures were singularly ungraceful; his manners were grotesque; but of his power over his hearers there could be no doubt. That power remained with him until a far later date; and long after the years when men usually continue to take part in political debate, Lord Brougham could be impassioned, impressive, and even overwhelming. He was not an orator of the highest class; his speeches have not stood the test of time. Apart from the circumstances of the hour and the personal power of the speaker, they could hardly arouse any great delight, or even interest; for they are by no means models of English style, and they have little of that profound philosophical interest, that pregnancy of thought and meaning, and that splendor of eloquence, which make the speeches of Burke always classic, and even in a certain sense always popular among us. In truth no man could have done with abiding success all the things which Brougham did successfully for the hour. On law, on politics, on literature, on languages, on science, on art, on industrial and commercial enterprise, he professed to pronounce with the authority of a teacher. "If Brougham knew a little of law," said O'Connell when the former became lord chancellor, "he would know a little of everything." The anecdote is told in another way too, which perhaps makes it even more piquant. "The new lord chancellor knows a little of everything in the world—even of law."

Brougham's was an excitable and self-asserting nature. He had during many years shown himself an embodied influence, a living speaking force in the promotion of great political and social reforms. If his talents were great, if his personal vanity was immense, let it be said that his services to the cause of human freedom and education were simply inestimable. As an opponent of slavery in the colonies, as an advocate of political reform at home, of law reform, of popular education, of religious equality, he had worked with indomitable zeal, with resistless passion, and with splendid success. But his career passed through two remarkable changes which to a great extent interfered with the full efficacy of his extraordinary powers. The first was when from popular tribune and reformer he became lord chancellor in 1830; the second was when he was left

out of office on the reconstruction of the Whig ministry in April, 1835, and he passed for the remainder of his life into the position of an independent or unattached critic of the measures and policy of other men. It has never been clearly known why the Whigs so suddenly threw over Brougham. The common belief is that his eccentricities and his almost savage temper made him intolerable in a cabinet. It has been darkly hinted that for a while his intellect was actually under a cloud, as people said that of Chatham was during a momentous season.

Lord Brougham was not a man likely to forget or forgive the wrong which he must have believed that he had sustained at the hands of the Whigs. He became the fiercest and most formidable of Lord Melbourne's hostile critics.

The other opponent who has been spoken of was Lord Lyndhurst. Lord Lyndhurst resembled Lord Brougham in the length of his career and in capacity for work, if in nothing else. Lyndhurst, who was born in Boston the year before the tea ships were boarded in that harbor and their cargoes flung into the water, has been heard addressing the House of Lords in all vigor and fluency by men who are yet far from middle age. He was one of the most effective parliamentary debaters of a time which has known such men as Peel and Palmerston, Gladstone and Disraeli, Bright and Cobden. His style was singularly and even severely clear, direct and pure; his manner was easy and graceful; his voice remarkably sweet and strong. Nothing could have been in greater contrast than his clear, correct, nervous argument, and the impassioned invectives and overwhelming strength of Brougham. Lyndhurst had, as has been said, an immense capacity for work, when the work had to be done; but his natural tendency was as distinctly toward indolence as Brougham's was toward unresting activity. Nor were Lyndhurst's political convictions ever very clear. By the habitude of associating with the Tories, and receiving office from them, and speaking for them, and attacking their enemies with argument and sarcasm, Lyndhurst finally settled down into all the ways of Toryism. But nothing in his varied history showed that he had any particular preference that way; and there were many passages in his career when it would seem as if a turn of chance decided what path of political life he was to follow. As a keen

debater he was perhaps hardly ever excelled in parliament; but he had neither the passion nor the genius of the orator; and his capacity was narrow indeed in its range when compared with the astonishing versatility and omnivorous mental activity of Brougham. As a speaker he was always equal. He seemed to know no varying moods or fits of mental lassitude. Whenever he spoke he reached at once the same high level as a debater. The very fact may in itself perhaps be taken as conclusive evidence that he was not an orator. The higher qualities of the orator are no more to be summoned at will than those of the poet.

These two men were without any comparison the two leading debaters in the House of Lords. Lord Melbourne had not at that time in the Upper House a single man of first class or even of second class debating power on the bench of the ministry. An able writer has well remarked that the position of the ministry in the House of Lords might be compared to that of a water-logged wreck into which enemies from all quarters are pouring their broadsides.

The accession of the queen made it necessary that a new parliament should be summoned. The struggle between parties among the constituencies was very animated, and was carried on in some instances with a recourse to manœuvre and stratagem such as in our time would hardly be possible. The result was not a very marked alteration in the condition of parties; but on the whole the advantage remained with the Tories. Somewhere about this time, it may be remarked, the use of the word "conservative" to describe the latter political party first came into fashion. Mr. Wilson Croker is credited with the honor of having first employed the word in that sense. In an article in the *Quarterly Review*, some years before, he spoke of being decidedly and conscientiously attached "to what is called the Tory, but which might with more propriety be called the Conservative party." During the elections for the new parliament, Lord John Russell, speaking at a public dinner at Stroud, made allusion to the new name which his opponents were beginning to affect for their party. "If that," he said, "is the name that pleases them; if they say that the old distinction of Whig and Tory should no longer be kept up, I am ready, in opposition to their name of Conservative, to take the name of Reformer, and to stand by that opposition."

The Tories or Conservatives, then, had a slight gain as the result of the appeal to the country. The new parliament on its assembling seems to have gathered in the Commons an unusually large number of gifted and promising men. There was something too of a literary stamp about it, a fact not much to be observed in parliaments of a date nearer to the present time. Mr. Grote, the historian of Greece sat for the city of London. The late Lord Lytton, then Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer, had a seat, an advanced Radical at that day. Mr. Disraeli came then into parliament for the first time. Charles Buller, full of high spirits, brilliant humor, and the very inspiration of keen good sense, seemed on the sure way to that career of renown which a premature death cut short. Sir William Molesworth was an excellent type of the school which in later days was called the Philosophical Radical. Another distinguished member of the same school, Mr. Roebuck, had lost his seat, and was for the moment an outsider. Mr. Gladstone had been already five years in parliament. The late Lord Carlisle, then Lord Morpeth, was looked upon as a graceful specimen of the literary and artistic young nobleman who also cultivates a little politics for his intellectual amusement. Lord John Russell had but lately begun his career as leader of the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston was foreign secretary, but had not even then got the credit of the great ability which he possessed. Not many years before Mr. Greville spoke of him as a man who "had been twenty years in office and had never distinguished himself before." Mr. Greville expresses a mild surprise at the high opinion which persons who knew Lord Palmerston intimately were pleased to entertain as to his ability and his capacity for work. Only those who knew him very intimately indeed had any idea of the capacity for governing parliament and the country which he was soon afterward to display. Sir Robert Peel was leader of the Conservative party. Lord Stanley, the late Lord Derby, was still in the House of Commons. He had not long before broken definitively with the Whigs on the question of the Irish ecclesiastical establishment, and had passed over to that Conservative party of which he afterward became the most influential leader and the most powerful parliamentary orator. O'Connell and Sheil represented the eloquence of the Irish national party. Decidedly the House of Com-



mons first elected during Queen Victoria's reign was strong in eloquence and talent. Only two really great speakers have risen in the forty years that followed who were not members of parliament at that time, Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. Mr. Cobden had come forward as a candidate for the borough of Stockport, but was not successful, and did not obtain a seat in parliament until four years after. It was only by what may be called an accident that Macaulay and Mr. Roebuck were not in the parliament of 1837. It is fair to say, therefore, that, except for Cobden and Bright, the subsequent forty years have added no first class name to the records of parliamentary eloquence.

The ministry was not very strong in the House of Commons. Its conditions indeed hardly allowed it to feel itself strong even if it had had more powerful representatives in either house. Its adherents were but loosely held together. The more ardent reformers were disappointed with ministers; the free trade movement was rising into distinct bulk and proportions, and threatened to be formidably independent of mere party ties. The government had to rely a good deal on the precarious support of Mr. O'Connell and his followers. They were not rich in debating talent in the Commons any more than in the Lords. Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the opposition, was by far the most powerful man in the House of Commons. Added to his great qualities as an administrator and a parliamentary debater, he had the virtue, then very rare among conservative statesmen, of being a sound and clear financier, with a good grasp of the fundamental principles of political economy. His high, austere character made him respected by opponents as well as by friends. He had not perhaps many intimate friends. His temperament was cold, or at least its heat was self-contained; he threw out no genial glow to those around him. He was by nature a reserved and shy man, in whose manners shyness took the form of pompousness and coldness. Something might be said of him like that which Richter said of Schiller; he was to strangers stony and like a precipice from which it was their instinct to spring back. It is certain that he had warm and generous feelings, but his very sensitiveness only led him to disguise them. The contrast between his emotions and his lack of demonstrativeness created in him a constant artificiality which often seemed mere awk-

wardness. It was in the House of Commons that his real genius and character displayed themselves. The atmosphere of debate was to him what Macaulay says wine was to Addison, the influence which broke the spell under which his fine intellect seemed otherwise to lie imprisoned. Peel was a perfect master of the House of Commons. He was as great an orator as any man could be who addresses himself to the House of Commons, its ways and its purposes alone. He went as near perhaps to the rank of a great orator as anyone can go who is but little gifted with imagination. Oratory has been well described as the fusion of reason and passion. Passion always carries something of the imaginative along with it. Sir Robert Peel had little imagination, and almost none of that passion which in eloquence sometimes supplies its place. His style was clear, strong, and stately; full of various argument and apt illustration drawn from books and from the world of politics and commerce. He followed a difficult argument home to its utter conclusions; and if it had in it any lurking fallacy, he brought out the weakness into the clearest light, often with a happy touch of humor and quiet sarcasm. His speeches might be described as the very perfection of good sense and high principle clothed in the most impressive language. But they were something more peculiar than this, for they were so constructed, in their argument and their style alike, as to touch the very core of the intelligence of the House of Commons. They told of the feelings and the inspiration of parliament as the ballad-music of a country tells of its scenery and its national sentiments.

Lord Stanley was a far more energetic and impassioned speaker than Sir Robert Peel, and perhaps occasionally in his later career, came now and then nearer to the height of genuine oratory. But Lord Stanley was little more than a splendid parliamentary partisan, even when, long after, he was prime minister of England. He had very little indeed of that class of information which the modern world requires of its statesmen and leaders. Of political economy, of finance, of the development and the discoveries of modern science, he knew almost as little as it is possible for an able and energetic man to know who lives in the throng of active life and hears what people are talking of around him. He once said good-humoredly of himself, that he was

brought up in the pre-scientific period. His scholarship was merely such training in the classic languages as allowed him to have a full literary appreciation of the beauty of Greek and Roman literature. He had no real and deep knowledge of the history of the Greek and the Roman people, nor probably did he at all appreciate the great difference between the spirit of Roman and of Greek civilization. He had, in fact, what would have been called at an earlier day an elegant scholarship; he had a considerable knowledge of the politics of his time in most European countries, an energetic intrepid spirit, and with him, as Macaulay well said, the science of parliamentary debate seemed to be an instinct. There was no speaker on the ministerial benches at that time who could for a moment be compared with him.

Lord John Russell, who had the leadership of the party in the House of Commons, was really a much stronger man than he seemed to be. He had a character for dauntless courage and confidence among his friends; for boundless self-conceit among his enemies. Every one remembers Sydney Smith's famous illustrations of Lord John Russell's unlimited faith in his own power of achievement. Thomas Moore addressed a poem to him at one time, when Lord John Russell thought or talked of giving up political life, in which he appeals to "thy genius, thy youth, and thy name," declares that the instinct of the young statesman is the same as "the eaglet's to soar with his eyes on the sun," and implores him not to "think for an instant thy country can spare such a light from her darkening horizon as thou." Later observers, to whom Lord John Russell appeared probably remarkable for a cold and formal style as a debater, and for lack of originating power as a statesman, may find it difficult to reconcile the poet's picture with their own impressions of the reality. But it is certain that at one time the reputation of Lord John Russell was that of a rather reckless man of genius, a sort of Whig Shelley. He had in truth much less genius than his friends and admirers believed, and a great deal more of practical strength than either friends or foes gave him credit for. He became, not indeed an orator, but a very keen debater, who was especially effective in a cold irritating sarcasm which penetrated the weakness of an opponent's argument like some dissolving acid. In the poem

from which we have quoted, Moore speaks of the eloquence of his noble friend as "not like those rills from a height, which sparkle and foam and in vapor are o'er; but a current that works out its way into light through the filtering recesses of thought and of lore." Allowing for the exaggeration of friendship and poetry, this is not a bad description of what Lord John Russell's style became at its best. The thin bright stream of argument worked its way slowly out and contrived to wear a path for itself through obstacles which at first the looker-on might have felt assured it never could penetrate. Lord John Russell's swordsmanship was the swordsmanship of Saladin, and not that of stout King Richard. But it was very effective sword-play in its own way.

Our English system of government by party makes the history of parliament seem like that of a succession of great political duels. Two men stand constantly confronted during a series of years, one of whom is at the head of the government, while the other is at the head of the opposition. They change places with each victory. The conqueror goes into office; the conquered into opposition. This is not the place to discuss either the merits or the probable duration of the principle of government by party; it is enough to say here that it undoubtedly gives a very animated and varied complexion to our political troubles, and invests them indeed with much of the glow and passion of actual warfare. It has often happened that the two leading opponents are men of intellectual and oratorical powers so fairly balanced that their followers may well dispute among themselves as to the superiority of their respective chiefs, and that the public in general may become divided into two schools not merely political, but even critical, according to their partiality for one or the other. We still dispute as to whether Fox or Pitt was the greater leader, the greater orator; it is probable that for a long time to come the same question will be asked by political students about Gladstone and Disraeli. For many years Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel stood thus opposed. They will often come into contrast and comparison in these pages. For the present it is enough to say that Peel had by far the more original mind, and that Lord John Russell never obtained so great an influence over the House of Commons as that which his rival long enjoyed. The heat of political

passion afterward induced a bitter critic to accuse Peel of lack of originality, because he assimilated readily and turned to account the ideas of other men. Not merely the criticism, but the principle on which it was founded, was altogether wrong. It ought to be left to children to suppose that nothing is original but that which we make up, as the childish phrase is, "out of our own heads." Originality in politics, as in every field of art, consists in the use and application of the ideas which we get or are given to us. The greatest proof Sir Robert Peel ever gave of high and genuine statesmanship was in his recognition that the time had come to put into practical legislation the principles which Cobden and Villiers and Bright had been advocating in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell was a born reformer. He had sat at the feet of Fox. He was cradled in the principles of Liberalism. He held faithfully to his creed; he was one of its boldest and keenest champions. He had great advantages over Peel, in the mere fact that he had begun his education in a more enlightened school. But he wanted passion quite as much as Peel did, and remained still farther than Peel below the level of the genuine orator. Russell, as we have said, had not long held the post of leader of the House of Commons when the first parliament of Queen Victoria assembled. He was still, in a manner, on trial; and even among his friends, perhaps especially among his friends, there were whispers that his confidence in himself was greater than his capacity for leadership.

After the chiefs of ministry and of opposition, the most conspicuous figure in the House of Commons was the colossal form of O'Connell, the great Irish agitator, of whom we shall hear a good deal more. Among the foremost orators of the house at that time was O'Connell's impassioned lieutenant, Richard Lalor Sheil. It is curious how little is now remembered of Sheil, whom so many well-qualified authorities declared to be a genuine orator. Lord Beaconsfield, in one of his novels, speaks of Sheil's eloquence in terms of the highest praise, and disparages Canning. It is but a short time since Mr. Gladstone selected Sheil as one of three remarkable illustrations of great success as a speaker achieved in spite of serious defects of voice and delivery; the other two examples being Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Newman. Mr. Gladstone described Sheil's voice as

Like nothing but the sound produced by "a tin kettle battered about from place to place," knocking first against one side and then against another. "In anybody else," Mr. Gladstone went on to say, "I would not if it had been in my choice, like to have listened to that voice; but in him I would not have changed it, for it was part of a most remarkable whole, and nobody ever felt it painful while listening to it. He was a great orator, and an orator of much preparation, I believe, carried even to words, with a very vivid imagination and an enormous power of language and of strong feeling. There was a peculiar character, a sort of half wildness in his aspect and delivery; his whole figure, and his delivery and his voice and his manner were all in such perfect keeping with one another that they formed a great parliamentary picture; and although it is now thirty-five years since I heard Mr. Sheil, my recollection of him is just as vivid as if I had been listening to him to-day." This surely is a picture of a great orator, as Mr. Gladstone says Sheil was. Nor is it easy to understand how a man without being a great orator could have persuaded two experts of such very different schools as Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli, that he deserved such a name. Yet the after years have in a curious but unmistakable way denied the claims of Sheil. Perhaps it is because, if he really was an orator, he was that and nothing more, that our practical age, finding no mark left by him on parliament or politics, has declined to take much account even of his eloquence. His career faded away into second-class ministerial office, and closed at last, somewhat prematurely, in the little court of Florence, where he was sent as the representative of England. He is worth mentioning here because he had the promise of a splendid reputation; because the charm of his eloquence evidently lingered long in the memories of those to whom it was once familiar, and because his is one of the most brilliant illustrations of that career of Irish agitator, which begins in stormy opposition to English government and subsides after awhile into meek recognition of its title and adoption of its ministerial uniform. O'Connell we have passed over for the present, because we shall hear of him again; but of Sheil it is not necessary that we should hear any more.

This was evidently a remarkable parliament, with Russell for the leader of one party, and Peel for the leader of

another; with O'Connell and Sheil as independent supporters of the ministry; with Mr. Gladstone still comparatively new to public life, and Mr. Disraeli to address the Commons for the first time; with Palmerston still unrecognized and Stanley lately gone over to Conservatism, itself the newest invented thing in politics; with Grote and Bulwer, and Joseph Hume and Charles Buller; and Ward and Villiers, Sir Francis Burdett and Smith O'Brien and the Radical Alcibiades of Finsbury, "Tom" Duncombe.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### CANADA AND LORD DURHAM.

THE first disturbance to the quiet and good promise of the new reign came from Canada. The parliament which we have described met for the first time on November 20, 1837, and was to have been adjourned to February 1, 1838; but the news which began to arrive from Canada was so alarming, that the ministry were compelled to change their purpose and fix the re-assembling of the Houses for January 16. The disturbances in Canada had already broken out into open rebellion.

The condition of Canada was very peculiar. Lower or Eastern Canada was inhabited for the most part by men of French descent, who still kept up in the midst of an active and moving civilization most of the principles and usages which belonged to France before the Revolution. Even to this day, after all the changes, political and social, that have taken place, the traveler from Europe sees in many of the towns of Lower Canada an old-fashioned France, such as he had known otherwise only in books that tell of France before '89. Nor is this only in small sequestered towns and villages which the impulses of modern ways have yet failed to reach. In busy and trading Montreal, with its residents made up of Englishmen, Scotchmen and Americans, as well as the men of French descent, the visitor is more immediately conscious of the presence of what may be called an old-fashioned Catholicism than he is in Paris, or even indeed in Rome. In Quebec, a city which for picturesqueness and beauty of situation is not equaled by Edinburgh or Florence, the

curious interest of the place is further increased, the novelty of the sensations it produces in the visitor is made more piquant by the evidences he meets with everywhere, through its quaint and steepy streets, and under its antiquated archways, of the existence of a society which has hardly in France survived the great revolution. At the opening of Queen Victoria's reign, the undiluted character of this French mediævalism was of course much more remarkable. It would doubtless have exhibited itself quietly enough if it were absolutely undiluted. Lower Canada would have dozed away in its sleepy picturesqueness, held fast to its ancient ways, and allowed a bustling giddy world, all alive with commerce and ambition, and desire for novelty and the terribly disturbing thing which unresting people call progress, to rush on its wild path unheeded. But its neighbors and its newer citizens were not disposed to allow Lower Canada thus to rot itself in ease on the decaying wharfs of the St. Lawrence and the St. Charles. In the large towns there were active traders from England and other countries, who were by no means content to put up with old-world ways and to let the magnificent resources of the place run to waste. Upper Canada, on the other hand, was all new as to its population, and was full of the modern desire for commercial activity. Upper Canada was peopled almost exclusively by inhabitants from Great Britain. Scotch settlers, with all the energy and push of their country; men from the northern province of Ireland, who might be described as virtually Scotch also, came there. The emigrant from the south of Ireland went to the United States because he found there a country more or less hostile to England, and because there the Catholic Church was understood to be flourishing. The Ulsterman went to Canada as the Scotchman did, because he saw the flag of England flying and the principle of religious establishment which he admired at home still recognized. It is almost needless to say that Englishmen in great numbers were settled there, whose chief desire was to make the colony as far as possible a copy of the institutions of England. When Canada was ceded to England by France, as a consequence of the victories of Wolfe, the population was nearly all in the lower province, and therefore was nearly all of French origin. Since the cession the growth of the population of the other province had been surprisingly rapid, and had been almost



exclusively the growth, as we have seen, of immigration from Great Britain, one or two of the colonizing states of the European continent, and the American republic itself.

It is easy to see on the very face of things some of the difficulties which must arise in the development of such a system. The French of Lower Canada would regard with almost morbid jealousy any legislation which appeared likely to interfere with their ancient ways and to give any advantage or favor to the populations of British descent. The latter would see injustice or feebleness in every measure which did not assist them in developing their more energetic ideas. The home government in such a condition of things often has especial trouble with those whom we may call its own people. Their very loyalty to the institutions of the old country impels them to be unreasonable and exacting. It is not easy to make them understand why they should not be at the least encouraged, if not indeed actually enabled, to carry boldly out the Anglicizing policy which they clearly see is to be for the good of the colony in the end. The government has all the difficulty that the mother of a household has when, with the best intentions and the most conscientious resolve to act impartially, she is called upon to manage her own children and the children of her husband's former marriage. Every word she says, every resolve she is induced to acknowledge, is liable to be regarded with jealousy and dissatisfaction on the one side as well as on the other. "You are doing everything to favor your own children," the one set cry out. "You ought to do something more for your own children," is the equally querulous remonstrance of the other.

It would have been difficult, therefore, for the home government, however wise and far-seeing their policy, to make the wheels of any system run smoothly at once in such a colony as Canada. But their policy certainly does not seem to have been either wise or far-seeing. The plan of government adopted looks as if it were especially devised to bring out into sharp relief all the antagonisms that were natural to the existing state of things. By an act called the Constitution of 1791, Canada was divided into two provinces, the upper and the lower. Each province had a separate system of government, consisting of a governor, an executive council appointed by the crown, and supposed in some way to resemble the privy council of this country;

a legislative council, the members of which were appointed by the crown for life; and a representative assembly, the members of which were elected for four years. At the same time the clergy reserves were established by parliament. One-seventh of the waste lands of the colony was set aside for the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, a fruitful source of disturbance and ill-feeling.

When the two provinces were divided in 1791, the intention was that they should remain distinct in fact as well as in name. It was hoped that Lower Canada would remain altogether French, and that Upper Canada would be exclusively English. Then it was thought that they might be governed on their separate systems as securely and with as little trouble as we now govern the Mauritius on one system and Malta on another. Those who formed such an idea do not seem to have taken any counsel with geography. The one fact, that Upper Canada can hardly be said to have any means of communication with Europe and the whole-eastern world except through Lower Canada, or else through the United States, ought to have settled the question at once. It was in Lower Canada that the greatest difficulties arose. A constant antagonism grew up between the majority of the legislative council, who were nominees of the crown, and the majority of the representative assembly, who were elected by the population of the province. The home government encouraged and indeed kept up that most odious and dangerous of all instruments for the supposed management of a colony—a “British party” devoted to the so-called interests of the mother country and obedient to the word of command from their masters and patrons at home. The majority in the legislative council constantly thwarted the resolutions of the vast majority of the popular assembly. Disputes arose as to the voting of supplies. The government retained in their service officials whom the representative assembly had condemned, and insisted on the right to pay them their salaries out of certain funds of the colony. The representative assembly took to stopping the supplies, and the government claimed the right to counteract this measure by appropriating to the purpose such public moneys as happened to be within their reach at the time. The colony—for indeed on these subjects the population of Lower Canada, right or wrong, was so near to being of one mind that we may

take the declarations of public meetings as representing the colony—demanded that the legislative council should be made elective, and that the colonial government should not be allowed to dispose of the moneys of the colony at their pleasure. The House of Commons and the government here replied by refusing to listen to the proposal to make the legislative council an elective body, and authorizing the provincial government, without the consent of the colonial representation, to appropriate the money in the treasury for the administration of justice and the maintenance of the executive system. This was in plain words to announce to the French population, who made up the vast majority, and whom we had taught to believe in the representative form of government, that their wishes would never count for anything, and that the colony was to be ruled solely at the pleasure of the little British party of officials and crown nominees. It is not necessary to suppose that in all these disputes the popular majority were in the right and the officials in the wrong. No one can doubt that there was much bitterness of feeling arising out of the mere differences of race. The French and the English could not be got to blend. In some places, as it was afterward said in the famous report of Lord Durham, the two sets of colonists never publicly met together except in the jury-box, and then only for the obstruction of justice. The British residents complained bitterly of being subject to French law and procedure in so many of their affairs. The tenure of land and many other conditions of the system were antique French, and the French law worked, or rather did not work, in civil affairs side by side with the equally impeded British law in criminal matters. At last the representative assembly refused to vote any further supplies or to carry on any further business. They formulated their grievances against the home government. Their complaints were of arbitrary conduct on the part of the governors; intolerable composition of the legislative council, which they insisted ought to be elective; illegal appropriation of the public money; and violent prorogation of the provincial parliament.

One of the leading men in the movement which afterward became rebellion in Lower Canada was Mr. Louis Joseph Papineau. This man had risen to high position by his talents, his energy, and his undoubtedly honorable char-

acter. He had represented Montreal in the representative assembly of Lower Canada, and he afterward became speaker of the house. He made himself leader of the movement to protest against the policy of the governors, and that of the government at home by whom they were sustained. He held a series of meetings, at some of which undoubtedly rather strong language was used, and too frequent and significant appeals were made to the example held out to the population of Lower Canada by the successful revolt of the United States. Mr. Papineau also planned the calling together of a great convention to discuss and proclaim the grievances of the colonies. Lord Gosford, the governor, began by dismissing several militia officers who had taken part in some of these demonstrations; Mr. Papineau himself was an officer of this force. Then the governor issued warrants for the apprehension of many members of the popular assembly on the charge of high treason. Some of these at once left the country; others against whom warrants were issued were arrested, and a sudden resistance was made by their friends and supporters. Then, in the manner familiar to all who have read anything of the history of revolutionary movements, the resistance to a capture of prisoners suddenly transformed itself into open rebellion.

The rebellion was not in a military sense a very great thing. At its first outbreak the military authorities were for a moment surprised, and the rebels obtained one or two trifling advantages. But the commander-in-chief at once showed energy adequate to the occasion, and used, as it was his duty to do, a strong hand in putting the movement down. The rebels fought with something like desperation in one or two instances, and there was, it must be said, a good deal of blood shed. The disturbance, however, after awhile extended to the upper province. Upper Canada too had its complaints against its governors and the home government, and its protests against having its offices all disposed of by a "family compact;" but the rebellious movement does not seem to have taken a genuine hold of the province at any time. There was some discontent; there was a constant stimulus to excitement kept up from across the American frontier by sympathizers with any republican movement; and there were some excitable persons inclined for revolutionary change in the prov-

ince itself whose zeal caught fire when the flame broke out in Lower Canada. But it seems to have been an exotic movement altogether, and so far as its military history is concerned, deserves notice chiefly for the chivalrous eccentricity of the plan by which the governor of the province undertook to put it down. The governor was the gallant and fanciful soldier and traveler, Sir Francis, then Major, Head. He, who had fought at Waterloo and seen much service besides, was quietly performing the duties of assistant poor law commissioner for the county of Kent, when he was summoned, in 1835, at a moment's notice, to assume the governorship of Upper Canada. When the rebellion broke out in that province, Major Head proved himself not merely equal to the occasion, but boldly superior to it. He promptly resolved to win a grand moral victory over all rebellion then and for the future. He was seized with a desire to show to the whole world how vain it was for any disturber to think of shaking the loyalty of the province under his control. He issued to rebellion in general a challenge not unlike that which Shakespeare's Prince Harry offers to the chiefs of the insurrection against Henry IV. He invited it to come on and settle the controversy by a sort of duel. He sent all the regular soldiers out of the province to the help of the authorities of Lower Canada; he allowed the rebels to mature their plans in any way they liked; he permitted them to choose their own day and hour; and when they were ready to begin their assaults on constituted authority, he summoned to his side the militia and all the loyal inhabitants, and with their help he completely extinguished the rebellion. It was but a very trifling affair; it went out or collapsed in a moment. Major Head had his desire. He showed that rebellion in that province was not a thing serious enough to call for the intervention of regular troops. The loyal colonists were for the most part delighted with the spirited conduct of their leader and his new-fashioned way of dealing with rebellion. No doubt the moral effect was highly imposing. The plan was almost as original as that described in Herodotus and introduced into one of Massinger's plays, when the moral authority of the masters is made to assert itself over the rebellious slaves by the mere exhibition of the symbolic whip. But the authorities at home took a somewhat more prosaic view of the policy of Sir Francis

Head. It was suggested that if the fears of many had been realized and the rebellion had been aided by a large force of sympathizers from the United States, the moral authority of Canadian loyalty might have stood greatly in need of the material presence of regular troops. In the end Sir Francis Head resigned his office. His loyalty, courage and success were acknowledged by the gift of a baronetcy; and he obtained the admiration not merely of those who approved his policy, but even of many among those who felt bound to condemn it. Perhaps it may be mentioned that there were some who persisted to the last in the belief that Sir Francis Head was not by any means so rashly chivalrous as he had allowed himself to be thought, and that he had full preparation made, if his moral demonstration should fail, to supply its place in good time with more commonplace and effective measures.

The news of the outbreaks in Canada created a natural excitement in this country. There was a very strong feeling of sympathy among many classes here—not, indeed, with the rebellion, but with the colony which complained of what seemed to be genuine and serious grievances. Public meetings were held at which resolutions were passed ascribing the disturbances in the first place to the refusal by the government of any redress sought for by the colonists. Mr. Hume, the pioneer of financial reform, took the side of the colonists very warmly, both in and out of parliament. During one of the parliamentary debates on the subject, Sir Robert Peel referred to the principal leader of the rebellion in Upper Canada as “a Mr. Mackenzie.” Mr. Hume resented this way of speaking of a prominent colonist, and remarked that “there was a Mr. Mackenzie as there might be a Sir Robert Peel,” and created some amusement by referring to the declarations of Lord Chatham on the American Stamp Act, which he cited as the opinions of “a Mr. Pitt.” Lord John Russell on the part of the government introduced a bill to deal with the rebellious province. The bill proposed in brief to suspend for a time the constitution of Lower Canada, and to send out from this country a governor-general and high commissioner, with full powers to deal with the rebellion, and to remodel the constitution of both provinces. The proposal met with a good deal of opposition at first on very different grounds. Mr. Roebuck, who was then, as it happened, out

of parliament, appeared as the agent and representative of the province of Lower Canada, and demanded to be heard at the bar of both the houses in opposition to the bill. After some little demur his demand was granted, and he stood at the bar, first of the Commons, and then of the Lords, and opposed the bill on the ground that it unjustly suspended the constitution of Lower Canada in consequence of disturbances provoked by the intolerable oppression of the home government. A critic of that day remarked that most orators seemed to make it their business to conciliate and propitiate the audience they desired to win over, but that Mr. Roebuck seemed from the very first to be determined to set all his hearers against him and his cause. Mr. Roebuck's speeches were, however, exceedingly argumentative and powerful appeals. Their effect was enhanced by the singularly youthful appearance of the speaker, who is described as looking like a boy hardly out of his teens.

It was evident, however, that the proposal of the government must in the main be adopted. The general opinion of parliament decided not unreasonably that that was not the moment for entering into a consideration of the past policy of the government, and that the country could do nothing better just then than send out some man of commanding ability and character to deal with the existing condition of things. There was an almost universal admission that the government had found the right man when Lord John Russell mentioned the name of Lord Durham.

Lord Durham was a man of remarkable character. It is a matter of surprise how little his name is thought of by the present generation, seeing what a strenuous figure he seemed in the eyes of his contemporaries, and how striking a part he played in the politics of a time which has even still some living representatives. He belonged to one of the oldest families in England. The Lambtons had lived on their estate in the north, in uninterrupted succession, since the Conquest. The male succession, it is stated, never was interrupted since the twelfth century. They were not, however, a family of aristocrats. Their wealth was derived chiefly from coal mines, and grew up in later days; the property at first, and for a long time, was of inconsiderable value. For more than a century, however, the Lambtons had come to take rank among the gentry of

the county, and some member of the family had represented the city of Durham in the House of Commons from 1727 until the early death of Lord Durham's father in December, 1797. William Henry Lambton, Lord Durham's father, was a staunch Whig, and had been a friend and associate of Fox. John George Lambton, the son, was born at Lambton Castle in April, 1792. Before he was quite twenty years of age, he made a romantic marriage at Gretna Green with a lady who died three years after. He served for a short time in a regiment of Hussars. About a year after the death of his first wife, he married the eldest daughter of Lord Grey. He was then only twenty-four years of age. He had before this been returned to parliament for the county of Durham, and he soon distinguished himself as a very advanced and energetic reformer. While in the Commons he seldom addressed the House, but when he did speak, it was in support of some measure of reform, or against what he conceived to be antiquated and illiberal legislation. He brought out a plan of his own for parliamentary reform in 1821. In 1828 he was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Durham. When the ministry of Lord Grey was formed, in November, 1830, Lord Durham became Lord Privy Seal. He is said to have had an almost complete control over Lord Grey. He had an impassioned and energetic nature, which sometimes drove him into outbreaks of feeling which most of his colleagues dreaded. Various highly colored descriptions of stormy scenes between him and his companions in office are given by writers of the time. Lord Durham, his enemies, and some of his friends said, bullied and browbeat his opponents in the cabinet, and would sometimes hardly allow his father-in-law and official chief a chance of putting in a word on the other side, or in mitigation of his tempestuous mood. He was thorough in his reforming purposes, and would have rushed at radical changes with scanty consideration for the time or for the temper of his opponents. He had very little reverence indeed for what Carlyle calls the majesty of custom. Whatever he wished he strongly wished. He had no idea of reticence, and cared not much for the decorum of office. It is not necessary to believe all the stories told by those who hated and dreaded Lord Durham, in order to accept the belief that he really was somewhat of an *enfant terrible* to the



stately Lord Grey, and to the easy-going colleagues who were by no means absolutely eaten up by their zeal for reform. In the powerful speech which he delivered in the House of Lords on the reform bill, there is a specimen of his eloquence of denunciation which might well have startled listeners even in those days when the license of speech was often sadly out of proportion with its legalized liberty. Lord Durham was especially roused to anger by some observations made in the debate of a previous night by the Bishop of Exeter. He described the prelate's speech as an exhibition of "coarse and virulent invective, malignant and false insinuation, the grossest perversions of historical facts decked out with all the choicest flowers of pamphleteering slang." He was called to order for these words, and a peer moved that they be taken down. Lord Durham was by no means dismayed. He coolly declared that he did not mean to defend his language as the most elegant or graceful, but that it exactly conveyed the ideas regarding the bishop which he meant to express; that he believed the bishop's speech to contain insinuations which were as false as scandalous; that he had said so; that he now begged leave to repeat the words, and that he paused to give any noble lord who thought fit, an opportunity of taking them down. No one, however, seemed disposed to encounter any farther this impassioned adversary, and when he had had his say, Lord Durham became somewhat mollified, and endeavored to soften the pain of the impression he had made. He begged the House of Lords to make some allowance for him if he had spoken too warmly; for, as he said with much pathetic force, his mind had lately been tortured by domestic loss. He thus alluded to the recent death of his eldest son—"a beautiful boy," says a writer of some years ago, "whose features will live for ever in the well-known picture by Lawrence."

The whole of this incident, the fierce attack and the sudden pathetic expression of regret, will serve well enough to illustrate the emotional, uncontrolled character of Lord Durham. He was one of the men who, even when they are thoroughly in the right, have often the unhappy art of seeming to put themselves completely in the wrong. He was the most advanced of all the reformers in the reforming ministry of Lord Grey. His plan of reform in 1821 proposed to give four hundred members to certain districts

of town and country, in which every householder should have a vote. When Lord Grey had formed his reform ministry, Lord Durham sent for Lord John Russell and requested him to draw up a scheme of reform. A committee was formed on Lord Durham's suggestion, consisting of Sir James Graham, Lord Duncannon, Lord John Russell, and Lord Durham himself. Lord John Russell drew up a plan, which he published long after with the alterations which Lord Durham had suggested and written in his own hand on the margin. If Lord Durham had had his way, the ballot would at that time have been included in the programme of the government; and it was indeed understood that at one period of the discussions he had won over his colleagues to his opinion on that subject. He was in a word the Radical member of the cabinet, with all the energy which became such a character; with that "magnificent indiscretion" which had been attributed to a greater man, Edmund Burke; with all that courage of his opinions which, in the Frenchified phraseology of modern politics, is so much talked of, so rarely found, and so little trusted or successful when it is found.

Not long after Lord Durham was raised in the peerage and became an earl. His influence over Lord Grey continued great, but his differences of opinion with his former colleagues—he had resigned his office—became greater and greater every day. More than once he had taken the public into his confidence in his characteristic and heedless way. He was sent on a mission to Russia, perhaps to get him out of the way, and afterward he was made ambassador at the Russian court. In the interval between his mission and his formal appointment he had come back to England and performed a series of enterprises which in the homely and undignified language of American politics would probably be called "stumping the country." He was looked to with much hope by the more extreme Liberals in the country, and with corresponding dislike and dread by all who thought the country had gone far enough, or much too far, in the recent political changes.

None of his opponents, however, denied his great ability. He was never deterred by conventional beliefs and habits from looking boldly into the very heart of a great political difficulty. He was never afraid to propose what in times later than his have been called heroic remedies. There

was a general impression, perhaps even among those who liked him least, that he was a sort of "unemployed Cæsar," a man who only required a field large enough to develop great qualities in the ruling of men. The difficulties in Canada seemed to have come as if expressly to give him an opportunity of proving himself all that his friends declared him to be, or of justifying for ever the distrust of his enemies. He went out to Canada with the assurance of every one that his expedition would either make or mar a career, if not a country.

Lord Durham went out to Canada with the brightest hopes and prospects. He took with him two of the men best qualified in England at that time to make his mission a success—Mr. Charles Buller and Mr. Edward Gibbon Wakefield. He understood that he was going out as a dictator, and there can be no doubt that his expedition was regarded in this light by England and by the colonies. We have remarked that people looked on his mission as likely to make or mar a career, if not a country. What it did, however, was somewhat different from that which anyone expected. Lord Durham found out a new alternative. He made a country and he marred a career. He is distinctly the founder of the system which has since worked with such gratifying success in Canada; he is the founder even of the principle which allowed the quiet development of the provinces into a confederation with neighboring colonies under the name of the Dominion of Canada. But the singular quality which in home politics had helped to mar so much of Lord Durham's personal career was in full work during his visit to Canada. It would not be easy to find in modern political history so curious an example of splendid and lasting success combined with all the appearance of utter and disastrous failure. The mission of Lord Durham saved Canada. It ruined Lord Durham. At the moment it seemed to superficial observers to have been as injurious to the colony as to the man.

Lord Durham arrived in Quebec at the end of May, 1838. He at once issued a proclamation, in style like that of a dictator. It was not in any way unworthy of the occasion, which especially called for the intervention of a brave and enlightened dictatorship. He declared that he would unsparingly punish any who violated the laws, but he frankly invited the co-operation of the colonies to form

a new system of government really suited to their wants and to the altering conditions of civilization. Unfortunately, he had hardly entered on his work of dictatorship when he found that he was no longer a dictator. In the passing of the Canada Bill through parliament the powers which he understood were to be conferred upon him had been considerably reduced. Lord Durham went to work, however, as if he were still invested with absolute authority over all the laws and conditions of the colony. A very Cæsar laying down the lines for the future government of a province could hardly have been more boldly arbitrary. Let it be said also that Lord Durham's arbitrariness was for the most part healthy in effect and just in spirit. But it gave an immense opportunity of attack on himself and on the government to the enemies of both at home. Lord Durham had hardly begun his work of reconstruction when his recall was clamored for by vehement voices in parliament.

Lord Durham began by issuing a series of ordinances intended to provide for the security of Lower Canada. He proclaimed a very liberal amnesty, to which, however, there were certain exceptions. The leaders of the rebellious movement, Papineau and others, who had escaped from the colony, were excluded from the amnesty. So likewise were certain prisoners who either had voluntarily confessed themselves guilty of high treason, or had been induced to make such an acknowledgment in the hope of obtaining a mitigated punishment. These Lord Durham ordered to be transported to Bermuda; and for any of these, or of the leaders who had escaped, who should return to the colony without permission, he proclaimed that they should be deemed guilty of high treason and condemned to suffer death. It needs no learned legal argument to prove that this was a proceeding not to be justified by any of the ordinary forms of law. Lord Durham had no power to transport any one to Bermuda. He had no authority over Bermuda; he had no authority which he could delegate to the officials of Bermuda enabling them to detain political prisoners. Nor had he any power to declare that persons who returned to the colony were to be liable to the punishment of death. It is not a capital offense by any of the laws of England for even a transported convict to break bounds and return to his home. All this was quite illegal; that is to say, was outside the limits of Lord Durham's

legal authority. Lord Durham was well aware of the fact. He had not for a moment supposed that he was acting in accordance with ordinary English law. He was acting in the spirit of a dictator, at once bold and merciful, who is under the impression that he has been invested with extraordinary powers for the very reason that the crisis does not admit of the ordinary operations of law. For the decree of death to banished men returning without permission, he had indeed the precedent and authority of acts passed already by the colonial parliament itself; but Lord Durham did not care for any such authority. He found that he had on his hands a considerable number of prisoners whom it would be absurd to put on trial in Lower Canada with the usual forms of law. It would have been absolutely impossible to get any unpacked jury to convict them. They would have been triumphantly acquitted. The authority of the crown would have been brought into greater contempt than ever. So little faith had the colonists in the impartial working of the ordinary law in the governor's hands, that the universal impression in Lower Canada was that Lord Durham would have the prisoners tried by a packed jury of his own officials, convicted as a matter of course, and executed out of hand. It was with amazement people found that the new governor would not stoop to the infamy of packing a jury. Lord Durham saw no better way out of the difficulty than to impose a sort of exile on those who admitted their connection with the rebellion, and to prevent by the threat of a severe penalty the return of those who had already fled from the colony. His amnesty measure was large and liberal; but he did not see that he could allow prominent offenders to remain unrebuked in the colony; and to attempt to bring them to trial would have been to secure for them, not punishment, but public honor.

Another measure of Lord Durham's was likewise open to the charge of excessive use of power. The act which appointed him prescribed that he should be advised by a council, and that every ordinance of his should be signed by at least five of its members. There was already a council in existence nominated by Lord Durham's predecessor, Sir J. Colborne; a sort of provisional government put together to supply for the moment the place of the suspended political constitution. This council Lord Durham

set aside altogether, and substituted for it one of his own making, and composed chiefly of his secretaries and the members of his staff. In truth this was but a part of the policy which he had marked out for himself. He was resolved to play the game which he honestly believed he could play better than anyone else. He had in his mind, partly from the inspiration of the gifted and well-instructed men who accompanied and advises him, a plan which he was firmly convinced would be the salvation of the colony. Events have proved that he was right. His disposal of the prisoners was only a clearing of the decks for the great action of remodeling the colony. He did not allow a form of law to stand between him and his purpose. Indeed, as we have already said, he regarded himself as a dictator sent out to reconstruct a whole system in the best way he could. When he was accused of having gone beyond the law, he asked with a scorn not wholly unreasonable; "What are the constitutional principles remaining in force where the whole constitution is suspended? What principle of the British Constitution holds good in a country where the people's money is taken from them without the people's consent; where representative government is annihilated; where martial law has been the law of the land and where trial by jury exists only to defeat the ends of justice, and to provoke the righteous scorn and indignation of the community?"

Still there can be no doubt that a less impetuous and impatient spirit than that of Lord Durham might have found a way of beginning his great reforms without provoking such a storm of hostile criticism. He was, it must always be remembered, a dictator who only strove to use his powers for the restoration of liberty and constitutional government. His mode of disposing of his prisoners was arbitrary only in the interests of mercy. He declared openly that he did not think it right to send to an ordinary penal settlement, and thus brand with infamy, men whom the public feeling of the colony entirely approved, and whose cause, until they broke into rebellion, had far more right on its side than that of the authority they complained of could claim to possess. He sent them to Bermuda simply as into exile; to remove them from the colony, but nothing more. He lent the weight of this authority to the colonial act, which prescribed the penalty of death for

returning to the colony, because he believed that the men thus proscribed never would return.

But his policy met with the severest and most unmeasured criticism at home. If Lord Durham had been guilty of the worst excesses of power which Burke charged against Warren Hastings, he could not have been more fiercely denounced in the House of Lords. He was accused of having promulgated an ordinance which would enable him to hang men without any trial or form of trial. None of his opponents seemed to remember, that whether his disposal of the prisoners was right or wrong, it was only a small and incidental part of a great policy covering the readjustment of the whole political and social system of a splendid colony. The criticism went on as if the promulgation of the Quebec ordinances was the be-all and the end-all of Lord Durham's mission. His opponents made great complaint about the cost of his progress in Canada. Lord Durham had undoubtedly a lavish taste and a love for something like Oriental display. He made his goings about in Canada like a gorgeous royal progress; yet it was well-known that he took no remuneration whatever for himself, and did not even accept his own personal traveling expenses. He afterward stated in the House of Lords that the visit cost him personally ten thousand pounds at least. Mr. Hume, the advocate of economy, made sarcastic comment on the sudden fit of parsimony which seemed to have seized, in Lord Durham's case, men whom he had never before known to raise their voices against any prodigality of expenditure.

The ministry was very weak in debating power in the House of Lords. Lord Durham had made enemies there. The opportunity was tempting for assailing him and the ministry together. Many of the criticisms were undoubtedly the conscientious protests of men who saw danger in any departure from the recognized principles of constitutional law. Eminent judges and lawyers in the House of Lords naturally looked above all things to the proper administration of the law as it existed. But it is hard to doubt that political or personal enmity influenced some of the attacks on Lord Durham's conduct. Almost all the leading men in the House of Lords were against him. Lord Brougham and Lord Lyndhurst were for the time leagued in opposition to the government and in attack on the Canadian policy. Lord Brougham claimed to be con-

sistent. He had opposed the Canada coercion from the beginning, he said, and he opposed illegal attempts to deal with Canada now. It seems a little hard to understand how Lord Brougham could really so far have misunderstood the purpose of Lord Durham's proclamation as to believe that he proposed to hang men without the form of law. However Lord Durham may have broken the technical rules of law, nothing could be more obvious than the fact that he did so in the interest of mercy and generosity, and not that of tyrannical severity. Lord Brougham inveighed against him with thundering eloquence, as if he were denouncing another Sejanus. It must be owned that his attacks lost some of their moral effect because of his known hatred to Lord Melbourne and the ministry, and even to Lord Durham himself. People said that Brougham had a special reason for feeling hostile to anything done by Lord Durham. A dinner was given to Lord Grey by the Reformers of Edinburgh, in 1834, at which Lord Brougham and Lord Durham were both present. Brougham was called upon to speak, and in the course of his speech he took occasion to condemn certain too zealous reformers who could not be content with the changes that had been made, but must demand that the ministry should rush forward into wild and extravagant enterprises. He enlarged upon this subject with great vivacity and with amusing variety of humorous and rhetorical illustration. Lord Durham assumed that the attack was intended for him. His assumption was not unnatural. When he came in his turn to speak, he was indiscreet enough to reply directly to Lord Brougham, to accept the speech of the former as a personal challenge, and in bitter words to retort invective and sarcasm. The scene was not edifying. The guests were scandalized. The effect of Brougham's speech was wholly spoiled. Brougham was made to seem a disturber of order by the indiscretion which provoked into retort a man notoriously indiscreet and incapable of self-restraint. It is not unfair to the memory of so fierce and unsparing a political gladiator as Lord Brougham, to assume that when he felt called upon to attack the Canadian policy of Lord Durham, the recollection of the scene at the Edinburgh dinner inspired with additional force his criticism of the Quebec ordinances.

The ministry were weak and yielded. They had in the



first instance approved of the ordinances, but they quickly gave way and abandoned them. They avoided a direct attempt on the part of Lord Brougham to reverse the policy of Lord Durham by announcing that they had determined to disallow the Quebec ordinances. Lord Durham learned for the first time from an American paper that the government had abandoned him. He at once announced his determination to give up his position and to return to England. His letter announcing this resolve crossed on the ocean the despatch from home disallowing his ordinances. With characteristic imprudence he issued a proclamation from the Castle of St. Lewis, in the city of Quebec, which was virtually an appeal to the public feeling of the colony against the conduct of her majesty's government. When the news of this extraordinary proclamation reached home, Lord Durham was called by the *Times* newspaper, "the Lord High Seditious." The representative of the sovereign, it was said, had appealed to the judgment of a still rebellious colony against the policy of the sovereign's own advisers. Of course Lord Durham's recall was unavoidable. The government at once sent out a despatch removing him from his place as governor of British North America.

Lord Durham had not waited for the formal recall. He returned to England a disgraced man. Yet even then there was public spirit enough among the English people to refuse to ratify any sentence of disgrace upon him. When he landed at Plymouth, he was received with acclamation by the population although the government had prevented any of the official honor usually shown to returning governors from being offered to him. Mr. John Stuart Mill has claimed with modest firmness and with perfect justice a leading share in influencing public opinion in favor of Lord Durham. "Lord Durham," he says in his autobiography, "was bitterly attacked from all sides, inveighed against by enemies, given up by timid friends; while those who would willingly have defended him did not know what to say. He appeared to be returning a defeated and discredited man. I had followed the Canadian events from the beginning; I had been one of the prompters of his prompters; his policy was almost exactly what mine would have been, and I was in a position to defend it. I wrote and published a manifesto in the *Westminster Review*, in

which I took the very highest ground in his behalf, claiming for him not mere acquittal, but praise and honor. Instantly a number of other writers took up the tone. I believe there was a portion of truth in what Lord Durham, soon after, with polite exaggeration, said to me, that to this article might be ascribed the almost triumphal reception which he met with on his arrival in England. I believe it to have been the word in season which at a critical moment does much to decide the result; the touch which determines whether a stone set in motion at the top of an eminence shall roll down on one side or on the other. All hopes connected with Lord Durham as a politician soon vanished; but with regard to Canadian and generally to colonial policy the cause was gained. Lord Durham's report, written by Charles Buller, partly under the inspiration of Wakefield, began a new era; its recommendations, extending to complete internal self-government, were in full operation in Canada within two or three years, and have been since extended to nearly all the other colonies of European race which have any claim to the character of important communities." In this instance the *victa causa* pleased not only Cato, but in the end the gods as well.

Lord Durham's report was acknowledged by enemies as well as by the most impartial critics to be a masterly document. As Mr. Mill has said, it laid the foundation of the political success and social prosperity not only of Canada but of all the other important colonies. After having explained in the most exhaustive manner the causes of discontent and backwardness in Canada, it went on to recommend that the government of the colony should be put as much as possible into the hands of the colonists themselves, that they themselves should execute as well as make the laws, the limit of the imperial government's interference being in such matters as affect the relations of the colony with the mother country, such as the constitution and form of government, the regulation of foreign relations and trade, and the disposal of the public lands. Lord Durham proposed to establish a thoroughly good system of municipal institutions; to secure the independence of the judges; to make all provincial officers, except the governor and his secretary, responsible to the colonial legislature; and to repeal all former legislation with respect to the reserves of land for the clergy. Finally, he proposed that the prov-

inces of Canada should be reunited politically and should become one legislature, containing the representatives of both races and of all districts. It is significant that the report also recommended that in any act to be introduced for this purpose, a provision should be made by which all or any of the other North American colonies should on the application of their legislatures and with the consent of Canada be admitted into the Canadian Union. Thus the separation which Fox thought unwise was to be abolished, and the Canadas were to be fused into one system, which Lord Durham would have had a federation. In brief, Lord Durham proposed to make the Canadas self-governing as regards their internal affairs, and the germ of a federal union.

It is not necessary to describe in detail the steps by which the government gradually introduced the recommendations of Lord Durham to parliament and carried them to success. Lord Glenelg, one of the feeblest and most apathetic of colonial secretaries, had retired from office, partly, no doubt, because of the attacks in parliament on his administration of Canadian affairs. He was succeeded at the Colonial office by Lord Normanby, and Lord Normanby gave way in a few months to Lord John Russell, who was full of energy and earnestness. Lord Durham's successor and disciple in the work of Canadian government, Lord Sydenham—best known as Mr. Charles Poulett Thomson, one of the pioneers of free trade—received Lord John Russell's cordial cooperation and support. Lord John Russell introduced into the House of Commons a bill which he described as intended to lay the foundation of a permanent settlement of the affairs of Canada. The measure was postponed for a session because some statesmen thought that it would not be acceptable to the Canadians themselves. Some little sputterings of the rebellion had also lingered after Lord Durham's return to this country, and these for a short time had directed attention away from the policy of reorganization. In 1840, however, the act was passed which reunited Upper and Lower Canada on the basis proposed by Lord Durham. Further legislation disposed of the clergy reserve lands for the general benefit of all churches and denominations. The way was made clear for that scheme which in times nearer to our own has formed the Dominion of Canada.

Lord Durham did not live to see the success of the policy

he had recommended. We may anticipate the close of his career. Within a few days after the passing of the Canada government bill he died at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, on July 28, 1840. He was then little more than forty-eight years of age. He had for some time been in failing health, and it cannot be doubted that the mortification attending his Canadian mission had worn away his strength. His proud and sensitive spirit could ill bear the contradictions and humiliations that had been forced upon him. He was an eager and a passionate nature, full of that *sæva indignatio* which by his own acknowledgment tortured the heart of Swift. He wanted to the success of his political career that proud patience which the gods are said to love, and by virtue of which great men live down misappreciation, and hold out until they see themselves justified, and hear the reproaches turn into cheers. But if Lord Durham's personal career was in any way a failure, his policy for the Canadas was a splendid success. It established the principles of colonial government. There were undoubtedly defects in the construction of the actual scheme which Lord Durham initiated, and which Lord Sydenham, who died not long after him, instituted. The legislative union of the two Canadas was in itself a makeshift, and was only adopted as such. Lord Durham would have had it otherwise if he might; but he did not see his way then to anything like the complete federation scheme afterward adopted. But the success of the policy lay in the broad principles it established, and to which other colonial systems as well as that of the Dominion of Canada owe their strength and security to-day. One may say with little help from the merely fanciful, that the rejoicings of emancipated colonies might have been in his dying ears as he sank into his early grave.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SCIENCE AND SPEED.

THE opening of the reign of Queen Victoria coincided with the introduction of many of the great discoveries and applications in science, industry and commerce which we consider specially representative of modern civilization. A

reign which saw in its earlier years the application of the electric current to the task of transmitting messages, the first successful attempts to make use of steam for the business of transatlantic navigation, the general development of the railway system all over these countries, and the introduction of the penny post, must be considered to have obtained for itself, had it secured no other memorials, an abiding place in history. A distinguished author has lately inveighed against the spirit which would rank such improvements as those just mentioned with the genuine triumphs of the human race, and has gone so far as to insist that there is nothing in any such which might not be expected from the self-interested contrivings of a very inferior animal nature. Amid the tendency to glorify beyond measure the mere mechanical improvements of modern civilization, it is natural that there should arise some angry questioning, some fierce disparagement of all that it has done. There will always be natures to which the philosophy of contemplation must seem far nobler than the philosophy which expresses itself in mechanical action. It may, however, be taken as certain that no people who were ever great in thought and in art willfully neglected to avail themselves of all possible contrivances for making life less laborious by the means of mechanical and artificial contrivance. The Greeks were to the best of their opportunity, and when at the highest point of their glory as an artistic race, as eager for the application of all scientific and mechanical contrivances to the business of life as the most practical and boastful Manchester man or Chicago man of our own day. We shall afterward see that the reign of Queen Victoria came to have a literature, an art, and a philosophy distinctly its own. For the moment we have to do with its industrial science; or at least with the first remarkable movements in that direction which accompanied the opening of the reign. This at least must be said for them, that they have changed the conditions of human life for us in such a manner as to make the history of the past forty or fifty years almost absolutely distinct from that of any preceding period. In all that part of our social life which is affected by industrial and mechanical appliances, the man of the latter part of the eighteenth century was less widely removed from the Englishman of the days of the Paston Letters than we are removed from the ways of

the eighteenth century. The man of the eighteenth century traveled on land and sea in much the same way that his forefathers had done hundreds of years before. His communications by letter with his fellows were carried on in very much the same method. He got his news from abroad and at home after the same slow uncertain fashion. His streets and houses were lighted very much as they might have been when Mr. Pepys was in London. His ideas of drainage and ventilation were equally elementary and simple. We see a complete revolution in all these things. A man of the present day suddenly thrust back fifty years in life, would find himself almost as awkwardly unsuited to the ways of that time as if he were sent back to the age when the Romans occupied Britain. He would find himself harassed at every step he took. He could do hardly anything as he does it to-day. Whatever the moral and philosophical value of the change in the eyes of thinkers too lofty to concern themselves with the common ways and doings of human life, this is certain at least, that the change is of immense historical importance, and that even if we look upon life as a mere pageant and show interesting to wise men only by its curious changes, a wise man of this school could hardly have done better, if the choice lay with him, than to desire that the lines of his life might be so cast as to fall into the earlier part of this present reign.

It is a somewhat curious coincidence, that in the year when Professor Wheatstone and Mr. Cooke took out their first patent "for improvements in giving signals and sounding alarms in distant places by means of electric currents transmitted through metallic circuit." Professor Morse, the American electrician, applied to congress for aid in the construction and carrying on of a small electric telegraph to convey messages a short distance, and made the application without success. In the following year he came to this country to obtain a patent for his invention; but he was refused. He had come too late. Our own countrymen were beforehand with him. Very soon after we find experiments made with the electric telegraph between Euston Square and Camden Town. These experiments were made under the authority of the London and Northwestern Railway Company, immediately on the taking out of the patent by Messrs. Wheatstone and Cooke. Mr. Robert Stephenson was one of those who came to

watch the operation of this new and wonderful attempt to make the currents of the air man's faithful Ariel. The London and Birmingham Railway was opened through its whole length in 1838. The Liverpool and Preston line was opened in the same year. The Liverpool and Birmingham had been opened in the year before; the London and Croydon was opened the year after. The act for the transmission of the mails by railways was passed in 1838. In the same year it was noted as an unparalleled, and to many an almost incredible triumph of human energy and science over time and space, that a locomotive had been able to travel at a speed of thirty-seven miles an hour.

“The prospect of traveling from the metropolis to Liverpool, a distance of two hundred and ten miles, in ten hours, calls forcibly to mind the tales of fairies and genii by which we were amused in our youth, and contrasts forcibly with the fact, attested on the personal experience of the writer of this notice, that about the commencement of the present century, this same journey occupied a space of sixty hours.” These are the words of a writer who gives an interesting account of the railways of England during the first year of the reign of Queen Victoria. In the same volume from which this extract is taken an allusion is made to the possibility of steam communication being successfully established between England and the United States. “Preparations on a gigantic scale,” a writer is able to announce, “are now in a state of great forwardness for trying an experiment in steam navigation which has been the subject of much controversy among scientific men. Ships of an enormous size, furnished with steam power equal to the force of four hundred horses and upward, will, before our next volume shall be prepared, have probably decided the question whether this description of vessels can, in the present state of our knowledge, profitably engage in transatlantic voyages. It is possible that these attempts may fail, a result which is indeed predicted by high authorities on this subject. We are more sanguine in our hopes; but should these be disappointed, we cannot, if we are to judge from our past progress, doubt that longer experience and a further application of inventive genius will at no very distant day render practicable and profitable by this means the longest voyages in which the adventurous spirit of man will lead him to embark.” The experiment thus alluded

to was made with perfect success. The *Sirius*, the *Great Western*, and the *Royal William* accomplished voyages between New York and this country in the early part of 1838; and it was remarked, that "transatlantic voyages by means of steam may now be said to be as easy of accomplishment, with ships of adequate size and power, as the passage between London and Margate." The *Great Western* crossed the ocean from Bristol to New York in fifteen days. She was followed by the *Sirius*, which left Cork for New York, and made the passage in seventeen days. The controversy as to the possibility of such voyages, which was settled by the *Great Western* and the *Sirius*, had no reference to the actual safety of such an experiment. During seven years the mails for the Mediterranean had been despatched by means of steamers. The doubt was as to the possibility of stowing in a vessel so large a quantity of coal or other fuel as would enable her to accomplish her voyage across the Atlantic, where there could be no stopping place and no possibility of taking in new stores. It was found, to the delight of all those who believed in the practicability of the enterprise, that the quantity of fuel which each vessel had on board when she left her port of departure proved amply sufficient for the completion of the voyage. Neither the *Sirius* nor the *Great Western* was the first vessel to cross the Atlantic by means of steam propulsion. Nearly twenty years before, a vessel called the *Savannah*, built at New York, crossed the ocean to Liverpool, and some years later an English-built steamer made several voyages between Holland and the Dutch West Indian colonies as a packet vessel in the service of that government. Indeed, a voyage had been made round the Cape of Good Hope more lately still by a steam ship. These expeditions, however, had really little or nothing to do with the problem which was solved by the voyages of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*. In the former instances the steam power was employed merely as an auxiliary. The vessel made as much use of her steam propulsion as she could, but she had to rely a good deal on her capacity as a sailor. This was quite a different thing from the enterprise of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*, which was to cross the ocean by steam propulsion and steam propulsion only. It is evident that so long as the steam power was to be used only as an auxiliary, it would be impossible to reckon on



speed and certainty of arrival. The doubt was whether a steamer could carry, with her cargo and passengers, fuel enough to serve for the whole of her voyage across the Atlantic. The expeditions of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western* settled the whole question. It was never again a matter of controversy. It is enough to say that two years after the *Great Western* went out from Bristol to New York the Cunard line of steamers was established. The steam communication between Liverpool and New York became thenceforth as regular and as unvarying a part of the business of commerce as the journeys of the trains on the *Great Western Railway* between London and Bristol. It was not Bristol which benefited most by the transatlantic voyages. They made the greatness of Liverpool. Year by year the sceptre of the commercial marine passed away from Bristol to Liverpool. No port in the world can show a line of docks like those of Liverpool. There the stately Mersey flows for miles between the superb and massive granite walls of the enclosures within whose shelter the ships of the world are arrayed as if on parade for the admiration of the traveler who has hitherto been accustomed to the irregular and straggling arrangements of the docks of London or of New York.

On July 5, 1839, an unusually late period of the year, the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward his annual budget. The most important part of the financial statement, so far as later times are concerned, is set out in a resolution proposed by the finance minister, which perhaps represents the greatest social improvement brought about by legislation in modern times. The chancellor proposed a resolution declaring that "it is expedient to reduce the postage on letters to one uniform rate of one penny charged upon every letter of a weight to be hereafter fixed by law; parliamentary privileges of franking being abolished and official franking strictly regulated; this house pledging itself at the same time to make good any deficiency of revenue which may be occasioned by such an alteration in the rates of the existing duties." Up to this time the rates of postage had been both high and various. They were varying both as to distance and as to the weight and even the size or the shape of a letter. The district or London post was a separate branch of the postal department; and the charge for the transmission of letters was

made on a different scale in London from that which prevailed between town and town. The average postage on every chargeable letter throughout the United Kingdom was sixpence farthing. A letter from London to Brighton cost eight-pence; to Aberdeen one shilling and three pence half-penny; to Belfast one shilling and four pence. Nor was this all; for if the letter were written on more than one sheet of paper, it came under the operation of a higher scale of charge. Members of parliament had the privilege of franking letters to a certain limited extent; members of the government had the privilege of franking to an unlimited extent. It is perhaps as well to mention, for the sake of being intelligible to all readers in an age which has not, in this country at least, known practically the beauty and liberality of the franking privilege, that it consisted in the right of the privileged person to send his own or any other person's letters through the post free of charge by merely writing his name on the outside. This meant, in plain words, that the letters of the class who could best afford to pay for them went free of charge, and that those who could least afford to pay had to pay double—the expense, that is to say, of carrying their own letters and the letters of the privileged and exempt.

The greatest grievances were felt everywhere because of this absurd system. It had along with its other disadvantages that of encouraging what may be called the smuggling of letters. Everywhere sprang up organizations for the illicit conveyance of correspondence at lower rates than those imposed by the government. The proprietors of almost every kind of public conveyance are said to have been engaged in this unlawful but certainly not very unnatural or unjustifiable traffic. Five-sixths of all the letters sent between Manchester and London were said to have been conveyed for years by this process. One great mercantile house was proved to have been in the habit of sending sixty-seven letters by what we may call this underground postoffice, for every one on which they paid the government charges. It was not merely to escape heavy cost that these stratagems were employed. As there was an additional charge when a letter was written on more sheets than one, there was a frequent and almost a constant tampering by officials with the sanctity of sealed letters for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not they

ought to be taxed on the higher scale. It was proved that in the years between 1815 and 1835, while the population had increased thirty per cent., and the stage-coach duty had increased one hundred and twenty-eight per cent., the post office revenues had shown no increase at all. In other countries the postal revenue had been on the increase steadily during that time; in the United States the revenue had actually trebled, although then and later the postal system of America was full of faults which at that day only seemed intelligible or excusable when placed in comparison with those of our own system.

Mr. (afterward Sir Rowland) Hill is the man to whom this country, and indeed all civilization, owes the adoption of the cheap and uniform system. His plan has been adopted by every state which professes to have a postal system at all. Mr. Hill belonged to a remarkable family. His father, Thomas Wright Hill, was a teacher, a man of advanced and practical views in popular education, a devoted lover of science, an advocate of civil and religious liberty, and a sort of celebrity in the Birmingham of his day, where he took a bold and active part in trying to defend the house of Dr. Priestley against the mob who attacked it. He had five sons, every one of whom made himself more or less conspicuous as a practical reformer in one path or another. The eldest of the sons was Matthew Davenport Hill, the philanthropic recorder of Birmingham, who did so much for prison reform and for the reclamation of juvenile offenders. The third son was Rowland Hill, the author of the cheap postal system. Rowland Hill when a little weakly child began to show some such precocious love for arithmetical calculations as Pascal showed for mathematics. His favorite amusement as a child was to lie on the hearth-rug and count up figures by the hour together. As he grew up he became teacher of mathematics in his father's school. Afterward he was appointed secretary to the South Australian Commission, and rendered much valuable service in the organization of the colony of South Australia. His early love of masses of figures it may have been which in the first instance turned his attention to the number of letters passing through the post office, the proportion they bore to the number of the population, the cost of carrying them, and the amount which the post office authorities charged for the conveyance of a single letter. A pictur-

esque and touching little illustration of the veritable hardships of the existing system seems to have quickened his interest in a reform of it. Miss Martineau thus tells the story:

“Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the lake district, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage, in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. As soon as the postman was out of sight she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself that as long as all went well with him he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage. Most persons would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell; but there was one mind which wakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove a brother and sister to cheating in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another’s welfare.”

Mr. Hill gradually worked out for himself a comprehensive scheme of reform. He put it before the world early in 1837. The public were taken by surprise when the plan came before them in the shape of a pamphlet which its author modestly entitled “Post Office Reform; its importance and practicability.” The root of Mr. Hill’s system lay in the fact, made evident by him beyond dispute, that the actual cost of the conveyance of letters through the post was very trifling, and was but little increased by the distance over which they had to be carried.

His proposal was therefore that the rates of postage should be diminished to the minimum; that at the same time the speed of conveyance should be increased, and that there should be much greater frequency of despatch. His principle was, in fact, the very opposite of that which had prevailed in the calculations of the authorities. Their idea was that the higher the charge for letters the greater the return to the revenue. He started on the assumption that the smaller the charge the greater the profit. He therefore

recommended the substitution of one uniform charge of one penny the half-ounce, without reference to the distance within the limits of the United Kingdom which the letter had to be carried. The post office authorities were at first uncompromising in their opposition to the scheme. The postmaster-general, Lord Lichfield, said in the House of Lords, that of all the wild and extravagant schemes he had ever heard of, it was the wildest and most extravagant. "The mails," he said, "will have to carry twelve times as much weight, and therefore the charge for transmission instead of £100,000, as now, must be twelve times that amount. The walls of the post office would burst, the whole area in which the building stands would not be large enough to receive the clerks and the letters." It is impossible not to be struck by the paradoxical peculiarity of this argument. Because the change would be so much welcomed by the public, Lord Lichfield argued that it ought not to be made. He did not fall back upon the then familiar assertion that the public would not send anything like the number of letters the advocates of the scheme expected. He argued that they would send so many as to make it troublesome for the post office authorities to deal with them. In plain words, it would be such an immense accommodation to the population in general, that the officials could not undertake the trouble of carrying it into effect. Another post office official, Colonel Maberley, was at all events more liberal. "My constant language," he said afterward, "to the heads of the departments was—This plan we know will fail. It is your duty to take care that no obstruction is placed in the way of it by the heads of the department, and by the post office. The allegation, I have not the least doubt, will be made at a subsequent period, that this plan has failed in consequence of the unwillingness of the government to carry it into fair execution. It is our duty as servants of the government to take care that no blame eventually shall fall on the government through any unwillingness of ours to carry it into proper effect." It is, perhaps, less surprising that the routine mind of officials should have seen no future but failure for the scheme, when so vigorous and untrammelled a thinker as Sydney Smith spoke with anger and contempt of the fact that "a million of revenue is given up in the nonsensical penny post scheme, to please my old, excellent,

and universally dissentient friend, Noah Warburton." Mr. Warburton was then member for Bridport, and with Mr. Wallace, another member of parliament, was very active in supporting and promoting the views of Mr. Hill. "I admire the Whig Ministry," Sydney Smith went on to say, "and think they have done more good things than all the ministries since the Revolution; but these concessions are sad and unworthy marks of weakness, and fill reasonable men with alarm."

It will be seen from this remark alone that the ministry had yielded somewhat more readily than might have been expected to the arguments of Mr. Hill. At the time his pamphlet appeared a commission was actually engaged in inquiring into the condition of the post office department. Their attention was drawn to Mr. Hill's plan, and they gave it a careful consideration, and reported in its favor, although the post office authorities were convinced that it must involve an unbearable loss of revenue. In parliament Mr. Wallace, whose name has been already mentioned, moved for a committee to inquire into the whole subject, and especially to examine the mode recommended for charging and collecting postage, in the pamphlet of Mr. Hill. The committee gave the subject a very patient consideration and at length made a report recommending uniform charges and prepayment by stamps. That part of Mr. Hill's plan which suggested the use of postage stamps was adopted by him on the advice of Mr. Charles Knight. The government took up the scheme with some spirit and liberality. The revenue that year showed a deficiency, but they determined to run the further risk which the proposal involved. The commercial community had naturally been stirred greatly by the project which promised so much relief and advantage. Sydney Smith was very much mistaken indeed when he fancied that it was only to please his old and excellent friend, Mr. Warburton, that the ministry gave way to the innovation. Petitions from all the commercial communities were pouring in to support the plan, and to ask that at least it should have a fair trial. The government at length determined to bring in a bill which should provide for the almost immediate introduction of Mr. Hill's scheme, and for the abolition of the franking system except in the case of official letters actually sent on business directly belonging

to her majesty's service. The bill declared, as an introductory step, that the charge for postage should be at the rate of four pence for each letter under half an ounce in weight, irrespective of distance, within the limits of the United Kingdom. This, however, was to be only a beginning; for on January 10, 1840, the postage was fixed at the uniform rate of one penny per letter of not more than half an ounce in weight. The introductory measure was not, of course, carried without opposition in both houses of parliament. The Duke of Wellington in his characteristic way declared that he strongly objected to the scheme, but as the government had evidently set their hearts upon it, he recommended the House of Lords not to offer any opposition to it. In the House of Commons it was opposed by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Goulburn, both of whom strongly condemned the whole scheme as likely to involve the country in vast loss of revenue. The measure, however, passed into law. Some idea of the effect it has produced upon the postal correspondence of the country may be gathered from the fact that in 1839, the last year of the heavy postage, the number of letters delivered in Great Britain and Ireland was a little more than eighty-two millions, which included some five millions and a half of franked letters returning nothing to the revenues of the country; whereas, in 1875, more than a thousand millions of letters were delivered in the United Kingdom. The population during the same time has not nearly doubled itself. It has already been remarked that the principle of Sir Rowland Hill's reform has since been put into operation in every civilized country in the world. It may be added that before long we shall in all human probability see an inter-oceanic postage established at a rate as low as people sometimes thought Sir Rowland Hill a madman for recommending as applicable to our inland post. The time is not far distant when a letter will be carried from London to San Francisco, or to Tokio in Japan, at a rate of charge as small as that which made financiers stare and laugh when it was suggested as profitable remuneration for carrying a letter from London to the town of Sussex or Hertfordshire. The "penny post," let it be said, is an older institution than that which Sir Rowland Hill introduced. A penny post for the conveyance of letters had been set up in London so long ago as 1683; and it was adopted or annexed

by the government some years after. An effort was even made to set up a half-penny post in London, in opposition to the official penny post, in 1708; but the government soon crushed this vexatious and intrusive rival. In 1738 Dr. Johnson writes to Mr. Cave "to entreat that you will be pleased to inform me, by the penny post, whether you resolve to print the poem." After awhile the government changed their penny post to a twopenny post, and gradually made a distinction between district and other postal systems, and contrived to swell the price for deliveries of all kinds. Long before even this time of the penny post, the old records of the city of Bristol contain an account of the payment of one penny for the carriage of letters to London. It need hardly be explained, however, that a penny in that time, or even in 1683, was a payment of very different value indeed from the modest sum which Sir Rowland Hill was successful in establishing. The ancient penny post resembled the modern penny only post in name.

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## CHAPTER V.

### CHARTISM.

It cannot, however, be said that all the omens under which the new queen's reign opened at home were as auspicious as the coincidences which made it contemporary with the first chapters of these new and noble developments in the history of science and invention. On the contrary, it began amid many grim and unpromising conditions in our social affairs. The winter of 1837-8 was one of unusual severity and distress. There would have been much discontent and grumbling in any case among the class described by French writers as the *prolétaire*; but the complaints were aggravated by a common belief that the young queen was wholly under the influence of a frivolous and selfish minister, who occupied her with amusements while the poor were starving. It does not appear that there was at any time the slightest justification for such a belief; but it prevailed among the working classes and the poor very generally, and added to the sufferings of genuine want the bitterness of imaginary wrong. Popular education was little looked after; so far as the state was concerned, might



be said not to be looked after at all. The laws of political economy were as yet only within the appreciation of a few, who were regarded not uncommonly, because of their theories, somewhat as phrenologists or mesmerists might be looked on in a more enlightened time. Some writers have made a great deal of the case of Thom and his disciples as evidence of the extraordinary ignorance that prevailed. Thom was a broken-down brewer, and in fact a madman, who had for some time been going about in Canterbury and other parts of Kent bedizened in fantastic costume, and styling himself at first Sir William Courtenay of Powderham Castle, knight of Malta, king of Jerusalem, king of the gipsy races, and we know not what else. He announced himself as a great political reformer, and for awhile he succeeded in getting many to believe in and support him. He was afterward confined for some time in a lunatic asylum, and when he came out he presented himself to the ignorant peasantry in the character of a second Messiah. He found many followers and believers again, among a humbler class indeed than those whom he had formerly won over. Much of his influence over the poor Kentish laborers was due to his denunciations of the new poor law, which was then popularly hated and feared with an almost insane intensity of feeling. Thom told them he had come to regenerate the whole world, and also to save his followers from the new poor law; and the latter announcement commended the former. He assembled a crowd of his supporters, and undertook to lead them to an attack on Canterbury. With his own hand he shot dead a policeman who endeavored to oppose his movements, exactly as a savior of society of bolder pretensions and greater success did at Boulogne not long after. Two companies of soldiers came out from Canterbury to disperse the rioters. The officer in command was shot dead by Thom. Thom's followers then charged the unexpected soldiers so fiercely that for a moment there was some confusion; but the second company fired a volley which stretched Thom and several of his adherents lifeless on the field. That was an end of the rising. Several of Thom's followers were afterward tried for murder, convicted and sentenced; but some pity was felt for their ignorance and their delusion, and they were not consigned to death. Long after the fall of their preposterous hero and saint, many of Thom's dis-

ciples believed that he would return from the grave to carry out the promised work of his mission. All this was lamentable, but could hardly be regarded as specially characteristic of the early years of the present reign. The Thom delusion was not much more absurd than the Tichborne mania of a later day. Down to our own time there are men and women among the Social Democrats of cultured Germany who still cherish the hope that their idol Ferdinand Lassalle will come back from the dead to lead and guide them.

But there were political and social dangers in the opening of the present reign more serious than any that could have been conjured up by a crazy man in a fantastic dress. There were delusions having deeper roots and showing a more inviting shelter than any that a religious fanatic of the vulgar type could cause to spring up in our society.

Only a few weeks after the coronation of the queen a great Radical meeting was held in Birmingham. A manifesto was adopted there which afterward came to be known as the Chartist petition. With that movement Chartism began to be one of the most disturbing influences of the political life of the country. It is a movement which, although its influence may now be said to have wholly passed away, well deserves to have its history fully written. For ten years it agitated England. It sometimes seemed to threaten an actual uprising of all the *prolétaire* against what were then the political and social institutions of the country. It might have been a very serious danger if the state had been involved in any external difficulties. It was backed by much genuine enthusiasm, passion, and intelligence. It appealed strongly and naturally to whatever there was of discontent among the working classes. It afforded a most acceptable and convenient means by which ambitious politicians of the self-seeking order could raise themselves into temporary importance. Its fierce and fitful flame went out at last under the influence of the clear, strong and steady light of political reform and education. The one great lesson it teaches is, that political agitation lives and is formidable only by virtue of what is reasonable in its demands. Thousands of ignorant and miserable men all over the country joined the Chartist agitation who cared nothing about the substantial value of its political claims. They were poor, they were over-

worked, they were badly paid, their lives were altogether wretched. They got into their heads some wild idea that the people's charter would give them better food and wages and lighter work if it were obtained, and that for that very reason the aristocrats and the officials would not grant it. No political concessions could really have satisfied these men. If the charter had been granted in 1838, they would no doubt have been as dissatisfied as ever in 1839. But the discontent of these poor creatures would have brought with it little danger to the state if it had not become part of the support of an organization which could show some sound and good reason for the demands it made. The moment that the clear and practical political grievances were dealt with the organization melted away. Vague discontent, however natural and excusable it may be, is only formidable in politics when it helps to swell the strength and the numbers of a crowd which calls for some reform that can be made and is withheld. One of the vulgarest fallacies of statecraft is to declare that it is of no use granting the reforms which would satisfy reasonable demands, because there are still unreasonable agitators whom these will not satisfy. Get the reasonable men on your side, and you need not fear the unreasonable. This is the lesson taught to statesmen by the Chartist agitations.

A funeral oration over Chartism was pronounced by Sir John Campbell, then attorney-general, afterward Lord Chief Justice Campbell, at a public dinner at Edinburgh on October 24, 1839. He spoke at some length and with much complacency of Chartism as an agitation which had passed away. Some ten days afterward occurred the most formidable outburst of Chartism that had been known up to that time, and Chartism continued to be an active and a disturbing influence in England for nearly ten years after. If Sir John Campbell had told his friends and constituents at the Edinburgh dinner that the influence of Chartism was just about to make itself really felt, he would have shown himself a somewhat more acute politician than we now understand him to be. Seldom has a public man setting up to be a political authority made a worse hit than he did in that memorable declaration. Campbell was indeed only a clever shrewd lawyer of the hard and narrow class. He never made any pretension to statesmanship, or even to great political knowledge; and his unfortunate

blunder might be passed over without notice were it not that it illustrates fairly enough the manner in which men of better information and judgment than he were at that time in the habit of disposing of all inconvenient political problems. The attorney-general was aware that there had been a few riots and a few arrests, and that the law had been what he would call vindicated; and as he had no manner of sympathy with the motives which could lead men to distress themselves and their friends about imaginary charters he assumed that there was an end of the matter. It did not occur to him to ask himself whether there might not be some underlying causes to explain if not to excuse the agitation that just then began to disturb the country, and that continued to disturb it for so many years. Even if he had inquired into the subject, it is not likely that he would have come to any wiser conclusion about it. The dramatic instinct, if we may be allowed to call it so, which enables a man to put himself for the moment into the condition and mood of men entirely unlike himself in feelings and conditions, is an indispensable element of real statesmanship; but it is the rarest of all gifts among politicians of the second order. If Sir John Campbell had turned his attention to the Chartist question, he would only have found that a number of men, for the most part poor and ignorant, were complaining of grievances where he could not for himself see any substantial grievances at all. That would have been enough for him. If a solid, wealthy and rising lawyer could not see any cause for grumbling, he would have made up his mind that no reasonable persons worthy the consideration of sensible legislators would continue to grumble after they had been told by those in authority that it was their business to keep quiet. But if he had, on the other hand, looked with the light of sympathetic intelligence, of that dramatic instinct which has just been mentioned, at the condition of the classes among whom Chartism was then rife, he would have seen that it was not likely the agitation could be put down by a few prosecutions and a few arrests, and the censure of a prosperous attorney-general. He would have seen that Chartism was not a cause but a consequence. The intelligence of a very ordinary man who approached the question in an impartial mood might have seen that Chartism was the expression of a vague discontent with very positive grievances and evils.

We have in our time outlived the days of political abstractions. The catch-words which thrilled our forefathers with emotion on one side or the other fall with hardly any meaning on our ears. We smile at such phrases as "the rights of man." We hardly know what is meant by talking of "the people" as the words were used long ago when "the people" was understood to mean a vast mass of wronged persons who had no representation and were oppressed by privilege and the aristocracy. We seldom talk of "liberty;" anyone venturing to found a theory or even a declamation on some supposed deprivation of liberty would soon find himself in the awkward position of being called on to give a scientific definition of what he understood liberty to be. He would be as much puzzled as were certain English workingmen, who desiring to express to Mr. John Stuart Mill their sympathy with what they called in the slang of continental democracy "the Revolution," were calmly bidden by the great liberal thinker to ask themselves what they meant by "the Revolution," which revolution, what revolution, and why they sympathized with it. But perhaps we are all a little too apt to think that because these abstractions have no living meaning now, they never had any living meaning at all. They convey no manner of clear idea in England now, but it does not by any means follow that they never conveyed any such idea. The phrase which Mr. Mill so properly condemned when he found it in the mouths of English workingmen had a very intelligible and distinct meaning when it first came to be used in France and throughout the continent. "The Revolution" expressed a clear reality, as recognizable by the intelligence of all who heard it as the name of Free Trade or of Ultramontaniam to men of our time. "The Revolution" was the principle which was asserting all over Europe the overthrow of the old absolute power of kings, and it described it just as well as any word could do. It is meaningless in our day for the very reason that it was full of meaning then. So it was with "the people" and "the rights of the people" and the "rights of labor," and all the other grandiloquent phrases which seem to us so empty and so meaningless now. They are empty and meaningless at the present hour; but they have no application now chiefly because they had application then.

The reform bill of 1832 had been necessarily and perhaps

naturally a class measure. It had done great things for the constitutional system of England. It had averted a revolution which without some such concession would probably have been inevitable. It had settled forever the question which was so fiercely and so gravely debated during the discussions of the reform years, whether the English Constitution is or is not based upon a system of popular representation. To many at present it may seem hardly credible that sane men could have denied the existence of the representative principle. But during the debates on the great reform bill such a denial was the strong point of many of the leading opponents of the measure, including the Duke of Wellington himself. The principle of the constitution, it was soberly argued, is that the sovereign invites whatever communities or interests he thinks fit to send in persons to parliament to take counsel with him on the affairs of the nation. This idea was got rid of by the reform bill. That bill abolished fifty-six nomination or rotten boroughs, and took away half the representation from thirty others; it disposed of the seats thus obtained by giving sixty-five additional representatives to the counties, and conferring the right of returning members on Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and some thirty-nine large and prosperous towns which had previously had no representation; while, as Lord John Russell said in his speech when he introduced the bill in March, 1831, "a ruined mound," sent two representatives to parliament; "three niches in a stone wall," sent two representatives to parliament; "a park where no houses were to be seen," sent two representatives to parliament. The bill introduced a £10 household qualification for boroughs, and extended the county franchise to leaseholders and copyholders. But it left the working classes almost altogether out of the franchise. Not merely did it confer no political emancipation on them, but it took away in many places the peculiar franchises which made the working men voters. There were communities—such, for example, as that of Preston, in Lancashire—where the system of franchise existing created something like universal suffrage. All this was smoothed away, if such an expression may be used, by the reform bill. In truth the reform bill broke down the monopoly which the aristocracy and landed classes had enjoyed, and admitted the middle classes to a share of

the law-making power. The representation was divided between the aristocracy and the middle class, instead of being, as before, the exclusive possession of the former.

The working class, in the opinion of many of their ablest and most influential representatives, were not merely left out but shouldered out. This was all the more exasperating because the excitement and agitation by the strength of which the reform bill was carried in the teeth of so much resistance were kept up by the workingmen. There was besides, at the time of the reform bill, a very high degree of what may be called the temperature of the French Revolution still heating the senses and influencing the judgment even of the aristocratic leaders of the movement. What Richter calls the "seed-grains" of the revolutionary doctrines had been blown abroad so widely that they rested in some of the highest as well as in most of the lowliest places. Some of the reform leaders, Lord Durham for instance, were prepared to go much farther in the way of Radicalism than at a later period Mr. Cobden or Mr. Bright would have gone. There was more than once a sort of appeal to the workingmen of the country which, however differently it may have been meant, certainly sounded in their ears as if it were an intimation that in the event of the bill being resisted too long it might be necessary to try what the strength of a popular uprising could do. Many years after, in the defense of the Irish state prisoners at Clonmel, the counsel who pleaded their cause insisted that they had warrant for their conduct in certain proceedings which were in preparation during the Reform agitation. He talked with undisguised significance of the teacher being in the ministry and the pupils in the dock; and quoted Captain Macheath to the effect that if laws were made equally for every degree, there might even then be rare company on Tyburn tree. It is not necessary to attach too much importance to assertions of this kind, or to accept them as sober contributions to history. But they are very instructive as a means of enabling us to understand the feeling of soreness which remained in the minds of large masses of the population when after the passing of the reform bill they found themselves left out in the cold. Rightly or wrongly they believed that their strength had been kept in reserve or *in terrorem* to secure the carrying of the reform bill, and that when it was carried they were

immediately thrown over by those whom they had thus helped to pass it. Therefore at the time when the young sovereign ascended the throne, the working classes in all the large towns were in a state of profound disappointment and discontent, almost indeed of disaffection. Chartism was beginning to succeed to the reform agitation. The leaders who had come from the ranks of the aristocracy had been discarded or had withdrawn. In some cases they had withdrawn in perfect good faith, believing sincerely that they had done the work which they undertook to do, and that that was all the country required. Men drawn more immediately from the working class itself, or who had in some way been dropped down by a class higher in the social scale, took up the popular leadership now.

Chartism may be said to have sprung definitively into existence in consequence of the formal declarations of the leaders of the Liberal party in parliament that they did not intend to push reform any farther. At the opening of the first parliament of Queen Victoria's reign the question was brought to a test. A Radical member of the House of Commons moved as an amendment to the address a resolution declaring in favor of the ballot and of shorter duration of parliaments. Only twenty members voted for it; and Lord John Russell declared distinctly against all such attempts to reopen the reform question. It was impossible that this declaration should not be received with disappointment and anger by great masses of the people. They had been in the full assurance that the reform bill itself was only the means by which greater changes were to be brought about. Lord John Russell said in the House of Commons that to push reform any farther then would be a breach of faith toward those who helped him to carry it. A great many outside parliament not unnaturally regarded the refusal to go any farther as a breach of faith toward them on the part of the Liberal leaders. Lord John Russell was right from his point of view. It would have been impossible to carry the reform movement any farther just then. In a country like ours where interests are so nicely balanced, it must always happen that a forward movement in politics is followed by a certain reaction. The parliamentary leaders in parliament were already beginning to feel the influence of this law of our political growth. It would have been hopeless to attempt to get the upper and



middle classes at such a time to consent to any further changes of considerable importance. But the feeling of those who had helped so materially to bring about the reform movement was at least intelligible when they found that its effects were to stop just short of the measures which alone could have any direct influence on their political position.

A conference was held almost immediately between a few of the Liberal members of parliament who professed Radical opinions and some of the leaders of the workingmen. At this conference the programme, or what was always afterward known as the "Charter" was agreed upon and drawn up. The name of "Charter" appears to have been given to it for the first time by O'Connell. "There's your Charter," he said to the secretary of the Working Men's Association; "agitate for it, and never be content with anything less." It is a great thing accomplished in political agitation to have found a telling name. A name is almost as important for a new agitation as for a new novel. The title of "The People's Charter" would of itself have launched the movement.

Quietly studied now, the People's Charter does not seem a very formidable document. There is little smell of gunpowder about it. Its "points," as they were called, were six. Manhood suffrage came first. It was then called universal suffrage, but it only meant manhood suffrage, for the promoters of the movement had not the slightest idea of insisting on the franchise for women. The second was annual parliaments. Vote by ballot was the third. Abolition of the property qualification (then and for many years after required for the election of a member to parliament) was the fourth. The payment of members was the fifth and the division of the country into equal electoral districts, the sixth of the famous points. Of these proposals some, it will be seen, were perfectly reasonable. Not one was so absolutely unreasonable as to be outside the range of fair and quiet discussion among practical politicians. Three of the points—half, that is to say, of the whole number—have already been made part of our constitutional system. The existing franchise may be virtually regarded as manhood suffrage. We have for years been voting by means of a written paper dropped in a ballot-box. The property qualification for members of parliament could

hardly be said to have been abolished. Such a word seems far too grand and dignified to describe the fate that befell it. We should rather say that it was extinguished by its own absurdity and viciousness. It never kept out of parliament any person legally disqualified, and it was the occasion of incessant tricks and devices which would surely have been counted disreputable and disgraceful to those who engaged in them, but that the injustice and folly of the system generated a sort of false public conscience where it was concerned, and made people think it as lawful to cheat it, as at one time the most respectable persons in private life thought it allowable to cheat the revenue and wear smuggled lace or drink smuggled brandy. The proposal to divide the country into equal electoral districts is one which can hardly yet be regarded as having come to any test. But it is almost certain that sooner or later some alteration of our present system in that direction will be adopted. Of the two other points of the charter, the payment of members may be regarded as decidedly objectionable; and that for yearly parliaments as embodying a proposition which would make public life an almost insufferable nuisance to those actively concerned in it. But neither of these two proposals would be looked upon in our time as outside the range of legitimate political discussion. Indeed, the difficulty any one engaged in their advocacy would find just now would be in getting any considerable body of listeners to take the slightest interest in the argument either for or against them.

The Chartists might be roughly divided into three classes—the political Chartists, the social Chartists, and the Chartists of vague discontent who joined the movement because they were wretched and felt angry. The first were the regular political agitators who wanted a wider popular representation; the second were chiefly led to the movement by their hatred of the “bread-tax.” These two classes were perfectly clear as to what they wanted; some of their demands were just and reasonable; none of them were without the sphere of rational and peaceful controversy. The disciples of mere discontent naturally swerved alternately to the side of those leaders or sections who talked loudest and fiercest against the law makers and the constituted authorities. Chartism soon split itself into two general divisions—the moral force and the physical force Chartism. Nothing

can be more unjust than to represent the leaders and promoters of the movement as mere factious and self-seeking demagogues. Some of them were men of great ability and eloquence; some were impassioned young poets drawn from the class whom Kingsley has described in his "Alton Locke"; some were men of education; many were earnest and devoted fanatics; and, so far as we can judge, all, or nearly all, were sincere. Even the man who did the movement most harm, and who made himself most odious to all reasonable outsiders, the once famous, now forgotten, Feargus O'Connor, appears to have been sincere and to have personally lost more than he gained by his Chartism. Four or five years after the collapse of what may be called the active Chartist agitation, a huge white-headed, vacuous-eyed man was to be seen of mornings wandering through the arcades of Covent Garden Market, looking at the fruits and flowers, occasionally taking up a flower, smelling at it, and putting it down with a smile of infantile satisfaction; a man who might have reminded observers of Mr. Dick in Dickens' "David Copperfield;" and this was the once renowned, once dreaded and detested Feargus O'Connor. For some time before his death his reason had wholly deserted him. Men did not know at first in the House of Commons the meaning of the odd pranks which Feargus was beginning to play there to the bewilderment of the great assembly. At last it was seen that the fallen leader of Chartism was a hopeless madman. It is hardly to be doubted that insanity had long been growing on him, and that some at least of his political follies and extravagances were the result of an increasing disorder of the brain. In his day he had been the very model for a certain class of demagogues. He was of commanding presence, great stature and almost gigantic strength. He had education; he had mixed in good society; he belonged to an old family, and indeed boasted his descent from a line of Irish kings, not without some ground for the claim. He had been a man of some fashion at one time and had led a life of wild dissipation in his early years. He had a kind of eloquence which told with immense power on a mass of half-ignorant hearers; and indeed men who had no manner of liking for him or sympathy with his doctrines have declared that he was the most effective mob orator they had ever heard. He was ready, if needs were, to fight his way single-handed through a whole mass of

Tory opponents at a contested election. Thomas Cooper, the venerable poet of Chartism, has given an amusing description, in his autobiography, of Feargus O'Connor who was then his hero, leaping from a wagon at a Nottingham election into the midst of a crowd of Tory butchers, and with only two stout Chartist followers fighting his way through all opposition, "flooring the butchers like nine-pins." "Once," says Mr. Cooper, "the Tory lambs fought off all who surrounded him and got him down, and my heart quaked—for I thought they would kill him. But in a very few moments his red head emerged again from the rough human billows, and he was fighting his way as before."

There were many men in the movement of a nobler moral nature than poor huge, wild Feargus O'Connor. There were men like Thomas Cooper himself, devoted, impassioned, full of poetic aspiration and no scant measure of poetic inspiration as well. Henry Vincent was a man of unimpeachable character and of some ability, an effective popular speaker, who has since maintained in a very unpretending way a considerable reputation. Ernest Jones was as sincere and self-sacrificing a man as ever joined a sinking cause. He had proved his sincerity more in deed than word. His talents only fell short of that height which might claim to be regarded as genius. His education was that of a scholar and a gentleman. Many men of education and ability were drawn into sympathy if not into actual co-operation with the Chartists by a conviction that some of their claims were well-founded, and that the grievances of the working classes, which were terrible to contemplate, were such as a parliament better representing all classes would be able to remedy. Some of these men have since made for themselves an honorable name in parliament and out of it; some of them have risen to high political position. It is necessary to read such a book as Thomas Cooper's autobiography to understand how genuine was the poetic and political enthusiasm which was at the heart of the Chartist movement, and how bitter was the suffering which drove into its ranks so many thousands of stout working-men who, in a country like England, might well have expected to be able to live by the hard work they were only too willing to do. One must read the *Anti-Corn-Law Rhymes* of Ebenezer Elliott to understand how the "bread-

tax" became identified in the minds of the very best of the working class, and identified justly, with the system of political and economical legislation which was undoubtedly kept up, although not of conscious purpose for the benefit of a class. In the minds of too many, the British Constitution meant hard work and half-starvation.

A whole literature of Chartist newspapers sprang up to advocate the cause. The *Northern Star*, owned and conducted by Feargus O'Connor was the most popular and influential of them; but every great town had its Chartist press. Meetings were held at which sometimes very violent language was employed. It began to be the practice to hold torchlight meetings at night, and many men went armed to these, and open clamor was made by the wilder of the Chartists for an appeal to arms. A formidable riot took place in Birmingham, where the authorities endeavored to put down a Chartist meeting. Ebenezer Elliott and other sensible sympathizers endeavored to open the eyes of the more extreme Chartists to the folly of all schemes for measures of violence; but for the time the more violent a speaker was, the better chance he had of becoming popular. Efforts were made at times to bring about a compromise with the middle-class liberals and the anti-corn-law leaders; but all such attempts proved failures. The Chartists would not give up their charter; many of them would not renounce the hope of seeing it carried by force. The government began to prosecute some of the orators and leaders of the charter movement; and some of these were convicted, imprisoned, and treated with great severity. Henry Vincent's imprisonment at Newport, in Wales, was the occasion of an attempt at rescue which bore a very close resemblance indeed to a scheme of organized and armed rebellion.

Newport had around it a large mining population, and the miners were nearly all physical force Chartists. It was arranged among them to march in three divisions to a certain rendezvous, and when they had formed a junction there, which was to be two hours after midnight, to march into Newport, attack the jail, and effect the release of Vincent and other prisoners. The attempt was to be under the chief command of Mr. Frost, a trader of Newport, who had been a magistrate, but was deprived of the commission of the peace for violent political speeches—a

man of respectable character and conduct up to that time. This was on November 4, 1839. There was some misunderstanding and delay, as almost invariably happens in such enterprises, and the divisions of the little army did not effect their junction in time. When they entered Newport, they found the authorities fully prepared to meet them. Frost entered the town at the head of one division only, another following him at some interval. The third was nowhere, as far as the object of the enterprise was concerned. A conflict took place between the rioters and the soldiery and police, and the rioters were dispersed with a loss of some ten killed and fifty wounded. In their flight they encountered some of the other divisions coming up to the enterprise all too late. Nothing was more remarkable than the courage shown by the mayor of Newport, the magistrates, and the little body of soldiers. The mayor, Mr. Phillips, received two gunshot wounds. Frost was arrested next day along with some of his colleagues. They were tried on June 6, 1840. The charge against them was one of high treason. There did really appear ground enough to suppose that the expedition led by Frost was not merely to rescue Vincent, but to set going the great rebellious movement of which the physical force Chartists had long been talking. The Chartists appear at first to have numbered some ten thousand—twenty thousand indeed, according to other accounts—and they were armed with guns, pikes, swords, pickaxes and bludgeons. If the delay and misunderstanding had not taken place, and they had arrived at their rendezvous at the appointed time, the attempt might have led to very calamitous results. The jury found Frost and two of his companions, Williams and Jones, guilty of high treason, and they were sentenced to death; the sentence, however, was commuted to one of transportation for life. Even this was afterward relaxed, and when some years had passed away, and Chartism had ceased to be a disturbing influence, Frost was allowed to return to England, where he found that a new generation had grown up, and that he was all but forgotten. In the meantime the corn-law agitation had been successful; the year of revolutions had passed harmlessly over; Feargus O'Connor's day was done.

But the trial and conviction of Frost, Williams, and Jones did not put a stop to the Chartist agitation. On

the contrary, that agitation seemed rather to wax and strengthen and grow broader because of the attempt at Newport, and its consequences. Thomas Cooper, for example, had never attended a Chartist meeting, nor known anything of Chartism beyond what he read in the newspapers, until after the conviction of Frost and his companions. There was no lack of what were called energetic measures on the part of the government. The leading Chartists all over the country were prosecuted and tried, literally by hundreds. In most cases they were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment. The imprisonment served rather to make the Chartist leaders popular, and to advertise the movement, than to accomplish any purpose the government had at heart. They helped to make the government very unpopular. The working classes grew more and more bitter against the Whigs, who they said had professed Liberalism only to gain their own ends, and were really at heart less Liberal than the Tories. Now and then an imprisoned representative of the Chartist movement got to the end of his period of sentence, and came out of duress. He was a hero all over again, and his return to public life was the signal for fresh demonstrations of Chartism. At the general election of 1841, the vast majority of the Chartists, acting on the advice of some of their more extreme leaders, threw all their support into the cause of the Tories, and so helped the downfall of the Melbourne administration.

Wide and almost universal discontent among the working classes in town and country still helped to swell the Chartist ranks. The weavers and stockings in some of the manufacturing towns were miserably poor. Wages were low everywhere. In the agricultural districts the complaints against the operation of the new poor law were vehement and passionate; and although they were unjust in principle and sustained by monstrous exaggerations of statement, they were not the less potent as recruiting agents for Chartism. There was a profound distrust of the middle class and their leaders. The anti-corn-law agitation which was then springing up, and which, one might have thought, must find its most strenuous support among the poor artisans of the towns, was regarded with deep disgust by some of the Chartists, and with downright hostility by others. A very temperate orator of the Chartists put the feeling

of himself and his fellows in clear terms. "We do not object to the repeal of the corn laws," he said; "on the contrary. When we get the charter we will repeal the corn laws and all the bad laws. But if you give up your agitation for the charter to help the free traders, they will never help you to get the charter. Don't be deceived by the middle classes again! You helped them to get the reform bill, and where are the fine promises they made you? Don't listen to their humbug any more. Stick to your charter. Without your votes you are veritable slaves." The Chartists believed themselves abandoned by their natural leaders. All manner of socialist doctrines began to creep in among them. Wild and infidel opinions were proclaimed by many. Thomas Cooper tells one little anecdote which he says fairly illustrates the feeling of many of the fiercer spirits among the artisan Chartists in some of the towns. He and his friends were holding a meeting one day in Leicester. A poor religious stockinger said: "Let us be patient a little longer; surely God Almighty will help us soon." "Talk to us no more about thy Goddle Mighty," was the fierce cry that came in reply from one of the audience; "there isn't one! If there was one, he wouldn't let us suffer as we do!" About the same time a poor stockinger rushed into Cooper's house, and throwing himself wildly on a chair, exclaimed, "I wish they would hang me. I have lived on cold potatoes that were given me these two days, and this morning I've eaten a raw potato for sheer hunger. Give me a bit of bread and a cup of coffee or I shall drop." Thomas Cooper's remark about this time is very intelligible and simple. It tells a long clear story about Chartism. "How fierce," he says, "my discourses became now in the market place on Sunday evenings! My heart often burned with indignation I knew not how to express. I began from sheer sympathy to feel a tendency to glide into the depraved thinking of some of the stronger but coarser spirits among the men."

So the agitation went on. We need not follow it through all its incidents. It took in some places the form of industrial strikes; in others, of socialistic assemblages. Its fanaticism had in many instances a strong flavor of nobleness and virtue. Some men under the influence of thoughtful leaders pledged themselves to total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, in the full belief that the agitation



would never succeed until the working classes had proved themselves by their self-control to be worthy of the gift of freedom. In other instances, as has been already remarked, the disappointment and despair of the people took the form of infidelity. There were many riots and disturbances; none, indeed, of so seemingly rebellious a nature as that of Frost and his companions, but many serious enough to spread great alarm and to furnish fresh occasion for government prosecutions and imprisonments. Some of the prisoners seem to have been really treated with a positively wanton harshness and even cruelty. Thomas Cooper's account of his own sufferings in prison is painful to read. It is not easy to understand what good purpose any government could have supposed the prison authorities were serving by the unnecessary degradation and privation of men who, whatever their errors, were conspicuously and transparently sincere and honest.

It is clear that at that time the Chartists, who represented the bulk of the artisan class in most of the large towns, did in their very hearts believe that England was ruled for the benefit of aristocrats and millionaires who were absolutely indifferent to the sufferings of the poor. It is equally clear that most of what are called the ruling class did really believe the English workingmen who joined the Chartist movement to be a race of fierce unmanageable and selfish communists who, if they were allowed their own way for a moment, would prove themselves determined to overthrow throne, altar, and all established securities of society. An ignorant panic prevailed on both sides. England was indeed divided then, as Mr. Disraeli's novel described it, into two nations, the rich and the poor, in towns at least; and each hated and feared the other with all that unthinking hate and fear which hostile nations are capable of showing even amid all the influences of civilization.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### QUESTION DE JUPONS.

MEANWHILE things were looking ill with the Melbourne ministry. Sir Robert Peel was addressing great meetings of his followers, and declaring with much show of justice

that he had created anew the conservative party. The position of the Whigs would in any case have been difficult. Their mandate, to use the French phrase, seemed to be exhausted. They had no new thing to propose. They came into power as reformers, and now they had nothing to offer in the way of reform. It may be taken as a certainty that in English politics reaction must always follow advance. The Whigs must just then have come in for the effects of reaction. But they had more than that to contend with. In our own time, Mr. Gladstone had no sooner passed his great measures of reform than he began to experience the efforts of reaction. But there was a great difference between his situation and that of the Whigs under Melbourne. He had not failed to satisfy the demands of his followers. He had no extreme wing of his party clamoring against him on the ground that he had made use of their strength to help him in carrying out as much of his programme as suited his own *coterie*, and that he had then deserted them. This was the condition of the Whigs. The more advanced liberals and the whole body of the Chartists, and the working classes generally, detested and denounced them. Many of the Liberals had had some hope while Lord Durham still seemed likely to be a political power, but with the fading of his influence they lost all interest in the Whig ministry. On the other hand the support of O'Connell was a serious disadvantage to Melbourne and his party in England.

But the Whig ministers were always adding by some mistake or other to the difficulties of their position. The Jamaica Bill put them in great perplexity. This was a measure brought in on April 9, 1839, to make temporary provision for the government of the island of Jamaica, by setting aside the house of assembly for five years, and during that time empowering the governor and council with three salaried commissioners to manage the affairs of the colony. In other words, the Melbourne ministry proposed to suspend for five years the constitution of Jamaica. No body of persons can be more awkwardly placed than a Whig ministry proposing to set aside a constitutional government anywhere. Such a proposal may be a necessary measure; it may be unavoidable; but it always comes with a bad grace from Whigs or Liberals, and gives their enemies a handle against them which they cannot fail to use to

some purpose. What indeed, it may be plausibly asked, is the *raison d'être* of a liberal government if they have to return to the old Tory policy of suspended constitutions and absolute law? When Rabagas, become minister, tells his master that the only way to silence discontent is by the liberal use of the cannon, the Prince of Monaco remarks very naturally, that if that was to be the policy he might as well have kept to his old ministers and his absolutism. So it is with an English Liberal ministry advising the suspension of constitutions.

In the case of the Jamaica Bill there was some excuse for the harsh policy. After the abolition of slavery, the former masters in the island found it very hard to reconcile themselves to the new condition of things. They could not all at once understand that their former slaves were to be their equals before the law. As we have seen much more lately in the southern states of America after the civil war and the emancipation of the negroes, there was still a pertinacious attempt made by the planter class to regain in substance the power they had had to renounce in name. This was not to be justified or excused; but as human nature is made it was not unnatural. On the other hand, some of the Jamaica negroes were too ignorant to understand that they had acquired any rights; others were a little too clamorous in their assertion. Many a planter worked his men and whipped his women just as before the emancipation, and the victims did not understand that they had any right to complain. Many negroes, again, were ignorantly and thoughtlessly "bumptious," to use a vulgar expression, in the assertion of their newly-found equality. The imperial governors and officials were generally and justly eager to protect the negroes; and the result was a constant quarrel between the Jamaica house of assembly and the representatives of the home government. The assembly became more insolent and offensive every day. A bill, very necessary in itself, was passed by the imperial parliament for the better regulation of prisons in Jamaica, and the house of assembly refused to submit to any such legislation. Under these circumstances the Melbourne ministry proposed the suspension of the constitution of the island. The measure was opposed, not only by Peel and the Conservatives, but by many Radicals. It was argued that there were many courses open to the ministry short of the

highhanded proceeding they proposed; and in truth there was not that confidence in the Melbourne ministry at all which would have enabled them to obtain from parliament a majority sufficient to carry through such a policy. The ministry was weak and discredited; anybody might now throw a stone at it. They only had a majority of five in favor of their measure. This, of course, was a virtual defeat. The ministry acknowledged it and resigned. Their defeat was a humiliation; their resignation an inevitable submission; but they came back to office almost immediately under conditions that made the humiliation more humbling, and rendered their subsequent career more difficult by far than their past struggle for existence had been.

The return of the Whigs to office—for they cannot be said to have returned to power—came about in a very odd way. Gulliver ought to have had an opportunity of telling such a story to the king of the Brobdingnagians, in order the better to impress him with a clear idea of the logical beauty of constitutional government. It was an entirely new illustration of the old *cherchez la femme* principle, the *femme* in this case, however, being altogether a passive and innocent cause of trouble. The famous controversy known as the “bedchamber question” made a way back for the Whigs into place. When Lord Melbourne resigned, the queen sent for the Duke of Wellington, who advised her to apply to Sir Robert Peel, for the reason that the chief difficulties of a Conservative government would be in the House of Commons. The queen sent for Peel, and when he came, told him with a simple and girlish frankness that she was sorry to have to part with her late ministers, of whose conduct she entirely approved, but that she bowed to constitutional usage. This must have been rather an astonishing beginning to the grave and formal Peel; but he was not a man to think any worse of the candid young sovereign for her outspoken ways. The negotiations went on very smoothly as to the colleagues Peel meant to recommend to her majesty, until he happened to notice the composition of the royal household as regarded the ladies most closely in attendance on the queen. For example, he found that the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth were the two ladies in closest attendance on her majesty. Now it has to be borne in mind—it was proclaimed again and again during the negotiations—that the

chief difficulty of the conservatives would necessarily be in Ireland, where their policy would be altogether opposed to that of the Whigs. Lord Normanby had been lord lieutenant of Ireland under the Whigs, and Lord Morpeth, whom we can all remember as the amiable and accomplished Lord Carlisle of later time, Irish secretary. It certainly could not be satisfactory for Peel to try to work a new Irish policy while the closest household companions of the queen were the wife and sister of the displaced statesmen who directly represented the policy he had to supersede. Had this point of view been made clear to the sovereign at first, it is hardly possible that any serious difficulty could have arisen. The queen must have seen the obvious reasonableness of Peel's request; nor is it to be supposed that the two ladies in question could have desired to hold their places under such circumstances. But unluckily some misunderstanding took place at the very beginning of the conversations on this point. Peel only desired to press for the retirement of the ladies holding the higher offices; he did not intend to ask for any change affecting a place lower in official rank than that of lady of the bedchamber. But somehow or other he conveyed to the mind of the queen a different idea. She thought he meant to insist, as a matter of principle, upon the removal of all her familiar attendants and household associates. Under this impression she consulted Lord John Russell, who advised her on what he understood to be the state of the facts. On his advice the queen stated in reply that she could not "consent to a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage and is repugnant to her feelings." Sir Robert Peel held firm to his stipulation; and the chance of his then forming a ministry was at an end. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to be recalled; and at a cabinet meeting they adopted a minute declaring it reasonable "that the great offices of the court and situations in the household held by members of parliament should be included in the political arrangements made on a change in the administration; but they are not of opinion that a similar principle should be applied or extended to the offices held by ladies in her majesty's household."

The matter was naturally made the subject of explanation in both houses of parliament. Sir Robert Peel was undoubtedly right in his view of the question, and if he had been

clearly understood the right could hardly have been disputed; but he defended his position in language of what now seems rather ludicrous exaggeration. He treated this *question de jupons* as if it were of the last importance not alone to the honor of the ministry, but even to the safety of the realm. "I ask you," he said, "to go back to other times: take Pitt or Fox, or any other minister of this proud country, and answer for yourselves the question, is it fitting that one man shall be the minister, responsible for the most arduous charge that can fall to the lot of man, and that the wife of the other—that other his most formidable political enemy—shall, with his express consent, hold office in immediate attendance on the sovereign?" "Oh, no!" he exclaimed, in an outburst of indignant eloquence. "I felt that it was impossible; I could not consent to this. Feelings more powerful than reasoning told me that it was not for my own honor or for the public interests that I should consent to be minister of England." This high-flown language seems oddly out of place on the lips of a statesman who of all his contemporaries was the least apt to indulge in bursts of overwrought sentiment. Lord Melbourne, on the other hand, defended his action in the House of Lords in language of equal exaggeration. "I resume office," he said; "unequivocally and solely for this reason, that I will not desert my sovereign in a situation of difficulty and distress, especially when a demand is made upon her majesty with which I think she ought not to comply; a demand inconsistent with her personal honor, and which, if acquiesced in, would render her reign liable to all the changes and variations of political parties, and make her domestic life one constant scene of unhappiness and discomfort."

In the country the incident created great excitement. Some Liberals bluntly insisted that it was not right in such a matter to consult the feelings of the sovereign at all, and that the advice of the minister, and his idea of what was for the good of the country, ought alone to be considered. On the other hand, O'Connell burst into impassioned language of praise and delight, as he dwelt upon the decision of the queen, and called upon the powers above to bless "the young creature—that creature of only nineteen, as pure as she is exalted," who consulted not her head but "the overflowing feelings of her young heart."

“Those excellent women who had been so long attached to her, who had nursed and tended to her wants in her childhood, who had watched over her in her sickness, whose eyes beamed with delight as they saw her increasing daily in beauty and in loveliness—when they were threatened to be forced away from her—her heart told her that she could as well part with that heart itself as with those whom it held so dear.” Feargus O’Connor went a good deal further, however, when he boldly declared that he had excellent authority for the statement, that if the Tories had got the young queen into their hands by the agency of the new ladies of the bedchamber, they had a plan for putting her out of the way and placing “the bloody Cumberland” on the throne in her stead. In O’Connell’s case, no mystery was made of the fact that he believed the ladies actually surrounding the young queen to be friendly to what he considered the cause of Ireland; and that he was satisfied that Peel and the Tories were against it. For the wild talk represented by the words of Feargus O’Connor, it is only necessary to say that, frenzied and foolish as it must seem now to us, and as it must even then have seemed to all rational beings, it had the firm acceptance of large masses of people throughout the country, who persisted in seeing in Peel’s pleadings for the change of the bedchamber women the positive evidence of an unscrupulous Tory plot to get possession of the queen’s person, not indeed for the purpose of violently altering the succession, but in the hope of poisoning her mind against all Liberal opinions. ←

Lord Brougham was not likely to lose so good an opportunity of attacking Lord Melbourne and his colleagues. He insisted that Lord Melbourne had sacrificed Liberal ← principles and the interests of the country to the private feelings of the sovereign. “I thought,” he declared in a burst of eloquent passion, “that we belonged to a country in which the government by the crown and the wisdom of parliament was everything, and the personal feelings of the sovereign were absolutely not to be named at the same time. . . . I little thought to have lived to hear it said by the Whigs of 1839, ‘Let us rally round the queen; never mind the House of Commons; never mind measures; throw principles to the dogs; leave pledges unredeemed; but for God’s sake rally round the throne.’ Little did I think the day would come when I should hear such

language, not from the unconstitutional, place-hunting, king-loving Tories, who thought the public was made for the king, not the king for the public; but from the Whigs themselves! The Jamaica Bill, said to be a most important measure, had been brought forward. The government staked their existence upon it. They were not able to carry it; they therefore conceived they had lost the confidence of the House of Commons. They thought it a measure of paramount necessity then. Is it less necessary now? Oh, but that is altered! The Jamaica question is to be new fashioned; principles are to be given up, and all because of two ladies of the bedchamber."

Nothing could be more undesirable than the position in which Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had allowed the sovereign to place herself. The more people in general came to think over the matter, the more clearly it was seen that Peel was in the right, although he had not made himself understood at first, and had, perhaps, not shown all through enough of consideration for the novelty of the young sovereign's position, or for the difficulty of finding a conclusive precedent on such a question, seeing that since the principle of ministerial responsibility had come to be recognized among us in its genuine sense, there never before had been a woman on the throne. But no one could deliberately maintain the position at first taken up by the Whigs; and in point of fact they were soon glad to drop it as quickly and quietly as possible. The whole question, it may be said at once, was afterward settled by a sensible compromise which the prince consort suggested. It was agreed that on a change of ministry the queen would listen to any representation from the incoming prime minister as to the composition of her household, and would arrange for the retirement "of their own accord" of any ladies who were so closely related to the leaders of opposition as to render their presence inconvenient. The Whigs came back to office utterly discredited. They had to tinker up somehow a new Jamaica Bill. They had declared that they could not remain in office unless they were allowed to deal in a certain way with Jamaica; and now that they were back again in office, they could not avoid trying to do something with the Jamaica business. They therefore introduced a new bill which was a mere compromise put together in the hope of its being allowed to pass. It was



allowed to pass, after a fashion; that is, when the opposition in the House of Lords had tinkered it and amended it at their pleasure. The bedchamber question in fact had thrown Jamaica out of perspective. The unfortunate island must do the best it could now; in this country statesmen had graver matter to think of. Sir Robert Peel could not govern with Lady Normanby; the Whigs would not govern without her.

It does not seem by any means clear, however, that Lord Melbourne and his colleagues deserved the savage censure of Lord Brougham merely for having returned to office and given up their original position with regard to the Jamaica Bill. What else remained to be done? If they had refused to come back, the only result would have been that Peel must have become prime minister, with a distinct minority in the House of Commons. Peel could not have held his ground there, except by the favor and mercy of his opponents; and those were not merciful days in politics. He would only have taken office to be called upon at once to resign it by some adverse vote of the House of Commons. The state of things seems in this respect to be not unlike that which existed when Mr. Gladstone was defeated on the Irish University Bill in 1873. Mr. Gladstone resigned; or rather tendered his resignation; and by his advice her majesty invited Mr. Disraeli to form a cabinet. Mr. Disraeli did not see his way to undertake the government of the country with the existing House of Commons; and as the conditions under which he was willing to undertake the duty were not conveniently attainable, the negotiation came to an end. The queen sent again for Mr. Gladstone, who consented to resume his place as prime minister. If Lord Melbourne returned to office with the knowledge that he could not carry the Jamaica Bill which he had declared to be necessary, Mr. Gladstone resumed his place at the head of his ministry without the remotest hope of being able to carry his Irish University measure. No one ever found fault with Mr. Gladstone for having, under the circumstances, done the best he could and consented to meet the request of the sovereign and the convenience of the public service by again taking on himself the responsibility of government, although the measure on which he had declared he would stake the existence of his ministry had been rejected by the House of Commons.

Still it cannot be denied that the Melbourne government were prejudiced in the public mind by these events, and by the attacks for which they gave so large an opportunity. The feeling in some parts of the country was still sentimentally with the queen. At many a dinner table it became the fashion to drink the health of her majesty with a punning addition, not belonging to an order of wit any higher than that which in other days toasted the king "over the water;" or prayed of heaven to "send this crumb well down." The queen was toasted as the sovereign of spirit who "would not let her belles be peeled." But the ministry were almost universally believed to have placed themselves in a ridiculous light, and to have crept again into office, as Mr. Molesworth puts it in his valuable "History of England from 1830 to 1874," "behind the petticoats of the ladies in waiting." The death of Lady Flora Hastings, which occurred almost immediately, tended further to arouse a feeling of dislike to the Whigs. This melancholy event does not need any lengthened comment. A young lady who belonged to the household of the Duchess of Kent fell under an unfounded, but in the circumstances not wholly unreasonable suspicion. It was the classic story of Calisto, Diana's unhappy nymph, reversed. Lady Flora was proved to be innocent; but her death, imminent probably in any case from the disease which had fastened on her, was doubtless hastened by the humiliation to which she had been subjected. It does not seem that anyone was to blame in the matter. The ministry certainly do not appear to have done anything for which they could fairly be reproached. No one can be surprised that those who surrounded the queen and the Duchess of Kent should have taken some pains to inquire into the truth or falsehood of scandalous rumors, for which there might have appeared to be some obvious justification. But the whole story was so sad and shocking; the death of the poor young lady followed with such tragic rapidity upon the establishment of her innocence; the natural complaints of her mother were so loud and impassioned, that the ministers who had to answer the mother's appeals were unavoidably placed in an invidious and a painful position. The demands of the Marchioness of Hastings for redress were unreasonable. They endeavored to make out the existence of a cruel conspiracy against Lady Flora, and called for the peremptory

dismissal and disgrace of the eminent court physician, who had merely performed a most painful duty, and whose report had been the especial means of establishing the injustice of the suspicions which were directed against her. But it was a damaging duty for a minister to have to write to the distracted mother, as Lord Melbourne found it necessary to do, telling her that her demand was "so unprecedented and objectionable, that even the respect due to your ladyship's sex, rank, family and character would not justify me in more, if indeed it authorizes so much, than acknowledging that letter for the sole purpose of acquainting your ladyship that I have received it." The "palace scandal," as it was called, became known shortly before the dispute about the ladies of the bedchamber. The death of Lady Flora Hastings happened soon after it. It is not strictly in logical propriety that such events, or their rapid succession, should tend to bring into disrepute the ministry who can only be regarded as their historical contemporaries. But the world must change a great deal before ministers are no longer held accountable in public opinion for anything but the events over which they can be shown to have some control.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE QUEEN'S MARRIAGE.

ON January 16, 1840, the queen, opening parliament in person, announced her intention to marry her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha—a step which she trusted would be "conducive to the interests of my people as well as to my own domestic happiness." In the discussion which followed in the House of Commons, Sir Robert Peel observed that her majesty had "the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings, while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection." Peel spoke the simple truth; it was indeed a marriage founded on affection. No marriage contracted in the humblest class could have been more entirely a union of love, and more free from what might be called selfish and worldly considerations. The queen had for a long time loved

her cousin. He was nearly her own age, the queen being the elder by three months and two or three days. Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel was the full name of the young prince. He was the second son of Ernest, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and of his wife Louisa, daughter of Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. Prince Albert was born at the Rosenau, one of his father's residences, near Coburg, on August 26, 1819. The court historian notices with pardonable complacency the "remarkable coincidence"—easily explained, surely—that the same *accoucheuse*, Madame Siebold, assisted at the birth of Prince Albert, and of the queen some three months before, and that the prince was baptized by the clergyman, Professor Genzler, who had the year before officiated at the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Kent. A marriage between the Princess Victoria and Prince Albert had been thought of as desirable among the families on both sides, but it was always wisely resolved that nothing should be said to the young princess on the subject unless she herself showed a distinct liking for her cousin. In 1836, Prince Albert was brought by his father to England, and made the personal acquaintance of the princess, and she seems at once to have been drawn toward him in the manner which her family and friends would most have desired. Three years later the prince again came to England, and the queen, in a letter to her uncle, the King of the Belgians, wrote of him in the warmest terms. "Albert's beauty," she said, "is most striking, and he is most amiable and unaffected—in short, very fascinating." Not many days after she wrote to another friend and faithful counsellor, the Baron Stockmar, to say, "I do feel so guilty, I know not how to begin my letter; but I think the news it will contain will be sufficient to ensure your forgiveness. Albert has completely won my heart, and all was settled between us this morning." The queen had just before informed Lord Melbourne of her intention, and Lord Melbourne, it is needless to say, expressed his decided approval. There was no one to disapprove of such a marriage.

Prince Albert was a young man to win the heart of any girl. He was singularly handsome, graceful and gifted. In princes, as we know, a small measure of beauty and accomplishment suffices to throw courtiers and court ladies into transports of admiration; but had Prince Albert been

the son of a farmer or a butler, he must have been admired for his singular personal attractions. He had had a sound and a varied education. He had been brought up as if he were to be a professional musician, a professional chemist or botanist, and a professor of history and *belles lettres* and fine arts. The scientific and the literary were remarkably blended in his bringing-up; remarkably, that is to say, for some half-century ago, when even in Germany a system of education seldom aimed at being *totus teres atque rotundus*. He had begun to study the constitutional history of states, and was preparing himself to take an interest in politics. There was much of the practical and business-like about him, as he showed in after-life; he loved farming and took a deep interest in machinery and in the growth of industrial science. He was a sort of combination of the troubadour, the *savant*, and the man of business. His tastes were for a quiet, domestic and unostentatious life—a life of refined culture, of happy calm evenings, of art and poetry and genial communion with nature. He was made happy by the songs of birds, and delighted in sitting alone and playing the organ. But there was in him too a great deal of the political philosopher. He loved to hear political and other questions well argued out, and once observed that a false argument jarred on his nerves as much as a false note in music. He seems to have had from his youth an all-pervading sense of duty. So far as we can guess, he was almost absolutely free from the ordinary follies, not to say sins, of youth. Young as he was when he married the queen, he devoted himself at once to what he conscientiously believed to be the duties of his station with a self-control and self-devotion rare even among the aged, and almost unknown in youth. He gave up every habit, however familiar and dear, every predilection no matter how sweet, every indulgence of sentiment or amusement, that in any way threatened to interfere with the steadfast performance of the part he had assigned to himself. No man ever devoted himself more faithfully to the difficult duties of a high and a new situation, or kept more strictly to his resolve. It was no task to him to be a tender husband and a loving father. This was a part of his sweet, pure and affectionate nature. It may well be doubted whether any other queen ever had a married life so happy as that of Queen Victoria.

The marriage of the queen and the prince took place on

February 10, 1840. The reception given by the people in general to the prince on his landing in England a few days before the ceremony, and on the day of the marriage, was cordial and even enthusiastic. But it is not certain whether there was a very cordial feeling to the prince among all classes of politicians. A rumor of the most absurd kind had got abroad in certain circles that the young Albert was not a Protestant—that he was in fact a member of the Church of Rome. In a different circle the belief was curiously cherished that the prince was a free-thinker in matters of religion and a radical in politics. Somewhat unfortunately, the declaration of the intended marriage to the privy council did not mention the fact that Albert was a Protestant prince. The cabinet no doubt thought that the leaders of public opinion on all sides of politics would have had historical knowledge among them to teach them that Prince Albert belonged to that branch of the Saxon family which since the Reformation had been conspicuously Protestant. "There has not," Prince Albert himself wrote to the queen on December 7, 1839, "been a single Catholic princess introduced into the Coburg family since the appearance of Luther in 1521. Moreover the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony was the very first Protestant that ever lived." No doubt the ministry thought also that the constitutional rule which forbids an English sovereign to marry with a Roman Catholic under penalty of forfeiting the crown, would be regarded as a sufficient guarantee that when they announced the queen's approaching marriage it must be a marriage with a Protestant. All this assumption, however reasonable and natural, did not find warrant in the events that actually took place. It would have been better of course if the government had assumed that parliament and the public generally knew nothing about the prince and his ancestry, or the constitutional penalties for a member of the royal family marrying a Catholic, and had formally announced that the choice of Queen Victoria had happily fallen on a Protestant. The wise and farseeing Leopold, King of the Belgians, had recommended that the fact should be specifically mentioned; but it was perhaps a part of Lord Melbourne's indolent good nature to take it for granted that people generally would be calm and reasonable, and that all would go right without interruption or cavil. He therefore acted on the assumption that any

ormal mention of Prince Albert's Protestantism would be superfluous; and neither in the declaration to the privy council, nor in the announcement to parliament, was a word said upon the subject. The result was that in the debate on the address in the House of Lords a somewhat unseemly altercation took place, an altercation the more to be regretted because it might have been so easily spared. The question was bluntly raised by no less a person than the Duke of Wellington whether the future husband of the queen was or was not a Protestant. The Duke actually charged the ministry with having purposely left out the word "Protestant" in the announcements in order that they might not offend their Irish and Catholic supporters, and by the very charge did much to strengthen the popular feeling against the statesmen who were supposed to be kept in office by virtue of the patronage of O'Connell. The duke moved that the word "Protestant" be inserted in the congratulatory address to the queen, and he carried his point, although Lord Melbourne held to the opinion that the word was unnecessary in describing a prince who was not only a Protestant but descended from the most Protestant family in Europe. The lack of judgment and tact on the part of the ministry was never more clearly shown than in the original omission of the word.

Another disagreeable occurrence was the discussion that took place when the bill for the naturalization of the prince was brought before the House of Lords. The bill in its title merely set out the proposal to provide for the naturalization of the prince; but it contained a clause to give him precedence for life "next after her majesty, in parliament or elsewhere, as her majesty might think proper." A great deal of objection was raised by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Brougham to this clause on its own merits; but, as was natural, the objections were infinitely aggravated by the singular want of judgment, and even of common propriety, which could introduce a clause conferring on the sovereign powers so large and so new into a mere naturalization bill, without any previous notice to parliament. The matter was ultimately settled by allowing the bill to remain a simple naturalization measure, and leaving the question of precedence to be dealt with by royal prerogative. Both the great political parties concurred without further difficulty in an arrangement by which it was provided in letters

patent that the prince should henceforth upon all occasions, and in all meetings, except when otherwise provided by act of parliament, have precedence next to the queen. There never would have been any difficulty in the matter if the ministry had acted with any discretion; but it would be absurd to expect that a great nation, whose constitutional system is built up of precedents, should agree at once and without demur to every new arrangement which it might seem convenient to a ministry to make in a hurry. Yet another source of dissatisfaction to the palace and the people was created by the manner in which the ministry took upon themselves to bring forward the proposition for the settlement of an annuity on the prince. In former cases—that for example, of Queen Charlotte, Queen Adelaide, and Prince Leopold on his marriage with the Princess Charlotte—the annuity granted had been £50,000. It so happened, however, that the settlement to be made on Prince Albert came in times of great industrial and commercial distress. The days had gone by when economy in the House of Commons was looked upon as an ignoble principle, and when loyalty to the sovereign was believed to bind members of parliament to grant without a murmur of discussion any sums that might be asked by the ministry in the sovereign's name. Parliament was beginning to feel more thoroughly its responsibility as the guardian of the nation's resources, and it was no longer thought a fine thing to give away the money of the tax-payer with magnanimous indifference. It was therefore absurd on the part of the ministry to suppose that because great sums of money had been voted without question on former occasions, they would be voted without question now. It is quite possible that the whole matter might have been settled without controversy if the ministry had shown any judgment whatever in their conduct of the business. In our day the ministry would at once have consulted the leaders of the opposition. In all matters where the grant of money to anyone connected with the sovereign is concerned, it is now understood that the gift shall come with the full concurrence of both parties in parliament. The leader of the House of Commons would probably, by arrangement, propose the grant, and the leader of the opposition would second it. In the case of the annuity to Prince Albert, the ministry had the almost incredible folly to bring for-



ward their proposal without having invited in any way the concurrence of the opposition. They introduced the proposal without discretion; they conducted the discussion on it without temper. They answered the most reasonable objections with imputations of want of loyalty; and they gave some excuse for the suspicion that they wished to provoke the opposition into some expression that might make them odious to the queen and the prince. Mr. Hume, the economist, proposed that the annuity be reduced from £50,000 to £21,000. This was negatived. Thereupon Colonel Sibthorp, a once famous Tory fanatic of the most eccentric manners and opinions, proposed that the sum be £30,000 and he received the support of Sir Robert Peel and other eminent members of the opposition; and the amendment was carried.

These were not auspicious incidents to prelude the royal marriage. There can be no doubt that for a time the queen, still more than the prince, felt their influence keenly. The prince showed remarkable good sense and appreciation of the condition of political arrangements in England, and readily comprehended that there was nothing personal to himself in any objections which the House of Commons might have made to the proposals of the ministry. The question of precedence was very easily settled when it came to be discussed in reasonable fashion; although it was not until many years after, 1857, that the title of Prince Consort was given to the husband of the queen.

A few months after the marriage, a bill was passed providing for a regency in the possible event of the death of the queen, leaving issue. With the entire concurrence of the leaders of the opposition, who were consulted this time, Prince Albert was named regent, following the precedent which had been adopted in the instance of the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold. The Duke of Sussex, uncle of the queen, alone dissented in the House of Lords, and recorded his protest against the proposal. The passing of this bill was naturally regarded as of much importance to Prince Albert. It gave him to some extent the status in the country which he had not had before. It also proved that the prince himself had risen in the estimation of the Tory party during the few months that elapsed since the debates on the annuity and the question of precedence.

No one could have started with a more resolute deter-

mination to stand clear of party politics than Prince Albert. He accepted at once his position as the husband of the queen of a constitutional country. His own idea of his duty was that he should be the private secretary and unofficial counsellor of the queen. To this purpose he devoted himself unswervingly. Outside that part of his duties, he constituted himself a sort of minister, without portfolio, of art and education. He took an interest, and often a leading part, in all projects and movements relating to the spread of education, the culture of art, and the promotion of industrial science. Yet it was long before he was thoroughly understood by the country. It was long before he became in any degree popular; and it may be doubted whether he ever was thoroughly and generally popular. Not perhaps until his untimely death did the country find out how entirely disinterested and faithful his life had been, and how he had made the discharge of duty his business and his task. His character was one which is liable to be regarded by ordinary observers as possessing none but negative virtues. He was thought to be cold, formal, and apathetic. His manners were somewhat shy and constrained, except when he was in the company of those he loved, and then he commonly relaxed into a kind of boyish freedom and joyousness. But to the public in general he seemed formal and chilling. It is not only Mr. Pendennis who conceals his gentleness under a shy and pompos demeanor. With all his ability, his anxiety to learn, his capacity for patient study, and his willingness to welcome new ideas, he never perhaps quite understood the genius of the English political system. His faithful friend and counsellor, Baron Stockmar, was not the man best calculated to set him right on this subject. Both were far too eager to find in the English Constitution a piece of symmetrical mechanism, or to treat it as a written code from which one might take extracts or construct summaries for constant reference and guidance. But this was not in the beginning the cause of any coldness toward the prince on the part of the English public. Prince Albert had not the ways of an Englishman, and the tendency of Englishmen, then as now, was to assume that to have manners other than those of an Englishman was to be so far unworthy of confidence. He was not made to shine in commonplace society. He could talk admirably about something,

but he had not the gift of talking about nothing, and probably would not have cared much to cultivate such a faculty. He was fond of suggesting small innovations and improvements in established systems, to the annoyance of men with set ideas, who liked their own ways best. Thus it happened that he remained for many years, if not exactly unappreciated, yet not thoroughly appreciated, and that a considerable and very influential section of society was always ready to cavil at what he said, and find motive for suspicion in most things that he did. Perhaps he was best understood and most cordially appreciated among the poorer classes of his wife's subjects. He found also more cordial approval generally among the Radicals than among the Tories, or even the Whigs.

One reform which Prince Albert worked earnestly to bring about, was the abolition of dueling in the army, and the substitution of some system of courts of honorable arbitration to supersede the barbaric recourse to the decision of weapons. He did not succeed in having his courts of honor established. There was something too fanciful in the scheme to attract the authorities of our two services; and there were undoubtedly many practical difficulties in the way of making such a system effective. But he succeeded so far, that he induced the Duke of Wellington and the heads of the services to turn their attention very seriously to the subject, and to use all the influence in their power for the purpose of discouraging and discrediting the odious practice of the duel. It is carrying courtly politeness too far to attribute the total disappearance of the dueling system, as one biographer seems inclined to do, to the personal efforts of Prince Albert. It is enough to his honor that he did his best, and that the best was a substantial contribution toward so great an object. But nothing can testify more strikingly to the rapid growth of a genuine civilization in Queen Victoria's reign than the utter discontinuance of the dueling system. When the queen came to the throne, and for years after, it was still in full force. The duel plays a conspicuous part in the fiction and the drama of the sovereign's earlier years. It was a common incident of all political controversies. It was an episode of most contested elections. It was often resorted to for the purpose of deciding the right or wrong of a half-drunken quarrel over a card table. It formed as common a theme of gossip

as an elopement or a bankruptcy. Most of the eminent statesmen who were prominent in the earlier part of the queen's reign had fought duels. Peel and O'Connell had made arrangements for a "meeting." Mr. Disraeli had challenged O'Connell or any of the sons of O'Connell. The great agitator himself had killed his man in a duel. Mr. Roebuck had gone out; Mr. Cobden at a much later period had been visited with a challenge, and had had the good sense and the moral courage to laugh at it. At the present hour a duel in England would seem as absurd and barbarous an anachronism as an ordeal by touch or a witch-burning. Many years have passed since a duel was last talked of in parliament; and then it was only the subject of a reprobation that had some work to do to keep its countenance while administering the proper rebuke. But it was not the influence of any one man, or even any class of men, that brought about in so short a time this striking change in the tone of public feeling and morality. The change was part of the growth of education and of civilization; of the strengthening and broadening influence of the press, the platform, the cheap book, the pulpit, and the less restricted intercourse of classes.

This is perhaps as suitable a place as any other to introduce some notice of the attempts that were made from time to time upon the life of the queen. It is proper to say something of them, although not one possessed the slightest political importance, or could be said to illustrate anything more than sheer lunacy, or that morbid vanity and thirst for notoriety that is nearly akin to genuine madness. The first attempt was made on June 10, 1840, by Edward Oxford, a potboy of seventeen, who fired two shots at the queen as she was driving up Constitution Hill with Prince Albert. Oxford fired both shots deliberately enough, but happily missed in each case. He proved to have been an absurd creature, half crazy with a longing to consider himself a political prisoner and to be talked of. When he was tried, the jury pronounced him insane, and he was ordered to be kept in a lunatic asylum during her majesty's pleasure. The trial completely dissipated some wild alarms that were felt, founded chiefly on absurd papers in Oxford's possession, about a tremendous secret society called "Young England," having among its other objects the assassination of royal personages. It is a not uninteresting illustration

of the condition of public feeling, that some of the Irish Catholic papers in seeming good faith denounced Oxford as an agent of the Duke of Cumberland and the Orangemen, and declared that the object was to assassinate the queen and put the duke on the throne. The trial showed that Oxford was the agent of nobody, and was impelled by nothing but his own crack-brained love of notoriety. The finding of the jury was evidently something of a compromise, for it is very doubtful whether the boy was insane in the medical sense, and whether he was fairly to be held irresponsible for his actions. But it was felt perhaps that the wisest course was to treat him as a madman; and the result did not prove unsatisfactory. Mr. Theodore Martin, in his "Life of the Prince Consort," expresses a different opinion. He thinks it would have been well if Oxford had been dealt with as guilty in the ordinary way. "The best commentary," he says, "on the lenity thus shown was pronounced by Oxford himself, on being told of the similar attempts of Francis and Bean in 1842, when he declared that if he had been hanged there would have been no more shooting at the queen." It may be reasonably doubted whether the authority of Oxford as to the general influence of criminal legislation is very valuable. Against the philosophic opinion of the half-crazy young potboy on which Mr. Martin places so much reliance, may be set the fact, that in other countries where attempts on the life of the sovereign have been punished by the stern award of death, it has not been found that the execution of one fanatic was a safe protection against the murderous fanaticism of another.

On May 30, 1842, a man named John Francis, son of a machinist in Drury Lane, fired a pistol at the queen as she was driving down Constitution Hill, on the very spot where Oxford's attempt was made. This was a somewhat serious attempt, for Francis was not more than a few feet from the carriage, which fortunately was driving at a very rapid rate. The queen showed great composure. She was in some measure prepared for the attempt, for it seems certain that the same man had on the previous evening presented a pistol at the royal carriage, although he did not then fire it. Francis was arrested and put on trial. He was only twenty-two years of age, and although at first he endeavored to brazen it out and put on a sort of melodramatic regicide aspect, yet when the sentence of death for

high treason was passed on him he fell into a swoon and was carried insensible from the court. The sentence was not carried into effect. It was not certain whether the pistol was loaded at all, and whether the whole performance was not a mere piece of brutal play-acting done out of a longing to be notorious. Her majesty herself was anxious that the death sentence should not be carried into effect, and it was finally commuted to one of transportation for life. The very day after this mitigation of punishment became publicly known another attempt was made by a hunchbacked lad named Bean. As the queen was passing from Buckingham Palace to the Chapel Royal, Bean presented a pistol at her carriage, but did not succeed in firing it before his hand was seized by a prompt and courageous boy who was standing near. The pistol was found to be loaded with powder, paper closely rammed down, and some scraps of a clay pipe. It may be asked whether the argument of Mr. Martin is not fully borne out by this occurrence, and whether the fact of Bean's attempt having been made on the day after the commutation of the capital sentence in the case of Francis is not evidence that the leniency in the former instance was the cause of the attempt made in the latter. But it was made clear, and the fact is recorded on the authority of Prince Albert himself, that Bean had announced his determination to make the attempt several days before the sentence of Francis was commuted, and while Francis was actually lying under sentence of death. With regard to Francis himself, the prince was clearly of opinion that to carry out the capital sentence would have been nothing less than a judicial murder, as it is essential that the act should be committed with intent to kill or wound, and in Francis' case to all appearance this was not the fact, or at least it was open to grave doubt. In this calm and wise way did the husband of the queen, who had always shared with her whatever of danger there might be in the attempts, argue as to the manner in which they ought to be dealt with. The ambition which fired most or all of the miscreants who thus disturbed the queen and the country was that of the mountebank rather than of the assassin. The queen herself showed how thoroughly she understood the significance of all that had happened, when she declared, according to Mr. Martin, that she expected a repetition of the attempts on her life so long as the law remained unal-

tered by which they could be dealt with only as acts of high treason. The seeming dignity of martyrdom had something fascinating in it to morbid vanity or crazy fanaticism, while on the other hand it was almost certain that the martyr's penalty would not in the end be inflicted. A very appropriate change in the law was effected by which a punishment at once sharp and degrading was provided even for mere mountebank attempts against the queen; a punishment which was certain to be inflicted. A bill was introduced by Sir Robert Peel making such attempts punishable by transportation for seven years, or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, "the culprit to be publicly or privately whipped as often and in such manner as the court shall direct, not exceeding thrice." Bean was convicted under this act and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Millbank Penitentiary. This did not, however, conclude the attacks on the queen. An Irish bricklayer, named Hamilton, fired a pistol, charged only with powder, at her majesty, on Constitution Hill, on May 19, 1849, and was sentenced to seven years' transportation. A man named Robert Pate, once a lieutenant of Hussars, struck her majesty on the face with a stick as she was leaving the Duke of Cambridge's residence in her carriage on May 27, 1850. This man was sentenced to seven years' transportation, but the judge paid so much attention to the plea of insanity set up on his behalf, as to omit from his punishment the whipping which might have been ordered. Finally, on February 29, 1872, a lad of seventeen, named Arthur O'Connor, presented a pistol at the queen as she was entering Buckingham Palace after a drive. The pistol, however, proved to be unloaded—an antique and useless or harmless weapon, with a flint lock which was broken, and in the barrel a piece of greasy red rag. The wretched lad held a paper in one hand which was found to be some sort of petition on behalf of the Fenian prisoners. When he came up for trial a plea of insanity was put in on his behalf, but he did not seem to be insane in the sense of being irresponsible for his actions or incapable of understanding the penalty they involved, and he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a whipping. We have hurried over many years for the purpose of completing this painful and ludicrous catalogue of the attempts made against the queen. It will be seen that

in not a single instance was there the slightest political significance to be attached to them. Even in our own softened and civilized time it sometimes happens that an attempt is made on the life of a sovereign which, however we may condemn and reprobate it on moral grounds, yet does seem to bear a distinct political meaning, and to show that there are fanatical minds still burning under some sense of national or personal wrong. But in the various attacks which were made on Queen Victoria nothing of the kind was even pretended. There was no opportunity for any vamping about Brutus and Charlotte Corday. The impulse, where it was not that of sheer insanity, was of kin to the vulgar love of notoriety in certain minds which sets on those whom it pervades to mutilate noble works of art and scrawl their autographs on the marble of immortal monuments. There was a great deal of wisdom shown in not dealing too severely with most of these offenses and in not treating them too much *au sérieux*. Prince Albert himself said that "the vindictive feeling of the common people would be a thousand times more dangerous than the madness of individuals." There was not indeed the slightest danger at any time that the "common people" of England could be wrought up to any sympathy with assassination; nor was this what Prince Albert meant. But the queen and her husband were yet new to power, and the people had not quite lost all memory of sovereigns who, well-meaning enough, had yet scarcely understood constitutional government, and there were wild rumors of reaction this way and revolution that way. It might have fomented a feeling of distrust and dissatisfaction if the people had seen any disposition on the part of those in authority to strain the criminal law for the sake of enforcing a death penalty against creatures like Oxford and Bean. The most alarming and unnerving of all dangers to a ruler is that of assassination. Even the best and most blameless sovereign is not wholly secure against it. The hand of Oxford might have killed the queen. Perhaps, however, the best protection a sovereign can have is not to exaggerate the danger. There is no safety in mere severity of punishment. Where the attempt is serious and desperate, it is that of a fanaticism which holds its life in its hand, and is not to be deterred by fear of death. The tortures of Ravallac did not deter <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ Damiens. The birch in the case of Bean and



O'Connor may effectively discountenance enterprises which are born of the mountebank's and not the fanatic's spirit.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE OPIUM WAR.

THE opium dispute with China was going on when the queen came to the throne. The Opium War broke out soon after. On March 3, 1843, five huge wagons, each of them drawn by four horses, and the whole under escort of a detachment of the Sixtieth Regiment, arrived in front of the Mint. An immense crowd followed the wagons. It was seen that they were filled with boxes; and one of the boxes having been somewhat broken in its journey, the crowd were able to see that it was crammed full of odd-looking silver coins. The lookers-on were delighted, as well as amused, by the sight of this huge consignment of treasure; and when it became known that the silver money was the first instalment of the China ransom, there were lusty cheers given as the wagons passed through the gates of the Mint. This was a payment on account of the war indemnity imposed on China. Nearly four millions and a half sterling was the sum of the indemnity, in addition to one million and a quarter which had already been paid by the Chinese authorities. Many readers may remember that for some time "China money" was regularly set down as an item in the revenues of each year with which the chancellor of the exchequer had to deal. The China War, of which this money was the spoil, was not perhaps an event of which the nation was entitled to be very proud. It was the precursor of other wars; the policy on which it was conducted has never since ceased altogether to be a question of more or less excited controversy; but it may safely be asserted that if the same events were to occur in our day it would be hardly possible to find a ministry to originate a war, for which at the same time it must be owned that the vast majority of the people, of all politics and classes, were only too ready then to find excuse and even justification. The wagon-loads of silver conveyed into the Mint amid the cheers of the crowd were the spoils of the famous Opium War.

Reduced to plain words, the principle for which we fought in the China War was the right of Great Britain to force a peculiar trade upon a foreign people in spite of the protestations of the government and all such public opinion as there was of the nation. Of course this was not the avowed motive of the war. Not often in history is the real and inspiring motive of a war proclaimed in so many words by those who carry it on. Not often, indeed, is it seen, naked and avowed, even in the minds of its promoters themselves. As the quarrel between this country and China went on, a great many minor and incidental subjects of dispute arose which for the moment put the one main and original question out of people's minds; and in the course of these discussions it happened more than once that the Chinese authorities took some steps which put them decidedly in the wrong. Thus it is true enough that there were particular passages of the controversy when the English government had all or nearly all of the right on their side so far as the immediate incident of the dispute was concerned; and when, if that had been the whole matter of quarrel, or if the quarrel had begun there, a patriotic minister might have been justified in thinking that the Chinese were determined to offend England, and deserved humiliation. But no consideration of this kind can now hide from our eyes the fact that in the beginning and the very origin of the quarrel we were distinctly in the wrong. We asserted, or at least acted on the assertion of, a claim so unreasonable and even monstrous that it never could have been made upon any nation strong enough to render its assertion a matter of serious responsibility. The most important lessons a nation can learn from its own history are found in the exposure of its own errors. Historians have sometimes done more evil than court flatterers when they have gone about to glorify the errors of their own people, and to make wrong appear right, because an English government talked the public opinion of the time into a confusion of principles.

The whole principle of Chinese civilization, at the time when the Opium War broke out, was based on conditions which to any modern nation must seem erroneous and unreasonable. The Chinese governments and people desired to have no political relations or dealings whatever with any other state. They were not so obstinately set against pri-

vate and commercial dealings; but they would have no political intercourse with foreigners, and they would not even recognize the existence of foreign peoples as states. They were perfectly satisfied with themselves and their own systems. They were convinced that their own systems were not only wise but absolutely perfect. It is superfluous to say that this was in itself evidence of ignorance and self-conceit. A belief in the perfection of their own systems could only exist among a people who knew nothing of any other systems. But absurd as the idea must appear to us, yet the Chinese might have found a good deal to say for it. It was the result of a civilization so ancient that the oldest events preserved in European history were but as yesterday in the comparison. Whatever its errors and defects, it was distinctly a civilization. It was a system with a literature and laws and institutions of its own; it was a coherent and harmonious social and political system which had on the whole worked tolerably well. It was not very unlike in its principles the kind of civilization which at one time it was the whim of men of genius, like Rousseau and Diderot, to idealize and admire. The European, of whatever nation, may be said to like change, and to believe in its necessity. His instincts and his convictions alike tend this way. The sleepest of Europeans—the Neapolitan who lies with his feet in the water on the Chiaja; the Spaniard, who smokes his cigar and sips his coffee as if life had no active business whatever; the *flâneur* of the Paris boulevards; the beggar who lounged from cabin to cabin in Ireland a generation ago—all these, no matter how little inclined for change themselves, would be delighted to hear of travel and enterprise, and of new things and new discoveries. But to the Chinese, of all eastern races, the very idea of travel and change was something repulsive and odious. As the thought of having to go a day unwashed would be to the educated Englishman of our age, or as the edge of a precipice is to a nervous man, so was the idea of innovation to the Chinese of that time. The ordinary Oriental dreads and detests change; but the Chinese at that time went as far beyond the ordinary Oriental as the latter goes beyond an average Englishman. In the present day a considerable alteration has taken place in this respect. The Chinese have had innovation after innovation forced on them, until at last they have taken up with the new order of things,

like people who feel that it is idle to resist their fate any longer. The emigration from China has been as remarkable as that from Ireland or Germany; and the United States finds itself confronted with a question of the first magnitude when it asks itself what is to be the influence and operation of the descent of the Chinese populations along the Pacific slope. Japan has put on modern and European civilization like a garment. Japan effected in a few years a revolution in the political constitution and the social habits of her people, and in their very way of looking at things, the like of which no other state ever accomplished in a century. But nothing of all this was thought of at the time of the China War. The one thing which China asked of European civilization and the thing called Modern Progress was to be let alone. China's prayer to Europe was that of Diogenes to Alexander—"Stand out of my sunshine."

It was, as we have said, to political relationships rather than to private and commercial dealings with foreign peoples that the Chinese felt an unconquerable objection. They did not indeed like even private and commercial dealings with foreigners. They would much rather have lived without ever seeing the face of a foreigner. But they had put up with the private intrusion of foreigners and trade, and had had dealings with American traders, and with the East India Company. The charter and the exclusive rights of the East India Company expired in April, 1834; the charter was renewed under different conditions, and the trade with China was thrown open. One of the great branches of the East India Company's business with China was the opium trade. When the trading privileges ceased this traffic was taken up briskly by private merchants, who bought of the company the opium which they grew in India and sold it to the Chinese. The Chinese governments, and all teachers, moralists, and persons of education in China, had long desired to get rid of or put down this trade in opium. They considered it highly detrimental to the morals, the health and the prosperity of the people. Of late the destructive effects of opium have often been disputed, particularly in the House of Commons. It has been said that it is not on the average nearly so unwholesome as the Chinese governments always thought, and that it does not do as much proportionate harm to China as the

use of brandy, whisky, and gin does to England. It seems to this writer hardly possible to doubt that the use of opium is, on the whole, a curse to any nation; but, even if this were not so, the question between England and the Chinese governments would remain just the same. The Chinese governments may have taken exaggerated views of the evils of the opium trade; their motives in wishing to put it down may have been mixed with considerations of interest as much political as philanthropic. Lord Palmerston insisted that the Chinese government were not sincere in their professed objection on moral grounds to the traffic. If they were sincere, he asked, why did they not prevent the growth of the poppy in China? It was, he tersely put it, an "exportation of bullion question, an agricultural protection question;" it was a question of the poppy interest in China, and of the economists who wished to prevent the exportation of the precious metals. It is curious that such arguments as this could have weighed with any one for a moment. It was no business of ours to ask ourselves whether the Chinese government were perfectly sincere in their professions of a lofty morality, or whether they, unlike all other governments that have ever been known, were influenced by one sole motive in the making of their regulations. All that had nothing to do with the question. States are not at liberty to help the subjects of other states to break the laws of their own governments. Especially when these laws even profess to concern questions of morals, is it the duty of foreign states not to interfere with the regulations which a government considers it necessary to impose for the protection of its people. All traffic in opium was strictly forbidden by the governments and laws of China. Yet our English traders carried on a brisk and profitable trade in the forbidden article. Nor was this merely an ordinary smuggling, or a business akin to that of the blockade running during the American civil war. The arrangements with the Chinese government allowed the existence of all establishments and machinery for carrying on a general trade at Canton and Macao; and under cover of these arrangements the opium traders set up their regular headquarters in these towns.

Let us find an illustration intelligible to readers of the present day, to show how unjustifiable was this practice. The state of Maine, as every one knows, prohibits the com-

mon sale of spirituous liquors. Let us suppose that several companies of English merchants were formed in Portland and Augusta, and the other towns of Maine, for the purpose of brewing beer and distilling whisky, and selling both to the public of Maine in defiance of the state laws. Let us further suppose that when the authorities of Maine proceeded to put the state laws in force against these intruders, our government here took up the cause of the whisky sellers, and sent an ironclad fleet to Portland to compel the people of Maine to put up with them. It seems impossible to think of any English government taking such a course as this; or of the English public enduring it for one moment. In the case of such a nation as the United States, nothing of the kind would be possible. The serious responsibilities of any such undertaking would make even the most thoughtless minister pause, and would give the public in general some time to think the matter over; and before any freak of the kind could be attempted the conscience of the nation would be aroused, and the unjust policy would have to be abandoned. But in dealing with China the ministry never seems to have thought the right or wrong of the question a matter worthy of any consideration. The controversy was entered upon with as light a heart as a modern war of still graver moment. The people in general knew nothing about the matter until it had gone so far that the original point of dispute was almost out of sight, and it seemed as if the safety of English subjects and the honor of England were compromised in some way by the high-handed proceedings of the Chinese government.

The English government appointed superintendents to manage our commercial dealings with China. Unluckily these superintendents were invested with a sort of political or diplomatic character, and thus from the first became objectionable to the Chinese authorities. One of the first of these superintendents acted in disregard of the express instructions of his own government. He was told that he must not pass the entrance of the Canton river in a vessel of war, as the Chinese authorities always made a marked distinction between ships of war and merchant vessels in regard to the freedom of intercourse. Misunderstandings occurred at every new step of negotiation. These misunderstandings were natural. Our people knew hardly anything about the Chinese. The limitation of our means of

communication with them made this ignorance inevitable, but certainly did not excuse our acting as if we were in possession of the fullest and most accurate information. The manner in which some of our official instructors went on was well illustrated by a sentence in the speech of Sir James Graham, during the debate on the whole subject in the House of Commons in April, 1840. It was, Sir James Graham said, as if a foreigner who was occasionally permitted to anchor at the Nore, and at times to land at Wapping, being placed in close confinement during his continuance there, were to pronounce a deliberate opinion upon the resources, the genius, and the character of the British Empire.

Our representatives were generally disposed to be unyielding; and not only that, but to see deliberate offense in every Chinese usage or ceremony which the authorities endeavored to impose on them. On the other hand, it is clear that the Chinese authorities thoroughly detested them and their mission, and all about them, and often made or countenanced delays that were unnecessary, and interferences which were disagreeable and offensive. The Chinese believed from the first that the superintendents were there merely to protect the opium trade and to force on China political relations with the West. Practically this was the effect of their presence. The superintendents took no steps to aid the Chinese authorities in stopping the hated trade. The British traders naturally enough thought that the British government were determined to protect them in carrying it on. Indeed the superintendents themselves might well have had the same conviction. The government at home allowed Captain Elliott, the chief superintendent, to make appeal after appeal for instructions without paying the slightest attention to him. Captain Elliott saw that the opium traders were growing more and more reckless and audacious; that they were thrusting their trade under the very eyes of the Chinese authorities. He also saw as every one on the spot must have seen, that the authorities, who had been so apathetic for a long time, were now at last determined to go any lengths to put down the traffic. At length the English government announced to Captain Elliott, the decision which they ought to have made known months, not to say years before, that "her majesty's government could not interfere for the purpose

of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country with which they trade;" and that "any loss therefore which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts." This very wise and proper resolve came, however, too late. The British traders had been allowed to go on for a long time under the full conviction that the protection of the English government was behind them and wholly at their service. Captain Elliott, himself seems to have now believed that the announcement of his superiors was but a graceful diplomatic figure of speech. When the Chinese authorities actually proceeded to insist on the forfeiture of an immense quantity of the opium in the hands of British traders, and took other harsh, but certainly not unnatural measures to extinguish the traffic, Captain Elliott sent to the governor of India a request for as many ships of war as could be spared for the protection of the life and property of Englishmen in China. Before long British ships arrived; and the two countries were at war.

It is not necessary to describe the successive steps by which the war came on. It was inevitable from the moment that the English superintendent identified himself with the protection of the opium trade. The English believed that the Chinese authorities were determined on war, and only waiting for a convenient moment to make a treacherous beginning. The Chinese were convinced that from the first we had meant nothing but war. Such a condition of feeling on both sides would probably have made war unavoidable, even in the case of two nations who had far much better ways of understanding each other than the English and Chinese. It is not surprising if the English people at home knew little of the original causes of the controversy. All that presented itself to their mind was the fact that Englishmen were in danger in a foreign country; that they were harshly treated and recklessly imprisoned; that their lives were in jeopardy, and that the flag of England was insulted. There was a general notion too, that the Chinese were a barbarous and a ridiculous people who had no alphabet, and thought themselves much better than any other people, even the English, and that, on the whole, it would be a good thing to take the conceit out of



them. Those who remember what the common feeling of ordinary society was at the time, will admit that it did not reach a much loftier level than this. The matter was, however taken up more seriously in parliament.

The policy of the government was challenged in the House of Commons, but with results of more importance to the existing composition of the English cabinet than to the relations between this country and China. Sir James Graham moved a resolution condemning the policy of ministers, for having by its uncertainty and other errors brought about the war which, however, he did not then think it possible to avoid. A debate which continued for three days took place. It was marked by the same curious mixture of parties which we have seen in debates on China questions in days nearer to the present. The defense of the government was opened by Mr. Macaulay, who had been elected for Edinburgh and appointed secretary at war. The defense consisted chiefly in the argument that we could not have put the trade in opium down, no matter how earnest we had been, and that it was not necessary or possible to keep on issuing frequent instructions to agents so far away as our representatives in China. Mr. Macaulay actually drew from our experience in India an argument in support of his position. We cannot govern India from London, he insisted; we must, for the most part govern India in India. One can imagine how Macaulay would in one of his essays have torn into pieces such an argument coming from any advocate of a policy opposed to his own. The reply, indeed, is almost too obvious to need any exposition. In India the complete materials of administration were in existence. There was a governor-general, there were councillors, there was an army. The men best qualified to rule the country were there, provided with all the appliances and forces of rule. In China we had an agent with a vague and anomalous office dropped down in the middle of a hostile people, possessed neither of recognized authority nor of power to enforce its recognition. It was probably true enough that we could not have put down the opium trade; that even with all the assistance of the Chinese government we could have done no more than to drive it from one port in order to see it make its appearance at another. But what we ought to have done is, therefore, only the more clear. We ought to have announced from the first,

and in the firmest tone, that we would have nothing to do with the trade; that we would not protect it; and we ought to have held to this determination. As it was, we allowed our traders to remain under the impression that we were willing to support them, until it was too late to undeceive them with any profit to their safety or our credit. The Chinese authorities acted after awhile with a high-handed disregard of fairness, and of anything like what we should call the responsibility of law; but it is evident that they believed they were themselves the objects of lawless intrusion and enterprise. There were on the part of the government great efforts made to represent the motion as an attempt to prevent the ministry from exacting satisfaction from the Chinese government, and from protecting the lives and interests of Englishmen in China. But it is unfortunately only too often the duty of statesmen to recognize the necessity of carrying on a war, even while they are of opinion that they whose mismanagement brought about the war deserve condemnation. When Englishmen are being imprisoned and murdered, the innocent just as well as the guilty, in a foreign country—when, in short, war is actually going on—it is not possible for English statesmen in opposition to say, “We will not allow England to strike a blow in defense of our fellow-countrymen and our flag, because we are of opinion that better judgment on the part of our government would have spared us the beginning of such a war.” There was really no inconsistency in recognizing the necessity of carrying on the war, and at the same time censuring the ministry who had allowed the necessity to be forced upon us. Sir Robert Peel quoted with great effect, during the debate, the example of Fox, who declared his readiness to give every help to the prosecution of a war which the very same day he proposed to censure the ministry for having brought upon the country. With all their efforts, the ministers were only able to command a majority of nine votes as the result of the three days’ debate.

The war, however, went on. It was easy work enough so far as England was concerned. It was on our side nothing but a succession of cheap victories. The Chinese fought very bravely in a great many instances; and they showed still more often a Spartan-like resolve not to survive defeat. When one of the Chinese cities was taken

by Sir Hugh Gough, the Tartar general went into his house as soon as he saw that all was lost, made his servants set fire to the building, and calmly sat in his chair until he was burned to death. One of the English officers writes of the same attack, that it was impossible to compute the loss of the Chinese, "for when they found they could stand no longer against us, they cut the throats of their wives and children, or drove them into wells or ponds, and then destroyed themselves. In many houses there were from eight to twelve dead bodies, and I myself saw a dozen women and children drowning themselves in a small pond, the day after the fight." We quickly captured the island of Chusan, on the east coast of China; a part of our squadron went up the Peiho river to threaten the capital; negotiations were opened, and the preliminaries of a treaty were made out, to which, however, neither the English government nor the Chinese would agree, and the war was reopened. Chusan was again taken by us; Ningpo, a large city a few miles in on the mainland, fell into our hands; Amoy, farther south, was captured; our troops were before Nankin, when the Chinese government at last saw how futile was the idea of resisting our arms. Their women or their children might just as well have attempted to encounter our soldiers. With all the bravery which the Chinese often displayed, there was something pitiful, pathetic, ludicrous, in the simple and childlike attempts which they made to carry on war against us. They made peace at last on any terms we chose to ask. We asked in the first instance the cession in perpetuity to us of the island of Hong-Kong. Of course we got it. Then we asked that five ports, Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow-Foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai, should be thrown open to British traders, and that consuls should be established there. Needless to say that this too was conceded. Then it was agreed that the indemnity already mentioned should be paid by the Chinese government—some four millions and a half sterling, in addition to one million and a quarter as compensation for the destroyed opium. It was also stipulated that correspondence between officials of the two governments was thenceforth to be carried on upon equal terms. The war was over for the present, and the thanks of both houses of parliament were voted to the fleet and army engaged in the operations. The Duke of Wellington moved the vote of thanks in the

House of Lords. He could hardly help, one would think, forming in his mind as he spoke an occasional contrast between the services which he asked the house to honor, and the sort of warfare which it had been his glorious duty to engage in so long. The Duke of Wellington was a simple-minded man, with little sense of humor. He did not probably perceive himself the irony that others might have seen in the fact that the conqueror of Napoleon, the victor in years of warfare against soldiers unsurpassed in history, should have had to move a vote of thanks to the fleet and army which triumphed over the unarmed, helpless, childlike Chinese.

The whole chapter of history ended, not inappropriately perhaps, with a rather pitiful dispute between the English government and the English traders about the amount of compensation to which the latter laid claim for their destroyed opium. The government were in something of a difficulty; for they had formally announced that they were resolved to let the traders abide by any loss which their violation of the laws of China might bring upon them. But, on the other hand, they had identified themselves by the war with the cause of the traders; and one of the conditions of peace had been the compensation for the opium. The traders insisted that the amount given for this purpose by the Chinese government did not nearly meet their losses. The English government, on the other hand, would not admit that they were bound in any way further to make good the losses of the merchants. The traders demanded to be compensated according to the price of opium at the time the seizure was made; a demand which, if we admit any claim at all, seems only fair and reasonable. The government had clearly undertaken their cause in the end, and were hardly in a position either logical or dignified, when they afterward chose to say, "Yes, we admit that we did undertake to get you redress, but we do not think now that we are bound to give you full redress." At last the matter was compromised; the merchants had to take what they could get, something considerably below their demand, and give in return to the government an immediate acquittance in full. It is hard to get up any feeling of sympathy with the traders who lost on such a speculation. It is hard to feel any regret even if the government which had done so much for them in the war treated them so shabbily

when the war was over; but that they were treated shabbily in the final settlement seems to us to allow of no doubt.

The Chinese war then was over for the time. But as the children say that snow brings more snow, so did that war with China bring other wars to follow it.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### DECLINE AND FALL OF THE WHIG MINISTRY.

THE Melbourne ministry kept going from bad to worse. There was a great stirring in the country all around them, which made their feebleness the more conspicuous. We sometimes read in history a defense of some particular sovereign whom common opinion cries down, the defense being a reference to the number of excellent measures that were set in motion during his reign. If we were to judge of the Melbourne ministry on the same principle, it might seem indeed as if their career was one of extreme activity and fruitfulness. Reforms were astir in almost every direction. Inquiries into the condition of our poor and our laboring classes were, to use a cant phrase of the time, the order of the day. The foundation of the colony of New Zealand was laid with a philosophical deliberation and thoughtfulness which might have reminded one of Locke and the constitution of the Carolinas. Some of the first comprehensive and practical measures to mitigate the rigor and to correct the indiscriminateness of the death punishment were taken during this period. One of the first legislative enactments which fairly acknowledged the difference between an English wife and a purchased slave, so far as the despotic power of the master was concerned, belongs to the same time. This was the Custody of Infants Bill, the object of which was to obtain for mothers of irreproachable conduct, who through no fault of theirs were living apart from their husbands, occasional access to their children, with the permission and under the control of the equity judges. It is curious to notice how long and how fiercely this modest measure of recognition for what may almost be called the natural rights of a wife and a mother was disputed in parliament, or at least in the House of Lords.

It is curious too, to notice what a clamor was raised over

the small contribution to the cause of national education which was made by the Melbourne government. In 1834 the first grant of public money for the purposes of elementary education was made by parliament. The sum granted was twenty thousand pounds, and the same grant was made every year until 1839. Then Lord John Russell asked for an increase of ten thousand pounds, and proposed a change in the manner of appropriating the money. Up to that time the grant had been distributed through the National School Society, a body in direct connection with the Church of England, and the British and Foreign School Association, which admitted children of all Christian denominations without imposing on them sectarian teaching. The money was dispensed by the lords of the treasury, who gave aid to applicants in proportion to the size and cost of the school buildings and the number of children who attended them. Naturally, the result of such an arrangement was, that the districts which needed help the most got it the least. If a place was so poor as not to be able to do anything for itself, the lords of the treasury would do nothing for it. Naturally too, the rich and powerful Church of England secured the greater part of the grant for itself. There was no inspection of the schools; no reports were made to parliament as to the manner in which the system worked; no steps were taken to find out if the teachers were qualified or the teaching was good. "The statistics of the schools," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "were alone considered; the size of the schoolroom, the cost of the building, and the number of scholars." In 1839 Lord John Russell proposed to increase the grant, and an order in council transferred its distribution to a committee of the privy council composed of the president and not more than five members. Lord John Russell also proposed the appointment of inspectors, the founding of a model school for the training of teachers, and the establishment of infant schools. The model school and the infant schools were to be practically unsectarian. The committee of the privy council were to be allowed to depart from the principle of proportioning their grants to the amount of local contribution to establish in poor and crowded places schools not necessarily connected with either of the two educational societies, and to extend their aid even to schools where the Roman Catholic version of the

Bible was read. The proposals of the government were fiercely opposed in both houses of parliament. The most various and fantastic forms of bigotry combined against them. The application of public money, and especially through the hands of the committee of privy council, to any schools not under the control and authority of the Church of England was denounced as a state recognition of popery and heresy. Scarcely less marvelous to us now are the speeches of those who promoted, than of those who opposed the scheme. Lord John Russell himself, who was much in advance of the common opinion of those among whom he moved, pleaded for the principles of his measure in a tone rather of apology than of actual vindication. He did not venture to oppose point blank the claim of those who insisted that it was part of the sacred right of the established church to have the teaching all done in her own way or to allow no teaching at all.

The government did not get all they sought for. They had a fierce fight for their grant, and an amendment moved by Lord Stanley, to the effect that her majesty be requested to revoke the order in council appointing the committee on education, was only negatived by a majority of two votes—two hundred and seventy-five to two hundred and seventy-three. In the lords, to which the struggle was transferred, the Archbishop of Canterbury actually moved and carried by a large majority an address to the queen praying her to revoke the order in council. The queen replied firmly that the funds voted by parliament would be found to be laid out in strict accordance with constitutional usage, the rights of conscience, and the safety of the established church, and so dismissed the question. The government therefore succeeded in establishing their committee of council on education, the institution by which our system of public instruction has been managed ever since. The ministry on the whole showed to advantage in this struggle. They took up a principle and they stood by it. If, as we have said, the speeches made by the promoters of the scheme seem amazing to any intelligent person of our time, because of the feeble, apologetic, and almost craven tone in which they assert the claims of a system of national education, yet it must be admitted that the principle was accepted by the government at some risk, and that it was not shabbily deserted in the face of hostile pressure. It is worth notic-

ing that while the increased grant and the principles on which it was to be distributed were opposed by such men as Sir Robert Peel, Lord Stanley, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Disraeli, it had the support of Mr. O'Connell and of Mr. Smith O'Brien. Both these Irish leaders only regretted that the grant was not very much larger, and that it was not appropriated on a more liberal principle. O'Connell was the recognized leader of the Irish Catholics and nationalists; Smith O'Brien was an aristocratic Protestant. With all the weakness of the Whig ministry, their term of office must at least be remarkable for the new departure it took in the matter of national education. The appointment of the committee of council marks an epoch.

Indeed the history of that time seems full of reform projects. The parliamentary annals contain the names of various measures of social and political improvement which might in themselves, it would seem, bear witness to the most unsleeping activity on the part of any ministry. Measures for general registration; for the reduction of the stamp duty on newspapers, and of the duty on paper; for the improvement of the jail system; for the spread of vaccination; for the regulation of the labor of children; for the prohibition of the employment of any child or young person under twenty-one in the cleaning of chimneys by climbing; for the suppression of the punishment of the pillory; efforts to relieve the Jews from civil disabilities—these are but a few of the many projects of social and political reform that occupied the attention of that busy period, which somehow appears nevertheless to have been so sleepy and do-nothing. How does it come about that we can regard the ministry in whose time all these things were done or attempted as exhausted and worthless?

One answer is plain. The reforming energy was in the time, and not in the ministry. In every instance public opinion went far ahead of the inclinations of her majesty's ministers. There was a just and general conviction that if the government were left to themselves they would do nothing. When they were driven into any course of improvement they usually did all they could to minimize the amount of reform to be effected. Whatever they undertook they seemed to undertake reluctantly, and as if only with the object of preventing other people from having anything to do with it. Naturally therefore, they got little



or no thanks for any good they might have done. When they brought in a measure to abolish in various cases the punishment of death, they fell so far behind public opinion and the inclinations of the commission that had for eight years been inquiring into the state of our criminal law, that their bill only passed by very narrow majorities, and impressed many ardent reformers as if it were meant rather to withhold than to advance a genuine reform. In truth, it was a period of enthusiasm and of growth and the ministry did not understand this. Lord Melbourne seems to have found it hard to persuade himself that there was any real anxiety in the mind of any one to do anything in particular. He had apparently got into his mind the conviction that the only sensible thing the people of England could do was to keep up the Melbourne ministry, and that being a sensible people they would naturally do this. He had grown into something like the condition of a pampered old hall-porter, who dozing in his chair begins to look on it as an act of rudeness if any visitor to his master presumes to knock at the door and so disturb him from his comfortable rest.

Any one who doubts that it was really a time of enthusiasm in these countries has only to glance at its history. The Church of England and the Church of Scotland were alike convulsed by movements which were the offspring of a genuine and irresistible enthusiasm—enthusiasm of that strong far-reaching kind which makes epochs in the history of a church or a people. In Ireland Father Mathew, a pious and earnest friar, who had neither eloquence nor learning nor genius, but only enthusiasm and noble purpose, had stirred the hearts of the population in the cause of temperance as thoroughly as Peter the Hermit might have stirred the heart of a people to a crusade. Many of the efforts of social reform which are still periodically made among ourselves had their beginning then, and can scarcely be said to have made much advance from that day to this. In July, 1840, Mr. Hume moved in the House of Commons for an address to the throne praying that the British Museum and the National Gallery might be opened to the public after divine service on Sundays, "at such hours as taverns, beershops and ginshops are legally open." The motion was of course rejected; but it is worthy of mention now as an evidence of the point to which the spirit of

social reform had advanced at a period when Lord Melbourne had seemingly made up his mind that reform had done enough for his generation, and that ministers might be allowed, at least during his time, to eat their meals in peace without being disturbed by the urgencies of restless Radicals or threatened with hostile majorities and Tory successes.

The Stockdale case was a disturbance of ministerial repose which at one time threatened to bring about a collision between the privileges of parliament and the authority of the law courts. The Messrs. Hansard, the well-known parliamentary printers, had published certain parliamentary reports on prisons, in which it happened that a book published by J. J. Stockdale was described as obscene and disgusting in the extreme. Stockdale proceeded against the Hansards for libel. The Hansards pleaded the authority of parliament; but Lord Chief Justice Denman decided that the House of Commons was not parliament, and had no authority to sanction the publication of libels on individuals. Out of this contradiction of authorities arose a long and often a very unseemly squabble. The House of Commons would not give up its privileges; the law courts would not admit its authority. Judgment was given by default against the Hansards in one of the many actions for libel which arose out of the affair, and the sheriffs of London were called on to seize and sell some of the Hansards' property to satisfy the demands of the plaintiff. The unhappy sheriffs were placed, as the homely old saying would describe it, between the devil and the deep sea. If they touched the property of the Hansards, they were acting in contempt of the privilege of the House of Commons and were liable to be committed to Newgate. If, on the other hand, they refused to carry out the orders of the court of queen's bench, that court would certainly send them to prison for the refusal. The reality of their dilemma in fact was very soon proved. The amount of the damages was paid into the sheriff's court, in order to avoid the scandal of a sale, but under protest; the House of Commons ordered the sheriffs to refund the money to the Hansards; the court of queen's bench was moved for an order to direct the sheriffs to pay it over to Stockdale. The sheriffs were finally committed to the custody of the sergent-at-arms for contempt of the House of Commons. The court of queen's

bench served a writ of *habeas corpus* on the sergeant-at-arms, calling on him to produce the sheriffs in court. The house directed the sergeant-at-arms to inform the court that he held the sheriffs in custody by order of the Commons. The sergeant-at-arms took the sheriffs to the court of queen's bench and made his statement there; his explanation was declared reasonable and sufficient, and he marched his prisoners back again. A great deal of this ridiculous sort of thing went on which it is not now necessary to describe in any detail. The House of Commons, what with the arrest of the sheriffs and of agents acting on behalf of the pertinacious Stockdale, had on their hands batches of prisoners with whom they did not know in the least what to do; the whole affair created immense popular excitement mingled with much ironical laughter. At last the House of Commons had recourse to legislation, and Lord John Russell brought in a bill on March 3, 1840, to afford summary protection to all persons employed in the publication of parliamentary papers. The preamble of the measure declared that "Whereas it is essential to the due and effectual discharge of the functions and duties of parliament that no obstruction should exist to the publication of the reports, papers, votes, or proceedings of either house as such house should deem fit," it is to be lawful "for any person or persons against whom any civil or eriminal proceedings shall be taken on account of such publication to bring before the court a certificate under the hand of the lord chancellor or the speaker, stating that it was published by the authority of the house, and the proceedings should at once be stayed." This bill was run quickly through both houses—not without some opposition or at least murmur in the upper house—and it became law on April 14. It settled the question satisfactorily enough, although it certainly did not define the relative rights of parliament and the courts of law. No difficulty of the same kind has since arisen. The sheriffs and the other prisoners were discharged from custody after awhile, and the public excitement went out in quiet laughter.

The question, however, was a very serious one; and it is significant that public opinion was almost entirely on the side of the law courts and the sheriffs. The ministry must have so fallen in public favor as to bring the House of Commons into disrepute along with them, or such a senti-

ment could not have prevailed so widely out of doors. The public seemed to see nothing in the whole affair but a tyrannical House of Commons wielding illimitable powers against a few humble individuals, some of whom, the sheriffs for instance, had no share in the controversy except that imposed on them by official duty. Accordingly the sheriffs were the heroes of the hour, and were toasted and applauded all over the country. Assuredly it was an awkward position for the House of Commons to be placed in when it had to vindicate its privileges by committing to prison men who were merely doing a duty which the law courts imposed on them. It would have been better probably if the government had more firmly asserted the rights of the House of Commons at the beginning, and thus allowed the public to see the real question which the whole controversy involved. Nothing can be more clear now than the paramount importance of securing to each house of parliament an absolute authority and freedom of publication. No evil that could possibly arise out of the misuse of such power could be anything like that certain to come of a state of things which restricted, by libel laws or otherwise, the right of either house to publish whatever it thought proper for the public good. Not a single measure for the reform of any great grievance, from the abolition of slavery to the passing of the factory acts, but might have been obstructed, and perhaps even prevented, if the free exposure of existing evils were denied to the houses of parliament. In this country, parliament only works through the power of public opinion. A social reform is not carried out simply by virtue of the decision of a cabinet that something ought to be done. The attention of the legislature and of the public has to be called to the grievance again and again by speeches, resolutions, debates and divisions, before there is any chance of carrying a measure on the subject. When public opinion is ripe, and is strong enough to help the government through with a reform in spite of prejudices and vested interests, then, and not till then, the reform is carried. But it would be hardly possible to bring the matter up to this stage of growth if those who were interested in upholding a grievance had the power of worrying the publishers of the parliamentary reports by legal proceedings in the earlier stages of the discussion. Nor would it be of any use to protect merely the freedom of

debate in parliament itself. It is not through debate, but through publication, that the public opinion of the country is reached. In truth, the poorer a man is, the weaker and the humbler, the greater need is there that he should call out for the full freedom of publication to be vested in the hands of parliament. The factory child, the climbing boy, the apprentice under colonial systems of modified slavery, the seaman sent to sea in the rotten ship; the woman clad in unwomanly rags who sings her "Song of a Shirt"; the other woman almost literally unsexed in form, function and soul, who in her filthy trousers of sacking dragged on all fours the coal trucks in the mines—these are the tyrants and the monopolists for whom we assert the privilege of parliamentary publication.

The operations which took place about this time in Syria belong perhaps rather to the general history of the Ottoman empire than to that of England. But they had so important a bearing on the relations between this country and France, and are so directly connected with subsequent events in which England bore a leading part, that it would be impossible to pass them over without some notice here. Mohammed Ali, pasha of Egypt, the most powerful of all the sultan's feudatories, a man of iron will and great capacity both for war and administration, had made himself for a time master of Syria. By the aid of the warlike qualities of his adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, he had defeated the armies of the porte wherever he had encountered them. Mohammed's victories had for the time compelled the porte to allow him to remain in power in Syria; but the sultan had long been preparing to try another effort for the reduction of his ambitious vassal. In 1839 the sultan again declared war against Mohammed Ali. Ibrahim Pasha again obtained an overwhelming victory over the Turkish army. The energetic Sultan Mahmoud, a man not unworthy to cope with such an adversary as Mohammed Ali, died suddenly; and immediately after his death the capitan pasha, or lord high admiral of the Ottoman fleet, went over to the Egyptians with all his vessels; an act of almost unexampled treachery even in the history of the Ottoman Empire. It was evident that Turkey was not able to hold her own against the formidable Mohammed and his successful son; and the policy of the western powers of Europe, and of England especially, had long been to maintain the Ottoman

empire as a necessary part of the common state system. The policy of Russia was to keep up that empire as long as it suited her own purposes; to take care that no other power got anything out of Turkey; and to prepare the way for such a partition of the spoils of Turkey as would satisfy Russian interests. Russia therefore was to be found now defending Turkey, and now assailing her. The course taken by Russia was seemingly inconsistent; but it was only inconsistent as the course of a sailing ship may be which now tacks to this side and now to that, but has a clear object in view and a port to reach all the while. England was then and for a long time after steadily bent on preserving the Turkish empire, and in a great measure as a rampart against the schemes and ambitions imputed to Russia herself. France was less firmly set on the maintenance of Turkey, and France, moreover, had got it into her mind that England had designs of her own on Egypt. Austria was disposed to go generally with England; Prussia was little more than a nominal sharer in the alliance that was now tinkered up. It is evident that such an alliance could not be very harmonious or direct in its action. It was, however, effective enough to prove too strong for the pasha of Egypt. A fleet made up of English, Austrian and Turkish vessels bombarded Acre; an allied army drove the Egyptians from several of their strongholds. Ibrahim Pasha, with all his courage and genius, was not equal to the odds against which he now saw himself forced to contend. He had to succumb. No one could doubt that he and his father were incomparably better able to give good government and the chances of development to Syria than the porte had ever been. But in this instance as in others, the odious principle was upheld by England and her actual allies, that the Turkish empire must be maintained, at no matter what cost of suffering and degradation to its subject populations. Mohammed Ali was deprived of all his Asiatic possessions; but was secured in his government of Egypt. A convention signed at London on July 15, 1840, arranged for the imposition of those terms on Mohammed Ali.

The convention was signed by the representatives of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia, on the one part, and of the Ottoman porte on the other. The name of France was not found there. France had drawn back

from the alliance, and for some time seemed as if she were likely to take arms against it. M. Thiers was then her prime minister: he was a man of quick fancy, restless and ambitious temperament, and what we cannot help calling a vulgar spirit of national self-sufficiency—we are speaking now of the Thiers of 1840, not of the wise and capable statesman, tempered and tried by the fire of adversity, who reorganized France out of the ruin and welter of 1870. Thiers persuaded himself and the great majority of his countrymen that England was bent upon driving Mohammed Ali out of Egypt as well as out of Syria, and that her object was to obtain possession of Egypt for herself. For some months it seemed as if war were inevitable between England and France, although there was not, in reality, the slightest reason why the two states should quarrel. France was just as far away from any thought of a really disinterested foreign policy as England. England, on the other hand, had not the remotest idea of becoming the possessor of Egypt. Fortunately, Louis Philippe and M. Guizot were both strongly in favor of peace; M. Thiers resigned; and M. Guizot became minister for foreign affairs, and virtually head of the government. Thiers defended his policy in the French chamber in a scream of passionate and almost hysterical declamation. Again and again he declared that his mind had been made up to go to war if England did not at once give way and modify the terms of the convention of July. It cannot be doubted that Thiers carried with him much of the excited public feeling of France. But the king and M. Guizot were happily supported by the majority in and out of the chambers; and on July 13, 1841, the Treaty of London was signed, which provided for the settlement of the affairs of Egypt on the basis of the arrangement already made, and which contained, moreover, the stipulation, to be referred to more than once hereafter, by which the sultan declared himself firmly resolved to maintain the ancient principle of his empire—that no foreign ship of war was to be admitted into the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, with the exception of light vessels for which a firman was granted.

The public of this country had taken but little interest in the controversy about Egypt, at least until it seemed likely to involve England in a war with France. Some of the episodes of the war were indeed looked upon with a

certain satisfaction by people here at home. The bravery of Charles Napier, the hot-headed, self-conceited commander was enthusiastically extolled, and his feats of successful audacity were glorified as though they had shown the genius of a Nelson, or the clever resource of a Cochrane. Not many of Napier's admirers cared a rush about the merits of the quarrel between the porte and the pasha. Most of them would have been just as well pleased if Napier had been fighting for the pasha and against the porte; not a few were utterly ignorant as whether he was fighting for porte or for pasha. Those who claimed to be more enlightened had a sort of general idea that it was in some way essential to the safety and glory of England that whenever Turkey was in trouble we should at once become her champions, tame her rebels, and conquer her enemies. Unfounded as were the suspicions of Frenchmen about our designs upon Egypt, they can hardly be called very unreasonable. Even a very cool and impartial Frenchman might be led to the conclusion that free England would not without some direct purpose of her own have pledged herself to the cause of a base and a decaying despotism.

Steadily meanwhile did the ministry go from bad to worse. They had greatly damaged their character by the manner in which they had again and again put up with defeat and consented to resume or retain office on any excuse or pretext. They were remarkably bad administrators; their finances were wretchedly managed. In later times we have come to regard the Tories as especially weak in the matter of finance. A well-managed revenue and a comfortable surplus are generally looked upon as in some way or other the monopoly of a Liberal administration; while lavish expenditure, deficit and increased taxation are counted among the necessary accompaniments of a Tory government. So nearly does public opinion on both sides go to accepting these conditions, that there are many Tories who take it rather as a matter of pride that their leaders are not mean economists, and who regard a free-handed expenditure of the national revenue as something peculiarly gentlemanlike and in keeping with the honorable traditions of a great country party. But this was not the idea which prevailed in the days of the Melbourne ministry. Then the universal conviction was that the Whigs were incapable of managing their finances. The budget



of the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Baring, showed a deficiency of nearly two millions. This deficiency he proposed to meet in part by alteration in the sugar duties; but the House of Commons, after a long debate, rejected his proposals by a majority of thirty-six. It was then expected, of course, that ministers would resign; but they were not yet willing to accept the consequences of defeat. They thought they had another stone in their sling. Lord John Russell had previously given notice of his intention to move for a committee of the whole house to consider the state of legislation with regard to the trade in corn; and he now brought forward an announcement of his plan, which was to propose a fixed duty of eight shillings per quarter on wheat, and proportionately diminished rates on rye, barley, and oats. Except for its effect on the fortunes of the Melbourne ministry, there is not the slightest importance to be attached to this proposal. It was an experiment in the direction of the free traders who were just beginning to be powerful; although they were not nearly strong enough yet to dictate the policy of a government. We shall have to tell the story of free trade hereafter; this present incident is no part of the history of a great movement; it is merely a small party dodge. It deceived no one. Lord Melbourne had always spoken with the uttermost contempt of the free trade agitation. With characteristic oaths, he had declared that of all the mad things he had ever heard suggested free trade was the maddest. Lord John Russell himself, although far more enlightened than the prime minister, had often condemned and sneered at the demand for free trade. The conversion of the ministers into the official advocates of a moderate fixed duty was all too sudden for the conscience, for the very stomach of the nation. Public opinion would not endure it. Nothing but harm came to the Whigs from the attempt. Instead of any new adherents or fresh sympathy being won for them by their proposal, people only asked, "Will nothing then turn them out of office? Will they never have done with trying new tricks to keep in place?"

Sir Robert Peel took, in homely phrase, the bull by the horns. He proposed a direct vote of want of confidence—a resolution declaring that ministers did not possess the confidence of the house sufficiently to enable them to carry through the measures which they deemed of essential im-

portance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office under such circumstances was at variance with the spirit of the constitution. On June 4, 1841, the division was taken; and the vote of no-confidence was carried by a majority of one. Even the Whigs could not stand this. Lord Melbourne at last began to think that things were looking serious. Parliament was dissolved, and the result of the general election was that the Tories were found to have a majority even greater than they themselves had anticipated. The moment the new parliament was assembled amendments to the address were carried in both houses in a sense hostile to the government. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to resign, and Sir Robert Peel was entrusted with the task of forming an administration.

We have not much more to do with Lord Melbourne in this history. He merely drops out of it. Between his expulsion from office and his death, which took place in 1848, he did little or nothing to call for the notice of any one. It was said at one time that his closing years were lonesome and melancholy; but this has lately been denied, and indeed it is not likely that one who had such a genial temper and so many friends could have been left to the dreariness of a not self-sufficing solitude and to the bitterness of neglect. He was a generous and kindly man; his personal character, although often assailed, was free of any serious reproach; he was a failure in office, not so much from want of ability, as because he was a politician without convictions.

The Peel ministry came into power with great hopes. It had Lord Lyndhurst for lord chancellor; Sir James Graham for home secretary; Lord Aberdeen at the foreign office; Lord Stanley was colonial secretary. The most remarkable man not in the cabinet, soon to be one of the foremost statesmen in the country, was Mr. W. E. Gladstone. It is a fact of some significance in the history of the Peel administration, that the elections which brought the new ministry into power brought Mr. Cobden for the first time into the House of Commons.

## CHAPTER X.

## MOVEMENTS IN THE CHURCHES.

WHILE Lord Melbourne and his Whig colleagues, still in office, were frittering away their popularity on the pleasant assumption that nobody was particularly in earnest about anything, the vice-chancellor and heads of houses held a meeting at Oxford and passed a censure on the celebrated "No. 90," of "Tracts for the Times." The movement, of which some important tendencies were formally censured in the condemnation of this tract, was one of the most momentous that had stirred the Church of England since the Reformation. The author of the tract was Dr. John Henry Newman, and the principal ground for its censure by voices claiming authority was the principle it seemed to put forward—that a man might honestly subscribe all the articles and formularies of the English Church, while yet holding many of the doctrines of the Church of Rome, against which those articles were regarded as a necessary protest. The great movement which was thus brought into sudden question and publicity was in itself an offspring of the immense stirring of thought which the French Revolution called up, and which had its softened echo in the English Reform Bill. The center of the religious movement was to be found in the University of Oxford. When it is in the right, and when it is in the wrong, Oxford has always had more of the sentimental and of the poetic in its cast of thought than its rival or colleague of Cambridge. There were two influences then in operation over England, both of which alike aroused the alarm and the hostility of certain gifted and enthusiastic young Oxford men. One was the tendency to rationalism drawn from the German theologians; the other was the manner in which the connection of the church with the state in England was beginning to operate to the disadvantage of the church as a sacred institution and teacher. The reform party everywhere were assailing the rights and property of the church. In Ireland especially experiments were made which every practical man will now regard with approval, whether he be churchman or not, but which seemed to the devoted ecclesiast of Oxford to be fraught with danger to the freedom and influ-

ence of the church. Out of the contemplation of these dangers sprang the desire to revive the authority of the church; to quicken her with a new vitality; to give her once again that place as guide and inspirer of the national life which her ardent votaries believed to be hers by right, and to have been forfeited only by the carelessness of her authorities and their failure to fulfill the duties of her heaven-assigned mission.

No movement could well have had a purer source. None could have had more disinterested and high-minded promoters. It was borne in upon some earnest unresting souls, like that of the sweet and saintly Keble—souls “without haste and without rest,” like Goethe’s star—that the Church of England had higher duties and nobler claims than the business of preaching harmless sermons and the power of enriching bishops. Keble could not bear to think of the church taking pleasure since all is well. He urged on some of the more vigorous and thoughtful minds around him, or rather he suggested it by his influence and his example, that they should reclaim for the church the place which ought to be hers, as the true successor of the apostles. He claimed for her that she, and she alone, was the real Catholic Church, and that Rome had wandered away from the right path, and foregone the glorious mission which she might have maintained. Among those who shared the spirit and purpose of Keble were Richard Hurrell Froude, the historian’s elder brother, who gave rich promise of a splendid career, but who died while still in comparative youth; Dr. Pusey, afterward leader of the school of ecclesiasticism which bears his name; and, most eminent of all, Dr. Newman. Keble had taken part in the publication of a series of treatises called “Tracts for the Times,” the object of which was to vindicate the real mission, as the writers believed, of the Church of England. This was the tractarian movement which had such various and memorable results. Newman first started the project of the tracts, and wrote the most remarkable of them. He had up to this time been distinguished as one of the most unsparing enemies of Rome. At the same time he was, as he has himself said, “fierce” against the “instruments” and the “manifestations” of “the Liberal cause.” While he was at Algiers once a French vessel put in there, flying the tricolor; Newman would not even look at her. “On

my return, though forced to stop twenty-four hours at Paris, I kept indoors the whole time, and all that I saw of that beautiful city was what I saw from the diligence." He had never had any manner of association with Roman Catholics; had, in fact, known singularly little of them. As Newman studied and wrote concerning the best way to restore the Church of England to her proper place in the national life, he kept the thought before him "that there was something greater than the established church, and that that was the Church Catholic and Apostolic, set up from the beginning, of which she was but the local presence and the organ. She was nothing unless she was this. She must be dealt with strongly or she would be lost. There was need of a second Reformation. At this time the idea of leaving the church never, Dr. Newman himself assures us, had crossed his imagination. He felt alarmed for the church between German rationalism and man-of-the-world liberalism. His fear was that the church would sink to be the servile instrument of a state, and a liberal state.

The abilities of Dr. Newman were hardly surpassed by any contemporary in any department of thought. His position and influence in Oxford were almost unique. There was in his intellectual temperament a curious combination of the mystic and the logical. He was at once a poetic dreamer and a sophist—in the true and not the corrupt and ungenerous sense of the latter word. It had often been said of him and of another great Englishman, that a change in their early conditions and training would easily have made of Newman a Stuart Mill, and of Mill a Newman. England in our time has hardly had a greater master of argument and of English prose than Newman. He is one of the keenest of dialecticians; and like Mill has the rare art that dissolves all the difficulties of the most abstruse or perplexed subject, and shows it bare and clear even to the least subtle of readers. His words dispel mists; and whether they who listen agree or not, they cannot fail to understand. A penetrating, poignant satirical humor is found in most of his writings; an irony sometimes piercing suddenly through it like a darting pain. On the other hand, a generous vein of poetry and of pathos informs his style; and there are many passages of his works in which he rises to the height of a genuine and noble eloquence.

In all the arts that make a great preacher or orator,

Newman was strikingly deficient. His manner was constrained, ungraceful and even awkward; his voice was thin and weak. His bearing was not at first impressive in any way. A gaunt emaciated figure, a sharp and eagle face, a cold meditative eye rather repelled than attracted those who saw him for the first time. Singularly devoid of affectation, Newman did not always conceal his intellectual scorn of men who made loud pretense with inferior gifts, and the men must have been few indeed whose gifts were not inferior to his. Newman had no scorn for intellectual inferiority in itself; he despised it only when it gave itself airs. His influence while he was the vicar of St. Mary's at Oxford was profound. As Mr. Gladstone said of him in a recent speech, "without ostentation or effort, but by simple excellence, he was continually drawing undergraduates more and more around him." Mr. Gladstone in the same speech gave a description of Dr. Newman's pulpit style which is interesting: "Dr. Newman's manner in the pulpit was one which, if you considered it in its separate parts, would lead you to arrive at very unsatisfactory conclusions. There was not very much change in the inflection of the voice; action there was none; his sermons were read and his eyes were always on his book; and all that you will say is against efficiency in preaching. Yes; but you take the man as a whole, and there was a stamp and a seal upon him, there was a solemn music and sweetness in his tone, there was a completeness in the figure, taken together with the tone and with the manner, which made even his delivery such as I have described it, and though exclusively with written sermons, singularly attractive." The stamp and seal were indeed those which are impressed by genius, piety and earnestness. No opponent ever spoke of Newman but with admiration for his intellect and respect for his character. Dr. Newman had a younger brother, Francis W. Newman, who also possessed remarkable ability and earnestness. He too was distinguished at Oxford and seemed to have a great career there before him. But he was drawn one way by the wave of thought before his more famous brother had been drawn the other way. In 1830, the younger Newman found himself prevented by religious scruples from subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles for his master's degree. He left the university, and wandered for years in the east, endeavoring not very successfully per-

haps to teach Christianity on its broadest base to Mohammedans; and then he came back to England to take his place among the leaders of a certain school of free thought. Fate had dealt with those brothers as with the two friends in Richter's story; it "seized their bleeding hearts, and flung them different ways."

When Dr. Newman wrote the famous tract "No. 90," for which he was censured, he bowed to the authority of his bishop if not to that of the heads of houses; and he discontinued the publication of such treatises. But he did not admit any change of opinion; and indeed soon after he edited a publication called "The British Critic," in which many of the principles held to be exclusively those of the Church of Rome were enthusiastically claimed for the English church. Yet a little and the gradual working of Newman's mind became evident to all the world. The brightest and most penetrating intellect in the Church of England was withdrawn from her service, and Newman went over to the Church of Rome. His secession was described by Mr. Disraeli a quarter of a century afterward as having "dealt a blow to the Church of England under which she still reels." To this result had the inquiry conducted him which had led his friend Dr. Pusey merely to endeavor to incorporate some of the mysticism and the symbols of Rome with the ritual of the English Protestant Church; which had brought Keble only to seek a more liberal and truly Christian temper for the faith of the Protestant; and which had sent Francis Newman into radicalism and rationalism.

In truth, it is not difficult now to understand how the elder Newman's mind became drawn toward the ancient church which won him at last. We can see from his own candid account of his early sentiments how profoundly mystical was his intellectual nature, and how, long before he was conscious of any such tendency, he was drawn toward the very symbolisms of the Catholic Church. Pascal's early and unexplained mastery of mathematical problems which no one had taught him is not more suggestive in its way than those early drawings of Catholic symbols and devices which, done in his childhood, Newman says, surprised and were inexplicable to him when he came on them in years long after. No place could be better fitted to encourage and develop this tendency to mysticism in a thoughtful

mind than Oxford, with all its noble memories of scholars and of priests; with its picturesque and poetic surroundings, and its never-fading mediævalism. Newman lived in the past. His spirit was with mediæval England. His thoughts were of a time when one church took charge of the souls of a whole united devout people, and stood as the guide and authority appointed for them by heaven. He thought of such a time until first he believed in it as a thing of the past, and next came to have faith in the possibility of its restoration as a thing of the present and the future. When once he had come to this point the rest followed, "as by lot God wot." No creature could for a moment suppose that that ideal church was to be found in the English establishment, submitted as it was to state-made doctrine, and to the decision of the lord chancellor, who might be an infidel or a free-liver. The question which Cardinal Manning tells us he asked himself years after at the time of the Gorham case must often have presented itself to the mind of Newman. Suppose all the bishops of the Church of England should decide unanimously on any question of doctrine, would any one receive the decision as infallible? Of course not. Such is not the genius or the principle of the English church. The Church of England has no pretension to be considered the infallible guide of the people in matters even of doctrine. Were she seriously to put forward any such pretension, it would be rejected with contempt by the common mind of the nation. We are not discussing questions of dogma, or the rival claims of churches here; we are merely pointing out that to a man with Newman's idea of a church, the Church of England could not long afford a home. That very logical tendency, which in the mind of Newman as of that of Pascal contended for supremacy with the tendency to devotion and mysticism, only impelled him more rigorously on his way. He could not put up with compromises, and convince himself that he ought to be convinced. He dragged every compromise and every doctrine into the light, and insisted on knowing exactly what it amounted to and what it meant to say. The doctrines and compromises of his own church did not satisfy him. There are minds which in this condition of bewilderment might have been content to find "no footing so solid as doubt." Newman had not a mind of that class. He could not believe



in a world without a church, or a church without what he held to be inspiration; and accordingly he threw his whole soul energy, genius and fame into the cause of the Church of Rome.

This, however, did not come all at once. We are anticipating by a few years the passing over of Dr. Newman, Cardinal Manning and others to the ancient church. It is clear that Newman was not himself conscious for a long time of the manner in which he was being drawn, surely although not quickly, in the direction of Rome. He used to be accused at one time of having remained a conscious Roman Catholic in the English church, laboring to make new converts. Apart from his own calm assurances, and from the singularly pure and candid nature of the man, there are reasons enough to render such a charge absurd. Indeed, that simple and childish conception of human nature which assumes that a man must always see the logical consequences of certain admissions or inquiries beforehand, because all men can see them afterward, is rather confusing and out of place when we are considering such a crisis of thought and feeling as that which took place in Oxford, and such men as those who were principally concerned in it. For the present, it is enough to say that the object of that movement was to raise the Church of England from apathy, from dull, easy-going acquiescence, from the perfunctory discharge of formal duties, and to quicken her again with the spirit of a priesthood, to arouse her to the living work, spiritual and physical, of an ecclesiastical sovereignty. The impulse overshot itself in some cases and was misdirected in others. It proved a failure on the whole as to its definite aims; and it sometimes left behind it only the ashes of a barren symbolism. But in its source it was generous, beneficent and noble, and it is hard to believe that there has not been throughout the Church of England on the whole a higher spirit at work since the famous Oxford movement began.

Still greater was the practical importance, at least in defined results, of the movement which went on in Scotland at about the same time. A fortnight before the decision of the heads of houses at Oxford on Dr. Newman's tract, Lord Aberdeen announced in the House of Lords that he did not see his way to do anything in particular with regard to the dissensions in the Church of Scotland. He had

tried a measure he said, the year before, and half the Church of Scotland liked it and the other half denounced it, and the government opposed it; and he, therefore, had nothing further to suggest in the matter. The perplexity of Lord Aberdeen only faintly typified the perplexity of the ministry. Lord Melbourne was about the last man in the world likely to have any sympathy with the spirit which animated the Scottish Reformers, or any notion of how to get out of the difficulty which the whole question presented. Differing as they did in so many other points, there was one central resemblance between the movement in the Kirk of Scotland and that which was going on in the Church of England. In both cases alike the effort of the reforming party was to emancipate the church from the control of the state in matters involving religious doctrine and duty. In Scotland was soon to be presented the spectacle of a great secession from an established church, not because the seceders objected to the principle of a church, but because they held that the establishment was not faithful enough to its mission as a church. One of the seceders pithily explained the position of the controversy when he said that he and his fellows were leaving the Kirk of Scotland, not because she was too "churchy," but because she was not "churchy" enough.

The case was briefly this. During the reign of Queen Anne an act was passed which took from the church courts in Scotland the free choice as to the appointment of pastors, by subjecting the power of presbytery to the control and interference of the law courts. Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift, not one of whom cared a rush about the supposed sanctity of an ecclesiastical appointment, were the authors of this compromise, which was exactly of the kind that sensible men of the world everywhere might be supposed likely to accept and approve. In an immense number of Scotch parishes the minister was nominated by a lay patron; and if the presbytery found nothing to condemn in him as to "life, literature and doctrine," they were compelled to appoint him, however unwelcome he might be to the parishioners. Now it is obvious that a man might have a blameless character, sound religious views, and an excellent education, and nevertheless be totally unfitted to undertake the charge of a Scottish parish. The Southwark congregation who appreciate and delight in the min-

istrations of Mr. Spurgeon might very well be excused if they objected to having a perfectly moral Charles Honeyman, even though his religious opinions were identical with those of their favorite, forced upon them at the will of some aristocratic lay patron. The effect of the power conferred on the law courts and the patron was simply in a great number of cases to send families away from the Church of Scotland and into voluntaryism. The Scotch people are above all others impatient of any attempt to force on them the services of unacceptable ministers. Men clung to the national church as long as it was national—that is, as long as it represented and protected the sacred claims of a deeply religious people. Dissent, or rather voluntaryism, began to make a progress in Scotland that alarmed thoughtful churchmen. To get over the difficulty the general assembly, the highest ecclesiastical court in Scotland, and likewise a sort of church parliament, declared that a veto on the nomination of the pastor should be exercised by the congregation, in accordance with a fundamental law of the church that no pastor should be intruded on any congregation contrary to the will of the people. The Veto Act, as this declaration was called, worked well enough for a short time, and the highest legal authorities declared it not incompatible with the Act of Queen Anne. But it diminished far too seriously the power of the lay patron to be accepted without a struggle. In the celebrated Auchterarder case the patron won a victory over the church in the courts of law, for having presented a minister whose appointment was vetoed by the congregation; he obtained an order from the civil courts deciding that the presbytery must take him on trial, in obedience with the Act of Queen Anne, as he was qualified by life, literature, and doctrine. This question, however, was easily settled by the general assembly of the church. They left to the patron's nominee his stipend and his house, and took no further notice of him. They did not recognize him as one of their pastors, but he might have, if he would, the manse and the money which the civil courts had declared to be his. They merely appealed to the legislature to do something which might make the civil law in harmony with the principles of the church. A more serious question, however, presently arose. This was the famous Strathbogie case, which brought the authority of the church and that of the state into irreconcilable

conflict. A minister had been nominated in the parish of Marnoch who was so unacceptable to the congregation that two hundred and sixty-one out of three hundred heads of families objected to his appointment. The general assembly directed the presbytery of Strathbogie, in which the parish lay, to reject the minister, Mr. Edwards. The presbytery had long been noted for its leaning toward the claims of the civil power, and it very reluctantly obeyed the command of the highest authority and ruling body of the church. Another minister was appointed to the parish. Mr. Edwards fought the question out in the civil court and obtained an interdict against the new appointment, and a decision that the presbytery were bound to take himself on trial. Seven members constituting the majority of the presbytery determined, without consulting the general assembly, to obey the civil power, and they admitted Mr. Edwards on trial. The seven were brought before the bar of the general assembly, and by an overwhelming majority were condemned to be deposed from their places in the ministry. Their parishes were declared vacant. A more complete antagonism between church and state is not possible to imagine. The church expelled from its ministry seven men for having obeyed the command of the civil laws.

It was on the motion of Dr. Chalmers that the seven ministers were deposed. Dr. Chalmers became the leader of the movement which was destined within two years from the time we are now surveying to cause the disruption of the ancient Kirk of Scotland. No man could be better fitted for the task of leadership in such a movement. He was beyond comparison the foremost man in the Scottish church. He was the greatest pulpit orator in Scotland, or, indeed, in Great Britain. As a scientific writer, both on astronomy and on political economy, he had made a great mark. From having been in his earlier days the minister of an obscure Scottish village congregation, he had suddenly sprung into fame. He was the lion of any city which he happened to visit. If he preached in London, the church was crowded with the leaders of politics, science and fashion, eager to hear him. The effect he produced in England is all the more surprising seeing that he spoke in the broadest Scottish accent conceivable, and, as one admirer admits, mispronounced almost every word. We have already quoted what Mr. Gladstone said about the style of Dr. Newman;

let us cite also what he says about Dr. Chalmers. "I have heard," said Mr. Gladstone, "Dr. Chalmers preach and lecture. Being a man of Scotch blood, I am very much attached to Scotland, and like even the Scotch accent; but not the Scotch accent of Dr. Chalmers. Undoubtedly the accent of Dr. Chalmers in preaching and delivery was a considerable impediment to his success; but, notwithstanding all that, it was overborne by the power of the man in preaching—overborne by his power, which melted into harmony with all the adjuncts and incidents of the man as a whole, so much so, that although I would have said that the accent of Dr. Chalmers was distasteful, yet in Dr. Chalmers himself I would not have had it altered in the smallest degree." Chalmers spoke with a massive eloquence in keeping with his powerful frame and his broad brow and his commanding presence. His speeches were a strenuous blending of argument and emotion. They appealed at once to the strong common sense and to the deep religious convictions of his Scottish audiences. His whole soul was in his work as a leader of religious movements. He cared little or nothing for any popularity or fame that he might have won. Some strong and characteristic words of his own have told what he thought of passing renown. He called it "a popularity which rifles home of its sweets; and by elevating a man above his fellows places him in a region of desolation, where he stands a conspicuous mark for the shafts of malice, envy and detraction; a popularity which with its head among storms and its feet on the treacherous quicksands, has nothing to lull the agonies of its tottering existence but the Hosannahs of a driveling generation." There is no reason to doubt that these were Chalmers' genuine sentiments; and scarcely any man of his time had come into so sudden and great an endowment of popularity. The reader of to-day must not look for adequate illustration of the genius and the influence of Chalmers in his published works. These do indeed show him to have been a strong reasoner and a man of original mind. But they do not show the Chalmers of Scottish controversy. That Chalmers must be studied through the traces, lying all around, of his influence upon the mind and the history of the Scottish people. The free church of Scotland is his monument. He did not make that church. It was not the work of one man, or, strictly speaking, of one genera-

tion. It grew naturally out of the inevitable struggle between church and state. But Chalmers did more than any other man to decide the moment and the manner of its coming into existence, and its success is his best monument.

For we may anticipate a little, in this instance as in that of the Oxford movement, and mention at once the fact that on May 18, 1843, some five hundred ministers of the Church of Scotland, under the leadership of Dr. Chalmers, seceded from the old kirk and set about to form the free church. The government of Sir Robert Peel had made a weak effort at compromise by legislative enactment, but had declined to introduce any legislation which should free the Kirk of Scotland from the control of the civil courts, and there was no course for those who held the views of Dr. Chalmers but to withdraw from the church which admitted that claim of state control. Opinions may differ as to the necessity, the propriety of the secession—as to its effects upon the history and the character of the Scottish people since that time; but there can be no difference of opinion as to the spirit of self-sacrifice in which the step was taken. Five hundred ministers on that memorable day went deliberately forth from their positions of comfort and honor, from home and competence, to meet an uncertain and a perilous future, with perhaps poverty and failure to be the final result of their enterprise, and with misconstruction and misrepresentation to make the bitter bread of poverty more bitter still. In these pages we have nothing to do with the merits of religious controversies; and it is no part of our concern to consider even the social and political effects produced upon Scotland by this great secession. But we need not withhold our admiration from the men who risked and suffered so much in the cause of what they believed to be their church's true rights; and we are bound to give this admiration as cordially to the poor and nameless ministers, the men of the rank and file, about whose doings history so little concerns herself, as to the leaders like Chalmers, who, whether they sought it or not, found fame shining on their path of self-sacrifice. The history of Scotland is illustrated by many great national deeds. No deed it tells of surpasses in dignity and in moral grandeur that secession—to cite the words of the protest—"from an establishment which we loved and prized, through interference with conscience, the dishonor done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of his sole and supreme authority as king in his church."

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE DISASTERS OF CABUL.

THE earliest days of the Peel ministry fell upon trouble, not indeed at home, but abroad. At home the prospect still seemed bright. The birth of the queen's eldest son was an event welcomed by national congratulation. There was still great distress in the agricultural districts; but there was a general confidence that the financial genius of Peel would quickly find some way to make burdens light, and that the condition of things all over the country would begin to mend. It was a region far removed from the knowledge and the thoughts of most Englishmen that supplied the news now beginning to come into England day after day, and to thrill the country with the tale of one of the greatest disasters to English policy and English arms to be found in all the record of our dealings with the East. There are many still living who can recall with an impression as keen as though it belonged to yesterday the first accounts that reached this country of the surrender at Cabul, and the gradual extinction of the army that tried to make its retreat through the terrible pass.

This grim chapter of history had been for some time in preparation. It may be said to open with the reign itself. News traveled slowly then; and it was quite in the ordinary course of things that some part of the empire might be torn with convulsion for months before London knew that the even and ordinary condition of things had been disturbed. In this instance, the rejoicings at the accession of the young queen were still going on when a series of events had begun in Central Asia destined to excite the profoundest emotion in England, and to exercise the most powerful influence upon our foreign policy down to the present hour. On September 20, 1837, Captain Alexander Burnes arrived at Cabul, the capital of the state of Cabul, in the north of Afghanistan, and the ancient capital of the Emperor Baber, whose tomb is on a hill outside the city. Burnes was a famous orientalist and traveler, the Burton or Burnaby of his day; he had conducted an expedition into Central Asia; had published his travels in Bokhara, and had been sent on a mission by the Indian government, in whose ser-

vice he was to study the navigation of the Indus. He was, it may be remarked, a member of the family of Robert Burns, the poet himself having changed the original spelling of the name which all the other members of the family retained. The object of the journey of Captain Burnes to Cabul in 1837 was in the first instance to enter into commercial relations with Dost Mohammed, then ruler of Cabul, and with other chiefs of the western regions. But events soon changed his business from a commercial into a political and diplomatic mission; and his tragic fate would make his journey memorable to Englishmen forever, even if other events had not grown out of it which give it a place of more than personal importance in history.

The great region of Afghanistan, with its historical boundaries as varying and difficult to fix at certain times as those of the old Dukedom of Burgundy, has been called the land of transition between Eastern and Western Asia. All the great ways that lead from Persia to India pass through that region. There is a proverb which declares that no one can be king of Hindostan without first becoming lord of Cabul. The Afghans are the ruling nation, but among them had long been settled Hindoos, Arabs, Armenians, Abyssinians, and men of other races and religions. The Afghans are Mohammedans of the Shunite sect, but they allowed Hindoos, Christians, and even the Persians, who are of the hated dissenting sect of the Shiites, to live among them, and even to rise to high position and influence. The founder of the Afghan empire, Ahmed Shah, died in 1773. He had made an empire which stretched from Herat on the west to Sirhind on the east, and from the Oxus and Cashmere on the north to the Arabian Sea and the mouth of the Indus on the south. The death of his son, Timur Shah, delivered the kingdom up to the hostile factions, intrigues, and quarrels of his sons; the leaders of a powerful tribe, the Barukzyes, took advantage of the events that arose out of this condition of things to dethrone the descendants of Ahmed Shah. When Captain Burnes visited Afghanistan in 1832, the only part of all their great inheritance which yet remained with the descendants of Ahmed Shah was the principality of Herat. The remainder of Afghanistan was parceled out between Dost Mohammed and his brothers. Dost Mohammed was a man of extraordinary ability and energy. He would prob-



ably have made a name as a soldier and a statesman anywhere. He had led stormy youth, but had put away with maturity and responsibility the vices and follies of his earlier years. There seems no reason to doubt that although he was a usurper he was a sincere lover of his country, and on the whole a wise and just ruler.

When Captain Burnes visited Dost Mohammed, he was received with every mark of friendship and favor. Dost Mohammed professed to, and no doubt at one time was, a sincere friend of the English government and people. There was, however, at that time a quarrel going on between the shah of Persia and the prince of Herat, the last enthroned representative, as has been already said, of the great family on whose fall Dost Mahommed and his brothers had mounted into power. So far as can now be judged, there does seem to have been serious and genuine ground of complaint on the part of Persia against the ruler of Herat. But it is probable too that the Persian shah had been seeking for, and in any case, would have found, a pretext for making war; and the strong impression at the time in England, and among the authorities in India, was that Persia herself was but a puppet in the hands of Russia. A glance at the man will show the meaning of this suspicion and the reasons which at once gave it plausibility, and would have rendered it of grave importance. If Persia were merely the instrument of Russia, and if the troops of the shah were only the advance guard of the czar, then undoubtedly the attack on Herat might have been regarded as the first step of a great movement of Russia toward our Indian dominion.

There were other reasons, too, to give this suspicion some plausibility. Mysterious agents of Russia, officers in her service and others, began to show themselves in Central Asia at the time of Captain Burnes' visit to Dost Mohammed. Undoubtedly, Russia did set herself for some reason to win the friendship and alliance of Dost Mohammed; and Captain Burnes was for his part engaged in the same endeavor. All considerations of merely commercial nature had long since been put away, and Burnes was freely and earnestly negotiating with Dost Mohammed for his alliance. Burnes always insisted that Dost Mohammed himself was sincerely anxious to become an ally of England, and that he offered more than once on his own free part to dismiss the Russian

agents even without seeing them, if Burnes desired him to do so. But for some reason Burnes' superiors did not share his confidence. In Downing street and in Simla the profoundest distrust of Dost Mohammed prevailed. It was again and again impressed on Burnes that he must regard Dost Mohammed as a treacherous enemy and as a man playing the part of Persia and of Russia. It is impossible now to estimate fairly all the reasons which may have justified the English and the Indian governments in this conviction. But we know that nothing in the policy afterward followed out by the Indian authorities exhibited any of the judgment and wisdom that would warrant us in taking anything for granted on the mere faith of their dictum. The story of four years—almost to a day the extent of this sad chapter of English history—will be a tale of such misfortune, blunder and humiliation as the annals of England do not anywhere else present. Blunders which were indeed worse than crimes, and a principle of action which it is a crime in any rulers to sanction, brought things to such a pass with us that in a few years from the accession of the queen we had in Afghanistan soldiers who were positively afraid to fight the enemy, and some English officials who were not ashamed to treat for the removal of our most formidable foes by purchased assassination. It is a good thing for us all to read in cold blood this chapter of our history. It will teach us how vain is a policy founded on evil and ignoble principles; how vain is the strength and courage of men when they have not leaders fit to command. It may teach us also not to be too severe in our criticism of other nations. The failure of the French invasion of Mexico under the Second Empire seems like glory when compared with the failure of our attempt to impose a hated sovereign on the Afghan people.

Captain Burnes then was placed in the painful difficulty of having to carry out a policy of which he entirely disapproved. He believed in Dost Mohammed as a friend, and he was ordered to regard him as an enemy. It would have been better for the career and for the reputation of Burnes if he had simply declined to have anything to do with a course of action which seemed to him at once unjust and unwise. But Burnes was a young man, full of youth's energy and ambition. He thought he saw a career of distinction opening before him, and he was unwilling to close

it abruptly by setting himself in obstinate opposition to his superiors. He was, besides, of a quick mercurial temperament, over which mind followed mood in rapid succession of change. A slight contradiction sometimes threw him into momentary despondency; a gleam of hope elated him into the assurance that all was won. It is probable that after awhile he may have persuaded himself to acquiesce in the judgment of his chiefs. On the other hand, Dost Mohammed was placed in a position of great difficulty and danger. He had to choose. He could not remain absolutely independent of all the disputants. If England would not support him, he must for his own safety find alliances elsewhere; in Russian statecraft, for example. He told Burnes of this again and again, and Burnes endeavored without the slightest success to impress his superiors with his own views as to the reasonableness of Dost Mohammed's arguments. Runjeet Singh, the daring and successful adventurer who had annexed the whole province of Cashmere to his dominions, was the enemy of Dost Mohammed and the faithful ally of England. Dost Mohammed thought the British government could assist him in coming to terms with Runjeet Singh, and Burnes had assured him that the British government would do all it could to establish satisfactory terms of peace between Afghanistan and the Punjab, over which Runjeet Singh ruled. Burnes wrote from Cabul to say that Russia had made substantial offers to Dost Mohammed; Persia had been lavish in her biddings for his alliance; Bokhara and other states had not been backward; "yet in all that has passed, or is daily transpiring, the chief of Cabul declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offices of the British to all these offers, however alluring they may seem, from Persia or from the emperor; which places his good sense in a light more than prominent, and in my humble judgment proves that by an earlier attention to these countries we might have escaped the whole of these intrigues and held long since a stable influence in Cabul." Burnes, however, was unable to impress his superiors with any belief either in Dost Mohammed or in the policy which he himself advocated, and the result was that Lord Auckland, the governor-general of India, at length resolved to treat Dost Mohammed as an enemy and to drive him from Cabul. Lord Auckland, therefore, entered into a treaty with Runjeet Singh and

Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, the exiled representative of what we may call the legitimist rulers of Afghanistan, for the restoration of the latter to the throne of his ancestors, and for the destruction of the power of Dost Mohammed.

It ought to be a waste of time to enter into any argument in condemnation of such a policy in our days. Even if its results had not proved in this particular instance its most striking and exemplary condemnation, it is so grossly and flagrantly opposed to all the principles of our more modern statesmanship that no one among us ought now to need a warning against it. Dost Mohammed was the accepted, popular and successful ruler of Cabul. No matter what our quarrel with him, we had not the slightest right to make it an excuse for forcing on his people a ruler whom they had proved before, as they were soon to prove again, that they thoroughly detested. Perhaps the nearest parallel to our policy in this instance is to be found in the French invasion of Mexico, and the disastrous attempt to impose a foreign ruler on the Mexican people. Each experiment ended in utter failure, and the miserable death of the unfortunate puppet prince who was put forward as the figure-head of the enterprise. But the French emperor could at least have pleaded in his defense that Maximilian of Austria had not already been tried and rejected by the Mexican people. Our *protégé* had been tried and rejected. The French emperor might have pleaded that he had actual and substantial wrongs to avenge. We had only problematical and possible dangers to guard against. In any case, as has been already said, the calamities entailed on French arms and counsels by the Mexican intervention read like a page of brilliant success when compared with the immediate result of our enterprise in Cabul. Before passing away from this part of the subject, it is necessary to mention the fact that among its many unfortunate incidents the campaign led to some peculiarly humiliating debates and some lamentable accusations in the House of Commons. Years after Burnes had been flung into his bloody grave, it was found that the English government had presented to the House of Commons his despatches in so mutilated and altered a form, that Burnes was made to seem as if he actually approved and recommended the policy which he especially warned us to avoid. It is painful to have to record such a fact but it is indispensable that it should be

recorded. It would be vain to attempt to explain how the principles and the honor of English statesmanship fell for the hour under the demoralizing influence which allowed such things to be thought legitimate. An Oriental atmosphere seemed to have gathered around our official leaders. In Afghanistan they were entering into secret and treacherous treaties; in England they were garbling despatches. When years after Lord Palmerston was called upon to defend the policy which had thus dealt with the despatches of Alexander Burnes, he did not say that the documents were not garbled. He only contended that as the government had determined not to act on the advice of Burnes, they were in no wise bound to publish those passages of his despatches in which he set forth assumptions which they believed to be unfounded, and advised a policy which they looked upon as mistaken. Such a defense is only to be read with wonder and pain. The government was not accused of suppressing passages which they believed rightly or wrongly to be worthless. The accusation was that by suppressing passages and sentences here and there, Burnes was made to appear as if he were actually recommending the policy against which he was at the time most earnestly protesting. Burnes was himself the first victim of the policy which he strove against, and which all England has since condemned. No severer word is needed to condemn the mutilation of his despatches than to say that he was actually made to stand before the country as responsible for having recommended that very policy. "It should never be forgotten," says Sir J. W. Kaye, the historian of the Afghan War, "by those who would form a correct estimate of the character and career of Alexander Burnes, that both have been misrepresented in those collections of state papers which are supposed to furnish the best materials of history, but which are often in reality only one-sided compilations of garbled documents—counterfeits, which the ministerial stamp forces into currency, defrauding a present generation, and handing down to posterity a chain of dangerous lies."

Meanwhile the Persian attack on Herat had practically failed, owing mainly to the skill and spirit of a young English officer, Eldred Pottinger, who was assisting the prince in his resistance to the troops of the Persian shah. Lord Auckland, however, ordered the assemblage of a

British force for service across the Indus, and issued a famous manifesto, dated from Simla, October 1, 1838, in which he set forth the motives of his policy. The governor-general stated that Dost Mohammed had made a sudden and unprovoked attack upon our ancient ally, Runjeet Singh, and that when the Persian army was besieging Herat, Dost Mohammed was giving undisguised support to the designs of Persia. The chiefs of Candahar, the brothers of Dost Mohammed, had also, Lord Auckland declared, given in their adherence to the plans of Persia. Great Britain regarded the advance of Persian arms in Afghanistan as an act of hostility toward herself. The governor-general had, therefore, resolved to support the claims of the Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, whose dominions had been usurped by the existing rulers of Cabul, and who had found an honorable asylum in British territory; and "whose popularity throughout Afghanistan"—Lord Auckland wrote in words that must afterward have read like the keenest and cruelest satire upon his policy—"had been proved to his lordship by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities." This popular sovereign, this favorite of his people, was at the time living in exile, without the faintest hope of ever again being restored to his dominions. We pulled the poor man out of his obscurity, told him that his people were yearning for him, and that we would set him on his throne once more. We entered for the purpose into the tripartite treaty already mentioned. Mr. (afterward Sir W. H.) Macnaghten, secretary to the government of India, was appointed to be envoy and minister at the court of Shah Soojah; and Sir Alexander Burnes (who had been recalled from the court of Dost Mohammed and rewarded with a title for giving the advice which his superiors thought absurd) was deputed to act under his direction. It is only right to say that the policy of Lord Auckland had the entire approval of the British government. It was afterward stated in parliament on the part of the ministry that a despatch recommending to Lord Auckland exactly such a course as he pursued crossed on the way his despatch announcing to the government at home that he had already undertaken the enterprise.

We conquered Dost Mohammed and dethroned him. He made a bold and brilliant, sometimes even a splendid

resistance. We took Ghuznee by blowing up one of its gates with bags of gunpowder, and thus admitting the rush of a storming party. It was defended by one of the sons of Dost Mohammed, who became our prisoner. We took Jellalabad, which was defended by Akbar Khan, another of Dost Mohammed's sons, whose name came afterward to have a hateful sound in all English ears. As we approached Cabul, Dost Mohammed abandoned his capital and fled with a few horsemen across the Indus. Shah Soojah entered Cabul accompanied by the British officers. It was to have been a triumphal entry. The hearts of those who believed in his cause must have sunk within them when they saw how the shah was received by the people who, Lord Auckland was assured, were so devoted to him. The city received him in sullen silence. Few of its people condescended even to turn out to see him as he passed. The vast majority stayed away and disdained even to look at him. One would have thought that the least observant eye must have seen that his throne could not last a moment longer than the time during which the strength of Britain was willing to support it. The British army, however, withdrew, leaving only a contingent of some eight thousand men, besides the shah's own hirelings, to maintain him for the present. Sir W. Macnaghten seems to have really believed that the work was done, and that Shah Soojah was as safe on his throne as Queen Victoria. He was destined to be very soon and very cruelly undeceived.

Dost Mohammed made more than one effort to regain his place. He invaded Shah Soojah's dominions, and met the combined forces of the shah and their English ally in more than one battle. On November 2, 1840, he won the admiration of the English themselves by the brilliant stand he made against them. With his Afghan horse he drove our cavalry before him, and forced them to seek the shelter of the British guns. The native troopers would not stand against him; they fled and left their English officers, who vainly tried to rally them. In this battle of Purwandurrah victory might not unreasonably have been claimed for Dost Mohammed. He won at least his part of the battle. No tongues have praised him louder than those of English historians. But Dost Mohammed had the wisdom of a statesman as well as the genius of a soldier. He knew well that he could not hold out against the strength

of England. A savage or semi-barbarous chieftain is easily puffed up by seeming triumph over a great power, and is led to his destruction by the vain hope that he can hold out against it to the last. Dost Mohammed had no such ignorant and idle notion. Perhaps he knew well enough too that time was wholly on his side; that he had only to wait and see the sovereignty of Shah Soojah tumble into pieces. The evening after his brilliant exploit in the field Dost Mohammed rode quietly up to the quarters of Sir W. Macnaghten, met the envoy, who was returning from an evening ride, and to Macnaghten's utter amazement announced himself as Dost Mohammed, tendered to the envoy the sword that had flashed so splendidly across the field of the previous day's fight and surrendered himself a prisoner. His sword was returned; he was treated with all honor; and a few days afterward he was sent to India, where a residence and a revenue were assigned to him.

But the withdrawal of Dost Mohammed from the scene did nothing to secure the reign of the unfortunate Shah Soojah. The shah was hated on his own account. He was regarded as a traitor who had sold his country to the foreigners. Insurrections began to be chronic. They were going on in the very midst of Cabul itself. Sir W. Macnaghten was warned of danger, but seemed to take no heed. Some fatal blindness appears to have suddenly fallen on the eyes of our people in Cabul. On November 2, 1841, an insurrection broke out. Sir Alexander Burnes lived in the city itself. Sir W. Macnaghten and the military commander, Major-General Elphinstone, were in cantonments at some little distance. The insurrection might have been put down in the first instance with hardly the need even of Napoleon's famous "whiff of grapeshot." But it was allowed to grow up without attempt at control. Sir Alexander Burnes could not be got to believe that it was anything serious even when a fanatical and furious mob were besieging his own house. The fanatics were especially bitter against Burnes, because they believed that he had been guilty of treachery. They accused him of having pretended to be the friend of Dost Mohammed, deceived him, and brought the English into the country. How entirely innocent of this charge Burnes was we all now know; but it would be idle to deny that there was much in the external aspect of events to excite such a suspicion in the mind of



an infuriated Afghan. To the last Burnes refused to believe that he was in danger. He had always been a friend to the Afghans, he said, and he could have nothing to fear. It was true. He had always been the sincere friend of the Afghans. It was his misfortune, and the heavy fault of his superiors, that he had been made to appear as an enemy of the Afghans. He had now to pay a heavy penalty for the errors and the wrong-doing of others. He harangued the raging mob and endeavored to bring them to reason. He does not seem to have understood up to the very last moment that by reminding them that he was Alexander Burnes, their old friend, he was only giving them a new reason for demanding his life. He was murdered in the tumult. He and his brother and all those with them were hacked to pieces with Afghan knives. He was only in his thirty-seventh year when he was murdered. He was the first victim of the policy which had resolved to intervene in the affairs of Afghanistan. Fate seldom showed with more strange and bitter malice her proverbial irony than when she made him the first victim of the policy adopted in despite of his best advice and his strongest warnings.

The murder of Burnes was not a climax; it was only a beginning. The English troops were quartered in cantonments outside the city, and at some little distance from it. These cantonments were in any case of real difficulty practically indefensible. The popular monarch, the darling of his people, whom we had restored to his throne, was in the Bala Hissar, or citadel of Cabul. From the moment when the insurrection broke out he may be regarded as a prisoner or a besieged man there. He was as utterly unable to help our people as they were to help him. The whole country threw itself into insurrection against him and us. The Afghans attacked the cantonments and actually compelled the English to abandon the forts in which all our commissariat was stored. We were thus threatened with famine even if we could resist the enemy in arms. We were strangely unfortunate in our civil and military leaders. Sir W. Macnaghten was a man of high character and good purpose, but he was weak and credulous. The commander, General Elphinstone, was old, infirm, tortured by disease, broken down both in mind and body, incapable of forming a purpose of his own, or of holding to one suggested by

anybody else. His second in command was a far stronger and abler man; but unhappily the two could never agree. "They were both of them," says Sir J. W. Kaye, "brave men. In any other situation, though the physical infirmities of the one and the cankered vanity, the dogmatical perverseness of the other, might have in some measure detracted from their efficiency as military commanders, I believe they would have exhibited sufficient courage and constancy to rescue an army from utter destruction, and the British name from indelible reproach. But in the Cabul cantonments they were miserably out of place. They seem to have been sent there by superhuman intervention, to work out the utter ruin and prostration of an unholy policy by ordinary human means." One fact must be mentioned by an English historian; one which an English historian has happily not often to record. It is certain that an officer in our service entered into negotiations for the murder of the insurgent chiefs who were our worst enemies. It is more than probable that he believed in doing so he was acting as Sir W. Macnaghten would have had him do. Sir W. Macnaghten was innocent of any complicity in such a plot, and was incapable of it. But the negotiations were opened and carried on in his name.

A new figure appeared on the scene, a dark and a fierce apparition. This was Akbar Khan, the favorite son of Dost Mohammed. He was a daring, a clever, an unscrupulous young man. From the moment when he entered Cabul he became the real leader of the insurrection against Shah Soojah and us. Macnaghten, persuaded by the military commander that the position of things was hopeless, consented to enter into negotiations with Akbar Khan. Before the arrival of the latter the chiefs of the insurrection had offered us terms which made the ears of our envoy tingle. Such terms had not often been even suggested to British soldiers before. They were simply unconditional surrender. Macnaghten indignantly rejected them. Everything went wrong with him, however. We were beaten again and again by the Afghans. Our officers never faltered in their duty; but the melancholy truth has to be told that the men, most of whom were Asiatics, at last began to lose heart and would not fight the enemy. So the envoy was compelled to enter into terms with Akbar Khan and the other chiefs, Akbar Khan received him at first with con-

temptuous insolence—as a haughty conqueror receives some ignoble and humiliated adversary. It was agreed that the British troops should quit Afghanistan at once; that Dost Mohammed and his family should be sent back to Afghanistan; that on his return the unfortunate Shah Soojah should be allowed to take himself off to India or where he would; and that some British officers should be left at Cabul as hostages for the fulfillment of the conditions.

The evacuation did not take place at once, although the fierce winter was setting in, and the snow was falling heavily, ominously. Macnaghten seems to have had still some lingering hopes that something would turn up to relieve him from the shame of quitting the country; and it must be owned that he does not seem to have had any intention of carrying out the terms of the agreement if by any chance he could escape from them. On both sides there were dallyings and delays. At last Akbar Khan made a new and startling proposition to our envoy. It was that they two should enter into a secret treaty, should unite their arms against the other chiefs, and should keep Shah Soojah on the throne as nominal king, with Akbar Khan as his vizier. Macnaghten caught at the proposals. He had entered into terms of negotiation with the Afghan chiefs together; he now consented to enter into a secret treaty with one of the chiefs to turn their joint arms against the others. It would be idle and shameful to attempt to defend such a policy. We can only excuse it by considering the terrible circumstances of Macnaghten's position; the manner in which his nerves and moral fibre had been shaken and shattered by calamities; and his doubts whether he could place any reliance on the promises of the chiefs. He had apparently sunk into that condition of mind which Macanlay tells us that Clive adopted so readily in his dealings with Asiatics, and under the influence of which men naturally honorable and high-minded come to believe that it is right to act treacherously with those whom we believe to be treacherous. All this is but excuse, and rather poor excuse. When it has all been said and thought of, we must still be glad to believe that there are not many Englishmen who would, under any circumstances, have consented even to give a hearing to the proposals of Akbar Khan.

Whatever Macnaghten's error, it was dearly expiated. He went out at noon next day to confer with Akbar Khan

on the banks of the neighboring river. Three of his officers were with him. Akbar Khan was ominously surrounded by friends and retainers. These kept pressing round the unfortunate envoy. Some remonstrance was made by one of the English officers, but Akbar Khan said it was of no consequence, as they were all in the secret. Not many words were spoken; the expected conference had hardly begun when a signal was given or an order issued by Akbar Khan, and the envoy and the officers were suddenly seized from behind. A scene of wild confusion followed, in which hardly anything is clear and certain but the one most horrible incident. The envoy struggled with Akbar Khan, who had himself seized Macnaghten; Akbar Khan drew from his belt one of a pair of pistols which Macnaghten had presented to him a short time before and shot him through the body. The fanatics who were crowding round hacked the body to pieces with their knives. Of the three officers one was killed on the spot; the other two were forced to mount Afghan horses and carried away as prisoners.

At first this horrible deed of treachery and blood shows like that to which Clearchus and his companions, the chiefs of the famous ten thousand Greeks, fell victims at the hands of Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap. But it seems certain that the treachery of Akbar, base as it was, did not contemplate more than the seizure of the envoy and his officers. There were jealousies and disputes among the chiefs of the insurrection. One of them in especial had got his mind filled with the conviction, inspired no doubt by the unfortunate and unparalleled negotiation already mentioned, that the envoy had offered a price for his head. Akbar Khan was accused by him of being a secret friend of the envoy and the English. Akbar Khan's father was a captive in the hands of the English, and it may have been thought that on his account and for personal purposes Akbar was favoring the envoy and even intriguing with him. Akbar offered to prove his sincerity by making the envoy a captive and handing him over to the chiefs. This was the treacherous plot which he strove to carry out by entering into the secret negotiations with the easily deluded envoy. On the fatal day the latter resisted and struggled; Akbar Khan heard a cry of alarm that the English soldiers were coming out of cantonments to rescue the envoy; and, wild with passion, he suddenly drew his pistol and fired.

This was the statement made again and again by Akbar Khan himself. It does not seem an improbable explanation for what otherwise looks a murder as stupid and purposeless as it was brutal. The explanation does not much relieve the darkness of Akbar Khan's character. It is given here as history, not as exculpation. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Akbar Khan would have shrunk from any treachery or any cruelty which served his purpose. His own explanation of his purpose in this instance shows a degree of treachery which could hardly be surpassed even in the East. But it is well to bear in mind that the suspicions of perfidy under which the English envoy labored, and which was the main impulse of Akbar's Khan's movement, had evidence enough to support it in the eyes of suspicious enemies; and that poor Macnaghten would not have been murdered had he not consented to meet Akbar Khan and treat with him on a proposition to which an English official should never have listened.

A terrible agony of suspense followed among the little English force in the cantonments. The military chiefs afterward stated that they did not know until the following day that any calamity had befallen the envoy. But a keen suspicion ran through the cantonments that some fearful deed had been done. No step was taken to avenge the death of Macnaghten even when it became known that his hacked and mangled body had been exhibited in triumph all through the streets and bazaars of Cabul. A paralysis seemed to have fallen over the councils of our military chiefs. On December 24, 1841, came a letter from one of the officers seized by Akbar Khan, accompanying proposals for a treaty from the Afghan chiefs. It is hard now to understand how any English officers could have consented to enter into terms with the murderers of Macnaghten before his mangled body could well have ceased to bleed. It is strange that it did not occur to most of them that there was an alternative; that they were not ordered by fate to accept whatever the conquerors chose to offer. We can all see the difficulty of their position. General Elphinstone and his second in command, Brigadier Shelton, were convinced that it would be equally impossible to stay where they were or to cut their way through the Afghans. But it might have occurred to many that they were nevertheless not bound to treat with the Afghans. They might have

remembered the famous answer of the father in Corneille's immortal drama, who is asked what his son could have done but yield in the face of such odds, and exclaims in generous passion that he could have died. One English officer of mark did counsel his superiors in this spirit. This was Major Eldred Pottinger, whose skill and courage in the defense of Herat we have already mentioned. Pottinger was for cutting their way through all enemies and difficulties as far as they could, and then occupying the ground with their dead bodies. But his advice was hardly taken into consideration. It was determined to treat with the Afghans; and treating with the Afghans now meant accepting any terms the Afghans chose to impose on their fallen enemies. In the negotiations that went on some written documents were exchanged. One of these, drawn up by the English negotiators, contains a short sentence which we believe to be absolutely unique in the history of British dealings with armed enemies. It is an appeal to the Afghan conquerors not to be too hard upon the vanquished; not to break the bruised reed. "In friendship, kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings!" In friendship—we appealed to the friendship of Macnaghten's murderers; to the friendship, in any case, of the man whose father we had dethroned and driven into exile. Not overpowering the weak with sufferings! The weak were the English! One might fancy he was reading the plaintive and piteous appeal of some forlorn and feeble tribe of helpless half-breeds for the mercy of arrogant and mastering rulers. "Suffolk's imperious tongue is stern and rough," says one in Shakespeare's pages when he is bidden to ask for consideration at the hands of captors whom he is no longer able to resist. The tongue with which the English force at Cabul addressed the Afghans was not imperious or stern or rough. It was bated, mild and plaintive. Only the other day, it would seem, these men had blown up the gates of Ghuznee and rushed through the dense smoke and the falling ruins to attack the enemy hand to hand. Only the other day our envoy had received in surrender the bright sword of Dost Mohammed. Now the same men who had seen these things could only plead for a little gentleness of consideration, and had no thought of resistance, and did not any longer seem to know how to die.

We accepted the terms of treaty offered to us. Nothing else could be done by men who were not prepared to adopt the advice of the heroic father in Corneille. The English were at once to take themselves off out of Afghanistan, giving up all their guns except six, which they were allowed to retain for their necessary defense in their mournful journey home; they were to leave behind all the treasure, and to guarantee the payment of something additional for the safe conduct of the poor little army to Peshawur or to Jellalabad; and they were to hand over six officers as hostages for the due fulfillment of the conditions. It is of course understood that the conditions included the immediate release of Dost Mohammed and his family and their return to Afghanistan. When these should return, the six hostages were to be released. Only one concession had been obtained from the conquerors. It was at first demanded that some of the married ladies should be left as hostages; but on the urgent representations of the English officers this condition was waived—at least for the moment. When the treaty was signed, the officers who had been seized when Macnaghten was murdered were released.

It is worth mentioning that these officers were not badly treated by Akbar Khan while they were in his power. On the contrary, he had to make strenuous efforts, and did make them in good faith, to save them from being murdered by bands of his fanatical followers. One of the officers has himself described the almost desperate efforts which Akbar Khan had to make to save him from the fury of the mob, who thronged thirsting for the blood of the Englishman, up to the very stirrup of their young chief. "Akbar Khan," says this officer, "at length drew his sword and laid about him right manfully," in defense of his prisoner. When, however, he had got the latter into a place of safety, the impetuous young Afghan chief could not restrain a sneer at his captive and the cause his captive represented. Turning to the English officer, he said more than once, "in a tone of triumphant derision," some words such as these: "So you are the man who came here to seize my country?" It must be owned that the condition of things gave bitter meaning to the taunt, if they did not actually excuse it. At a later period of this melancholy story it is told by Lady Sale that crowds of the fanatical Ghilzyes were endeavoring to persuade Akbar Khan to slaughter all

the English, and that when he tried to pacify them they said that when Burnes came into the country they entreated Akbar Khan's father to have Burnes killed, or he would go back to Hindostan, and on some future day return and bring an army with him, "to take our country from us;" and all the calamities had come upon them because Dost Mohammed would not take their advice. Akbar Khan either was or pretended to be moderate. He might indeed safely put on an air of magnanimity. His enemies were doomed. It needed no command from him to decree their destruction.

The withdrawal from Cabul began. It was the heart of a cruel winter. The English had to make their way through the awful pass of Koord Cabul. This stupendous gorge runs for some five miles between mountain ranges so narrow, lofty and grim, that in the winter season the rays of the sun can hardly pierce its darkness even at the noontide. Down the center dashed a precipitous mountain current, so fiercely that the stern frost of that terrible time could not stay its course. The snow lay in masses on the ground; the rocks and stones that raised their heads above the snow in the way of the unfortunate travelers were slippery with frost. Soon the white snow began to be stained and splashed with blood. Fearful as this Koord Cabul Pass was, it was only a degree worse than the road which for two whole days the English had to traverse to reach it. The army which set out from Cabul numbered more than four thousand fighting men, of whom Europeans, it should be said, formed but a small proportion; and some twelve thousand camp followers of all kinds. There were also many women and children. Lady Macnaghten, widow of the murdered envoy; Lady Sale, whose gallant husband was holding Jellalabad at the near end of the Khyber Pass toward the Indian frontier; Mrs. Sturt, her daughter, soon to be widowed by the death of her young husband; Mrs. Trevor and her seven children, and many other pitiable fugitives. The winter journey would have been cruel and dangerous enough in time of peace; but this journey had to be accomplished in the midst of something far worse than common war. At every step of the road, every opening of the rocks, the unhappy crowd of confused and heterogeneous fugitives were beset by bands of savage fanatics, who with their long guns and long knives were



murdering all they could reach. It was all the way a confused constant battle against a guerrilla enemy of the most furious and merciless temper, who were perfectly familiar with the ground, and could rush forward and retire exactly as suited their tactics. The English soldiers, weary, weak, and crippled by frost, could make but a poor fight against the savage Afghans. "It was no longer," says Sir J. W. Kaye, "a retreating army; it was a rabble in chaotic flight." Men, women, and children, horses, ponies, camels, the wounded, the dying, the dead, all crowded together in almost inextricable confusion among the snow and amid the relentless enemies. "The massacre"—to quote again from Sir J. W. Kaye, "was fearful in this Koord Cabul Pass. Three thousand men are said to have fallen under the fire of the enemy, or to have dropped down paralyzed and exhausted to be slaughtered by the Afghan knives. And amidst these fearful scenes of carnage, through a shower of matchlock balls, rode English ladies on horseback or in camel-panniers, sometimes vainly endeavoring to keep their children beneath their eyes, and losing them in the confusion and bewilderment of the desolating march."

Was it for this, then, that our troops had been induced to capitulate? Was this the safe-conduct which the Afghan chiefs had promised in return for their accepting the ignominious conditions imposed on them? Some of the chiefs did exert themselves to their utmost to protect the unfortunate English. It is not certain what the real wish of Akbar Khan may have been. He protested that he had no power to restrain the hordes of fanatical Ghilzyes, whose immediate chiefs had not authority enough to keep them from murdering the English whenever they got a chance. The force of some few hundred horsemen whom Akbar Khan had with him were utterly incapable, he declared, of maintaining order among such a lot of infuriated and lawless savages. Akbar Khan constantly appeared on the scene during this journey of terror. At every opening or break of the long straggling flight he and his little band of followers showed themselves on the horizon; trying still to protect the English from utter ruin, as he declared; come to gloat over their misery and to see that it was surely accomplished, some of the unhappy English were ready to believe. Yet his presence was something that seemed to give a hope of protection. Akbar Khan at length started

the English by a proposal that the women and children who were with the army should be handed over to his custody to be conveyed by him in safety to Peshawur. There was nothing better to be done. The only modification of his request or command that could be obtained, was that the husbands of the married ladies should accompany their wives. With this agreement the women and children were handed over to the care of this dreaded enemy, and Lady Macnaghten had to undergo the agony of a personal interview with the man whose own hand had killed her husband. Few scenes in poetry or romance can surely be more thrilling with emotion than such a meeting as this must have been. Akbar Khan was kindly in his language, and declared to the unhappy widow that he would give his right arm to undo, if it were possible, the deed that he had done.

The women and children and the married men whose wives were among this party were taken from the unfortunate army and placed under the care of Akbar Khan. As events turned out, this proved a fortunate thing for them. But in any case it was the best thing that could be done. Not one of these women and children could have lived through the horrors of the journey which lay before the remnant of what had once been a British force. The march was resumed; new horrors set in; new heaps of corpses stained the snow; and then Akbar Khan presented himself with a fresh proposition. In the treaty made at Cabul between the English authorities and the Afghan chiefs there was an article which stipulated that "the English force at Jellalabad shall march for Peshawur before the Cabul army arrives, and shall not delay on the road." Akbar Khan was especially anxious to get rid of the little army at Jellalabad at the near end of the Khyber Pass. He desired above all things that it should be on the march home to India; either that it might be out of his way, or that he might have a chance of destroying it on its way. It was in great measure as a security for its moving that he desired to have the women and children under his care it is not likely that he meant any harm to the women and children; it must be remembered that his father and many of the women of his family were under the control of the British government as prisoners in Hindostan. But he fancied that if he had the English women in his hands the army at Jellalabad could not refuse to obey the conditions set down in the

article of the treaty. Now that he had the women in his power, however, he demanded other guarantees, with openly acknowledged purpose of keeping these latter until Jellalabad should have been evacuated. He demanded that General Elphinstone, the commander, with his second in command, and also one other officer, should hand themselves over to him as hostages. He promised if this were done to exert himself more than before to restrain the fanatical tribes, and also to provide the army in the Koord Cabul Pass with provisions. There was nothing for it but to submit; and the English general himself became, with the women and children a captive in the hands of the inexorable enemy.

Then the march of the army, without a general, went on again. Soon it became the story of a general without an army; before very long there was neither general nor army. It is idle to lengthen a tale of mere horrors. The straggling remnant of an army entered the Jugdulluk Pass—a dark, steep, narrow, ascending path between crags. The miserable toilers found that the fanatical, implacable tribes had barricaded the pass. All was over. The army of Cabul was finally extinguished in that barricaded pass. It was a trap; the British were taken in it. A few mere fugitives escaped from the scene of actual slaughter, and were on the road to Jellalabad, where Sale and his little army were holding their own. When they were within sixteen miles of Jellalabad the number was reduced to six. Of these six, five were killed by straggling marauders on the way. One man alone reached Jellalabad to tell the tale. Literally one man, Dr. Brydon, came to Jellalabad out of a moving host which had numbered in all some sixteen thousand when it set out on its march. The curious eye will search through history or fiction in vain for any picture more thrilling with the suggestions of an awful catastrophe than that of this solitary survivor, faint and reeling on his jaded horse, as he appeared under the falls of Jellalabad, to bear the tidings of our Thermopylae of pain and shame.

This is the crisis of the story. With this at least the worst of the pain and shame were destined to end. The rest is all, so far as we are concerned, reaction and recovery. Our successes are common enough; we may tell their tale briefly in this instance. The garrison at Jellalabad had received before Dr. Brydon's arrival an intimation that

they were to go out and march toward India in accordance with the terms of the treaty extorted from Elphinstone at Cabul. They very properly declined to be bound by a treaty which, as General Sale rightly conjectured, had been "forced from our envoy and military commander with the knives at their throats." General Sale's determination was clear and simple. "I propose to hold this place on the part of government until I receive its order to the contrary." This resolve of Sale's was really the turning point of the history. Sale held Jellalabad; Nott was at Candahar. Akbar Khan besieged Jellalabad. Nature seemed to have declared herself emphatically on his side, for a succession of earthquake shocks shattered the walls of the place, and produced more terrible destruction than the most formidable guns of modern warfare could have done. But the garrison held out fearlessly; they restored the parapets, re-established every battery, re-trenched the whole of the gates, and built up all the breaches. They resisted every attempt of Akbar Khan to advance upon their works and at length when it became certain that General Pollock was forcing the Khyber Pass to come to their relief, they determined to attack Akbar Khan's army; they issued boldly out of their forts, forced a battle on the Afghan chief, and completely defeated him. Before Pollock, having gallantly fought his way through the Khyber Pass, had reached Jellalabad, the beleaguering army had been entirely defeated and dispersed. General Nott at Candahar was ready now to co-operate with General Sale and General Pollock for any movement on Cabul which the authorities might advise or sanction. Meanwhile the unfortunate Shah Soojah, whom we had restored with so much pomp of announcement to the throne of his ancestors, was dead. He was assassinated in Cabul, soon after the departure of the British, by the orders of some of the chiefs who detested him; and his body, stripped of its royal robes and its many jewels, was flung into a ditch. Historians quarrel a good deal over the question of his sincerity and fidelity in his dealings with us. It is not likely that an Oriental of his temperament and his weakness could have been capable of any genuine and unmixed loyalty to the English strangers. It seems to us probable enough that he may at important moments have wavered and even faltered, glad to take advantage of any movement that might safely rid him of

us, and yet on the whole preferring our friendship and our protection to the tender mercies which he was doomed to experience when our troops had left him. But if we ask concerning his gratitude to us, it may be well also to ask what there was in our conduct toward him which called for any enthusiastic display of gratitude. We did not help him out of any love for him, or any concern for the justice of his cause. It served us to have a puppet, and we took him when it suited us. We also abandoned him when it suited us. As Lady Teazle proposes to do with honor in her conference with Joseph Surface, so we ought to do with gratitude in discussing the merits of Shah Soojah—leave it out of the question. What Shah Soojah owed to us was a few weeks of idle pomp and absurd dreams, a bitter awakening and a shameful death.

During this time a new governor-general had arrived in India. Lord Auckland's time had run out, and during its latter months he had become nerveless and despondent because of the utter failure of the policy which in an evil hour for himself and his country he had been induced to undertake. It does not seem that it ever was at heart a policy of his own, and he knew that the East India Company were altogether opposed to it. The company were well aware of the vast expense which our enterprises in Afghanistan must impose on the revenues of India, and they looked forward eagerly to the earliest opportunity of bringing it to a close. Lord Auckland had been persuaded into adopting it against his better judgment, and against even the whisperings of his conscience; and now he too longed to be done with it; but he wished to leave Afghanistan as a magnanimous conqueror. He had in his own person discounted the honors of victory. He had received an earldom for the services he was presumed to have rendered to his sovereign and his country. He had therefore in full sight that mournful juxtaposition of incongruous objects which a great English writer has described so touchingly and tersely—the trophies of victory and the battle lost. He was an honorable, kindly gentleman, and the news of all the successive calamities fell upon him with a crushing, an overwhelming weight. In plain language, the governor-general lost his head. He seemed to have no other idea than that of getting all our troops as quickly as might be out of Afghanistan and shaking the dust of the place off

our feet forever. It may be doubted whether, if we had pursued such a policy as this, we might not as well have left India itself once for all. If we had allowed it to seem clear to the Indian populations and princes that we could be driven out of Afghanistan with humiliation and disaster, and that we were unable or afraid to strike one blow to redeem our military credit, we should before long have seen in Hindostan many an attempt to enact there the scenes of Cabul and Candahar. Unless a moralist is prepared to say that a nation which has committed one error of policy is bound in conscience to take all the worst and most protracted consequences of that error, and never make any attempt to protect itself against them, even a moralist of the most scrupulous character can hardly deny that we were bound, for the sake of our interests in Europe as well as in India, to prove that our strength had not been broken nor our counsels paralyzed by the disasters in Afghanistan. Yet Lord Auckland does not appear to have thought anything of the kind either needful or within the compass of our national strength. He was, in fact, a broken man.

His successor came out with the brightest hopes of India and the world, founded on his energy and strength of mind. The successor was Lord Ellenborough, the son of that Edward Law, afterward Lord Ellenborough, chief justice of the king's bench, who had been leading counsel for Warren Hastings when the latter was impeached before the House of Lords. The second Ellenborough was at the time of his appointment filling the office of president of the Board of Control, an office he had held before. He was therefore well acquainted with the affairs of India. He had come into office under Sir Robert Peel on the resignation of the Melbourne ministry. He was looked upon as a man of great ability and energy. It was known that his personal predilections were for the career of a soldier. He was fond of telling his hearers then and since that the life of a camp was that which he should have loved to lead. He was a man of great and, in certain lights, apparently splendid abilities. There was a certain Orientalism about his language, his aspirations and his policy. He loved gorgeousness and dramatic—ill-natured persons said theatric—effects. Life arranged itself in his eyes as a superb and showy pageant of which it would have been his ambition to form the central figure. His eloquence

was often of a lofty and noble order. Men who are still hardly of middle age can remember Lord Ellenborough on great occasions in the House of Lords, and can recollect their having been deeply impressed by him, even though they had but lately heard such speakers as Gladstone or Bright in the other house. It was not easy, indeed, sometimes to avoid the conviction that in listening to Lord Ellenborough one was listening to a really great orator of a somewhat antique and stately type, who attuned his speech to the pitch of an age of loftier and less prosaic aims than ours. When he had a great question to deal with, and when his instincts, if not his reasoning power, had put him on the right, or at least the effective side of it, he could speak in a tone of poetic and elevated eloquence to which it was impossible to listen without emotion. But if Lord Ellenborough was in some respects a man of genius, he was also a man whose love of mere effects often made him seem like a quack. There are certain characters in which a little of unconscious quackery is associated with some of the elements of true genius. Lord Ellenborough was one of these. Far greater men than he must be associated in the same category. The elder Pitt, the first Napoleon, Mirabeau, Bolingbroke, and many others, were men in whom undoubtedly some of the *charlatan* was mixed up with some of the very highest qualities of genius. In Lord Ellenborough this blending was strongly, and sometimes even startlingly apparent. To this hour there are men who knew him well in public and private on whom his weaknesses made so disproportionate an impression that they can see in him little more than a mere *charlatan*. This is entirely unjust. He was a man of great abilities and earnestness, who had in him a strange dash of the play-actor, who at the most serious moment of emergency always thought of how to display himself effectively, and who would have met the peril of an empire as poor Narcissa met death, with an overmastering desire to show to the best personal advantage.

Lord Ellenborough's appointment was hailed by all parties in India as the most auspicious that could be made. Here, people said, is surely the great stage for a great actor; and now the great actor is coming. There would be something fascinating to a temper like his in the thought of redeeming the military honor of his country

and standing out in history as the avenger of the shames of Cabul. But those who thought in this way found themselves suddenly disappointed. Lord Ellenborough uttered and wrote a few showy sentences about revenging our losses and "re-establishing in all its original brilliancy our military character." But when he had done this he seemed to have relieved his mind and to have done enough. With him there was a constant tendency to substitute grandiose phrases for deeds; or perhaps to think that the phrase was the thing of real moment. He said these fine words, and then at once he announced that the only object of the government was to get the troops out of Afghanistan as quickly as might be, and almost on any terms. The whole of Lord Ellenborough's conduct during this crisis is inexplicable except on the assumption that he really did not know at certain times how to distinguish between phrases and actions. A general outcry was raised in India and among the troops in Afghanistan against the extraordinary policy which Lord Ellenborough propounded. Englishmen, in fact, refused to believe in it; took it as something that must be put aside. English soldiers could not believe that they were to be recalled after defeat; they persisted in the conviction that, let the governor-general say what he might, his intention must be that the army should retrieve its fame and retire only after complete victory. The governor-general himself after awhile quietly acted on this interpretation of his meaning. He allowed the military commanders in Afghanistan to pull their resources together and prepare for inflicting signal chastisement on the enemy. They were not long in doing this. They encountered the enemy wherever he showed himself and defeated him. They recaptured town after town, until at length, on September 15, 1842, General Pollock's force entered Cabul. A few days after, as a lasting mark of retribution for the crimes which had been committed there, the British commander ordered the destruction of the great bazaar of Cabul, where the mangled remains of the unfortunate envoy Macnaghten had been exhibited in brutal triumph and joy to the Afghan population.

It is not necessary to enter into detailed descriptions of the successful progress of our arms. The war may be regarded as over. It is, however, necessary to say something of the fate of the captives, or hostages, who were



hurried away that terrible January night at the command of Akbar Khan. One thing has first to be told which some may now receive with incredulity, but which is, nevertheless, true—there was a British general who was disposed to leave them to their fate and take no trouble about them and who declared himself under the conviction, from the tenor of all Lord Ellenborough's despatches, that the recovery of the prisoners was "a matter of indifference to the government." There seems to have been some unhappy spell working against us in all this chapter of our history, by virtue of which even its most brilliant pages were destined to have something ignoble or ludicrous written on them. Better counsels, however, prevailed. General Pollock insisted on an effort being made to recover the prisoners before the troops began to return to India, and he appointed to this noble duty the husband of one of the hostage ladies—Sir Robert Sale. The prisoners were recovered with greater ease than was expected—so many of them as were yet alive. Poor General Elphinstone had long before succumbed to disease and hardship. The ladies had gone through strange privations. Thirty-six years ago the tale of the captivity of Lady Sale and her companions was in every mouth all over England; nor did any civilized land fail to take an interest in the strange and pathetic story. They were hurried from fort to fort as the designs and the fortunes of Akbar Khan dictated his disposal of them. They suffered almost every fierce alternation of cold and heat. They had to live on the coarsest fare; they were lodged in a manner which would have made the most wretched prison accommodation of a civilized country seem luxurious by comparison; they were in constant uncertainty and fear, not knowing what might befall. Yet they seem to have held up their courage and spirits wonderfully well, and to have kept the hearts of the children alive with mirth and sport at moments of the utmost peril. Gradually it became more and more suspected that the fortunes of Akbar Khan were falling. At last it was beyond doubt that he had been completely defeated. Then they were hurried away again, they knew not whither, through ever-ascending mountain passes, under a scorching sun. They were being carried off to the wild rugged regions of the Indian Caucasus. They were bestowed in a miserable fort at Bamecan. They were now under the charge of one of

Akbar Khan's soldiers of fortune. This man had begun to suspect that things were well-nigh hopeless with Akbar Khan. He was induced by gradual and very cautious approaches to enter into an agreement with the prisoners for their release. The English officers signed an agreement with him to secure him a large reward and a pension for life, if he enabled them to escape. He accordingly declared that he renounced his allegiance to Akbar Khan; all the more readily, seeing that news came in of the chief's total defeat and flight, no one knew whither. The prisoners and their escort, lately their jailer and guards, set forth on their way to General Pollock's camp. On their way they met the English parties sent out to seek for them. Sir Robert Sale found his wife again. "Our joy," says one of the rescued prisoners, "was too great, too overwhelming, for tongue to utter." Descriptions, indeed, could do nothing for the effect of such a meeting but to spoil it.

There is a very different ending to the episode of the English captives in Bokhara. Colonel Stoddart, who had been sent to the Persian camp in the beginning of all these events to insist that Persia must desist from the siege of Herat, was sent subsequently on a mission to the ameer of Bokhara. The ameer received him favorably at first, but afterward became suspicious of English designs of conquest, and treated Stoddart with marked indignity. The ameer appears to have been the very model of a melodramatic eastern tyrant. He was cruel and capricious as another Caligula, and perhaps, in truth, quite as mad. He threw Stoddart into prison. Captain Conolly was appointed two years after to proceed to Bokhara and other countries of the same region. He undertook to endeavor to effect the liberation of Stoddart, but could only succeed in sharing his sufferings, and, at last, his fate. The ameer had written a letter to the queen of England, and the answer was written by the foreign secretary, referring the ameer to the governor-general of India. The savage tyrant redoubled the ill-treatment of his captives. He accused them of being spies and of giving help to his enemies. The Indian government were of opinion that the envoys had in some manner exceeded their instructions, and that Conolly in particular had contributed by indiscretion to his own fate. Nothing therefore was done to obtain

their release beyond diplomatic efforts, and appeals to the magnanimity of the ameer, which had not any particular effect. Dr. Wolff, the celebrated traveler and missionary, afterward undertook an expedition of his own in the hope of saving the unfortunate captives; but he only reached Bokhara in time to hear that they had been put to death. The moment and the actual manner of their death cannot be known to positive certainty; but there is little doubt that they were executed on the same day by the orders of the ameer. The journals of Conolly have been preserved up to an advanced period of his captivity, and they relieve so far the melancholy of the fate that fell on the unfortunate officers by showing that the horrors of their hopeless imprisonment were so great that their dearest friends must have been glad to know of their release even by the knife of the executioner. It is perhaps not the least bitter part of the story, that in the belief of many, including the unfortunate officers themselves, the course pursued by the English authorities in India had done more to hand them over to the treacherous cruelty of their captor than to release them from his power. In truth, the authorities of India had had enough of intervention. It would have needed a great exigency indeed to stir them into energy of action soon again in Central Asia.

This thrilling chapter of English history closes with something like a piece of harlequinade. The curtain fell amid general laughter. Only the genius of Lord Ellenborough could have turned the mood of India and of England to mirth on such a subject. Lord Ellenborough was equal to this extraordinary feat. The never-to-be-forgotten proclamation about the restoration to India of the gates of the temple of Somnauth, redeemed at Lord Ellenborough's orders when Ghuznee was retaken by the English, was first received with incredulity as a practical joke; then with one universal burst of laughter; then with indignation; and then, again, when the natural anger had died away, with laughter again. "My brothers and my friends," wrote Lord Ellenborough "to all the princes, chiefs and people of India"—"Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnauth in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahmoud looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee. The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the tem-

ple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory; the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus."

No words of pompous man could possibly have put together greater absurdities. The brothers and friends were Mohammedans and Hindoos, who were about as likely to agree as to the effect of these symbols of triumph as a Fenian and an Orangeman would be to fraternize in a toast to the glorious, pious and immortal memory. To the Mohammedans the triumph of Lord Ellenborough was simply an insult. To the Hindoos the offer was ridiculous; for the temple of Somnauth itself was in ruins, and the ground it covered was trodden by Mohammedans. To finish the absurdity, the gates proved not to be genuine relics at all.

On October 1, 1842, exactly four years since Lord Auckland's proclamation announcing and justifying the intervention to restore Shah Soojah, Lord Ellenborough issued another proclamation announcing the complete failure and the revocation of the policy of his predecessor. Lord Ellenborough declared that "to force a sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British government;" that therefore they would recognize any government approved by the Afghans themselves, that the British arms would be withdrawn from Afghanistan, and that the government of India would remain "content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its empire." Dost Mohammed was released from his captivity, and before long was ruler of Cabul once again. Thus ended the story of our expedition to reorganize the internal condition of Afghanistan. After four years of unparalleled trial and disaster, everything was restored to the condition in which we found it; except that there were so many brave Englishmen sleeping in bloody graves. The Duke of Wellington ascribed the causes of our failure to making war with a peace establishment; making war without a safe base of operations; carrying the native army out of India into a strange and cold climate; invading a poor country which was unequal to the supply of our wants; giving undue power to political agents; want of forethought and undue confidence in the Afghans on the part of Sir W.

Macnaghten; placing our magazines, even our treasure, in indefensible places; great military neglect and mismanagement after the outbreak. Doubtless these were in a military sense the reasons for the failure of an enterprise which cost the revenues of India an enormous amount of treasure. But the causes of failure were deeper than any military errors could explain. It is doubtful whether the genius of a Napoleon and the forethought of a Wellington could have won any permanent success for an enterprise founded on so false and fatal a policy. Nothing in the ability or devotion of those entrusted with the task of carrying it out could have made it deserve success. Our first error of principle was to go completely out of our way for the purpose of meeting mere speculative dangers; our next and far greater error was made when we attempted, in the words of Lord Ellenborough's proclamation, to force a sovereign upon a reluctant people.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE REPEAL YEAR.

"THE year 1843," said O'Connell, "is and shall be the great repeal year." In the year 1843, at all events, O'Connell and his repeal agitation are entitled to the foremost place. The character of the man himself well deserves some calm consideration. We are now, perhaps, in a condition to do it justice. We are far removed in sentiment and political association, if not exactly in years, from the time when O'Connell was the idol of one party, and the object of all the bitterest scorn and hatred of the other. No man of his time was so madly worshiped and so fiercely denounced. No man in our time was ever the object of so much abuse in the newspapers. The fiercest and coarsest attacks that we can remember to have been made in English journals on Cobden and Bright during the heat of the anti-corn law agitation seem placid, gentle and almost complimentary when compared with the criticisms daily applied to O'Connell. The only vituperation which could equal in vehemence and scurrility that poured out upon O'Connell was that which O'Connell himself poured out upon his assailants. His hand was against every man, if every man's

hard was against him. He asked for no quarter, and he gave none.

We have outlived, not the times merely, but the whole spirit of the times so far as political controversy is concerned. We are now able to recognize the fact that a public man may hold opinions which are distasteful to the majority, and yet be perfectly sincere and worthy of respect. We are well aware that a man may differ from us, even on vital questions, and yet be neither fool nor knave. But this view of things was not generally taken in the days of O'Connell's great agitation. He and his enemies alike acted in their controversies on the principle that a political opponent is necessarily a blockhead or a scoundrel. It is strange and somewhat melancholy to read the strictures of so enlightened a woman as Miss Martineau upon O'Connell. They are all based upon what a humorous writer has called the "fiend-in-human-shape theory." Miss Martineau not merely assumes that O'Connell was insincere and untrustworthy, but discourses of him on the assumption that he was knowingly and purposely a villain. Not only does she hold that his repeal agitation was an unqualified evil for his country, and that repeal, if gained, would have been a curse to it, but she insists that O'Connell himself was thoroughly convinced of the facts. She devotes whole pages of lively and acrid argument to prove, not only that O'Connell was ruining his country, but that he knew he was ruining it, and persevered in his wickedness out of pure self-seeking. No writer possessed of one-tenth of Miss Martineau's intellect and education would now reason after that fashion about any public man. If there is any common delusion of past days which may be taken as entirely exploded now, it is the idea that any man ever swayed vast masses of people, and became the idol and the hero of a nation, by the strength of a conscious hypocrisy and imposture.

O'Connell in this repeal year, as he called it, was by far the most prominent politician in these countries who had never been in office. He had been the patron of the Melbourne ministry, and his patronage had proved baneful to it. One of the great causes of the detestation in which the Melbourne Whigs were held by a vast number of English people was their alleged subserviency to the Irish agitator. We cannot be surprised if the English public just then was

little inclined to take an impartial estimate of O'Connell. He had attacked some of their public men in language of the fiercest denunciation. He had started an agitation which seemed as if it were directly meant to bring about a break-up of the imperial system so lately completed by the act of union. He was opposed to the existence of the state church in Ireland. He was the bitter enemy of the Irish landlord class—of the landlords, that is to say, who took their title in any way from England. He was familiarly known in the graceful controversy of the time as the "Big Beggarman." It was an article of faith with the general public that he was enriching himself at the expense of a poor and foolish people. It is a matter of fact that he had given up a splendid practice at the bar to carry on his agitation; that he lost by the agitation, pecuniarily, far more than he ever got by it; that he had not himself received from first to last anything like the amount of the noble tribute so becomingly and properly given to Mr. Cobden, and so honorably accepted by him; and that he died poor, leaving his sons poor. Indeed, it is a remarkable evidence of the purifying nature of any great political cause, even where the object sought is but a phantom, that it is hardly possible to give a single instance of a great political agitation carried on in these countries and in modern times by leaders who had any primary purpose of making money. But at that time the general English public were firmly convinced that O'Connell was simply keeping up his agitation for the sake of pocketing "the rent." Some of the qualities, too, that specially endeared him to his Celtic countrymen made him particularly objectionable to Englishmen; and Englishmen have never been famous for readiness to enter into the feelings and accept the point of view of other peoples. O'Connell was a thorough Celt. He represented all the impulsiveness, the quick-changing emotions, the passionate, exaggerated loves and hatred, the heedlessness of statement, the tendency to confound impressions with facts, the ebullient humor—all the other qualities that are especially characteristic of the Celt. The Irish people were the audience to which O'Connell habitually played. It may indeed be said that even in playing to this audience he commonly played to the gallery. As the orator of a popular assembly, as the orator of a monster meeting, he probably never had an equal in these countries.

He had many of the physical endowments that are especially favorable to success in such a sphere. He had a herculean frame, a stately presence, a face capable of expressing easily and effectively the most rapid alternations of mood, and a voice which all hearers admit to have been almost unrivalled for strength and sweetness. Its power, its pathos, its passion, its music have been described in words of positive rapture by men who detested O'Connell, and who would rather if they could have denied to him any claim on public attention, even in the matter of voice. He spoke without studied preparation, and of course had all the defects of such a style. He fell into repetition and into carelessness of construction; he was hurried away into exaggeration and sometimes into mere bombast. But he had all the peculiar success, too, which rewards the orator who can speak without preparation. He always spoke right to the hearts of his hearers. On the platform or in parliament, whatever he said was said to his audience, and was never in the nature of discourse delivered over their heads. He entered the House of Commons when he was nearly fifty-four years of age. Most persons supposed that the style of speaking he had formed, first in addressing juries, and next in rousing Irish mobs, must cause his failure when he came to appeal to the unsympathetic and fastidious House of Commons. But it is certain that O'Connell became one of the most successful parliamentary orators of his time. Lord Jeffrey, a professional critic, declared that all other speakers in the house seemed to him only talking schoolboy-talk after he had heard O'Connell. No man we now know of is less likely to be carried away by any of the claptrap arts of a false demagogic style than Mr. Roebuck; and Mr. Roebuck has said that he considers O'Connell the greatest orator he ever heard in the House of Commons; Charles Dickens, when a reporter in the gallery, where he had few equals, if any, in his craft, put down his pencil once when engaged in reporting a speech of O'Connell's on one of the tithe riots in Ireland, and declared that he could not take notes of the speech, so moved was he by its pathos. Lord Beaconsfield, who certainly had no great liking for O'Connell, has spoken in terms as high as any one could use about his power over the house. But O'Connell's eloquence only helped him to make all the more enemies in the House of Commons.



He was reckless even there in his denunciation, although he took care never to obtrude on parliament the extravagant and unmeaning abuse of opponents which delighted the Irish mob meetings.

O'Connell was a crafty and successful lawyer. The Irish peasant, like the Scottish, is, or at least then was remarkably fond of litigation. He delighted in the quirks and quibbles of law, and in the triumphs won by the skill of lawyers over opponents. He admired O'Connell all the more when O'Connell boasted and proved that he could drive a coach and six through any act of parliament. One of the pet heroes of Irish legend is a personage whose cleverness and craft procure for him a *sobriquet* which has been rendered into English by the words "twists upon twists and tricks upon tricks." O'Connell was in the eyes of many of the Irish peasantry an embodiment of "twists upon twists and tricks upon tricks," enlisted in their cause for the confusion of their adversaries. He had borne the leading part in carrying Catholic emancipation. He had encountered all the danger and responsibility of the somewhat aggressive movement by which it was finally secured. It is true that it was a reform which in the course of civilization must have been carried. It had in its favor all the enlightenment of the time. The eloquence of the greatest orators, the intellect of the truest philosophers, the prescience of the wisest statesmen had pleaded for it and helped to make its way clear. No one can doubt that it must in a short time have been carried if O'Connell had never lived. But it was carried just then by virtue of O'Connell's bold agitation and by the wise resolve of the Tory government not to provoke a civil war. It is deeply to be regretted that Catholic emancipation was not conceded to the claims of justice. Had it been so yielded, it is very doubtful whether we should ever have heard much of the repeal agitation. But the Irish people saw, and indeed all the world was made aware of the fact, that emancipation would not have been conceded just then at least but for the fear of civil disturbance. To an Englishman looking coolly back from a distance the difference is clear between granting to-day rather than provoke disturbance that which every one sees must be granted some time, and conceding what the vast majority of the English people believe can never with propriety or even safety be granted at

all. But we can hardly wonder if the Irish peasant did not make such distinctions. All he knew was that O'Connell had demanded Catholic emancipation, and had been answered at first by a direct refusal; that he had said he would compel its concession, and that in the end it was conceded to him. When, therefore, O'Connell said that he would compel the government to give him repeal of the union, the Irish peasant naturally believed that he could keep his word.

Nor is there any reason to doubt that O'Connell himself believed in the possibility of accomplishing his purpose. We are apt now to think of the union between England and Ireland as of time-honored endurance. It had been scarcely thirty years in existence when O'Connell entered parliament. The veneration of ancient lineage, the majesty of custom, the respect due to the "wisdom of our ancestors"—none of these familiar claims could be urged on behalf of the legislative union between England and Ireland. To O'Connell it appeared simply as a modern innovation which had nothing to be said for it except that a majority of Englishmen had by threats and bribery forced it on a majority of Irishmen. Mr. Lecky, the author of the "History of European Morals," may be cited as an impartial authority on such a subject. Let us see what he says, in his work on "The Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," with regard to the movement for repeal of the union, of which it seems almost needless to say he disapproves. "O'Connell perceived clearly," says Mr. Lecky, "that the tendency of affairs in Europe was toward the recognition of the principle that a nation's will is the one legitimate rule of its government. All rational men acknowledged that the union was imposed on Ireland by corrupt means contrary to the wish of one generation. O'Connell was prepared to show, by the protest of the vast majority of the people, that it was retained without the acquiescence of the next. He had allied himself with the parties that were rising surely and rapidly to power in England—with the democracy, whose gradual progress is effacing the most venerable landmarks of the constitution—with the free traders, whose approaching triumph he had hailed and exulted in from afar. He had perceived the possibility of forming a powerful party in parliament, which would be free to co-operate with all English parties without coa-

lescing with any, and might thus turn the balance of factions and decide the fate of ministries. He saw, too, that while England in a time of peace might resist the expressed will of the Irish nation, its policy would be necessarily modified in time of war; and he predicted that should there be a collision with France while the nation was organized as in 1843, repeal would be the immediate and the inevitable consequence. In a word, he believed that under a constitutional government the will of four-fifths of a nation, if peacefully, perseveringly and energetically expressed, must sooner or later be triumphant. If a war had broken out during the agitation—if the life of O'Connell had been prolonged ten years longer—if any worthy successor had assumed his mantle—if a fearful famine had not broken the spirit of the people—who can say that the agitation would not have been successful?" No one, we fancy, except those who are always convinced that nothing can ever come to pass which they think ought not to come to pass. At all events, if an English political philosopher, surveying the events after a distance of thirty years, is of opinion that repeal was possible, it is not surprising that O'Connell thought its attainment possible at the time when he set himself to agitate for it. Even if this be not conceded, it will at least be allowed that it is not very surprising if the Irish peasant saw no absurdity in the movement. Our system of government by party does not lay claim to absolute perfection. It is an excellent mechanism on the whole; it is probably the most satisfactory that the wit of man has yet devised for the management of the affairs of a state; but its greatest admirers will bear to be told that it has its drawbacks and disadvantages. One of these undoubtedly is found in the fact that so few reforms are accomplished in deference to the claims of justice, in comparison with those that are yielded to the pressure of numbers. A great English statesman in our own day once said that parliament had done many just things, but few things because they were just. O'Connell and the Irish people saw that Catholic emancipation had been yielded to pressure rather than to justice; it is not wonderful if they thought that pressure might prevail as well in the matter of repeal.

In many respects O'Connell differed from more modern Irish Nationalists. He was a thorough Liberal. He was a devoted opponent of negro slavery; he was a staunch

free trader; he was a friend of popular education; he was an enemy to all excess; he was opposed to strikes; he was an advocate of religious equality everywhere; and he declined to receive the commands of the Vatican in his political agitation. "I am a Catholic, but I am not a Papist," was his own definition of his religious attitude. He preached the doctrine of constitutional agitation strictly, and declared that no political reform was worth the shedding of one drop of blood. It may be asked how it came about that with all these excellent attributes, which all critics now allow to him, O'Connell was so detested by the vast majority of the English people. One reason undoubtedly is that O'Connell deliberately revived and worked up for his political purposes the almost extinct national hatreds of Celt and Saxon. As a phrase of political controversy, he may be said to have invented the word "Saxon." He gave a terrible license to his tongue. His abuse was outrageous; his praise was outrageous. The very effusiveness of his loyalty told to his disadvantage. People could not understand how one who perpetually denounced "the Saxon" could be so enthusiastic and rapturous in his professions of loyalty to the Saxon's queen. In the common opinion of Englishmen, all the evils of Ireland, all the troubles attaching to the connection between the two countries, had arisen from this unmitigated, rankling hatred of Celt and Saxon. It was impossible for them to believe that a man who deliberately applied all the force of his eloquence to revive it could be a genuine patriot. It appeared intolerable that while thus laboring to make the Celt hate the Saxon he should yet profess an extravagant devotion to the sovereign of England. Yet O'Connell was probably quite sincere in his professions of loyalty. He was in no sense a revolutionist. He had from his education in a French college acquired an early detestation of the principles of the French Revolution. Of the Irish rebels of '98 he spoke with as savage an intolerance as the narrowest English Tories could show in speaking of himself. The Tones, and Emmetts, and Fitzgeralds, whom so many of the Irish people adored, were, in O'Connell's eyes, and in his words, only "a gang of miscreants." He grew angry at the slightest expression of an opinion among his followers that seemed to denote even a willingness to discuss any of the doctrines of Communism. His theory and his

policy evidently were that Ireland was to be saved by a dictatorship entrusted to himself, with the Irish priesthood acting as his officers and agents. He maintained the authority of the priests, and his own authority by means of them and over them. The political system of the country for the purposes of agitation was to be a sort of hierarchy; the parish priests occupying the lowest grade, the bishops standing on the higher steps, and O'Connell himself supreme as the pontiff over all.

He had a parliamentary system by means of which he proposed to approach more directly the question of repeal of the union. He got seats in the House of Commons for a number of his sons, his nephews, and his sworn retainers. "O'Connell's tail" was the precursor of "the pope's brass band," in the slang of the House of Commons. He had an almost supreme control over the Irish constituencies, and whenever a vacancy took place he sent down the repeal candidate to contest it. He always inculcated and insisted on the necessity of order and peace. Indeed, as he proposed to carry on his agitation altogether by the help of the bishops and the priests, it was not possible for him, even were he so inclined, to conduct it on any other than peaceful principles. "The man who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy," was a maxim which he was never weary of impressing upon his followers. The temperance movement set on foot with such remarkable and sudden success by Father Mathew was at once turned to account by O'Connell. He was himself, in his later years at all events, a very temperate man, and he was delighted at the prospect of good order and discipline which the temperance movement afforded. Father Mathew was very far from sharing all the political opinions of O'Connell. The sweet and simple friar, whose power was that of goodness and enthusiasm only, and who had but little force of character or intellect, shrank from political agitation, and was rather conservative than otherwise in his views. But he could not afford to repudiate the support of O'Connell, who on all occasions glorified the temperance movement, and called upon his followers to join it, and was always boasting of his "noble army of teetotalers." It was probably when he found that the mere fact of his having supported the Melbourne government did so much to discredit that government in the eyes of Englishmen and to bring about its

fall, that O'Connell went deliberately out of the path of mere parliamentary agitation, and started that system of agitation by monster meetings which has since his time been regularly established among us as a principal part of all political organization for a definite purpose. He founded in Dublin a Repeal Association which met in a place on Burgh Quay, and which he styled Conciliation Hall. Around him in this association he gathered his sons, his relatives, his devoted followers, priestly and lay. The *Nation* newspaper, then in its youth and full of a fresh literary vigor, was one of his most brilliant instruments. At a later period of the agitation it was destined to be used against him, and with severe effect. The famous monster meetings were usually held on a Sunday, on some open spot, mostly selected for its historic fame, and with all the picturesque surroundings of hill and stream. From the dawn of the summer day the repealers were thronging to the scene of the meeting. They came from all parts of the neighboring country for miles and miles. They were commonly marshalled and guided by their parish priests. They all attended the services of their church before the meeting began. The influence of his religion and of his patriotic feelings was brought to bear at once upon the impressionable and emotional Irish Celt. At the meeting O'Connell and several of his chosen orators addressed the crowd on the subject of the wrongs done to Ireland by "the Saxon," the claims of Ireland to the restoration of her old parliament in College Green, and the certainty of her having it restored if Irishmen only obeyed O'Connell and their priests, were sober, and displayed their strength and their unity.

O'Connell himself, it is needless to say, was always the great orator of the day. The agitation developed a great deal of literary talent among the younger men of education; but it never brought out a man who was even spoken of as a possible successor to O'Connell in eloquence. His magnificent voice enabled him to do what no genius and no eloquence less aptly endowed could have done. He could send his lightest word thrilling to the extreme of the vast concourse of people whom he desired to move. He swayed them with the magic of an absolute control. He understood all the moods of his people; to address himself to them came naturally to him. He made them roar with laughter; he made them weep; he made them thrill with

indignation. As the shadow runs over a field, so the impression of his varying eloquence ran over the assemblage. He commanded the emotions of his hearers as a consummate conductor sways the energies of his orchestra. Every allusion told. When, in one of the meetings held in his native Kerry, he turned solemnly round and appealed to "yonder blue mountains where you and I were cradled;" or in sight of the objects he described he apostrophized Ireland as the "land of the green valley and the rushing river"—an admirable characteristic and complete description; or recalled some historical association connected with the scene he surveyed—each was some special appeal to the instant feelings of his peculiar audience. Sometimes he indulged in the grossest and what ought to have been the most ridiculous flattery of his hearers—flattery which would have offended and disgusted the dullest English audience. But the Irish peasant, with all his keen sense of the ridiculous in others, is singularly open to the influence of any appeal to his own vanity. There is a great deal of the "eternal-womanly" in the Celtic nature; and it is not easy to overflatter one of the race. Doubtless O'Connell knew this and acted purposely on it; and this was a peculiarity of his political conduct which it would be hard indeed to command or even to defend. But in truth he adopted in his agitation the tactics he had employed at the bar. "A good speech is a good thing," he used to say; "but the verdict is *the* thing." His flattery of his hearers was not grosser than his abuse of all those whom they did not like. His dispraise often had absolutely no meaning in it. There was no sense whatever in calling the Duke of Wellington "a stunted corporal;" one might as well have called Mont Blanc a molehill. Nobody could have shown more clearly than O'Connell did that he did not believe the *Times* to be "an obscure rag." It would have been as humorous and as truthful to say that there was no such paper as the *Times*. But these absurdities made an ignorant audience laugh for the moment, and O'Connell had gained the only point he just then wanted to carry. He would probably have answered any one who remonstrated with him on the disingenuousness of such sayings as Mrs. Thrale says Burke once answered her when she taxed him with a want of literal accuracy, by quoting "Odds life, must one swear to the truth of a song?" But this recklessness of epithet and de-

scription did much to make O'Connell distrusted and disliked in England, where, in whatever heat of political controversy words are supposed to be the expressions of some manner of genuine sentiment. Of course many of O'Connell's abusive epithets were not only full of humor, but did to some extent fairly represent the weaknesses at least of those against whom they were directed. Some of his historical allusions were of a more mischievous nature than any mere personalities could have been. "Peel and Wellington," he said at Kilkenny, "may be second Cromwells; they may get Cromwell's blunted truncheon, and they may—oh, sacred heavens!—enact on the fair occupants of that gallery" (pointing to the ladies' gallery), "the murder of the Wexford women. Let it not be supposed that when I made that appeal to the ladies it was but a flight of my imagination. No! when Cromwell entered the town of Wexford by treachery, three hundred ladies, the beauty and loveliness of Wexford, the young and the old, the maid and the matron, were collected round the Cross of Christ; they prayed to heaven for mercy and I hope they found it; they prayed to the English for humanity, and Cromwell slaughtered them. I tell you this; three hundred women, the grace and beauty and virtue of Wexford, were slaughtered by the English ruffians—sacred heaven!" He went on then to assure his hearers that "the ruffianly Saxon paper, the *Times*, in the number received by me to-day, presumes to threaten us again with such a scene." One would like to see the copy of the *Times* which contained such a threat, or indeed any words that could be tortured into a semblance of any such hideous meaning. But the great agitator, when he found he had excited enough the horror of his audience, proceeded to reassure them by the means of all others most objectionable and dangerous at such a time. "I am not imaginative," he said, "when I talk of the possibility of such scenes anew; but yet I assert that there is no danger to our women now, for the men of Ireland would die to the last in their defense." Here the whole meeting broke into a storm of impassioned cheering. "Ay," the orator exclaimed, when the storm found a momentary lull, "we were a paltry remnant then; we are millions now." At Mullaghmast, O'Connell made an impassioned allusion to the massacre of Irish chieftains, said to have taken place on that very spot in the reign of



Queen Elizabeth. "Three hundred and ninety Irish chiefs perished here! They came, confiding in Saxon honor, relying on the protection of the queen, to a friendly conference. In the midst of revelry, in the cheerful light of the banquet house, they were surrounded and butchered. None returned save one. Their wives were widows, their children fatherless. In their homesteads was heard the shrill shriek of despair—the cry of bitter agony. Oh, Saxon cruelty, how it cheers my heart to think that you dare not attempt such a deed again!" It is not necessary to point out what the effect of such descriptions and such allusions must have been upon an excitable and ignorant peasant audience—on men who were ready to believe in all sincerity that England only wanted the opportunity to re-enact in the reign of Queen Victoria the scenes of Elizabeth's or Cromwell's day.

The late Lord Lytton has given, in his poem, "St. Stephens," a picturesque description of one of these meetings and of the effect produced upon himself by O'Connell's eloquence. "Once to my sight," he says, "the giant thus was given; walled by wide air and roofed by boundless heaven." He describes "the human ocean" lying spread out at the giant's feet; its "wave on wave" flowing "into space away." Not unnaturally, Lord Lytton thought "no clarion could have sent its sound even to the center" of that crowd.

And as I thought, rose the sonorous swell  
 As from some church tower swings the silvery bell;  
 Aloft and clear from airy tide to tide,  
 It glided easy as a bird may glide.  
 To the last verge of that vast audience sent,  
 It played with each wild passion as it went;  
 Now stirred the uproar—now the murmur stilled,  
 And sobs of laughter answered as it willed.  
 Then did I know what spells of infinite choice  
 To rouse or lull has the sweet human voice.  
 Then did I learn to seize the sudden clue  
 To the grand troublous life antique—to view,  
 Under the rock-stand of Demosthenes,  
 Unstable Athens heave her noisy seas.

The crowds who attended the monster meetings came in a sort of military order and with a certain parade of military discipline. At the meeting held on the Hill of Tara, where O'Connell stood beside the stone said to have been used for the coronation of the ancient monarchs of Ireland,

it is declared on the authority of careful and unsympathetic witnesses that a quarter of a million of people must have been present. The government naturally felt that there was a very considerable danger in the massing together of such vast crowds of men in something like military array and under the absolute leadership of one man, who openly avowed that he had called them together to show England what was the strength her statesmen would have to fear if they continued to deny repeal to his demand. It is certain now that O'Connell did not at any time mean to employ force for the attainment of his ends. But it is equally certain that he wished the English government to see that he had the command of an immense number of men, and probably even to believe that he would, if needs were, hurl them in rebellion upon England if ever she should be embarrassed with a foreign war. It is certain, too, that many of O'Connell's most ardent admirers, especially among the young men, were fully convinced that some day or other their leader would call on them to fight, and were much disappointed when they found that he had no such intention. The government at last resolved to interfere. A meeting was announced to be held at Clontarf on Sunday, October 8, 1843. Clontarf is near Dublin, and is famous in Irish history as the scene of a great victory of the Irish over their Danish invaders. It was intended that this meeting should surpass in numbers and in earnestness the assemblage at Tara. On the the very day before the eighth the lord lieutenant issued a proclamation prohibiting the meeting as "calculated to excite reasonable and well-grounded apprehension," in that its object was "to accomplish alterations in the laws and constitution of the realm by intimidation and the demonstration of physical force." O'Connell's power over the people was never shown more effectively than in the control which at that critical moment he was still able to exercise. The populations were already coming in to Clontarf in streams from all the country round, when the proclamation of the lord lieutenant was issued. No doubt the Irish government ran a terrible risk when they delayed so long the issue of their proclamation. With the people already assembling in such masses, the risk of a collision with the police and the soldiery, and of a consequent massacre, is something still shocking to contemplate. It is not surprising, perhaps, if O'Connell

and many of his followers made it a charge against the government that they intended to bring about such a collision in order to make an example of some of the repealers and thus strike terror through the country. Some sort of collision would almost undoubtedly have occurred but for the promptitude of O'Connell himself. He at once issued a proclamation of his own to which the populations were likely to pay far more attention than they would to anything coming from Dublin Castle. O'Connell declared that the orders of the lord lieutenant must be obeyed; that the meeting must not take place; and that the people must return to their homes. The "uncrowned king," as some of his admirers loved to call him, was obeyed, and no meeting was held.

From that moment, however, the great power of the repeal agitation was gone. The government had accomplished far more by their proclamation than they could possibly have imagined at the time. They had, without knowing it, compelled O'Connell to show his hand. It was now made clear that he did not intend to have resort to force. From that hour there was virtually a schism between the elder repealers and the younger. The young and fiery followers of the great agitator lost all faith in him. It would in any case have been impossible to maintain for any very long time the state of national tension in which Ireland had been kept. It must soon come either to a climax or to an anti-climax. It came to an anti-climax. All the imposing demonstrations of physical strength lost their value when it was made positively known that they were only demonstrations, and that nothing was ever to come of them. The eye of an attentive foreigner was then fixed on Ireland and on O'Connell; the eye of one destined to play a part in the political history of our time which none other has surpassed. Count Cavour had not long returned to his own country from a visit made with the express purpose of studying the politics and the general condition of England and Ireland. He wrote to a friend about the crisis then passing in Ireland. "When one is at a distance," he said, "from the theater of events, it is easy to make prophecies which have already been contradicted by facts. But according to my view O'Connell's fate is sealed. On the first vigorous demonstration of his opponents he has drawn back; from that moment he has ceased to be

dangerous." Cavour was perfectly right. It was never again possible to bring the Irish people up to the pitch of enthusiasm which O'Connell had wrought them to before the suppression of the Clontarf meeting; and before long the Irish national movement had split in two.

The government at once proceeded to the prosecution of O'Connell and some of his principal associates. Daniel O'Connell himself, his son John, the late Sir John Gray, and Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, were the most conspicuous of those against whom the prosecution was directed. They were charged with conspiring to raise and excite disaffection among her majesty's subjects, to excite them to hatred and contempt of the government and constitution of the realm. The trial was in many ways a singularly unfortunate proceeding. The government prosecutor objected to all the Catholics whose names were called as jurors. An error of the sheriffs in the construction of the jury-lists had already reduced by a considerable number the roll of Catholics entitled to serve on juries. It therefore happened that the greatest of Irish Catholics, the representative Catholic of his day, the principal agent in the work of carrying Catholic emancipation, was tried by a jury composed exclusively of Protestants. It has only to be added that this was done in the metropolis of a country essentially Catholic; a country five-sixths of whose people were Catholics; and on a question affecting indirectly, if not directly, the whole position and claims of Catholics. The trial was long. O'Connell defended himself; and his speech was universally regarded as wanting the power that had made his defense of others so effective in former days. It was for the most part a sober and somewhat heavy argument to prove that Ireland had lost instead of gained by her union with England. The jury found O'Connell guilty along with most of his associates, and he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a fine of £2,000. The others received lighter sentences. O'Connell appealed to the House of Lords against the sentence. In the meantime he issued a proclamation to the Irish people commanding them to keep perfectly quiet and not to commit any offense against the law. "Every man," said one of his proclamations, "who is guilty of the slightest breach of the peace is an enemy of me and of Ireland." The Irish people took him at his word and remained perfectly quiet.

O'Connell and his principal associates were committed to Richmond Prison, in Dublin. The trial had been delayed in various ways, and the sentence was not pronounced until May 24, 1844. The appeal to the House of Lords—we may pass over intermediate states of procedure—was heard in the following September. Five law lords were present. The lord chancellor (Lord Lyndhurst) and Lord Brougham were of opinion that the sentence of the court below should be affirmed. Lord Denman, Lord Cottenham, and Lord Campbell were of opposite opinion. Lord Denman, in particular, condemned the manner in which the jury-lists had been prepared. Some of his words on the occasion became memorable, and passed into a sort of proverbial expression. Such practices, he said, would make of the law, “a mockery, a delusion and a snare.” A strange and memorable scene followed. The constitution of the House of Lords then and for long after made no difference between law lords and others in voting on a question of appeal. As a matter of practice and of fairness, the lay peers hardly ever interfered in the voting on an appeal. But they had an undoubted right to do so; and it is even certain that in one or two peculiar cases they had exercised the right. If the lay lords were to vote in this instance, the fate of O'Connell and his companions could not be doubtful. O'Connell had always been the bitter enemy of the House of Lords. He had vehemently denounced its authority, its practices, and its leading members. Nor, if the lay peers had voted and confirmed the judgment of the court below, could it have been positively said that an injustice was done by their interference. The majority of the judges on the writ of error had approved the judgment of the court below. In the House of Lords itself the lord chancellor and Lord Brougham were of opinion that the judgment ought to be sustained. There would, therefore, have been some ground of maintaining that the substantial justice of the case had been met by the action of the lay peers. On the other hand, it would have afforded a ground for a positive outcry in Ireland if a question purely of law had been decided by the votes of lay peers against their bitter enemy. One peer, Lord Wharfedale, made a timely appeal to the better judgment and feeling of his brethren. He urged them not to take a course which might allow any one to say that political or personal feeling had prevailed

in a judicial decision of the House of Lords. The appeal had its effect. A moment before one lay peer at least had openly declared that he would insist on his right to vote. When the lord chancellor was about to put the question in the first instance, to ascertain in the usual way whether a division would be necessary, several lay peers seemed as if they were determined to vote. But the appeal of Lord Wharncliffe settled the matter. All the lay peers at once withdrew and left the matter according to the usual course in the hands of the law lords. The majority of these being against the judgment of the court below, it was accordingly reversed, and O'Connell and his associates were set at liberty. The propriety of a lay peer voting on a question of judicial appeal was never raised again so long as the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords was still exercised in the old and now obsolete fashion.

Nothing could well have been more satisfactory and more fortunate in its results than the conduct of the House of Lords. The effect upon the mind of the Irish people would have been deplorable if it had been seen that O'Connell was convicted by a jury on which there were no Roman Catholics, and that the sentence was confirmed, not by a judicial, but by a strictly political vote of the House of Lords. As it was, the influence of the decision, which proved that even in the assembly most bitterly denounced by O'Connell he could receive fair play, was in the highest degree satisfactory. It cannot be doubted that it did something to weaken the force of O'Connell's own denunciations of Saxon treachery and wrong-doing. The influence of O'Connell was never the same after the trial. Many causes combined to bring about this result. Most writers ascribe it above all to the trial itself, and the evidence it afforded that the English government were strong enough to prosecute and punish even O'Connell if he provoked them too far. It is somewhat surprising to find intelligent men like Mr. Green, the author of "A Short History of the English People," countenancing such a belief. If the House of Lords had, by the votes of the lay peers, confirmed the sentence on O'Connell, he would have come out of his prison at the expiration of his period of sentence more popular and more powerful than ever. Had his strength and faculty of agitation lasted, he might have agitated thenceforth with more effect than ever. If the Clontarf meeting

had not disclosed to a large section of his followers that his policy after all was only to be one of talk, he might have come out of prison just the man he had been, the leader of all classes of Catholics and Nationalists. But the real blow given to O'Connell's popularity was given by O'Connell himself. The moment it was made clear that nothing was to be done but agitate, and that all the monster meetings, the crowds and banners and bands of music, the marshaling and marching and reviewing, meant nothing more than Father Mathew's temperance meetings meant—that moment all the youth of the movement fell off from O'Connell. The young men were very silly, as after events proved. O'Connell was far more wise and had an infinitely better estimate of the strength of England than they had. But it is certain that the young men were disgusted with the kind of gigantic sham which the great agitator seemed to have been conducting for so long a time. It would have been impossible to keep up forever such an excitement as that which got together the monster meetings. Such heat cannot be brought up to the burning point and kept there at will. A reaction was inevitable. O'Connell was getting old, and had lived a life of work and wear and tear enough to break down even his constitution of iron. He had kept a great part of his own followers in heart, as he had kept the government in alarm, by leaving it doubtful whether he would not in the end make an appeal to the reserve of physical force which he so often boasted of having at his back. When the whole secret was out, he ceased to be an object of fear to the one and of enthusiasm to the other. It was neither the lord lieutenant's proclamation nor the prosecution by the government that impaired the influence of O'Connell. It was O'Connell's own proclamation declaring for submission to the law that dethroned him. From that moment the political monarch had to dispute with rebels for his crown; and the crown fell off in the struggle, like that which Uhland tells of in the pretty poem.

For the Clontarf meeting had been the climax. There was all manner of national rejoicing when the decision of the House of Lords set O'Connell and his fellow-prisoners free. There were illuminations and banquets and meetings and triumphal processions, renewed declarations of allegiance to the great leader, and renewed protestations on his part

that repeal was coming. But his reign was over. His death may as well be recorded here as later. His health broke down; and the disputes in which he became engaged with the young Irishmen, dividing his party into two hostile camps, were a grievous burthen to him. In Lord Beaconsfield's "Life of Lord George Bentinck," a very touching description is given of the last speech made by O'Connell in parliament. It was on April 3, 1846; "His appearance," says Mr. Disraeli, "was of great debility, and the tones of his voice were very still. His words indeed only reached those who were immediately around him, and the ministers sitting on the other side of the green table, and listening with that interest and respectful attention which became the occasion." O'Connell spoke for nearly two hours. "It was a strange and touching spectacle to those who remembered the former colossal energy and the clear and thrilling tones that had once startled, disturbed and controlled senates. . . . To the house generally it was a performance in dumb show; a feeble old man muttering before a table; but respect for the great parliamentary personage kept all as orderly as if the fortunes of a party hung upon his rhetoric; and though not an accent reached the gallery, means were taken that next morning the country should not lose the last and not the least interesting of the speeches of one who had so long occupied and agitated the mind of nations."

O'Connell became seized with profound melancholy. Only one desire seemed left to him, the desire to close his stormy career in Rome. The Eternal City is the capital, the shrine, the Mecca of the church to which O'Connell was undoubtedly devoted with all his heart. He longed to lie down in the shadow of the dome of St. Peter's and rest there, and there die. His youth had been wild in more ways than one, and he had long been under the influence of a profound penitence. He had killed a man in a duel and was through all his after life haunted by regret for the deed, although it was really forced on him, and he had acted only as any other man of his time would have acted in such conditions. But now in his old and sinking days all the errors of his youth and his strong manhood came back upon him, and he longed to steep the painful memories in the sacred influences of Rome. He hurried to Italy at a time when the prospect of the famine darkened



ing down upon his country cast an additional shadow across his outward path. He reached Genoa, and he went no farther. His strength wholly failed him there, and he died, still far from Rome on May 15, 1847. The close of his career was a mournful collapse; it was like the sudden crumbling in of some stately and commanding tower. The other day, it seemed, he filled a space of almost unequalled breadth and height in the political landscape; and now he is already gone. "Even with a thought the rack dislimbs, and makes it indistinct, as water is in water."

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### PEEL'S ADMINISTRATION.

SOME important steps in the progress of what may be described as social legislation are part of the history of Peel's government. The act of parliament which prohibited absolutely the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries was rendered unavoidable by the fearful exposures made through the instrumentality of a commission appointed to enquire into the whole subject. This commission was appointed on the motion of the then Lord Ashley, since better known as the Earl of Shaftesbury, a man who during the whole of a long career has always devoted himself—sometimes wisely and successfully, sometimes indiscreetly and to little purpose, always with disinterested and benevolent intention—to the task of brightening the lives and lightening the burdens of the working classes and the poor. The commission found many hideous evils arising from the employment of women and girls underground, and Lord Ashley made such effective use of their disclosures that he encountered very little opposition when he came to propose restrictive legislation. In some of the coal mines women were literally employed as beasts of burden. Where the seam of coal was too narrow to allow them to stand upright, they had to crawl back and forward on all fours for fourteen or sixteen hours a day dragging the trucks laden with coal. The trucks were generally fastened to a chain which passed between the legs of the unfortunate women, and was then connected with a belt which was strapped round their naked waists. Their only clothing

often consisted of an old pair of trousers made of sacking; and they were uncovered from the waist up—uncovered, that is to say, except for the grime and filth that collected and clotted around them. All manner of hideous diseases were generated in these unsexed bodies. Unsexed almost literally some of them became; for their chests were often hard and flat as those of men; and not a few of them lost all reproductive power: a happy condition truly under the circumstances, where women who bore children only went up to the higher air for a week during their confinement, and were then back at their work again. It would be superfluous to say that the immorality engendered by such a state of things was in exact keeping with the other evils which it brought about. Lord Ashley had the happiness and the honor of putting a stop to this infamous sort of labor forever by the act of 1842, which declared that, after a certain limited period, no woman or girl whatever should be employed in mines and collieries.

Lord Ashley was less completely successful in his endeavor to secure a ten hours' limitation for the daily labor of women and young persons in factories. By a vigorous annual agitation on the general subject of factory labor, in which Lord Ashley had followed in the footsteps of Mr. Michael Thomas Sadler, he brought the government up to the point of undertaking legislation on the subject. They first introduced a bill which combined a limitation of the labor of children in factories with a plan for compulsory education among the children. The educational clauses of the bill had to be abandoned in consequence of a somewhat narrow-minded opposition among the dissenters, who feared that too much advantage was given to the church. Afterward the government brought in another bill, which became in the end the factories act of 1844. It was during the passing of this measure that Lord Ashley tried unsuccessfully to introduce his ten hours' limit. The bill diminished the working hours of children under thirteen years of age, and fixed them at six and a half hours each day; extended somewhat the time during which they were to be under daily instruction, and did a good many other useful and wholesome things. The principle of legislative interference to protect youthful workers in factories had been already established by the act of 1833; and Lord Ashley's agitation only obtained for it a somewhat extended applica-

tion. It has since that time again and again received further extension; and in this time, as in the former, there is a constant controversy going on as to whether its principles ought not to be so extended as to guard in almost every way the labor of adult women, and even of adult men. The controversy during Lord Ashley's agitation was always warm and often impassioned. Many thoroughly benevolent men and women could not bring themselves to believe that any satisfactory and permanent results could come of a legislative interference with what might be called the freedom of contract between employers and employed. They argued that it was idle to say the interference was only made or sought in the case of women and boys; for if the women and boys stop off working, they pointed out, the men must perforce in most cases stop off working too. Some of the public men afterward most justly popular among the English artisan classes were opposed to the measure on the ground that it was a heedless attempt to interfere with fixed economic laws. It was urged too, and with much semblance of justice, that the interference of the state for the protection or the compulsory education of children in factories would have been much better employed, and was far more loudly called for in the case of the children employed in agricultural labor. The lot of a factory child, it was contended, is infinitely better in most respects than that of the poor little creature who is employed in holloaing at the crows on a farm. The mill-hand is well cared for, well paid, well able to care for himself and his wife and his family, it was argued; but what of the miserable Giles Scroggins of Dorsetshire or Somersetshire, who never has more in all his life than just enough to keep body and soul together; and for whom, at the close, the workhouse is the only haven of rest? Why not legislate for him—at least for his wife and children?

Neither point requires much consideration from us at present. We have to recognize historical facts; and it is certain that this country has made up its mind that for the present and for a long time to come parliament will interfere in whatever way seems good to it with the conditions on which labor is carried on. There has been indeed a very marked advance or retrogression, whichever men may please to call it, in public opinion since the ten hours' agitation. At that time compulsory education and

the principles of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Act would have seemed alike impossible to most persons in this country. The practical mind of the Englishman carries to an extreme the dislike and contempt for what the French call *les principes* in politics. Therefore we oscillate a good deal, the pendulum swinging now very far in the direction of non-interference with individual action, and now still farther in the direction of universal interference and regulation—what was once humorously described as grandmotherly legislation. With our recent experiences we can only be surprised that a few years ago there was such a repugnance to the modest amount of interference with individual rights which Lord Ashley's extremest proposals would have sought to introduce. As regards the other point, it is certain that parliament will at one time or another do for the children in the fields something very like that which it has done for the children in the factories. It is enough for us to know that practically the factory legislation has worked very well, and that the non-interference in the fields is a far heavier responsibility on the conscience of parliament than interference in the factories.

Many other things done by Sir Robert Peel's government aroused bitter controversy and agitation. In one or two remarkable instances the ministerial policy went near to producing that discord in the Conservative party which we shall presently see break out into passion and schism when Peel came to deal with the corn laws. There was, for example, the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, a college for the education especially of young men who sought to enter the ranks of the priesthood. The grant was not a new thing. Since before the act of union a grant had been made for the college. The government of Sir Robert Peel only proposed to make that which was insufficient sufficient; to enable the college to be kept in repair and to accomplish the purpose for which it was founded. As Macaulay put it, there was no more question of principle involved than there would be in the sacrifice of a pound instead of a pennyweight on some particular altar. Yet the ministerial proposition called up a very tempest of clamorous bigotry all over the country. What Macaulay described in fierce scorn as "the bray of Exeter Hall" was heard resounding every day and night. Peel carried his measure, although nearly half his own party in the House of Com-

mons voted against it on the second reading. The whole controversy has little interest now. Perhaps it will be found to live in the memory of many persons, chiefly because of the quarrel it caused between Macaulay and his Edinburgh constituents, and of the annual motion for the withdrawal of the grant which was so long afterward one of the regular bores of the House of Commons. Many of us can well remember the venerable form of the late Mr. Spooner as year after year he addressed an apathetic, scanty and half-amused audience, pottering over his papers by the light of two candles specially placed for his convenience on the table in front of the speaker, and endeavoring in vain to arouse England to serious attention on the subject of the awful fate she was preparing for herself by her toleration of the principles of Rome. The Maynooth grant was abolished indeed not long after Mr. Spooner's death; but the manner of its abolition would have given him less comfort even than its introduction. It was abolished when Mr. Gladstone's government abolished the state church in Ireland.

Another of Peel's measures which aroused much clamor on both sides was that for the establishment of what were afterward called the "godless colleges" in Ireland. O'Connell has often had the credit of applying this nickname to the new colleges; but it was in fact from the extremest of all no-popery men, Sir Robert Harry Inglis, that the expression came. It was indeed from Sir Robert Inglis' side that the first note sounded of opposition to the scheme, although O'Connell afterward took it vigorously up, and the pope and the Irish bishops condemned the colleges.

There was objection within the ministry, as well as without, to the Maynooth grant. Mr. Gladstone, who had been doing admirable work, first as vice-president, and afterward as president, of the board of trade, resigned his office because of this proposal. He acted, perhaps, with a too sensitive chivalry. He had written a work, as all the world knows, on the relations of church and state, and he did not think the views expressed in that book left him free to co-operate in the ministerial measure. Some staid politicians were shocked, many more smiled, not a few sneered. The public in general applauded the spirit of disinterestedness which dictated the young statesman's act.

Mr. Gladstone, however, supported the Queen's College

scheme by voice and vote. The proposal of the government was to establish in Ireland three colleges—one in Cork, the second in Belfast, and the third in Galway—and to affiliate these to a new university to be called the "Queen's University in Ireland." The teaching in these colleges was to be purely secular. Nothing could be more admirable than the intentions of Peel and his colleagues. Nor could it be denied that there might have been good seeming hope for a plan which thus proposed to open a sort of neutral ground in the educational controversy. But from both sides of the house and from the extreme party in each church came an equally fierce denunciation of the proposal to separate secular from religious education. Nor surely could the claim of the Irish Catholics be said even by the warmest advocate of undenominational education to have no reason on its side. The small minority of Protestants in Ireland had their college and their university established as a distinctively Protestant institution. Why should not the great majority who were Catholics ask for something of the same kind for themselves? Peel carried his measure; but the controversy has gone on ever since, and we have yet to see whether the scheme is a success or a failure.

One small installment of justice to a much injured and long-suffering religious body was accomplished without any trouble by Sir Robert Peel's government. This was the bill for removing the test by which Jews were excluded from certain municipal offices. A Jew might be high sheriff of a county, or sheriff of London; but, with an inconsistency which was as ridiculous as it was narrow-minded, he was prevented from becoming a mayor, an alderman, or even a member of the common council. The oath which had to be taken included the words "on the true faith of a Christian." Lord Lyndhurst, the lord chancellor, introduced a measure to get rid of this absurd anomaly; and the House of Lords, who had firmly rejected similar proposals of relief before, passed it without any difficulty. It was of course passed by the House of Commons, which had done its best to introduce the reform in previous sessions, and without success.

The bank charter act, separating the issue from the banking department of the Bank of England, limiting the issue of notes to a fixed amount of securities, and requiring

the whole of the further circulation to be on a basis of bullion, and prohibiting the formation of any new banks of issue, is a characteristic and an important measure of Peel's government. To Peel, too, we owe the establishment of the income tax on its present basis—a doubtful boon. The copyright question was at least advanced a stage. Railways were regulated. The railway mania and railway panic also belong to this active period. The country went wild with railway speculation. The South Sea scheme was hardly more of a bubble or hardly burst more suddenly or disastrously. The vulgar and flashy successes of one or two lucky adventurers turned the heads of the whole community. For a time it seemed to be a national article of faith that the capacity of the country to absorb new railway schemes and make them profitable was unlimited, and that to make a fortune one had only to take shares in anything. An odd feature of the time was the outbreak of what were called the Rebecca riots in Wales. These riots arose out of the anger and impatience of the people at the great increase of toll-bars and tolls on the public roads. Some one, it was supposed, had hit upon a passage in Genesis which supplies a motto for their grievance and their complaint. "And they blessed Rebecca and said unto her. . . let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." They set about accordingly to possess very effectually the gates of those which hated them. Mobs assembled every night, destroyed turnpikes and dispersed. They met with little molestation in most cases for awhile. The mobs were always led by a man in woman's clothes, supposed to represent the typical Rebecca. As the disturbances went on, it was found that no easier mode of disguise could be got than a woman's clothes, and therefore in many of the riots petticoats might almost be said to be the uniform of the insurgent force. Night after night for months these midnight musterings took place. Rebecca and her daughters became the terror of many regions. As the work went on it became more serious. Rebecca and her daughters grew bold. There were conflicts with the police and with the soldiers. It is to be feared that men and even women died for Rebecca. At last the government succeeded in putting down the riots, and had the wisdom to appoint a commission to inquire into the cause of so much disturbance; and the commission, as will readily be imagined, found that there were

genuine grievances at the bottom of the popular excitement. The farmers and the laborers were poor; the tolls were seriously oppressive. The government dealt lightly with most of the rioters who had been captured, and introduced measures which removed the grievances most seriously complained of. Rebecca and her daughters were heard of no more. They had made out their case, and done in their wild mumming way something of a good work. Only a short time before the rioters would have been shot down and the grievances would have been allowed to stand. Rebecca and her short career mark an advancement in the political and social history of England.

Sir James Graham, the home secretary, brought himself and the government into some trouble by the manner in which he made use of the power invested in the administration for the opening of private letters. Mr. Duncombe, the Radical member for Finsbury, presented a petition from Joseph Mazzini and others complaining that letters addressed to them had been opened in the post office. Many of Mazzini's friends, and perhaps Mazzini himself, believed that the contents of these letters had been communicated to the Sardinian and Austrian governments, and that as a result men who were supposed to be implicated in projects of insurrection on the continent had actually been arrested and put to death. Sir James Graham did not deny that he had issued a warrant authorizing the opening of some of Mazzini's letters; but he contended that the right to open letters had been specially reserved to the government on its responsibility, that it had always been exercised, but by him with special caution and moderation; and that it would be impossible for any government absolutely to deprive itself of such a right. The public excitement was at first very great; but it soon subsided. The reports of parliamentary committees appointed by the two houses showed that all governments had exercised the right, but naturally with decreasing frequency and greater caution of late years; and that there was no chance now of its being seriously abused. No one, not even Thomas Carlyle, who had written to the *Times* in generous indignation at the opening of Mazzini's letters, went so far as to say that such a right should never be exercised. Carlyle admitted that he would tolerate the practice "when some new gun powder plot may be in the wind, some double-dyed high



treason or imminent national wreck not avoidable otherwise." In the particular case of Mazzini it seemed an odious trick, and every one was ashamed of it. Such a feeling was the surest guard against abuse for the future, and the matter was allowed to drop. The minister is to be pitied who is compelled even by legitimate necessity to have recourse to such an expedient; he would be despised now by every decent man if he turned to it without such justification. Many years had to pass away before Sir James Graham was free from innuendoes and attacks on the ground that he had tampered with the correspondence of an exile. One remark, on the other hand, it is right to make. An exile is sheltered in a country like England on the assumption that he does not involve her in responsibility and danger by using her protection as a shield behind which to contrive plots and organize insurrections against foreign governments. It is certain that Mazzini did make use of the shelter England gave him for such a purpose. It would in the end be to the heavy injury of all fugitives from despotic rule, if to shelter them brought such consequences on the countries that offered them a home.

The Peel administration was made memorable by many remarkable events at home as well as abroad. It had, as we have seen, inherited wars and brought them to a close; it had wars of its own. Scinde was annexed by Lord Ellenborough in consequence of the disputes which had arisen between us and the ameers, whom we accused of having broken faith with us. They were said to be in correspondence with our enemies, which may possibly have been true, and to have failed to pay up our tribute, which was very likely. Anyhow we found occasion for an attack on Scinde; and the result was the total defeat of the princes and their army, and the annexation of the territory. Sir Charles Napier won a splendid victory—splendid, that is, in a military sense—over an enemy outnumbering him by more than twelve to one at the battle of Meeanee; and Scinde was ours. Peel and his colleagues accepted the annexation. None of them liked it; but none saw how it could be undone. There was nothing to be proud of in the matter, except the courage of our soldiers, and the genius of Sir Charles Napier, one of the most brilliant, daring, successful, eccentric, and self-conceited captains who had ever fought in the service of England since the

days of Peterborough. Later on the Sikhs invaded our territory by crossing the Sutlej in great force. Sir Hugh Gough, afterward Lord Gough, fought several fierce battles with them before he could conquer them; and even then they were only conquered for the time.

We were at one moment apparently on the very verge of what must have proved a far more serious war much nearer home, in consequence of the dispute that arose between this country and France about Tahiti and Queen Pomare. Queen Pomare was sovereign of the island of Tahiti, in the South Pacific, the Otaheite of Captain Cook. She was a pupil of some of our missionaries, and was very friendly to England and its people. She had been induced or compelled to put herself and her dominion under the protection of France; a step which was highly displeasing to her subjects. Some ill-feeling toward the French residents of the island was shown; and the French admiral, who had induced or compelled the queen to put herself under French protection, now suddenly appeared off the coast, and called on her to hoist the French flag above her own. She refused; and he instantly effected a landing on the island, pulled down her flag, raised that of France in its place, and proclaimed that the island was French territory. The French admiral appears to have been a hot-headed, thoughtless sort of man, the Commodore Wilkes of his day. His act was at once disavowed by the French government, and condemned in strong terms by M. Guizot. But Queen Pomare had appealed to the queen of England for assistance. "Do not cast me away, my friend," she said; "I run to you for refuge, to be covered under your great shadow, the same that afforded relief to my fathers by your fathers, who are now dead, and whose kingdoms have descended to us the weaker vessels." A large party in France allowed themselves to become inflamed with the idea that British intrigue was at the bottom of the Tahiti peoples' dislike to the protectorate of France, and that England wanted to get Queen Pomare's dominions for herself. They cried out therefore that to take down the flag of France from its place in Tahiti would be to insult the dignity of the French nation, and to insult it at the instance of England. The cry was echoed in the shrillest tones by a great number of French newspapers. Where the flag of France had once been hoisted, they screamed, it must

never be taken down; which is about equivalent to saying that if a man's officious servant carries off the property of some one else and gives it to his master, the master's dignity is lowered by his consenting to hand it back to its owner. In the face of this clamor the French government, although they disavowed any share in the filibustering of their admiral, did not show themselves in great haste to undo what he had done. Possibly they found themselves in something of the same difficulty as the English government in regard to the annexation of Scinde. They could not perhaps with great safety to themselves have ventured to be honest all at once; and in any case they did not want to give up the protectorate of Tahiti. While the more hot-headed on both sides of the English Channel were thus snarling at each other, the difficulty was immensely complicated by the seizure of a missionary named Pritchard, who had been our consul in the island up to the deposition of Pomare. A French sentinel had been attacked, or was said to have been attacked, in the night, and in consequence the French commandant seized Pritchard in reprisal, declaring him to be "the only mover and instigator of disturbances among the natives." Pritchard was flung into prison, and only released to be expelled from the island. He came home to England with his story; and his arrival was the signal for an outburst of indignation all over the country. Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen alike stigmatized the treatment of Pritchard as a gross and intolerable outrage; and satisfaction was demanded of the French government. The king and M. Guizot were both willing that full justice should be done, and both anxious to avoid any occasion of ill-feeling with England. The king had lately been receiving with effusive show of affection a visit from our queen in France, and was about to return it. But so hot was popular passion on both sides, that it would have needed stronger and juster natures than those of the king and his minister to venture at once on doing the right thing. It was on the last day of the session of 1844, September 5, that Sir Robert Peel was able to announce that the French government had agreed to compensate Pritchard for his sufferings and losses. Queen Pomare was nominally restored to power, but the French protection proved as stringent as if it were a sovereign rule. She might as well have pulled down her flag, for all the sover-

eign right it secured to her. She died thirty-four years after, and her death recalled to the memory of the English public the long-forgotten fact that she had once so nearly been the cause of a war between England and France.

The Ashburton Treaty and the Oregon Treaty belong alike to the history of Peel's administration. The Ashburton Treaty bears date August 9, 1842, and arranges finally the north-western boundary between the British Provinces of North America and the United States. For many years the want of any clear and settled understanding as to the boundary line between Canada and the state of Maine had been a source of some disturbance, and of much controversy. Arbitration between England and the United States had been tried and failed, both parties declining the award. Sir Robert Peel sent out Lord Ashburton, formerly Mr. Baring, as plenipotentiary, to Washington, in 1842, and by his intelligent exertions an arrangement was come to which appears to have given mutual satisfaction ever since, despite of the sinister prophesyings of Lord Palmerston at the time. The Oregon question was more complicated, and was the source of a longer controversy. More than once the dispute about the boundary line in the Oregon region had very nearly become an occasion for war between England and the United States. In Canning's time there was a crisis during which, to quote the words of an English statesman, war could have been brought about by the holding up of a finger. The question in dispute was as to the boundary line between English and American territory west of the Rocky Mountains. It had seemed a matter of little importance at one time, when the country west of the Rocky Mountains was regarded by most persons as little better than a desert idle. But when the vast capacities and the splendid future of the Pacific slope began to be recognized, and the importance to us of some station and harbor there came to be more and more evident, the dispute naturally swelled into a question of vital interest to both nations. In 1818 an attempt at arrangement was made, but failed. The two governments then agreed to leave the disputed regions to joint occupation for ten years, after which the subject was to be opened again. When the end of the first term came near, Canning did his best to bring about a settlement, but failed. The dispute involved the ownership of the mouth of the Columbia

River, and of the noble island which bears the name of Vancouver, off the shore of British Columbia. The joint occupancy was renewed for an indefinite time; but in 1843, the president of the United States somewhat peremptorily called for a final settlement of the boundary. The question was eagerly taken up by excitable politicians in the American House of Representatives. For more than two years the Oregon question became a party cry in America. With a large proportion of the American public, including, of course, nearly all citizens of Irish birth or extraction, any president would have been popular beyond measure who had forced a war on England. Calmer and wiser counsels prevailed, however, on both sides. Lord Aberdeen, our foreign secretary, was especially moderate and conciliatory. He offered a compromise which was at last accepted. On June 15, 1846, the Oregon Treaty settled the question for that time at least; the dividing line was to be "the forty-ninth degree of latitude, from the Rocky Mountains west to the middle of the channel separating Vancouver's Island from the mainland; thence southerly through the middle of the channel and of Fauca's Straits to the Pacific." The channel and straits were to be free, as also the great northern branch of the Columbia River. In other words, Vancouver's Island remained to Great Britain, and the free navigation of the Columbia River was secured. We have said that the question was settled, "for that time;" because an important part of it came up again for settlement many years after. The commissioners appointed to determine that portion of the boundary which was to run southerly through the middle of the channel were unable to come to any agreement on the subject, and the divergence of the claims made on one side and the other constituted a new question, which became a part of the famous Treaty of Washington in 1871, and was finally settled by the arbitration of the emperor of Germany. But it is much to the honor of the Peel administration that a dispute which had for years been charged with possibilities of war, and had become a stock subject of political agitation in America, should have been so far settled as to be removed forever after out of the category of disputes which suggest an appeal to arms. This was one of the last acts of Peel's government, and it was not the least of the great things he had done. We have soon to tell how it came about that it was one of his latest

triumphs, and how an administration which had come into power with such splendid promise, and had accomplished so much in such various fields of legislation, was brought so suddenly to a fall. The story is one of the most remarkable and important chapters in the history of English politics and parties.

During Peel's time we catch a last glimpse of the famous Arctic navigator, Sir John Franklin. He sailed on the expedition which was doomed to be his last, on May 26, 1845, with his two vessels, *Erebus* and *Terror*. Not much more is heard of him as among the living. We may say of him as Carlyle says of *La Pérouse*, "The brave navigator goes and returns not; the seekers search far seas for him in vain; only some mournful mysterious shadow of him hovers long in all heads and hearts."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### FREE TRADE AND THE LEAGUE.

FEW chapters of political history in modern times have given occasion for more controversy than that which contains the story of Sir Robert Peel's administration in its dealing with the corn laws. Told in the briefest form, the story is that Peel came into office in 1841 to maintain the corn laws, and that in 1846 he repealed them. The controversy as to the wisdom or unwisdom of repealing the corn laws has long since come to an end. They who were the uncompromising opponents of free trade at that time are proud to call themselves its uncompromising zealots now. Indeed, there is no more chance of a reaction against free trade in England than there is of a reaction against the rule of three. But the controversy still exists, and will probably always be in dispute, as to the conduct of Sir Robert Peel.

The Melbourne ministry fell, as we have seen, in consequence of a direct vote of want of confidence moved by their leading opponent, and the return of a majority hostile to them at the general election that followed. The vote of want of confidence was leveled against their financial policy, especially against Lord John Russell's proposal to substitute a fixed duty of eight shillings for Peel's sliding

scale. Sir Robert Peel came into office, and he introduced a reorganized scheme of a sliding scale, reducing the duties and improving the system, but maintaining the principle. Lord John Russell proposed an amendment declaring that the House of Commons, "considering the evils which have been caused by the present corn laws and especially by the fluctuation of the graduated or sliding scale, is not prepared to adopt the measure of her majesty's government, which is founded on the same principles, and is likely to be attended by similar results." The amendment was rejected by a large majority, no less than one hundred and twenty-three. But the question between free trade and protection was even more distinctly raised. Mr. Villiers proposed another amendment declaring for the entire abolition of all duties on grain. Only ninety votes were given for the amendment, while three hundred and ninety-three were recorded against it. Sir Robert Peel's government, therefore, came into power distinctly pledged to uphold the principle of protection for home grown grain. Four years after this Sir Robert Peel proposed the total abolition of the corn duties. For this he was denounced by some members of his party in language more fierce and unmeasured than ever since has been applied to any leading statesman. Mr. Gladstone was never assailed by the staunchest supporter of the Irish church in words so vituperative as those which rated Sir Robert Peel for his supposed apostasy. One eminent person at least made his first fame as a parliamentary orator by his denunciations of the great minister whom he had previously eulogized and supported.

"The history of agricultural distress," it has been well observed, "is the history of agricultural abundance." This looks at first sight a paradox; but nothing can in reality be more plain and less paradoxical. "Whenever," to follow out the passage, "Providence, through the blessing of genial seasons, fills the nation's stores with plenteousness, then and then only has the cry of ruin to the cultivator been proclaimed as the one great evil for legislation to repress." This is indeed the very meaning of the principle of protection. When the commodity which the protected interest has to dispose of is so abundant as to be easily attained by the common body of consumers, then of course the protected interest is injured in its particular way of making money, and expects the state to do something to

secure it in the principal advantage of its monopoly. The greater quantity of grain a good harvest brings for the benefit of all the people, the less the price the corn-grower can charge for it. His interest as a monopolist is always and inevitably opposed to the interest of the community.

But it is easy even now, when we have almost forgotten the days of protection, to see that the corn-grower is not likely either to recognize or to admit this conflict of interests between his protection and the public welfare. Apart from the natural tendency of every man to think that that which does him good must do good to the community, there was undoubtedly something very fascinating in the theory of protection. It had a charming give and take, live and let live, air about it. "You give me a little more than the market price for my corn, and don't you see I shall be able to buy all the more of your cloth, and tea, and sugar or to pay you the higher rent for your land?" Such a compact seems reasonable and tempting. Almost up to our own time the legislation of the country was in the hands of the classes who had more to do with the growing of corn and the ownership of land than with the making of cotton and the working of machinery. The great object of legislation and of social compacts of whatever kind seemed to be to keep the rents of the landowners and prices of the farmers up to a comfortable standard. It is not particularly to the discredit of the landlords and the farmers that this was so. We have seen in later times how every class in succession has resisted the movement of the principle of free trade when it came to be applied to its own particular interests. The paper manufacturers liked it as little in 1860 as the landlords and farmers had done fifteen years earlier. When the cup comes to be commended to the lips of each interest in turn, we always find that it is received as a poisoned chalice, and taken with much shuddering and passionate protestation. The particular advantage possessed by vested interests in the corn laws was that for a long time the landlords possessed all the legislative power and all the *prestige* as well. There was a certain reverence and sanctity about the ownership of land, with its hereditary descent and its patriarchal dignities, which the manufacture of paper could not pretend to claim.

If it really were true that the legitimate incomes or the legitimate influence of the landlord class in England went



down in any way because of the repeal of the corn laws, it would have to be admitted that the landlords, like the aristocrats before the French Revolution, had done something themselves to encourage the growth of new and disturbing ideas. Before the Revolution, free thought and the equality and brotherhood of man were beginning to be pet doctrines among the French nobles and their wives and daughters. It was the whim of the hour to talk Rousseau, and to affect indifference to rank and a general faith in a good time coming of equality and brotherhood. In something of the same fashion the aristocracy of England were for some time before the repeal of the corn laws illustrating a sort of revival of patriarchal ideas about the duties of property. The influence was stirring everywhere. Oxford was beginning to busy itself in the revival of the olden influence of the church. The Young England party, as they were then called, were ardent to restore the good old days when the noble was the father of the poor and the chief of his neighborhood. All manner of pretty whimsies were caught up by this ruling idea to give them an appearance of earnest purpose. The young landlord exhibited himself in the attitude of a protector, patron and friend to all his tenants. Doles were formally given at stated hours to all who would come for them to the castle gate. Young noblemen played cricket with the peasants on their estate, and the Saturnian age was believed by a good many persons to be returning for the express benefit of old, or rather of young, England. There was something like a party being formed in parliament for the realization of young England's idyllic purposes. It comprised among its members several more or less gifted youths of rank, who were full of enthusiasm and poetic aspirations and nonsense; and it had the encouragement and support of one man of genius, who had no natural connection with the English aristocracy, but who was afterward destined to be the successful leader of the conservative and aristocratic party; to be its savior when it was all but down in the dust; to guide it to victory, and make it once more, for the time at least, supreme in the political life of the country. This brilliant champion of conservatism has often spoken of the repeal of the corn laws as the fall of the landlord class in England. If the landlords fell, it must be said of them, as has been fairly said of many a dynasty, that they never deserved

better on the whole than just at the time when the blow struck them down.

The famous corn law of 1815 was a copy of the corn law of 1670. The former measure imposed a duty on the importation of foreign grain which amounted to prohibition. Wheat might be exported upon the payment of one shilling per quarter customs duty; but importation was practically prohibited until the price of wheat had reached eighty shillings a quarter. The corn law of 1815 was hurried through parliament, absolutely closing the ports against the importation of foreign grain until the price of our home-grown grain had reached the magic figure of eighty shillings a quarter. It was hurried through, despite the most earnest petitions from the commercial and manufacturing classes. A great deal of popular disturbance attended the passing of the measure. There were riots in London, and the houses of several of the supporters of the bill were attacked. Incendiary fires blazed in many parts of the country. In the Isle of Ely there were riots which lasted for two days and two nights, and the aid of the military had to be called in to suppress them. Five persons were hanged as the result of these disturbances. One might excuse a demagogue who compared the event to the suppression of some of the food riots in France just before the Revolution, of which we only read that the people—the poor, that is to say—turned out demanding bread, and the ringleaders were immediately hanged, and there was an end of the matter. After the corn law of 1815, thus ominously introduced, there were sliding scale acts, having for their business to establish a varying system of duty, so that, according as the price of home-produced wheat rose to a certain height, the duty on imported wheat sank in proportion. The principle of all these measures was the same. It was founded on the assumption that the corn grew for the benefit of the grower first of all; and that until he had been secured in a handsome profit the public at large had no right to any reduction in the cost of food. When the harvest was a good one, and the golden grain was plenty, then the soul of the grower was afraid, and he called out to parliament to protect him against the calamity of having to sell his corn any cheaper than he did in years of famine. He did not see all the time that if the prosperity of the country in general was enhanced, he too must come to benefit by it.

Naturally, it was in places like Manchester that the fallacy of all this theory was first commonly perceived and most warmly resented. The Manchester manufacturers saw that the customers for their goods were to be found in all parts of the world; and they knew that at every turn they were hampered in their dealings with the customers by the system of protective duties. They wanted to sell their goods wherever they could find buyers, and they chafed at any barrier between them and the sale. Manchester, from the time of its first having parliamentary representation—only a few years before the foundation of the anti-corn law league—had always spoken out for free trade. The fascinating sophism which had such charms for other communities, that by paying more than was actually necessary for everything all round, Dick enriched Tom, while Tom was at the same time enriching Dick had no charms for the intelligence and the practical experience of Manchester. The close of the year 1836 was a period of stagnant trade and general depression, arising, in some parts of the country, to actual and severe suffering. Some members of parliament and other influential men were stricken with the idea, which it does not seem to have required much strength of observation to foster, that it could not be for the advantage of the country in general to have the price of bread very high at a time when wages were very low and work was scarce. A movement against the corn laws began in London. An anti-corn law association on a small scale was formed. Its list of members bore the names of more than twenty members of parliament, and for a time the society had a look of vigor about it. It came to nothing, however. London has never been found an effective nursery of agitation. It is too large to have any central interest or source of action. It is too dependent socially and economically on the patronage of the higher and wealthier classes. London has never been to England what Paris has been to France. It has hardly ever made or represented thoroughly the public opinion of England during any great crisis. A new center of operations soon had to be sought, and various causes combined to make Lancashire the proper place. In the year 1838 the town of Bolton-le-Moors, in Lancashire, was the victim of a terrible commercial crisis. Thirty out of the fifty manufacturing establishments which the town contained were closed;

nearly a fourth of all the houses of business were closed and actually deserted; and more than five thousand workmen were without homes or means of subsistence. All the intelligence and energy of Lancashire was roused. One obvious guarantee against starvation was cheap bread, and cheap bread meant of course the abolition of the corn laws, for these laws were constructed on the principle that it was necessary to keep bread dear. A meeting was held in Manchester to consider measures necessary to be adopted for bringing about the complete repeal of these laws. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce adopted a petition to parliament against the corn laws. The anti-corn law agitation had been fairly launched.

From that time it grew and grew in importance and strength. Meetings were held in various towns of England and Scotland. Associations were formed everywhere to co-operate with the movement which had its headquarters in Manchester. In Newall's Buildings, Market street, Manchester, the work of the league was really done for years. The leaders of the movement gave up their time day by day to its service. The league had to encounter a great deal of rather fierce opposition from the Chartists, who loudly proclaimed that the whole movement was only meant to entrap them once more into an alliance with the middle classes and the employers, as in the case of the reform bill, in order that when they had been made the cat's-paw again they might again be thrown contemptuously aside. On the other hand, the league had from the first the cordial co-operation of Daniel O'Connell, who became one of their principal orators when they held meetings in the metropolis. They issued pamphlets by hundreds of thousands, and sent lecturers all over the country explaining the principles of free trade. A gigantic propaganda of free trade opinions was called into existence. Money was raised by the holding of bazaars in Manchester and in London, and by calling for subscriptions. A bazaar in Manchester brought in ten thousand pounds; one in London raised rather more than double that sum, not including the subscriptions that were contributed. A free trade hall was built in Manchester. This building had an interesting history full of good omen for the cause. The ground on which the hall was erected was the property of Mr. Cobden, and was placed by him at the disposal of the league. That

ground was the scene of what was known in Manchester as the Massacre of Peterloo. On August 16, 1819, a meeting of Manchester reformers was held on that spot, which was dispersed by an attack of soldiers and militia, with the loss of many lives. The memory of that day rankled in the hearts of the Manchester Liberals for long after, and perhaps no better means could be found for purifying the ground from the stain and the shame of such bloodshed than its dedication by the modern apostle of peace and free trade as a site whereon to build a hall sacred to the promulgation of his favorite doctrines.

The times were peculiarly favorable to the new sort of propaganda which came into being with the anti-corn-law league. A few years before such an agitation would hardly have found the means of making its influence felt all over the country. The very reduction of the cost of postage alone must have facilitated its labors to an extent beyond calculation. The inundation of the country with pamphlets, tracts, and reports of speeches would have been scarcely possible under the old system, and would in any case have swallowed up a far larger amount of money than even the league with its ample resources would have been able to supply. In all parts of the country railways were being opened, and these enabled the lecturers of the league to hasten from town to town and to keep the cause always alive in the popular mind. All these advantages and many others might, however, have proved of little avail if the league had not from the first been in the hands of men who seemed as if they came by special appointment to do its work. Great as the work was which the league did, it will be remembered in England almost as much because of the men who won the success as on account of the success itself.

The nominal leader of the free trade party in parliament was for many years Mr. Charles Villiers, a man of aristocratic family and surroundings, of remarkable ability, and of the steadiest fidelity to the cause he had undertaken. Nothing is a more familiar phenomenon in the history of English political agitation than the aristocrat who assumes the popular cause and cries out for the "rights" of the "unfranchised millions." But it was something new to find a man of Mr. Villier's class devoting himself to a cause so entirely practical and business-like as that of the repeal of the corn laws. Mr. Villiers brought forward for

several successive sessions in the House of Commons a motion in favor of the total repeal of the corn laws. His eloquence and his argumentative power served the great purpose of drawing the attention of the country to the whole question, and making converts to the principle he advocated. The House of Commons has always of late years been the best platform from which to address the country. In political agitation it has been made to prepare the way for the schemes of legislation which it has itself always begun by reprobating. But Mr. Villiers might have gone on for all his life dividing the House of Commons on the question of free trade, without getting much nearer to his object, if it were not for the manner in which the cause was taken up by the country, and more particularly by the great manufacturing towns of the north. Until the passing of Lord Grey's reform bill these towns had no representation in parliament. They seemed destined after that event to make up for their long exclusion from representative influence by taking the government of the country into their own hands. Of late years they have lost some of their relative influence. They have not now all the power that for no inconsiderable time they undoubtedly possessed. The reforms they chiefly aimed at have been carried, and the spirit which in times of stress and struggle kept their populations almost of one mind has less necessity of existence now. Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds are no whit less important to the life of the nation now than they were before free trade. But their supremacy does not exist now as it did then. At that time it was town against country; Manchester representing the town, and the whole conservative (at one period almost the whole landowning) body representing the country. The Manchester school, as it was called, then and for long after had some teachers and leaders who were of themselves capable of making any school powerful and respected. With the Manchester school began a new kind of popular agitation. Up to that time agitation meant appeal to passion, and lived by provoking passion. Its cause might be good or bad, but the way of promoting it was the same. The Manchester school introduced the agitation which appealed to reason and argument only; which stirred men's hearts with figures of arithmetic rather than figures of speech, and which converted mob meetings to political economy.

The real leader of the movement was Mr. Richard Cobden. Mr. Cobden was a man belonging to the yeoman class. He had received but a moderate education. His father dying while the great free trader was still young, Richard Cobden was taken in charge by an uncle, who had a wholesale warehouse in the city of London, and who gave him employment there. Cobden afterward became a partner in a Manchester printed cotton factory; and he traveled occasionally on the commercial business of this establishment. He had a great liking for travel; but not by any means as the ordinary tourist travels; the interest of Cobden was not in scenery, or in art, or in ruins, but in men. He studied the condition of countries with a view to the manner in which it affected the men and women of the present, and through them was likely to affect the future. On everything that he saw he turned a quick and intelligent eye; and he saw for himself and thought for himself. Wherever he went he wanted to learn something. He had in abundance that peculiar faculty which some great men of widely different stamp to him and from each other have possessed; of which Goethe frankly boasted, and which Mirabeau had more largely than he was always willing to acknowledge; the faculty which exacts from every one with whom its owner comes into contact some contribution to his stock of information and to his advantage. Cobden could learn something from everybody. It is doubtful whether he ever came even into momentary acquaintance with any one whom he did not compel to yield him something in the way of information. He traveled very widely for a time when traveling was more difficult work than it is at present. He made himself familiar with most of the countries of Europe, with many parts of the east, and, what was then a rarer accomplishment, with the United States and Canada. He did not make the familiar grand tour and then dismiss the places he had seen from his active memory. He studied them and visited many of them again to compare early with later impressions. This was in itself an education of the highest value for the career he proposed to pursue. When he was about thirty years of age he began to acquire a certain reputation as the author of pamphlets directed against some of the pet doctrines of old-fashioned statesmanship; the balance of power in Europe; the necessity of maintaining a state church in

Ireland; the importance of allowing no European quarrel to go on without England's intervention; and similar dogmas. Mr. Cobden's opinions then were very much as they continued to the day of his death. He seemed to have come to the maturity of his convictions all at once, and to have passed through no further change either of growth or of decay. But whatever might be said then or now of the doctrines he maintained, there could be only one opinion as to the skill and force which upheld them with pen as well as tongue. The tongue, however, was his best weapon. If oratory were a business and not an art—that is, if its test were its success rather than its form—then it might be contended reasonably enough that Mr. Cobden was one of the greatest orators England has ever known. Nothing could exceed the persuasiveness of his style. His manner was simple, sweet and earnest. It was persuasive, but it had not the sort of persuasiveness which is merely a better kind of plausibility. It persuaded by convincing. It was transparently sincere. The light of its conviction shone all through it. It aimed at the reason and the judgment of the listener, and seemed to be convincing him to his own interest against his prejudices. Cobden's style was almost exclusively conversational, but he had a clear, well-toned voice, with a quiet, unassuming power in it which enabled him to make his words heard distinctly and without effort all through the great meetings he had often to address. His speeches were full of variety. He illustrated every argument by something drawn from his personal observation or from reading, and his illustrations were always striking, appropriate, and interesting. He had a large amount of bright and winning humor, and he spoke the simplest and purest English. He never used an unnecessary sentence or failed for a single moment in making his meaning clear. Many strong opponents of Mr. Cobden's opinions confessed even during his lifetime that they sometimes found with dismay their most cherished convictions crumbling away beneath his flow of easy argument. In the stormy times of national passion Mr. Cobden was less powerful. When the question was one to be settled by the rules that govern man's substantial interests, or even by the standing rules, if such an expression may be allowed, of morality, then Cobden was unequalled. So long as the controversy could be settled after this fashion—"I will



show you that in such a course you are acting injuriously to your own interests;" or "You are doing what a fair and just man ought not to do"—so long as argument of that kind could sway the conduct of men, then there was no one who could convince as Cobden could. But when the hour and mood of passion came, and a man or a nation said, "I do not care any longer whether this is for my interest or not—I don't care whether you call it right or wrong, this way my instincts drive me, and this way I am going"—then Mr. Cobden's teaching, the very perfection as it was of common sense and fair play, was out of season. It could not answer feeling with feeling. It was not able to "overcrow," in the word of Shakespeare and Spenser, one emotion by another. The defect of Mr. Cobden's style of mind and temper is fitly illustrated in the deficiency of his method of argument. His sort of education, his modes of observation, his way of turning travel to account, all went together to make him the man he was. The apostle of common sense and fair dealing, he had no sympathy with the passions of men; he did not understand them; they passed for nothing in his calculations. His judgment of men and of nations was based far too much on his knowledge of his own motives and character. He knew that in any given case he could always trust himself to act the part of a just and prudent man; and he assumed that all the world could be governed by the rules of prudence and of equity. History had little interest for him, except as it testified to man's advancement and steady progress, and furnished arguments to show that men prospered by liberty, peace and just dealings with their neighbors. He cared little or nothing for mere sentiments. Even where these had their root in some human tendency that was noble in itself, he did not reverence them if they seemed to stand in the way of men's acting peacefully and prudently. He did not see why the mere idea of nationality, for example, should induce people to disturb themselves by insurrections and wars, so long as they were tolerably well governed, and allowed to exist in peace and to make an honest living. Thus he never represented more than half the English character. He was always out of sympathy with his countrymen on some great political question.

But he seemed as if he were designed by nature to conduct to success such an agitation as that against the corn

laws. He found some colleagues who were worthy of him. His chief companion in the campaign was Mr. Bright. Mr. Bright's fame is not so completely bound up with the repeal of the corn laws, or even with the extension of the suffrage, as that of Mr. Cobden. If Mr. Bright had been on the wrong side of every cause he pleaded; if his agitation had been as conspicuous for failure as it was for success, he would still be famous among English public men. He was what Mr. Cobden was not, an orator of the very highest class. It is doubtful whether English public life has ever produced a man who possessed more of the qualifications of a great orator than Mr. Bright. He had a commanding presence; not indeed the stately and colossal form of O'Connell, but a massive figure, a large head, a handsome and expressive face. His voice was powerful, resonant, clear, with a peculiar vibration in it which lent unspeakable effect to any passages of pathos or of scorn. His style of speaking was exactly what a conventional demagogue's ought not to be. It was pure to austerity; it was stripped of all superfluous ornament. It never gushed or foamed. It never allowed itself to be mastered by passion. The first peculiarity that struck the listener was its superb self-restraint. The orator at his most powerful passages appeared as if he were rather keeping in his strength than taxing it with effort. His voice was for the most part calm and measured; he hardly ever indulged in much gesticulation. He never under the pressure of whatever emotion shouted or stormed. The fire of his eloquence was a white heat; intense, consuming, but never sparkling or sputtering. He had an admirable gift of humor and a keen ironical power. He had read few books, but of those he read he was a master. The English Bible and Milton were his chief studies. His style was probably formed for the most part on the Bible; for although he may have molded his general way of thinking and his simple strong morality on the lessons he found in Milton, his mere language bore little trace of Milton's stately classicism, with its Hellenized and Latinized terminology, but was above all things Saxon and simple. Bright was a man of the middle class. His family were Quakers of a somewhat austere mold. They were manufacturers of carpets in Rochdale, Lancashire, and had made considerable money in their business. John Bright therefore was raised above

the temptations which often beset the eloquent young man who takes up a democratic cause in a country like ours; and as our public opinion goes it probably was to his advantage when first he made his appearance in parliament that he was well known to be a man of some means, and not a clever and needy adventurer.

Mr. Bright himself has given an interesting account of his first meeting with Mr. Cobden:

“The first time I became acquainted with Mr. Cobden was in connection with the great question of education. I went over to Manchester to call upon him and invite him to come to Rochdale to speak at a meeting about to be held in the school-room of the Baptist Chapel in West street. I found him in his counting-house. I told him what I wanted; his countenance lighted up with pleasure to find that others were working in the same cause. He without hesitation agreed to come. He came and he spoke; and though he was then so young a speaker, yet the qualities of his speech was such as remained with him so long as he was able to speak at all—clearness, logic, a conversational eloquence, a persuasiveness which when combined with the absolute truth there was in his eye and in his countenance, became a power it was almost impossible to resist.”

Still more remarkable is the description Mr. Bright has given of Cobden's first appeal to him to join in the agitation for the repeal of the corn laws:

“I was in Leamington, and Mr. Cobden called on me. I was then in the depths of grief—I may almost say of despair for the light and sunshine of my house had been extinguished. All that was left on earth of my young wife, except the memory of a sainted life and a too brief happiness, was lying still and cold in the chamber above us. Mr. Cobden called on me as his friend, and addressed me, as you may suppose, with words of condolence. After a time he looked up and said: ‘There are thousands and thousands of homes in England at this moment where wives and mothers and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first paroxysm of your grief is passed, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest until the corn laws are repealed.’ ”

The invitation thus given was cordially accepted, and from that time dates the almost unique fellowship of these two men; who worked together in the closest brotherhood,

who loved each other as not all brothers do, who were associated so closely in the public mind that until Cobden's death the name of one was scarcely ever mentioned without that of the other. There was something positively romantic about their mutual attachment. Each led a noble life; each was in his own way a man of genius; each was simple and strong. Rivalry between them would have been impossible, although they were every day being compared and contrasted by both friendly and unfriendly critics. Their gifts were admirably suited to make them powerful allies. Each had something that the other wanted. Bright had not Cobden's winning persuasiveness nor his surprising ease and force of argument. But Cobden had not anything like his companion's oratorical power. He had not the tones of scorn, of pathos, of humor, and of passion. The two together made a genuine power in the House of Commons and on the platform. Mr. Kinglake, who is as little in sympathy with the general political opinions of Cobden and Bright as any man well could be, has borne admirable testimony to their argumentative power and to their influence over the House of Commons: "These two orators had shown with what strength, with what a masterly skill, with what patience, with what a high courage they could carry a scientific truth through the storms of politics. They had shown that they could arouse and govern the assenting thousands who listened to them with delight—that they could bend the House of Commons—that they could press their creed upon a prime minister, and put upon his mind so hard a stress, that after awhile he felt it to be a torture and a violence to his reason to have to make a stand against them. Nay, more. Each of these gifted men had proved that he could go bravely into the midst of angry opponents, could show them their fallacies one by one, destroy their favorite theories before their very faces, and triumphantly argue them down." It was indeed a scientific truth which in the first instance Cobden and Bright undertook to force upon the recognition of a parliament composed in great measure of the very men who were taught to believe that their own personal and class interests were bound up with the maintenance of the existing economical creed. Those who hold that because it was a scientific truth the task of its advocates ought to have been easy, will do well to observe the success of the resistance

which has been thus far offered to it in almost every country but England alone.

These men had many assistants and lieutenants well worthy to act with them and under them. Mr. W. J. Fox, for instance, a Unitarian minister of great popularity and remarkable eloquence, seemed at one time almost to divide public admiration as an orator with Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. Mr. Milner Gibson, who had been a Tory, went over to the movement, and gave it the assistance of trained parliamentary knowledge and very considerable debating skill. In the Lancashire towns the league had the advantage of being officered for the most part by shrewd and sound men of business, who gave their time as freely as they gave their money to the advancement of the cause. It is curious to compare the manner in which the anti-corn-law agitation was conducted with the manner in which the contemporary agitation in Ireland for repeal of the union was carried on. In England the agitation was based on the most strictly business principles. The leaders spoke and acted as if the league itself were some great commercial firm, which was bound above all things to fulfill its promises and keep to the letter as well as the spirit of its engagements. There was no boasting; there was no exaggeration; there were no appeals to passion; no romantic rousings of sentimental emotion. The system of the agitation was as clear, straightforward and business-like as its purpose. In Ireland there were monster meetings with all manner of dramatic and theatric effects; with rhetorical exaggeration and vehement appeal to passion and to ancient memory of suffering. The cause was kept up from day to day by assurances of near success so positive that it is sometimes hard to believe those who made them could themselves have been deceived by them. No doubt the difference will be described by many as the mere result of the difference between the one cause and the other; between the agitation for free trade, clear, tangible and practical, and that for repeal of the union with its shadowy object and its visionary impulses. But a better explanation of the difference will be found in the different natures to which an appeal had to be made. It is not by any means certain that O'Connell's cause was a mere shadow; nor will it appear if, we study the criticism of the time, that the guides of public opinion who pronounced the repeal agitation absurd

and ludicrous had any better words at first for the movement against the corn laws. Cobden and Bright on the one side, O'Connell on the other, knew the audiences they had to address. It would have been impossible to stir the blood of the Lancashire artisan by means of the appeals which went to the very heart of the dreamy, sentimental impassioned Celt of the south of Ireland. The Munster peasant would have understood little of such clear, penetrating business-like argument as that by which Cobden and Bright enforced their doctrines. Had O'Connell's cause been as practical and its success been as immediately attainable as that of the anti-corn-law league, the great Irish agitator would still have had to address his followers in a different tone of appeal. "All men are not alike," says the Norman butler to the Flemish soldier in Scott's "Betrothed;" "that which will but warm your Flemish hearts will put wildfire into Norman brains; and what may only encourage your countrymen to man the walls, will make ours fly over the battlements." The most impassioned Celt, however, will admit that in the anti-corn-law movement of Cobden and Bright, with its rigid truthfulness and its strict proportion between capacity and promise, there was an entirely new dignity lent to popular agitation which raised it to the condition of statesmanship in the rough. The reform agitation in England had not been conducted without some exaggeration, much appeal to passion, and some not by any means indistinct allusion to the reserve of popular force which might be called into action if legislators and peers proved insensible to argument. The era of the anti-corn law movement was a new epoch altogether in English political controversy.

The league, however, successful as it might be throughout the country, had its great work to do in parliament. The free trade leaders must have found their hearts sink within them when they came sometimes to confront that fortress of traditions and of vested rights. Even after the change made in favor of manufacturing and middle class interests by the reform bill, the House of Commons was still composed, as to nine-tenths of its whole number, by representatives of the landlords. The entire House of Lords was then constituted of the owners of land. All tradition, all prestige, all the dignity of aristocratic institutions, seemed to be naturally arrayed against the new

movement, conducted as it was by manufacturers and traders for the benefit seemingly of trade and those whom it employed. The artisan population who might have been formidable as a disturbing element were, on the whole, rather against the free traders than for them. Nearly all the great official leaders had to be converted to the doctrines of free trade. Many of the Whigs were willing enough to admit the case of free trade as the young Scotch lady mentioned by Sydney Smith admitted the case of love "in the abstract;" but they could not recognize the possibility of applying it in the complicated financial conditions of an artificial system like ours. Some of the Whigs were in favor of a fixed duty in place of the existing sliding scale. The leaders of the movement had indeed to resist a very dangerous temptation coming from statesmen who professed to be in accordance with them as to the mere principle of protection, but who were always endeavoring to persuade them that they had better accept any decent compromise and not push their demands to extremes. The witty peer who in a former generation answered an advocate of moderate reform by asking him what he thought of moderate chastity, might have had many opportunities, if he had been engaged in the free trade movement, of turning his epigram to account.

Mr. Macaulay, for instance, wrote to the electors of Edinburgh to remonstrate with them on what he considered their fanatical and uncompromising adherence to the principle of free trade. "In my opinion," Mr. Macaulay wrote to his constituents, "you are all wrong—not because you think all protection bad, for I think so too; not even because you avow your opinion and attempt to propagate it; for I have always done the same, and shall do the same; but because, being in a situation where your only hope is in a compromise, you refuse to hear of compromise; because, being in a situation where every person who will go a step with you on the right road ought to be cordially welcomed, you drive from you those who are willing and desirous to go with you half way. To this policy I will be no party. I will not abandon those with whom I have hitherto acted, and without whose help I am confident that no great improvement can be effected, for an object purely selfish." It had not occurred to Mr. Macaulay that any party but the Whigs could bring in any measure of fiscal

or other reform worth the having; and indeed he probably thought it would be something like an act of ingratitude amounting to a species of sacrilege to accept reform from any hands but those of its recognized Whig patrons. The anti-corn law agitation introduced a gamut of politics into England which astonished and considerably discomfited steady-going politicians like Macaulay. The league men did not profess to be bound by any indefeasible bond of allegiance to the Whig party. They were prepared to cooperate with any party whatever which would undertake to abolish the corn-laws. Their agitation would have done some good in this way, if in no other sense. It introduced a more robust and independent spirit into political life. It is almost ludicrous sometimes to read the diatribes of supporters of Lord Melbourne's government, for example, against anyone who should presume to think that any object in the mind of a true patriot, or at least of a true Liberal, could equal in importance that of keeping the Melbourne ministry in power. Great reforms have been made by Conservative governments in our own days, because the new political temper which was growing up in England refused to affirm that the patent of reform rested in the possession of any particular party, and that if the holders of the monopoly did not find it convenient, or were not in the humor, to use it any further just then, no one else must venture to interfere in the matter, or to undertake the duty which they had declined to perform. At the time that Macaulay wrote his letter, however, it had not entered into the mind of any Whig to believe it possible that the repeal of the corn laws was to be the work of a great conservative minister, done at the bidding of two Radical politicians.

It is a significant fact that the anti-corn law league were not in the least discouraged by the accession of Sir Robert Peel to power. To them the fixed duty proposed by Lord John Russell was as objectionable as Peel's sliding scale. Their hopes seem rather to have gone up than gone down when the minister came into power whose adherents, unlike those of Lord John Russell, were absolutely against the very principle of free trade. It is of some importance in estimating the morality of the course pursued by Peel to observe the opinion formed of his professions and his probable purposes by the shrewd men who led the anti-corn-law league. The grand charge against Peel is that he



betrayed his party; that he induced them to continue their allegiance to him on the promise that he would never concede the principle of free trade; and that he used his power to establish free trade when the time came to choose between it and a surrender of office. Now it is certain that the League always regarded Sir Robert Peel as a free trader in heart; as one who fully admitted the principle of free trade, but who did not see his way just then to deprive the agricultural interest of the protection on which they had for so many years been allowed and encouraged to lean. In the debate after the general election of 1841, the debate which turned out the Melbourne ministry, Mr. Cobden, then for the first time a member of the House of Commons, said: "I am a free trader; I call myself neither Whig nor Tory. I am proud to acknowledge the virtue of the Whig ministry in coming out from the ranks of the monopolists and advancing three parts out of four in my own direction. Yet if the right honorable baronet opposite (Sir R. Peel) advances one step further, I will be the first to meet him half way, and shake hands with him." Some years later Mr. Cobden said at Birmingham, "There can be no doubt that Sir Robert Peel is, at heart, as good a free trader as I am. He has told us so in the House of Commons again and again; nor do I doubt that Sir Robert Peel has in his inmost heart the desire to be the man who shall carry out the principles of free trade in this country." Sir Robert Peel had indeed, as Mr. Cobden said, again and again in parliament expressed his conviction as to the general truth of the principles of free trade. In 1842, he declared it to be utterly beyond the power of parliament, and a mere delusion, to say that by any duty, fixed or otherwise, a certain price could be guaranteed to the producer. In the same year he expressed his belief that, "on the general principle of free trade there is now no great difference of opinion, and that all agree in the general rule that we should buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market." This expression of opinion called forth an ironical cheer from the benches of opposition. Peel knew well what the cheer was meant to convey. He knew it meant to ask him why then he did not allow the country to buy its grain in the cheapest market. He promptly added—"I know the meaning of that cheer. I do not wish to raise a discussion on the corn laws or the sugar duties, which I

contend, however, are exceptions to the general rule, and I will not go into that question now." The press of the day, whether for or against Peel, commented upon his declarations and his measures as indicating clearly that the bent of his mind was toward free trade even in grain. At all events, he had reached that mental condition when he regarded the case of grain, like that of sugar, as a necessary exception for the time to the operation of a general rule.

It ought to have been obvious that if exceptional circumstances should arise, pulling more strongly in the direction of the league, Sir Robert Peel's own explicit declarations must bind him to recognize the necessity of applying the free trade principles even to corn. "Sir Robert Peel," says his cousin, Sir Laurence Peel, in a sketch of the life and character of the great statesman, "had been, as I have said, always a free trader. The questions to which he had declined to apply those principles had been viewed by him as exceptional. The corn law had been so treated by many able exponents of the principles of free trade." Sir Robert Peel himself has left it on record that during the discussions on the corn law of 1842 he was more than once pressed to give a guarantee, "so far as a minister could give it," that the amount of protection established by that law should be permanently adhered to; "but although I did not then contemplate the necessity for further change, I uniformly refused to fetter the discretion of the government by any such assurances as those that were required of me." It is evident that the condition of Sir Robert Peel's opinions was even as far back as 1842 something very different indeed from that of the ordinary county member or pledged Protectionist, and that Peel had done all he could to make this clear to his party. A minister who in 1842 refused to fetter the discretion of his government in dealing with the protection of home-grown grain ought not on the face of things to be accused of violating his pledges and betraying his party, if four years later, under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances, he made up his mind to the abolition of such a protection. Let us test this in a manner that will be familiar to our own time. Suppose a prime minister is pressed by some of his own party to give the House of Commons a guarantee, "so far as a minister could give it," that the principle of the state church establishment in England shall be permanently adhered to. He

declines to fetter the discretion of the government in the future. Is it not evident that such an answer would be taken by nine out of ten of his listeners to be ominous of some change to the established church? If four years after the same minister were to propose to disestablish the church, he might be denounced and he might even be execrated, but no one could fairly accuse him of having violated his pledge and betrayed his party.

The country party, however, did not understand Sir Robert Peel as their opponents and his assuredly understood him. They did not at this time believe in the possibility of any change. Free trade was to them little more than an abstraction. They did not much care who preached it out of parliament. They were convinced that the state of things they saw around them when they were boys would continue to the end. They looked on Mr. Villiers and his annual motion in favor of free trade very much as a stout old Tory of later times might regard the annual motion for woman suffrage. Both parties in the house—that is to say, both of the parties from whom ministers were taken—alike set themselves against the introduction of any such measure. The supporters of it were, with one exception, not men of family and rank. It was agitated for a good deal out of doors, but agitation had not up to that time succeeded in making much way even with a reformed parliament. The country party observed that some men among the two leading sets went farther in favor of the abstract principle than others; but it did not seem to them that that really affected the practical question very much. In 1842, Mr. Disraeli himself was one of those who stood up for the free trade principle, and insisted that it had been rather the inherited principle of the conservatives than of the Whigs. Country gentlemen did not therefore greatly concern themselves about the practical work doing in Manchester, or the professions of abstract opinion so often made in parliament. They did not see that the mind of their leader was avowedly in a progressive condition on the subject of free trade. Because they could not bring themselves to question for a moment the principle of protection for home-grown grain, they made up their minds that it was a principle as sacred with him. Against that conviction no evidence could prevail. It was with them a point of conscience and honor; it would have seemed an insult to their

leader to believe even his own words if these seemed to say that it was a mere question of expediency, convenience, and time with him.

Perhaps it would have been better if Sir Robert Peel had devoted himself more directly to what Mr. Disraeli afterward called educating his party. Perhaps, if he had made it part of his duty as a leader to prepare the minds of his followers for the fact that protection for grain having ceased to be tenable as an economic principle would possibly some day have to be given up as a practice, he might have taken his party along with him. He might have been able to show them as the events have shown them since, that the introduction of free corn would be a blessing to the population of England in general, and would do nothing but good for the landed interest as well. The influence of Peel at that time, and indeed all through his administration up to the introduction of his free trade measures, was limitless, so far as his party were concerned. He could have done anything with them. Indeed, we find no evidence so clear to prove that Peel had not in 1842 made up his mind to the introduction of free trade, as the fact that he did not at once begin to educate his party to it. This is to be regretted. The measure might have been passed by common accord. There is something not altogether without pathetic influence in the thought of that country party whom Peel had led so long, and who adored him so thoroughly, turning away from him and against him and mournfully seeking another leader. There is something pathetic in the thought that rightly or wrongly, they should have believed themselves betrayed by their chief. But Peel, to begin with, was a reserved, cold, somewhat awkward man. He was not effusive; he did not pour out his emotions and reveal all his changes of opinion in bursts of confidence even to his habitual associates. He brooded over these things in his own mind; he gave such expression to them in open debate as any passing occasion seemed strictly to call for; and he assumed perhaps that the gradual changes operating in his views when thus expressed were understood by his followers. Above all, it is probable that Peel himself did not see until almost the last moment that the time had actually come when the principle of protection must give way to other and more weighty claims. In his speech announcing his intended legislation in 1846, Sir

Robert Peel, with a proud frankness which was characteristic of him, denied that his altered course of action was due exclusively to the failure of the potato crop and the dread of famine in Ireland. "I will not," he said, "withhold the homage which is due to the progress of reason and of truth by denying that my opinions on the subject of protection have undergone a change. . . . I will not direct the course of the vessel by observations taken in 1842." But it is probable that if the Irish famine had not threatened, the moment for introducing the new legislation might have been indefinitely postponed. The prospects of the anti-corn-law league did not look by any means bright when the session preceding the introduction of the free trade legislation came to an end. The number of votes that the league could count on in parliament did not much exceed that which the advocates of Home Rule have been able to reckon up in our day. Nothing in 1843 or in the earlier part of 1845 pointed to any immediate necessity for Sir Robert Peel's testing the progress of his own convictions by reducing them into the shape of practical action. It is therefore not hard to understand how even a far-seeing and conscientious statesman, busy with the practical work of each day, might have put off taking definite counsel with himself as to the introduction of measures for which just then there seemed no special necessity, and which could hardly be introduced without bitter controversy.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### FAMINE FORCES PEEL'S HAND.

WE see how the two great parties of the state stood with regard to this question of free trade. The Whigs were steadily gravitating toward it. Their leaders did not quite see their way to accept it as a principle of practical statesmanship, but it was evident that their acceptance of it was only a question of time, and of no long time. The leader of the Tory party was being drawn day by day more in the same direction. Both leaders, Russell and Peel, had gone so far as to admit the general principle of free trade. Peel had contended that grain was in England a necessary exception; Russell was not of opinion that the time had come

when it could be treated otherwise than as an exception. The free trade party small, indeed, in its parliamentary force, but daily growing more and more powerful with the country, would take nothing from either leader but free trade *sans phrase*; and would take that from either leader without regard to partisan considerations. It is evident to anyone who knows anything of the working of our system of government by party, that this must soon have ended in one or other of the two great ruling parties forming an alliance with the free traders. If unforeseen events had not interposed, it is probable that conviction would first have fastened on the minds of the Whigs, and that they would have had the honor of abolishing the corn laws. They were out of office, and did not seem likely to get back soon to it by their own power, and the free trade party would have come in time to be a very desirable ally. It would be idle to pretend to doubt that the convictions of political parties are hastened on a good deal under our system by the yearning of those who are out of office to get the better of those who are in. Statesmen in England are converted as Henry of Navarre became Catholic; we do not say that they actually change their opinions for the sake of making themselves eligible for power, but a change which has been growing up imperceptibly, and which might otherwise have taken a long time to declare itself, is stimulated thus to confess itself and come out into the light. But in the case of the anti-corn-law agitation, an event over which political parties had no control intervened to spur the intent of the prime minister. Mr. Bright many years after, when pronouncing the eulogy of his dead friend, Cobden, described what happened in a fine sentence: "Famine itself, against which we had warred, joined us." In the autumn of 1845 the potato rot began in Ireland.

The vast majority of the working population of Ireland were known to depend absolutely on the potato for subsistence. In the northern province, where the population were of Scotch extraction, the oatmeal, the brose of their ancestors, still supplied the staple of their food; but in the southern and western provinces a large proportion of the peasantry actually lived on the potato and the potato alone. In these districts whole generations grew up, lived, married, and passed away, without having ever tasted flesh meat. It was evident, then, that a failure in the potato

crop would be equivalent to famine. Many of the laboring class received little or no money wages. They lived on what was called the "cottier tenant system," that is to say, a man worked for a landowner on condition of getting the use of a little scrap of land for himself, on which to grow potatoes to be the sole food of himself and his family. The news came in the autumn of 1845 that the long continuance of sunless wet and cold had imperiled, if not already destroyed, the food of a people.

The cabinet of Sir Robert Peel held hasty meetings closely following each other. People began to ask whether parliament was about to be called together, and whether the government had resolved on a bold policy. The anti-corn law league were clamoring for the opening of the ports. The prime minister himself was strongly in favor of such a course. He urged upon his colleagues that all restrictions upon the importation of foreign corn should be suspended either by an order in council, or by calling parliament together and recommending such a measure from the throne. It is now known that in offering this advice to his colleagues Peel accompanied it with the expression of a doubt as to whether it would ever be possible to restore the restrictions that had once been suspended. Indeed, this doubt must have filled every mind. The league were openly declaring that one reason why they called for the opening of the ports was that once opened they never could be closed again. The doubt was enough for some of the colleagues of Sir Robert Peel. It seems marvelous now, how responsible statesmen could struggle for the retention of restrictions which were so unpopular and indefensible that if they were once suspended, under the pressure of no matter what exceptional necessity, they never could be reimposed. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Stanley, however, opposed the idea of opening the ports, and the proposal fell through. The cabinet merely resolved on appointing a commission, consisting of the heads of departments in Ireland, to take some steps to guard against a sudden outbreak of famine, and the thought of an autumnal session was abandoned. Sir Robert Peel himself has thus tersely described the manner in which his proposals were received: "The cabinet by a very considerable majority declined giving its assent to the proposals which I thus made to them." They were supported by only

three members of the cabinet, the Earl of Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. The other members of the cabinet, some on the ground of objection to the principle of the measures recommended, others upon the ground that there was not yet sufficient evidence of the necessity for them, withheld their sanction."

The great cry all through Ireland was for the opening of the ports. The Mansion House Relief Committee of Dublin issued a series of resolutions declaring their conviction from the most undeniable evidence that considerably more than one third of the entire potato crop in Ireland had been already destroyed by the disease, and that the disease had not ceased its ravages, but on the contrary was daily expanding more and more. "No reasonable conjecture can be formed," the resolutions went on to state, "with respect to the limit of its effects short of the destruction of the entire remaining crop;" and the document concluded with a denunciation of the ministry for not opening the ports, or calling parliament together before the usual time for its assembling.

Two or three days after the issue of these resolutions Lord John Russell wrote a letter from Edinburgh to his constituents, the electors of the city of London—a letter which is one of the historical documents of the reign. It announced his unqualified conversion to the principles of the anti-corn-law league. The failure of the potato crop was of course the immediate occasion of this letter. "Indecision and procrastination," Lord John Russell wrote, "may produce a state of suffering which it is frightful to contemplate. . . . It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty. In 1841 the free trade party would have agreed to a duty of eight shillings per quarter on wheat, and after a lapse of years this duty might have been further reduced, and ultimately abolished. But the imposition of any duty at present, without a provision for its extinction within a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent." Lord John Russell then invited a general understanding, to put an end to a system "which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter division among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality and crime among the people." Then the writer added a significant remark to the effect that the government



appeared to be waiting for some excuse to give up the present corn laws, and urging the people to afford them all the excuse they could desire, "by petition, by address, by remonstrance."

Peel himself has told us in his memoirs what was the effect which this letter produced upon his own councils. "It could not," he points out, "fail to exercise a very material influence on the public mind, and on the subject-matter of our deliberations in the cabinet. It justified the conclusion that the Whig party was prepared to unite with the anti-corn law league in demanding the total repeal of the corn laws." Peel would not consent now to propose simply an opening of the ports. It would seem, he thought, a mere submission, to accept the minimum of the terms ordered by the Whig leader. That would have been well enough when he first recommended it to his cabinet; and if it could then have been offered to the country as the spontaneous movement of a united ministry, it would have been becoming of the emergency and of the men. But to do this now would be futile; would seem like trifling with the question. Sir Robert Peel therefore recommended to his cabinet an early meeting of parliament with the view of bringing forward some measure equivalent to a speedy repeal of the corn laws.

The recommendation was wise. It was, indeed, indispensable. Yet it is hard to think that an impartial posterity will form a very lofty estimate of the wisdom with which the counsels of the two great English parties were guided in this momentous emergency. Neither Whigs nor Tories appear to have formed a judgment because of facts or principles, but only in deference to the political necessities of the hour. Sir Robert Peel himself denied that it was the resistless hand of famine in Ireland which had brought him to his resolve that the corn laws ought to be abolished. He grew into the conviction that they were bad in principle. Lord John Russell had long been growing into the same conviction. Yet the league had been left to divide with but small numbers against overwhelming majorities made up of both parties, until the very session before Peel proposed to repeal the corn laws. Lord Beaconsfield, indeed, indulges in something like exaggeration when he says, in his "Life of Lord George Bentinck," that the close of the session of 1845 found the league nearly reduced to silence.

But it is not untrue that, as he says, "the Manchester confederates seemed to be least in favor with parliament and the country on the very eve of their triumph." "They lost at the same time elections and the ear of the house; and the cause of total and immediate repeal seemed in a not less hopeless position than when, under circumstances of infinite difficulty, it was first and solely upheld by the terse eloquence and vivid perception of Charles Villiers." Lord Beaconsfield certainly ought to know what cause had and what had not the ear of the House of Commons at that time; and yet we venture to doubt, even after his assurance, whether the league and its speakers had in any way found their hold on the attention of parliament diminishing. But the loss of elections is beyond dispute. It is a fact alluded to in the very letter from Lord John Russell which was creating so much commotion. "It is not to be denied," Lord John Russell writes, "that many elections for cities and towns in 1841, and some in 1845, appear to favor the assertion that free trade is not popular with the great mass of the community." This is, from whatever cause, a very common phenomenon in our political history. A movement which began with the promise of sweeping all before it seems after awhile to lose its force, and is supposed by many observers to be now only the work and the care of a few earnest and fanatical men. Suddenly it is taken up by a minister of commanding influence, and the bore or the croquet of one parliament is the great party controversy of a second, and the accomplished triumph of a third. In this instance it is beyond dispute that the league seemed to be somewhat losing in strength and influence just on the eve of its complete triumph. He must, indeed, be the very optimist of parliamentary government who upholds the manner of free trade's final adoption as absolutely satisfactory, and as reflecting nothing but credit upon the counsels of our two great political parties. Such a well-contented personage might be fairly asked to explain why a system of protective taxation, beginning to be regarded by all thoughtful statesmen as bad in itself, should never be examined with a view to its repeal until the force of a great emergency and the rival biddings of party leaders came to render its repeal inevitable. The corn laws, as all the world now admits, were a cruel burden to the poor and the working class of England. They were justly described

by Lord John Russell as "the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter division among classes; the cause of penury, fever, mortality and crime among the people." All this was independent of the sudden and ephemeral calamity of the potato rot, which at the time when Lord John Russell wrote that letter did not threaten to become nearly so fatal as it afterward proved to be. One cannot help asking, how long would the corn laws have been suffered thus to blight commerce and agriculture, to cause division among classes and to produce penury, mortality and crime among the people, if the potato rot in Ireland had not rendered it necessary to do something without delay?"

The potato rot, however, inspired the writing of Lord John Russell's letter; and Lord John Russell's letter inspired Sir Robert Peel with the conviction that something must be done. Most of his colleagues were inclined to go with him this time. A cabinet council was held on November 25, almost immediately after the publication of Lord John Russell's letter. At that council Sir Robert Peel recommended the summoning of parliament with a view to instant measures to combat the famine in Ireland, but with a view also to some announcement of legislation intended to pave the way for the repeal of the corn laws. Lord Stanley still hesitated, and asked time to consider his decision. The Duke of Wellington was unchanged in his private opinion that the corn laws ought to be maintained; but he declared, with a blunt simplicity, that his only object in public life was "to support Sir Robert Peel's administration of the government for the queen." "A good government for the country," said the sturdy and simple old hero, "is more important than corn laws or any other consideration." One may smile at this notion of a good government without reference to the quality of the legislation it introduces; it reminds one a little of the celebrated study of history without reference to time and place. But the duke acted strictly up to his principles of duty, and he declared that if Sir Robert Peel considered the repeal of the corn laws to be, not right or necessary for the welfare of England, but requisite for the maintenance of Sir Robert Peel's position "in parliament and in the public view," he should thoroughly support the proposal. Lord Stanley, however, was not to be changed in the end. He took time

to consider, and seems really to have tried his best to persuade himself that he could fall in with the new position which the premier had assumed. Meanwhile the most excited condition of public feeling prevailed throughout London and the country generally. The *Times* newspaper came out on December 4 with the announcement that the ministry had made up its mind, and that the royal speech at the commencement of the session would recommend an immediate consideration of the corn laws preparatory to their total repeal. It would be hardly possible to exaggerate the excitement caused by this startling piece of news. It was indignantly and in unqualified terms declared a falsehood by the ministerial prints. Long arguments were gone into to prove that even if the fact announced were true, it could not possibly have been known to the *Times*. In Disraeli's "Coningsby" Mr. Rigby gives the clearest and most convincing reasons to prove first that Lord Spencer could not be dead as report said he was; and next, that even if he were dead, the fact could not possibly be known to those who took on themselves to announce it. He is hardly silenced even by the assurance of a great duke that he is one of Lord Spencer's executors, and that Lord Spencer was certainly dead. So the announcement in the *Times* was fiercely and pedantically argued against. "It can't be true;" "the *Times* could not get to know of it;" "it must be a cabinet secret if it were true;" "nobody outside the cabinet could possibly know of it;" "if any one outside the cabinet could get to know of it, it would not be the *Times*;" it would be this, that, or the other person or journal; and so forth. Long after it had been made certain, beyond even Mr. Rigby's power of disputation, that the announcement was true so far as the resolve of the prime minister was concerned, people continued to argue and controvert as to the manner in which the *Times* became possessed of the secret. The general conclusion come to among the knowing was that the blandishments of a gifted and beautiful lady with a dash of political intrigue in her had somehow extorted the secret from a young and handsome member of the cabinet, and that she had communicated it to the *Times*. It is not impossible that this may have been the true explanation. It was believed in by a great many persons who might have been in a position to judge of the probabilities. On the other hand, there were surely signs

and tokens enough by which a shrewd politician might have guessed what was to come without any intervention of petticoat diplomacy. It seems odd now that people should then have distressed themselves so much by conjectures as to the source of the information, when once it was made certain that the information itself was substantially true. This it undoubtedly was, although it did not tell all the truth, and could not foretell. For there was an ordeal yet to be gone through before the prime minister could put his plans into operation. On December 4 the *Times* made the announcement. On the sixth, having been passionately contradicted, it repeated the assertion. "We adhere to our original announcement that parliament will meet early in January, and that a repeal of the corn laws will be proposed in one house by Sir R. Peel, and in the other by the Duke of Wellington." But in the meantime the opposition in the cabinet had proved itself unmanageable. Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch intimated to the prime minister that they could not be parties to any measure involving the ultimate repeal of the corn laws. Sir Robert Peel did not believe that he could carry out his project satisfactorily under such circumstances, and he therefore hastened to tender his resignation to the queen. "The other members of the cabinet, without exception, I believe"—these are Sir Robert Peel's own words—"concurred in this opinion; and under these circumstances I considered it to be my duty to tender my resignation to her majesty. On December 5th I repaired to Osborne, Isle of Wight, and humbly solicited her majesty to relieve me from duties which I felt I could no longer discharge with advantage to her majesty's service." The very day after the *Times* made its famous announcement, the very day before the *Times* repeated it, the prime minister who was to propose the repeal of the corn laws went out of office.

*Quem dixere chaos!* Apparently chaos had come again. Lord John Russell was sent for from Edinburgh. His letter had, without any such purpose on his part, written him up as the man to take Sir Robert Peel's place. Lord John Russell came to London and did his best to cope with the many difficulties of the situation. His party were not very strong in the country, and they had not a majority in the House of Commons. He very naturally endeavored to obtain from Peel a pledge that he would support the

immediate and complete repeal of the corn laws. Peel, writing to the queen, "humbly expresses his regret that he does not feel it to be consistent with his duty to enter upon the consideration of this important question in parliament fettered by a previous engagement of the nature of that required of him." The position of Lord John Russell was awkward. He had been forced into it because one or two of Sir Robert Peel's colleagues would not consent to adopt the policy of their chief. But the very fact of so stubborn an opposition from a man of Lord Stanley's influence showed clearly enough that the passing of free trade measures was not to be effected without stern resistance from the country party. The whole risk and burden had seemingly been thrown on Lord John Russell; and now Sir Robert Peel would not even pledge himself to unconditional support of the very policy which was understood to be his own. Lord John Russell showed, even then, his characteristic courage. He resolved to form a ministry without a parliamentary majority. He was not however fated to try the ordeal. Lord Grey, who was a few months before Lord Howick, and who had just succeeded to the title of his father (the stately Charles Earl Grey, the pupil of Fox, and chief of the cabinet which passed the reform bill and abolished slavery)—Lord Grey felt a strong objection to the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston; and these two could not get on in one ministry as it was part of Lord John Russell's plan that they should do. Lord Grey also was strongly of opinion that a seat in the cabinet ought to be offered to Mr. Cobden; but other great Whigs could not bring themselves to any larger sacrifice to justice and common sense than a suggestion that the office of vice-president of the board of trade should be tendered to the leader of the free trade movement. Mr. Macaulay describes the event in a letter to a constituent in Edinburgh. "All our plans were frustrated by Lord Grey, who objected to Lord Palmerston being foreign secretary. I hope that the public interests will not suffer. Sir Robert Peel must now undertake the settlement of the question. It is certain that he can settle it. It is by no means certain that we could have done so. For we shall to a man support him; and a large proportion of those who are now in office would have refused to support us." One passage in Macaulay's letter will be read with peculiar interest.

“From the first,” he says, “I told Lord John Russell that I stipulated for one thing only—total and immediate repeal of the corn laws; that my objections to gradual abolition were insurmountable; but that if he declared for total and immediate repeal, I would be as to all other matters absolutely in his hands; that I would take any office or no office, just as suited him best; and that he should never be disturbed by any personal pretensions or jealousies on my part.” No one can doubt Macaulay’s sincerity and singleness of purpose. But it is surprising to note the change that the agitation of little more than two years had made in his opinions on the subject of a policy of immediate and unconditional abolition. In February, 1843 he was pointing out to the electors of Edinburgh the unwisdom of refusing a compromise, and in December, 1845 he is writing to Edinburgh to say that the one only thing for which he must stipulate was total and immediate repeal. The anti-corn law league might well be satisfied with the propagandist work they had done. The league itself looked on very composedly during these little altercations and embarrassments of parties. They knew well enough now that let who would take power he must carry out their policy. At a meeting of the league, which was held in Covent Garden Theater on the 17th of this memorable month, and while the negotiations were still going on, Mr. Cobden declared that he and his friends had not striven to keep one party in or another out of office. “We have worked with but one principle and one object in view; and if we maintain that principle for but six months more, we shall attain to that state which I have so long and so anxiously desired, when the league shall be dissolved into its primitive elements by the triumph of its principles.”

Lord John Russell found it impossible to form a ministry. He signified his failure to the queen. Probably, having done the best he could, he was not particularly distressed to find that his efforts were ineffectual. The queen had to send for Sir Robert Peel to Windsor and tell him that she must require him to withdraw his resignation and to remain in her service. Sir Robert of course could only comply. The queen offered to give him some time to enter into communication with his colleagues; but Sir Robert very wisely thought that he could speak with much greater authority if he were to invite them to support him in an

effort on which he was determined and which he had positively undertaken to make. He therefore returned from Windsor on the evening of December 20, "having resumed all the functions of first minister of the crown." The Duke of Buccleuch withdrew his opposition to the policy which Peel was now to carry out; but Lord Stanley remained firm. The place of the latter was taken as secretary of state for the colonies by Mr. Gladstone, who, however, curiously enough, remained without a seat in parliament during the eventful session that was now to come. Mr. Gladstone had sat for the borough of Newark, but that borough being under the influence of the Duke of Newcastle, who had withdrawn his support from the ministry, he did not invite re-election, but remained without a seat in the House of Commons for some months. Sir Robert Peel then, to use his own words in a letter to the Princess de Lieven, resumed power "with greater means of rendering public service than I should have done had I not relinquished it." He felt, he said, "like a man restored to life after his funeral service had been preached."

Parliament was summoned to meet in January. In the meantime it was easily seen how the protectionists and the Tories of the extreme orders generally would regard the proposals of Sir Robert Peel. Protectionist meetings were held in various parts of the country, and they were all but unanimous in condemning by anticipation the policy of the restored premier. Resolutions were passed at many of these meetings expressing an equal disbelief in the prime minister and in the famine. The utmost indignation was expressed at the idea of there being any famine in prospect which could cause any departure from the principles which secured to the farmers a certain fixed price for their grain, or at least prevented the price from falling below what they considered a paying amount. Not less absurd than the protestations that there would be no famine were some of the remedies which were suggested for it if it should insist on coming in. The Duke of Norfolk of that time made himself particularly conspicuous by a beneficent suggestion which he offered to a distressed population. He went about recommending a curry powder of his own device as a charm against hunger.

Parliament met. The opening day was January 22, 1846. The queen in person opened the session, and the speech



from the throne said a good deal about the condition of Ireland and the failure of the potato crop. The speech contained one significant sentence. "I have had," her majesty was made to say, "great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measures which you have presented to me from time to time, calculated to extend commerce and to stimulate domestic skill and industry, by the repeal of prohibitive and the relaxation of protective duties. I recommend you to take into your early consideration whether the principle on which you have acted may not with advantage be yet more extensively applied." Before the address in reply to the speech from the throne was moved, Sir Robert Peel gave notice of the intention of the government on the earliest possible day to submit to the consideration of the house measures connected with the commercial and financial affairs of the country.

There are few scenes more animated and exciting than that presented by the House of Commons on some night when a great debate is expected, or when some momentous announcement is to be made. A common thrill seems to tremble all through the assembly as a breath of wind runs across the sea. The house appears for the moment to be one body pervaded by one expectation. The ministerial benches, the front benches of opposition, are occupied by the men of political renown and of historic name. The benches everywhere else are crowded to their utmost capacity. Members who cannot get seats—on such occasion a goodly number—stand below the bar or have to dispose themselves along the side galleries. The celebrities are not confined to the treasury benches or those of the leaders of opposition. Here and there, among the independent members and below the gangway on both sides, are seen men of influence and renown. At the opening of parliament in 1846 this was especially to be observed. The rising fame of the free trade leaders made them almost like a third great party in the House of Commons. The strangers' gallery, the speaker's gallery on such a night are crowded to excess. The eye surveys the whole house and sees no vacant place. In the very hum of conversation that runs along the benches there is a tone of profound anxiety. The minister who has to face that house and make the announcement for which all are waiting in a most feverish anxiety is a man to be envied by the ambitious. This time

there was a curiosity about everything. What was the minister about to announce? When and in what fashion would he announce it? Would the Whig leaders speak before the ministerial announcement? Would the free traders? What voice would first hint to the expectant Commons the course which political events were destined to take? The moving of an address to the throne is always a formal piece of business. It would be hardly possible for Cicero or Burke to be very interesting when performing such a task. On the other hand, it is an excellent chance for a young beginner. He finds the house in a sort of contemptuously indulgent mood, prepared to welcome the slightest evidence of any capacity of speech above the dullest mediocrity. He can hardly say anything absurd or offensive unless he goes absolutely out of his way to make a fool of himself; and on the other hand, he can easily say his little nothings in a graceful way, and receive grateful applause accordingly from an assembly which counts on being bored, and feels doubly indebted to the speaker who is even in the slightest degree an agreeable disappointment. On this particular occasion, however, the duty of the proposer and the seconder of the address was made specially trying by the fact that they had to interfere with merely formal utterances between an eager house and an exciting announcement. A certain piquancy was lent, however, to the performance of the duty by the fact, which the speeches made evident beyond the possibility of mistake, that the proposer of the address knew quite well what the government were about to do, and that the seconder knew nothing whatever.

Now the formal task is done. The address has been moved and seconded. The speaker puts the question that the address be adopted. Now is the time for debate, if debate there is to be. On such occasions there is always some discussion, but it is commonly as mere a piece of formality as the address itself. It is understood that the leader of opposition will say something meaning next to nothing; that two or three men will grumble vaguely at the ministry; that the leader of the house will reply; and then the affair is all over. But on this occasion it was certain that some momentous announcement would have to be made; and the question was when it would come. Perhaps no one expected exactly what did happen. Nothing can be more unusual than for the leader of the house to open the

debate on such an occasion; and Sir Robert Peel was usually somewhat of a formalist, who kept to the regular ways in all that pertained to the business of the house. No eyes of expectation were turned therefore to the ministerial bench at the moment after the formal putting of the question by the speaker. It was rather expected that Lord John Russell, or perhaps Mr. Cobden, would rise. But a surprised murmur running through all parts of the house soon told those who could not see the treasury bench that something unusual had happened; and in a moment the voice of the prime minister was heard—that marvelous voice of which Lord Beaconsfield says that it had not in his time any equal in the house “unless we except the trilling tones of O’Connell”—and it was known that the great explanation was coming at once.

The explanation even now, however, was somewhat deferred. The prime minister showed a deliberate intention, it might have been thought, not to come to the point at once. He went into long and labored explanations of the manner in which his mind had been brought into a change on the subject of free trade and protection; and he gave exhaustive calculations to show that the reduction of duty was constantly followed by expansion of the revenue, and even a maintenance of high prices. The duties on glass, the duties on flax, the prices of salt pork and domestic lard the contract price of salt beef for the navy—these and many other such topics were discussed at great length, and with elaborate fullness of detail in the hearing of an eager House, anxious only for that night to know whether or not the minister meant to introduce the principle of free trade. Peel, however made it clear enough that he had become a complete convert to the doctrines of the Manchester school, and that in his opinion the time had come when that protection which he had taken office to maintain must forever be abandoned. One sentence at the close of his speech was made the occasion of much labored criticism and some severe accusation. It was that in which Peel declared that he found it “no easy task to ensure the harmonious and united action of an ancient monarchy, a proud aristocracy, and a reformed House of Commons.”

The explanation was over. The House of Commons were left rather to infer than to understand what the government proposed to do. Lord John Russell entered into

some personal explanations relating to his endeavor to form a ministry, and the causes of its failure. These have not much interest for a later time. It might have seemed that the work of the night was done. It was evident that the ministerial policy could not be discussed then; for, in fact, it had not been announced. The house knew that the prime minister was a convert to the principles of free trade; but that was all that any one could be said to know except those who were in the secrets of the cabinet. There appeared therefore nothing for it but to wait until the time should come for the formal announcement and the full discussion of government measures. Suddenly, however, a new and striking figure intervened in the languishing debate, and filled the House of Commons with a fresh life. There is not often to be found in our parliamentary history an example like this of a sudden turn given to a whole career by a timely speech. The member who rose to comment on the explanation of Sir Robert Peel had been for many years in the House of Commons. This was his tenth session. He had spoken often in each session. He had made many bold attempts to win a name in parliament, and hitherto his political career had been simply a failure. From the hour when he spoke this speech, it was one long, unbroken brilliant success.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

MR. DISRAELI.

THE speaker who rose into such sudden prominence and something like the position of a party leader was one of the most remarkable men the politics of the reign have produced. Perhaps, if the word remarkable were to be used in its most strict sense, and without particular reference to praise, it would be just to describe him as emphatically the most remarkable man that the political controversies of the present reign have called into power. Mr. Disraeli entered the House of Commons as conservative member for Maidstone in 1837. He was then about thirty-two years of age. He had previously made repeated and unsuccessful attempts to get a seat in parliament. He began his political career as an advanced Liberal, and had come out under the

auspices of Daniel O'Connell and Joseph Hume. He had described himself as one who desired to fight the battle of the people, and who was supported by neither of the aristocratic parties. He failed again and again, and apparently he began to think that it would be a wiser thing to look for the support of one or other of the aristocratic parties. He had before this given indications of remarkably literary talent if, indeed it might not be called genius. His novel, "Vivian Grey," published when he was in his twenty-third year, was suffused with extravagance, affectation, and mere animal spirit; but it was full of the evidences of a fresh and brilliant ability. The son of a distinguished literary man, Mr. Disraeli had probably at that time only a young literary man's notions of politics. It is not necessary to charge him with deliberate inconsistency because from having been a Radical of the most advanced views he became by an easy leap a romantic Tory. It is not likely that at the beginning of his career he had any very clear ideas in connection with the words Tory or Radical. He wrote a letter to Mr. W. J. Fox, already described as an eminent Unitarian minister and rising politician, in which he declared that his *forte* was sedition. Most clever young men who are not born to fortune, and who feel drawn into political life, fancy too that their *forte* is sedition. When young Disraeli found that sedition and even advanced Radicalism did not do much to get him into parliament, he probably began to ask himself whether his liberal convictions were so deeply rooted as to call for the sacrifice of a career. He thought the question over, and doubtless found himself crystallizing fast into an advocate of the established order of things. In a purely personal light this was a fortunate conclusion for the ambitious young politician. He could not then have anticipated the extraordinary change which was to be wrought in the destiny and the composition of the Tory party by the eloquence, the arguments and the influence of two men who at that time were almost absolutely unknown. Mr. Cobden stood for the first time as a candidate for a seat in parliament in the year that saw Mr. Disraeli elected for the first time, and Mr. Cobden was unsuccessful. Cobden had to wait four years before he found his way into the House of Commons; Bright did not become a member of parliament until some two years later still. It was, however, the anti-corn-law agitation

which, by conquering Peel and making him its advocate, brought about the memorable split in the conservative party, and carried away from the cause of the country squires nearly all the men of talent who had hitherto been with them. A new or middle party of so-called Peelites was formed. Graham, Gladstone, Sidney Herbert, Cardwell, and other men of equal mark or promise, joined it; and the country party was left to seek for leadership in the earnest spirit and very moderate talents of Lord George Bentinck. Mr. Disraeli then found his chance. His genius was such that it must have made a way for him anywhere and in spite of any competition; but it is not too much to say that his career of political advancement might have been very different if, in place of finding himself the only man of first-class ability in the party to which he had attached himself, he had been a member of a party which had Palmerston and Russell and Gladstone and Graham for its captains, and Cobden and Bright for its habitual supporters.

This, however, could not have been in Mr. Disraeli's thoughts when he changed from Radicalism to Conservatism. No trace of the progress of conversion can be found in his speeches or his writings. It is not unreasonable to infer that he took up Radicalism at the beginning because it looked the most picturesque and romantic thing to do, and that only as he found it fail to answer his personal object did it occur to him that he had after all more affinity with the cause of the country gentlemen. The reputation he had made for himself before his going into parliament was of a nature rather calculated to retard than to advance a political career. He was looked upon almost universally as an eccentric and audacious adventurer, who was kept from being dangerous by the affectations and absurdities of his conduct. He dressed in the extremest style of preposterous foppery; he talked a blending of cynicism and sentiment; he had made the most reckless statements; his boasting was almost outrageous; his rhetoric of abuse was, even in that free-spoken time, astonishingly vigorous and unrestrained. Even his literary efforts did not then receive anything like the appreciation they have obtained since. At that time they were regarded rather as audacious whimsicalities, the fantastic freaks of a clever youth, than as genuine works of a certain kind of art. Even when he did

get into the House of Commons, his first experience there was little calculated to give him much hope of success. Reading over this first speech now, it seems hard to understand why it should have excited so much laughter and derision; why it should have called forth nothing but laughter and derision. It is a clever speech, full of point and odd conceits; very like in style and structure many of the speeches which in later years won for the same orator the applause of the House of Commons. But Mr. Disraeli's reputation had preceded him into the house. Up to this time his life had been, says an unfriendly but not an unjust critic, "an almost uninterrupted career of follies and defeats." The house was probably in a humor to find the speech ridiculous because the general impression was that the man himself was ridiculous. Mr. Disraeli's appearance, too, no doubt, contributed something to the contemptuous opinion which was formed of him on his first attempt to address the assembly which he afterward came to rule. He is described by an observer as having been attired "in a bottle-green frock coat and a waistcoat of white, of the Dick Swiveller pattern, the front of which exhibited a network of glittering chains; large fancy-pattern pantaloons, and a black tie, above which no shirt-collar was visible, completed the outward man. A countenance lividly pale, set out by a pair of intensely black eyes, and a broad but not very high forehead, overhung by clustering ringlets of coal-black hair, which, combed away from the right temple, fell in bunches of well-oiled small ringlets over his left cheek." His manner was intensely theatric; his gestures were wild and extravagant. In all this there is not much however, to surprise those who knew Mr. Disraeli in his greater days. His style was always extravagant; his rhetoric constantly degenerated into vulgarity; his whole manner was that of the typical foreigner whom English people regard as the illustration of all that is vehement and unquiet. But whatever the cause, it is certain that on the occasion of his first attempt Mr. Disraeli made not merely a failure, but even a ludicrous failure. One who heard the debate thus describes the manner in which, baffled by the persistent laughter and other interruptions of the noisy house, the orator withdrew from the discussion, defeated but not discouraged. "At last, losing his temper, which until now he had preserved in a wonderful manner, he paused in the

midst of a sentence, and looking the Liberals indignantly in the face, raised his hands, and opening his mouth as widely as its dimensions would admit, said in a remarkably loud and almost terrific tone, 'I have begun several times, many things and I have often succeeded at last; ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me.'" This final prediction is so like what a manufacturer of biography would make up for a hero, and is so like what was actually said in one or two other remarkable instances, that a reader might be excused for doubting its authenticity in this case. But nothing can be more certain than the fact that Mr. Disraeli did bring to a close his maiden speech in the House of Commons with this bold prediction. The words are to be found in the reports published next morning in all the daily papers of the metropolis.

It was thus that Mr. Disraeli began his career as a parliamentary orator. It is a curious fact that on that occasion almost the only one of his hearers who seems to have admired the speech was Sir Robert Peel. It is by his philippic against Peel that Disraeli is now about to convince the House of Commons that the man they laughed at before is a great parliamentary orator.

Disraeli was not in the least discouraged by his first failure. A few days after it he spoke again, and he spoke three or four times more during his first session. But he had learned some wisdom by rough experience, and he did not make his oratorical flights so long or so ambitious as that first attempt. Then he seemed after awhile, as he grew more familiar with the house, to go in for being paradoxical; for making himself always conspicuous; for taking up positions and expounding political creeds which other men would have avoided. It is very difficult to get any clear idea of what his opinions were about this period of his career, if he had any political opinions at all. Our impression is that he really had no opinions at that time; that he was only in quest of opinions. He spoke on subjects of which it was evident that he knew nothing, and sometimes he managed, by the sheer force of a strong intelligence, to discern the absurdity of economic sophistries which had baffled men of far greater experience, and which indeed, to judge from his personal declarations and political conduct afterward, he allowed before long to baffle and



bewilder himself. More often, however he talked, with a grandiose and oracular vagueness which seemed to imply that he alone of all men saw into the very heart of the question, but that he, of all men, must not yet reveal what he saw. At his best of times Mr. Disraeli was an example of that class of being whom Macaulay declares to be so rare that Lord Chatham appears to him almost a solitary illustration of it—"a great man of real genius and of a brave, lofty and commanding spirit, without simplicity of character." What Macaulay goes on to say of Chatham will bear quotation too. "He was an actor in the closet, an actor at council, an actor in parliament; and even in private society he could not lay aside his theatrical tones and attitudes." Mr. Disraeli was at one period of his career so affected that he positively affected affectation. Yet he was a man of undoubted genius; he had a spirit that never quailed under stress of any circumstances, however disheartening; he commanded as scarcely any statesman since Chatham himself has been able to do; and it would be unjust and absurd to deny to a man gifted with qualities like these the possession of a lofty nature.

For some time Mr. Disraeli then seemed resolved to make himself remarkable—to be talked about. He succeeded admirably. He was talked about. All the political and satirical journals of the day had a great deal to say about him. He is not spoken of in terms of praise as a rule. Neither has he much praise to shower about him. Any one who looks back to the political controversies of that time will be astounded at the language which Mr. Disraeli addresses to his opponents of the press, and which his opponents address to him. In some cases it is no exaggeration to say that a squabble between two Billingsgate fishwomen in our day would have good chance of ending without the use of words and phrases so coarse as those which then passed between this brilliant literary man and some of his assailants. We have all read the history of the controversy between him and O'Connell, and the savage ferocity of the language with which O'Connell denounced him as "a miscreant," as "a wretch," "a liar," "whose life is a living lie;" and finally as "the heir-at-law of the blasphemous thief who died impenitent on the cross." Mr. Disraeli begins his reply by describing himself as one of those who "will not be insulted even by a Yahoo without chastizing

it;" and afterward, in a letter to one of Mr. O'Connell's sons, declares his desire to express "the utter scorn in which I hold his [Mr. O'Connell's] character, and the disgust with which his conduct inspires me;" and informs the son that "I shall take every opportunity of holding your father's name up to public contempt, and I fervently pray that you or some one of your blood may attempt to avenge the inextinguishable hatred with which I shall pursue his existence." In reading of a controversy like this between two public men, we seem to be transported back to an age having absolutely nothing in common with our own. It appears almost impossible to believe that men still active in political life were active in political life then. Yet this is not the most astonishing specimen of the sort of controversy in which Mr. Disraeli became engaged in his younger days. Nothing perhaps that the political literature of the time preserves could exceed the ferocity of his controversial duel with O'Connell; but there are many samples of the rhetoric of abuse to be found in the journals of the time which would far less bear exposure to the gaze of the fastidious public of our day. The dueling system survived then and for long after, and Mr. Disraeli always professed himself ready to sustain with his pistol anything that his lips might have given utterance to, even in the reckless heat of controversy. The social temper which in our time insists that the first duty of a gentleman is to apologize for an unjust or offensive expression used in debate was unknown then. Perhaps it could hardly exist to any great extent in the company of the dueling system. When a man's withdrawal of an offensive expression might be imputed to a want of physical courage, the courtesy which impels a gentleman to atone for a wrong is not likely to triumph very often over the fear of being accounted a coward. If any one doubts the superiority of manners as well as of morals which comes of our milder ways, he has only to read a few specimens of the controversies of Mr. Disraeli's earlier days, when men who aspired to be considered great political leaders thought it not unbecoming to call names like a costermonger, and to swagger like Bobadil or the Copper Captain.

Mr. Disraeli kept himself well up to the level of his time in the calling of names and the swaggering. But he was making himself remarkable in political controversy as well.

In the House of Commons he began to be regarded as a dangerous adversary in debate. He was wonderfully ready with retort and sarcasm. But during all the earlier part of his career he was thought of only as a free lance. He had praised Peel when Peel said something that suited him or when to praise Peel seemed likely to wound some one else. But it was during the debates on the abolition of the corn laws that he first rose to the fame of a great debater and a powerful parliamentary orator. We use the words powerful parliamentary orator with the purpose of conveying a special qualification. He is a great parliamentary orator who can employ the kind of eloquence and argument which tell most readily on parliament. But it must not be supposed that the great parliamentary orator is necessarily a great orator in the wider sense. Some of the men who made the greatest successes as parliamentary orators have failed to win any genuine reputations as orators of the broader and higher school. The fame of Charles Townshend's "champagne speech" has vanished, evanescent almost as the bubbles from which it derived its inspiration and its name. No one now reads many even of the fragments preserved for us of those speeches of Sheridan which those who heard them declared to have surpassed all ancient and modern eloquence. The House of Commons often found Burke dull, and the speeches of Burke have passed into English literature secure of a perpetual place there. Mr. Disraeli never succeeded in being more than a parliamentary orator, and probably would not have cared to be anything more. But even at this comparatively early date, and while he had still the reputation of being a whimsical, self-confident and feather-headed adventurer, he soon won for himself the name of one who could hold his own in retort and in sarcasm against any antagonist. The days of the more elaborate oratory were going by, and the time was coming when the pungent epigram, the sparkling paradox, the rattling attack, the vivid repartee, would count for the most attractive part of eloquence with the House of Commons.

Mr. Disraeli was exactly the man to succeed under the new conditions of parliamentary eloquence. Hitherto he had wanted a cause to inspire and justify audacity, and on which to employ with effect his remarkable resources of sarcasm and rhetoric. Hitherto he had addressed an

audience out of sympathy with him for the most part. Now he was about to become the spokesman of a large body of men who, chafing and almost choking with wrath, were not capable of speaking effectively for themselves. Mr. Disraeli did therefore the very wisest thing he could do when he launched at once into a savage personal attack upon Sir Robert Peel. The speech abounds in passages of audaciously powerful sarcasm. "I am not one of the converts," Mr. Disraeli said. "I am perhaps a member of a fallen party. To the opinions which I have expressed in this house in favor of protection I still adhere. They sent me to this house, and if I had relinquished them I should have relinquished my seat also." That was the key-note of the speech. He denounced Sir Robert Peel, not for having changed his opinions, but for having retained a position which enabled him to betray his party. He compared Peel to the lord high admiral of the Turkish fleet, who at a great warlike crisis, when he was placed at the head of the finest armament that ever left the Dardanelles since the days of Solomon the Great, steered at once for the enemies' port, and when arraigned as a traitor, said that he really saw no use in prolonging a hopeless struggle, and that he had accepted the command of the fleet only to put the sultan out of pain by bringing the struggle to a close at once. "Well do we remember, on this side of the house—not perhaps without a blush—the efforts we made to raise him to the bench where he now sits. Who does not remember the sacred cause of protection for which sovereigns were thwarted, parliament dissolved, and a nation taken in?" "I belong to a party which can triumph no more, for we have nothing left on our side except the constituencies which we have not betrayed." He denounced Peel as "a man who never originates an idea; a watcher of the atmosphere; a man who takes his observations, and when he finds the wind in a particular quarter trims his sails to suit it;" and he declared that "such a man may be a powerful minister, but he is no more a great statesman than the man who gets up behind a carriage is a great whip."

"The opportune," says Mr. Disraeli himself in his "Lord George Bentinck," "in a popular assembly has sometimes more success than the weightiest efforts of research and reason." He is alluding to this very speech, of which

he says, with perhaps a superfluous modesty, that "it was the long constrained passion of the house that now found a vent far more than the sallies of the speaker that changed the frigid silence of this senate into excitement and tumult." The speech was indeed opportune. But it was opportune in a far larger sense than as a timely philippic rattling up an exhausted and disappointed house. That moment when Disraeli rose was the very turning point of the fortunes of his party. There was genius, there was positive statesmanship, in seizing so boldly and so adroitly on the moment. It would have been a great thing gained for Peel if he could have got through that first night without any alarm note of opposition from his own side. The habits of parliamentary discipline are very clinging. They are hard to tear away. Every impulse of association and training protests against the very effort to rend them asunder. A once powerful minister exercises a control over his long obedient followers somewhat like that of the heart of the Bruce in the fine old Scottish story. Those who once followed will still obey the name and the symbol even when the actual power to lead is gone forever. If one other night's habitude had been added to the long discipline that bound his party to Peel; if they had allowed themselves to listen to that declaration of the session's first night without murmur, perhaps they might never have rebelled. Mr. Disraeli drew together into one focus all the rays of their gathering anger against Peel, and made them light into a flame. He showed the genius of the born leader, by stepping forth at the critical moment and giving the word of command.

From that hour Mr. Disraeli was the real leader of the Tory squires; from that moment his voice gave the word of command to the Tory party. There was peculiar courage too in the part he took. He must have known that he was open to one retort from Peel that might have crushed a less confident man. It was well known that when Peel was coming into power Disraeli expected to be offered a place of some kind in the ministry, and would have accepted it. Mr. Disraeli afterward explained, when Peel made allusion to the fact, that he had never put himself directly forward as a candidate for office; but there had undoubtedly been some negotiation going forward which was conducted on Mr. Disraeli's side by some one

who supposed he was doing what Disraeli would like to have done; and Peel had not taken any hint, and would not in any way avail himself of Disraeli's services. Disraeli must have known that when he attacked Peel the latter would hardly fail to make use of this obvious retort; but he felt little daunted on that score. He could have made a fair enough defense of his consistency in any case, but he knew very well that what the indignant Tories wanted just then was not a man who had been uniformly consistent, but one who could attack Sir Robert Peel without scruple and with effect. Disraeli made his own career by the course he took on that memorable night, and he also made a new career for the Tory party.

Now that he had proved himself so brilliant a *spadassin* in this debate, men began to remember that he had dealt trenchant blows before. Many of his sentences attacking Peel, which have passed into familiar quotation almost like proverbs, were spoken in 1845. He had accused the great minister of having borrowed his tactics from the Whigs. "The right honorable gentleman caught the Whigs bathing and he walked away with their clothes. He has left them in the full enjoyment of their liberal position, and he is himself a strict conservative of their garments." "I look on the right honorable gentleman as a man who has tamed the shrew of Liberalism by her own tactics. He is the political Petruchio who has outbid you all." "If the right honorable gentleman would only stick to quotation instead of having recourse to obloquy, he may rely upon it he would find it a safer weapon. It is one he always wields with the hand of a master, and when he does appeal to any authority in prose or verse, he is sure to be successful, partly because he seldom quotes a passage that has not already received the meed of parliamentary approbation." We can all readily understand how such a hit as the last would tell in the case of an orator like Peel, who had the old-fashioned way of introducing long quotations from approved classic authors into his speeches, and who not unfrequently introduced citations which were received with all the better welcome by the house because of the familiarity of their language. More fierce and cutting was the reference to Canning, with whom Peel had quarreled, and the implied contrast of Canning with Peel. Sir Robert had cited against Disraeli Canning's famous lines praying to be

saved from a "candid friend." Disraeli seized the opportunity thus given. "The name of Canning is one," he said, "never to be mentioned, I am sure, in this house without emotion. We all admire his genius; we all, or at least most of us, deplore his untimely end; and we all sympathize with him in his severe struggle with supreme prejudice and sublime mediocrity, with inveterate foes and with candid friends." The phrase "sublime mediocrity" had marvelous effect. As a hostile description of Peel's character, it had enough of seeming truth about it to tell most effectively alike on friends and enemies of the great leader. A friend, or even an impartial enemy, would not indeed admit that it accurately described Peel's intellect and position; but as a stroke of personal satire it touched nearly enough the characteristics of its object to impress itself at once as a master-hit on the minds of all who caught its instant purpose. The words remained in use long after the controversy and its occasion had passed away; and it was allowed that an unfriendly and bitter critic could hardly have found a phrase more suited to its ungenial purpose or more likely to connect itself at once in the public mind with the name of him who was its object. Mr. Disraeli did not in fact greatly admire Canning. He has left a very disparaging criticism of Canning as an orator in one of his novels. On the other hand, he has shown in his "Life of Lord George Bentinck" that he could do full justice to some of the greatest qualities of Sir Robert Peel. But at the moment of his attacking Peel and crying up Canning he was only concerned to disparage the one, and it was on this account that he eulogized the other. The famous sentence too in which he declared that a conservative government was an "organized hypocrisy" was spoken during the debates of the session of 1845, before the explanation of the minister on the subject of free trade. All these brilliant things men now began to recall. Looking back from this distance of time, we can see well enough that Mr. Disraeli had displayed his peculiar genius long before the House of Commons took the pains to recognize it. From the night of the opening of the session of 1846 it was never questioned. Thenceforward he was really the mouthpiece and the sense-carrier of his party. For some time to come indeed his nominal post might have seemed to be only that of its bravo. The country gentleman who

cheered to the echo his fierce attacks on Peel during the debates of the session of 1846, had probably not the slightest suspicion that the daring rhetorician who was so savagely revenging them on their now hated leader was a man of as cool a judgment, as long a head, and as complete a capacity for the control of any party as any politician who for generations had appeared in the House of Commons.

One immediate effect of the turn thus given by Disraeli's timely intervention in the debate was the formation of a protection party in the House of Commons. The leadership of this perilous adventure was entrusted to Lord George Bentinck, a sporting nobleman of energetic character, great tenacity of purpose and conviction, and a not inconsiderable aptitude for politics which had hitherto had no opportunity for either exercising or displaying itself. Lord George Bentinck had sat in eight parliaments without taking part in any great debate. When he was suddenly drawn into the leadership of the protection party in the House of Commons, he gave himself up to it entirely. He had at first only joined the party as one of its organizers; but he showed himself in many respects well fitted for the leadership, and the choice of leaders was in any case very limited. When once he had accepted the position, he was unwearied in his attention to its duties; and indeed up to the moment of his sudden and premature death he never allowed himself any relaxation from the cares it imposed on him. Mr. Disraeli, in his "Life of Lord George Bentinck," has indeed overrated, with the pardonable extravagance of friendship, the intellectual gifts of his leader. Bentinck's abilities were hardly even of the second class; and the amount of knowledge which he brought to bear on the questions he discussed with so much earnestness and energy was often and of necessity little better than mere cram. But in parliament the essential qualities of a leader are not great powers of intellect. A man of cool head, good temper, firm will, and capacity for appreciating the serviceable qualities of other men, may, always provided that he has high birth and great social influence, make a very successful leader, even though he be wanting altogether in the higher attributes of eloquence and statesmanship. It may be doubted whether, on the whole, great eloquence and genius are



necessary at all to the leader of a party in parliament in times not specially troublous. Bentinck had patience, energy, good humor, and considerable appreciation of the characters of men. If he had a bad voice, was a poor speaker, talked absolute nonsense about protective duties and sugar and guano, and made up absurd calculations to prove impossibilities and paradoxes, he at least always spoke in full faith and was only the more necessary to his party because he could honestly continue to believe in the old doctrines, no matter what political economy and hard facts might say to the contrary.

The secession was, therefore, in full course of organization. On January 27, Sir Robert Peel came forward to explain his financial policy. It is almost superfluous to say that the most intense anxiety prevailed all over the country, and that the house was crowded. An incident of the night, which then created a profound sensation, would not be worth noticing now but for the evidence it gives of the bitterness with which the protection party were filled, and of the curiously bad taste of which gentlemen of position and education can be guilty under the inspiration of a blind fanaticism. There is something ludicrous in the pompous tone as of righteous indignation deliberately repressed, with which Mr. Disraeli, in his "Life of Bentinck," announces the event. The proceedings in the House of Commons, he says, "were ushered in by a startling occurrence." What was this portentous preliminary? "His royal highness the prince consort, attended by the master of the horse, appeared and took his seat in the body of the house to listen to the statement of the first minister." In other words, there was to be a statement of great importance and a debate of profound interest, and the husband of the queen was anxious to be a listener. The prince consort did not understand that because he had married the queen he was therefore precluded from hearing a discussion in the House of Commons. The poorest man and the greatest man in the land were alike free to occupy a seat in one of the galleries of the house, and it is not to be wondered at if the prince consort fancied that he too might listen to a debate without unhinging the British constitution. Lord George Bentinck and the protectionists were aflame with indignation. They saw in the quiet presence of the intelligent gentleman who came to listen to

the discussion an attempt to overawe the commons and compel them to bend to the will of the crown. It is not easy to read without a feeling of shame the absurd and unseemly comments which were made upon this harmless incident. The queen herself has given an explanation of the prince's visit which is straightforward and dignified. "The prince merely went, as the Prince of Wales and the queen's other sons do, for once, to hear a fine debate, which is so useful to all princes." "But this," the queen adds, "he naturally felt unable to do again."

The prime minister announced his policy. His object was to abandon the sliding scale altogether; but for the present he intended to impose a duty of ten shillings a quarter on corn when the price of it was under forty-eight shillings a quarter; to reduce that duty by one shilling for every shilling of rise in price until it reached fifty-three shillings a quarter, when the duty should fall to four shillings. This arrangement was, however, only to hold good for three years, at the end of which time protective duties on grain were to be wholly abandoned. Peel explained that he intended gradually to apply the principle of free trade to manufactures and every description of produce, bearing in mind the necessity of providing for the expenditure of the country, and of smoothing away some of the difficulties which a sudden withdrawal of protection might cause. The differential duties on sugar, which were professedly intended to protect the growers of free sugars against the competition of those who cultivated sugar by the use of slave labor, were to be diminished, but not abolished. The duties on the importation of foreign cattle were to be at once removed. In order to compensate the agricultural interests for the gradual withdrawal of protective duties, there were to be some readjustments of local burdens. We need not dwell much on this part of the explanation. We are familiar in late years with the ingenious manner in which the principle of the readjustment of local burdens is worked in the hope of conciliating the agricultural interests. These readjustments are not usually received with any great gratitude or attended by any particular success. In this instance Sir Robert Peel could hardly have laid much serious stress on them. If the landowners and farmers had really any just ground of complaint in the abolition of protection, the salve which was

applied to their wound would scarcely have caused them to forget its pains. The important part of the explanation, so far as history is concerned, consisted in the fact that Peel proclaimed himself an absolute convert to the free trade principle, and that the introduction of the principle into all departments of our commercial legislation was, according to his intention, to be a mere question of time and convenience. The struggle was to be between protection and free trade.

Not that the proposals of the ministry wholly satisfied the professed free traders. These latter would have enforced, if they could, an immediate application of the principle without the interval of three years, and the devices and shifts which were to be put in operation during that middle time. But of course, although they pressed their protest in the form of an amendment, they had no idea of not taking what they could get when the amendment failed to secure the approval of the majority. The protectionist amendment amounted to a distinct proposal that the policy of the government be absolutely rejected by the house. The debate lasted for twelve nights, and at the end the protectionists had two hundred and forty votes against three hundred and thirty-seven given on behalf of the policy of the government. The majority of ninety-seven was not quite so large as the government had anticipated; and the result was to encourage the protectionists in their plans of opposition. The opportunities of obstruction were many. The majority just mentioned was merely in favor of going into committee of the whole house to consider the existing customs and corn acts; but every single financial scheme which the minister had to propose must be introduced, debated and carried, if it was to be carried, as a separate bill. We shall not ask our readers to follow us into the details of these long discussions. They were not important; they were often not dignified. They more frequently concerned themselves about the conduct and personal consistency of the minister than about the merits of his policy. The arguments in favor of protection, which doubtless seemed effective to the country gentlemen then, seem like the prattle of children now. There were, indeed, some exciting passages in the debates. For these the house was mainly indebted to the rhetoric of Mr. Disraeli. That indefatigable and somewhat reckless cham-

pion occupied himself with incessant attacks on the prime minister. He described Peel as "a trader on other people's intelligence; a political burglar of other men's ideas." "The occupants of the treasury bench," he said, were "political peddlers, who had bought their party in the cheapest market and sold it in the dearest." This was strong language. But it was after all more justifiable than the attempt Mr. Disraeli made to revive an old and bitter controversy between Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Cobden, which for the sake of the former had better have been forgotten. Three years before, Mr. Edward Drummond, private secretary of Sir Robert Peel, was shot by an assassin. There could be no doubt that the victim had been mistaken for the prime minister himself. The assassin turned out to be a lunatic, and as such was found not guilty of the murder and was consigned to a lunatic asylum. The event naturally had a profound effect on Sir Robert Peel, and during one of the debates on free trade Mr. Cobden happening to say that he would hold the prime minister responsible for the condition of the country, Peel, in an extraordinary burst of excitement, interpreted the words as a threat to expose him to the attack of an assassin. Nothing could be more painfully absurd; and nothing could better show the unreasoning and discreditable hatred of the Tories at that time for any one who opposed the policy of Peel than the fact that they actually cheered their leader again and again when he made this passionate and half-frenzied charge on one of the purest and noblest men who ever sat in the English parliament. Peel soon recovered his senses. He saw the error of which he had been guilty and regretted it; and it ought to have been consigned to forgetfulness; but Mr. Disraeli, in repelling a charge made against him of indulging in unjustifiable personalities, revived the whole story and reminded the House of Commons that the prime minister had charged the leader of the free trade league with inciting assassins to murder him. This unjustifiable attempt to rekindle an old quarrel had, however, no other effect than to draw from Sir Robert Peel a renewed expression of apology for the charge he had made against Mr. Cobden, "in the course of a heated debate, when I put an erroneous construction on some expressions used by the honorable member for Stockport." Mr. Cobden declared that the explanation

made by Peel was entirely satisfactory, and expressed his hope that no one on either side of the house would attempt to revive the subject or make further allusion to it.

The government prevailed. It would be superfluous to go into any details as to the progress of the corn bill. Enough to say that the third reading of the bill passed the House of Commons on May 15, by a majority of ninety-eight votes. The bill was at once sent up to the House of Lords, and, by means chiefly of the earnest advice of the Duke of Wellington, was carried through that house without much serious opposition. But June 25, the day when the bill was read for a third time in the House of Lords, was a memorable day in the parliamentary annals of England. It saw the fall of the ministry who had carried to success the greatest piece of legislation that had been introduced since Lord Grey's reform bill.

A coercion bill for Ireland was the measure which brought this catastrophe on the government of Sir Robert Peel. While the corn bill was yet passing through the House of Commons the government felt called upon, in consequence of the condition of crime and outrage in Ireland, to introduce a coercion bill. Lord George Bentinck at first gave the measure his support; but during the Whitsuntide recess he changed his views. He now declared that he had only supported the bill on the assurance of the government that it was absolutely necessary for the safety of life in Ireland, and that as the government had not pressed it on in advance of every other measure—especially no doubt of the corn bill—he could not believe that it was really a matter of imminent necessity; and that furthermore he had no longer any confidence in the government and could not trust them with extraordinary powers. In truth the bill was placing the government in a serious difficulty. All the Irish followers of O'Connell would of course oppose the coercion measure. The Whigs when out of office have usually made it a rule to oppose coercion bills if they do not come accompanied with some promises of legislative reform and concession. The English Radical members, Mr. Cobden and his followers, were almost sure to oppose it. Under these circumstances, it seemed probable enough that if the protectionists joined with the other opponents of the coercion bill the government must be defeated. The temptation was too great.

As Mr. Disraeli himself candidly says of his party, "vengeance had succeeded in most breasts to the more sanguine sentiment. The field was lost, but at any rate there should be retribution for those who had betrayed it." The question with many of the indignant protectionists was, as Mr. Disraeli himself puts it, "How was Sir Robert Peel to be turned out?" It soon became evident that he could be turned out by those who detested him and longed for vengeance voting against him on the coercion bill. This was done. The fiercer protectionists voted with the free traders, the Whigs, and the Irish Catholic and Liberal members; and after a debate of much bitterness and passion, the division on the second reading of the coercion bill took place on Thursday, June 25, and the ministry were left in a minority of seventy-three. Two hundred and nineteen votes only were given for the second reading of the bill, and two hundred and ninety-two against it. Some eighty of the protectionists followed Lord George Bentinck into the lobby to vote against the bill, and their votes settled the question. Mr. Disraeli has given a somewhat pompous description of the scene "as the protectionists passed in defile before the minister to the hostile lobby." "*Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas immolat,*" cries the hero of the *Æneid*, as he plunges his sword into the heart of his rival. "Protection kills you; not your coercion bill," the irreconcilable protectionists might have said as they trooped past the minister. Chance had put within their grasp the means of vengeance, and they had seized it and made successful use of it. The Peel ministry had fallen in its very hour of triumph.

Three days after Sir Robert Peel announced his resignation of office. His speech "was considered one of glorification and pique," says Mr. Disraeli. It does not so impress most readers. It appears to have been full of dignity and of emotion, not usual with Peel, but not surely under the circumstances incompatible with dignity. It contained that often-quoted tribute to the services of a former opponent, in which Peel declared that "the name which ought to be, and which will be, associated with the success of these measures is the name of the man who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has advocated their cause with untiring energy and with appeals to reason enforced by an eloquence the more to be admired because

it is unaffected and unadorned—the name of Richard Cobden.” An added effect was given to this well-deserved panegyric by the little irregularity which the prime minister committed when he mentioned in debate a member by name. The closing sentence of the speech was eloquent and touching. Many would censure him, Peel said; his name would perhaps be execrated by the monopolist who would maintain protection for his own individual benefit; “but it may be that I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of good will in those places which are the abode of men whose lot it is to labor and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow—a name remembered with expressions of good will when they shall recreate their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened with a sense of injustice.”

The great minister fell. So great a success followed by so sudden and complete a fall is hardly recorded in the parliamentary history of our modern times. Peel had crushed O’Connell and carried free trade, and O’Connell and the protectionists had life enough yet to pull him down. He is as a conqueror who having won the great victory of his life is struck by a hostile hand in some by-way as he passes home to enjoy his triumph.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### FAMINE, COMMERCIAL TROUBLE, AND FOREIGN INTRIGUE.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL succeeded Sir Robert Peel as first lord of the treasury; Lord Palmerston became foreign secretary; Sir Charles Wood was chancellor of the exchequer; Lord Grey took charge of the colonies; and Sir George Grey was home secretary. Mr. Macaulay accepted the office of paymaster-general, with a seat in the cabinet, a distinction not usually given to the occupant of that office. The ministry was not particularly strong in administrative talent. The premier and the foreign secretary were the only members of the cabinet who could be called statesmen of the first class; and even Lord Palmerston had not as yet won more than a somewhat doubtful kind of fame, and was looked upon as a man quite as likely to do mischief

as good to any ministry of which he might happen to form a part. Lord Grey then and since only succeeded somehow in missing the career of a leading statesman. He had great talents and some originality; he was independent and bold. But his independence degenerated too often into impracticability and even eccentricity; and he was, in fact, a politician with whom ordinary men could not work. Sir Charles Wood, the new chancellor of the exchequer, had solid sense and excellent administrative capacity, but he was about as bad a public speaker as ever addressed the House of Commons. His budget speeches were often made so unintelligible by defective manner and delivery that they might almost as well have been spoken in a foreign language. Sir George Grey was a speaker of fearful fluency, and a respectable administrator of the second or third class. He was as plodding in administration as he was precipitate of speech.

"Peel," wrote Lord Palmerston to a friend a short time after the formation of the new ministry, "seems to have made up his mind that for a year or two he cannot hope to form a party, and that he must give people a certain time to forget the events of last year; in the meanwhile, it is evident that he does not wish that any other government should be formed out of the people on his side of the house, because of that government he would not be a member. For these reasons, and also because he sincerely thinks it best that we should, for the present, remain in, he gives us very cordial support, as far as he can without losing his independent position. Graham, who sits up under his old pillar, and never comes down to Peel's bench even for personal communication, seems to keep himself aloof from everybody, and to hold himself free to act according to circumstances; but as yet he is not considered as the head of any party. George Bentinck has entirely broken down as a candidate for ministerial position; and thus we are left masters of the field, not only on account of our own merits, which, though we say it ourselves, are great, but by virtue of the absence of any efficient competitors." Palmerston's humorous estimate of the state of affairs was accurate. The new ministry was safe enough, because there was no party in a condition to compete with it.

The position of the government of Lord John Russell was not one to be envied. The Irish famine occupied all



attention, and soon seemed to be an evil too great for any ministry to deal with. The failure of the potato was an overwhelming disaster for a people almost wholly agricultural and a peasantry long accustomed to live upon that root alone. Ireland contains a very few large towns; when the names of four or five are mentioned the list is done with, and we have to come to mere villages. The country has hardly any manufactures except that of linen in the northern province. In the south and west the people live by agriculture alone. The cottier system, which prevailed almost universally in three of the four provinces, was an arrangement by which a man obtained in return for his labor a right to cultivate a little patch of ground, just enough to supply him with food for the scanty maintenance of his family. The great landlords were for the most part absentees; the smaller landlords were often deeply in debt, and were therefore compelled to screw every possible penny of rent out of their tenants-at-will. They had not, however, even that regularity and order in their exactions that might at least have forced upon the tenant some habits of forethought and exactness. There was a sort of understanding that the rent was always to be somewhat in arrear; the supposed kindness of a landlord consisted in his allowing the indebtedness to increase more liberally than others of his class would do. There was a demoralizing slatternliness in the whole system. It was almost certain that if a tenant, by greatly increased industry and good fortune, made the land which he held more valuable than before, his rent would at once be increased. On the other hand, it was held an act of tyranny to dispossess him so long as he made even any fair promise of paying up. There was, therefore, a thoroughly vicious system established all round, demoralizing alike to the landlord and the tenant.

Underlying all the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland were two great facts. The occupation of land was virtually a necessity of life to the Irish tenant. That is the first fact. The second is, that the land system under which Ireland was placed was one entirely foreign to the traditions, the ideas, one might say the very genius of the Irish people. Whether the system introduced by conquest and confiscation was better than the old one or not does not in the slightest degree affect the working of this fact

on the relations between the landlord and the tenant in Ireland. No one will be able to understand the whole meaning and bearing of the long land struggle in Ireland who does not clearly get into his mind the fact that, rightly or wrongly, the Irish peasant regarded the right to have a bit of land, his share, exactly as other peoples regard the right to live. It was in his mind something elementary and self-evident. He could not be loyal to, he could not even understand, any system which did not secure that to him. According to Michelet, the land is the French peasant's mistress. It was the Irish peasant's life.

The Irish peasant with his wife and his family lived on the potato. Hardly in any country coming within the pale of civilization was there to be found a whole peasant population dependent for their living on one single root. When the potato failed in 1845 the life-system of the people seemed to have given way. At first it was not thought that the failure must necessarily be anything more than partial. But it soon began to appear that for at least two seasons the whole food of the peasant population and of the poor in towns was absolutely gone. Lord John Russell's government pattered with the difficulty rather than encountered it. In their excuse it has to be said of course that the calamity they had to meet was unprecedented and that it must have tried the resources of the most energetic and farseeing statesmanship. Still the fact remains that the measures of the government were at first utterly inadequate to the occasion, and that afterward some of them were even calculated to make bad worse. Not a county in Ireland wholly escaped the potato disease, and many of the southern and western counties were soon in actual famine. A peculiar form of fever—famine-fever it was called—began to show itself everywhere. A terrible dysentery set in as well. In some districts the people died in hundreds daily from fever, dysentery, or sheer starvation. The districts of Skibbercen, Skull, Westport and other places obtained a ghastly supremacy in misery. In some of these districts the parochial authorities at last declined to put the ratepayers to the expense of coffins for the too frequent dead. The coroners declared it impossible to keep on holding inquests. There was no time for all the ceremonies of that kind that would have to be gone through if they made any pretense at keeping up the sys-

tem of ordinary seasons. In other places where the formula was still kept up the juries added to their verdicts of death by starvation some charge of willful murder against Lord John Russell or the lord lieutenant, or some other official whose supposed neglect was set down as the cause of the death. Unfortunately, the government had to show an immense activity in the introduction of coercion bills and other repressive measures. It would have been impossible that in such a country as Ireland a famine of that gigantic kind should set in without bringing crimes of violence along with it. The peasantry had always hated the land tenure system; they had always been told, not surely without justice, that it was at the bottom of all their miseries; they were now under the firm conviction that the government could have saved them if it would. What wonder then if there were bread riots and agrarian disturbances? Who can now wonder, that being so, that the government introduced exceptional measures of repression? But it certainly had a grim and a disheartening effect on the spirits of the Irish people when it seemed as if the government could only pother and palter with famine, but could be earnest and energetic when devising coercion bills.

Whatever might be said of the government, no one could doubt the good will of the English people. In every great English community, from the metropolis downward, subscription lists were opened and the most liberal contributions poured in. In Liverpool, for example, a great number of the merchants of the place put down a thousand pounds each. The Quakers of England sent over a delegation of their number to the specially famine-stricken districts of Ireland to administer relief. Many other sects and bodies followed the example. National relief associations were specially formed in England. Relief indeed began to be poured in from all countries. The United States employed some of their war vessels to send gifts of grain and other food to the starving places. In one Irish seaport the joy-bells of the town were kept ringing all day in honor of the arrival of one of these grain-laden vessels—a mournfully significant form of rejoicing surely. One of the national writers said at the time that the misery of Ireland touched “even the heart of the Turk at the far Dardanelles, and he sent her in pity the alms of a beggar.”

It was true that from Turkey as from most other countries had come some contribution toward the relief of Irish distress. At the same time there were some very foolish performances gone through in Dublin under the sanction and patronage of the lord lieutenant; the solemn "inauguration," as it would be called by a certain class of writers now, of a public soup kitchen, devised and managed by the fashionable French cook M. Soyer, for the purpose of showing the Irish people what remarkably sustaining *potage* might be made out of the thinnest and cheapest materials. This exposition would have been well enough in a quiet and practical way, but performed as a grand national ceremony of regeneration, under the patronage of the viceroy, and with accompaniment of brass bands and pageantry, it had a remarkably foolish and even offensive aspect. The performance was resented bitterly by many of the impatient young spirits of the national party in Dublin.

Meanwhile the misery went on deepening and broadening. It was far too great to be effectually encountered by subscriptions, however generous; and the government, meaning to do the best they could, were practically at their wit's end. The starving peasants streamed into the nearest considerable town, hoping for relief there, and found too often that there the very sources of charity were dried up. Many, very many, thus disappointed, merely lay down on the pavement and died there. Along the country roads one met everywhere groups of gaunt dim-eyed wretches, clad in miserable old sacking and wandering aimlessly with some vague idea of finding food, as the boy in the fable hoped to find the gold where the rainbow touched the earth. Many remained in their empty hovels and took death there when he came. In some regions the country seemed unpeopled for miles. A fervid national writer declared that the impression made on him by the aspect of the country then was that of "one silent vast dissolution." Allowing for rhetoric, there was not much exaggeration in the words. Certainly the Ireland of tradition was dissolved in the operation of that famine. The old system gave way utterly. The landlordism of the days before the famine never revived in its former strength and its peculiar ways. For the landlord class there came out of the famine the encumbered estates court; for the small farmer and peasant class there floated up the American emigrant ship.

Acts and even conspiracies of violence, as we have said, began to be not uncommon throughout the country and in the cities. One peculiar symptom of the time was the glass-breaking mania that set in throughout the towns of the south and west. It is perhaps not quite reasonable to call it a mania, for it had melancholy method in it. The workhouses were overcrowded, and the authorities could not receive there or feed there one-fourth of the applicants who besieged them. Suddenly it seemed to occur to the minds of many of famine's victims that there were the prisons for which one might qualify himself, and to which, after qualification he could not be denied admittance. The idea was simple: go into a town, smash deliberately the windows of a shop, and some days of a jail and of substantial food must follow. The plan became a favorite. Especially was it adopted by young girls and women. After a time the puzzled magistrates resolved to put an end to this device by refusing to inflict the punishment which these unfortunate creatures sought as a refuge and a comfort. One early result of the famine and the general breakdown of property is too significant to be allowed to pass unnoticed. Some of the landlords had been living for a long time on a baseless system, on a credit which the failure of the crops brought to a crushing test. Not a few of these were utterly broken. They could maintain their houses and halls no longer, and often were only too happy to let them to the poor law guardians to be used as extra workhouses. In the near neighborhood of many a distressed country town the great house of the local magistrate thus became a receptacle for the pauperism which could not find a refuge in the overcrowded asylums which the poor law system had already provided. The lion and the lizard, says the Persian poet, keep the halls where Janshyd gloried and drank deep. The pauper devoured his scanty dole of Indian meal porridge in the hall where his landlord had gloried and drunk deep.

When the famine was over and its results came to be estimated, it was found that Ireland had lost about two millions of her population. She had come down from eight millions to six. This was the combined effect of starvation, of the various diseases that followed in its path gleaned where it had failed to gather, and of emigration. Long after all the direct effects of the failure of the potato

had ceased, the population still continued steadily to decrease. The Irish peasant had in fact had his eyes turned, as Mr. Bright afterward expressed it, toward the setting sun, and for long years the stream of emigration westward never abated in its volume. A new Ireland began to grow up across the Atlantic. In every great city of the United States the Irish element began to form a considerable constituent of the population. From New York to San Francisco, from St. Paul, Minnesota, to New Orleans, the Irish accent is heard in every street, and the Irish voter comes to the polling-booth ready, far too heedlessly, to vote for any politician who will tell him that America loves the green flag and hates the Saxon.

Terrible as the immediate effects of the famine were, it is impossible for any friend of Ireland to say that, on the whole, it did not bring much good with it. It first applied the scourge which was to drive out of the land a thoroughly vicious and rotten system. It first called the attention of English statesmen irresistibly to the fact that the system was bad to its heart's core, and that nothing good could come of it. It roused the attention of the humble Irishman, too often inclined to put up with everything in the lazy spirit of a Neapolitan or a fatalist, to the fact that there was for him too a world elsewhere. The famine had indeed many a bloody afterbirth; but it gave to the world a new Ireland.

The government, as it may be supposed, had hard work to do all this time. They had the best intentions toward Ireland, and were always indeed announcing that they had found out some new way of dealing with the distress, and modifying or withdrawing old plans. They adopted measures from time to time to expend large sums in something like systematic employment for the poor in Ireland; they modified the Irish poor laws; they agreed at length to suspend temporarily the corn laws and the navigation laws, so far as these related to the importation of grain. A tremendous commercial panic, causing the fall of great houses, especially in the corn trade, all over the country called for the suspension of the bank charter act of 1844, and the measures of the ministers were for the most part treated considerately and loyally by Sir Robert Peel; but a new opposition had formed itself under the nominal guidance of Lord George Bentinck, and the real inspiration of

Mr. Disraeli. Lord George Bentinck brought in a bill to make a grant of sixteen millions to be expended as an advance on the construction and completion of Irish railways. This proposal was naturally very welcome to many in Ireland. It had a lavish and showy air about it; and Lord George Bentinck talked grandiosely in his speech about the readiness with which he, the Saxon, would, if his measure were carried, answer with his head for the loyalty of the Irish people. But it soon began to appear that the scheme was not so much a question of the Irish people as of certain moneyed classes who might be helped along at the expense of the English and the Irish people. Lord George Bentinck certainly had no other than a direct and single-minded purpose to do good to Ireland; but his measure would have been a failure if it had been carried. It was fairly open in some respects to the criticism of Mr. Roebuck, that it proposed to relieve Irish landlordism of its responsibilities at the expense of the British taxpayer. The measure was rejected. Lord George Bentinck was able to worry the ministry somewhat effectively when they introduced a measure to reduce gradually the differential duties on sugar for a few years, and then replace these duties by a fixed and uniform rate. This was, in short, a proposal to apply the principle of free trade, instead of that of protection, to sugar. The protective principle had in this case, however, a certain fascination about it, even for independent minds; for an exceptional protection had been retained by Sir Robert Peel in order to enable the planters in our colonies to compensate themselves for the loss they might suffer in the transition from slavery to free labor. Lord George Bentinck therefore proposed an amendment to the resolutions of the government, declaring it unjust and impolitic to reduce the duty on foreign slave-grown sugar, as tending to check the advance of production by British free labor, and to give a great additional stimulus to slave labor. Many sincere and independent opponents of slavery, Lord Brougham in the House of Lords among them, were caught by this view of the question. Lord George and his brilliant lieutenant at one time appeared as if they were likely to carry their point in the Commons. But it was announced that if the resolutions of the government were defeated the ministers would resign, and there was no one to take their place. Peel could not return to

power; and the time was far distant yet when Mr. Disraeli could form a ministry. The opposition crumbled away therefore, and the government measures were carried. Lord George Bentinck made himself for a while the champion of the West India sugar-producing interest. He was a man who threw himself with enormous energy into any work he undertook; and he had got up the case of the West Indian planters with all the enthusiasm that inspired him in his more congenial pursuits as one of the principle men on the turf.

The alliance between him and Mr. Disraeli is curious. The two men, one would think, could have had absolutely nothing in common. Mr. Disraeli knew nothing about horses and racing. Lord George Bentinck could not possibly have understood, not to say sympathized with, many of the leading ideas of his lieutenant. Yet Bentinck had evidently formed a just estimate of Disraeli's political genius; and Disraeli saw that in Bentinck were many of the special qualities which go to make a powerful party leader in England. Time has amply justified, and more than justified, Bentinck's convictions as to Disraeli; Bentinck's premature death leaves Disraeli's estimate of him an untested speculation.

There were troubles abroad as well as at home for the government. Almost immediately on their coming into office, the project of the Spanish marriages, concocted between Louis Philippe and his minister, M. Guizot, disturbed for a time and very seriously the good understanding between England and France. It might so far as this country was concerned have had much graver consequences, but for the fact that it bore its bitter fruits so soon for the dynasty of Louis Philippe and helped to put a new ruler on the throne of France. It is only as it affected the friendly feeling between this country and France that the question of the Spanish marriages has a place in such a work as this; but at one time it seemed likely enough to bring about consequences which would link it closely and directly with the history of England. The ambition of the French minister and his master was to bring the throne of Spain in some way under the direct influence of France. Such a scheme had again and again been at the heart of French rulers and statesmen, and it had always failed. At least, it had always brought with it jealousy, hostility and



war. Louis Philippe and his minister were untaught by the lessons of the past. The young Queen Isabella of Spain was unmarried, and of course a high degree of public anxiety existed in Europe as to her choice of a husband. No delusion can be more profound or more often exposed than that which inspires ambitious princes and enterprising statesmen to imagine that they can control nations by the influence of dynastic alliances. In every European war we see princes closely connected by marriage in arms against each other. The great political forces which bring nations into the field of battle are not to be charmed into submission by the rubbing of a princess' wedding ring. But a certain class of statesmen, a man of the order who in ordinary life would be called too clever by half, is always intriguing about royal marriages, as if thus alone he could hold in his hands the destinies of nations.

In an evil hour for themselves and their fame, Louis Philippe and his minister believed that they could obtain a virtual ownership of Spain by an ingenious marriage scheme. There was at one time a project talked of rather than actually entertained, of marrying the young queen of Spain and her sister to the Duc d'Anjou and the Duc de Montpensier, both sons of Louis Philippe. But this would have been too daring a venture on the part of the king of the French. Apart from any objections to be entertained by other states, it was certain that England could not "view with indifference," as the diplomatic phrase goes, the prospect of a son of the French king occupying the throne of Spain. It may be said that, after all, it was of little concern to England who married the queen of Spain. Spain was nothing to us. It would not follow that Spain must be the tool of France because the Spanish queen married a son of the French king, any more than it was certain in a former day that Austria must link herself with the fortunes of the great Napoleon because he had married an Austrian princess. Probably it would have been well if England had concerned herself in nowise with the domestic affairs of Spain, and had allowed Louis Philippe to spin what ignoble plots he pleased, if the Spanish people themselves had not wit enough to see through and power enough to counteract them. At a later period France brought on herself a terrible war and a crushing defeat because her emperor chose to believe, or allowed himself to be per-

suaded into believing, that the security of France would be threatened if a Prussian prince were called to the throne of Spain. The Prussian prince did not ascend that throne; but the war between France and Prussia went on; France was defeated; and after a little the Spanish people themselves got rid of the prince whom they had consented to accept in place of the obnoxious Prussian. If the French emperor had not interfered, it is only too probable that the Prussian prince would have gone to Madrid, reigned there for a few unstable and tremulous months, and then have been quietly sent back to his own country. But at the time of Louis Philippe's intrigues about the Spanish marriages, the statesmen of England were by no means disposed to take a cool and philosophic view of things. The idea of non-intervention had scarcely come up then, and the English minister who was chiefly concerned in foreign affairs was about the last man in the world to admit that anything could go on in Europe or elsewhere in which England was not entitled to express an opinion and to make her influence felt. The marriage, therefore, of the young queen of Spain had been long a subject of anxious consideration in the councils of the English government. Louis Philippe knew very well that he could not venture to marry one of his sons to the young Isabella. But he and his minister devised a scheme for securing to themselves and their policy the same effect in another way. They contrived that the queen and her sister should be married at the same time—the queen to her cousin, Don Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz; and her sister to the Duke de Montpensier, Louis Philippe's son. There was reason to expect that the queen, if married to Don Francisco, would have no children, and that the wife of Louis Philippe's son, or some of her children, would come to the throne of Spain.

On the moral guilt of a plot like this it would be superfluous to dwell. Nothing in the history of the perversions of human conscience and judgment can be more extraordinary than the fact that a man like M. Guizot should have been its inspiring influence. It came with a double shock upon the queen of England and her ministers, because they had every reason to think that Louis Philippe had bound himself by a solemn promise to discourage any such policy. When the queen paid her visit to Louis

Philippe at Eu, the king made the most distinct and the most spontaneous promise on the subject both to her majesty and to Lord Aberdeen. The queen's own journal says: "The king told Lord Aberdeen as well as me he never would hear of Montpensier's marriage with the Infanta of Spain—which they are in a great fright about in England—until it was no longer a political question, which would be when the queen is married and has children." The king's own defense of himself afterward, in a letter intended to be a reply to one written to his daughter, the queen of the Belgians, by Queen Victoria, admits the fact. "I shall tell you precisely," he says, "in what consists the deviation on my side. Simply in my having arranged for the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier, not before the marriage of the queen of Spain, for she is to be married to the Duc de Cadiz at the very moment when my son is married to the Infanta, but before the queen has a child. That is the whole deviation; nothing more, nothing less." This was surely deviation enough from the king's promise to justify any charge of bad faith that could be made. The objection of England and other powers was from first to last an objection to any arrangement which might leave the succession to one of Louis Philippe's children or grandchildren. For this reason the king had given his word to Queen Victoria that he would not hear of his son's marriage with Isabella's sister until the difficulty about the succession had been removed by Isabella herself being married and having a child. Such an agreement was absolutely broken when the king arranged for the marriage of his son to the sister of Queen Isabella at the same time as Isabella's own marriage, and when, therefore, it was not certain that the young queen would have any children. The political question, the question of succession, remained then open as before. All the objections that England and other powers had to the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier stood out as strong as ever. It was a question of the birth of a child, and no child was born. The breach of faith was made infinitely more grave by the fact that in the public opinion of Europe Louis Philippe was set down as having brought about the marriage of the queen of Spain with her cousin Don Francisco in the hope and belief that the union would be barren of issue, and that the wife of his son would stand on the next step of the throne.

The excuse which Louis Philippe put forward to palliate what he called his "deviation" from the promise to the queen was not of a nature calculated to allay the ill-feeling which his policy had aroused in England. He pleaded in substance that he had reason to believe in an intended piece of treachery on the part of the English government, the consequences of which, if it were successful, would have been injurious to his policy, and the discovery of which therefore released him from his promise. He had found out, as he declared, that there was an intention on the part of England to put forward as a candidate for the hand of Queen Isabella, Prince Leopold of Coburg, a cousin of Prince Albert. There was so little justification for any such suspicion, that it hardly seems possible a man of Louis Philippe's shrewdness can really have entertained it. The English government had always steadfastly declined to give any support whatever to the candidature of this young prince. Lord Aberdeen, who was then foreign secretary, had always taken his stand on the broad principle that the marriage of the queen of Spain was the business of Isabella herself and of the Spanish people, and that so long as that queen and that people were satisfied, and the interests of England were in no wise involved, the government of Queen Victoria would interfere in no manner. The candidature of Prince Leopold had been in the first instance a project of the dowager queen of Spain, Christina, a woman of intriguing character, on whose political probity no great reliance could be placed. The English government had in the most decided and practical manner proved that they took no share in the plans of Queen Christina, and had no sympathy with them. But while the whole negotiations were going on, the defeat of Sir Robert Peel's ministry brought Lord Palmerston into the foreign office in the place of Lord Aberdeen. The very name of Palmerston produced on Louis Philippe and his minister the effect vulgarly said to be wrought on a bull by the display of a red rag. Louis Philippe treasured in bitter memory the unexpected success which Palmerston had won from him in regard to Turkey and Egypt. At that time, and especially in the court of Louis Philippe, foreign politics were looked upon as the field in which the ministers of great powers contended against each other with brag and trickery, and subtle arts of all kinds; the plain principles

of integrity and truthful dealing did not seem to be regarded as properly belonging to the rules of the game. Louis Philippe probably believed in good faith that the return of Lord Palmerston to the foreign office must mean the renewed activity of treacherous plans against himself. This at least is the only assumption on which we can explain the king's conduct, if we do not wish to believe that he put forward excuses and pretexts which were willful in their falsehood. Louis Philippe seized on some words in a despatch of Lord Palmerston's, in which the candidature of Prince Leopold was simply mentioned as a matter of fact; declared that these words showed that the English government had at last openly adopted that candidature, professed himself relieved from all previous engagements, and at once hurried on the marriage between Queen Isabella and her cousin, and that of his own son with Isabella's sister. On October 10, 1846, the double marriage took place at Madrid; and on February 5, following, M. Guizot told the French chambers that the Spanish marriages constituted the first great thing France had accomplished completely single-handed in Europe since 1830.

Every one knows what a failure this scheme proved, so far as the objects of Louis Philippe and his minister were concerned. Queen Isabella had children; Montpensier's wife did not come to the throne; and the dynasty of Louis Philippe fell before long, its fall undoubtedly hastened by the position of utter isolation and distrust in which it was placed by the scheme of the Spanish marriages and the feelings which it provoked in Europe. The fact with which we have to deal, however, is that the friendship between England and France, from which so many happy results seemed likely to come to Europe and the cause of free government, was necessarily interrupted. It would have been impossible to trust any longer to Louis Philippe. The queen herself entered into a correspondence with his daughter, the queen of the Belgians, in which she expressed in the clearest and the most emphatic manner her opinion of the treachery with which England had been encountered, and suggested plainly enough her sense of the moral wrong involved in such ignoble policy. The whole transaction is but another and a most striking condemnation of that odious creed, for a long time tolerated in statecraft, that there is one moral code for private life and

another for the world of politics. A man who in private affairs should act as Louis Philippe and M. Guizot acted would be justly considered infamous. It is impossible to suppose that M. Guizot at least could have so acted in private life. M. Guizot was a Protestant of a peculiarly austere type, who professed to make religious duty his guide in all things, and who doubtless did make it so in all his dealings as a private citizen. But it is only too evident that he believed the policy of states to allow of other principles than those of Christian morality. He allowed himself to be governed by the odious delusion that the interests of a state can be advanced and ought to be pursued by means which an ordinary man of decent character would scorn to employ for any object in private life. A man of any high principle would not employ such arts in private life to save all his earthly possessions and his life and the lives of his wife and children. Any one who will take the trouble to think over the whole of this plot, for it can be called by no other name, over the ignoble object which it had in view, the base means by which it was carried out, the ruthless disregard for the inclinations, the affections, the happiness, and the morality of its principal victims; and will then think of it as carried on in private life in order to come at the reversion of some young and helpless girl's inheritance, will perhaps find it hard to understand how the shame can be any the less because the principal plotter was a king and the victims were a queen and a nation.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CHARTISM AND YOUNG IRELAND.

THE year 1848 was an era in the modern history of Europe. It was the year of unfulfilled revolutions. The fall of the dynasty of Louis Philippe may be said to have set the revolutionary tide flowing. The event in France had long been anticipated by keen-eyed observers. There are many predictions, delivered and recorded before the revolution was yet near, which show that it ought not to have taken the world by surprise. The reign of the bourgeois king was unsuited in its good and in its bad qualities alike to the genius and the temper of the French people.

The people of France have defects enough which friends and enemies are ready to point out to them, but it can hardly be denied that they like at least the appearance of a certain splendor and magnanimity in their systems of government. This is indeed one of their weaknesses. It lays them open to the allurements of any brilliant adventurer like the First Napoleon or the Third, who can promise them national greatness and glory at the expense perhaps of domestic liberty. But it makes them peculiarly intolerant of anything mean and sordid in a system or a ruler. There are peoples no doubt who could be persuaded, and wisely persuaded, to put up with a good deal of the ignoble and the shabby in their foreign policy for the sake of domestic comfort and tranquillity. But the French people are always impatient of anything like meanness in their rulers, and the government of Louis Philippe was especially mean. Its foreign policy was treacherous; its diplomatists were commissioned to act as tricksters; the word of a French minister at a foreign court began to be regarded as on a level of credibility with a diceer's oath. The home policy of the king was narrow-minded and repressive enough; but a man who played upon the national weakness more wisely might have persuaded his people to be content with defects at home for the sake of prestige abroad. From the hour when it became apparent in France that the nation was not respected abroad, the fall of the dynasty was only a matter of time and change. The terrible story of the de Praslin family helped to bring about the catastrophe; the alternate weakness and obstinacy of the government forced it on; and the king's own lack of decision made it impossible that when the trial had come it could end in any way but one.

Louis Philippe fled to England, and his flight was the signal for long pent-up fires to break out all over Europe. Revolution soon was aflame over nearly all the courts and capitals of the continent. Revolution is like an epidemic; it finds out the weak places in systems. The two European countries which being tried by it stood it best were England and Belgium. In the latter country the king made a frank appeal to his people, and told them that if they wished to be rid of him he was quite willing to go. Language of this kind is new in the mouths of sovereigns; and the Belgians are a people well able to appreciate it.

They declared for their king, and the shock of the revolution passed harmlessly away. In England and Ireland the effect of the events in France was instantly made manifest. The Chartist agitation, which had been much encouraged by the triumphant return of Feargus O'Connor for Nottingham at the general election of 1847, at once came to a head. Some of the Chartist leaders called out for the dismissal of the ministry, the dissolution of parliament, the charter and "no surrender." A national convention of Chartists began its sittings in London to arrange for a monster demonstration on April 10. Some of the speakers openly declared that the people were now quite ready to fight for their charter. Others, more cautious, advised that no step should be taken against the law until at least it was quite certain that the people were stronger than the upholders of the existing laws. Nearly all the leading Chartists spoke of the revolution in France as an example offered in good time to the English people; and it is somewhat curious to observe how it was assumed in the most evident good faith that what we may call the wage-receiving portion of the population of these islands constitutes exclusively the English people. What the educated, the wealthy, the owners of land, the proprietors of factories, the ministers of the different denominations, the authors of books, the painters of pictures, the bench, the bar, the army, the navy, the medical profession—what all these or any of them might think with regard to any proposed constitutional changes was accounted a matter in no wise affecting the resolve of the English "people." The moderate men among the Chartists themselves were soon unable to secure a hearing; and the word of order went round among the body that "the English people" must have the charter or a republic. What had been done in France enthusiasts fancied might well be done in England.

It was determined to present a monster petition to the House of Commons demanding the charter, and in fact offering a last chance to parliament to yield quietly to the demand. The petition was to be presented by a deputation who were to be conducted by a vast procession up to the doors of the house. The procession was to be formed on Kennington Common, the space then unenclosed which is now Kennington Park, on the south side of London. There the Chartists were to be addressed by their still



trusted leader Feargus O'Connor, and they were to march in military order to present their petition. The object undoubtedly was to make such a parade of physical force as should overawe the legislature and the government, and demonstrate the impossibility of refusing a demand backed by such a reserve of power. The idea was taken from O'Connell's policy in the monster meetings; but there were many of the Chartists who hoped for something more than a mere demonstration of physical force, and who would have been heartily glad if some untimely or unreasonable interference on the part of the authorities had led to a collision. A strong faith still survived at that day in what was grandiosely called the might of earnest numbers. Ardent young Chartists who belonged to the time of life when everything seems possible to the brave and faithful, and when facts and examples count for nothing unless they favor one's own views, fully believed that it needed but the firing of the first shot, "the sparkle of the first sword drawn," to give success to the arms, though but the bare arms of the people, and to inaugurate the reign of liberty. Therefore, however differently and harmlessly events may have turned out, we may be certain that there went to the rendezvous at Kennington Common on that tenth of April many hundreds of ignorant and excitable young men, who desired nothing so much as a collision with the police and the military, and the reign of liberty to follow. The proposed procession was declared illegal, and all peaceful and loyal subjects were warned not to take any part in it. But this was exactly what the more ardent among the Chartists expected and desired to see. They were rejoiced that the government had proclaimed the procession unlawful. Was not that the proper occasion for resolute patriots to show that they represented a cause above despotic law? Was not that the very opportunity offered to them to prove that the people were more mighty than their rulers and that the rulers must obey or abdicate? Was not the whole sequence of proceedings thus far exactly after the pattern of the French Revolution? The people resolve that they will have a certain demonstration in a certain way; the oligarchical government declare that they shall not do so; the people persevere, and of course the next thing must be that the government falls, exactly as in Paris. When poor Dick Swiveller in Dickens' story is recovering from

his fever, he looks forth from his miserable bed and makes up his mind that he is under the influence of some such magic spell as he has become familiar with in the "Arabian Nights." His poverty-stricken little nurse claps her thin hands with joy to see him alive; and Dick makes up his mind that the clapping of the hands is the sign understood of all who read Eastern romance, and that next must appear at the princess' summons the row of slaves with jars of jewels on their heads. Poor Dick, reasoning from his experiences in the "Arabian Nights," wasn't one whit more astray than enthusiastic Chartists reasoning for the sequence of English politics from the evidence of what had happened in France. The slaves with the jars of jewels on their heads were just as likely to follow the clap of the poor girl's hands, as the events that had followed a popular demonstration in Paris to follow a popular demonstration in London. To begin with, the Chartists did not represent any such power in London as the Liberal deputies of the French chamber did in Paris. In the next place, London does not govern England, and in our time at least never did. In the third place, the English government knew perfectly well that they were strong in the general support of the nation, and were not likely to yield for a single moment to the hesitation which sealed the fate of the French monarchy.

The Chartists fell to disputing among themselves very much as O'Connell's repealers had done. Some were for disobeying the orders of the authorities and having the procession, and provoking rather than avoiding a collision. At a meeting of the Chartist convention held the night before the demonstration, "the eve of liberty," as some of the orators eloquently termed it, a considerable number were for going armed to Kennington Common. Feargus O'Connor had, however, sense enough still left to throw the weight of his influence against such an insane proceeding, and to insist that the demonstration must show itself to be, as it was from the first proclaimed to be, a strictly pacific proceeding. This was the parting of the ways in the Chartist, as it had been in the repeal agitation. The more ardent spirits at once withdrew from the organization. Those who might even at the very last have done mischief if they had remained part of the movement withdrew from it; and Chartism was left to be represented by

an open-air meeting and a petition to parliament, like all the other demonstrations that the metropolis had seen to pass, hardly heeded, across the field of politics. But the public at large was not aware that the fangs of Chartism had been drawn before it was let loose to play on Kennington Common that memorable tenth of April. London awoke in great alarm that day. The Chartists in their most sanguine moments never ascribed to themselves half the strength that honest alarmists of the *bourgeois* class were ready that morning to ascribe to them. The wildest rumors were spread abroad in many parts of the metropolis. Long before the Chartists had got together on Kennington Common at all, various remote quarters of London were filled with horrifying reports of encounters between the insurgents and the police or the military, in which the Chartists invariably had the better, and as a result of which they were marching in full force to the particular district where the momentary panic prevailed. London is worse off than most cities in such a time of alarm. It is too large for true accounts of things rapidly to diffuse themselves. In April, 1848, the street telegraph was not in use for carrying news through cities, and the rapidly succeeding editions of the cheap papers were as yet unknown. In various quarters of London, therefore, the citizen was left through the greater part of the day to all the agonies of doubt and uncertainty.

There was no lack, however, of public precautions against an outbreak of armed Chartism. The Duke of Wellington took charge of all the arrangements for guarding the public buildings and defending the metropolis generally. He acted with extreme caution, and told several influential persons that the troops were in readiness everywhere, but that they would not be seen unless an occasion actually rose for calling on their services. The coolness and presence of mind of the stern old soldier are well illustrated in the fact that to several persons of influence and authority who came to him with suggestions for the defense of this place or that, his almost invariable answer was "done already," or "done two hours ago," or something of the kind. A vast number of Londoners enrolled themselves as special constables for the maintenance of law and order. Nearly two hundred thousand persons, it is said, were sworn in for this purpose; and it will always be told

as an odd incident of that famous scare, that the Prince Louis Napoleon, then living in London, was one of those who volunteered to bear arms in the preservation of order. Not a long time was to pass away before the most lawless outrage on the order and life of a peaceful city was to be perpetrated by the special command of the man who was so ready to lend the saving aid of his constable's staff to protect English society against some poor hundreds or thousands of English workingmen.

The crisis, however, luckily proved not to stand in need of such saviors of society. The Chartist demonstration was a wretched failure. The separation of the Chartists who wanted force from those who wanted orderly proceedings reduced the project to nothing. The meeting on Kennington Common, so far from being a gathering of half a million of men, was not a larger concourse than a temperance demonstration had often drawn together on the same spot. Some twenty or twenty-five thousand persons were on Kennington Common, of whom at least half were said to be mere lookers-on, come to see what was to happen, and caring nothing whatever about the people's charter. The procession was not formed, O'Connor himself strongly insisting on obedience to the orders of the authorities. There were speeches of the usual kind by O'Connor and others; and the opportunity was made available by some of the more extreme and consequently disappointed Chartists to express, in very vehement language, their not unreasonable conviction that the leaders of the convention were humbugs. The whole affair in truth was an absurd anachronism. The lovers of law and order could have desired nothing better than that it should thus come forth in the light of day and show itself. The clap of the hand was given, but the slaves with the jars of jewels did not appear. It is not that the demands of the Chartists were anachronisms or absurdities. We have already shown that many of them were just and reasonable, and that all came within the fair scope of political argument. The anachronism was in the idea that the display of physical force could any longer be needed or be allowed to settle a political controversy in England. The absurdity was in the notion that the wage-receiving classes, and they alone, are "the people of England."

The great Chartist petition itself, which was to have made

so profound an impression on the House of Commons, proved as utter a failure as the demonstration on Kennington Common. Mr. O'Connor in presenting this portentous document boasted that it would be found to have five million seven hundred thousand signatures in round numbers. The calculation was made in very round numbers indeed. The committee on public petitions were requested to make a minute examination of the document and to report to the House of Commons. The committee called in the services of a little army of law-stationers' clerks, and went to work to analyze the signatures. They found, to begin with, that the whole number of signatures, genuine or otherwise, fell short of two millions. But that was not all. The committee found in many cases that whole sheets of the petition were signed by the one hand, and that eight per cent. of the signatures were those of women. It did not need much investigation to prove that a large proportion of the signatures were not genuine. The name of the queen, of Prince Albert, of the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, Colonel Sibthorp, and various other public personages, appeared again and again on the Chartist roll. Some of these eminent persons would appear to have carried their zeal for the people's charter so far as to keep signing their names untiringly all over the petition. A large number of yet stranger allies would seem to have been drawn to the cause of the charter. "Cheeks the Marine" was a personage very familiar at that time to the readers of Captain Marryat's sea stories; and the name of that mythical hero appeared with bewildering iteration in the petition. So did "Davy Jones;" so did various persons describing themselves as Pugnose, Flatnose, Wooden-legs, and by other such epithets acknowledging curious personal defects. We need not describe the laughter and scorn which these revelations produced. There really was not anything very marvelous in the discovery. The petition was got up in great haste, and with almost utter carelessness. Its sheets used to be sent anywhere, and left lying about anywhere, on a chance of obtaining signatures. The temptation to schoolboys and practical jokers of all kinds was irresistible. Wherever there was a mischievous hand that could get hold of a pen, there was some name of a royal personage or some Cheeks the Marine at once added to the muster-roll of the Chartists. As a matter of fact,

almost all large popular petitions are found to have some such buffooneries mixed up with their serious business. The committee on petitions have on several occasions had reason to draw attention to the obviously fictitious nature of signatures appended to such documents. The petitions in favor of O'Connell's movement used to lie at the doors of chapels all the Sunday long in Ireland, with pen and ink ready for all who approved to sign; and it was many a time the favorite amusement of schoolboys to scrawl down the most grotesque names and nonsensical imitations of names. But the Chartist petition had been so loudly boasted of, and the whole Chartist movement had created such a scare, that the delight of the public generally at any discovery that threw both into ridicule was overwhelming. It was made certain that the number of genuine signatures was ridiculously below the estimate formed by the Chartist leaders; and the agitation after terrifying respectability for a long time suddenly showed itself as a thing only to be laughed at. The laughter was stentorian and overwhelming. The very fact that the petition contained so many absurdities was in itself an evidence of the sincerity of those who presented it. It was not likely that they would have furnished their enemies with so easy and tempting a way of turning them into ridicule, if they had known or suspected that there was any lack of genuineness in the signatures, or that they would have provided so ready a means of decrying their truthfulness as to claim five millions of names for a document which they knew to have less than two millions. The Chartist leaders in all their doings showed a want of accurate calculation, and of the frame of mind which desires or appreciates such accuracy. The famous petition was only one other example of their habitual weakness. It did not bear testimony against their good faith.

The effect however, of this unlucky petition on the English public mind was decisive. From that day Chartism never presented itself to the ordinary middle-class Englishman as anything but an object of ridicule. The terror of the agitation was gone. There were efforts made again and again during the year by some of the more earnest and extreme of the Chartist leaders to renew the strength of the agitation. The outbreak of the Young Ireland movement found many sympathizers among the

English Chartists, more especially in its earlier stages; and some of the Chartists in London and other great English cities endeavored to light up the fire of their agitation again by the help of some brands caught up from the pile of disaffection which Mitchel and Meagher were setting ablaze in Dublin. A monster gathering of Chartists was announced for Whit-Monday, June 12, and again the metropolis was thrown into a momentary alarm, very different in strength however from that of the famous tenth of April. Again precautions were taken by the military authorities against the possible rising of an insurrectionary mob. Nothing came of this last gasp of Chartism. The *Times* of the following day remarked that there was absolutely nothing to record, "nothing except the blankest expectation, the most miserable gaping, gossiping, and grumbling of disappointed listeners; the standing about, the roaming to and fro, the dispersing and the sneaking home of some poor simpletons who had wandered forth in the hope of some miraculous crisis in their affairs." It is impossible not to pity those who were thus deceived; not to feel some regret for the earnestness, the hope, the ignorant, passionate energy which were thrown away.

Nor can we feel only surprise and contempt for those who imagined that the charter and the rule of what was called in their jargon "the people" would do something to regenerate their miserable lot. They had at least seen that up to that time parliament had done little for them. There had been a parliament of aristocrats and landlords, and it had for generations troubled itself little about the class from whom Chartism was recruited. The scepter of legislative power had passed into the hands of a parliament made up in great measure of the wealthy middle ranks, and it had thus far shown no inclination to distress itself over much about them. Almost every single measure parliament has passed to do any good for the wage-receiving classes and the poor generally has been passed since the time when the Chartists began to be a power. Our corn laws repeal, our factory acts, our sanitary legislation, our measures referring to the homes of the poor—all these have been the work of later times than those which engendered the Chartist movement. It is easy to imagine a Chartist replying in the early days of the movement to some grave remonstrances from wise legislators. He might say,

“You tell me I am mad to think the charter can do anything for me and my class. But can you tell me what else ever has done, or tried to do, any good for them? You think I am a crazy person because I believe that a popular parliament could make anything of the task of government. I ask you what have you and your like made of it already? Things are well enough no doubt for you and your class, a pitiful minority; but they could not be any worse for us, and we might make them better so far as the great majority are concerned. We may fairly crave a trial for our experiment. No matter how wild and absurd it may seem it could not turn out, for the majority, any worse than your scheme has done.” It would not have been very easy then to answer a speaker who took this line of argument. In truth, there was, as we have already insisted, grievance enough to excuse the Chartist agitation and hope enough in the scheme the Chartists proposed to warrant its fair discussion. Such movements are never to be regarded by sensible persons as the work merely of knaves and dupes.

Chartism bubbled and sputtered a little yet in some of the provincial towns and even in London. There were Chartist riots in Ashton, Lancashire, and an affray with the police and the killing, before the affray, it is painful to have to say, of one policeman. There were Chartists arrested in Manchester on the charge of preparing insurrectionary movements. In two or three public-houses in London some Chartist juntas were arrested, and the police believed they had got evidence of a projected rising to take in the whole of the metropolis. It is not impossible that some wild and frantic schemes of the kind were talked of and partly hatched by some of the disappointed fanatics of the movement. Some of them were fiery and ignorant enough for anything; and throughout this memorable year thrones and systems kept toppling down all over Europe in a manner that might well have led feather-headed agitators to fancy that nothing was stable, and that in England too the whistle of a few conspirators might bring about a transformation scene. All this folly came to nothing but a few arrests and a few not heavy sentences. Among those tried in London on charges of sedition merely, was Mr. Ernest Jones, who was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Mr. Jones has been already spoken of as a man



of position and of high culture; a poet whose verses sometimes might almost claim for their author the possession of genius. He was an orator whose speeches then and after obtained the enthusiastic admiration of John Bright. He belonged rather to the school of revolutionists which established itself as Young Ireland than to the class of the poor Fussells and Cuffeys and uneducated workingmen who made up the foremost ranks of the aggressive Chartist movement in its later period. He might have had a brilliant and a useful career. He outlived the Chartist era; lived to return to peaceful agitation, to hold public controversy with the eccentric and clever Professor Blackie, of Edinburgh, on the relative advantages of republicanism and monarchy, and to stand for a parliamentary borough at the general election of 1868; and then his career was closed by death. The close was sadly premature even then. He had plunged immaturity into politics, and although a whole generation had passed away since his *début*, he was but a young man comparatively when the last scene came. Here comes, not inappropriately, to an end the history of English Chartism. It died of publicity; of exposure to the air; of the anti-corn-law league; of the evident tendency of the time to settle all questions by reason, argument, and majorities; of growing education; of a strengthening sense of duty among all the more influential classes. When Sir John Campbell spoke its obituary years before, as we have seen, he treated it as simply a monster killed by the just severity of the law. 'Ten years' experience taught the English public to be wiser than Sir John Campbell. Chartism did not die of its own excesses; it became an anachronism; no one wanted it any more. All that was sound in its claims asserted itself and was in time conceded. But its active or aggressive influence ceased with 1848. The history of the reign of Queen Victoria has not any further to concern itself about Chartism. Not since that year has there been serious talk or thought of any agitation asserting its claims by the use or even the display of armed force in England.

The spirit of the time had meanwhile made itself felt in a different way in Ireland. For some months before the beginning of the year the Young Ireland party had been established as a rival association to the repealers who still believed in the policy of O'Connell. It was inevitable

that O'Connell's agitation should beget some such movement. The great agitator had brought the temperament of the younger men of his party up to a fever heat, and it was out of the question that all that heat should subside in the veins of young collegians and schoolboys at the precise moment when the leader found that he had been going too far and gave the word for peace and retreat. The influence of O'Connell had been waning for a time before his death. It was a personal influence depending on his eloquence and his power, and these of course had gone down with his physical decay. The *Nation* newspaper was conducted and written for by some rising young men of high culture and remarkable talent. It was inspired in the beginning by at least one genuine poet, Mr. Thomas Davis, who unfortunately died in his youth. It had long been writing in a style of romantic and sentimental nationalism, which could hardly give much satisfaction to or derive much satisfaction from the somewhat cunning and trickish agitation which O'Connell had set going. The *Nation* and the clever youths who wrote for it were all for nationalism of the Hellenic or French type, and were disposed to laugh at constitutional agitation, and to chafe against the influence of the priests. The famine had created an immense amount of unreasonable but certainly not unnatural indignation against the government, who were accused of having paltered with the agony and danger of the time, and having clung to the letter of the doctrines of political economy when death was invading Ireland in full force. The Young Ireland party had received a new support by the adhesion of Mr. William Smith O'Brien to their ranks. Mr. O'Brien was a man of considerable influence in Ireland. He had large property and high rank. He was connected with or related to many aristocratic families. His brother was Lord Inchiquin; the title of the marquissate of Thomond was in the family. He was undoubtedly descended from the famous Irish hero and king, Brian Boru, and was almost inordinately proud of his claims of long descent. He had the highest personal character and the finest sense of honor; but his capacity for leadership of any movement was very slender. A poor speaker, with little more than an ordinary country gentleman's share of intellect, O'Brien was a well-meaning but weak and vain man, whose head at last became almost turned by the

homage which his followers and the Irish people generally paid him. He was in short a sort of Lafayette *manqué*; under the happiest auspices he could never have been more than a successful Lafayette. But his adhesion to the cause of Young Ireland gave the movement a decided impulse. His rank, his legendary descent, his undoubted chivalry of character and purity of purpose lent a romantic interest to his appearance as the recognized leader, or at least the figure-head, of the Young Irelanders.

Smith O'Brien was a man of more mature years than most of his companions in the movement. He was some forty-three or four years of age when he took the leadership of the movement. Thomas Francis Meagher, the most brilliant orator of the party, a man who under other conditions might have risen to great distinction in public life, was then only about two or three and twenty. Mitchel and Duffy, who were regarded as elders among the Young Irelanders, were perhaps each some thirty years of age. There were many men more or less prominent in the movement who were still younger than Meagher. One of these, who afterward rose to some distinction in America, and is long since dead, wrote a poem about the time when the Young Ireland movement was at its height, in which he commemorated sadly his attainment of his eighteenth year, and deplored that at an age when Chatterton was mighty and Keats had glimpses into spirit-land—the age of eighteen, to wit—he, this young Irish patriot, had yet accomplished nothing for his native country. Most of his companions sympathized fully with him and thought his impatience natural and reasonable. The Young Ireland agitation was at first a sort of college debating society movement, and it never became really national. It was composed for the most part of young journalists, young scholars, amateur *littérateurs*, poets *en herbe*, orators molded on the finest patterns of Athens and the French Revolution, and aspiring youths of the Cherubino time of life who were ambitious of distinction as heroes in the eyes of young ladies. Among the recognized leaders of the party there was hardly one in want of money. Some of them were young men of fortune, or at least the sons of wealthy parents. Not many of the dangerous revolutionary elements were to be found among these clever, respectable, and precocious youths. The Young Ireland move-

ment was as absolutely unlike the Chartist movement in England as any political agitation could be unlike another. Unreal and unlucky as the Chartist movement proved to be, its ranks were recruited by genuine passion and genuine misery.

Before the death of O'Connell the formal secession of the Young Ireland party from the regular repealers had taken place. It arose out of an attempt of O'Connell to force upon the whole body a declaration condemning the use of physical force—of the sword, as it was grandiosely called—in any patriotic movement whatever. It was in itself a sign of O'Connell's failing powers and judgment that he expected to get a body of men about the age of Meagher to make a formal declaration against the weapon of Leonidas and Miltiades and all the other heroes dear to classically-instructed youth. Meagher declaimed against the idea in a burst of poetic rhetoric which made his followers believe that a new Grattan of bolder style was coming up to recall the manhood of Ireland that had been banished by the agitation of O'Connell and the priests. "I am not one of those tame moralists," the young orator exclaimed, "who say that liberty is not worth one drop of blood. . . . Against this miserable maxim the noblest virtue that has saved and sanctified humanity appears in judgment. From the blue waters of the Bay of Salamis; from the valley over which the sun stood still and lit the Israelite to victory; from the cathedral in which the sword of Poland has been sheathed in the shroud of Kosciusko; from the convent of St. Isidore where the fiery hand that rent the ensign of St. George upon the plains of Ulster has molded into dust; from the sands of the desert where the wild genius of the Algerine so long has scared the eagle of the Pyrenees; from the ducal palace in this kingdom where the memory of the gallant and seditious Geraldine enhances more than royal favor the splendor of his race; from the solitary grave within this mute city which a dying bequest has left without an epitaph—oh! from every spot where heroism has had a sacrifice or a triumph, a voice breaks in upon the cringing crowd that cherishes this maxim, crying, 'Away with it—away with it!'"

The reader will probably think that a generation of young men might have enjoyed as much as they could get

of this sparkling declamation without much harm being done thereby to the cause of order. Only a crowd of well-educated young Irishmen fresh from college, and with the teaching of their country's history which the *Nation* was pouring out weekly in prose and poetry, could possibly have understood all its historical allusions. No harm, indeed, would have come of this graceful and poetic movement were it not for events which the Young Ireland party had no share in bringing about.

The continental revolutions of the year 1848 suddenly converted the movement from a literary and poetical organization into a rebellious conspiracy. The fever of that wild epoch spread itself at once over Ireland. When crowns were going down everywhere, what wonder if Hellenic Young Irelandism believed that the moment had come when the crown of the Saxon invader too was destined to fall? The French Revolution and the flight of Louis Philippe set Ireland in a rapture of hope and rebellious joy. Lamartine became the hero of the hour. A copy of his showy, superficial "Girondists" was in the hand of every true Young Irishman. Meagher was at once declared to be the Vergniaud of the Irish revolution. Smith O'Brien was called upon to become its Lafayette. A deputation of Young Irishmen, with O'Brien and Meagher at their head, waited upon Lamartine, and were received by him with a cool good sense which made Englishmen greatly respect his judgment and prudence, but which much disconcerted the hopes of the Young Irishmen. Many of these latter appear to have taken in their most literal sense some words of Lamartine's about the sympathy of the new French Republic with the struggles of oppressed nationalities, and to have fancied that the republic would seriously consider the propriety of going to war with England at the request of a few young men from Ireland, headed by a country gentleman and member of parliament. In the meantime a fresher and a stronger influence than that of O'Brien or Meagher had arisen in Young Irelandism. Young Ireland itself now split into two sections: one for immediate action, the other for caution and delay. The party of action acknowledged the leadership of John Mitchel. The organ of this section was the newspaper started by Mitchel in opposition to the *Nation*, which had grown too slow for him. The new

journal was called the *United Irishman*, and in a short time it had completely distanced the *Nation* in popularity and in circulation. The deliberate policy of the *United Irishman* was to force the hand first of the government and then of the Irish people. Mitchel had made up his mind so to rouse the passion of the people as to compel the government to take steps for the prevention of rebellion by the arrest of some of the leaders. Then Mitchel calculated upon the populace rising to defend or rescue their heroes—and then the game would be afoot; Ireland would be entered in rebellion; and the rest would be for fate to decide.

This looks now a very wild and hopeless scheme. So of course it proved itself to be. But it did not appear so hopeless at the time, even to cool heads. At least it may be called the only scheme which had the slightest chance of success; we do not say of success in establishing the independence of Ireland, which Mitchel sought for, but in setting a genuine rebellion afoot. Mitchel was the one formidable man among the rebels of '48. He was the one man who distinctly knew what he wanted, and was prepared to run any risk to get it. He was cast in the very mold of the genuine revolutionist, and under different circumstances might have played a formidable part. He came from the northern part of the island, and was a Protestant dissenter. It is a fact worthy of note that all the really formidable rebels Ireland has produced in modern times, from Wolfe Tone to Mitchel, have been Protestants. Mitchel was a man of great literary talent; indeed a man of something like genius. He wrote a clear, bold, incisive prose, keen in its scorn and satire, going directly to the heart of its purpose. As mere prose some of it is worth reading even to-day for its cutting force and pitiless irony. Mitchel issued in his paper week after week a challenge to the government to prosecute him. He poured out the most fiery sedition, and used every incentive that words could supply to rouse a hot-headed people to arms or an impatient government to some act of severe repression. Mitchel was quite ready to make a sacrifice of himself if it were necessary. It is possible enough that he had persuaded himself into the belief that a rising in Ireland against the government might be successful. But there is good reason to think that he would have been quite

satisfied if he could have stirred up by any process a genuine and sanguinary insurrection, which would have read well in the papers and redeemed the Irish Nationalists from what he considered the disgrace of never having shown that they knew how to die for their cause. He kept on urging the people to prepare for warlike effort, and every week's *United Irishman* contained long descriptions of how to make pikes and how to use them; how to cast bullets, how to make the streets as dangerous for the hoofs of cavalry horses as Bruce made the field of Bannockburn. Some of the recipes, if we may call them so, were of a peculiarly ferocious kind. The use of vitriol was recommended among other destructive agencies. A feeling of detestation was not unnaturally aroused against Mitchel, even in the minds of many who sympathized with his general opinions; and those whom we may call the Girondists of the party somewhat shrank from him and would gladly have been rid of him. It is true that the most ferocious of these vitriolic articles were not written by him; nor did he know of the famous recommendation about the throwing of vitriol until it appeared in print. He was, however, justly and properly as well as technically responsible for all that appeared in a paper started with such a purpose as that of the *United Irishman*, and it is not even certain that he would have disapproved of the vitriol-throwing recommendation if he had known of it in time. He never disavowed it nor took any pains to show that it was not his own. The fact that he was not its author is therefore only mentioned here as a matter more or less interesting, and not at all as any excuse for Mitchel's general style of newspaper war-making. He was a fanatic, clever and fearless; he would neither have asked quarter nor given it; and undoubtedly if Ireland had had many men of his desperate resolve she would have been plunged into a bloody, an obstinate, and a disastrous contest against the strength of the British government.

In the meantime that government had to do something. The lord lieutenant could not go on forever allowing a newspaper to scream out appeals to rebellion, and to publish every week minute descriptions of the easiest and quickest way of killing off English soldiers. The existing laws were not strong enough to deal with Mitchel and to suppress his paper. It would have been of little account

to proceed against him under the ordinary laws which condemned seditious speaking or writing. Prosecutions were in fact set on foot against O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchel himself for ordinary offenses of that kind; but the accused men got bail and went on meantime speaking and writing as before, and when the cases came to be tried by a jury the government failed to obtain a conviction. The government therefore brought in a bill for the better security of the crown and government, making all written incitement to insurrection or resistance to the law felony punishable with transportation. This measure was passed rapidly through all its stages. It enabled the government to suppress newspapers like the *United Irishman*, and to keep in prison without bail, while awaiting trial, anyone charged with an offense under the new act. Mitchel soon gave the authorities an opportunity of testing the efficacy of the act in his person. He repeated his incitements to insurrection, was arrested and thrown into prison. The climax of the excitement in Ireland was reached when Mitchel's trial came on. There can be little doubt that he was filled with a strong hope that his followers would attempt to rescue him. He wrote from his cell that he could hear around the walls of his prison every night the tramp of hundreds of sympathizers, "felons in heart and soul." The government for their part were in full expectation that some sort of rising would take place. For the time, Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and all the other Young Irelanders were thrown into the shade, and the eyes of the whole country were turned upon Mitchel's cell. Had there been another Mitchel out of doors, as fearless and reckless as the Mitchel in the prison, a sanguinary outbreak would probably have taken place. But the leaders of the movement outside were by no means clear in their own minds as to the course they ought to pursue. Many of them were well satisfied of the hopelessness and folly of any rebellious movement, and nearly all were quite aware that in any case the country just then was wholly unprepared for anything of the kind. Not a few had a shrewd suspicion that the movement never had taken any real hold on the heart of the country. Some were jealous of Mitchel's sudden popularity, and in their secret hearts were disposed to curse him for the trouble he had brought on them. But they could not attempt to give open utterance



to such a sentiment. Mitchel's boldness and resolve had placed them at a sad disadvantage. He had that superiority of influence over them that downright determination always gives a man over colleagues who do not quite know what they would have. One thing however they could do; and that they did. They discouraged any idea of an attempt to resene Mitchel. His trial came on. He was found guilty. He made a short but powerful and impassioned speech from the dock; he was sentenced to fourteen year's transportation; he was hurried under an escort of cavalry through the streets of Dublin, put on board a ship of war, and in a few hours was on his way to Bermuda. Dublin remained perfectly quiet; the country outside hardly knew what was happening until Mitchel was well on his way, and far-seeing persons smiled to themselves and said the danger was all over.

So indeed it proved to be. The remainder of the proceedings partook rather of the nature of burlesque. The Young Ireland leaders became more demonstrative than ever. The *Nation* newspaper now went in openly for rebellion, but rebellion at some unnamed time, and when Ireland should be ready to meet the Saxon. It seemed to be assumed that the Saxon, with a characteristic love of fair play, would let his foes make all the preparations they pleased without any interference, and that when they announced themselves ready, then, but not until then, would he come forth to fight with them. Smith O'Brien went about the country holding reviews of the "Confederates," as the Young Irelanders called themselves. The government, however, showed a contempt for the rules of fair play, suspended the *habeas corpus* act in Ireland, and issued warrants for the arrest of Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and other confederate leaders. The Young Irelanders received the news of this unchivalric proceeding with an outburst of anger and surprise which was evidently genuine. They had clearly made up their minds that they were to go on playing at preparation for rebellion as long as they liked to keep up the game. They were completely puzzled by the new condition of things. It was not very clear what Leonidas or Verignand would have done under such circumstances; it was certain that if they were all arrested the country would not stir hand or foot in their behalf. Some of the principle leaders, therefore—Smith

O'Brien, Meagher, Dillon, and others—left Dublin and went down into the country. It is not certain even yet whether they had any clear purpose of rebellion at first. It seems probable that they thought of evading arrest for awhile, and trying meantime if the country was ready to follow them into an armed movement. They held a series of gatherings, which might be described as meetings of agitators or marshalings of rebels, according as one was pleased to interpret their purpose. But this sort of thing very soon drifted into rebellion. The principal body of the followers of Smith O'Brien came into collision with the police, at a place called Ballingarry in Tipperary. They attacked a small force of police, who took refuge in the cottage of a poor widow named Cormack. The police held the house as a besieged fort, and the rebels attacked them from the famous cabbage-garden outside. The police fired a few volleys. The rebels fired, with what wretched muskets and rifles they possessed, but without harming a single policeman. After a few of them had been killed or wounded—it never was perfectly certain that any were actually killed—the rebel army dispersed, and the rebellion was all over. In a few days after poor Smith O'Brien was taken quietly at the railway station in Thurles, Tipperary. He was calmly buying a ticket for Limerick when he was recognized. He made no resistance whatever, and seemed to regard the whole mummery as at an end. He accepted his fate with the composure of a gentleman, and indeed in all the part which was left for him to play he bore himself with dignity. It is but justice to an unfortunate gentleman to say that some reports which were rather ignobly set abroad about his having showed a lack of personal courage in the Ballingarry affray were, as all will readily believe, quite untrue. Some of the police deposed that during the fight, if fight it could be called, poor O'Brien exposed his life with entire recklessness. One policeman said he could have shot him easily at several periods of the little drama, but he felt reluctant to be the slayer of the misguided descendant of the Irish kings. It afterward appeared also that any little chance of carrying on any manner of rebellion was put a stop to by Smith O'Brien's own resolution that his rebels must not seize the private property of any one. He insisted that his rebellion must pay its way, and the funds were soon out. The con-

federate leader awoke from a dream when he saw his followers dispersing after the first volley or two from the police. From that moment he behaved like a dignified gentleman, equal to the fate he had brought upon him.

Meagher and two of his companions were arrested a few days after as they were wandering hopelessly and aimlessly through the mountains of Tipperary. The prisoners were brought for trial before a special commission held at Clonmel in Tipperary, in the following September. Smith O'Brien was the first put on trial, and he was found guilty. He said a few words with grave and dignified composure, simply declaring that he had endeavored to do his duty to his native country and that he was prepared to abide the consequences. He was sentenced to death after the old form in cases of high treason—to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered. Meagher was afterward found guilty. Great commiseration was felt for him. His youth and his eloquence made all men and women pity him. His father was a wealthy man who had had a respected career in parliament; and there had seemed at one time to be a bright and happy life before young Meagher. The short address in which Meagher vindicated his actions when called upon to show cause why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, was full of manly and pathetic eloquence. He had nothing, he said, to retract or to ask pardon for. "I am not here to crave with faltering lip the life I have consecrated to the independence of my country. . . . I offer to my country as some proof of the sincerity with which I have thought and spoken and struggled for her, the life of a young heart. . . . The history of Ireland explains my crime and justifies it. . . . Even here where the shadows of death surround me, and from which I see my early grave opening for me in no consecrated soil, the hope which beckoned me forth on that perilous sea whereon I have been wrecked animates, consoles, enraptures me. No; I do not despair of my poor old country, her peace, her liberty, her glory."

Meagher was sentenced to death with the same hideous formalities as those which had been observed in the case of Smith O'Brien. No one, however, really believed for a moment that such a sentence was likely to be carried out in the reign of Queen Victoria. The sentence of death was changed into one of transportation for life. Nor was

even this carried out. The convicts were all sent to Australia, and a few years after Meagher contrived to make his escape. He was soon followed by Mitchel. The manner of escape was at least of doubtful credit to the prisoners, for they were placed under parole, and a very nice question was raised as to whether they had not broken their parole by the attempt to escape. It was a nice question, which in the case of men of a delicate sense of honor ought, one would think, hardly to have arisen at all. The point in Mitchel's case was, that he actually went to the police court within whose jurisdiction he was, formally and publicly announced to the magistrate that he withdrew his parole, and invited the magistrate to arrest him then and there. But the magistrate was unprepared for his coming and was quite thrown off his guard. Mitchel was armed, and so was a friend who accompanied him, and who had planned and carried out the escape. They had horses waiting at the door, and when they saw that the magistrate did not know what to do, they left the court, mounted the horses, and rode away. It was contended by Mitchel and by his companion Mr. P. J. Smyth (afterward a distinguished member of parliament), that they had fulfilled all the conditions required by the parole and had formally and honorably withdrawn it. One is only surprised how men of honor could thus puzzle and deceive themselves. The understood condition of a parole is that a man who intends to withdraw it shall place himself before his captors in exactly the same condition as he was when on his pledged word of honor they allowed him a comparative liberty. It is evident that a prisoner would never be allowed to go at large on parole if he were to make use of his liberty to arrange all the conditions of an escape, and when everything was ready, take his captors by surprise, tell them he was no longer bound by the conditions of the pledge, and that they might keep him if they could. It was long believed in England that Smith O'Brien had declined to have anything to do with Mitchel's escape. But it is only just to Mitchel and his advisers to say that the whole plan was submitted to O'Brien, and that it had his entire approval, and it is clear that O'Brien too could not have thought there was anything dishonorable in it. Smith O'Brien himself afterward received a pardon on condition of his not returning to these islands; but this condition

was withdrawn after a time, and he came back to Ireland. He died quietly in Wales in 1864. Mitchel settled for a while in Richmond, Virginia, and became an ardent advocate of slavery and an impassioned champion of the Southern Rebellion. He returned to the North after the rebellion, and more lately came to Ireland, where, owing to some defect in the criminal law, he could not be arrested, his time of penal servitude having expired although he had not served it. He was still a hero with a certain class of the people; he was put up as a candidate for an Irish county, and elected. He was not allowed to enter the House of Commons, however; the election was declared void, and a new writ was issued. He was elected again, and some turmoil was expected, when suddenly Mitchel, who had long been in sinking health, was withdrawn from the controversy by death. He should have died before. The later years of his life were only an anti-climax. His attitude in the dock in 1848 had something of dignity and heroism in it, and even the staunchest enemies of his cause admired him. He had undoubtedly great literary ability, and if he had never reappeared in politics the world would have thought that a really brilliant light had been prematurely extinguished. Meagher served in the army of the Federal States when the war broke out, and showed much of the soldier's spirit and capacity. His end was premature and inglorious. He fell from the deck of a steamer one night; it was dark and there was a strong current running; help came too late. A false step, a dark night, and the muddy waters of the Missouri closed the career that had opened with so much promise of brightness.

Many of the conspicuous Young Irelanders rose to some distinction. Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor of the *Nation*, who was twice put on his trial after the failure of the insurrection, but whom the jury would not on either occasion convict, became a member of the House of Commons, and afterward emigrated to the colony of Victoria. He rose to be prime minister there, and received knighthood from the crown and a pension from the colonial parliament. Thomas Darcy M'Gee, another prominent rebel, went to the United States, and thence to Canada, where he rose to be a minister of the crown. He was one of the most loyal supporters of the British connection. His untimely death by the hand of an assassin was lamented

in England as well as in the colony he had served so well. Some of the Young Irelanders remained in the United States and won repute; others returned to England, and of these not a few entered the House of Commons and were respected there, the follies of their youth quite forgotten by their colleagues, even if not disowned by themselves. A remarkable illustration of the spirit of fairness that generally pervades the House of Commons is found in the fact that everyone there respected John Martin, who to the day of his death avowed himself, in parliament and out of it, a consistent and unrepentant opponent of British rule in Ireland. He was respected because of the purity of his character and the transparent sincerity of his purpose. Martin had been devoted to Mitchel in his lifetime, and he died a few days after Mitchel's death.

The Young Ireland movement came and vanished like a shadow. It never had any reality or substance in it. It was a literary and poetic inspiration altogether. It never took the slightest hold of the peasantry. It hardly touched any men of mature years. It was a rather pretty playing at rebellion. It was an imitation of the French Revolution as the Girondists imitated the patriots of Greece and Rome. But it might, perhaps, have had a chance of doing memorable mischief if the policy of the one only man in the business who really was in earnest and was reckless had been carried out. It is another illustration of the fact which O'Connell's movement had exemplified before, that in Irish politics a climax cannot be repeated or recalled. There is something fitful in all Irish agitation. The national emotion can be wrought up to a certain temperature; and if at that boiling point nothing is done, the heat suddenly goes out, and no blowing of Cyclopean bellows can rekindle it. The repeal agitation was brought up to this point when the meeting at Clontarf was convened; the dispersal of the meeting was the end of the whole agitation. With the Young Ireland movement the trial of Mitchel formed the climax. After that a wise legislator would have known that there was nothing more to fear. Petion, the revolutionary mayor of Paris, knew that when it rained his partisans could do nothing. There were in 1848 observant Irishmen who knew that after the Mitchel climax had been reached the crowd would disperse, not to be collected again for that time.

These two agitations, the Chartist and the young Ireland, constituted what may be called our tribute to the power of the insurrectionary spirit that was abroad over Europe in 1848. In almost every other European state revolution raised its head fiercely, and fought out its claims in the very capital, under the eyes of bewildered royalty. The whole of Italy from the Alps to the Straits of Messina, and from Venice to Genoa, was thrown into convulsion; "Our Italy" once again "shone o'er with evil swords." There was insurrection in Berlin and in Vienna. The emperor had to fly from the latter city as the people fled from Rome. In Paris there came a Red Republican rising against a Republic that strove not to be red, and the rising was crushed by Cavaignac with a terrible strenuousness that made some of the streets of Paris literally to run with blood. It was a grim foreshadowing of the Commune of 1871. Another remarkable foreshadowing of what was to come was seen in the fact that the Prince Louis Napoleon, long an exile from France, had been allowed to return to it, and at the close of the year, in the passion for law and order at any price born of the Red Republican excesses, had been elected president of the French Republic. Hungary was in arms; Spain was in convulsion; even Switzerland was not safe. Our contribution to this general commotion was to be found in the demonstration on Kennington Common and the abortive attempt at a rising near Ballingarry. There could not possibly be a truer tribute to the solid strength of our system. Not for one moment was the political constitution of England seriously endangered. Not for one hour did the safety of our great communities require a call upon the soldiers instead of upon the police. Not one charge of cavalry was needed to put down the fiercest outburst of the rebellious spirit in England. Not one single execution took place. The meaning of this is clear. It is not that there were no grievances in our system calling for redress. It is not that the existing institutions did not bear heavily down on many classes. It is not that our political or social system was so conspicuously better than that of some European countries which were torn and plowed up by revolution. To imagine that we owed our freedom from revolution to our freedom from serious grievance would be to misread altogether the lessons offered to

our statesmen by that eventful year. We have done the work of whole generations of reformers in the interval between this time and that. We have made peaceful reforms, political, industrial, legal, since then which, if not to be had otherwise, would have justified any appeal to revolution. There, however, we touch upon the lesson of the time. Our political and constitutional system rendered an appeal to force unnecessary and superfluous. No call to arms was needed to bring about any reform that the common judgment of the country might demand. Other peoples flew to arms because they were driven by despair; because there was no way in their political constitution for the influence of public opinion to make itself justly felt; because those who were in power held it by the force of bayonets and not of public agreement. The results of the year were on the whole unfavorable to popular liberty. The results of the year that followed were decidedly reactionary. The time had not come in 1848 or 1849 for Liberal principles to assert themselves. Their "great deed," to quote some of the words of our English poetess, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "was too great." We in this country were saved alike from the revolution and the reaction by the universal recognition of the fact among all who gave themselves time to think, that public opinion, being the ultimate ruling power, was the only authority to which appeal was needed, and that in the end justice would be done. All but the very wildest spirits could afford to wait; and no revolutionary movement is really dangerous which is only the work of the wildest spirits.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### DON PACIFICO.

THE name of Don Pacifico was as familiar to the world some quarter of a century ago as that of M. Jecker was about the time of the French invasion of Mexico. Don Pacifico became famous for a season as the man whose quarrel had nearly brought on a European war, caused a temporary disturbance of good relations between England and France, split up political parties in England in a manner hardly ever known before, and established the reputa-



tion of Lord Palmerston as one of the greatest parliamentary debaters of his time. Among the memorable speeches delivered in the English House of Commons that of Lord Palmerston on the Don Pacifico debate must always take a place. It was not because the subject of the debate was a great one, or because there were any grand principles involved. The question originally in dispute was unutterably trivial and paltry; there was no particular principle involved; it was altogether what is called in commercial litigation a question of account; a controversy about the amount and time of payment of a doubtful claim. Nor was the speech delivered by Lord Palmerston one of the grand historical displays of oratory that even when the sound of them is lost send their echoes to "roll from soul to soul." It was not like one of Burke's great speeches, or one of Chatham's. It was not one calculated to provoke keen literary controversy, like Sheridan's celebrated "Begum speech," which all contemporaries held to be unrivaled, but which a later generation assumes to have been rather flashy rhetoric. There are no passages of splendid eloquence in Palmerston's Pacifico speech. Its great merit was its wonderful power as a contribution to parliamentary argument; as a masterly appeal to the feelings, the prejudices, and the passions of the House of Commons; as a complete parliamentary victory over a combination of the most influential, eloquent, and heterogeneous opponents.

Don Pacifico was a Jew, a Portuguese by extraction, but a native of Gibraltar and a British subject. His house in Athens was attacked and plundered in the open day on April 4, 1847, by an Athenian mob who were headed, it was affirmed, by two sons of the Greek minister of war. The attack came about in this way. It had been customary in Greek towns to celebrate Easter by burning an effigy of Judas Iscariot. In 1847 the police of Athens were ordered to prevent this performance, and the mob, disappointed of their favorite amusement, ascribed the new orders to the influence of the Jews. Don Pacifico's house happened to stand near the spot where the Judas was annually burnt; Don Pacifico was known to be a Jew; and the anger of the mob was wreaked upon him accordingly. There could be no doubt that the attack was lawless, and that the Greek authorities took no trouble to pro-

tect Pacifico against it. Don Pacifico made a claim against the Greek government for compensation. He estimated his losses, direct and indirect, at nearly thirty-two thousand pounds sterling. Another claim was made at the same time by another British subject, a man of a very different stamp from Don Pacifico. This was Mr. Finlay, the historian of Greece. Mr. Finlay had gone out to Greece in the enthusiastic days of Byron and Cochran and Church and Hastings; and he settled in Athens when the independence of Greece had been established. Some of his land had been taken for the purpose of rounding off the new palace gardens of King Otho; and Mr. Finlay had declined to accept the terms offered by the Greek government, to which other landowners in the same position as himself had assented. Some stress was laid by Lord Palmerston's antagonists in the course of the debate on the fact that Mr. Finlay thus stood out apart from other landowners in Athens. Mr. Finlay, however, had a perfect right to stand out for any price he thought fit. He was in the same position as a Greek resident of London or Manchester whose land is taken for the purposes of a railway or other public improvement, and who declines to accept the amount of compensation tendered for it in the first instance. The peculiarity of the case was that Mr. Finlay was not left, as the supposed Greek gentleman assuredly would be, to make good his claims for himself in the courts of law. Neither Don Pacifico nor Mr. Finlay had appealed to the law courts at all. But about this time our foreign office had had several little complaints against the Greek authorities. We had taken so considerable a part in setting up Greece that our ministers not unnaturally thought Greece ought to show her gratitude by attending a little more closely to our advice. On the other hand, Lord Palmerston had made up his mind that there was constant intrigue going on against our interests among the foreign diplomatists in Athens. He was convinced that France was perpetually plotting against us there, and that Russia was watching an opportunity to supersede, once for all, our influence by completely establishing hers. Don Pacifico's sheets, counterpanes, and gold watch had the advantage of being made the subject of a trial of strength between England on the one side, and France and Russia on the other.

There had been other complaints as well. Ionian subjects of her majesty had sent in remonstrances against lawless or high-handed proceedings; and a midshipman of her majesty's ship *Fantôme*, landing from a boat at night on the shore of Patras, had been arrested by mistake. None of these questions would seem at first sight to wear a very grave international character. All they needed for settlement, it might be thought, was a little open discussion and the exercise of some good sense and moderation on both sides. It cannot be doubted that the Greek authorities were lax and careless, and that acts had been done which they could not justify. It is only fair to say that they do not appear to have tried to justify some of them; but they were of opinion that certain of the claims were absurdly exaggerated, and in this belief they proved to be well sustained. The Greeks were very poor, and also very dilatory; and they gave Lord Palmerston a reasonable excuse for a little impatience. Unluckily, Lord Palmerston became possessed with the idea that the French minister in Greece was secretly setting the Greek government on to resist our claims. For the foreign office had made the claims ours. They had lumped up the outrages on Ionian seamen, the mistaken arrest of the midshipman (who had been released with apologies the moment his nationality and position were discovered), Mr. Finlay's land, and Don Pacifico's household furniture in one claim, converted it into a national demand, and insisted that Greece must pay up within a given time or take the consequences. Greece hesitated, and accordingly the British fleet was ordered to the Piræus. It made its appearance very promptly there, and seized all the Greek vessels belonging to the government and to private merchants that were found within the waters.

The Greek government appealed to France and Russia as powers joined with us in the treaty to protect the independence of Greece; France and Russia were both disposed to make bitter complaint of not having been consulted in the first instance by the British government; nor was their feeling greatly softened by Lord Palmerston's peremptory reply that it was all a question between England and Greece, with which no other power had any business to interfere. The Russian government wrote an angry, and indeed an offensive remonstrance. The Russian foreign

minister spoke of "the very painful impression produced upon the mind of the emperor by the unexpected acts of violence which the British authorities had just directed against Greece;" and asked if Great Britain, "abusing the advantages which are afforded to her by her immense maritime superiority," intended to "disengage herself from all obligation," and to "authorize all great powers on every fitting opportunity to recognize toward the weak no other rule but their own will, no other right but their own physical strength." The French government, perhaps under the pressure of difficulties and uncertain affairs at home, in their unsettled state showed a better temper, and intervened only in the interests of peace and good understanding. Something like a friendly arbitration was accepted from France, and the French government sent a special representative to Athens to try to come to terms with our minister there. The difficulties appeared likely to be adjusted. All the claims except those of Don Pacifico were matter of easy settlement, and at first the French commissioner seemed even willing to accept Don Pacifico's stupendous valuation of his household goods. But Pacifico had introduced other demands of a more shadowy character. He said that he had certain claims on the Portuguese government, and that the papers on which these claims rested for support were destroyed in the sacking of his house, and therefore he felt entitled to ask for £26,618 as compensation on that account also. The French commissioner was a little staggered at this demand, and declined to accede to it without further consideration; and as our minister, Mr. Wyse, did not believe he had any authority to abate any of the now national demand, the negotiation was for the time broken off. In the meantime, however, negotiations had still been going on between the English and French governments in London, and these had resulted in a convention disposing of all the disputed claims. By the terms of this agreement a sum of eight thousand five hundred pounds was to be paid by the Greek government to be divided among the various claimants; and Greece was also to pay whatever sum might be found to be fairly due on account of Don Pacifico's Portuguese claims after these had been investigated by arbitrators. This would seem a very satisfactory and honorable arrangement. But some demon of mischief appeared to have this unlucky

affair in charge from the first. The two negotiations going on in London and Athens simultaneously got in each other's way. Instructions as to what had been agreed to in London were not forwarded to Athens quickly enough by the English government, and when the French government sent out to their commissioner the news of the convention he found that Mr. Wyse knew nothing about the matter, and had no authority which, as he conceived, would have warranted him in departing from the course of action he was following out. Mr. Wyse, therefore, proceeded with his measures of coercion, and at length the Greek government gave way. The convention having, however, been made in the meantime in London, there then arose a question as to whether that convention or the terms extorted at Athens should be the basis of arrangement. Over this trumpety dispute, which a few words of frank good sense and good temper on both sides would have easily settled, a new quarrel seemed at one time likely to break out between England and France. The French government actually withdrew their ambassador, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, from London; and there was for a short time a general alarm over Europe. But the question in dispute was really too small and insignificant for any two rational governments to make it a cause of serious quarrel; and after a while our government gave way, and agreed to an arrangement which was in the main all that France desired. When, after a long lapse of time, the arbitrators came to settle the claims of Don Pacifico, it was found that he was entitled to about one thirtieth of the sum he had originally demanded. He had assessed all his claims on the same liberal and fanciful scale as that which he adopted in estimating the value of his household property. Don Pacifico, it seems, charged in his bill one hundred and fifty pounds sterling for a bedstead, thirty pounds for sheets of the bed, twenty-five pounds for two coverlets, and ten pounds for a pillow-case. Cleopatra might have been contented with bed-furniture so luxurious as Don Pacifico represented himself to have in his common use. The jewelry of his wife and daughters he estimated at two thousand pounds. He gave no vouchers for any of these claims, saying that all his papers had been destroyed by the mob. It seemed too that he had always lived in a humble sort of way, and was never supposed by his neigh-

bors to possess such splendor of ornament and household goods.

While the controversy between the English and French governments was yet unfinished, a parliamentary controversy between the former government and the opposition in the House of Lords was to begin. Lord Stanley proposed a resolution which was practically a vote of censure on the government. The resolution in fact expressed the regret of the House to find that "various claims against the Greek government, doubtful in point of justice, or exaggerated in amount, have been enforced by coercive measures, directed against the commerce and people of Greece, and calculated to endanger the continuance of our friendly relations with foreign powers." The resolution was carried, after a debate of great spirit and energy, by a majority of thirty-seven. Lord Palmerston was not dismayed. A ministry is seldom greatly troubled by an adverse vote in the House of Lords. The foreign secretary, writing about the result of the division the following day, merely said: "We were beaten last night in the Lords by a larger majority than we had, up to the last moment, expected; but when we took office we knew that our opponents had a larger pack in the Lords than we had, and that whenever the two packs were to be fully dealt out, theirs would show a larger number than ours." Still it was necessary that something should be done in the Commons to counterbalance the stroke of the Lords, and accordingly Mr. Roebuck, acting as an independent member, although on this occasion in harmony with the government, gave notice of a resolution which boldly affirmed that the principles on which the foreign policy of the government had been regulated were "such as were calculated to maintain the honor and dignity of this country; and in times of unexampled difficulty to preserve peace between England and the various nations of the world." On June 24, 1850, a night memorable in parliamentary annals as the opening night of the debate which established Lord Palmerston's position as a great leader of party, Mr. Roebuck brought forward his resolution.

A reader unaccustomed to parliamentary tactics may fail to observe the peculiar shrewdness of the resolution. It was framed, at least it reads as if it had been framed, to accomplish one purpose, while professing to serve another,

It was intended, of course, as a reply to the censure of the House of Lords. It was to proclaim to the world that the representative chamber had reversed the decision of the House of Peers and acquitted the ministry. But what did Mr. Roebuck's resolution actually do? Did it affirm that the government had acted rightly with regard to Greece? The dealings with Greece were expressly censured by the House of Lords; but Mr. Roebuck proposed to affirm that the general policy of the ministry deserved the approval of the House of Commons. It was well known that there were many men of Liberal opinions in the House of Commons who did not approve of the course pursued with regard to Greece, but who would yet have been very sorry to give a vote which might contribute to the overthrow of a Liberal government. The resolution was so framed as to offer to all such an opportunity of supporting the government, and yet satisfying their consciences. For it might be thus put to them—"you think the government were too harsh with Greece? Perhaps you are right. But this resolution does not say that they were quite free of blame in their way of dealing with Greece. It only says that their policy on the whole has been sound and successful; and of course you must admit that. They may have made a little mistake with regard to Greece; but admitting that, do you not still think that on the whole they have done very well, and much better than any Tory ministry would be likely to do? That is all that Roebuck's resolution asks you to affirm and you really cannot vote against it."

A large number of Liberals were no doubt influenced by this view of the situation and by the framing of the resolution. But there were some who could not be led into any approval of the particular transaction which the resolution, if not intended to cover, would certainly be made to cover. There were others, too, who, even on the broader field opened purposely up by the resolution, honestly believed that Lord Palmerston's general policy was an incessant violation of the principle of non-intervention, and was therefore injurious to the character and the safety of the country. In a prolonged and powerful debate some of the foremost men on both sides of the house opposed and denounced the policy of the government, for which, as every one knew, Lord Palmerston was almost exclusively responsible. "The allied troops who led the attack," says

Mr. Evelyn Ashley, in his "Life of Lord Palmerston," "were English protectionists and foreign absolutists." It is strange that an able and usually fair-minded man should be led into such an absurdity. Lord Palmerston himself called it "a shot fired by a foreign conspiracy aided and abetted by a domestic intrigue." But Lord Palmerston was the minister personally assailed, and might be excused, perhaps, for believing at the moment that warring monarchs were giving the fatal wound, and that the attack on him was the work of the combined treachery of Europe. An historian looking back upon the events after an interval of a quarter of a century ought to be able to take a calmer view of things. Among the "English protectionists" who took a prominent part in condemning the policy of Lord Palmerston, were Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, Sir Robert Peel, Sir William Molesworth, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. In the House of Lords, Lord Brougham, Lord Canning and Lord Aberdeen had supported the resolution of Lord Stanley. The truth is, that Lord Palmerston's proceedings were fairly open to difference of judgment even on the part of the most devoted Liberals and the most independent thinkers. It did not need that a man should be a protectionist or an absolutist to explain his entire disapproval of such a course of conduct as that which had been followed out with regard to Greece. It seems to us now, quietly looking back at the whole story, hardly possible that a man with, for example, the temperament and the general views of Mr. Gladstone could have approved of such a policy; obviously impossible that a man like Mr. Cobden could have approved of it. These men simply followed their judgment and their conscience.

The principal interest of the debate now rests in the manner of Lord Palmerston's defense. The speech was indeed a masterpiece of parliamentary argument and address. It was in part a complete exposition and defense of the whole course of the foreign policy which the noble speaker had directed. But although the resolution treated only of the general policy of the government, Lord Palmerston did not fail to make a special defense of his action toward Greece. He based his vindication of this particular chapter of his policy on the ground which, of all others, gave him most advantage in addressing a parliamentary assembly. He contended that in all he had done he had



been actuated by the resolve that the poorest claimant who bore the name of an English citizen should be protected by the whole strength of England against the oppression of a foreign government. His speech was an appeal to all the elementary emotions of manhood and citizenship and good-fellowship. To vote against him seemed to be to declare that England was unable or unwilling to protect her children. A man appeared to be guilty of an unpatriotic and ignoble act who censured the minister whose only error, if error it were, was a too proud and generous resolve to make the name of England and the rights of Englishmen respected throughout the world. A good deal of ridicule had been heaped not unnaturally on Don Pacifico, his claims, his career, and his costly bed furniture. Lord Palmerston turned that very ridicule to good account for his own cause. He repelled with a warmth of seemingly generous indignation the suggestion that because a man was lowly, pitiful, even ridiculous, even of doubtful conduct in his earlier career, therefore he was one with whom a foreign government was not bound to observe any principles of fair dealing at all. He protested against having serious things treated jocosely; as if any man in parliament had ever treated serious things more often in a jocose spirit. He protested against having the house kept "in a roar of laughter at the poverty of one sufferer or at the miserable habitation of another; at the nationality of one man, or the religion of another; as if because a man was poor he might be bastinadoed and tortured with impunity, as if a man who was born in Scotland might be robbed without redress, or because a man is of the Jewish persuasion he is a fair mark for any outrage." Lord Palmerston had also a great advantage given to him by the argument of some of his opponents, that whatever the laws of a foreign country, a stranger has only to abide by them, and that a government claiming redress for any wrong done to one of its subjects is completely answered by the statement that he has suffered only as inhabitants of the country themselves have suffered. The argument against Lord Palmerston was pushed entirely too far in this instance, and it gave him one of his finest opportunities for reply. It is true as a general rule in the intercourse of nations, that a stranger who goes voluntarily into a country is expected to abide by its laws, and that his government will not protect him

from their ordinary operation in every case where it may seem to press hardly or even unfairly against him. But in this understanding is always involved a distinct assumption that the laws of the state are to be such as civilization would properly recognize; supposing that the state in question professes to be a civilized state. It is also distinctly assumed that the state must be able and willing to enforce its own laws where they are fairly invoked on behalf of a foreigner. If, for instance, a foreigner has a just claim against some continental government, and that government will not recognize the claim, or recognizing it will not satisfy it; and the government of the injured man intervenes and asks that his claim shall be met—it would never be accounted a sufficient answer to say that many of the inhabitants of the country had been treated just in the same way and had got no redress. If there were a law in Turkey, or any other slave-owning state, that a man who could not pay his debts was liable to have his wife and daughter sold into slavery, it is certain that no government like that of England would hear of the application of such a law to the family of a poor English trader settled in Constantinople. There is no clear rule easy to be laid down; perhaps there can be no clear rule on the subject at all. But it is evident that the governments of all civilized countries do exercise a certain protectorate over their subjects in foreign countries, and do insist in extreme cases that the laws of the country shall not be applied or denied to them in a manner which a native resident might think himself compelled to endure without protest. It is not even so in the case of manifestly harsh and barbarous laws alone, or of the denial of justice in a harsh and barbarous way. The principle prevails even in regard to laws which are in themselves unexceptionable and necessary. No government, for example, will allow one of its subjects living in a foreign country to be brought under the law for the levying of the conscription there and compelled to serve in the army of a foreign state.

All this only shows that the opponents of Lord Palmerston made a mistake when they endeavored to obtain any general assent to the principle that a minister does wrong who asks for his fellow-subjects at the hands of a foreign government any better treatment than that which the government in question administers, and without revolt, to its

own people. Lord Palmerston was not the man to lose so splendid an opportunity. He really made it appear as if the question between him and his opponents was that of the protection of Englishmen abroad; as if he were anxious to look after their lives and safety, while his opponents were urging the odious principle that when once an Englishman put his foot on a foreign shore his own government renounced all intent to concern themselves with any fate that might befall him. Here was a new turn given to the debate, a new opportunity afforded to those who, while they did not approve exactly of what had been done with Greece, were nevertheless anxious to support the general principles of Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. The speech was a marvelous appeal to what are called "English interests." In a peroration of thrilling power Lord Palmerston asked for the verdict of the house to decide "whether, as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say '*Civis Romanus sum*,' so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong."

When Lord Palmerston closed his speech the overwhelming plaudits of the house foretold the victory he had won. It was indeed a masterpiece of telling defense. The speech occupied some five hours in delivery. It was spoken, as Mr. Gladstone afterward said, from the dusk of one day to the dawn of the next. It was spoken without the help of a single note. Lord Palmerston always wisely thought that in order to have full command of such an audience a man should, if possible, never use notes. He was quite conscious of his own lack of the higher gifts of imagination and emotion that make the great orator; but he knew also what a splendid weapon of attack and defense was his fluency and readiness, and he was not willing to weaken the effect of its spontaneity by the interposition of a single note. All this great speech, therefore, full as it was of minute details, names, dates, figures, references of all kinds, was delivered with the same facility, the same lack of effort, the same absence of any adventitious aids to memory which characterized Palmerston's ordinary style when he answered a simple question. Nothing could be more complete than Palmerston's success. "*Civis Romanus*" settled the matter. Who was in the House of Commons

so rude that would not be a Roman? Who was there so lacking in patriotic spirit that would not have his countrymen as good as any Roman citizen of them all? It was to little purpose that Mr. Gladstone, in a speech of singular argumentative power, pointed out that "a Roman citizen was the member of a privileged caste, of a victorious and conquering nation, of a nation that held all others bound down by the strong arm of power—which had one law for him and another for the rest of the world, which asserted in his favor principles which it denied to all others." It was in vain that Mr. Gladstone asked whether Lord Palmerston thought that was the position which it would become a civilized and Christian nation like England to claim for her citizens. The glory of being a "*Civis Romanus*" was far too strong for any mere argument drawn from fact and common sense to combat against it. The phrase had carried the day. When Mr. Cockburn, in supporting Lord Palmerston's policy, quoted from classical authority to show that the Romans had always avenged any wrongs done to their citizens, and cited from one of Cicero's speeches against Verres: "*Quot bella majores nostros et quanta suscepisse arbitramini, quod civis Romani injuriâ affecti, quod navicularii retenti, quod mercatores spoliati dicerentur?*" the house cheered more tumultuously than ever. In vain was the calm, grave, studiously moderate remonstrance of Sir Robert Peel, who, while generously declaring that Palmerston's speech "made us all proud of the man who delivered it," yet recorded his firm protest against the style of policy which Palmerston's eloquence had endeavored to glorify. The victory was all with Palmerston. He had, in the words of Shakespeare's Rosalind, wrestled well and overthrown more than his enemies.

After a debate of four nights, a majority of forty-six was given for the resolution. The ministry came out not only absolved but triumphant. The odd thing about the whole proceeding is that the ministers in general heartily disapproved of the sort of policy which Palmerston put so energetically into action—at least they disapproved, if not his principles, yet certainly his way of enforcing them. Before this debate came on Lord John Russell had made up his mind that it would be impossible for him to remain in office with Lord Palmerston as foreign secretary. None the less, however, did Lord John Russell defend the policy

of the foreign office in a speech which Palmerston himself described as "admirable and first-rate." The ministers felt bound to stand by the actions which they had not repudiated at the time when they were done. They could not allow Lord Palmerston to be separated from them in political responsibility when they had not separated themselves from moral responsibility for his proceedings in time. Therefore they had to defend in parliament what they did not pretend to approve in private. The theory of a cabinet always united when attacked rendered doubtless such a course of proceeding necessary in parliamentary tactics. It would, perhaps, be hard to make it seem quite satisfactory to the simple and unsophisticated mind. No part of our duty calls on us to attempt such a task. It was a famous victory—we must only settle the question as old Caspar disposed of the doubts about the propriety of the praise given to the Duke of Marlborough and "our good Prince Eugene." "It is not telling a lie," says some one in Thackeray, "it is only voting with your party." But Thackeray had never been in the House of Commons.

Of many fine speeches made during this brilliant debate we must notice one in particular. It was that of Mr. Cockburn, then member for Southampton—a speech to which allusion has already been made. Never in our time has a reputation been more suddenly, completely, and deservedly made than Mr. Cockburn won by his brilliant display of ingenious argument and stirring words. The manner of the speaker lent additional effect to his clever and captivating eloquence. He had a clear, sweet, penetrating voice, a fluency that seemed so easy as to make listeners sometimes fancy that it ought to cost no effort, and a grace of gesture such as it must be owned the courts of law where he had had his training do not often teach. Mr. Cockburn defended the policy of Palmerston with an effect only inferior to that produced by Palmerston's own speech, and with a rhetorical grace and finish to which Palmerston made no pretension. In writing to Lord Normanby about the debate, Lord Palmerston distributed his praise to friends and enemies with that generous impartiality which was a fine part of his character. Gladstone's attack on his policy he pronounced "a first-rate performance." Peel and Disraeli he praised likewise. But "as to Cockburn's," he said, "I do not know that I ever in the course of my life

heard a better speech from anybody, without any exception." The effect which Coekburn's speech produced on the house was well described in the house itself by one who rose chiefly for the purpose of disputing the principles it advocated. Mr. Cobden observed that when Mr. Coekburn had concluded his speech, "one-half of the treasury benches were left empty while honorable members ran after one another, tumbling over each other in their haste to shake hands with the honorable and learned member." Mr. Cockburn's career was safe from that hour. It is needless to say that he well upheld in after years the reputation he won in a night. The brilliant and sudden success of the member for Southampton was but the fitting prelude to the abiding distinction won by the lord chief justice of England.

One association of profound melancholy clings to that great debate. The speech delivered by Sir Robert Peel was the last that was destined to come from his lips. The debate closed on the morning of Saturday, June 29. It was nearly four o'clock when the division was taken, and Peel left the house as the sunlight was already beginning to stream into the corridors and lobbies. He went home to rest; but his sleep could not be long. He had to attend a meeting of the royal commissioners of the great Industrial Exhibition at twelve, and the meeting was important. The site of the building had to be decided upon, and Prince Albert and the commissioners generally relied greatly on the influence of Sir Robert Peel to sustain them against the clamorous objection out of doors to the choice of a place in Hyde Park. Peel went to the meeting and undertook to assume the leading part in defending the decision of the commissioners before the House of Commons. He returned home for a short time after the meeting and then set out for a ride in the park. He called at Buckingham Palace and wrote his name in the queen's visiting book. Then as he was riding up Constitution Hill he stopped to talk to a young lady, a friend of his, who was also riding. His horse suddenly shied and flung him off; and Peel clinging to the bridle, the animal fell with its knees on his shoulders. The injuries which he received proved beyond all skill of surgery. He lingered, now conscious, now delirious with pain, for two or three days; and he died about eleven o'clock on the night of July

2. Most of the members of his family and some of his dearest old friends and companions in political arms were beside him when he died. The tears of the Duke of Wellington in one house of parliament, and the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone in the other, were expressions as fitting and adequate as might be of the universal feeling of the nation.

There was no honor which parliament and the country would not willingly have paid to the memory of Peel. Lord John Russell proposed with the sanction of the crown that his remains should be buried with public honors. But Peel had distinctly declared in his will that he desired his remains to lie beside those of his father and mother in the family vault at Drayton Bassett. All that parliament and the country could do therefore was to decree a monument to him in Westminster Abbey. The offer of a peerage was made to Lady Peel, but, as might perhaps have been expected, it was declined. Lady Peel declared that her own desire was to bear no other name than that by which her husband had been known. She also explained that the express wish of her husband, recorded in his will, was that no member of his family should accept any title or other reward on account of any services Peel might have rendered to his country. No desire could have been more honorable to the statesman who had formed and expressed it; none certainly more in keeping with all that was known of the severely unselfish and unostentatious character of Sir Robert Peel. Yet there were persons found to misconstrue his meaning and to discover offense to the order of aristocracy in Peel's determination. A report went about that the great statesman's objection to the acceptance of a peerage by one of his family implied a disparagement of the order of peers and was founded on feelings of contempt or hostility to the House of Lords. Mr. Goulburn, who was one of Peel's executors, easily explained Peel's meaning, if indeed it needed explanation to any reasonable mind. Peel was impressed with the conviction that it was better for a man to be the son of his own works; and he desired that his sons, if they were to bear titles and distinctions given them by the state, should win them by their own services and worth, and not simply put them on as an inheritance from their father. As regards himself, it may well be that he thought the name under

which he had made his reputation became him better than any new title. He had not looked for reward of that kind, and might well prefer to mark the fact that he did not specially value such distinctions. Nor would it be any disparagement to the peerage—a thing which in the case of a man with Peel's opinions is utterly out of the question—to think that much of the dignity of a title depends on its long descent and its historic record, and that a fire-new, specially-invented title to a man already great is a disfigurement, or at least a disguise, rather than an adornment. When titles were abolished during the great French Revolution, Mirabeau complained of being called "Citizen Riquetti," in the official reports of the assembly. "With your Riquetti," he said angrily, "you have puzzled all Europe for days." Europe knew Count Mirabeau, but was for some time bewildered by Citizen Riquetti. Sir Robert Peel may well have objected to a reversal of the process, and to the bewildering of Europe by disguising a famous citizen in a new peerage.

"Peel's death," Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother a few days after, putting the remark at the close of a long letter about the recent victory of the government and the congratulations he had personally received "is a great calamity, and one that seems to have had no adequate cause. He was a very bad and awkward rider, and his horse might have been sat by any better equestrian; but he seems somehow or other to have been entangled in the bridle, and to have pulled the horse to step or kneel upon him. The injury to the shoulder was severe but curable; that which killed him was a broken rib forced with great violence inwards into the lungs." The cause of Peel's death would certainly not have been adequate, as Lord Palmerston put it, if great men needed prodigious and portentous events to bring about their end. But the stumble of a horse has been found enough in other instances too. Peel seemed destined for great things yet when he died. He was but in his sixty-third year; he was some years younger than Lord Palmerston, who may be said without exaggeration to have just achieved his first great success. Many circumstances were pointing to Peel as likely before long to be summoned again to the leadership in the government of the country. It is superfluous to say that his faculties as parliamentary orator or statesman were not



showing any signs of decay. An English public man is not supposed to show signs of decaying faculties at sixty-two. The shying horse and perhaps the bad ridership settled the question of Peel's career between them. We have already endeavored to estimate that career and to do justice to Peel's great qualities. He was not a man of original genius, but he was one of the best administrators of other men's ideas that ever knew how and when to leave a party and to serve a country. He was never tried by the severe tests which tell whether a man is a statesman of the highest order. He was never tried as Cavour, for example, was tried, by conditions which placed the national existence of his country in jeopardy. He had no such trials to encounter as were forced on Pitt. He was the minister of a country always peaceful, safe, and prosperous. But he was called upon at a trying moment to take a step on which assuredly much of the prosperity of the people and nearly all the hopes of his party along with his own personal reputation were imperilled. He did not want courage to take the step, and he had the judgment to take it at the right time. He bore the reproaches of that which had been his party with dignity and composure. He was undoubtedly, as Lord Beaconsfield calls him, a great member of parliament; but he was surely also a great minister. Perhaps he only needed a profounder trial at the hands of fate to have earned the title of a great man.

To the same year belongs the close of another remarkable career. On August 26, 1850, Louis Philippe, lately king of the French, died at Claremont, the guest of England. Few men in history had gone through greater reverses. Son of Philippe Egalité, brought up in a sort of blending of luxury and scholastic self-denial, under the contrasting influence of his father and of his teacher, Madame de Genlis, a woman full at least of virtuous precept and Rousseau-like profession, he showed great force of character during the revolution. He still regarded France as his country, though she no longer gave a throne to any of his family. He had fought like a brave young soldier at Valmy and Jemappes. "*Egalité Fils*," says Carlyle, speaking of the young man at Valmy—"Equality Junior, a light, gallant field-officer, distinguished himself by intrepidity; it is the same intrepid individual who now, as Louis Philippe, without the Equality struggles under sad

circumstances to be called king of the French for a season." It is he who, as Carlyle also describes it, saves his sister with such spirit and energy when Madame de Genlis with all her fine precepts would have left her behind to whatever danger. "Behold the young princely brother, struggling hitherward, hastily calling; bear the princess in his arms. Hastily he has clutched the poor young lady up, in her very nightgown, nothing saved of her goods except the watch from the pillow; with brotherly despair he flings her in, among the band-boxes, into Genlis' chaise, into Genlis' arms. . . . The brave young Egalité has a most wild morrow to look for; but now only himself to carry through it." The brave young Egalité had indeed a wild time before him. A wanderer, an exile, a fugitive, a teacher in Swiss and American schools; bearing many and various names as he turned to many callings and saw many lands, always perhaps keeping in mind that Danton had laid his great hand upon his head and declared that the boy must one day be king of France. Then in the whirligig of time the opportunity that long might have seemed impossible came round at last; and the soldier, exile, college teacher, wanderer among American-Indian tribes, resident of Philadelphia, and of Bloomingdale in the New York suburbs, is king of the French. Well had Carlyle gauged his position after some years of reign when he described him "as struggling under sad circumstances to be called king of the French for a season." He ought to have been a great man; he had had a great training. All his promise as a man faded when his seeming success began to shine. He had apparently learned nothing of adversity; he was able to learn nothing of prosperity and greatness. Of all men whom his time had tried he ought best to have known, one might think, the vanity of human schemes, and the futility of trying to uphold thrones on false principles. He intrigued for power as if his previous experience had taught him that power once obtained was inalienable. He seemed at one time to have no real faith in anything but chance. He made the fairest professions and did the meanest, falsest things. He talked to Queen Victoria in language that might have brought tears into a father's eyes; and he was all the time planning the detestable juggle of the Spanish marriages. He did not even seem to retain the courage of his youth. It went appar-

ently with whatever of true, unselfish principle he had when he was yet a young soldier of the republic. He was like our own James II., who as a youth exorted the praise of the great Turenne for his bravery, and as a king earned the scorn of the world for his pusillanimous imbecility. Some people say that there remained a gleam of perverted principle in Louis Philippe which broke out just at the close, and unluckily for him exactly at the wrong time. It is asserted that he could have put down the movement of 1848 in the beginning with one decisive word. Certainly those who began that movement were as little prepared as he for its turning out a revolution. It is generally assumed that he halted and dallied and refused to give the word of command out of sheer weakness of mind and lack of courage. But the assumption according to some is unjust. Their theory is that Louis Philippe at that moment of crisis was seized with a conscientious scruple, and believed that having been called to power by the choice of the people—called to rule not as king of France, but as king of the French; as king, that is to say, of the French people so long as they chose to have him—he was not authorized to maintain himself on that throne by force. The feeling would have been just and right if it were certain that the French people, or any majority of the French people, really wished him away and were prepared to welcome a republic. But it was hardly fair to those who set him on the throne to assume at once that he was bound to come down from it at the bidding of no matter whom, how few or how many, and without in some way trying conclusions to see if it were the voice of France that summoned him to descend, or only the outcry of a moment and a crowd. The scruple, if it existed, lost the throne; in which we are far from saying that France suffered any great loss. We are bound to say that M. Thiers, who ought to have known, does not seem to have believed in the operation of any scruple of the kind, and ascribes the king's fall simply to blundering and to bad advice. But it would have been curiously illustrative of the odd contradictions of human nature, and especially curious as illustrating that one very odd and mixed nature, if Louis Philippe had really felt such a scruple and yielded to it. He had carried out with full deliberation, and in spite of all remonstrance, schemes which tore asunder human lives,

blighted human happiness, played at dice with the destinies of whole nations and might have involved all Europe in war, and it does not seem that he ever felt one twinge of scruple or acknowledged one pang of remorse. His policy had been unutterably mean and selfish and deceitful. His very *bourgeois* virtues, on which he was so much inclined to boast himself, had been a sham; for he had carried out schemes which defied and flouted the first principles of human virtue, and made as light of the honor of women as of the integrity of man. It would humor the irony of fate if he had sacrificed his crown to a scruple which a man of really high principle would well have felt justified in banishing from his mind. One is reminded of the daughter of Macklin, the famous actor, who having made her success on the stage by appearing constantly in pieces which compelled the most liberal display of form and limbs to all the house and all the town, died of a slight injury to her knee, which she allowed to grow mortal rather than permit any doctor to look at the suffering place. In Louis Philippe's case, too, the scruple would show so oddly that even the sacrifice it entailed could scarcely make us regard it with respect.

He died in exile among us, the clever, unwise, grand, mean old man. There was a great deal about him which made him respected in private life, and when he had nothing to do with state intrigues and the foreign policy of courts. He was much liked in England, where for many years after his sons lived. But there were Englishmen who did not like him and did not readily forgive him. One of these was Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother a few days after the death of Louis Philippe, expressing his sentiments thereupon with the utmost directness. "The death of Louis Philippe," he said, "delivers me from my most artful and inveterate enemy, whose position gave him in many ways the power to injure me." Louis Philippe always detested Lord Palmerston, and, according to Thiers, was constantly saying witty and spiteful things of the English minister, which good-natured friends as constantly brought to Palmerston's ears. When Lord Palmerston did not feel exactly as a good Christian ought to have felt, he at least never pretended to any such feeling. The same letter contains immediately after a reference to Sir Robert Peel. It too is

characteristic. "Though I am sorry for the death of Peel from personal regard, and because it is no doubt a great loss to the country, yet, so far as my own political position is concerned, I do not think that he was ever disposed to do me any good turn." A little while before, Prince Albert, writing to his friend Baron Stockmar, had spoken of Peel as having somewhat unduly favored Palmerston's foreign policy in the great Pacifico debate, or at least not having borne as severely as he might upon it, and for a certainly not selfish reason. "He" (Peel) "could not call the policy good, and yet he did not wish to damage the ministry, and this solely because he considered that a protectionist ministry succeeding them would be dangerous to the country, and had quite determined not to take office himself. But would the fact that his health no longer admitted of his doing so have been sufficient as time went on to make his followers and friends bear with patient resignation their own permanent exclusion from office? I doubt it." The prince might well doubt it; if Peel had lived, it is all but certain that he would have had to take office. It is curious, however, to notice how completely Prince Albert and Lord Palmerston are at odds in their way of estimating Peel's political attitude before his death. Lord Palmerston's quiet way of setting Peel down as one who would never be disposed to do him a good turn is characteristic of the manner in which the foreign secretary went in for the game of politics. Palmerston was a man of kindly instincts and genial temperament. He was much loved by his friends. His feelings were always directing him toward a certain half-indolent benevolence. But the game of politics was to him like the hunting field. One cannot stop to help a friend out of a ditch or to lament over him if he is down and seriously injured. For the hour the only thing is to keep on one's way. In the political game Lord Palmerston was playing, enemies were only obstacles, and it would be absurd to pretend to be sorry when they were out of his path. Therefore, there is no affectation of generous regret for Louis Philippe. Political rivals, even if private friends, are something like obstacles too. Palmerston is of opinion that Peel would never be disposed to do him a good turn, and therefore indulges in no sentimental regret for his death. He is a loss to the country, no doubt, and personally one is sorry

for him, of course, and all that; "which done, God take King Edward to his mercy, and leave the world for me to bustle in." The world certainly was more free henceforth for Lord Palmerston's active and unresting spirit to bustle in.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### THE ECCLESIASTICAL TITLES BILL.

THE autumn of 1850 and the greater part of 1851 were disturbed by an agitation which seems strangely out of keeping with our present condition of religious liberty and civilization. A struggle with the Papal court might appear to be a practical impossibility for the England of our time. The mind has to go back some centuries to put itself into what would appear the proper framework for such events. Legislation or even agitation against Papal aggression would seem about as superfluous in our modern English days as the use of any of the once-popular charms which were believed to hinder witches of their will. The story is extraordinary, and is in many ways instructive.

For some time previous to 1850 there had been, as we have seen already, a certain movement among some scholarly, mystical men in England toward the Roman Church. We have already shown how this movement began, and how little could fairly be said to represent any actual impulse of reaction among the English people. But it unquestionably made a profound impression in Rome. The court of Rome then saw everything through the eyes of ecclesiastics; and a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic not well acquainted with the actual conditions of English life might well be excused if, when he found that two or three great Englishmen had gone over to the church, he fancied that they were but the vanguard of a vast popular or national movement. It is clear that the court of Rome was quite mistaken as to the religious condition of England. The most chimerical notions prevailed in the Vatican. To the eyes of Papal enthusiasm the whole English nation was only waiting for some word in season to return to the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome. The pope had not been fortunate in many things. He had been a fugitive from

his own city, and had been restored only by the force of French arms. He was a thoroughly good, pious and genial man, not seeing far into the various ways of human thought and national character; and to his mind there was nothing unreasonable in the idea that heaven might have made up for the domestic disasters of his reign by making him the instrument of the conversion of England. No better proof can be given of the manner in which he and his advisers misunderstood the English people than the step with which his sanguine zeal inspired him. The English people, even while they yet bowed to the spiritual supremacy of the Papacy, were always keenly jealous of any ecclesiastical attempt to control the political action or restrict the national independence of England. The history of the relations between England and Rome for long generations before England had any thought of renouncing the faith of Rome might have furnished ample proof of this to anyone who gave himself the trouble to turn over a few pages of English chronicles. The pope did not read English, and his advisers did not understand England. Accordingly he took a step, with the view of encouraging and inviting England to become converted, which was calculated specially and instantly to defeat its own purpose. Had the great majority of the English people been really drawing toward the verge of a reaction to Rome, such an act as that done by the pope might have startled them back to their old attitude. The assumption of Papal authority over England only filled the English people with a new determination to repudiate and resist every pretension at spiritual authority on the part of the court of Rome.

The time had so completely passed away, and the supposed pretensions have come to so little, that the most zealous Protestant can afford to discuss the whole question now with absolute impartiality and unruffled calmness. Every one can clearly see now that if the pope was mistaken in the course he took, and if the nation in general was amply justified in resenting even a supposed attempt at foreign interference, the piece of legislation to which the occasion gave birth, was not a masterpiece of statesmanship, nor was the manner in which it was carried through always creditable to the good sense of parliament and the public. The Papal aggression in itself was perhaps a

measure to smile at rather than to arouse great national indignation. It consisted in the issue of a papal bull, "given at St. Peter's, Rome, under the seal of the fisherman," and directing the establishment in England of "a hierarchy of bishops deriving their titles from their own sees, which we constitute by the present letter in the various apostolic districts." It is a curious evidence of the little knowledge of England's condition possessed by the court of Rome then, that although five-sixths at least of the Catholics in England were Irish by birth or extraction, the newly-appointed bishops were all or nearly all, Englishmen unconnected with Ireland.

An Englishman of the present day would be probably inclined to ask, on hearing the effect of the bull, Is that all? Being told that that was all, he would probably have gone on to ask, What does it matter? Who cares whether the pope gives new titles to his English ecclesiastics or not? What Protestant is even interested in knowing whether a certain Catholic bishop living in England is called bishop of Mesopotamia, or of Lambeth? There always were Catholic bishops in England. There were Catholic archbishops. They were free to go and come, to preach and teach as they liked; to dress as they liked; for all that nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen cared, they might have been also free to call themselves what they liked. Any Protestant who mixed with Roman Catholics, or knew anything about their usages, knew that they were in the habit of calling their bishops "my lord," and their archbishops "your grace." He knew of course that they had not the slightest legal right to use such high-sounding titles, but this did not trouble him in the least. It was only a ceremonial intended for Catholics, and it did not give him either offense or concern. Why then should he be expected to disturb his mind because the pope chose to direct that the English Roman Catholics should call a man Bishop of Liverpool or Archbishop of Westminster? The pope could not compel him to call them by any such names if he did not think fit; and unless his attention had been very earnestly drawn to the fact, he never probably would have found out that any new titles had been invented for the Catholic hierarchy in England.

This was the way in which a great many Englishmen regarded the matter even then. But it must be owned



that there was something about the time and manner of the papal bull calculated to offend the susceptibility of a great and independent nation. The mere fact that a certain movement toward Rome had been painfully visible in the ranks of the English church itself was enough to make people sensitive and jealous. The plain sense of many thoroughly impartial and cool-headed Englishmen showed them that the two things were connected in the mind of the pope, and that he had issued his bull because he thought the time was actually coming when he might begin to take measures for the spiritual annexation of England. His pretensions might be of no account in themselves; but the fact that he made them in the evident belief that they were justified by realities, produced a jarring and painful effect on the mind of England. The offense lay in the pope's evident assumption that the change he was making was the natural result of an actual change in the national feeling of England. The anger was not against the giving of the new titles, but against the assumption of a new right to give titles representing territorial distinctions in this country. The agitation that sprang up was fiercely heated by the pastoral letter of the chief of the new hierarchy. The pope had divided England into various dioceses, which he placed under the control of an archbishop and twelve suffragans; and the new archbishop was Cardinal Wiseman. Under the title of Archbishop of Westminster and Administrator Apostolic of the Diocese of Southwark, Cardinal Wiseman was now to reside in London. Cardinal Wiseman was already well known in England. He was of English descent on his father's side and of Irish on his mother's; he was a Spaniard by birth and a Roman by education. His family on both sides was of good position; his father came of a long line of Essex gentry. Wiseman had held the professorship of Oriental languages in the English college at Rome, and afterward became rector of the college. In 1840 he was appointed by the pope one of the Vicars Apostolic in England, and held his position here as Bishop of Melipotamus *in partibus infidelium*. He was well known to be a fine scholar, an accomplished linguist, and a powerful preacher and controversialist. But he was believed also to be a man of great ecclesiastical ambition—ambition for his church, that is to say—of singular boldness, and of much political ability.

The pope's action was set down as in great measure the work of Wiseman. The cardinal himself was accepted in the minds of most Englishmen as a type of the regular Italian ecclesiastic—bold, clever, ambitious, and unscrupulous. The very fact of his English extraction only militated the more against him in the public feeling. He was regarded as in some sense one who had gone over to the enemy, and who was the more to be dreaded because of the knowledge he carried with him. Perhaps it is not too much to say that in the existing mood of the English people the very title of cardinal exasperated the feeling against Wiseman. Had he come as a simple archbishop, the aggression might not have seemed so marked. The title of cardinal brought back unwelcome memories to the English public. It reminded them of a period of their history when the forces of Rome and those of the national independence were really arrayed against each other in a struggle which Englishmen might justly look on as dangerous. Since those times there had been no cardinal in England. Did it not look ominous that a cardinal should present himself now? The first step taken by Cardinal Wiseman did not tend to charm away this feeling. He issued a pastoral letter, addressed to England, on October 7, 1850, which was set forth as "given out of the Flaminian Gate of Rome." This description of the letter was afterward stated to be in accordance with one of the necessary formularies of the church of Rome; but it was then assumed in England to be an expression of insolence and audacity intended to remind the English people that from out of Rome itself came the assertion of supremacy over them. This letter was to be read publicly in all the Roman Catholic churches in London. It addressed itself directly to the English people, and it announced that "your beloved country has received a place among the fair churches which normally constituted form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament from which its light had long vanished; and begins now anew its course of regularly adjusted action round the center of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light, and of vigor."

It must be allowed that this was rather imprudent language to address to a people peculiarly proud of being

Protestant; a people of whom their critics say, not wholly without reason, that they are somewhat narrow and unsympathetic in their Protestantism; that their national tendency is to believe in the existence of nothing really good outside the limits of Protestantism. In England the national church is a symbol of victory over foreign enemies and domination at home. It was not likely that the English people could regard it as anything but an offense to be told that they were resuming their place as a part of an ecclesiastical system to which they, of all peoples, looked with dislike and distrust. We are not saying that the feeling with which the great bulk of the English people regarded Cardinal Wiseman's church was just or liberal. We are simply recording the unquestionable historical fact that such was the manner in which the English people regarded the Roman Church, in order to show how slender was the probability of their being moved to anything but anger by such expressions as those contained in Cardinal Wiseman's letter. But the letter had hardly reached England when the country was aroused by another letter coming from a very different quarter, and intended as a counterblast to the papal assumption of authority. This was Lord John Russell's famous Durham letter. Russell had the art of writing letters that exploded like bomb-shells in the midst of some controversy. His Edinburgh letter had set the cabinet of Sir Robert Peel on to recognize the fact that something must be done with the free trade question; and now his Durham letter spoke the word that let loose a very torrent of English public feeling. The letter was in reply to one from the Bishop of Durham, and was dated "Downing Street, November the 4th." Lord John Russell condemned in the most unmeasured terms the assumption of the pope as "a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the queen's supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation as asserted even in the Roman Catholic times." Lord John Russell went on to say that his alarm was by no means equal to his indignation; that the liberty of Protestantism had been enjoyed too long in England to allow of any successful attempt to impose a foreign yoke upon men's minds and consciences, and that the laws of the country should be

carefully examined, and the propriety of adopting some additional measures deliberately considered. But Lord John Russell went further than all this. He declared that there was a danger that alarmed him more than any aggression from a foreign sovereign, and that was "the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the church of England herself." Clergymen of that church, he declared, had been "leading their flocks step by step to the verge of the precipice." What, he asked, meant "the honor paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the church, the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, the muttering of the Liturgy so as to disguise the language in which it is written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of penance and absolution?" The letter closed with a sentence which gave especial offense to Roman Catholics, but which Lord John Russell afterward explained, and indeed the context ought to have shown, was not meant as any attack on their religion or their ceremonial. "I have little hope that the propounders and framers of these innovations will desist from their insidious course; but I rely with confidence on the people of England; and I will not abate one jot of heart or hope so long as the glorious principles and the immortal martyrs of the reformation shall be held in reverence by the great mass of a nation which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition and with scorn at the laborious endeavors which are now making to confine the intellect and enslave the soul." It is now clear from the very terms of this letter that Lord John Russell meant to apply these words to the practices within the English church which he had so strongly condemned in the earlier passages, and which alone, he said, he regarded with any serious alarm. But the Roman Catholics in general and the majority of persons of all sects accepted them as a denunciation of "popery." The Catholics looked upon them as a declaration of war against Catholicism; the fanatical of the other side welcomed them as a trumpet-call to a new "No Popery" agitation.

The very day after the letter appeared was the Guy Faux anniversary. All over the country the effigies of the pope and Cardinal Wiseman took the place of the regulation "Guy," and were paraded and burnt amid tumultuous demonstrations. A colossal procession of "Guys" passed

down Fleet Street, the principal figure of which, a gigantic form of sixteen feet high, seated in a chariot, had to be bent down, compelled to "veil his crest," in order to pass under Temple Bar. This Titanic "Guy" was the new cardinal in his red robes. In Exeter a yet more elaborate anti-papal demonstration was made. A procession of two hundred persons in character-dresses marched round the venerable cathedral amid the varied effulgence of colored lights. The procession represented the pope, the new cardinal, and the Inquisition, various of the Inquisitors brandishing instruments of torture. Considerable sums of money were spent on these popular demonstrations, the only interest in which now is that they serve to illustrate the public sentiment of the hour. Mr. Disraeli good-naturedly endeavored at once to foment the prevailing heat of public temper and at the same time to direct its fervor against the ministry themselves, by declaring in a published letter that he could hardly blame the pope for supposing himself at liberty to divide England into bishoprics, seeing the encouragement he had got from the ministers themselves by the recognition they had offered to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland. "The fact is," Mr. Disraeli said, "the whole question has been surrendered and decided in favor of the pope by the present government. The ministers who recognized the pseudo-Archbishop of Tuam as a peer and a prelate cannot object to the appointment of a pseudo-Archbishop of Westminster, even though he be a cardinal." As a matter of fact, it was not the existing government that had recognized the rank of the Irish Catholic prelates. The recognition had been formally arranged in January 1845 by a royal warrant or commission for carrying out the charitable bequests act, which gave the Irish Catholic prelates rank immediately after the prelates of the established church of the same degree. But the letter of Mr. Disraeli, like that of Lord John Russell, served to inflame passions on both sides and to put the country in the worst possible mood for any manner of wholesome legislation. Never during the same generation had there been such an outburst of anger on both sides of the religious controversy. It was a curious incident in political history that Lord John Russell, who had more than any Englishman then living been identified with the principles of religious liberty, who had sat at the

feet of Fox, and had for his closest friend the Catholic poet Thomas Moore, came to be regarded by Roman Catholics as the bitterest enemy of their creed and their rights of worship.

The ministry felt that something must be done. They could not face parliament without some piece of legislation to satisfy public feeling. Many even among the most zealous Protestants deeply regretted that Lord John Russell had written anything on the subject. Not a few Roman Catholics of position and influence bitterly lamented the indiscretion of the papal court. The mischief, however, was now fairly afoot. The step taken by the pope had set the country aflame. Every day crowded and tumultuous meetings were held to denounce the action of the court of Rome. Before the end of the year something like seven thousand such meetings had been held throughout the kingdom. Sometimes the Roman Catholic party mustered strong at such demonstrations, and the result was rioting and disturbance. Addresses poured in upon the queen and the ministers calling for decided action against the assumption of papal authority. About the same time Father Gavazzi, an Italian republican who had been a priest, came to London and began a series of lectures against the papacy. He was a man of great rhetorical power, with a remarkable command of the eloquence of passion and denunciation. His lectures were at first given only in Italian, and therefore did not appeal to a popular English audience. But they were reported in the papers at much length, and they contributed not a little to swell the tide of public feeling against the pope and the court of Rome. The new lord chancellor, Lord Truro, created great applause and tumult at the lord mayor's dinner by quoting from Shakespeare the words, "Under my feet I'll stamp thy cardinal's hat, in spite of pope or dignitaries of church." Charles Kean, the tragedian, was interrupted by thundering peals of applause and the rising of the whole audience to their feet when, as King John, he proclaimed that "no Italian priest shall tithe or toll in our dominion." Long afterward, and when the storm seemed to have wholly died away, Cardinal Wiseman, going in a carriage through the streets of Liverpool to deliver a lecture on a purely literary subject to a general audience, was pelted with stones by a mob who remembered the papal assump-

tion and the passions excited by the ecclesiastical titles act.

The opening of parliament came. The ministry had to do something. No ministry that ever held power in England could have attempted to meet the House of Commons without some project of a measure to allay public excitement. On February 4, 1851, the queen in person opened parliament. Her speech contained some sentences which were listened to with the profoundest interest because they referred to the question which was agitating all England. "The recent assumption of certain ecclesiastical titles conferred by a foreign power has excited strong feelings in this country; and large bodies of my subjects have presented addresses to me expressing attachment to the throne and praying that such assumptions should be resisted. I have assured them of my resolution to maintain the rights of my crown and the independence of the nation against all encroachments, from whatever quarter they may proceed. I have at the same time expressed my earnest desire and firm determination, under God's blessing, to maintain unimpaired the religious liberty which is so justly prized by the people of this country." How little of inclination to any measures dealing unfairly with Roman Catholics was in the mind of the queen herself may be seen from a letter in which, when the excitement was at its height, she had expressed her opinion to her aunt, the Duchess of Gloucester. "I would never have consented to anything which breathed a spirit of intolerance. Sincerely Protestant as I always have been, and always shall be, and indignant as I am at those who call themselves Protestants while they are in fact quite the contrary, I much regret the unchristian and intolerant spirit exhibited by many people at the public meetings. I cannot bear to hear the violent abuse of the Catholic religion, which is so painful and so cruel toward the many good and innocent Roman Catholics. However, we must hope and trust this excitement will soon cease, and that the wholesome effect of it upon our own church will be lasting."

"The papal aggression question," Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother just before the opening of parliament "will give us some trouble, and give rise to stormy debates. Our difficulty will be to find out a measure which shall satisfy reasonable Protestants without violating those principles of

liberal toleration which we are pledged to. I think we shall succeed. . . . The thing itself, in truth, is little or nothing, and does not justify the irritation. What has goaded the nation is the manner, insolent and ostentatious, in which it has been done. . . . We must bring in a measure. The country would not be satisfied without some legislative enactment. We shall make it as gentle as possible. The violent party will object to it for its mildness, and will endeavor to drive us farther." A measure brought in only because something must be done to satisfy public opinion is not likely to be a very valuable piece of legislation. The ministry in this case were embarrassed by the fact that they really did not particularly want to do anything except to satisfy public opinion for the moment and get rid of all the controversy. They were placed between two galling fires. On the one side were the extreme Protestants, to whom Palmerston alluded as violent, and who were eager for severe measures against the Catholics; and on the other were the Roman Catholic supporters of the ministry, who protested against any legislation whatever on the subject. It would have been simply impossible to find any safe and satisfactory path of compromise which all could consent to walk. The ministry did the best they could to frame a measure which would seem to do something and yet do little or nothing. Two or three days after the meeting of parliament Lord John Russell introduced his bill to prevent the assumption by Roman Catholics of titles taken from any territory or place within the united kingdom. The measure proposed to prohibit the use of all such titles under penalty, and to render void all acts done by or bequests made to persons under such titles. The Roman Catholic relief act imposed a penalty of one hundred pounds for every assumption of a title taken from an existing see. Lord John Russell proposed now to extend the penalty to the assumption of any title whatever from any place in the United Kingdom. The reception which was given to Lord John Russell's motion for leave to bring in this bill was not encouraging. Usually leave to bring in a bill is granted as a matter of course. Some few general observations of extemporaneous and guarded criticism are often made; but the common practice is to offer no opposition. On this occasion, however, it was at once made manifest that no measure, however



“gentle,” to use Lord Palmerston’s word, would be allowed to pass without obstinate opposition. Mr. Roebuck described the bill as “one of the meanest, pettiest, and most futile measures that ever disgraced even bigotry itself.” Mr. Bright called it “little, paltry, and miserable—a mere sham to bolster up church ascendancy.” Mr. Disraeli declared that he would not oppose the introduction of the bill; but he spoke of it in language of as much contempt as Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Bright had used, calling it a mere piece of petty persecution. “Was it for this,” Mr. Disraeli scornfully asked, “that the lord chancellor trampled on a cardinal’s hat amid the patriotic acclamations of the metropolitan municipality?” Sir Robert Inglis, on the part of the more extreme Protestants, objected to the bill on the ground that it did not go far enough. The debate on the motion for leave to bring in the bill was renewed for night after night, and the fullest promise of an angry and prolonged resistance was given. Yet so strong was the feeling in favor of some legislation, that when the division was taken, three hundred and ninety-five votes were given for the motion, and only sixty-three against it. The opponents of the measure had on their side not only all the prominent champions of religious liberty like Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright, but also Protestant politicians of such devotion to the interests of the church as Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterward Lord Selborne, and Mr. Beresford Hope; and of course they had with them all the Irish Catholic members. Yet the motion for leave to bring in the bill was carried by this overwhelming majority. The ministers had at all events ample justification, so far as parliamentary tactics were concerned, for the introduction of their measure.

If, however, we come to regard the ministerial proposal as a piece of practical legislation, the case to be made out for them is not strong, nor is the abortive result of their efforts at all surprising. They set out on the enterprise without any real interest in it, or any particular confidence in its success. It is probable that Lord John Russell alone of all the ministers had any expectation of a satisfactory result to come of the piece of legislation they were attempting. We have seen what Lord Palmerston thought on the whole subject. The ministers were, in fact, in the difficulty of all statesmen who bring in a measure, not because

they themselves are clear as to its necessity or its efficacy, but because they find that something must be done to satisfy public feeling, and they do not know of anything better to do at the moment. The history of the ecclesiastical titles bill was, therefore, a history of blunder, unlucky accident, and failure from the moment it was brought in until its ignominious and ridiculous repeal many years after, and when its absolute impotence had been not merely demonstrated but forgotten.

The government at first, as we have seen, resolved to impose a penalty on the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman Catholic prelates from places in the United Kingdom, and to make null and void all acts done or bequests made in virtue of such titles. But they found that it would be absolutely impossible to apply such legislation to Ireland. In that country a Catholic hierarchy had long been tolerated, and all the functions of a regular hierarchy had been in full and formal operation. To apply the new measure to Ireland would have been virtually to repeal the Roman Catholic relief act and restore the penal laws. On the other hand, the ministers were not willing to make one law against titles for England and another for Ireland. They were driven, therefore, to the course of withdrawing two of the stringent clauses of the bill, and leaving it little more than a mere declaration against the assumption of unlawful titles. But by doing this they furnished stronger reasons for opposition to both of the two very different parties who had hitherto denounced their way of dealing with the crisis. Those who thought the bill did not go far enough before were of course indignant at the proposal to shear it of whatever little force it had originally possessed. They, on the other hand, who had opposed it as a breach of the principle of religious liberty could now ridicule it with all the greater effect on the ground that it violated a principle without even the pretext of doing any practical good as a compensation. In the first instance, the ministry might plead that the crisis was exceptional; that it called for exceptional measures; that something must be done; and that they could not stand on ceremony even with the principle of religious liberty when the interest of the state was at stake. Now they left it in the power of their opponents to say that they were breaking a principle for the sake of introducing a nonentity.

The debates were long, fierce, and often passionate. The bill, even cut down as it was, had a vast majority on its side. But some of the most illustrious names in the House of Commons were recorded against it; by far the most eloquent voices in the house were raised to condemn it. The Irish Roman Catholic members set up a persistent opposition to it, and up to a certain period of its progress put in requisition all the forms of the house to impede it. This part of the story ought not to be passed over without mention of the fact that among other effects produced by the ecclesiastical titles bill, perhaps the most distinct was the creation of the most worthless band of agitators who ever pretended to speak with the voice of Ireland. These were the men who were called in the house "the pope's brass band," and who were regarded with as much dislike and distrust by all intelligent Irish Catholics and Irish Nationalists as by the most inveterate Tories. These men leaped into influence by their denunciations of the ecclesiastical titles bill. They were successful for a time in palming themselves off as patriots upon Irish constituencies. They thundered against the bill; they put in motion every mechanism of delay and obstruction; some of them were really clever and eloquent; most of them were loud voiced; they had a grand and heaven-sent opportunity given to them, and they made use of it. They had a leader, the once famous John Sadleir. This man possessed marked ability, and was further gifted with an unscrupulous audacity at least equal to his ability. He went to work deliberately to create for himself a band of followers by whose help he might mount to power. He was a financial swindler as well as a political adventurer. By means of the money he had suddenly acquired and by virtue of his furious denunciations of the anti-Catholic policy of the government, he was for a time able to work the Irish popular constituencies so as to get his own followers into the house and become for the hour a sort of little O'Connell. He had with him some two or three honest men, whom he deluded into a belief in the sincerity of himself and his gang of swindling adventurers; and it is only fair to say that by far the most eloquent man of the party appears to have been one of those on whom Sadleir was thus able to impose. Mr. Sadleir's band afterward came to sad grief. He committed suicide himself to escape the

punishment of his frauds; some of his associates fled to foreign countries and hid themselves under feigned names. James Sadleir, brother and accomplice of John, was among these, and underwent that rare mark of degradation in our days, a formal expulsion from the House of Commons. The pope's brass band and its subsequent history, culminating in the suicide on Hampstead Heath, was about the only practical result of the ecclesiastical titles bill.

The bill, reduced in stringency as has been described, made, however, some progress through the house. It was interrupted at one stage by events which had nothing to do with its history. The government got into trouble of another kind. At the opening of the session Mr. Disraeli introduced a motion to the effect that the agricultural distress of the country called upon the government to introduce without delay some measures for its relief. This motion was in fact the last spasmodic cry of protection. Many influential politicians still believed that the cause of protection was not wholly lost; that a reaction was possible; that the free trade doctrine would prove a failure and have to be given up; and they regarded Mr. Disraeli's as a very important motion calling for a strenuous effort in its favor. The government treated the motion as one for restored protection, and threw all their strength into the struggle against it. They won; but only by a majority of fourteen. A few days after, Mr. Locke King, member for East Surrey, asked for leave to bring in a bill to assimilate the county franchise to that existing in boroughs. Lord John Russell opposed the motion, and the government were defeated by one hundred votes against fifty-two. It was evident that this was only what is called a "snap" vote; that the house was taken by surprise, and that the result in no wise represented the general feeling of parliament. But still it was a vexatious occurrence for the ministry, already humiliated by the small majority they had obtained on Disraeli's motion. Their budget had already been received with very general marks of dissatisfaction. The chancellor of the exchequer only proposed a partial and qualified repeal of the window tax, an impost which was justly detested, and he continued the income tax. The budget was introduced shortly before Mr. Locke King's motion, and every day that had elapsed since its introduction only more and more developed the public dis-

satisfaction with which it was regarded. Under all these circumstances Lord John Russell felt that he had no alternative but to tender his resignation to the queen. Leaving his ecclesiastical titles bill suspended in air, he announced that he could no longer think of carrying on the government of the country.

The question was, who should succeed him. The queen sent for Lord Stanley, afterward Lord Derby. Lord Stanley offered to do his best to form a government, but was not at all sanguine about the success of the task nor eager to undertake it. He even recommended that before he made any experiment Lord John Russell should try if he could not do something by getting some of the Peelites, as they were then beginning to be called—the followers of Sir Robert Peel who had held with him to the last—to join him and thus patch up the government anew. This was tried, and failed. The Peelites would have nothing to do with the ecclesiastical titles bill, and Lord John Russell would not go on without it. On the other hand, Lord Aberdeen, the chief of the Peelites in the House of Lords, would not attempt to form a ministry of his own, frankly acknowledging that in the existing temper of the country it would be impossible for any government to get on without legislating in some way on the papal aggression. There was nothing for it but for Lord Stanley to try. He tried without hope, and of course he was unsuccessful. The position of parties was very peculiar. It was impossible to form any combination which could really agree upon anything. There were three parties out of which a ministry might be formed. These were the Whigs, the Conservatives, and the Peelites. The Peelites were a very rising and promising body of men. Among them were Sir James Graham, Lord Canning, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and some others almost equally well known. Only these three groups were fairly in the competition for office; for the idea of a ministry of Radicals and Manchester men was not then likely to present itself to any official mind. But how could any one put together a ministry formed from a combination of these three? The Peelites would not coalesce with the Tories because of the protection question, to which Mr. Disraeli's motion had given a new semblance of vitality, and because of Lord Stanley's own declaration that he still regarded

the policy of free trade as only an experiment. The Peelites would not combine with the Whigs because of the ecclesiastical titles bill. The Conservatives would not disavow protective ideas; the Whigs would not give up the ecclesiastical titles bill. No statesman, therefore, could form a government without having to count on two great parties being against him on one question or the other. All manner of delays took place. The Duke of Wellington was consulted. Lord Lansdowne was consulted. The wit of man could suggest nothing satisfactory. The conditions for extracting any satisfactory solution did not exist. There was nothing better to be done than to ask the ministers who had resigned to resume their places and muddle on as they best could. It is not enough to say that there was nothing better to be done; there was nothing else to be done. They were at all events still administering the affairs of the country, and no one would relieve them of the task. *Ipsa facto* they had to stay.

The ministers returned to their places and resumed the ecclesiastical titles bill. It was then that they made the change in its conditions which has already been mentioned, and thus created new argument against them on both sides of the House of Commons. They struck out of the bill every word that might appear like an encroachment on the Roman Church within the sphere of its own ecclesiastical operations, and made it simply an act against the public and ostentatious assumption of illegal titles. The bill was wrangled over until the end of June, and then a large number, some seventy, of the Irish Catholic members publicly seceded from the discussion and announced that they would take no further part in the divisions. On this some of the strongest opponents of the papal aggression, led by Sir Frederick Thesiger, afterward Lord Chelmsford, brought in a series of resolutions intended to make the bill more stringent than it had been even as originally introduced. The object of the resolutions was principally to give the power of prosecuting and claiming a penalty to anybody, provided he obtained the consent of the law officers of the crown, and to make penal the introduction of bulls. The government opposed the introduction of these amendments, and were put in the awkward position of having to act as antagonists of the party in the country who represented the strongest hostility to the papal aggres-

sion. Thus for the moment the author of the Durham letter was seemingly converted into a champion of the Roman Catholic side of the controversy. His championship was ineffective. The Irish members took no part in the controversy, and the government were beaten by the ultra-Protestant party on every division. Lord John Russell was bitterly taunted by various of his opponents, and was asked with indignation why he did not withdraw the bill when it ceased to be any longer his own scheme. He probably thought by this time that it really made very little matter what bill was passed so long as any bill was passed, and that the best thing to do was to get the controversy out of the way by any process. He did not therefore withdraw the bill, although Sir Frederick Thesiger carried all his stringent clauses. When the measure came on for a third reading, Lord John Russell moved the omission of the added clauses but he was defeated by large majorities. The bill was done with so far as the House of Commons was concerned. After an eloquent and powerful protest from Mr. Gladstone against the measure, as one disparaging to the great principle of religious freedom, the bill was read a third time. It went up to the House of Lords, was passed there without alteration although not without opposition, and soon after received the royal assent.

This was practically the last the world heard about it. In the Roman Church everything went on as before. The new cardinal archbishop still called himself Archbishop of Westminster; some of the Irish prelates made a point of ostentatiously using their territorial titles, in letters addressed to the ministers themselves. The bitterness of feeling which the papal aggression and the legislation against it had called up did not indeed pass away very soon. It broke out again and again, sometimes in the form of very serious riot. It turned away at many an election the eyes and minds of the constituencies from questions of profound and genuine public interest to dogmatic controversy and the hates of jarring sectaries. It furnished political capital for John Sadleir and his band, and kept them flourishing for awhile; and it set up in the Irish popular mind a purely imaginary figure of Lord John Russell, who became regarded as the malign enemy of the Catholic faith and of all religious liberty. But save for the quarrels

aroused at the time, the act of the pope and the act of parliament were alike dead letters. Nothing came of the papal bull. England was not restored to the communion of the Roman Catholic Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London retained their places and their spiritual jurisdiction as before. Cardinal Wiseman remained only a prelate of Roman Catholics. On the other hand, the ecclesiastical titles act was never put in force. Nobody troubled about it. Many years after, in 1871, it was quietly repealed. It died in such obscurity that the outer public hardly knew whether it was above ground or below. Certainly, if the whole agitation showed that England was thoroughly Protestant, it also showed that English Protestants had not much of the persecuting spirit. They had no inclination to molest their Catholic neighbors, and only asked to be let alone. The pope, they believed, had insulted them; they resented the insult; that was all.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE EXHIBITION IN HYDE PARK.

THE first of May, 1851, will always be memorable as the day on which the great exhibition was opened in Hyde Park. The year 1851, indeed, is generally associated in the memory of Englishmen with that first Great International Exhibition. As we look back upon it pleasant recollections come up of the great glass palace in Hyde Park, the palace "upspringing from the verdant sod," which Thackeray described so gracefully and with so much poetic feeling. The strange crowds of the curious of all provinces and all nations are seen again. The marvelous, and at that time wholly unprecedented, collections of the products of all countries; the glitter of the Koh-i-Noor, the palm trees beneath the glass roof, the leaping fountains, the statuary, the ores, the ingots, the huge blocks of coal, the lacework, the loomwork, the Oriental stuffs—all these made on the mind of the ordinary inexpert a confused impression of lavishness and profusion and order and fantastic beauty which was then wholly novel, and could hardly be recalled except in mere memory. The novelty of the ex-



periment was that which made it specially memorable. Many exhibitions of a similar kind have taken place since. Some of these far surpassed that of Hyde Park in the splendor and variety of the collections brought together. Two of them at least—those of Paris in 1867 and 1878—were infinitely superior in the array and display of the products, the dresses, the inhabitants of far-divided countries. But the impression which the Hyde Park Exhibition made upon the ordinary mind was like that of a boy's first visit to the play—an impression never to be equaled, no matter by what far superior charm of spectacle it may in after years again and again be followed.

Golden indeed were the expectations with which hopeful people welcomed the exhibition of 1851. It was the first organized to gather all the representatives of the world's industry into one great fair; and there were those who seriously expected that men who had once been prevailed upon to meet together in friendly and peaceful rivalry would never again be persuaded to meet in rivalry of a fiercer kind. It seems extraordinary now to think that any sane person can have indulged in such expectations, or can have imagined that the tremendous forces generated by the rival interests, ambitions, and passions of races could be subdued into harmonious co-operation by the good sense and good feeling born of a friendly meeting. The Hyde Park Exhibition and all the exhibitions that followed it have not as yet made the slightest perceptible difference in the warlike tendencies of nations. The Hyde Park Exhibition was often described as the festival to open the long reign of peace. It might as a mere matter of chronology be called without any impropriety the festival to celebrate the close of the short reign of peace. From that year, 1851, it may be said fairly enough that the world has hardly known a week of peace. The *coup d'état* in France closed the year. The Crimean War began almost immediately after, and was followed by the Indian Mutiny, and that by the war between France and Australia, the long civil war in the United States, the Neapolitan enterprises of Garibaldi, and the Mexican intervention, until we come to the war between Austria, Prussia, and Denmark; the short sharp struggle for German supremacy between Austria and Prussia, the war between France and Germany, and the war between Russia and Turkey. Such

were, in brief summary, the events that quickly followed the great inaugurating Festival of Peace in 1851. Of course those who organized the great exhibition were in no way responsible for the exalted and extravagant expectations which were formed as to its effects on the history of the world and the elements of human nature. But there was a great deal too much of the dithyrambic about the style in which many writers and speakers thought fit to describe the exhibition. With some of these all this was the result of genuine enthusiasm. In other instances the extravagance was indulged in by persons not habitually extravagant, but, on the contrary, very sober, methodical, and calculating, who by the very fact of their possessing eminently these qualities were led into a total misconception of the influence of such assemblages of men. These calm and wise persons assumed that because they themselves, if shown that a certain course of conduct was for their material and moral benefit, would instantly follow it and keep to it, it must therefore follow that all peoples and states were amenable to the same excellent principle of self-discipline. War is a foolish and improvident, not to say immortal and atrocious, way of trying to adjust our disputes, they argued; let peoples far divided in geographical situation be only brought together and induced to talk this over, and see how much more profitable and noble is the rivalry of peace in trade and commerce, and they will never think of the coarse and brutal arbitrament of battle any more. Not a few others, it must be owned, indulged in the high-flown glorification of the reign of peace to come because the exhibition was the special enterprise of the prince consort, and they had a natural aptitude for the production of courtly strains. But among all these classes of pæan-singers it did happen that a good deal of unmerited discredit was cast upon the results of the great exhibition; for the enterprise was held responsible for illusions it had of itself nothing to do with creating, and disappointments which were no consequence of any failure on its part. Even upon trade and production it is very easy to exaggerate the beneficent influences of an international exhibition. But that such enterprises have some beneficial influence is beyond doubt; and that they are interesting, instructive, well calculated to educate and refine the minds of nations, may be admitted by the least enthusiastic of men.

The first idea of the exhibition was conceived by Prince Albert; and it was his energy and influence which succeeded in carrying the idea into practical execution. Probably no influence less great than that which his station gave to the prince would have prevailed to carry to success so difficult an enterprise. There had been industrial exhibitions before on a small scale and of local limit; but if the idea of an exhibition in which all the nations of the world were to compete had occurred to other minds before, as it may well have done, it was merely as a vague thought, a day-dream, without any claim to a practical realization. Prince Albert was president of the society of arts, and this position secured him a platform for the effective promulgation of his ideas. On June 30, 1849, he called a meeting of the society of arts at Buckingham Palace. He proposed that the society should undertake the initiative in the promotion of an exhibition of the works of all nations. The main idea of Prince Albert was that the exhibition should be divided into four great sections—the first to contain raw materials and produce; the second machinery for ordinary industrial and productive purposes and mechanical inventions of the more ingenious kind; the third manufactured articles; and the fourth sculpture, models, and the illustrations of the plastic arts generally. The idea was at once taken up by the society of arts, and by their agency spread abroad. On October 17th in the same year a meeting of merchants and bankers was held in London to promote the success of the undertaking. In the first few days of 1850 a formal commission was appointed “for the promotion of the exhibition of the works of all nations, to be holden in the year 1851.” Prince Albert was appointed president of the commission. The enterprise was now fairly launched. A few days after a meeting was held in the Mansion House to raise funds in aid of the exhibition, and ten thousand pounds was at once collected. This of course was but the beginning, and a guarantee fund of two hundred thousand pounds was very soon obtained.

On March 21st in the same year the lord mayor of London gave a banquet at the Mansion House to the chief magistrates of the cities, towns, and boroughs of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of inviting their co-operation in support of the undertaking. Prince Albert was present, and spoke. He had cultivated the art of speaking with

much success, and had almost entirely overcome whatever difficulty stood in his way from his foreign birth and education. He never quite lost his foreign accent. No man coming to a new country at the age of manhood as Prince Albert did ever acquired the new tongue in such a manner as to lose all trace of a foreign origin; and to the end of his career Prince Albert spoke with an accent which, however carefully trained, still betrayed its early habitudes. But, except for this slight blemish, Prince Albert may be said to have acquired a perfect mastery of the English language; and he became a remarkably good public speaker. He had indeed nothing of the orator in his nature. It was but the extravagance of courtliness which called his polished and thoughtful speeches oratory. In the prince's nature there was neither the passion nor the poetry that are essential to genuine eloquence; nor were the occasions on which he addressed the English people likely to stimulate a man to eloquence. But his style of speaking was clear, thoughtful, stately, and sometimes even noble. It exactly suited its purpose. It was that of a man who did not set up for an orator; and who, when he spoke, wished that his ideas rather than his words should impress his hearers. It is very much to be doubted whether the English public would be quite delighted to have a prince who was also a really great orator. Genuine eloquence would probably impress a great many respectable persons as a gift not exactly suited to a prince. There is even still a certain distrust of the artistic in the English mind as of a sort of thing which is very proper in professional writers and painters and speakers, but which would hardly become persons of the highest station. Prince Albert probably spoke just as well as he could have done with successful effect upon his English audiences. At the dinner in the Mansion House he spoke with great clearness and grace of the purposes of the great exhibition. It was, he said, to "give the world a true test, a living picture, of the point of industrial development at which the whole of mankind has arrived, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions."

It must not be supposed, however, that the project of the great exhibition advanced wholly without opposition. Many persons were disposed to sneer at it; many were skeptical about its doing any good; not a few still regarded

Prince Albert as a foreigner and a pedant, and were slow to believe that anything really practical was likely to be developed under his impulse and protection. A very whimsical sort of opposition was raised in the House of Commons by a once famous eccentric, the late Colonel Sibthorp. Sibthorp was a man who might have been drawn by Smollett. His grotesque gestures, his overboiling energy, his uncouth appearance, his huge mustache, marked him out as an object of curiosity in any crowd. He was the subject of one of the most amusing pieces of impromptu parody ever thrown off by a public speaker—that in which O'Connell travestied Dryden's famous lines about the three poets in three distant ages born, and pictured three colonels in three different counties born, winding up with, "The force of nature could no farther go; to beard the one she shaved the other two." One of the gallant Sibthorp's especial weakness was a distrust and detestation of all foreigners. Foreigners he lumped together as a race of beings whose chief characteristics were popery and immortality. While three-fourths of the promoters of the exhibition were dwelling with the strongest emphasis on the benefit it would bring by drawing into London the representatives of all nations, Colonel Sibthorp was denouncing this agglomeration of foreigners as the greatest curse that could fall upon England. He regarded foreigners much as Isaac of York, in "Ivanhoe," regards the Knight Templars. "When," asks Isaac in bitter remonstrance, "did Templars breathe aught but cruelty to men and dishonor to women?" Colonel Sibthorp kept asking some such question with regard to foreigners in general and their expected concourse to the exhibition. In language somewhat too energetic and broad for our more polite time, he warned the House of Commons and the country of the consequences to English morals which must come of the influx of a crowd of foreigners at a given season. "Take care," he exclaimed in the House of Commons, "of your wives and daughters; take care of your property and your lives!" He declared that he prayed for some tremendous hailstorm or visitation of lightning to be sent from heaven expressly for the purpose of destroying in advance the building destined for the ill-omened exhibition. When free trade had left nothing else needed to complete the ruin of the nation, the enemy of mankind, he declared, had

inspired us with the idea of the great exhibition, so that the foreigners who had first robbed us of our trade might now be enabled to rob us of our honor.

The objections raised to the exhibition were not by any means confined to Colonel Sibthorp or to his kind of argument. After some consideration the royal commissioners had fixed upon Hyde Park as the best site for the great building, and many energetic and some influential voices were raised in fierce outcry against what was called the profanation of the park. It was argued that the public use of Hyde Park would be destroyed by the exhibition; that the park would be utterly spoiled; that its beauty could never be restored. A petition was presented by Lord Campbell to the House of Lords against the occupation of any part of Hyde Park with the exhibition building. Lord Brougham supported the petition with his characteristic impetuosity and vehemence. He denounced the attorney-general with indignant eloquence because that official had declined to file an application to the court of chancery for an injunction to stay any proceeding with the proposed building in the park. He denounced the House of Lords itself for what he considered its servile deference to royalty in the matter of the exhibition and its site. He declared that when he endeavored to raise the question there he was received in dead silence; and he asserted that an effort to bring on a discussion in the House of Commons was received with a silence equally profound and servile. Such facts, he shouted, only showed more painfully "that absolute prostration of the understanding which takes place even in the minds of the bravest when the word prince is mentioned in this country!" It is probably true enough that only the influence of a prince could have carried the scheme to success against the storms of opposition that began to blow at various periods and from different points. Undoubtedly a vast number, probably the great majority, of those who supported the enterprise in the beginning did so simply because it was the project of a prince. Their numbers and their money enabled it to be carried on, and secured it the test of the world's examination and approval. In that sense the very servility which accepts with delight whatever a prince proposes stood the exhibition in good stead; a courtier may plead that if English people in general had been more independent and less given to ad-

miration of princes, the excellent project devised by Prince Albert would never have had a fair trial. Many times during its progress the prince himself trembled for the success of his scheme. Many a time he must have felt inclined to renounce it, or at least to regret that he had ever taken it up.

Absurd as the opposition to the scheme may now seem, it is certain that a great many sensible persons thought the moment singularly inopportune for the gathering of large crowds, and were satisfied that some inconvenient, if not dangerous, public demonstration must be provoked. The smoldering embers of Chartism, they said, were every where under society's feet. The crowds of foreigners who Colonel Sibthorp so dreaded would, calmer people said, naturally include large numbers of the "Reds" of all continental nations, who would be only too glad to coalesce with Chartism and discontent of all kinds, for the purpose of disturbing the peace of London. The agitation caused by the papal aggression was still in full force and aflame. By an odd coincidence the first column of the exhibition building had been set up in Hyde Park almost at the same moment with the issue of the papal bull establishing a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England. These conditions looked gloomy for the project. "The opponents of the exhibition," wrote the prince himself, "work with might and main to throw all the old women here into a panic and to drive myself crazy. The strangers, they give out, are certain to commence a thorough revolution here, to murder Victoria and myself, and to proclaim the Red Republic in England; the plague is certain to ensue from the confluence of such vast multitudes, and to swallow up those whom the increased price of everything has not already swept away. For all this I am to be responsible, and against all this I have to make efficient provision." Most of the continental sovereigns looked coldly on the undertaking. The king of Prussia took such alarm at the thought of the Red Republicans whom the exhibition would draw together, that at first he positively prohibited his brother, then prince of Prussia, now German emperor, from attending the opening ceremonial; and though he afterward withdrew the prohibition he remained full of doubts and fears as to the personal safety of any royal or princely personage found in Hyde Park on the opening

day. The Duke of Cambridge, being appealed to on the subject, acknowledged himself also full of apprehensions. The objections to the site continued to grow up to a certain time. "The exhibition," Prince Albert wrote once to Baron Stockmar, his friend and adviser, "is now attacked furiously by the *Times*, and the House of Commons is going to drive us out of the park. There is immense excitement on the subject. If we are driven out of the park, the work is done for." At one time, indeed, this result seemed highly probable; but public opinion gradually underwent a change, and the opposition to the site was defeated in the House of Commons by a large majority.

Even, however, when the question of the site had been disposed of, there remained immense difficulties in the way. The press was not on the whole very favorable to the project; *Punch*, in particular, was hardly ever weary of making fun of it. Such a project, while yet only in embryo, undoubtedly furnished many points on which satire could fasten; and nothing short of complete success could save it from falling under a mountain of ridicule. No half success would have rescued it. The ridicule was naturally provoked and aggravated to an unspeakable degree by the hyperbolic expectations and preposterous dithyrambics of some of the well-meaning but unwise and somewhat too obstreperously loyal supporters of the enterprise. To add to all this, as the time for the opening drew near, some of the foreign diplomatists in London began to sulk at the whole project. There were small points of objection made about the position and functions of foreign ambassadors at the opening ceremonial, and what the queen and prince meant for politeness was in one instance at least near being twisted into cause of offense. Up to the last moment it was not quite certain whether an absurd diplomatic quarrel might not have been part of the inaugural ceremonies of the opening day.

The prince did not despair, however, and the project went on. There was a great deal of difficulty in selecting a plan for the building. Huge structures of brickwork, looking like enormous railway sheds, costly and hideous at once, were proposed; it seemed almost certain that some one of them must be chosen. Happily, a sudden inspiration struck Mr. (afterward Sir Joseph) Paxton, who was then in charge of the Duke of Devonshire's superb grounds



at Chatsworth. Why not try glass and iron? he asked himself. Why not build a palace of glass and iron large enough to cover all the intended contents of the exhibition, and which should be at once light, beautiful, and cheap? Mr. Paxton sketched out his plan hastily, and the idea was eagerly accepted by the royal commissioners. He made many improvements afterward in his design; but the palace of glass and iron arose within the specified time on the green turf of Hyde Park. The idea so happily hit upon was serviceable in more ways than one to the success of the exhibition. It made the building itself as much an object of curiosity and wonder as the collections under its crystal roof. Of the hundreds of thousands who came to the exhibition a goodly proportion were drawn to Hyde Park rather by a wish to see Paxton's palace of glass than all the wonders of industrial and plastic art that it inclosed. Indeed, Lord Palmerston, writing to Lord Normanby on the day after the opening of the exhibition, said: "The building itself is far more worth seeing than anything in it, though many of its contents are worthy of admiration." Perhaps the glass building was like the exhibition project itself in one respect. It did not bring about the revolution which it was confidently expected to create. Glass and iron have not superseded brick and stone, any more than competitions of peaceful industry have banished arbitrament by war. But the building, like the exhibition itself, fulfilled admirably its more modest and immediate purpose, and was in that way a complete success. The structure of glass is indeed in every mind inseparably associated with the event and the year.

The queen herself has written a very interesting account of the success of the opening day. Her description is interesting as an expression of the feelings of the writer, the sense of profound relief and rapture, as well as for the sake of the picture it gives of the ceremonial itself. The enthusiasm of the wife over the complete success of the project on which her husband had set his heart and staked his name is simple and touching. If the importance of the undertaking and the amount of fame it was to bring to its author may seem a little over done, not many readers will complain of the womanly and wifely feeling which could not be denied such fervent expression. "The great event," wrote the queen, "has taken place—a complete

and beautiful triumph—a glorious and touching sight, one which I shall ever be proud of for my beloved Albert and my country. . . . The park presented a wonderful spectacle, crowds streaming through it, carriages and troops passing, quite like the coronation day, and for me the same anxiety—no, much greater anxiety, on account of my beloved Albert. The day was bright, and all bustle and excitement. . . . The Green Park and Hyde Park were one densely crowded mass of human beings, in the highest good humor and most enthusiastic. I never saw Hyde Park look as it did—as far as the eye could reach. A little rain fell just as we started, but before we came near the Crystal Palace the sun shone and gleamed upon the gigantic edifice, upon which the flags of all nations were floating. . . . The glimpse of the transept through the iron gates, the waving palms, flowers, statues, myriads of people filling the galleries and seats around, with the flourish of trumpets as we entered, gave us a sensation which I can never forget, and I felt much moved. . . . The sight as we came to the middle was magical—so vast, so glorious, so touching—one felt, as so many did whom I have since spoken to, filled with devotion—more so than by any service I have ever heard. The tremendous cheers, the joy expressed in every face, the immensity of the building, the mixture of palms, flowers, trees, statues, fountains; the organ (with two hundred instruments and six hundred voices, which sounded like nothing), and my beloved husband the author of this peace festival, which united the industry of all nations of the earth—all this was moving indeed, and it was and is a day to live forever. God bless my dearest Albert! God bless my dearest country, which has shown itself so great to-day! One felt so grateful to the great God, who seemed to pervade all and to bless all.”

The success of the opening day was indeed undoubted. There were nearly thirty thousand people gathered together within the building, and nearly three-quarters of a million of persons lined the way between the exhibition and Buckingham Palace; and yet no accident whatever occurred, nor had the police any trouble imposed on them by the conduct of anybody in the crowd. “It was impossible,” wrote Lord Palmerston, “for the invited guests of a lady’s drawing-room to have conducted themselves with more per-

fect propriety than did this sea of human beings." It is needless to say that there were no hostile demonstrations by Red Republicans or malignant Chartists or infuriated Irish Catholics. The one thing which especially struck foreign observers, and to which many eloquent pens and tongues bore witness, was the orderly conduct of the people. Nor did the subsequent history of the exhibition in any way belie the promise of its opening day. It continued to attract delighted crowds to the last, and more than once held within its precincts at one moment nearly a hundred thousand persons, a concourse large enough to have made the population of a respectable continental capital. In another way the exhibition proved even more successful than was anticipated. There had been some difficulty in raising money in the first instance, and it was thought something of a patriotic risk when a few spirited citizens combined to secure the accomplishment of the undertaking by means of a guarantee fund. But the guarantee fund became in the end merely one of the forms and ceremonials of the exhibition: for the undertaking not only covered its expenses, but left a huge sum of money in the hands of the royal commissioners. The exhibition was closed by Prince Albert on October 15th. That at least may be described as the closing day, for it was then that the awards of prizes were made known in presence of the prince and a large concourse of people. The exhibition itself had actually been closed to the general public on the eleventh of the month. It has been imitated again and again. It was followed by an exhibition in Dublin; an exhibition of the paintings and sculptures of all nations in Manchester; three great exhibitions in Paris; the International Exhibition in Kensington in 1862—the enterprise too of Prince Albert, although not destined to have his presence at its opening; an exhibition at Vienna, one in Philadelphia, and various others. Where all nations seem to have agreed to pay Prince Albert's enterprise the compliment of imitation, it seems superfluous to say that it was a success. Time has so toned down our expectations in regard to these enterprises that no occasion now arises for the feeling of disappointment which was long associated in the minds of once-sanguine persons with the Crystal Palace of Hyde Park. We look on such exhibitions now as useful agencies in the work of industrial development, and

in promoting the intercourse of people, and thus co-operating with various other influences in the general business of civilization. But the impressions produced by the Hyde Park Exhibition were unique. It was the first thing of the kind; the gathering of peoples it brought together was as new, odd, and interesting as the glass building in which the industry of the world was displayed. For the first time in their lives Londoners saw the ordinary aspect of London distinctly modified and changed by the incursion of foreigners who came to take part in or to look at our exhibition. London seemed to be playing at holiday in a strange carnival sort of way during the time the exhibition was open. The Hyde Park enterprise bequeathed nothing very tangible or distinct to the world, except indeed the palace which, built out of its fabric, not its ruins, so gracefully ornaments one of the soft hills of Sydenham. But the memory of the exhibition itself is very distinct with all who saw it. None of its followers were exactly like it, or could take its place in the recollection of those who were its contemporaries. In a year made memorable by many political events of the greatest importance, of disturbed and tempestuous politics abroad and at home, of the deaths of many illustrious men, and the failure of many splendid hopes, the exhibition in Hyde Park still holds its place in memory—not for what it brought or accomplished, but simply for itself, its surroundings, and its house of glass.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### PALMERSTON.

THE death of Sir Robert Peel had left Lord Palmerston the most prominent, if not actually the most influential, among the statesmen of England. Palmerston's was a strenuous self-asserting character. He loved, whenever he had an opportunity, to make a stroke, as he frequently put it himself, "off his own bat." He had given himself up to the study of foreign affairs as no minister of his time had done. He had a peculiar capacity for understanding foreign politics and people as well as foreign languages; and he had come somewhat to pique himself upon his

knowledge. As Bacon said that he had taken all learning for his province, Palmerston seemed to have made up his mind that he had taken all European affairs for his province. His sympathies were markedly liberal. As opinions went then, they might have been considered among statesmen almost revolutionary; for the conservative of our day is to the full as liberal as the average Liberal of 1848 and 1850. In all the popular movements going on throughout the continent Palmerston's sympathies were generally with the peoples and against the government; while he had, on the other hand, a very strong contempt, which he took no pains to conceal, even for the very best class of the continental demagogue. It was not, however, in his sympathies that Palmerston differed from most of his colleagues. He was not more liberal even in his views of foreign affairs than Lord John Russell; he was probably not so consistently and on principle a supporter of free and popular institutions. But Lord Palmerston's energetic, heedless temperament, his exuberant animal spirits, and his profound confidence in himself and his opinions, made him much more liberal and spontaneous in his expressions of sympathy than a man of Russell's colder nature could well have been. Palmerston seized a conclusion at once, and hardly ever departed from it. He never seemed to care who knew what he thought on any subject. He had a contempt for men of more deliberate temper, and often spoke and wrote as if he thought a man slow in forming an opinion must needs be a dull man, not to say a fool. All opinions not his own he held in good-humored scorn. In some of his letters we find him writing of men of the most undoubted genius and wisdom, whose views have since stood all the test of time and trial, as if they were mere blockheads for whom no practical man could feel the slightest respect. It would be almost superfluous to say, in describing a man of such a nature, that Lord Palmerston sometimes fancied he saw great wisdom and force of character in men for whom neither then nor since did the world in general show much regard. As with a man, so with a cause. Lord Palmerston was to all appearance capricious in his sympathies. Calmer and more earnest minds were sometimes offended at what seemed a lack of deep-seated principle in his mind and his policy, even when it happened that he and they were in accord as to the course that

ought to be pursued. His levity often shocked them; his blunt, brusque ways of speaking and writing sometimes gave downright offense.

In his later years Lord Palmerston's manner in parliament and out of it had greatly mellowed and softened and grown more genial. He retained all the good spirits and the ready, easy, marvelously telling humor: but he had grown more considerate of the feelings of opponents in debate, and he allowed his genuine kindness of heart a freer influence upon his mode of speech. He had grown to prefer on the whole his friend or even his honorable opponent to his joke. They who only remember Palmerston in his very later years in the House of Commons, and who can only recall to memory that bright racy humor which never offended, will perhaps find it hard to understand how many enemies he made for himself at an earlier period by the levity and flippancy of his manner. Many grave statesmen thought that the levity and flippancy were far less dangerous even when employed in irritating his adversaries in the House of Commons than when exercised in badgering foreign ministers and their governments and sovereigns. Lord Palmerston was unsparing in his lectures to foreign states. He was always admonishing them that they ought to lose no time in at once adopting the principles of government which prevailed in England. He not uncommonly put his admonitions in the tone of one who meant to say: "If you don't take my advice you will be ruined, and your ruin will serve you right for being such fools." While, therefore, he was a Conservative in home politics, and never even professed the slightest personal interest in any projects of political reform in England, he got the credit all over the continent of being a supporter, promoter, and patron of all manner of revolutionary movements, and a disturber of the relations between subjects and their sovereigns.

Lord Palmerston was not inconsistent in thus being a Conservative at home and something like a revolutionary abroad. He was quite satisfied with the state of things in England. He was convinced that when a people had got a well-limited suffrage and a respectable House of Commons elected by open vote, a House of Lords, and a constitutional sovereign, they had got all that in a political sense man has to hope for. He was not a far-seeing man, nor a

man who much troubled himself about what a certain class of writers and thinkers are fond of calling "problems of life." It did not occur to him to think that, as a matter of absolute necessity, the very reforms we enjoy in one day are only putting us into a mental condition to aspire after and see the occasion for further reforms as the days go on. But he clearly saw that most continental countries were governed on a system which was not only worn out and decaying, but which was the source of great practical and personal evils to their inhabitants. He desired, therefore, for every country a political system like that of Great Britain, and neither for Great Britain nor for any other country did he desire anything more. He was accordingly looked upon by continental ministers as a patron of revolution, and by English Radicals as the steady enemy of political reform. Both were right from their own point of view. The familiar saying among continental Conservatives was expressed in the well-known German lines, which affirm that, "If the devil had a son, he must be surely Palmerston." On the other hand, the English Radical party regarded him as the most formidable enemy they had. Mr. Cobden deliberately declared him to be the worst minister that had ever governed England. At a later period, when Lord Palmerston invited Cobden to take office under him, Cobden referred to what he had said of Palmerston, and gave this as a reason to show the impossibility of his serving such a chief. The good-natured statesman only smiled, and observed that another public man who had just joined his administration had often said things as hard of him in other days. "Yes," answered Cobden, quietly, "but I meant what I said."

Palmerston, therefore, had many enemies among European statesmen. It is now certain that the queen frequently wineed under the expressions of ill-feeling which were brought to her ears as affecting England, and, as she supposed, herself, and which she believed to have been drawn on her by the inconsiderate and impulsive conduct of Palmerston. The prince consort, on whose advice the queen very naturally relied, was a man of singularly calm and earnest nature. He liked to form his opinions deliberately and slowly, and disliked expressing any opinion until his mind was well made up. Lord Palmerston, when secretary for foreign affairs, was much in the habit of writ-

ing and answering despatches on the spur of the moment, and without consulting either the queen or his colleagues. Palmerston complained of the long delays which took place on several occasions when, in matters of urgent importance, he waited to submit despatches to the queen before sending them off. He was of opinion that during the memorable controversy on the Spanish marriages the interests of England were once in danger of being compromised by the delay thus forced upon him. He contended too that where the general policy of a state was clearly marked out and well-known, it would have been idle to insist that a foreign secretary capable of performing the duties of his office should wait to submit for the inspection and approval of the sovereign and his colleagues every scrap of paper he wrote on before it was allowed to leave England. If such precautions were needful, Lord Palmerston contended, it could only be because the person holding office of foreign secretary was unfit for his post; and he ought, therefore to be dismissed, and some better qualified man put in his place. Of course there is some obvious justice in this view of the case. It would perhaps have been unreasonable to expect that, at a time when the business of the foreign office had suddenly swelled to unprecedented magnitude, the same rules and formalities could be kept up which had suited slower and less busy days. But the complaint made by the queen was not that Palmerston failed to consult her on every detail and to submit every line relating to the organization of the foreign office for her approval before he sent it off. The complaint was clear, and full of matter for very grave consideration. The queen complained that on matters concerning the actual policy of the state, Palmerston was in the habit of acting on his own independent judgment and authority; that she found herself more than once thus pledged to a course of policy which she had not had an opportunity of considering, and would not have approved if she had had such an opportunity; and that she hardly ever found any question absolutely intact and uncompromised when it was submitted to her judgment. The complaint was justified in many cases. Lord Palmerston frequently acted in a manner which almost made it seem as if he were purposely ignoring the authority of the sovereign. In part this came from the natural impatience of a quick man confident in his own



knowledge of a subject, and chafing at any delay which he thought unnecessary and merely formal. But it is not easy to avoid a suspicion that Lord Palmerston's rapidity of action sometimes had a different explanation. Two impressions seem to have had a place deeply down in the mind of the foreign secretary. He appears to have felt sure that, roughly speaking, the sympathies of the English people were with the continental movements against the sovereigns, and that the sympathies of the English court were with the sovereigns against the popular movements. In the first belief he was undoubtedly right. In the second he was probably right. It is not likely that a man of Prince Albert's peculiar turn of mind could have admitted much sympathy with revolution against constituted authority of any kind. Even his Liberalism, undoubtedly a deep and genuine conviction, did not lead him to make much allowance for any disturbing impulses. His orderly intellectual nature, with little of fire or passion in it, was prone to estimate everything by the manner in which it stood the test of logical argument. He could understand arguing against a bad system better than he could understand taking the risk of making things worse by resisting it. Some of the published memoranda or other writings of Prince Albert are full of a curious interest as showing the way in which a calm, intellectual and earnest man could approach some of the burning questions of the day with the belief apparently that the great antagonisms of systems and of opposing national forces could be argued into moderation and persuaded into compromise. In Prince Albert there were two tendencies counteracting each other. His natural sympathies were manifestly with the authority of thrones. His education taught him that thrones can only exist by virtue of their occupants recognizing the fact that they do not exist of their own authority, and taking care that they do not become unsuited to the time. The influence of Prince Albert would therefore be something very different from the impulses and desires of Lord Palmerston. It is hardly to be doubted that Palmerston sometimes acted upon this conviction. He thought he understood better than others not only the tendencies of events in foreign politics, but also the tendencies of English public opinion with regard to them. He well knew that so long as he had public opinion with him, no influence could

long prevail against him. His knowledge of English public opinion was something like an instinct. It could always be trusted. It had, indeed, no far reach. Lord Palmerston never could be relied upon for a judgment as to the possible changes of a generation or even a few years. But he was an almost infallible guide as to what a majority of the English people were likely to say if asked at the particular moment when any question was under dispute. Palmerston never really guided, but always followed, the English public, even in foreign affairs. He was, it seems almost needless to say, an incomparably better judge of the direction English sentiment was likely to take than the most acute foreigner put in such a place as Prince Albert's could possibly hope to be. It may be assumed, then, that some at least of Lord Palmerston's actions were dictated by the conviction that he had the general force of that sentiment to sustain him in case his mode of conducting the business of the foreign office should ever be called into account.

A time came when it was called into account. The queen and the prince had long chafed under Lord Palmerston's cavalier way of doing business. So far back as 1849 her majesty had felt obliged to draw the attention of the foreign secretary to the fact that his office was constitutionally under the control of the prime minister, and that the despatches to be submitted for her approval should, therefore, pass through the hands of Lord John Russell. Lord John Russell approved of this arrangement, only suggesting—and the suggestion is of some moment in considering the defense of his conduct afterward made by Lord Palmerston—that every facility should be given for the transaction of business by the queen's attending to the draft despatches as soon as possible after their arrival. The queen accepted the suggestion good-humoredly, only pleading that she should “not be pressed for an answer within a few minutes, as is done now sometimes.” One can see tolerably well what a part of the difficulty was even from these slight hints. Lord Palmerston was rapid in forming his judgments as in all his proceedings, and when once he had made up his mind was impatient of any delay which seemed to him superfluous. Prince Albert was slow, deliberate, reflective, and methodical. Lord Palmerston was always sure he was right in every judgment he formed, even if it

were adopted on the spur of the moment; Prince Albert loved reconsideration, and was open to new argument and late conviction. However, the difficulty was got over in 1849. Lord Palmerston agreed to every suggestion, and for the time all seemed likely to go smoothly. It was only for the time. The queen soon believed she had reason to complain that the new arrangement was not carried out. Things were going on, she thought, in just the old way. Lord Palmerston dealt as before with foreign courts according to what seemed best to him at the moment; and his sovereign and his colleagues often only knew of some important despatch or instruction when the thing was done and could not be conveniently or becomingly undone. The prince, at her majesty's request, wrote to Lord John Russell, complaining strongly of the conduct of Lord Palmerston. The letter declared that Lord Palmerston had failed in his duty toward her, "and not from oversight or negligence, but upon principle, and with astonishing pertinacity, against every effort of the queen. Besides which, Lord Palmerston does not scruple to let it appear in public as if the sovereign's negligence in attending to the papers sent to her caused delay and annoyance." Even before this it seems that the queen had drawn up a memorandum to lay down in clear and severe language the exact rules by which the foreign secretary must be bound in his dealings with her. The memorandum was not used at that time, as it was thought that the remonstrances of the sovereign and the prime minister alike could hardly fail to have some effect on the foreign secretary. This time, however, the queen appears to have felt that she could no longer refrain; and accordingly the following important memorandum was addressed by her majesty to the prime minister. It is well worth quoting in full, partly because it became a subject of much interest and controversy afterward, and partly because of the tone of peculiar sternness, rare indeed from a sovereign to a minister in our times, in which its instructions are conveyed.

"OSBORNE, August 12, 1850.

"With reference to the conversation about Lord Palmerston which the queen had with Lord John Russell the other day, and Lord Palmerston's disavowal that he ever intended any disrespect to her by the various neglects of

which she has had so long and so often to complain, she thinks it right, in order to prevent mistake for the future, to explain what it is she expects from the foreign secretary.

“She requires:

“First. That he will distinctly state what he proposes to do in a given case, in order that the queen may know as distinctly to what she has given her royal sanction.

“Second. Having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the minister; such an act she must consider as failure in sincerity toward the crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her constitutional right of dismissing that minister. She expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and the foreign ministers, before important decisions are taken based upon that intercourse; to receive the foreign despatches in good time, and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents before they must be sent off. The queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston.”

The tone of the memorandum was severe, but there was nothing unreasonable in its stipulations. On the contrary, it simply prescribed what every one might have supposed to be the elementary conditions on which the duties of a sovereign and a foreign minister can alone be satisfactorily carried on. Custom as well as obvious convenience demanded such conditions. The Duke of Wellington declared that when he was prime minister no despatch left the foreign office without his seeing it. No sovereign, one would think, could consent to the responsibility of rule on any other terms. We have perhaps got into the habit of thinking, or at least of saying, that the sovereign of a constitutional country only rules through the ministers. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the sovereign has no constitutional functions whatever provided by our system of government, and that the sole duty of a monarch is to make a figure in certain state pageantry. It has sometimes been said that the sovereign in a country like England is only the signet ring of the nation. If this were true, it might be asked with unanswerable force why a veritable signet ring costing a few pounds, and never requiring to be renewed, would not serve all purposes quite

as well and save expense. But the position of the sovereign is not one of meaningless inactivity. The sovereign has a very distinct and practical office to fulfill in a constitutional country. The monarch in England is the chief magistrate of the state, specially raised above party and passion and change in order to be able to look with a clearer eye to all that concerns the interests of the nation. Our constitutional system grows and develops itself year after year as our requirements and conditions change; and the position of the sovereign, like everything else, has undergone some modification. It is settled now beyond dispute that the sovereign is not to dismiss ministers, or a minister simply from personal inclination or conviction, as until a very recent day it was the right and the habit of English monarchs to do. The sovereign now retains, in virtue of usage having almost the force of constitutional law, the ministers of whom the House of Commons approves. But the crown still has the right, in case of extreme need, of dismissing any minister who actually fails to do his duty. The sovereign is always supposed to understand the business of the state, to consider its affairs, and to offer an opinion and enforce it by argument on any question submitted by the ministers. When the ministers find that they cannot allow their judgment to bend to that of the sovereign, then indeed the sovereign gives way or the ministers resign. In all ordinary cases the sovereign gives way. But it was never intended by the English constitution that the ministers and the country were not to have the benefit of the advice and the judgment of a magistrate who is purposely placed above all the excitements and temptations of party, its triumphs and its reverses, and who is assumed therefore to have no other motive than the good of the state in offering an advice. The sovereign would grossly fail in public duty, and would be practically disappointing the confidence of the nation, who consented to act simply as the puppet of the minister, and to sign mechanically and without question every document he laid on the table.

In the principles which she laid down therefore, the queen was strictly right. But the memorandum was none the less a severe and a galling rebuke for the foreign secretary. We can imagine with what emotions Lord Palmerston must have received it. He was a proud, self-confident

man; and it came on him just in the moment of his greatest triumph. Never before, never since, did Lord Palmerston win so signal and so splendid a victory as that which he had extorted by the sheer force of his eloquence and his genius from a reluctant House of Commons in the Don Pacifico debate. Never probably in our parliamentary history did a man of years so advanced accomplish such a feat of eloquence, argument, and persuasion as he had achieved. He stood up before the world the foremost English statesman of the day. It is easy to imagine how deeply he must have felt the rebuke conveyed in the memorandum of the queen. We know as a matter of fact, from what he himself afterward said, that he did feel it bitterly. But he kept down his feelings. Whether he was right or wrong in the matter of dispute, he undoubtedly showed admirable self-control and good temper in his manner of receiving the reprimand. He wrote a friendly and good-humored letter to Lord John Russell, saying, "I have taken a copy of this memorandum of the queen, and will not fail to attend to the directions which it contains." The letter then gave a few lines of explanation about the manner in which delays had arisen in the sending of despatches to the queen, but promising to return to the old practice, and expressing a hope that if the return required an additional clerk or two, the treasury would be liberal in allowing him that assistance. Nothing could be more easy and pleasant. It might have seemed the ease of absolute carelessness. But it was nothing of the kind. Lord Palmerston had acted deliberately and with a purpose. He afterward explained why he had not answered the rebuke by resigning his office. "The paper," he said, "was written in anger by a lady as well as by a sovereign, and the difference between a lady and a man could not be forgotten even in the case of the occupant of the throne." He had "no reason to suppose that this memorandum would ever be seen by or be known to anybody but the queen, John Russell, and myself." Again, "I had lately been the object of violent political attack, and had gained a great and signal victory in the House of Commons and in public opinion; to have resigned then would have been to have given the fruits of victory to antagonists whom I had defeated, and to have abandoned my political supporters at the very moment when by their means I had triumphed."

But beyond all that, Lord Palmerston said that by suddenly resigning "I should have been bringing for decision at the bar of public opinion a personal quarrel between myself and my sovereign—a step which no subject ought to take if he can possibly avoid it; for the result of such a course must be either fatal to him or injurious to the country. If he should prove to be in the wrong, he would be irretrievably condemned; if the sovereign should be proved to be in the wrong, the monarchy would suffer."

It is impossible not to feel a high respect for the manner in which, having come to this determination, Lord Palmerston at once acted upon it. As he had resolved not to resent the rebuke, he would not allow any gleam of feeling to creep into his letter which could show that he felt any resentment. Few men could have avoided the temptation to throw into a reply on such an occasion something of the tone of the injured, the unappreciated, the martyr, the wronged one who endures much and will not complain. Lord Palmerston felt instinctively the bad taste and unwisdom of such a style of reply. He took his rebuke in the most perfect good humor. His letter must have surprised Lord John Russell. Macaulay observes that Warren Hastings, confident that he knew best and was acting rightly, endured the rebukes of the East India company with a patience which was sometimes mistaken for the patience of stupidity. It is not unlikely that when the prime minister received Lord Palmerston's reply he may have mistaken its patience for the patience of downright levity and indifference.

Lord Palmerston went a step farther in the way of conciliation. He asked for an interview with Prince Albert, and he explained to the prince, in the most emphatic and indignant terms, that the accusation against him of being purposely wanting in respect to the sovereign was absolutely unfounded. "Had it been deserved, he ought to be no longer tolerated in society." But he does not seem in the course of the interview to have done much more than argue the point as to the propriety and convenience of the system he had lately been adopting in the business of the foreign office.

So for the hour the matter dropped. Other events interfered; there were many important questions of domestic policy to be attended to; and for some time Lord Palm-

erston's policy and his way of conducting the business of the foreign office did not invite any particular attention. But the old question was destined to come up again in more serious form than before.

The failure of the Hungarian rebellion, through the intervention of Russia, called up a wide and deep feeling of regret and indignation in this country. The English people had very generally sympathized with the cause of the Hungarians and rejoiced in the victories which up to a certain point the arms of the insurgents had won. When the Hungarians were put down at last, not by the strength of Austria but by the intervention of Russia, the anger of Englishmen in general found loud-spoken expression. Louis Kossuth, who had been dictator of Hungary during the greater part of the insurrection, and who represented, in the English mind at least, the cause of Hungary and her national independence, came to England. He was about to take up his residence, as he then intended, in the United States, and on his way thither he visited England. He had applied for permission to pass through French territory, and had been refused the favor. The refusal only gave one additional reason to the English public for welcoming him with especial cordiality. He was accordingly received at Southampton, in Birmingham, in London, with an enthusiasm such as no foreigner except Garibaldi alone has ever drawn in our time from the English people. There was much in Kossuth himself as well as in his cause to attract the enthusiasm of popular assemblages. He had a strikingly handsome face and a stately presence. He was picturesque and perhaps even theatric in his dress and his bearing. He looked like a picture; all his attitudes and gestures seemed as if they were meant to be reproduced by a painter. He was undoubtedly one of the most eloquent men who ever addressed an English popular audience. In one of his imprisonments Kossuth had studied the English language chiefly from the pages of Shakespeare. He had mastered our tongue as few foreigners have ever been able to do; but what he had mastered was not the common colloquial English of the streets and the drawing-rooms. The English he spoke was the noblest in its style from which a student could supply his eloquence: Kossuth spoke the English of Shakespeare. He could address a public meeting for an hour or more



with a fluency not inferior seemingly to that of Gladstone, with measured dignity and well-restrained force that were not unworthy of Bright; and in curiously expressive, stately, powerful, pathetic English which sounded as if it belonged to a higher time and to loftier interests than ours. Viewed as a mere performance the achievement of Kossuth was unique. It may well be imagined what the effect was on a popular audience when such eloquence was poured forth in glowing eulogy of a cause with which they sympathized, and in denunciation of enemies and principles they detested. It was impossible not to be impressed by the force of some of the striking and dramatic passages in Kossuth's fervid, half-oriental orations. He stretched out his right hand and declared that "the time was when I held the destinies of the House of Hapsburg in the hollow of that hand!" He apostrophized those who fought and fell in the rank and file of Hungary's champions as "unnamed demi-gods." He prefaced a denunciation of the papal policy by an impassioned lament over the brief hopes that the pope was about to head the liberal movement in Italy, and reminded his hearers that "there was a time when the name of Pio Nono, coupled with that of Louis Kossuth, was thundered in *vivas* along the sunny shores of the Adriatic." Every appeal was vivid and dramatic; every allusion told. Throughout the whole there ran the thread of one distinct principle of international policy to which Kossuth endeavored to obtain the assent of the English people. This was the principle that if one state intervenes in the domestic affairs of another for the purpose of putting down revolution, it then becomes the right, and may even be the duty, of any third state to throw in the weight of her sword against the unjustifiable intervention. As a principle this is nothing more than some of the ablest and most thoughtful Englishmen had advocated before and have advocated since. But in Kossuth's mind and in the understanding of those who heard him, it meant that England ought to declare war against Russia or Austria, or both; the former for having intervened between the emperor of Austria and the Hungarians, and the latter for having invited and profited by the intervention.

The presence of Kossuth and the reception he got excited a wild anger and alarm among Austrian statesmen.

The Austrian minister was all sensitiveness and remonstrance. The relations between this country and Austria seemed to become every day more and more strained. Lord Palmerston regarded the anger and the fears of Austria with a contempt which he took no pains to conceal. Before the Hungarian exile had reached this country, while he was still under the protection of the sultan of Turkey, and Austria was in wild alarm lest he should be set at liberty and should come to England, Lord Palmerston wrote to a British diplomatist saying, "What a childish, silly fear this is of Kossuth! What great harm could he do to Austria while in France or England? He would be the hero of half a dozen dinners in England at which would be made speeches not more violent than those which have been made on platforms here within the last four months, and he would soon sink into comparative obscurity; while, on the other hand, so long as he is a state *détenu* in Turkey he is a martyr and the object of never-ceasing interest." Lord Palmerston understood thoroughly the temper of his countrymen in general. The English public never had any serious notion of going to war with Austria in obedience to Kossuth's appeal. They sympathized generally with Kossuth's cause, or with the cause which they understood him to represent; they were taken with his picturesque appearance and his really wonderful eloquence; they wanted a new hero, and Kossuth seemed positively cut out to supply the want. The enthusiasm cooled down after awhile, as was indeed inevitable. The time was not far off when Kossuth was to make vain appeals to almost empty halls, and when the eloquence that once could cram the largest buildings with excited admirers was to call aloud to solitude. There came a time when Kossuth lived in England forgotten and unnoticed; when his passing away from England was unobserved as his presence there had long been. There seems, one can hardly help saying, something cruel in this way of suddenly taking up the representative of some foreign cause, the spokesman of some "mission;" and then, when he has been filled with vain hopes, letting him drop down to disappointment and neglect. It was not perhaps the fault of the English people if Kossuth mistook, as many another man in like circumstances has done, the meaning of English popular sympathy. The English crowds who applauded Kossuth

at first meant nothing more than general sympathy with any hero of continental revolution, and personal admiration for the eloquence of the man who addressed them. But Kossuth did not thus accept the homage paid to him. No foreigner could have understood it in his place. Lord Palmerston understood it thoroughly, and knew what it meant, and how long it would last.

The time, however, had not yet come when the justice of Lord Palmerston's words was to be established. Kossuth was the hero of the hour, the comet of the season. The Austrian statesmen were going on as if every word spoken at a Kossuth meeting were a declaration of war against Austria. Lord Palmerston was disposed to chuckle over the anger thus displayed. "Kossuth's reception," he wrote to his brother, "must have been gall and wormwood to the Austrians and to the absolutists generally." Some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, however, became greatly alarmed when it was reported that the foreign minister was about to receive a visit from Kossuth in person to thank him for the sympathy and protection which England had accorded to the Hungarian refugees while they were still in Turkey, and without which it is only too likely that they would have been handed over to Austria or Russia. It was thought that for the foreign secretary to receive a formal visit of thanks from Kossuth would be regarded by Austria as a recognition by England of the justice of Kossuth's cause and an expression of censure against Austria. If Kossuth were received by Lord Palmerston, the Austrian ambassador, it was confidently reported, would leave England. Lord John Russell took alarm, and called a meeting of the cabinet to consider the momentous question. Lord Palmerston reluctantly consented to appease the alarms of his colleagues by promising to avoid an interview with Kossuth.

It does not seem to us that there was much dignity in the course taken by the cabinet. Lord Palmerston actually used, and very properly used, all the influence England could command to protect the Hungarian refugees in Turkey. He had intimated very distinctly, and with the full approval of England, that he would use still stronger measures if necessary to protect at once the sultan and the refugees. It seems to us that, having done this openly, and compelled Russia and Austria to bend to his urgency,

there could be little harm in his receiving a visit from one of the men whom he had thus protected. Austria's sensibilities must have been of a peculiar nature indeed if they could bear Lord Palmerston's very distinct and energetic intervention between her and her intended victim, but could not bear to hear that the rescued victim had paid Lord Palmerston a formal visit of gratitude. At all events, it does not seem as if an English minister was bound to go greatly out of his way to conciliate such very eccentric and morbid sensibilities. We owe to a foreign state with which we are on friendly terms a strict and honorable neutrality. Our ministers are bound by courtesy, prudence, and good sense not to obtrude any expression of their opinion touching the internal dissensions of a foreign state on the representatives of that state or the public. But they are not by any means bound to treat the enemies of every foreign state as our enemies. They are not expected to conciliate the friendship of Austria, for example, by declaring that any one who is disliked by the emperor of Austria shall never be admitted to speech of them. If Kossuth had come as the professed representative of an established government, and had sought an official interview with Lord Palmerston in that capacity, then indeed it would have been proper for the English foreign secretary to refuse to receive him. Our ministers, with perfect propriety, refused to receive Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell, the emissaries of the Southern Confederation, as official representatives of any state. But it is absurd to suppose that when the civil war was over in America an English statesman in office would be bound to decline receiving a visit from Mr. Jefferson Davis. We know, in fact, that the ex-king of Naples, the ex-king of Hanover, Don Carlos, and the royal representatives of various lost causes, are constantly received by English ministers and by the queen of England, and no representatives of any of the established governments would think of offering a remonstrance. If the emperor of Austria was likely to be offended by Lord Palmerston's receiving a visit from Kossuth, the only course for an English minister, as it seems to us, was to leave him to be offended, and to recover from his anger whenever he chose to allow common sense to resume possession of his mind. The queen of England might as well have taken offense at the action of the American govern-

ment, who actually gave, not merely private receptions, but public appointments, to Irish refugees after the outbreak of 1848.

Lord Palmerston, however, gave way, and did not receive the visit from Kossuth. The hoped-for result, that of sparing the sensibilities of the Austrian government was not attained. In fact, things turned out a great deal worse than they might have done if the interview between Lord Palmerston and Kossuth had been quietly allowed to come off. Meetings were held to express sympathy with Kossuth, and addresses were voted to Lord Palmerston thanking him for the influence he had exerted in preventing the surrender of Kossuth to Austria. Lord Palmerston consented to receive these addresses from the hands of deputations at the foreign office. The deputations represented certain metropolitan parishes, and were the exponents of markedly Radical opinions. Some of the addresses contained strong language with reference to the Austrian government and the Austrian sovereign. Lord Palmerston observed in his reply that there were expressions contained in the addresses with which he could hardly be expected to concur; but he spoke in a manner which conveyed the idea that his sympathies generally were with the cause which the deputations had adopted. This was the speech containing a phrase which was identified with Palmerston's name, and held to be specially characteristic of his way of speaking, and indeed of thinking, for many years after, in fact, to the close of his career. The noble lord told the deputation that the past crisis was one which required on the part of the British government much generalship and judgment; and that "a good deal of judicious bottle-holding was obliged to be brought into play." The phrase, "bottle-holding," borrowed from the prize ring, offended a good many persons who thought the past crisis far too grave, and the issues it involved too stern, to be properly described in language of such levity. But the general public were amused and delighted by the words, and the judicious bottle-holder became more of a popular favorite than ever. Some of the published reports put this a good deal more strongly than Lord Palmerston did, or at least than he intended to do; and he always insisted that he said no more to the deputations than he had often said in the House of Commons; and that he had

expressly declared he could not concur in some of the expressions contained in the addresses. Still, the whole proceeding considerably alarmed some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, and was regarded with distinct displeasure by the queen and Prince Albert. The queen specially requested that the matter should be brought before a cabinet council. Lord John Russell accordingly laid the whole question before his colleagues, and the general opinion seemed to be that Lord Palmerston had acted with want of caution. No formal resolution was adopted. It was thought that the general expression of opinion from his colleagues and the known displeasure of the queen would be enough to impress the necessity for greater prudence on the mind of the foreign secretary. Lord John Russell, in communicating with her majesty as to the proceedings of the cabinet council, expressed a hope that "it will have its effect upon Lord Palmerston, to whom Lord John Russell has written urging the necessity of a guarded conduct in the present very critical condition of Europe." This letter was not written when startling evidence was on its way to show that the irrepressible foreign secretary had been making a stroke off his own bat again; and a stroke this time of capital importance in the general game of European politics. The possible indiscretion of Lord Palmerston's dealings with a deputation or two from Finsbury and Islington became a matter of little interest when the country was called upon to consider the propriety of the foreign secretary's dealings with the new ruler of a new state system, with the author of the *coup d'état*.

The news of the *coup d'état* took England by surprise. A shock went through the whole country. Never probably was public opinion more unanimous, for the hour at least, than in condemnation of the stroke of policy ventured on by Louis Napoleon, and the savage manner in which it was carried to success. After awhile no doubt a considerable portion of the English public came to look more leniently on what had been done. Many soon grew accustomed to the story of the massacres along the boulevards of Paris and lost all sense of their horror. Some disposed of the whole affair after the satisfactory principle so commonly adopted by English people in judging of foreign affairs, and assumed that the system introduced by Louis Napoleon was a very good sort of thing—for the French,

After awhile a certain admiration, not to say adulation, of Louis Napoleon, began to be a kind of faith with many Englishmen, and the *coup d'état* was condoned and even approved by them. But there can be no doubt that when the story first came to be told in England, the almost universal voice of opinion condemned it as strongly as nearly all men of genuine enlightenment and feeling condemned it then and since. The queen was particularly anxious that nothing should be said by the British ambassador to commit us to any approval of what had been done. On December 4th the queen wrote to Lord John Russell from Osborne, expressing her desire that Lord Normanby, our ambassador at Paris, should be instructed to remain entirely passive and say no word that might be misconstrued into approval of the action of the prince president. The cabinet met that same day and decided that it was expedient to follow most closely her majesty's instructions. But they decided also, and very properly, that there was no reason for Lord Normanby suspending his diplomatic functions. Lord Normanby had in fact applied for instructions on this point. Next day Lord Palmerston, as foreign secretary, wrote to Lord Normanby, informing him that he was to make no change in his diplomatic relations with the French government. Lord Normanby's reply to this despatch created a startling sensation. Our ambassador wrote to say that when he called on the French minister for foreign affairs to inform him that he had been instructed by her majesty's government not to make any change in his relations with the French government, the minister, M. Turgot, told him that he had heard two days before from Count Walewski, the French ambassador in London, that Lord Palmerston had expressed to him his entire approval of what Louis Napoleon had done, and his conviction that the prince president could not have acted otherwise. It would not be easy to exaggerate the sensation produced among Lord Palmerston's colleagues by this astounding piece of news. The queen wrote at once to Lord John Russell, asking him if he knew anything about the approval which "the French government pretend to have received;" declaring that she could not "believe in the truth of the assertion, as such an approval given by Lord Palmerston would have been in complete contradiction to the line of strict neutrality and passiveness which

the queen had expressed her desire to see followed with regard to the late convulsions at Paris." Lord John Russell replied that he had already written to Lord Palmerston, "saying that he presumed there was no truth in the report." The reply of Lord Palmerston was delayed for what Lord Russell thought an unreasonable length of time at such a crisis; but when it came it left no doubt that Lord Palmerston had expressed to Count Walewski his approval of the *coup d'état*. Lord Palmerston observed indeed that Walewski had probably given to M. Turgot a somewhat highly colored report of what he had said, and that the report had lost nothing in passing from M. Turgot to Lord Normanby; but the substance of the letter was a full admission that Lord Palmerston approved of what had been done, and had expressed his approval to Count Walewski. The letters of explanation which the foreign minister wrote on the subject, whether to Lord Normanby or to Lord John Russell, were elaborate justifications of the *coup d'état*; they were in fact exactly such arguments as a minister of Louis Napoleon might with great propriety address to a foreign court. They were full of an undisguised and characteristic contempt for any one who could think otherwise on the subject than as Lord Palmerston thought. In replying to Lord John Russell the contempt was expressed in a quiet sneer; in the letters to Lord Normanby it was obtrusively and offensively put forward. Lord John Russell in vain endeavored to fasten Palmerston's attention on the fact that the question was not whether the action of Louis Napoleon was historically justifiable, but whether the conduct of the English foreign minister in expressing the approval of it without the knowledge and against the judgment of the queen and his colleagues was politically justifiable. Lord Palmerston simply returned to his defense of Louis Napoleon and his assertion that the prince president was only anticipating the intrigues of the Orleans family and the plans of the assembly. Lord Palmerston indeed gave a very minute account of a plot among the Orleans princes for a military rising against Louis Napoleon. No evidence of the existence of any such plot has ever been discovered. Louis Napoleon never pleaded the existence of such a plot in his own justification; it is now, we believe, universally admitted that Lord Palmerston was for once the victim of a



mere *canard*. But even if there had been an Orleanist plot, or twenty Orleanist plots, it never has been part of the duty or the policy of an English government to express approval of anything and everything that a foreign ruler may do to anticipate or put down a plot against him. The measures may be unjustifiable in their principle or in their severity; the plot may be of insignificant importance, utterly inadequate to excuse any extraordinary measures. The English government is not in ordinary cases called upon to express any opinion whatever. It had in this case deliberately decided that all expression of opinion should be scrupulously avoided, lest by any chance the French government should be led to believe that England approved of what had been done.

Lord Palmerston endeavored to draw a distinction between the expressions of a foreign secretary in conversation with an ambassador and a formal declaration of opinion. But it is clear that the French ambassador did not understand Lord Palmerston to be merely indulging in the irresponsible gossip of private life, and that Lord Palmerston never said a word to impress him with the belief that their conversation had that colorless and unmeaning character. In any case it was surely a piece of singular indiscretion on the part of a foreign minister to give to the French ambassador, even in private conversation, an unqualified opinion in favor of a stroke of policy of which the British government as a whole, and indeed with the one exception of Lord Palmerston, entirely disapproved. To give such an opinion without qualification or explanation was to mislead the French ambassador in the grossest manner and to send him away, as in fact he was sent under the impression that the conduct of his chief had the approval of the sovereign and government of England. Let it be remembered further that the foreign secretary who did this had been again and again rebuked for acting on his own responsibility, for saying and doing things which pledged, or seemed to pledge, the responsibility of the government without any authority, that a formal threat of dismissal actually hung over his head in the event of his repeating such indiscretions; and we shall be better able to form some idea of the sensation which was created in England by the revelation of Lord Palmerston's conduct. Many of his colleagues had cordially sympathized

with his views on the occasion of former indiscretions; and even while admitting that he had been indiscreet, yet acknowledged to themselves that their opinion on the broad question involved was not different from his. But even these drew back from any approval of his conduct in regard to the *coup d'état*. The almost universal judgment was that he had gone surprisingly wrong. Not a few, finding it impossible to account otherwise for such a proceeding, came to the conclusion that he must have been determined somehow to bring about a rupture with his colleagues of the cabinet, and had chosen this high-handed assertion of his will as the best means of flinging his defiance in their teeth.

Lord John Russell made up his mind. He came to the conclusion that he could no longer go on with Lord Palmerston as a colleague in the foreign office, and he signified his decision to Lord Palmerston himself. "While I concur," thus Lord John Russell wrote, "in the foreign policy of which you have been the adviser, and much as I admire the energy and ability with which it has been carried into effect, I cannot but observe that misunderstandings perpetually renewed, violations of prudence and decorum too frequently repeated, have marrèd the effects which ought to have followed from a sound policy and able administration. I am therefore most reluctantly compelled to come to the conclusion that the conduct of foreign affairs can no longer be left in your hands with advantage to the country." Rather unfortunately, Lord John Russell endeavored to soften the blow by offering, if Lord Palmerston should be willing, to recommend him to the queen to fill the office of lord-lieutenant of Ireland. This was a proposal which we agree with Mr. Evelyn Ashley, Lord Palmerston's biographer, in regarding as almost comical in its character. Lord Palmerston's whole soul was in foreign affairs. He had never affected any particular interest in Irish business. He cared little even for the home politics of England; it was out of the question to suppose that he would consent to bury himself in the vice-regal court of Dublin and occupy his diplomatic talents in composing disputes for precedence between Protestant deans and Catholic bishops, and in doling out the due proportion of invitations to the various ranks of aspiring traders and shopkeepers and their wives. Lord Palmer-

ston declined the offer with open contempt, and indeed it can hardly be supposed for a moment that Lord John Russell expected he would have seriously entertained it. The quarrel was complete; Lord Palmerston ceased for the time to be foreign secretary, and his place was taken by Lord Granville.

Seldom has a greater sensation been produced by the removal of a minister. The effect which was created all over Europe was probably just what Lord Palmerston himself would have desired; the belief prevailed everywhere that he had been sacrificed to the monarchical and reactionary influences all over the continent. The statesmen of Europe were under the impression that Lord Palmerston was put out of office as an evidence that England was about to withdraw from her former attitude of sympathy with the popular movements of the continent. Lord Palmerston himself fell under a delusion, which seems marvelous in a man possessed of his clear, strong common sense. He conceived that he had been sacrificed to reactionary intrigue. He wrote to his brother to say that the real ground for his dismissal was a "weak truckling to the hostile intrigues of the Orleans family, Austria, Russia, Saxony, and Bavaria, and in some degree of the present Prussian government." "All these parties," he said, "found their respective views and systems of policy thwarted by the course pursued by the British government, and they thought that if they could remove the minister they would change the policy. They had for a long time past effectually poisoned the mind of the queen and prince against me, and John Russell giving way rather encouraged than discountenanced the desire of the queen to remove me from the foreign office." So strongly did the idea prevail that an intrigue of foreign diplomatists had overthrown Palmerston, that the Russian ambassador, Baron Brunnow, took the very ill-advised step of addressing to Lord John Russell a disclaimer of any participation in such a proceeding. The queen made a proper comment on the letter of Baron Brunnow by describing it as "very presuming," inasmuch as it insinuated the possibility "of changes of governments in this country taking place at the instigation of foreign ministers." Lord Palmerston was of course entirely mistaken in supposing that any foreign interference had contributed to his removal from the

foreign office. The only wonder is how a man so experienced as he could have convinced himself of such a thing; at least, it would be a wonder if one did not know that the most experienced author or artist can always persuade himself that a disparaging critique is the result of personal and malignant hostility. But that the feeling of the queen and the prince had long been against him can hardly admit of dispute. Prince Albert seems not to have taken any pains to conceal his dislike and distrust of Palmerston. Nearly two years before, when the French ambassador was recalled for a time, the prince wrote to Lord John Russell to say that both the queen and himself were exceedingly sorry to hear of the recall; adding, "We are not surprised, however, that Lord Palmerston's mode of doing business should not be borne by the susceptible French government with the same good humor and forbearance as by his colleagues." At the moment when Lord John Russell resolved on getting rid of Lord Palmerston, Prince Albert wrote to him to say that "the sudden termination of your difference with Lord Palmerston has taken us much by surprise, as we were wont to see such differences terminate in his carrying his points, and leaving the defense of them to his colleagues, and the discredit to the queen." It is clear from this letter alone that the court was set against Lord Palmerston at that time. The court was sometimes right where Palmerston was wrong; but the fact that he then knew himself to be in antagonism to the court is of importance both in judging of his career and in estimating the relative strength of forces in the politics of England.

Lord Palmerston then was dismissed. The meeting of parliament took place on the 3rd of February following, 1852. It would be superfluous to say that the keenest anxiety was felt to know the full reasons of the sudden dismissal. To quote the words used by Mr. Roebuck, "The most marked person in the administration, he around whom all the party battles of the administration had been fought, whose political existence had been made the political existence of the government itself, the person on whose being in office the government rested their existence as a government, was dismissed; their right hand was cut off, their most powerful arm was taken away, and at the critical time when it was most needed." The House of Commons was not long left to wait for an ex-

planation. Lord John Russell made a long speech, in which he went into the whole history of the differences between Lord Palmerston and his colleagues; and, what was more surprising to the house, into a history of the late foreign secretary's differences with his sovereign and the threat of dismissal which had so long been hanging over his head. The prime minister read to the house the queen's memorandum which we have already quoted. Lord John Russell's speech was a great success. Lord Palmerston's was, even in the estimation of his closest friends, a failure. Far different, indeed, was the effect it produced from the almost magical influence of that wonderful speech on the "Don Pacifico" question, which had compelled even unconvinced opponents to genuine admiration. Palmerston seemed to have practically no defense. He only went over again the points put by him in the correspondence already noticed; contended that on the whole he had judged rightly of the French crisis, and that he could not help forming an opinion on it and so forth. Of the queen's memorandum he said nothing. He did not even attempt to explain how it came about that, having received so distinct and severe an injunction, he had ventured deliberately to disregard it in a matter of the greatest national importance. Some of his admirers were of opinion then and long after that the reading of the memorandum must have come on him by surprise; that Lord John Russell must have sprung a mine upon him; and that Palmerston was taken unfairly and at a disadvantage. But it is certain that Lord John Russell gave notice to his late colleague of his intention to read the memorandum of the queen. Besides, Lord Palmerston was one of the most ready and self-possessed speakers that ever addressed the House of Commons. During the very reading of the memorandum he could have found time to arrange his ideas, and to make out some show of a case for himself. The truth, we believe, is that Lord Palmerston deliberately declined to make any reply to that part of Lord John Russell's speech which disclosed the letter from the queen. He made up his mind that a dispute between a sovereign and a subject would be unbecoming of both; and he passed over the memorandum in deliberate silence. He doubtless felt convinced that, even though such indiscretion involved him for the moment in seeming defeat, it would in the

long run reckon to his credit and his advantage. Lord Dalling, better known as Sir Henry Bulwer, was present during the debate, and formed an opinion of Palmerston's conduct which seems in every way correct and farseeing. "I must say," Lord Dalling writes, "that I never admired him so much as at this crisis. He evidently thought he had been ill-treated; but I never heard him make an unfair or irritable remark, nor did he seem in anywise stunned by the blow he had received, or dismayed by the isolated position in which he stood. I should say that he seemed to consider that he had a quarrel put upon him which it was his wisest course to close by receiving the fire of his adversary and not returning it. He could not in fact have gained a victory against the premier on the ground which Lord John Russell had chosen for the combat which would not have been more permanently disadvantageous to him than a defeat. The faults of which he had been accused did not touch his own honor nor that of his country. Let them be admitted and there was an end of the matter. By and by an occasion would probably arise, in which he might choose an advantageous occasion for giving battle, and he was willing to wait calmly for that occasion."

Lord Dalling judged accurately so far as his judgment went. But while we agree with him in thinking that Lord Palmerston refrained from returning his adversary's fire for the reasons Lord Dalling has given, we are strongly of opinion that other reasons too influenced Palmerston. He knew that he was not at that time much liked or trusted by the queen and Prince Albert. He was not sorry that the fact should be made known to the world. He thoroughly understood English public opinion and was not above taking advantage of its moods and its prejudices. He did not think a statesman would stand any the worse in the general estimation of the English public then because it was known that he was not admired by Prince Albert.

But the almost universal opinion of the House of Commons and of the clubs was that Lord Palmerston's career was closed. "Palmerston is smashed!" was the common saying of the clubs. A night or two after the debate Lord Dalling met Mr. Disraeli on the staircase of the Russian Embassy, and Disraeli remarked to him that "there was a Palmerston."

Lord Palmerston evidently did not think so. The letters

he wrote to friends immediately after his fall show him as jaunty and full of confidence as ever. He was quite satisfied with the way things had gone. He waited calmly for what he called a few days afterward, "My tit-for-tat with John Russell," which came about indeed sooner than even he himself could well have expected.

We have not hesitated to express our opinion that throughout the whole of this particular dispute Lord Palmerston was in the wrong. He was in the wrong in many, if not most, of the controversies which had preceded it. That is to say, he was wrong in committing England, as he so often did, to measures which had not had the approval of the sovereign or his colleagues. In the memorable dispute which brought matters to a crisis he seems to us to have been in the wrong not less in what he did than in his manner of doing it. Yet it ought not to have been difficult for a calm observer even at the time to see that Lord Palmerston was likely to have the best of the controversy in the end. The faults of which he was principally accused were not such as the English people would find it very hard to forgive. He was said to be too brusque and high-handed in his dealings with foreign states and ministers; but it did not seem to the English people in general as if this was an offense for which his own countrymen were bound to condemn him too severely. There was a general impression that his influence was exercised on behalf of popular movements abroad; and an impression nearly as general that if he had not acted a good deal on his own impulses and of his own authority he could hardly have served any popular cause so well. The *coup d'état* certainly was not popular in England. For a long time it was a subject of general reprehension; but even at that time men who condemned the *coup d'état* were not disposed to condemn Lord Palmerston over-much because, acting as usual on a personal impulse, he had in that instance made a mistake. There was even in his error something dashing, showy and captivating to the general public. He made the influence of England felt, people said. His chief fault was that he was rather too strong for those around him. If any grave crisis came, he, it was murmured, and he alone, would be equal to the occasion and would maintain the dignity of England. Neither in war nor in statesmanship does a man suffer much

loss of popularity by occasionally disobeying orders and accomplishing daring feats. Lord Palmerston saw his way clearly at a critical period of his career. He saw that at that time there was, rightly or wrongly, a certain jealousy of the influence of Prince Albert, and he did not hesitate to take advantage of the fact. He bore his temporary disgrace with well-justified composure. "The devil aids him surely," says Sussex, speaking to Raleigh of Leicester in Scott's "Kenilworth," "for all that would sink another ten fathoms deep seems but to make him float the more easily." Some rival may have thought thus of Lord Palmerston.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### BIRTH OF THE EMPIRE—DEATH OF "THE DUKE."

THE year 1852 was one of profound emotion, and even excitement, in England. An able writer has remarked that the history of the continent of Europe might be traced through the history of England, if all other sources of information were destroyed, by the influence which every great event in continental affairs produces on the mood and policy of England. As the astronomer infers the existence and the attributes of some star his keenest glass will not reveal by the perturbations its neighborhood causes to some body of light within its ken, so the student of English history might well discover commotion on the continent by the evidence of a corresponding movement in England. All through the year 1852 the national mind of England was disturbed. The country was stirring itself in quite an unusual manner. A military spirit was exhibiting itself everywhere, not unlike that told of in Sheakespeare's "Henry the Fourth." The England of 1852 seems to threaten that "ere this year expire we bear our civil swords and native fire as far as France." At least the civil swords were sharpened in order that the country might be ready for a possible and even an anticipated invasion from France. The volunteer movement sprang into sudden existence. All over the country corps of young volunteers were being formed. An immense amount of national enthusiasm accompanied and acclaimed the forma-



tion of the volunteer army, which received the sanction of the crown early in the year, and thus became a national institution.

The meaning of all this movement was explained some years after by Mr. Tennyson, in a string of verses which did more honor perhaps to his patriotic feeling than to his poetic genius. The verses are absurdly unworthy of Tennyson as a poet; but they express with unmistakable clearness the popular sentiment of the hour; the condition of uncertainty, vague alarm, and very general determination to be ready at all events for whatever might come. "Form, form, riflemen, form," wrote the laureate; "better a rotten borough or two than a rotten fleet and a town in flames." "True that we have a faithful ally, but only the devil knows what he means." This was the alarm and the explanation. We had a faithful ally, no doubt; but we certainly did not quite know what he meant. All the earlier part of the year had witnessed the steady progress of the prince president of France to an imperial throne. The previous year had closed upon his *coup d'état*. He had arrested, imprisoned, banished, or shot his principal enemies, and had demanded from the French people a presidency for ten years, a ministry responsible to the executive power—himself alone—and two political chambers to be elected by universal suffrage. Nearly five hundred prisoners, untried before any tribunal, even that of a drum-head had been shipped off to Cayenne. The streets of Paris had been soaked in blood. The president instituted a *plébiscite*, or vote of the whole people, of course he got all he asked for. There was no arguing with the commander of twenty legions, and of such legions as those that had operated with terrible efficiency on the boulevards. The first day of the new year saw the religious ceremony at Notre Dame to celebrate the acceptance of the ten year's presidency by Louis Napoleon. The same day a decree was published in the name of the president declaring that the French eagle should be restored to the standards of the army, as a symbol of the regenerated military genius of France. A few days after, the prince president decreed the confiscation of the property of the Orleans family and restored titles of nobility in France. The birthday of the Emperor Napoleon was declared by decree to be the only national holiday. When the two

legislative bodies came to be sworn in, the president made an announcement which certainly did not surprise many persons, but which nevertheless sent a thrill abroad over all parts of Europe. If hostile parties continued to plot against him, the president intimated, and to question the legitimacy of the power he had assumed by virtue of the national vote, then it might be necessary to demand from the people, in the name of the repose of France, "a new title which will irrevocably fix upon my head the power with which they have invested me." There could be no further doubt. The Bonapartist empire was to be restored. A new Napoleon was to come to the throne.

"Only the devil knows what he means" indeed. So people were all saying throughout England in 1852. The scheme went on to its development and before the year was quite out Louis Napoleon was proclaimed emperor of the French. Men had noticed as a curious, not to say ominous, coincidence that on the very day when the Duke of Wellington died the *Moniteur* announced that the French people were receiving the prince president everywhere as the emperor-elect and as the elect of God; and another French journal published an article hinting not obscurely at the invasion and conquest of England as the first great duty of a new Napoleonic empire. The prince president indeed, in one of the provincial speeches which he delivered just before he was proclaimed emperor, had talked earnestly of peace. In his famous speech to the chamber of commerce of Bordeaux on October 9th, he denied that the restored empire would mean war. "I say," he declared, raising his voice and speaking with energy and emphasis, "the empire is peace." But the assurance did not do much to satisfy Europe. Had not the same voice, it was asked, declaimed with equal energy and earnestness the terms of the oath to the Republican constitution? Never, said a bitter enemy of the new empire, believe the word of a Bonaparte, unless when he promises to kill somebody. Such was indeed the common sentiment of a large number of the English people during the eventful year when the president became emperor and Prince Louis Napoleon was Napoleon the Third.

It would have been impossible that the English people could view all this without emotion and alarm. It had been clearly seen how the prince president had carried his

point thus far. He had appealed at every step to the memory of the Napoleonic legend. He had in every possible way revived and reproduced the attributes of the reign of the great emperor. His accession to power was strictly a military and a Napoleonic triumph. In ordinary circumstances the English people would not have troubled themselves much about any change in the form of government of a foreign country. They might have felt a strong dislike for the manner in which such a change had been brought about; but it would have been in nowise a matter of personal concern to them. But they could not see with indifference the rise of a new Napoleon to power on the strength of the old Napoleonic legend. The one special characteristic of the Napoleonic principle was its hostility to England. The life of the great Napoleon in its greatest days had been devoted to the one purpose of humiliating England. His plans had been foiled by England. Whatever hands may have joined in pressing him to the ground, there could be no doubt that he owed his fall principally to England. He died a prisoner of England, and with his hatred of her embittered rather than appeased. It did not seem unreasonable to believe that the successor who had been enabled to mount the imperial throne simply because he bore the name and represented the principles of the first Napoleon would inherit the hatred to England and the designs against England. Everything else that savored of the Napoleonic era had been revived; why should this, its principal characteristic, be allowed to lie in the tomb of the first emperor? The policy of the first Napoleon had lighted up a fire of hatred between England and France which at one time seemed inextinguishable. There were many who regarded that international hate as something like that of the hostile brothers in the classic story, the very flames of whose funeral piles refused to mingle in the air; or like that of the rival Scottish families whose blood, it was said, would never commingle though poured into one dish. It did not seem possible that a new Emperor Napoleon could arise without bringing a restoration of that hatred along with him.

There were some personal reasons, too, for particular distrust of the upcoming emperor among the English people. Louis Napoleon had lived many years in England. He was as well-known there as any prominent member of the

English aristocracy. He went a good deal into very various society, literary, artistic, merely fashionable, purely rowdy, as well as into that political society which might have seemed natural to him. In all circles the same opinion appears to have been formed of him. From the astute Lord Palmerston to the most ignorant of the horse-jockeys and ballet-girls with whom he occasionally consorted, all who met him seemed to think of the prince in much the same way. It was agreed on all hands that he was a fatuous, dreamy, moony, impracticable, stupid young man. A sort of stolid amiability, not enlightened enough to keep him out of low company and questionable conduct, appeared to be his principal characteristic. He constantly talked of his expected accession somehow and some time to the throne of France, and people only smiled pityingly at him. His attempts at Strasburg and Boulogne had covered him with ridicule and contempt. We cannot remember one authentic account of any Englishman of mark at that time having professed to see any evidence of capacity and strength of mind in Prince Louis Napoleon.

When the *coup d'état* came and was successful, the amazement of the English public was unbounded. Never had any plot been more skillfully and more carefully planned; more daringly carried out. Here evidently was a master in the art of conspiracy. Here was the combination of steady caution and boundless audacity. What a subtlety of design; what a perfection of silent self-control! How slowly the plan had been matured; how suddenly it was flashed upon the world and carried to success. No haste; no delay; no scruple, no remorse, no fear! And all this was the work of the dull dawdler of English drawing-rooms, the heavy, apathetic, unmoral rather than immoral haunter of English race-courses and gambling houses! What new surprise might not be feared, what subtle and daring enterprise might not reasonably be expected from one who could thus conceal and thus reveal himself, and do both with a like success!

Louis Napoleon, said a member of his family, deceived Europe twice: first when he succeeded in passing off as an idiot, and next when he succeeded in passing off as a statesman. The epigram had doubtless a great deal of truth in it. The *coup d'état* was probably neither planned nor carried to success by the energy of Louis Napoleon. Cooler

and stronger heads and hands are responsible for the execution at least of that enterprise. The prince, it is likely played little more than a passive part in it, and might have lost his nerve more than once but for the greater resolution of some of his associates, who were determined to crown him for their own sakes as well as for his. But at the time the world at large saw only Louis Napoleon in the whole scheme, conception, execution, and all. The idea was formed of a colossal figure of cunning and daring—a Brutus, a Talleyrand, a Philip of Spain, and a Napoleon the First all in one. Those who detested him most admired and feared him not the least. Who can doubt, it was asked, that he will endeavor to make himself the heir of the revengers of Napoleon? Who can believe any pledges he may give? How enter into any treaty or bond of any kind with such a man? Where is the one that can pretend to say he sees through him and understands his schemes?

Had Louis Napoleon any intention at any time of invading England? We are inclined to believe that he never had a regular fixed plan of the kind. But we are also inclined to think that the project entered into his mind with various other ideas and plans more or less vague; and that circumstances might have developed it into an actual scheme. Louis Napoleon was above all things a man of ideas in the inferior sense of the word; that is to say, he was always occupying himself with vague, dreamy suggestions of plans that might in this, that, or the other case be advantageously pursued. He had come to power probably with the determination to keep it and make himself acceptable to France first of all. After this came doubtless the sincere desire to make France great and powerful and prosperous. At first he had no particular notion of the way to establish himself as a popular ruler, and it is certain that he turned over all manner of plans in his mind for the purpose. Among these must certainly have been one for the invasion of England and the avenging of Waterloo. He let drop hints at times which showed that he was thinking of something of the kind. He talked of himself as representing a defeat. He was attacked with all the bitterness of a not unnatural but very unrestrained animosity in the English press for his conduct in the *coup d'état*; and no doubt he and his companions were greatly exasperated.

The mood of a large portion of the French people was distinctly aggressive. Ashamed to some degree of much that had been done and that they had had to suffer, many Frenchmen were in that state of dissatisfaction with themselves which makes people eager to pick a quarrel with some one else. Had Louis Napoleon been inclined, he might doubtless have easily stirred his people to the war mood; and it is not to be believed that he did not occasionally contemplate the expediency of doing something of the kind. Assuredly, if he had thought such an enterprise necessary to the stability of his reign, he would have risked even a war with England. But it would not have been tried except as a last resource; and the need did not arise. No one could have known better the risks of such an attempt. He knew England as his uncle never did; and if he had not his uncle's energy or military genius, he had far more knowledge of the world and of the relative resources and capabilities of nations. He would not have done anything rash without great necessity or the prospect of very certain benefit in the event of success.

An invasion of England was not therefore, a likely event. Looking back composedly now on what actually did happen, we may safely say that few things were less likely. But it was not by any means an impossible event. The more composedly one looks back to it now, the more he will be compelled to admit that it was at least on the cards. The feeling of national uneasiness and alarm was not a mere panic. There were five projects with which public opinion all over Europe specially credited Louis Napoleon when he began his imperial reign. One was a war with Russia. Another was a war with Austria. A third was a war with Prussia. A fourth was the annexation of Belgium. The fifth was the invasion of England. Three of these projects were carried out. The fourth we know was in contemplation. Our combination with France in the first project probably put all serious thought of the fifth out of the head of the French emperor. He got far more prestige out of an alliance with us than he could ever have got out of any quarrel with us; and he had little or no risk. We do not count for anything the repeated assurances of Louis Napoleon that he desired above all things to be on friendly terms with England. These assurances were doubtless sincere at the moment when they were made,

and under the circumstances of that moment. But altered circumstances might at any time have induced an altered frame of mind. The very same assurances were made again and again to Russia, to Austria and to Prussia. The pledge that the empire was peace was addressed, like the pope's edict, *urbi et orbi*.

Therefore we do not look upon the mood of England in 1852 as one of idle and baseless panic. The same feeling broke into life again in 1859, when the emperor of the French suddenly announced his determination to go to war with Austria. It was in this latter period indeed that the volunteer movement became a great national organization, and that the laureate did his best to rouse it into activity in the verses of hardly doubtful merit to which we have already referred. But in 1852 the beginning of an army of volunteers was made; and what is of more importance to the immediate business of our history, the government determined to bring in a bill for the reorganization of the national militia.

Our militia was not in any case a body to be particularly proud of at that time. It had fallen into decay, and almost into disorganization. Nothing could have been a more proper work for any government than its restoration to efficiency and respectability. Nothing, too, could have been more timely than a measure to make it efficient in view of the altered condition of European affairs and the increased danger of disturbance at home and abroad. We had on our hands at the time, too, one of our little wars—a Caffre war, which was protracted to a vexatious length, and which was not without serious military difficulty. It began in the December of 1850, and was not completely disposed of before the early part of 1853. We could not, therefore, afford to have our defenses in any defective condition, and no labor was more fairly incumbent on a government than the task of making them adequate to their purpose. But it was an unfortunate characteristic of Lord John Russell's government that it attempted so much legislation, not because some particular scheme commended itself to the mature wisdom of the ministry, but because something had to be done in a hurry to satisfy public opinion; and the government could not think of anything better at the moment than the first scheme that came to hand. Lord John Russell accordingly introduced a militia

bill, which was in the highest degree inadequate and unsatisfactory. The principal peculiarity of it was that it proposed to substitute a local militia for the regular force that had been in existence. Lord Palmerston saw great objections to this alteration and urged them with much briskness and skill on the night when Lord John Russell explained his measure. When Palmerston began his speech, he probably intended to be merely critical as regarded points in the measure which were susceptible of amendment; but as he went on he found more and more that he had the House with him. Every objection he made, every criticism he urged, almost every sentence he spoke drew down increasing cheers. Lord Palmerston saw that the house was not only thoroughly with him on this ground, but thoroughly against the government on various grounds. A few nights after he followed up his first success by proposing a resolution to substitute the word "regular" for the word "local" in the bill; thus, in fact, to reconstruct the bill on an entirely different principle from that adopted by its framer. The effort was successful. The Peelites went with Palmerston; the Protectionists followed him as well; and the result was that one hundred and thirty-six votes were given for the amendment, and only one hundred and twenty-five against it. The government were defeated by a majority of eleven. Lord John Russell instantly announced that he could no longer continue in office, as he did not possess the confidence of the country.

The announcement took the house by surprise. Lord Palmerston had not himself expected any such result from his resolution. There was no reason why the government should not have amended their bill on the basis of the resolution passed by the house. The country wanted a scheme of efficient defense, and the government were only called upon to make their scheme efficient. But Lord John Russell was well aware that his administration had been losing its authority little by little. Since the time when it had returned to power, simply because no one could form a ministry any stronger than itself, it had been only a government on sufferance. Ministers who assume office in that stopgap way seldom retain it long in England. The Gladstone government illustrated this fact in 1873, when they consented to return to office because Mr. Disraeli was not then in a condition to come in, and were



dismissed by an overwhelming majority at the elections in the following spring. Lord Palmerston assigned one special reason for Lord John Russell's promptness in resigning on the change in the militia bill. The great motive for the step was, according to Palmerston, "the fear of being defeated on the vote of censure about the Cape affairs, which was to have been moved to-day; as it is, the late government have gone out on a question which they have treated as a motion, merely asserting that they had lost the confidence of the house; whereas, if they had gone out on a defeat upon the motion about the Cape, they would have carried with them the direct censure of the House of Commons." The letter from Lord Palmerston to his brother, from which these words are quoted, begins with a remarkable sentence: "I have had my tit-for-tat with John Russell, and I turned him out on Friday last." Palmerston did not expect any such result, he declared; but the revenge was doubtless sweet for all that. This was in February, 1852; and it was only in the December of the previous year that Lord Palmerston was compelled to leave the foreign office by Lord John Russell. The same influence, oddly enough, was the indirect cause of both events. Lord Palmerston lost his place because of his recognition of Louis Napoleon; Lord John Russell fell from power while endeavoring to introduce a measure suggested by Louis Napoleon's successful usurpation. It will be seen in a future chapter how the influence of Louis Napoleon was once again fatal to each statesman in turn.

The Russell ministry had done little and initiated less. It had carried on Peel's system by throwing open the markets to foreign as well as colonial sugar, and by the repeal of the navigation laws enabled merchants to employ foreign ships and seamen in the conveyance of their goods. It had made a mild and ineffectual effort at a reform bill, and had feebly favored attempts to admit Jews to parliament. It sank from power with an unexpected collapse in which the nation felt small concern.

Lord Palmerston did not come to power again at that moment. He might have gone in with Lord Derby if he had been so inclined. But Lord Derby, who it may be said, had succeeded to that title on the death of his father in the preceding year, still talked of testing the policy of free trade at a general election, and of course Palmerston

was not disposed to have anything to do with such a proposition. Nor had Palmerston in any case much inclination to serve under Derby, of whose political intelligence he thought poorly, and whom he regarded principally as what he called "a flashy speaker." Lord Derby tried various combinations in vain, and at last had to experiment with a cabinet of undiluted Protectionists. He had to take office, not because he wanted it, or because any one in particular wanted him; but simply and solely because there was no one else who could undertake the task. He formed a cabinet to carry on the business of the country for the moment and until it should be convenient to have a general election, when he fondly hoped that by some inexplicable process a protectionist reaction would be brought about, and he should find himself at the head of a strong administration.

The ministry which Lord Derby was able to form was not a strong one. Lord Palmerston described it as containing two men of mark, Derby and Disraeli, and a number of ciphers. It had not, except for these two, a single man of any political ability, and had hardly one of any political experience. It had an able lawyer for lord chancellor, Lord St. Leonards, but he was nothing of a politician. The rest of the members of the government were respectable country gentlemen. One of them, Mr. Herries, had been chancellor of the exchequer in a short-lived government, that of Lord Goderich, in 1827; and he had held the office of secretary of war for a few months some time later. He was forgotten by the existing generation of politicians, and the general public only knew that he was still living when they heard of his accession to Lord Derby's government. The Earl of Malmesbury, Sir John Pakington, Mr. Walpole, Mr. Henley, and the rest, were men whose antecedents scarcely gave them warrant for any higher claim in public life than the position of chairman of quarter sessions; nor did their subsequent career in office contribute much to establish a loftier estimate of their capacity. The head of the government was remarkable for his dashing blunders as a politician, quite as much as for his dashing eloquence. His new lieutenant, Mr. Disraeli, had in former days christened him very happily, "the Rupert of Debate," after that fiery and gallant prince whose blunders generally lost the battle which his headlong courage had nearly won.

Concerning Mr. Disraeli himself it is not too much to say that many of his own party were rather more afraid of his genius than of the dullness of any of his colleagues. It was not a pleasant task in the best of circumstances to be at the head of a tolerated ministry in the House of Commons; a ministry which is in a minority and only holds its place because there is no one ready to relieve it of the responsibility of office. Mr. Disraeli himself, at a much later date, gave the House of Commons an amusing picture of the trials and humiliations which await the leader of such a forlorn hope. He had now to assume that position without any previous experience of office. Rarely indeed is the leadership of the House of Commons undertaken by any one who has not previously held office; and Mr. Disraeli entered upon leadership and office at the same moment for the first time. He became chancellor of the exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Among the many gifts with which he was accredited by fame, not a single admirer had hitherto dreamed of including a capacity for the mastery of figures. In addition to all the ordinary difficulties of the ministry of a minority there was, in this instance, the difficulty arising from the obscurity and inexperience of nearly all its members. Facetious persons dubbed the new administration the "Who? Who? Ministry." The explanation of this odd nickname was found in a story then in circulation about the Duke of Wellington. The duke, it was said, was anxious to hear from Lord Derby at the earliest moment all about the composition of his cabinet. He was overheard asking the new prime minister in the House of Lords the names of his intended colleagues. The duke was rather deaf, and, like most deaf persons, spoke in very loud tones, and of course had to be answered in tones also rather elevated. That which was meant for a whispered conversation became audible to the whole house. As Lord Derby mentioned each name, the duke asked in wonder and eagerness, "Who? Who?" After each new name came the same inquiry. The Duke of Wellington had clearly never heard of most of the new ministers before. The story went about; and Lord Derby's administration was familiarly known as the "Who? Who? government."

Lord Derby entered office with the avowed intention of testing the protection question all over again. But he was

no sooner in office than he found that the bare suggestion had immensely increased his difficulties. The formidable organization which had worked the free trade cause so successfully seemed likely to come into political life again with all its old vigor. The free traders began to stand together again the moment Lord Derby gave his unlucky hint. Every week that passed over his head did something to show him the mistake he had made when he hampered himself with any such undertaking as the revival of the protection question. Some of his colleagues had been unhappily and blunderingly outspoken in their addresses to their constituents seeking for re-election, and had talked as if the restoration of protection itself were the grand object of Lord Derby's taking office. The new chancellor of the exchequer had been far more cautious. He only talked vaguely of "those remedial measures which great productive interests, suffering from unequal taxation, have a right to expect from a just government." In truth, Mr. Disraeli was well convinced at this time of the hopelessness of any agitation for the restoration of protection, and would have been only too glad of any opportunity for a complete and at the same time a safe disavowal of any sympathy with such a project. The government found their path bristling with troubles, created for them by their own mistake in giving any hint about the demand for a new trial of the free trade question. Any chance they might otherwise have had of making effective head against their very trying difficulties was completely cut away from them.

The free trade league was reorganized. A conference of Liberal members of the House of Commons was held at the residence of Lord John Russell in Chesham Place, at which it was resolved to extract or extort from the government a full avowal of their policy with regard to protection and free trade. The feat would have been rather difficult of accomplishment, seeing that the government had absolutely no policy to offer on the subject, and were only hoping to be able to consult the country as one might consult an oracle. The chancellor of the exchequer when he made his financial statement accepted the increased prosperity of the few years preceding with an unctious which showed that he at least had no particular notion of attempting to reverse the policy which had so

greatly contributed to its progress. Mr. Disraeli pleased the Peelites and the Liberals much more by his statement than he pleased his chief or many of his followers. His speech indeed was very clever. A new financial scheme he could not produce, for he had not had time to make anything like a complete examination of the finances of the country; but he played very prettily and skillfully with the facts and figures, and conveyed to the listeners the idea of a man who could do wonderful things in finance if he only had a little time and were in the humor. Every one outside the limits of the extreme and unconverted protectionists was pleased with the success of his speech. People were glad that one who had proved himself so clever with many things should have shown himself equal to the uncongenial and unwonted task of dealing with dry facts and figures. The house felt that he was placed in a very trying position, and was well pleased to see him hold his own so successfully in it.

Mr. Disraeli merely proposed in his financial statement to leave things as he found them; to continue the income-tax for another year, as a provisional arrangement pending that complete re-examination of the financial affairs of the country to which he intimated that he found himself quite equal at the proper time. No one could suggest any better course; and the new chancellor came off on the whole with flying colors. His very difficulties had been a source of advantage to him. He was not expected to produce a financial scheme at such short notice; and if he was not equal to a financier's task, it did not so appear on this first occasion of trial. The government on the whole did not do badly during this period of their probation. They introduced and carried a militia bill, for which they obtained the cordial support of Lord Palmerston; and they gave a constitution to New Zealand; and then, in the beginning of July, the parliament was prorogued and the dissolution took place. The elections were signalized by very serious riots in many parts of the country. In Ireland particularly party passions ran high. The landlords and the police were on one side; the priests and the popular party on the other; and in several places there was some bloodshed. It was not in Ireland, however, a question about free trade or protection. The great mass of the Irish people knew nothing about Mr. Disraeli—probably had

never heard his name, and did not care who led the House of Commons. The question which agitated the Irish constituencies was that of tenant rights, in the first instance; and the time had not yet arrived when a great minister from either party was prepared to listen to their demands on this subject. There was also much bitterness of feeling remaining from the discussions on the ecclesiastical titles bill. But it may be safely said that not one of the questions that stirred up public feeling in England had the slightest popular interest in Ireland, and the question which the Irish people considered essential to their very existence did not enter for one moment into the struggles that were going on all over England.

The speeches of ministers in England showed the same lively diversity as before on the subject of protection. Mr. Disraeli not only threw protection overboard, but boldly declared that no one could have supposed the ministry had the slightest intention of proposing to bring back the laws that were repealed in 1846. In fact the time, he declared, had gone by when such exploded politics could even interest the people of this country. On the other hand, several of Mr. Disraeli's colleagues evidently spoke in the fullness of their simple faith that Lord Derby was bent on setting up again the once beloved and not yet forgotten protective system. But from the time of the elections nothing more was heard about protection or about the possibility of getting a new trial for its principles. The elections did little or nothing for the government. The dreams of a strengthened party at their back were gone. They gained a little, just enough to make it unlikely that any one would move a vote of want of confidence at the very outset of their reappearance before parliament, but not nearly enough to give them a chance of carrying any measure which could really propitiate the conservative party throughout the country. They were still to be the ministry of a minority; a ministry on sufferance. They were a ministry on sufferance when they appealed to the country, but they were able to say then that when their cause had been heard the country would declare for them. They now came back to be a ministry on sufferance, who had made the appeal and had seen it rejected. It was plain to every one that their existence as a ministry was only a question of days. Speculation was already busy

as to their successors; and it was evident that a new government could only be formed by some sort of coalition between the Whigs and the Peelites.

Among the noteworthy events of the general elections was the return of Macaulay to the House of Commons. Edinburgh elected him in a manner particularly complimentary to him and honorable to herself. He was elected without his solicitation, without his putting himself forward as a candidate, without his making any profession of faith or doing any of the things that the most independent candidate was then expected to do; and in fact, in spite of his positive declaration that he would do nothing to court election. He had for some years been absent from parliament. Some difference had arisen between him and certain of his constituents on the subject of the Maynooth grant. Complaints too had been made by Edinburgh constituents of Macaulay's lack of attention to local interests, and of the intellectual scorn which as they believed he exhibited in his intercourse with many of those who had supported him. The result of this was that at the general election of 1847 Macaulay was left third on the poll at Edinburgh. He felt this deeply. He might have easily found some other constituency; but his wounded pride hastened a resolution he had for some time been forming to retire to a life of private literary labor. He therefore remained out of parliament. In 1852 the movement of Edinburgh toward him was entirely spontaneous. Edinburgh was anxious to atone for the error of which she had been guilty. Macaulay would go no farther than to say that if Edinburgh spontaneously elected him he should deem it a very high honor; and "should not feel myself justified in refusing to accept a public trust offered to me in a manner so honorable and so peculiar." But he would not do anything whatever to court favor. He did not want to be elected to parliament, he said; he was very happy in his retirement. Edinburgh elected him on those terms. He was not long allowed by his health to serve her; but so long as he remained in the House of Commons it was as member for Edinburgh.

On September 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington died. His end was singularly peaceful. He fell quietly asleep about a quarter-past three in the afternoon in Walmer Castle, and he did not wake any more. He was a very old

man—in his eighty-fourth year—and his death had naturally been looked for as an event certain to come soon. Yet when it did come thus naturally and peacefully, it created a profound public emotion. No other man in our time ever held the position in England which the Duke of Wellington had occupied for more than a whole generation. The place he had won for himself was absolutely unique. His great deeds belonged to a past time. He was hardly anything of a statesman; he knew little and cared less about what may be called statecraft; and as an administrator he had made many mistakes. But the trust which the nation had in him as a counsellor was absolutely unlimited. It never entered into the mind of any one to suppose that the Duke of Wellington was actuated in any step he took, or advice he gave, by any feeling but a desire for the good of the state. His loyalty to the sovereign had something antique and touching in it. There was a blending of personal affection with the devotion of a state servant which lent a certain romantic dignity to the demeanor and character of one who otherwise had but little of the poetical or the sentimental in his nature. In the business of politics he had but one prevailing anxiety, and that was that the queen's government should be satisfactorily carried on. He gave up again and again his own most cherished convictions, most ingrained prejudices, in order that he might not stand in the way of the queen's government and the proper carrying of it on. This simple fidelity, sometimes rather whimsically displayed, stood him often in stead of an exalted statesmanship, and enabled him to extricate the government and the nation from difficulties in which a political insight far more keen than his might have failed to prove a guide.

It was for this true and tried, this simple and unswerving devotion to the national good that the people of England admired and revered him. He had not what would be called a loveable temperament, and yet the nation loved him. He was cold and brusque in manner, and seemed in general to have hardly a gleam of the emotional in him. This was not because he lacked affections. On the contrary, his affections and his friendships, were warm and enduring; and even in public he had more than once given way to outbursts of emotion such as a stranger would never have expected from one of that cold and rigid



demeanor. When Sir Robert Peel died, Wellington spoke of him in the House of Lords with the tears which he did not even try to control running down his cheeks. But in his ordinary bearing there was little of the manner that makes a man a popular idol. He was not brilliant or dashing, or emotional or graceful. He was dry, cold, self-contained. Yet the people loved him and trusted in him; loved him perhaps especially because they so trusted in him. No face and figure were better known at one time to the population of London than those of the Duke of Wellington. Of late his form had grown stooped, and he bent over his horse as he rode in the park or down Whitehall like one who could hardly keep himself in the saddle. Yet he mounted his horse to the last, and, indeed, could keep in the saddle after he had ceased to be able to sit erect in an arm-chair. He sometimes rode in a curious little cab of his own devising; but his favorite way of going about London was on the back of his horse. He was called, *par excellence*, "the duke." The London workingman who looked up as he went to or from his work and caught a sight of the bowed figure on the horse, took off his hat and told some passer-by, "There goes the duke!" His victories belonged to the past. They were but traditions even to middle-aged men in "the duke's" later years. But he was regarded still as embodiment of the national heroism and success; a modern St. George in a tightly-buttoned frock-coat and white trousers.

Wellington belonged so much to the past at the time of his death that it seems hardly in place here to say anything about his character as a soldier. But it may be remarked that his success was due in great measure to a sort of inspired common sense which rose to something like genius. He had in the highest conceivable degree the art of winning victories. In war, as in statesmanship, he had one characteristic which is said to have been the special gift of Julius Cæsar, and for the lack of which Cæsar's greatest modern rival in the art of conquest, the first Napoleon, lost all, or nearly all, that he had won. Wellington not only understood what could be done, but also what could not be done. The wild schemes of almost universal rule which set Napoleon astray and led him to his destruction would have appeared to the strong common sense of the Duke of Wellington as impossible and absurd as they

would have looked to the lofty intelligence of Cæsar. It can hardly be questioned that in original genius Napoleon far surpassed the Duke of Wellington. But Wellington always knew exactly what he could do, and Napoleon often confounded his ambitions with his capacities. Wellington provided for everything, looked after everything; never trusted to his star or to chance or to anything but care and preparation and the proper application of means to ends. Under almost any conceivable conditions, Wellington, pitted against Napoleon, was the man to win in the end. The very genius of Napoleon would sooner or later have left him open to the unsleeping watchfulness, the almost infallible judgment of Wellington.

He was as fortunate as he was deserving. No man could have drunk more deeply of the cup of fame and fortune than Wellington; and he was never for one moment intoxicated by it. After all his long wars and his splendid victories he had some thirty-seven years of peace and glory to enjoy. He held the loftiest position in this country that any man not a sovereign could hold, and he ranked far higher in the estimation of his countrymen than most of their sovereigns have done. The rescued emperors and kings of Europe had showered their honors on him. His fame was as completely secured during his lifetime as if death, by removing him from the possibility of making a mistake, had consecrated it. No new war under altered conditions tried the flexibility and the endurance of the military genius which had defeated in turn all Napoleon's great marshals as a prelude to the defeat of Napoleon himself. If ever any mortal may be said to have had in life all he could have desired, Wellington was surely that man. He might have found a new contentment in his honors, if he really cared much about them, in the reflection that he had done nothing for himself, but all for the state. He did not love war. He had no inclination whatever for it. When Lord John Russell visited Napoleon in Elba, Napoleon asked him whether he thought the Duke of Wellington would be able to live thenceforward without the excitement of war. It was probably in Napoleon's mind that the English soldier would be constantly entangling his country in foreign complications for the sake of gratifying his love for the brave squares of war. Lord John Russell endeavored to impress upon the great

fallen emperor that the Duke of Wellington would as a matter of course lapse into the place of a simple citizen, and would look with no manner of regret to the stormy days of battle. Napoleon seems to have listened with a sort of melancholy incredulity, and only observed once or twice that "it was a splendid game, war." To Wellington it was no splendid game, or game of any sort. It was a stern duty to be done for his sovereign and his country, and to be got through as quickly as possible. The difference between the two men cannot be better illustrated. It is impossible to compare two such men. There is hardly any common basis of comparison. To say which is the greater, one must first make up his mind as to whether his standard of greatness is genius or duty. Napoleon has made a far deeper impression on history. If that be superior greatness, it would be scarcely possible for any national partiality to claim an equal place for Wellington. But Englishmen may be content with the reflection that their hero saved his country, and that Napoleon nearly ruined his. We write this without the slightest inclination to sanction what may be called the British Philistine view of the character of Napoleon. Up to a certain period of his career it seems to us deserving of almost unmingled admiration; just as his country, in her earlier disputes with the other European Powers, seems to have been almost entirely in the right. But his success and his glory were too strong for Napoleon. He fell for the very want of that simple, steadfast devotion to duty which inspired Wellington always, and which made him seem dignified and great, even in statesmanship for which he was unfitted, and even when in statesmanship he was acting in a manner that would have made another man seem ridiculous rather than respectable. Wellington more nearly resembled Washington than Napoleon. He was a much greater soldier than Washington; but he was not on the whole so great a man.

It is fairly to be said for Wellington that the proportions of his personal greatness seem to grow rather than to dwindle as he and his events are removed from us by time. The battle of Waterloo does not indeed stand, as one of its historians has described it, among the decisive battles of the world. It was fought to keep the Bonapartes off the throne of France; and in twenty-five years after

Waterloo, while the victor of Waterloo was yet living, another Bonaparte was preparing to mount that throne. It was the climax of a national policy, which, however justifiable and inevitable it may have become in the end, would hardly now be justified as to its origin by one intelligent Englishman out of twenty. The present age is not, therefore, likely to become rhapsodical over Wellington, as our forefathers might have been, merely because he defeated the French and crushed Napoleon. Yet it is impossible for the coolest mind to study the career of Wellington without feeling a constant glow of admiration for that singular course of simple antique devotion to duty. His was truly the spirit in which a great nation must desire to be served.

The nation was not ungrateful. It heaped honors on Wellington; it would have heaped more on him if it knew how. It gave him its almost unqualified admiration. On his death it tried to give him such a public funeral as hero never had. The pageant was indeed a splendid and a gorgeous exhibition. It was not perhaps very well suited to the temperament and habits of the cold and simple hero to whose honor it was got up. Nor, perhaps, are gorgeous pageants exactly the sort of performance in which as a nation England particularly excels. But in the vast, silent, respectful crowd that thronged the London streets—a crowd such as no other city in the world could show—there was better evidence than pageantry or ceremonial could supply of the esteem in which the living generation held the hero of the last. The name of Wellington had long ceased to represent any hostility of nation to nation. The crowds who filled the streets of London that day had no thought of the kind of sentiment which used to fill the breasts of their fathers when France and Napoleon were named. They honored Wellington only as one who had always served his country; as the soldier of England and not as the invader of France, or even as the conqueror of Napoleon. The homage to his memory was as pure of selfish passion as his own career.

The new parliament was called together in November. It brought into public life in England a man who afterward made some mark in our politics, and whose intellect and debating power seemed at one time to promise him a position inferior to that of hardly any one in the House of

Commons. This was Mr. Robert Lowe, who had returned from one of the Australian colonies to enter political life in his native country. Mr. Lowe was a scholar of a highly cultured order; and, despite some serious defects of delivery, he proved to be a debater of the very highest class, especially gifted with the weapons of sarcasm, scorn, and invective. He was a Liberal in the intellectual sense; he was opposed to all restraints on education and on the progress of a career; but he had a detestation for democratic doctrines which almost amounted to a mania. He despised with the whole force of a temperament very favorable to intellectual scorn alike the rural Tory and the town Radical. His opinions were generally rather negative than positive. He did not seem to have any very positive opinions of any kind where politics were concerned. He was governed by a detestation of abstractions and sentimentalities, and "views" of all sorts. An intellectual Don Juan of the political world, he believed with Molière's hero that two and two make four, and that four and four make eight, and he was impatient of any theory which would commend itself to the mind on less rigorous evidence. If contempt for the intellectual weaknesses of an opposing party or doctrine could have made a great politician, Mr. Lowe would have won that name. In politics however, criticism is not enough. One must be able to originate, to mold the will of others, to compromise, to lead while seeming to follow, often to follow while seeming to lead. Of gifts like these Mr. Lowe had no share. He never became more than a great parliamentary critic of the acrid and vitriolic style.

Almost immediately on the assembling of the new parliament, Mr. Villiers brought forward a resolution not merely pledging the House of Commons to a free trade policy, but pouring out a sort of censure on all who had hitherto failed to recognize its worth. This step was thought necessary, and was indeed made necessary by the errors of which Lord Derby had been guilty, and the preposterous vapourings of some of his less responsible followers. If the resolution had been passed, the government must have resigned. They were willing enough now to agree to any resolution declaring that free trade was the established policy of the country; but they could not accept the triumphant eulogium which the resolution proposed to offer

to the commercial policy of the years when they were the uncompromising enemies of that very policy. They could submit to the punishment imposed on them; but they did not like this public kissing of the rod and doing penance. Lord Palmerston, who even up to that time regarded his ultimate acceptance of office under Lord Derby as a not impossible event if once the Derby party could shake themselves quite free of protection, devised an amendment which afforded them the means of a more or less honorable retreat. This resolution pledged the house to the "policy of unrestricted competition firmly maintained and prudently extended;" but recorded no panegyric of the legislation of 1846, and consequent condemnation of those who opposed that legislation. The amendment was accepted by all but the small band of irreconcilable protectionists: four hundred and sixty-eight voted for it; only fifty-three against it; and the moan of Protection was made. All that long chapter of English legislation was closed. Various commercial and other "interests" did indeed afterward demur to the application of the principle of unrestricted competition to their peculiar concerns. But they did not plead for protection. They only contended that the protection they sought for was not, in fact, protection at all, but free trade under peculiar circumstances. The straightforward doctrine of protection perished of the debate of November, 1852.

Still the government only existed on sufferance. Their tenure of office was somewhat rudely compared to that of a bailiff put into possession of certain premises, who is liable to be sent away at any moment when the two parties concerned in the litigation choose to come to terms. There was a general expectation that the moment Mr. Disraeli came to set out a genuine financial scheme the fate of the government would be decided." So the event proved. Mr. Disraeli made a financial statement which showed remarkable capacity for dealing with figures. It was subjected to a far more serious test than his first budget, for that was necessarily a mere stopgap or makeshift. This was a real budget, altering and reconstructing the financial system and the taxation of the country. The skill with which the chancellor of the exchequer explained his measures and tossed his figures about convinced many even of his strongest opponents that he had the capacity to make a

good budget if he only were allowed to do so by the conditions of his party's existence. But his cabinet had come into office under special obligations to the country party and the farmers. They could not avoid making some experiment in the way of special legislation for the farmers. They had at the very least to put on an appearance of doing something for them. The chancellor of the exchequer might be supposed to be in the position of the soldier in Hogarth's "March to Finchley," between the rival claimants on his attention. He has promised and vowed to the one; but he knows that the slightest mark of civility he offers to her will be fiercely resented by the other. When Mr. Disraeli undertook to favor the country interest and the farmers, he must have known only too well that he was setting all the free traders and Peelites against him; and he knew at the same time that if he neglected the country party he was cutting the ground from beneath his feet. The principle of his budget was the reduction of the malt duties and the increase of the inhabited house duty. Some manipulations of the income tax were to be introduced, chiefly with a view to lighten the impost on farmers' profits; and there was to be a modest reduction of the tea duty. The two points that stood out clear and prominent before the House of Commons were the reduction of the malt duty and the increase of the duty on inhabited houses. The reduction of the malt tax, as Mr. Lowe said in his pungent criticism, was the keystone of the budget. That reduction created a deficit, which the inhabited house duty had to be doubled in order to supply. The scheme was a complete failure. The farmers did not care much about the concession which had been made in their favor; those who had to pay for it in doubled taxation were bitterly indignant. Mr. Disraeli had exasperated the one claimant, and not greatly pleased the other. The government soon saw how things were likely to go. The chancellor of the exchequer began to see that he only had a desperate fight to make. The Whigs, the Free-traders, the Peelites, and such independent members or unattached members as Mr. Lowe and Mr. Bernal Osborne all fell on him. It became a combat *à outrance*. It well suited Mr. Disraeli's peculiar temperament. During the whole of his parliamentary career he has never fought so well as when he has been free to indulge to the full the courage of despair.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## MR. GLADSTONE.

THE debate was one of the finest of its kind ever heard in parliament during our time. The excitement on both sides was intense. The rivalry was hot and eager. Mr. Disraeli was animated by all the power of desperation, and was evidently in a mood neither to give nor to take quarter. He assailed Sir Charles Wood, the late chancellor of the exchequer, with a vehemence and even a virulence which certainly added much to the piquancy and interest of the discussion so far as listeners were concerned, but which more than once went to the very verge of the limits of parliamentary decorum. It was in the course of this speech that Disraeli, leaning across the table and directing his words full at Sir Charles Wood, declared, "I care not to be the right honorable gentleman's critic; but if he has learned his business, he has yet to learn that petulance is not sarcasm, and that insolence is not invective." The house had not heard the concluding word of Disraeli's bitter and impassioned speech, when at two o'clock in the morning Mr. Gladstone leaped to his feet to answer him. Then began that long parliamentary duel which only knew a truce when at the close of the session of 1876 Mr. Disraeli crossed the threshold of the House of Commons for the last time, thenceforward to take his place among the peers as Lord Beaconsfield. During all the intervening four-and-twenty years these two men were rivals in power and in parliamentary debate as much as ever Pitt and Fox had been. Their opposition, like that of Pitt and Fox, was one of temperament and character as well as of genius, position and political opinion. The rivalry of this first heated and eventful night was a splendid display. Those who had thought it impossible that any impression could be made upon the house after the speech of Mr. Disraeli had to acknowledge that a yet greater impression was produced by the unprepared reply of Mr. Gladstone. The house divided about four o'clock in the morning, and the government were left in a minority of nineteen. Mr. Disraeli took the defeat with his characteristic composure. The morning was cold and wet. "It will be an unpleasant day for going to Osborne," he quietly remarked to a friend



as they went down Westminster Hall together and looked out into the dreary streets. That day, at Osborne, the resignation of the ministry was formally placed in the hands of the queen.

In a few days after, the coalition ministry was formed. Lord Aberdeen was prime minister; Lord John Russell took the foreign office; Lord Palmerston became home secretary; Mr. Gladstone was chancellor of the exchequer. The public were a good deal surprised that Lord Palmerston had taken such a place as that of home secretary. His name had been identified with the foreign policy of England, and it was not supposed that he felt the slightest interest in the ordinary business of the home department. Palmerston himself explained in a letter to his brother that the home office was his own choice. He was not anxious to join the ministry at all; and if he had to make one, he preferred that he should hold some office in which he had personally no traditions. "I had long settled in my own mind," he said, "that I would not go back to the foreign office, and that if I ever took any office it should be the home. It does not do for a man to pass his whole life in one department, and the home office deals with the concerns of the country internally and brings one in contact with one's fellow-countrymen; besides which it gives one more influence in regard to the militia and the defense of the country." Lord Palmerston in fact announces that he has undertaken the business of the home office for the same reason as that given by Fritz, in the "Grande Duchesse," for becoming a schoolmaster. "Can you teach?" asks the Grande Duchesse. "No," is the answer, "*c'est pour apprendre*;" "I go to learn." The reader may well suspect, however, that it was not only with a view of learning the business of the internal administration and becoming acquainted with his fellow-countrymen that Palmerston preferred the home office. He would not consent to be foreign secretary on any terms but his own, and these terms were then out of the question.

The principal interest felt in the new government was not, however, centered in Lord Palmerston. The new chancellor of the exchequer was the man upon whom the eyes of curiosity and interest were chiefly turned. Mr. Gladstone was still a young man in the parliamentary sense at least. He was but forty-three. His career had been in

every way remarkable. He had entered public life at a very early age. He had been, to quote the words of Macaulay, a distinguished debater in the House of Commons ever since he was one-and-twenty. Criticising his book "The State in its Relations with the Church," which was published in 1838, Macaulay speaks of Gladstone as "a young man of unblemished character and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow reluctantly and mutinously a leader whose experience is indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor." The time was not so far away when the stern and unbending Tories would regard Gladstone as the greatest hope of their most bitter enemies. Lord Macaulay goes on to overwhelm the views expressed by Mr. Gladstone as to the relations between state and church, with a weight of argument and gorgeousness of illustration that now seem to have been hardly called for. One of the doctrines of the young statesman which Macaulay confutes with especial warmth, is the principle which, as he states it, "would give the Irish a Protestant church whether they like it or not." The author of the book which contained this doctrine was the author of the disestablishment of the state church in Ireland.

Mr. Gladstone was by birth a Lancashire man. It is not unworthy of notice that Lancashire gave to the parliaments of recent times their three greatest orators: Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and the late Lord Derby. Mr. Gladstone was born in Liverpool, and was the son of Sir John Gladstone, a Scotchman, who founded a great house in the seaport of the Mersey. He entered parliament when very young as a *protégé* of the Newcastle family, and he soon faithfully attached himself to Sir Robert Peel. His knowledge of finance, his thorough appreciation of the various needs of a nation's commerce and business, his middle-class origin, all brought him into natural affinity with his great leader. He became a free trader with Peel. He was not in the House of Commons, oddly enough, during the session when the free trade battle was fought and won. It has already been explained in this history that as he had changed his opinions with his leader he felt a reluctance to ask the support of the Newcastle family for the borough which by virtue of their influence

he had previously represented. But except for that short interval his whole career may be pronounced one long parliamentary success. He was from the very first recognized as a brilliant debater, and as one who promised to be an orator; but it was not until after the death of Sir Robert Peel that he proved himself the master of parliamentary eloquence we all now know him to be. It was he who pronounced what may be called the funeral oration upon Peel in the House of Commons; but the speech, although undoubtedly inspired by the truest and the deepest feelings does not seem by any means equal to some of his more recent efforts. There is an appearance of elaboration about it which goes far to mar its effect. Perhaps the first really great speech made by Gladstone was the reply to Disraeli on the memorable December morning which we have just described. That speech put him in the very foremost rank of English orators. Then perhaps he first showed to the full the one great quality in which as a parliamentary orator he has never had a rival in our time; the readiness which seems to require no preparation, but can marshal all its arguments as if by instinct at a given moment, and the fluency which can pour out the most eloquent language as freely as though it were but the breath of the nostrils. When, shortly after the formation of the coalition ministry, Mr. Gladstone delivered his first budget, it was regarded as a positive curiosity of financial exposition. It was a performance that belonged to the department of the fine arts. The speech occupied several hours, and assuredly no listener wished it the shorter by a single sentence. Pitt, we read, had the same art of making a budget speech a fascinating discourse; but in our time no minister has had this gift except Mr. Gladstone. Each time that he essayed the same task subsequently he accomplished just the same success. Mr. Gladstone's first oratorical qualification was his exquisite voice. Such a voice would make commonplace seem interesting and lend something of fascination to dullness itself. It was singularly pure, clear, resonant, and sweet. The orator never seemed to use the slightest effort or strain in filling any hall and reaching the ear of the farthest among the audience. It was not a loud voice or of great volume; but strong, vibrating and silvery. The words were always aided by energetic action and by the deep gleaming eyes of

the orator. Somebody once said that Gladstone was the only man in the house who could talk in italics. The saying was odd, but was nevertheless appropriate and expressive. Gladstone could by the slightest modulation of his voice give all the emphasis of italics, of small print, or large print, or any other effect he might desire, to his spoken words. It is not to be denied that his wonderful gift of words sometimes led him astray. It was often such a fluency as that of a torrent on which the orator was carried away. Gladstone had to pay for his fluency by being too fluent. He could seldom resist the temptation to shower too many words on his subject and his hearers. Sometimes he involved his sentence in parenthesis within parenthesis until the ordinary listener began to think extrication an impossibility; but the orator never failed to unravel all the entanglements and to bring the passage out to a clear and legitimate conclusion. There was never any halt or incoherency, nor did the joints of the sentence fail to fit together in the right way. Harley once described a famous speech as "a circumgyration of incoherent words." This description certainly could not be applied even to Mr. Gladstone's most involved passages; but if some of those were described as a circumgyration of coherent words, the phrase might be considered germane to the matter. His style was commonly too redundant. It seemed as if it belonged to a certain school of exuberant Italian rhetoric. Yet it was hardly to be called florid. Gladstone indulged in few flowers of rhetoric, and his great gift was not imagination. His fault was simply the habitual use of too many words. This defect was indeed a characteristic of the Peelite school of eloquence. Mr. Gladstone retained some of the defects of the school in which he had been trained, even after he had come to surpass its greatest master.

Often, however, this superb, exuberant rush of words added indescribable strength to the eloquence of the speaker. In passages of indignant remonstrance or denunciation, when word followed word, and stroke came down upon stroke, with a wealth of resource that seemed inexhaustible, the very fluency and variety of the speaker overwhelmed his audience. Interruption only gave him a new stimulus, and appeared to supply him with fresh resources of argument and illustration. His retorts leaped to his lips. His eye caught sometimes even the mere gesture

that indicated dissent or question; and perhaps some unlucky opponent who was only thinking of what might be said in opposition to the great orator found himself suddenly dragged into the conflict and overwhelmed with a torrent of remonstrance, argument, and scornful words. Gladstone had not much humor of the playful kind, but he had a certain force of sarcastic and scornful rhetoric. He was always terribly in earnest. Whether the subject were great or small, he threw his whole soul into it. Once, in addressing a schoolboy gathering, he told his young listeners that if a boy ran he ought always to run as fast as he could; if he jumped, he ought always to jump as far as he could. He illustrated his maxim in his own career. He had no idea apparently of running or jumping in such measure as happened to please the fancy of the moment. He always exercised his splendid powers to the uttermost strain.

A distinguished critic once pronounced Mr. Gladstone to be the greatest parliamentary orator of our time, on the ground that he had made by far the greatest number of fine speeches, while admitting that two or three speeches had been made by other men of the day which might rank higher than any of his. This is, however, a principle of criticism which posterity never sanctions. The greatest speech, the greatest poem, give the author the highest place, though the effort were but single. Shakespeare would rank beyond Massinger just as he does now had he written only "The Tempest." We cannot say how many novels, each as good as "Gil Blas," would make Le Sage the equal of Cervantes. On this point fame is inexorable. We are not, therefore, inclined to call Mr. Gladstone the greatest English orator of our time when we remember some of the finest speeches of Mr. Bright; but did we regard parliamentary speaking as a mere instrument of parliamentary business and debate, then unquestionably Mr. Gladstone is not only the greatest, but by far the greatest English orator of our time; for he had a richer combination of gifts than any other man we can remember, and he could use them oftenest with effect. He was like a racer which cannot indeed always go faster than every rival, but can win more races in the year than any other horse. Mr. Gladstone could get up at any moment, and no matter how many times a night, in the House of Commons, and be argumentative or indignant, pour out a

stream of impassioned eloquence or a shower of figures just as the exigency of the debate and the moment required. He was not, of course, always equal; but he was always eloquent and effective. He seemed as if he could not be anything but eloquent. Perhaps, judged in this way, he never had an equal in the English parliament. Neither Pitt nor Fox ever made so many speeches combining so many great qualities. Chatham was a great actor rather than a great orator. Burke was the greatest political essayist who ever addressed the House of Commons. Canning did not often rise above the level of burnished rhetorical commonplace. Macaulay, who during his time drew the most crowded houses of any speaker, not even excepting Peel, was not an orator in the true sense. Probably no one, past or present, had in combination so many gifts of voice, manner, fluency and argument, style, reason and passion, as Mr. Gladstone.

The House of Commons was his ground. There he was himself; there he was always seen to the best advantage. As a rule, he was not so successful on the platform. His turn of mind did not fit him well for the work of addressing great public meetings. He loved to look too carefully at every side of a question, and did not always go so quickly to the heart of it as would suit great popular audiences. The principal defect of his mind was probably a lack of simplicity, a tendency to over-refining and super-subtle argument. Not perhaps unnaturally, however, when he did, during some of the later passages of his career, lay himself out for the work of addressing popular audiences, he threw away all discrimination, and gave loose to the full force with which, under the excitement of great pressure, he was wont to rush at a principle. There seemed a certain lack of balance in his mind; a want of the exact poise of all his faculties. Either he must refine too much or he did not refine at all. Thus he became accused, and with some reason, of over-refining and all but quibbling in some of his parliamentary arguments; of looking at all sides of a question so carefully that it was too long in doubt whether he was ever going to form any opinion of his own; and he was sometimes accused with equal justice of pleading one side of a political cause before great meeting of his countrymen with all the passionate blindness of a partisan. The accusations might seem self-contradict-

tory, if we did not remember that they will apply, and with great force and justice to Burke. Burke cut blocks with a razor, and went on refining to an impatient House of Commons, only eager for its dinner; and the same Burke threw himself into antagonism to the French Revolution as if he were the wildest of partisans; as if the question had but one side, and only fools or villains could possibly say it had any other.

Mr. Gladstone grew slowly into Liberal convictions. At the time when he joined the coalition ministry he was still regarded as one who had scarcely left the camp of Toryism, and who had only joined that ministry because it was a coalition. Years after he was applied to by the late Lord Derby to join a ministry formed by him; and it was not supposed that there was anything unreasonable in the proposition. The first impulse toward Liberal principles was given to his mind probably by his change with his leader from protection to free trade. When a man like Gladstone saw that his traditional principles and those of his party had broken down in any one direction, it was but natural that he should begin to question their endurance in other directions. The whole fabric of belief was built up together. Gladstone's was a mind of that order that sees a principle in everything, and must, to adopt the phrase of a great preacher, make the plowing as much a part of religious duty as the praying. The interests of religion seemed to him bound up with the creed of Conservatism; the principles of protection must probably at one time have seemed a part of the whole creed of which one article was as sacred as another. His intellect and his principles, however, found themselves compelled to follow the guidance of his leader in the matter of free trade; and when inquiry thus began it was not very likely soon to stop. He must have seen how much the working of such a principle as that of protection became a class interest in England, and how impossible it would have been for it to continue long in existence under an extended and a popular suffrage. In other countries the fallacy of protection did not show itself so glaringly in the eyes of the poorer classes, for in other countries it was not the staple food of the population that became the principle object of a protective duty. But in England the bread on which the poorest had to live was made to pay a tax for the benefit of landlords and farmers.

As long as one believed this to be a necessary condition of a great unquestionable creed, it was easy for a young statesman to reconcile himself to it. It might bear cruelly on individuals, or even multitudes; but so would the law of gravitation, as Mill has remarked, bear harshly on the best of men when it dashed him down from a height and broke his bones. It would be idle to question the existence of the law on that account; or to disbelieve the whole teaching of the physical science which explains its movements. But when Mr. Gladstone came to be convinced that there was no such law as the protection principle at all; that it was a mere sham; that to believe in it was to be guilty of an economic heresy—then it was impossible for him not to begin questioning the genuineness of the whole system of political thought of which it formed but a part. Perhaps, too, he was impelled toward Liberal principles at home by seeing what the effects of opposite doctrines had been abroad. He rendered memorable service to the Liberal cause of Europe by his eloquent protest against the brutal treatment of Baron Poerio and other Liberals of Naples who were imprisoned by the Neapolitan king—a protest which Garibaldi declared to have sounded the first trumpet-call of Italian liberty. In rendering service to Liberalism and to Europe he rendered service also to his own intelligence. He helped to set free his own spirit as well as the Neapolitan people. We find him, as his career goes on, dropping the traditions of his youth, always rising higher in Liberalism, and not going back. One of the foremost of his compeers, and his only actual rival in popular eloquence, eulogized him as always struggling toward the light. The common taunts addressed to public men who have changed their opinions were hardly ever applied to him. Even his enemies felt that the one idea always inspired him—a conscientious anxiety to do the right thing. None accused him of being one of the politicians who mistake, as Victor Hugo says, a weathercock for a flag. With many qualities which seemed hardly suited to a practical politician; with a sensitive and eager temper, like that of Canning, and a turn for theological argument that as a rule Englishmen do not love in a statesman; with an impetuosity that often carried him far astray, and a deficiency of those genial social qualities that go so far to make a public success in England, Mr. Gladstone maintained



through the whole of his career a reputation against which there was hardly a serious cavil. The worst thing that was said of him was that he was too impulsive, and that his intelligence was too restless. He was an essayist, a critic, a Homeric scholar; a *dilettante* in art, music, and old china; he was a theological controversialist; he was a political economist, a financier, a practical administrator whose gift of mastering details has hardly ever been equaled; he was a statesman and an orator. No man could attempt so many things and not occasionally make himself the subject of a sneer. The intense gravity and earnestness of Gladstone's mind always, however, saved him from the special penalty of such versatility; no satirist described him as not one, but all mankind's epitome.

As yet, however, he is only the young statesman who was the other day the hope of the more solemn and solid Conservatives, and in whom they have not even yet entirely ceased to put some faith. The coalition ministry was so formed that it was not supposed a man necessarily nailed his colors to any mast when he joined it. More than one of Gladstone's earliest friends and political associates had a part in it. The ministry might undoubtedly be called an administration of all the talents. Except the late Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, it included almost every man of real ability who belonged to either of the two great parties of the state. The Manchester school had, of course, no place there; but they were not likely just yet to be recognized as constituting one of the elements out of which even a coalition ministry might be composed.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE EASTERN QUESTION.

FOR forty years England had been at peace. There had indeed been little wars here and there with some of her Asiatic and African neighbors; and once or twice, as in the instance of the quarrel between Turkey and Egypt, she had been menaced for a moment with a dispute of a more formidable kind and nearer home. But the trouble had passed away, and from Waterloo downward England had known no real war. The new generation were grow-

ing up in a kind of happy belief that wars were things of the past for us; out of fashion; belonging to a ruder and less rational society, like the wearing of armor and the carrying of weapons in the civil streets. It is not surprising if it seemed possible to many that the England of the future might regard the instruments and the ways of war with the same curious wonder as that which Virgil assumes would one day fill the minds of the rustic laborers whose plows turned up on some field of ancient battle the rusted swords and battered helmets of forgotten warriors. During all the convulsions of the continent, England had remained undisturbed. When bloody revolutions were storming through other capitals, London was smiling over the dispersion of the Chartists by a few special constables. When the armies of Austria, of Russia, of France, of Sardinia were scattered over vast and various continental battle-grounds, our troops were passing in peaceful pageantry of review before the well-pleased eyes of their sovereign in some stately royal park. A new school as well as a new generation had sprung up. This school, full of faith but full of practical shrewd logic as well, was teaching with great eloquence and effect that the practice of settling international controversy by the sword was costly, barbarous, and blundering as well as wicked. The practice of the duel in England had utterly gone out. ~~Battle~~ Battle was forever out of fashion as a means of settling private controversy in England. Why then should it be unreasonable to believe that the like practice among nations might soon become equally obsolete?

Such certainly was the faith of a great many intelligent persons at the time when the coalition ministry was formed. The majority tacitly acquiesced in the belief without thinking much about it. They had never in their time seen England engaged in European war; and it was natural to assume that what they had never seen they were never likely to see. Any one who retraces attentively the history of English public opinion at that time will easily find evidence enough of a commonly accepted understanding that England had done with great wars. Even then perhaps a shrewd observer might have been inclined to conjecture that by the very force of reaction a change would soon set in. Man, said Lord Palmerston, is by nature a fighting and quarreling animal. This was one of those smart saucy

generalizations characteristic of its author, and which used to provoke many graver and more philosophic persons; but which nevertheless often got the heart of a question in a rough and ready sort of way. In the season of which we are now speaking, it was not, however, the common belief that man was by nature a fighting and a quarreling animal—at least in England. Bad government, the arbitrary power of an aristocracy, the necessity of finding occupation for a standing army, the ambitions of princes, the misguided lessons of romance and poetry; these and other influences had converted man into an instrument of war. Leave him to his own impulses, his own nature, his own idea of self-interest, and the better teachings of wiser guides, and he is sure to remain in the paths of peace. Such was the common belief of the year or two after the great exhibition—the belief fervently preached by a few and accepted without contradiction by the majority, as most common beliefs are—the belief floating in the air of the time, and becoming part of the atmosphere in which the generation was brought up. Suddenly all this happy quiet faith was disturbed, and the long peace, which the hero of Tennyson's "Maud" says he thought no peace, was over and done. The hero of "Maud" had, it will be observed, the advantage of explaining his convictions after the war had broken out. The name was indeed legion of those who, under the same conditions, discovered like him that they had never relished the long long peace, or believed in it much as a peace at all.

The eastern question it was that disturbed the dream of peace. The use of such phrases as "the eastern question," borrowed chiefly from the political vocabulary of France, is not in general to be commended; but we can in this instance find no more ready and convenient way of expressing clearly and precisely the meaning of the crisis which had risen in Europe. It was strictly the eastern "question"—the question of what to do with the east of Europe. It was certain that things could not remain as they then were, and nothing else was certain. The Ottoman power had been settled during many centuries in the south-east of Europe. It had come in there as a conqueror, and had remained there only as a conqueror occupies the ground his tents are covering. The Turk had many of the strong qualities and even the virtues of a great warlike conqueror;

but he had no capacity or care for the arts of peace. He never thought of assimilating himself to those whom he had conquered, or them to him. He disdained to learn anything from them; he did not care whether or no they learned anything from him. It has been well remarked, that of all the races who conquered Greeks, the Turks alone learned nothing from their gifted captives. Captive Greece conquered all the world except the Turks. They defied her. She could not teach them letters or arts, commerce or science. The Turks were not, as a rule, oppressive to the races that lived under them. They were not habitual persecutors of the faiths they deemed heretical. In this respect they often contrasted favorably with states that ought to have been able to show them a better example. In truth, the Turk for the most part was disposed to look with disdainful composure on what he considered the religious follies of the heretical races who did not believe in the prophet. They were objects of his scornful pity rather than of his anger. Every now and then, indeed, some sudden fierce outburst of fanatical cruelty toward some of the subject sects horrified Europe, and reminded her that the conqueror who had settled himself down in her south-eastern corner was still a barbarian who had no right or place in civilized life. But as a rule the Turk did not care enough about the races he ruled over to feel the impulses of the perverted fanaticism which would strive to scourge men into the faith itself believes needful to salvation.

At one time there can be little doubt that all the powers of civilized Europe would gladly have seen the Turk driven out of our continent. But the Turk was powerful for a long series of generations, and it seemed for awhile rather a question whether he would not send the Europeans out of their own grounds. He was for centuries the great terror, the nightmare of western Europe. When he began to decay, and when his aggressive strength was practically all gone, it might have been thought that the western powers would then have managed somehow to get rid of him. But in the meantime the condition of Europe had greatly changed. No one not actually subject to the Turk was afraid of him any more; and other states had arisen strong for aggression. The uncertainties of these states as to the intentions of their neighbors and each

other proved a better bulwark for the Turks than any warlike strength of their own could any longer have furnished. The growth of the great Russian empire was of itself enough to change the whole conditions of the problem.

Nothing in our times has been more remarkable than the sudden growth of Russia. The rise of the United States is not so wonderful; for the men who made the United States were civilized men; men of our own race who might be expected to make a way for themselves anywhere, and who were, moreover, put by destiny in possession of a vast and splendid continent having all variety of climate and a limitless productiveness; and where they had no neighbors or rivals to molest them. But Russia was peopled by a race who even down to our own times remain in many respects little better than semi-barbarous; and she had enemies and obstacles on all sides. A few generations ago Russia was literally an inland state. She was shut up in the heart of eastern Europe as if in a prison. The genius, the craft and the audacity of Peter the Great first broke the narrow bounds set to the Russia of his day and extended her frontier to the sea. He was followed after a reign or two by a woman of genius, daring, unscrupulousness, and profligacy equal to his own; the greatest woman probably who ever sat on a throne, Elizabeth of England not even excepted. Catherine the Second so ably followed the example of Peter the Great, that she extended the Russian frontier in directions which he had not had opportunity to stretch to. By the time her reign was done Russia was one of the great powers of Europe, entitled to enter into negotiations on a footing of equality with the proudest states of the continent. Unlike Turkey, Russia had always shown a yearning after the latest development of science and of civilization. There was something even of affectation, provoking the smiles of an older and more ingrained culture, in the efforts persistently made by Russia to put on the garments of western civilization. Catherine the Great, in especial, had set the example in this way. She invited Diderot to her court. She adorned her cabinet with a bust of Charles James Fox. While some of the personal habits of herself and of those who surrounded her at court would have seemed too rude and coarse for Esquimaux, and while she was putting down free opinion at home with a severity worthy only of some

mediaeval Asiatic potentate, she was always talking as though she were a disciple of Rousseau's ideas and a pupil of Chesterfield's manners. This may have seemed ridiculous enough sometimes; and even in our own days the contrast between the professions and the practices of Russia is a familiar subject of satire. But in nations at least the homage which imitation pays often wins for half-conscious hypocrisy as much success as earnest and sincere endeavor. A nation that tries to appear more civilized than it really is ends very often by becoming more civilized than its neighbors ever thought it likely to be.

The wars against Napoleon brought Russia into close alliance with England, Austria, Prussia, and other European states of old and advanced civilization. Russia was, during one part of that great struggle, the leading spirit of the alliance against Napoleon. Her soldiers were seen in Italy and in France, as well as in the east of Europe. The semi-savage state became in the eyes of Europe a power charged along with others with the protection of the conservative interests of the continent. She was recognized as a valuable friend and a most formidable enemy. Gradually it became evident that she could be aggressive as well as conservative. In the war between Austria and Hungary, Russia intervened and conquered Austria's rebellious Hungarians for her. Russia had already earned the hatred of European Liberals by her share in the partition of Poland and her manner of dealing with the Poles. After awhile it grew to be a fixed conviction in the minds of the Liberalism of western Europe that Russia was the greatest obstacle then existing in civilization to the spread of popular ideas. The Turk was comparatively harmless in that sense. He was well content now, so much had his ancient ambition shrunk and his ancient war spirit gone out, if his strong and restless neighbors would only let him alone. But he was brought at more than one point into especial collision with Russia. Many of the provinces he ruled over in European Turkey were of Slavonian race and of the religion of the Greek Church. They were thus affined by a double tie to the Russian people, and therefore the manner in which Turkey dealt with those provinces was a constant source of dispute between Russia and her. The Russians are a profoundly religious people. No matter what one may think of their form of faith, no matter how he

may sometimes observe that religious profession contrasts with the daily habits of life, yet he cannot but see that the Russian character is steeped in religious faith or fanaticism. To the Russian fanatic there was something intolerable in the thought of a Slave population, professing the religion of the orthodox Church, being persecuted by the Turks. No Russian ruler could hope to be popular who ventured to show a disregard for the national sentiment on this subject. The Christian populations of Turkey were to the Russian sovereigns what the Germans of Schleswig-Holstein were to the great German princes of later years, an indirect charge to which they could not, if they would, profess any indifference. A German prince, in order to be popular, had to proclaim himself enthusiastic about the cause of Schleswig-Holstein; a Russian emperor could not be loved if he did not declare his undying resolve to be the protector of the Christian populations of Turkey. Much of this was probably sincere and single-minded on the part of the Russian people and most of the Russian politicians. But the other states of Europe began to suspect that mingled up with benign ideas of protecting the Christian populations of Turkey might be a desire to extend the frontier of Russia to the southward in a new direction. Europe had seen by what craft and what audacious enterprises Russia had managed to extend her empire to the sea in other quarters; it began to be commonly believed that her next object of ambition would be the possession of Constantinople and the Bosphorus. It was reported that a will of Peter the Great had left it as an injunction to his successors to turn all the efforts of their policy toward that object. The particular document which was believed to be a will of Peter the Great enjoined on all succeeding Russian sovereigns never to relax in the extension of their territory northward on the Baltic and southward on the Black Sea shores, and to encroach as far as possible in the direction of Constantinople and the Indies. "To work out this, raise wars continually—at one time against Turkey, at another against Persia; make dockyards on the Black Sea; by degrees make yourselves masters of that sea as well as of the Baltic; hasten the decay of Persia, and penetrate to the Persian Gulf; establish, if possible, the ancient commerce of the east *via* Syria, and push on to the Indies, which are the *entrepôt* of the world. Once

there you need not fear the gold of England." We now know that the alleged will was not genuine; but there could be little doubt that the policy of Peter and of his great follower Catherine would have been in thorough harmony with such a project. It therefore seemed to be the natural business of other European powers to see that the defects of the Ottoman government, such as they were, should not be made an excuse for helping Russia to secure the objects of her special ambition. One great power, above all the rest, had an interest in watching over every movement that threatened in any way to interfere with the highway to India; still more with her peaceful and secure possession of India herself. That power, of course, was England. England, Russia, and Turkey were alike in one respect; they were all Asiatic as well as European powers. But Turkey could never come into any manner of collision with the interests of England in the east. The days of Turkey's interfering with any great state were long over. Neither Russia nor England nor any other power in Europe or Asia feared her any more. On the contrary, there seemed something like a natural antagonism between England and Russia in the East. The Russians were extending their frontier toward that of our Indian empire. They were showing in that quarter the same mixture of craft and audacity which had stood them in good stead in various parts of Europe. Our officers and diplomatic emissaries reported that they were continually confronted by the evidences of Russian intrigue in Central Asia. We have already seen how much influence the real or supposed intrigues of Russia had in directing our policy in Afghanistan. Doubtless there was some exaggeration and some panic in all the tales that were told of Russian intrigue. Sometimes the alarm spread by these tales conjured up a kind of Russian hobgoblin, bewildering the minds of public servants and making even statesmen occasionally seem like affrighted children. The question that at present concerns us is not whether all the apprehensions of danger from Russia were just and reasonable, but whether as a matter of fact they did exist. They certainly counted for a great deal in determining the attitude of the English people toward both Turkey and Russia. It was in great measure out of these alarms that there grew up among certain statesmen and classes in this country the convic-



tion that the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish empire was part of the national duty of England.

It is not too much, therefore, to say that the states of Europe generally desired the maintenance of the Ottoman empire simply because it was believed that while Turkey held her place she was a barrier against vague dangers which it was not worth while encountering as long as they could possibly be averted. Sharply defined, the condition of things was this; Russia, by reason of her sympathy of religion or race with Turkey's Christian populations, was brought into chronic antagonism with Turkey; England, by reason of her Asiatic possessions, was kept in just the same state of antagonism to Russia. The position of England was trying and difficult. She felt herself compelled by the seeming necessity of her national interests to maintain the existence of a power which on its own merits stood condemned, and for which, as a power, no English statesman ever cared to say a word. The position of Russia had more plausibility about it. It sounded better when described in an official document or a popular appeal. Russia was the religious state which had made it her mission and her duty to protect the suffering Christians of Turkey. England, let her state her case no matter how carefully or frankly, could only affirm that her motive in opposing Russia was the protection of her own interests. One inconvenient result of this condition of things was that, here among English people, there was always a wide difference of opinion as to the national policy with regard to Russia and Turkey. Many public men of great ability and influence were of opinion that England had no right to uphold the Ottoman power because of any fancied danger that might come to us from its fall. It was the simple duty of England, they insisted, to be just and fear not. In private life, they contended, we should all abhor a man who assisted a ruffian to live in a house which he had only got into as a burglar, merely because there was a chance that the dispossession of the ruffian might enable his patron's rival in business to become the owner of the premises. The duty, they insisted, of a conscientious man is clear. He must not patronize a ruffian, whatever comes. Let what will happen, that he must not do. So it was, according to their argument, with national policy. We are not concerned in discussing this question just now; we

are merely acknowledging a fact which came to be of material consequence when the crisis arose that threw England into sudden antagonism with Russia.

That crisis came about during the later years of the reign of the Emperor Nicholas. He saw its opening, but not the close of even its first volume. Nicholas was a man of remarkable character. He had many of the ways of an Asiatic despot. He had a strong ambition, a fierce and fitful temper, a daring but sometimes, too, a vacillating will. He had many magnanimous and noble qualities, and moods of sweetness and gentleness. He reminded people sometimes of an Alexander the Great; sometimes of the "Arabian Nights" version of Haroun-al-Raschid. A certain excitability ran through the temperament of all his house, which, in some of its members, broke into actual madness and in others prevailed no farther than to lead to wild outbreaks of temper such as those that often convulsed the frame and distorted the character of a Charles the Bold or a Cœur de Lion. We cannot date the ways and characters of Nicholas' family from the years of Peter the Great. We must, for tolerably obvious reasons, be content to deduce their origin from the reign of Catherine II. The extraordinary and almost unparalleled conditions of the early married life of that much-injured, much-injuring woman, would easily account for any aberrations of intellect and will among her immediate descendants. Her son was a madman; there was madness or something very like it among the brothers of the Emperor Nicholas. The emperor at one time was very popular in England. He had visited the queen, and he had impressed every one by his noble presence, his lofty stature, his singular personal beauty, his blended dignity and familiarity of manner. He talked as if he had no higher ambition than to be in friendly alliance with England. When he wished to convey his impression of the highest degree of personal loyalty and honor, he always spoke of the word of an English gentleman. There can, indeed, be little doubt that the emperor was sincerely anxious to keep on terms of cordial friendship with England; and, what is more, had no idea until the very last that the way he was walking was one which England could not consent to tread. His brother and predecessor had been in close alliance with England; his own ideal hero was the Duke of Wellington; he had

made up his mind that when the division of the spoils of Turkey came about, England and he could best consult for their own interests and the peace of the world by making the appropriation a matter of joint arrangement.

We do not often in history find a great despot explaining in advance and in frank words a general policy like that which the Emperor Nicholas cherished with regard to Turkey. We are usually left to infer his schemes from his acts. Not uncommonly we have to set his acts and the fair inferences from them against his own positive and repeated assurances. But in the case of the Emperor Nicholas we are left in no such doubt. He told England exactly what he proposed to do. He told the story twice over; more than that, he consigned it to writing for our clearer understanding. When he visited England in 1844, for the second time, Nicholas had several conversations with the Duke of Wellington and with Lord Aberdeen, then foreign secretary, about Turkey and her prospects, and what would be likely to happen in the event of her dissolution, which he believed to be imminent. When he returned to Russia he had a memorandum drawn up by Count Nesselrode, his chancellor, embodying the views which, according to Nicholas' impressions, were entertained alike by him and by the British statesmen with whom he had been conversing. Mr. Kinglake says that he sent this document to England with the view of covering his retreat, having met with no encouragement from the English statesmen. Our idea of the matter is different. It may be taken for granted that the English statesmen did not give Nicholas any encouragement or at least that they did not intend to do so; but it seems clear to us that he believed they had done so. The memorandum drawn up by Count Nesselrode is much more like a formal reminder or record of a general and oral engagement than a withdrawal from a proposal which was evidently not likely to be accepted. The memorandum set forth that Russia and England were alike penetrated by the conviction that it was for their common interest that the Ottoman empire should maintain itself in its existing independence and extent of territory, and that they had an equal interest in averting all the dangers that might place its safety in jeopardy. With this object, the memorandum declared, the essential point was to suffer the Porte to live in repose without needlessly dis-

turbing it by diplomatic bickering. Turkey, however, had a habit of constantly breaking her engagements; and the memorandum insisted strongly that while she kept up this practice it was impossible for her integrity to be secure; and this practice of hers was indulged in because she believed she might do so with impunity, reckoning on the mutual jealousies of the cabinets, and thinking that if she failed in her engagements toward one of them, the rest would espouse her cause. "As soon as the Porte shall perceive that it is not supported by the other cabinets, it will give way, and the differences which have arisen will be arranged in a conciliatory manner, without any conflict resulting from them." The memorandum spoke of the imperative necessity of Turkey being led to treat her Christian subjects with toleration and mildness. On such conditions it was laid down that England and Russia must alike desire her preservation; but the document proceeded to say that, nevertheless, these states could not conceal from themselves the fact that the Ottoman empire contained within itself many elements of dissolution, and that unforeseen events might at any time hasten its fall. "In the uncertainty which hovers over the future a single fundamental idea seems to admit of a really practical application; that is, that the danger which may result from a catastrophe in Turkey will be much diminished if in the event of its occurring Russia and England have come to an understanding as to the course to be taken by them in common. That understanding will be the more beneficial inasmuch as it will have the full assent of Austria, between whom and Russia there already exists an entire accord." This document was sent to London and kept in the archives of the foreign office. It was only produced and made public when, at a much later day, the Russian press began to insist that the English government had always been in possession of the views of Russia in regard to Turkey. It seems to us evident that the emperor of Russia really believed that his views were shared by English statesmen. The mere fact that his memorandum was received and retained in the English foreign office might well of itself tend to make Nicholas assume that its principles were recognized by the English government as the basis of a common action, or at least a common understanding, between England and Russia. Nothing is more easy

than to allow a fanatic or a man of one idea to suppose that those to whom he explains his views are convinced by him and in agreement with him. It is only necessary to listen and say nothing. Therefore, it is to be regretted that the English statesmen should have listened to Nicholas without saying something very distinct to show that they were not admitting or accepting any combination of purpose; or that they should have received his memorandum without some distinct disclaimer of their being in any way bound by its terms. Some of the statements in the memorandum were at the least sufficiently remarkable to have called for comment of some kind from the English statesmen who received it. For example, the emperor of Russia professed to have in his hands not alone the policy of Russia, but that of Austria as well. He spoke for Austria, and he stated that he understood himself to be speaking for England too. Accordingly, England, Austria, and Russia were, in his understanding, entering into a secret conspiracy among themselves for the disposal of the territory of a friendly power in the event of that power getting into difficulties. This might surely be thought by the English statesmen to bear an ominous and painful resemblance to the kind of *pourparlers* that were going on between Russia, Prussia, and Austria before the partition of Poland, and might well have seemed to call for a strong and unmistakable repudiation on the part of England. We could scarcely have been too emphatic or too precise in conveying to the emperor of Russia our determination to have nothing to do with any such conspiracy.

Time went on, and the emperor thought he saw an occasion for still more clearly explaining his plans and for reviving the supposed understanding with England. Lord Aberdeen came into office as prime minister of this country; Lord Aberdeen who was foreign secretary when Nicholas was in England in 1844. On January 9, 1853, before the re-elections which were consequent upon the new ministerial appointments had yet taken place, the emperor met our minister, Sir G. Hamilton Seymour, at a party given by the Archduchess Helen, at her palace in St. Petersburg, and he drew him aside and began to talk with him in the most outspoken manner about the future of Turkey and the arrangements it might be necessary for England and Russia to make regarding it. The conversa-

tion was renewed again and again afterward. Few conversations have had greater fame than these. One phrase which the emperor employed has passed into the familiar political language of the world. As long as there is memory of an Ottoman empire in Europe, so long the Turkey of the days before the Crimean War will be called "the sick man." "We have on our hands," said the emperor, "a sick man—a very sick man; it will be a great misfortune if one of these days he should slip away from us before the necessary arrangements have been made." The conversations all tended toward the one purpose. The emperor urged that England and Russia ought to make arrangements beforehand as to the inheritance of the Ottoman in Europe—before what he regarded as the approaching and inevitable day when the sick man must come to die. The emperor explained that he did not contemplate nor would he allow a permanent occupation of Constantinople by Russia; or, on the other hand, would he consent to see that city held by England or France or any other great power. He would not listen to any plans for the reconstruction of Greece in the form of a Byzantine empire, nor would he allow Turkey to be split up into little republics—*aslyums*, as he said, for the Kossuths and Mazzinis of Europe. It was not made very clear what the emperor wished to have done with Constantinople, if it was not to be Russian, nor Turkish, nor English, nor French, nor Greek, nor yet a little republic; but it was evident, at all events, that Nicholas had made up his mind as to what it was not to be. He thought that Servia and Bulgaria might become independent states; that is to say, independent states, such as he considered the Danubian principalities then to be, "under my protection." If the reorganization of south-eastern Europe made it seem necessary to England that she should take possession of Egypt, the emperor said he should offer no objection. He said the same thing of Candia; if England desired to have that island, he saw no objection. He did not ask for any formal treaty, he said; indeed, such arrangements as that are not generally consigned to formal treaties; he only wished for such an understanding as might be come to among gentlemen, and he was satisfied that if he had ten minutes' conversation with Lord Aberdeen the thing could be easily settled. If only England and Russia could

arrive at an understanding on the subject, he declared that it was a matter of indifference to him what other powers might think or say. He spoke of the several millions of Christians in Turkey whose right she was called upon to watch over, and he remarked—the remark is of significance—that the right of watching over them was secured to him by treaty.

The emperor was evidently under the impression that the interests of England and of Russia were united in this proposed transaction. He had no idea of anything but the most perfect frankness so far as we were concerned. It clearly had not occurred to him to suspect that there could be anything dishonorable, anything England might recoil from, in the suggestion that the two powers ought to enter into a plot to divide the sick man's goods between them while the breath was yet in the sick man's body. It did not even occur to him that there could be anything dishonorable in entering into such a compact without the knowledge of any other of the great European powers. The emperor desired to act like a man of honor; but the idea of western honor was as yet new to Russia, and it had not quite got possession of the mind of Nicholas. He was like the savage who is ambitious of learning the ways of civilization, and who may be counted on to do whatever he knows to be in accordance with these ways, but who is constantly liable to make a mistake simply from not knowing how to apply them in each new emergency. The very consequences which came from Nicholas' confidential communications with our minister would of themselves testify to his sincerity, and in a certain sense to his simplicity. But the English government never after the disclosures of Sir Hamilton Seymour put any faith in Nicholas. They regarded him as nothing better than a plotter. They did not probably even make allowance enough for the degree of religious or superstitious fervor which accompanied and qualified all his ambition and his craft. Human nature is so oddly blent that we ought not to be surprised if we find a very high degree of fanatical and sincere fervor in company with a crafty selfishness. The English government and most of the English people ever after looked on Nicholas as a determined plotter and plunderer who was not to be made an associate in any engagement. On the other hand, Nicholas was as much disappointed as an honest

highwayman of the days of Captain Macheath might have been who, on making a handsome offer of a share in a new enterprise to a trusted and familiar "pal," finds that the latter is taken with a fit of virtuous indignation and is hurrying off to Bow street to tell the whole story.

The English minister and the English government could only answer the emperor's overtures by saying that they did not think it quite usual to enter into arrangements for the spoliation of a friendly power, and that England had no desire to succeed to any of the possessions of Turkey. The emperor doubtless did not believe these assurances. He probably felt convinced that England had some game of her own in hand into which she did not find it convenient to admit him on terms of partnership. He must have felt bitterly annoyed at the thought that he had committed himself so far for nothing. The communications were of course understood to be strictly confidential; and Nicholas had no fear that they would be given to the public at that time. They were in fact not made publicly known for more than a year after. But Nicholas had the dissatisfaction of knowing that her majesty's ministers were now in possession of his designs. He had the additional discomfort of believing that while he had shown his hand to them, they had contrived to keep whatever designs of their own they were preparing a complete secret from him. One unfortunate admission, the significance of which will be seen hereafter, was made on the part of the English government during the correspondence caused by the conversation between the emperor and Sir Hamilton Seymour. It was Lord John Russell who, inadvertently, no doubt, made this admission. In his letter to Sir Hamilton Seymour on February 9, 1853, he wound up with the words, "The more the Turkish government adopts the rules of impartial law and equal administration, the less will the emperor of Russia find it necessary to apply that exceptional protection which his imperial majesty has found so burdensome and inconvenient, though no doubt prescribed by duty and sanctioned by treaty."

These conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour formed but an episode in the history of the events that were then going on. It was an episode of great importance, even to the immediate progress of the events, and it had much to do with the turn they took toward war; but there were



great forces moving toward antagonism in the south-east of Europe that must in any case have come into collision. Russia, with her ambitions, her tendency to enlarge her frontier on all sides, and her natural sympathies of race and religion with the Christian and Selave populations under Turkish rule, must before long have come into active hostility with the Porte. Even at the present somewhat critical time we are not under any necessity to persuade ourselves that Russia was actuated in the movements she made by merely selfish ambition, and nothing else; that all the wrong was on her side of the quarrel, and all the right upon ours. It may be conceded without any abrogation of patriotic English sentiment, that, in standing up for the populations so closely affined to her in race and religion, Russia was acting very much as England would have acted under similar circumstances. If we can imagine a number of English and Christian populations under the sway of some Asiatic despot on the frontiers of our Indian empire, we shall admit that it is likely the sentiments of all Englishmen in India would be extremely sensitive on their behalf, and that it would not be difficult to get us to believe that we were called upon to interfere for their protection. Certainly, anyone who should try to persuade us that, after all, these Englishmen were nearly as well off under the Asiatic and despotic rule as many other people, or as they deserved to be, would not have much chance of a patient hearing from us.

The Russian emperor fell back a little after the failure of his efforts with Sir Hamilton Seymour, and for awhile seemed to agree with the English government as to the necessity of not embarrassing Turkey by pressing too severely upon her. He was no doubt seriously disappointed when he found that England would not go with him; and his calculations were put out by the discovery. He therefore saw himself compelled to act with a certain moderation while feeling his way to some other mode of attack. But the natural forces which were in operation did not depend on the will of any empire or government for their tendency. Nicholas would have had to move in any case. There is really no such thing in modern politics as a genuine autocrat. Nicholas of Russia could no more afford to overlook the evidences of popular and national feeling among his people than an English sovereign could. He

was a despot by virtue of the national will which he embodied. The national will was in decided antagonism to the tendencies of the Ottoman power in Europe; and afterward to the policy which the English government felt themselves compelled to adopt for the support of that power against the schemes of the emperor of Russia.

There had long been going on a dispute about the holy places in Palestine. The claims of the Greek Church and those of the Latin Church were in antagonism there. The emperor of Russia was the protector of the Greek Church; the kings of France had long had the Latin Church under their protection. France had never taken our views as to the necessity of maintaining the Ottoman power in Europe. On the contrary, as we have seen, the policy of England and that of France were so decidedly opposed at the time when France favored the independence of Egypt, and England would not hear of it, that the two countries very nearly came to war. Nor did France really feel any very profound sympathy with the pretensions which the Latin monks were constantly making in regard to the holy places. There was unquestionably downright religious fanaticism on the part of Russia to back up the demands of the Greek Church; but we can hardly believe that opinion in France or in the cabinets of French ministers really concerned itself much about the Latin monks except in so far as political purposes might be subserved by paying some attention to them. But it happened somewhat unfortunately that the French government began to be unusually active in pushing the Latin claims just then. The whole dispute on which the fortunes of Europe seemed for awhile to depend was of a strangely mediæval character. The holy places to which the Latins raised a claim were the great church in Bethlehem; the sanctuary of the nativity, with the right to place a new star there (that which formerly ornamented it having been lost); the tomb of the Virgin; the stone of anointing; the seven arches of the Virgin in the church of the holy sepulchre. In the reign of that remarkably pious, truthful, and virtuous monarch, Francis the First of France, a treaty was made with the sultan by which France was acknowledged the protector of the holy places in Palestine, and of the monks of the Latin Church who took on themselves the care of the sacred monuments and memorials. But the Greek Church after-

ward obtained firmans from the sultan; each sultan gave away privileges very much as it pleased him, and without taking much thought of the manner in which his firman might affect the treaties of his predecessors; and the Greeks claimed on the strength of these concessions that they had as good a right as the Latins to take care of the holy places. Disputes were always arising, and of course these were aggravated by the fact that France was supposed to be concerned in the protection of one set of disputants and Russia in that of another. The French and the Russian governments did, in point of fact, interfere from time to time for the purpose of making good their claims. The claims at length came to be identified with the states which respectively protected them. An advantage of the smallest kind gained by the Latins was viewed as an insult to Russia; a concession to the Greeks was a snub to France. The subject of controversy seemed trivial and odd in itself. But it had even in itself a profounder significance than many a question of diplomatic etiquette which has led great states to the verge of war, or into war itself. Mr. Kinglake, whose brilliant history of the invasion of the Crimea is too often disfigured by passages of solemn and pompous monotony, has superfluously devoted several eloquent pages to prove that the sacredness of association attaching to some particular spot has its roots in the very soil of human nature. The custody of the holy places was in this instance a symbol of a religious inheritance to the monastic disputants, and of political power to the diplomatists.

It was France which first stirred the controversy in the time just before the Crimean War. The fact is beyond dispute. Lord John Russell had hardly come into office when he had to observe in writing to Lord Cowley, our ambassador in Paris, that "her majesty's government cannot avoid perceiving that the ambassador of France at Constantinople was the first to disturb the *status quo* in which the matter rested." "Not," Lord John Russell went on to say, "that the disputes of the Latin and Greek Churches were not very active, but without some political action on the part of France those quarrels would never have troubled the relations of friendly powers." Lord John Russell also complained that the French ambassador was the first to speak of having recourse to force and to

threaten the intervention of a French fleet. "I regret to say," the despatch continued, "that this evil example has been partly followed by Russia." The French government were indeed unusually active at that time. The French ambassador, M. de Lavalette, is said to have threatened that a French fleet should appear off Jaffa, and even hinted at a French occupation of Jerusalem, "when," as he significantly put it, "we should have all the sanctuaries." One French army occupying Rome and another occupying Jerusalem would have left the world in no doubt as to the supremacy of France. The cause of all this energy is not far to seek. The prince president had only just succeeded in procuring himself to be installed as emperor; and he was very anxious to distract the attention of Frenchmen from domestic politics to some showy and startling policy abroad. He was in quest of a policy of adventure. This controversy between the church of the east and the church of the west tempted him into activity, as one that seemed likely enough to give him an opportunity of displaying the power of France and of the new system without any very great danger or responsibility. Technically, therefore, we are entitled to lay the blame of disturbing the peace of Europe in the first instance on the emperor of the French. But while we must condemn the restless and self-interested spirit which thus set itself to stir up disturbance, we cannot help seeing that the quarrel must have come at some time, even if the *plébiscite* had never been invited and a new emperor had never been placed upon the throne of France. The emperor of Russia had made up his mind that the time had come to divide the property of the sick man, and he was not likely to remain long without an opportunity of quarreling with any one who stood at the side of the sick man's bed, and seemed to constitute himself a protector of the sick man's interests.

The key of the whole controversy out of which the eastern war arose, and out of which indeed all subsequent complications in the east came as well, was said to be found in a clause of the treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji. During the negotiations for peace that took place in Vienna while the Crimean War was yet going on, the assembled plenipotentiaries declared that the whole dispute was owing to a misinterpretation of a clause in this unfortunate treaty. In a time much nearer to our own, the discussion on the

same clause in the same treaty was renewed with all the old earnestness; and with the same difference of interpretation. It may not perhaps give an initiated reader any very exalted opinion of the utility and beauty of diplomatic arrangements to hear that disputes covering more than a century of time, and causing at least two great wars, arose out of the impossibility of reconciling two different interpretations of the meaning of two or three lines of a treaty. The American civil war was said with much justice to have been fought to obtain a definition of the limits of the rights of the separate states as laid down in the constitution; the Crimean War was apparently fought to obtain a satisfactory and final definition of the seventh clause of the Treaty of Kainardji; and it did not fulfill its purpose. The historic value therefore of this seventh clause may in one sense be considered greater than that of the famous disputed words which provoked the censure of the Jansenists and the immortal letters of Pascal.

The treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji was made in 1774, between the Ottoman porte and Catherine II. of Russia. On sea and land the arms of the great empress had been victorious. Turkey was beaten to her knees. She had to give up Azof and Taganrog to Russia, and to declare the Crimea independent of the Ottoman empire; an event which it is almost needless to say was followed not many years after by the Russians taking the Crimea for themselves and making it a province of Catherine's empire. The Treaty of Kainardji, as it is usually called, was that which made the arrangements for peace. When it exacted from Turkey such heavy penalties in the shape of cession of territory, it was hardly supposed that one seemingly insignificant clause was destined to threaten the very existence of the Turkish empire. The treaty bore date July 10, 1774; and it was made, so to speak, in the tent of the victor. The seventh clause declared that the sublime porte promised "to protect constantly the Christian religion and its churches; and also to allow the minister of the imperial court of Russia to make on all occasions representations as well in favor of the new church in Constantinople, of which mention will be made in the fourteenth article, as in favor of those who officiate therein, promising to take such representations into due consideration as being made by a confidential functionary of a neighboring and sincerely

friendly power." Not much possibility of misunderstanding about these words, one might feel inclined to say. We turn then to the fourteenth article alluded to, in order to discover if in its wording lies the perplexity of meaning which led to such momentous and calamitous results. We find that by this article it is simply permitted to the court of Russia to build a public church of the Greek rite in the Galata quarter of Constantinople, in addition to the chapel built in the house of the minister; and it is declared that the new church "shall be always under the protection of the ministers of the (Russian) empire, and shield from all obstruction and all damage." Here, then, we seem to have two clauses of the simplest meaning and by no means of first-class importance. The latter clause allows Russia to build a new church in Constantinople; the former allows the Russian minister to make representations to the porte on behalf of the church and of those who officiate in it. What difference of opinion, it may be asked, could possibly arise? The difference was this; Russia claimed a right of protectorate over all the Christians of the Greek Church in Turkey as the consequence of the seventh clause of the treaty. She insisted that when Turkey gave her a right to interfere on behalf of the worshipers in one particular church, the same right extended so far as to cover all the worshipers of the same denomination in every part of the Ottoman dominions. The great object of Russia throughout all the negotiations that preceded the Crimean War was to obtain from the porte an admission of the existence of such a protectorate. Such an acknowledgment would, in fact, have made the emperor of Russia the patron and all but the ruler of by far the larger proportion of the populations of European Turkey. The sultan would no longer have been master in his own dominions. The Greek Christians would naturally have regarded the Russian emperor's right of intervention on their behalf as constituting a protectorate far more powerful than the nominal rule of the sultan. They would have known that the ultimate decision of any dispute in which they were concerned rested with the emperor, and not with the sultan; and they would soon have come to look upon the emperor, and not the sultan, as their actual sovereign.

Now it does not seem likely on the face of things that any ruler of a state would have consented to hand over to a

more powerful foreign monarch such a right over the great majority of his subjects. Still, if Turkey, driven to her last defenses, had no alternative but to make such a concession, the emperor of Russia could not be blamed for insisting that it should be carried out. The terms of the article in the treaty itself certainly do not seem to admit of such a construction. But for the views always advocated by Mr. Gladstone, we should say it was self-evident that the article never had any such meaning. We cannot, however, dismiss the argument of such a man as Mr. Gladstone as if it were unworthy of consideration, or say that an interpretation is obviously erroneous which he has deliberately and often declared to be accurate. We may as well mention here at once that Mr. Gladstone rests his argument on the first line of the famous article. The promise of the sultan, he contends, to protect constantly the Christian religion and its churches is an engagement distinct in itself, and disconnected from the engagement that follows in the same clause, and which refers to the new building and its ministrants. The sultan engages to protect the Christian churches; and with whom does he enter into this engagement? With the sovereign of Russia. Why does he make this engagement? Because he has been defeated by Russia and compelled to accept terms of peace; and one of the conditions on which he is admitted to peace is his making this engagement. How does he make the engagement? By an article in a treaty agreed to between him and the sovereign of Russia. But if a state enters into treaty engagement with another that it will do a certain thing, it is clear that the other state must have a special right of remonstrance and of representation if the thing be not done. Therefore Mr. Gladstone argues that as the sultan made a special treaty with Russia to protect the Christians, he gave in the very nature of things a special right to Russia to complain if the protection was not given. We are far from denying that there is force in the argument; and it is at all events worthy of being recorded for its mere historical importance. But Mr. Gladstone's was certainly not the European interpretation of the clause; nor does it seem to us the interpretation that history will accept. Lord John Russell, as we have seen, made a somewhat unlucky admission that the claims of Russia to a protectorate were "prescribed by duty and

sanctioned by treaty." But this admission seems rather to have been the result of inadvertence or heedlessness than of any deliberate intention to recognize the particular claim involved. The admission was afterward made the occasion of many a severe attack upon Lord John Russell by Mr. Disraeli and other leading members of the opposition. Assuredly Lord John Russell's admission, if it is really to be regarded as such, was not endorsed by the English government. Whenever we find Russia putting the claim into plain words, we find England, through her ministers, refusing to give it their acknowledgment. During the discussions before the Crimean War, Lord Clarendon, our foreign secretary, wrote to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe a letter embodying the views of the English government on the claim. No sovereign, Lord Clarendon says, having a due regard for his own dignity and independence, could admit proposals which conferred upon a foreign and more powerful sovereign a right of protection over his own subjects. "If such a concession were made, the result," as Lord Clarendon pointed out, "would be that fourteen millions of Greeks would henceforward regard the emperor as their supreme protector, and their allegiance to the sultan would be little more than nominal, while his own independence would dwindle into vassalage." Diplomacy, therefore, was powerless to do good during all the protracted negotiations that set in, for the plain reason that the only object of the emperor of Russia in entering upon negotiation at all was one which the other European powers regarded as absolutely inadmissible.

The dispute about the holy places was easily settled. The porte cared very little about the matter, and was willing enough to come to any fair terms by which the whole controversy could be got rid of. But the demands of Russia went on just as before. Prince Mentschikoff, a man of the Potemkin school, fierce, rough, and unable or unwilling to control his temper, was sent with demands to Constantinople; and his very manner of making the demands seemed as if it were taken up for the purpose of ensuring their rejection. If the envoy fairly represented the sovereign, the demands must have been so conveyed with the deliberate intention of immediately and irresistibly driving the Turks to reject every proposition coming from such a negotiator. Mentschikoff brought his pro-



posals with him cut and dry in the form of a convention which he called upon Turkey to accept without more ado. In other words, he put a pistol at Turkey's head and told her to sign at once or else he would pull the trigger. Turkey refused, and Prince Mentschikoff withdrew in real or affected rage, and presently the Emperor Nicholas sent two divisions of his army across the Pruth to take possession of the Danubian principalities.

Diplomacy, however, did not give in even then. The emperor announced that he had occupied the principalities not as an act of war, but with the view of obtaining material guarantees for the concession of the demands which Turkey had already declared that she would not concede. The English government advised the porte not to treat the occupation as an act of war, although fully admitting that it was strictly a *casus belli*, and that Turkey would have been amply justified in meeting it by an armed resistance if it were prudent for her to do so. It would of course have been treated as war by any strong power. We might well have retorted upon Russia the harsh but not wholly unjustifiable language she had employed toward us when we seized possession of material guarantees from the Greek government in the harbor of Piræus. In our act, however, there was less of that which constitutes war than in the arbitrary conduct of Russia. Greece did not declare that our demands were such as she could not admit in principle. She did admit most of them in principle but was only, as it seemed to our government, or at least to Lord Palmerston, trying to evade an actual settlement. There was nothing to go to war about; and our seizure of the ships, objectionable as it was, might be described as only a way of getting hold of a material guarantee for the discharge of a debt which was not in principle disputed. But in the dispute between Russia and Turkey the claim was rejected altogether; it was declared intolerable; its principle was absolutely repudiated, and any overt act on the part of Russia must therefore have had for its object to compel Turkey to submit to a demand which she would yield to force alone. This is of course in the very spirit of war; and if Turkey had been a stronger power, she would never have dreamed of meeting it in any other way than by an armed resistance. She was, however, strongly advised by England and other powers to adopt a

moderate course; and, in fact, throughout the whole of the negotiations she showed a remarkable self-control and a dignified courtesy which must sometimes have been very vexing to her opponent. Diplomacy went to work again, and a Vienna note was concocted which Russia at once offered to accept. The four great powers who were carrying on the business of mediation were at first quite charmed with the note, with the readiness of Russia to accept it, and with themselves; and but for the interposition of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe it seems highly probable that it would have been agreed to by all the parties concerned. Lord Stratford, however, saw plainly that the note was a virtual concession to Russia of all that she specially desired to have, and all that Europe was unwilling to concede to her. The great object of Russia was to obtain an acknowledgment, however vague or covert, of her protectorate over the Christians of the Greek Church in the sultan's dominions; and the Vienna note was so constructed as to affirm much rather than to deny the claim which Russia had so long been setting up. Assuredly such a note could at some future time have been brought out in triumph by Russia as an overwhelming evidence of the European recognition of such a protectorate.

Let us make this a little more plain. Suppose the question at issue were as to the payment of a tribute claimed by one prince from another. The one had been always insisting that the other was his vassal, bound to pay him tribute; the other always repudiated the claim in principle. This was the subject of dispute. After awhile the question is left to arbitration, and the arbitrators, without actually declaring in so many words that the claim to the tribute is established, yet go so far as to direct the payment of a certain sum of money, and do not introduce a single word to show that in their opinion the original claim was unjust in principle. Would not the claimant of the tribute be fully entitled in after years, if any new doubt of his claim were raised, to appeal to this arbitration as confirming it? Would he not be entitled to say, "The dispute was about my right to tribute. Here is a document awarding to me the payment of a certain sum, and not containing a word to show that the arbitrators disputed the principle of my claim. Is it possible to construe that otherwise than as a recognition of my claim?" We certainly

cannot think it would have been otherwise regarded by any impartial mind. The very readiness with which Russia consented to accept the Vienna note ought to have taught its framers that Russia found all her account in its vague and ambiguous language. The prince consort said it was a trap laid by Russia through Austria; and it seems hardly possible to regard it now in any other light.

The Turkish government, therefore, acting under the advice of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador to Constantinople, who had returned to his post after a long absence, declined to accept the Vienna note unless with considerable modifications. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe showed great acuteness and force of character throughout all these negotiations. A reader of Mr. Kinglake's history is sometimes apt to become nauseated by the absurd pomposness with which the historian overlays his descriptions of "the great Eltchi," as he is pleased to call him, and is inclined to wish that the great Eltchi could have imparted some of his own sober gravity and severe simplicity of style to his adulator. Mr. Kinglake writes of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe as if he were describing the all-compelling movements of some divinity or providence. A devoted imperial historian would have made himself ridiculous by writing of the great Napoleon at the height of his power in language of such inflated mysticism as this educated Englishman has allowed himself to employ when describing the manner in which our ambassador to Constantinople did his duty during the days before the Crimean War. But the extraordinary errors of taste and good sense into which Mr. Kinglake occasionally descends cannot prevent us from doing justice to the keen judgment and the inflexible will which Lord Stratford displayed during this critical time. He saw the fatal defect of the note, which, prepared in Paris, had been brought to its supposed perfection at Vienna, and had there received the adhesion of the English government along with that of the governments of the other great powers engaged in the conference. A hint from Lord Stratford made the ministers of the porte consider it was suspicious scrutiny, and they too saw its weakness and its conscious or unconscious treachery. They declared that unless certain modifications were introduced they would not accept the note. The reader will at first think perhaps that some of these modi-

fications were mere splittings of hairs and diplomatic, worse even than lawyer-like quibbles. But in truth the alterations demanded were of the greatest importance for Turkey. The porte had to think not for the immediate purpose of the note, but of the objects it might be made to serve afterward. It contained, for instance, words which declared that the government of his majesty the sultan would remain "faithful to the letter and the spirit of the stipulations of the treaties of Kainardji and of Adrianople, relative to the protection of the Christian religion." These words, in a note drawn up for the purpose of satisfying the emperor of Russia, could not but be understood as recognizing the interpretation of the treaty of Kainardji on which Russia has always insisted. The porte therefore proposed to strike out these words and substitute the following: "To the stipulations of the treaty of Kainardji, confirmed by that of Adrianople, relative to the protection by the sublime porte of the Christian religion." By these words the Turkish ministers quietly affirm that the only protectorate exercised over the Christians of Turkey is that of the sultan of Turkey himself. The difference is simply that between a claim conceded and a claim repudiated. The Russian government refused to accept the modifications; and in arguing against them, the Russian minister, Count Nesselrode, made it clear to the English government that Lord Stratford de Redcliffe was right when he held the note to be full of weakness and of error. For the Russian minister argued against the modifications on the very ground that they denied to the claims of Russia just that satisfaction that the statesmanship and the public opinion of Europe had always agreed to refuse. The prince consort's expression was appropriate; the western powers had nearly been caught in a trap.

From that time all hopes of peace were over. There were, to be sure, other negotiations still. A ghastly semblance of faith in the possibility of a peaceful arrangement was kept up for awhile on both sides. Little plans of adjustment were tinkered up and tried, and fell to pieces the moment they were tried. It is not necessary for us to describe them. Not many persons put any faith or even professed any interest in them. They were conducted amid the most energetic preparations for war on both sides. Our troops were moving toward Malta; the streets of Lon-

don, of Liverpool, of Southampton, and other towns, were ringing with the cheers of enthusiastic crowds gathered together to watch the marching of troops destined for the east. Turkey had actually declared war against Russia. People now were anxious rather to see how the war would open between Russia and the allies than when it would open; the time when could evidently only be a question of a few days; the way how was a matter of more peculiar interest. We had known so little of war for nearly forty years, that added to all the other emotions which the coming of battle must bring was the mere feeling of curiosity as to the sensation produced by a state of war. It was an abstraction to the living generation—a thing to read of and discuss and make poetry and romance out of; but they could not yet realize what itself was like.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### WHERE WAS LORD PALMERSTON?

MEANWHILE where was Lord Palmerston? He of all men, one would think, must have been pleased with the turn things were taking. He had had from the beginning little faith in any issue of the negotiations but war. Probably he did not really wish for any other result. We are well inclined to agree with Mr. Kinglake that of all the members of the cabinet he alone clearly saw his way and was satisfied with the prospect. But according to the supposed nature of his office he had now nothing to do with the war or with foreign affairs except as every member of the cabinet shares the responsibilities of the whole body. He had apparently about as much to do with the war as the postmaster-general, or the chancellor for the duchy of Lancaster, might have. He had accepted the office of home secretary; he had declared that he did not choose to be foreign secretary any more. He affirmed that he wanted to learn something about home affairs, and to get to understand his countrymen, and so forth. He was really very busy all this time in his new duties. Lord Palmerston was a remarkably efficient and successful home secretary. His unceasing activity loved to show itself in whatever department he might be called upon to occupy. He

brought to the somewhat prosaic duties of his new office, not only all the virile energy, but also all the enterprise which he had formerly shown in managing revolutions and dictating to foreign courts. The ticket-of-leave system dates from the time of his administration. Our transportation system had broken down, for, in fact, the colonies would stand it no longer, and it fell to Lord Palmerston to find something to put in its place; and the plan of granting tickets-of-leave to convicts who had shown that they were capable of regeneration was the outcome of the necessity and of his administration. The measures to abate the smoke nuisance, by compelling factories under penalties to consume their own smoke, is also an offspring of Palmerston's activity in the home office. The factory acts were extended by him. He went energetically to work in the shutting up of graveyards in the metropolis; and in a letter to his brother he declared that he should like to "put down beershops, and let shopkeepers sell beer like oil, and vinegar, and treacle, to be carried home and drunk with wives and children."

This little project is worthy of notice because it illustrates more fairly perhaps than some far greater plan might do at once the strength and the weakness of Palmerston's intelligence. He could not see why everything should not be done in a plain straightforward way, and why the arrangements that were good for the sale of one thing might not be good also for the sale of another. He did not stop to inquire whether, as a matter of fact, beer is a commodity at all like oil, and vinegar, and treacle; whether the same consequences follow the drinking of beer and the consumption of treacle. His critics said that he was apt to manage his foreign affairs on the same rough-and-ready principle. If a system suited England, why should it not suit all other places as well? If treacle may be sold safely without any manner of authoritative regulation, why not beer? The answer to the latter question is plain—because treacle is not beer. So, people said, with Palmerston's constitutional projects for every place. Why should not that which suits England suit also Spain? Because, to begin with, a good many people urged, Spain is not England.

There was one department of his duties in which Palmerston was acquiring a new and somewhat odd reputation.

This was in his way of answering deputations and letters. "The mere routine business of the home office," Palmerston writes to his brother, "as far as that consists in daily correspondence, is far lighter than that of the foreign office. But during a session of parliament the whole time of the secretary of state, up to the time when he must go to the House of Commons, is taken up by deputations of all kinds, and interviews with members of parliament, militia colonels, etc." Lord Palmerston was always civil and cordial; he was full of a peculiar kind of fresh common sense, and always ready to apply it to any subject whatever. He could at any time say some racy thing which set the public wondering and laughing. He gave something like a shock to the Presbytery of Edinburgh when they wrote to him through the moderator to ask whether a national fast ought not to be appointed in consequence of the appearance of cholera. Lord Palmerston gravely admonished the Presbytery that the Maker of the universe had appointed certain laws of nature for the planet on which we live, and that the weal or woe of mankind depends on the observance of those laws—one of them connecting health "with the absence of those noxious exhalations which proceed from overcrowded human beings, or from decomposing substances whether animal or vegetable." He therefore recommended that the purification of towns and cities should be more strenuously carried on, and remarked that the causes and sources of contagion, if allowed to remain, "will infallibly breed pestilence and be fruitful in death, in spite of all the prayers and fastings of a united but inactive nation." When Lord Stanley of Alderly applied to Lord Palmerston for a special permission for a deceased dignitary of a church to be buried under the roof of the sacred building, the home secretary declined to accede to the request in a letter that might have come from, or might have delighted, Sydney Smith. "What special connection is there between church dignities and the privilege of being decomposed under the feet of survivors? Do you seriously mean to imply that a soul is more likely to go to heaven because the body which it inhabited lies decomposing under the pavement of a church instead of being placed in a churchyard? . . . England is, I believe, the only country in which in these days people accumulate putrefying dead bodies amid the dwellings of the living; and as

to burying bodies under thronged churches, you might as well put them under libraries, drawing-rooms, and dining-rooms."

Lord Palmerston did not see what a very large field of religious and philosophical controversy he opened up by some of his arguments, both as to the fasting and as to the burial in churchyards. He only saw, for the moment, what appeared to him the healthy, common-sense aspect of the position he had taken up, and did not think or care about what other positions he might be surrendering by the very act. He had not a poetic or philosophic mind. In clearing his intelligence from all that he would have called prejudice or superstition, he had cleared out also much of the deeper sympathetic faculty which enables one man to understand the feelings and get at the springs of conduct in the breasts of other men. No one can doubt that his jaunty way of treating grave and disputed subjects offended many pure and simple minds. Yet it was a mistake to suppose that mere levity dictated his way of dealing with the prejudices of others. He had often given the question his deepest attention, and had come to a conclusion with as much thought as his temperament would have allowed to any subject. The difference between him and graver men was that when he had come to a conclusion seriously, he loved to express his views humorously. He resembled in this respect some of the greatest and the most earnest men of his time. Count Cavour delighted in jocular and humorous answers; so did President Lincoln; so at one period of his public career did Prince Bismarck. But there can be no doubt that Palmerston often made enemies by his seeming levity when another man could easily have made friends by saying just the same thing in grave words. The majority of the House of Commons liked him because he amused them and made them laugh; and they thought no more of the matter.

But the war is now fairly launched; and Palmerston is to all appearance what would be vulgarly called "out of the swim." Every eye was turned to him. He was like Pitt standing up on one of the back benches to support the administration of Addington. For years he had been identified with the foreign office, and with that sort of foreign policy which would seem best suited to the atmosphere of war; and now war is on foot, and Palmerston is



in the home office pleasantly "chaffing" militia colonels and making sensitive theologians angry by the flippancy of his replies. Perhaps there was something flattering to Palmerston's feeling of self-love in the curious wonder with which people turned their eyes upon him during all that interval. Every one seemed to ask how the country was to get on without him or to manage its foreign affairs, and when he would be good enough to come down from his quiet seat in the home office and assume what seemed his natural duties. A famous tenor singer of our day once had some quarrel with his manager. The singer withdrew from the company; some one else had to be put in his place. On the first night when the new man made his appearance before the public, the great singer was seen in a box calmly watching the performance like any other of the audience. The new man turned out a failure. The eyes of the house began to fix themselves upon the one who could sing, but who was sitting as unconcernedly in his box as if he never meant to sing any more. The audience at first was incredulous. It was in a great provincial city where the singer had always been a prime favorite. They could not believe that they were in good faith to be expected to put up with bad singing while he was there. At last their patience gave way. They insisted on the one singer leaving his place on the stage, and the other coming down from his box and his easy attitude of unconcern, and resuming what they regarded as his proper part. They would have their way; they carried their point; and the man who could sing was compelled at last to return to the scene of his old triumphs and sing for them again. The attitude of Lord Palmerston and the manner in which the public eyes were turned upon him during the early days of the war could hardly be illustrated more effectively than by this story. As yet the only wonder was why he did not take somehow the directorship of affairs; the time was to come when the general voice would insist upon his doing so.

One day a startling report ran through all circles. It was given out that Palmerston had actually resigned. So far was he from any intention of taking on himself the direction of affairs—even of war or of foreign affairs—that he appeared to have gone out of the ministry altogether. The report was confirmed; Palmerston actually had re-

signed. It was at once asserted that his resignation was caused by difference of opinion between him and his colleagues on the eastern policy of the government. But, on the other hand, it was as stoutly affirmed that the difference of opinion had only to do with the new reform bill which Lord John Russell was preparing to introduce. Now it is certain that Lord Palmerston did differ in opinion with Lord John Russell on the subject of his reform bill. It is certain that this was the avowed cause, and the only avowed cause of Palmerston's resignation. But it is equally certain that the real cause of the resignation was the conviction in Palmerston's mind that his colleagues were not up to the demands of the crisis in regard to the eastern war. Lord Palmerston's letters to his brother on the subject are amusing. They resemble some of the epistles which used to pass between suspected lovers in old days, and in which the words were so arranged that the sentences conveyed an obvious meaning good enough for the eye of jealous authority, but had a very different tale to tell to the one being for whom the truth was intended. Lord Palmerston gives his brother a long and circumstantial account of the differences about the reform bill, and about the impossibility of a home secretary either supporting by speech a bill he did not like or sitting silent during the whole discussion on it in the House of Commons. He shows that he could not possibly do otherwise under such trying circumstances than resign. The whole letter, until we come to the very last paragraph, is about the reform bill and nothing else. One might suppose that nothing else whatever was entering into the writer's thoughts. But at the end Palmerston just remembers to add that the *Times* was telling "an untruth" when it said there had been no difference in the cabinet about eastern affairs; for in fact there had been some little lack of agreement on the subject, but it would have looked rather silly, Palmerston thinks, if he were to have gone out of office merely because he could not have his own way about Turkish affairs. Exactly; and in a few days after Palmerston was induced to withdraw his resignation and to remain in the government; and then he wrote to his brother again explaining how and all about it. He explains that several members of the cabinet told him they considered the details of the reform bill quite open to discussion and so forth. "Their

earnest representations, and the knowledge that the cabinet had on Thursday taken a decision on Turkish affairs in entire accordance with opinions which I had long unsuccessfully pressed upon them, decided me to withdraw my resignation, which I did yesterday." "Of course," Lord Palmerston quietly adds, "what I say to you about the cabinet decision on Turkish affairs is entirely for yourself and not to be mentioned to anybody. But it is very important, and will give the allied squadrons the command of the Black Sea." All this was very prudent, of course, and very prettily arranged. But we doubt whether a single man in England who cared anything about the whole question was imposed upon for one moment. Nobody believed that at such a time Lord Palmerston would have gone out of office because he did not quite like the details of a reform bill, or that the cabinet would have obstinately clung to such a scheme just then in spite of his opposition. Indeed the first impression of every one was that Palmerston had gone out only in order to come back again much stronger than before; that he resigned when he could not have his way in eastern affairs, and that he would resume office empowered to have his way in everything. The explanations about the reform bill found as impatient listeners among the public at large as the desperate attempts of the young heroine in "She Stoops to Conquer" to satisfy honest Tony Lumpkin with her hasty and ill-concocted devices about Shagbag and Green and the rest of them, whose story she pretends to read for him from the letter which is not intended to reach the suspicious ears of his mother. When Lord Palmerston resumed his place in the ministry, the public at large felt certain that the war spirit was now at last to have its way, and that the dallyings of the peace-lovers were over.

Nor was England long left to guess at the reason why Lord Palmerston had so suddenly resigned his office and so suddenly returned to it. A great disaster had fallen upon Turkey. Her fleet had been destroyed by the Russians at Sinope, in the Black Sea. Sinope is, or was, a considerable seaport town and naval station belonging to Turkey, and standing on a rocky promontory on the southern shore of the Black Sea. On November 30, 1853, the Turkish squadron was lying there at anchor. The squadron consisted of seven frigates, a sloop, and a steamer.

It had no ship of the line. The Russian fleet, consisting of six ships of the line and some steamers, had been cruising about the Black Sea for several days previously, issuing from Sebastopol, and making an occasional swoop now and then as if to bear down upon the Turkish squadron. The Turkish commander was quite aware of the danger, and pressed for reinforcements; but nothing was done, either by the Turkish government or by the ambassadors of the allies at Constantinople. On November 30, however, the Sebastopol fleet did actually bear down upon the Turkish vessels lying at Sinope. The Turks, seeing that an attack was coming at last, not only accepted, but even anticipated it; for they were the first to fire. The fight was hopeless for them. They fought with all the desperate energy of fearless and unconquerable men; unconquerable, at least, in the sense that they would not yield. But the odds were too much against them to give them any chance. Either they would not haul down their flag, which is very likely; or if they did strike their colors, the Russian admiral did not see the signal. The fight went on until the whole Turkish squadron, save for the steamer, was destroyed. It was asserted on official authority that more than four thousand Turks were killed; that the survivors hardly numbered four hundred; and that of these every man was wounded. Sinope itself was much shattered and battered by the Russian fleet. The affair was at once the destruction of the Turkish ships and an attack upon Turkish territory.

This was "the massacre of Sinope." When the news came to England there arose one cry of grief and anger and shame. It was regarded as a deliberate act of treachery, consummated amid conditions of the most hideous barbarity. A clamor arose against the emperor of Russia as if he were a monster outside the pale of civilized law, like some of the furious and treacherous despots of mediæval Asiatic history. Mr. Kinglake has shown—and indeed the sequence of events must in time have shown every one—that there was no foundation for these accusations. The attack was not treacherous, but openly made; not sudden, but clearly announced by previous acts, and long expected, as we have seen, by the Turkish commander himself; and it was not in breach even of the courtesies of war. Russia and Turkey were not only formally but

actually at war. The Turks were the first to begin the actual military operations. More than five weeks before the affair at Sinope they had opened the business by firing from a fortress on a Russian flotilla. A few days after this act they crossed the Danube at Widdin and occupied Kalafat; and for several days they had fought under Omar Pasha with brilliant success against the Russians at Otenitza. All England had been enthusiastic about the bravery which the Turks had shown at Otenitza and the success which had attended their first encounter with the enemy. It was hardly to be expected that the emperor of Russia would only fight when he was at a disadvantage and refrain from attack where his power was overwhelming. Still there was an impression among English and French statesmen that while negotiations for peace were actually going on between the western powers and Russia, and while the fleets of England and France were remaining peacefully at anchor in the Bosphorus, whither they had been summoned by this time, the Russian emperor would abstain from complicating matters by making use of his Sebastopol fleet. Nothing could have been more unwise than to act upon an impression of this kind as if it were a regular agreement. But the English public did not understand at that moment the actual condition of things, and may well have supposed that if our government seemed secure and content, there must have been some definite arrangement to create so happy a condition of mind. It may look strange to readers now, surveying this chapter of past history with cool, unimpassioned mind, that anybody could have believed in the existence of any arrangement by virtue of which Turkey could be at war with Russia and not at war with her at the same time; which would have allowed Turkey to strike her enemy when and how she pleased, and would have restricted the enemy to such time, place, and method of retort as might suit the convenience of the neutral powers. But at the time, when the true state of affairs was little known in England, the account of the "massacre of Sinope" was received as if it had been the tale of some unparalleled act of treachery and savagery; and the eagerness of the country for war against Russia became inflamed to actual passion.

It was at that moment that Palmerston resigned his

office. The cabinet were still not prepared to go as far as he would have gone. They had believed that the Sebastopol fleet would do nothing as long as the western powers kept talking about peace; they now believed perhaps that the emperor of Russia would say he was very sorry for what had been done and promise not to do so any more. Lord Palmerston, supported by the urgent pressure of the emperor of the French, succeeded, however, in at last overcoming their determination. It was agreed that some decisive announcement should be made to the emperor of Russia on the part of England and France; and Lord Palmerston resumed his place, master of the situation. This was the decision of which he had spoken in his letter to his brother; the decision which he said he had long unsuccessfully pressed upon his colleagues, and which would give the allied squadrons the command of the Black Sea. It was, in fact, an intimation to Russia that France and England were resolved to prevent any repetition of the Sinope affair; that their squadrons would enter the Black Sea with orders to request, and if necessary to constrain, every Russian ship met in the Euxine to return to Sebastopol; and to repel by force any act of aggression afterward attempted against the Ottoman territory or flag. This was not, it should be observed, simply an intimation to the emperor of Russia that the great powers would impose and enforce the neutrality of the Black Sea. It was an announcement that if the flag of Russia dared to show itself on that sea, which washed Russia's southern shores, the war-ships of two far foreign states, taking possession of those waters, would pull it down, or compel those who bore it to fly ignominiously into port. This was, in fact, war.

Of course Lord Palmerston knew this. Because it meant war he accepted it and returned to his place, well pleased with the way in which things were going. From his point of view he was perfectly right. He had been consistent all through. He believed from the first that the pretensions of Russia would have to be put down by force of arms, and could not be put down in any other way; he believed that the danger to England from the aggrandisement of Russia was a capital danger calling for any extent of national sacrifice to avert it. He believed that a war with Russia was inevitable, and he preferred

taking it sooner to taking it later. He believed that an alliance with the emperor of the French was desirable, and a war with Russia would be the best means of making this effective. Lord Palmerston, therefore, was determined not to remain in the cabinet unless some strenuous measures were taken, and now, as on a memorable former occasion, he understood better than any one else the prevailing temper of the English people.

When the resolution of the western cabinets was communicated to the emperor of Russia he withdrew his representatives from London and Paris. On February 21, 1845, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the two allied powers were brought to a stop. Six weeks before this the English and French fleets had entered the Black Sea. The interval was filled up with renewed efforts to bring about a peaceful arrangement, which were conducted with as much gravity as if any one believed in the possibility of their success. The emperor of the French, who always loved letter-writing, and delighted in what Cobden once happily called the "monumental style," wrote to the Russian emperor appealing to him, professedly in the interests of peace, to allow an armistice to be signed, to let the belligerent forces on both sides retire from the places to which motives of war had led them, and then to negotiate a convention with the sultan which might be submitted to a conference of the four powers. If Russia would not do this, then Louis Napoleon, undertaking to speak in the name of the queen of Great Britain as well as of himself, intimated that France and England would be compelled to leave to the chances of war what might now be decided by reason and justice. The Emperor Nicholas replied that he had claimed nothing but what was confirmed by treaties; that his conditions were perfectly well known; he was still willing to treat on these conditions; but if Russia were driven to arms, then he quietly observed that he had no doubt she could hold her own as well in 1854 as she had done in 1812. That year, 1812, it is hardly necessary to say, was the year of the burning of Moscow and the disastrous retreat of the French. We can easily understand what faith in the possibility of a peaceful arrangement the Russian emperor must have had when he made the allusion and the French emperor must have had when it met his eye. Of course if Louis Napoleon had had the faintest

belief in any good result to come of his letter he would never have closed it with the threat which provoked the Russian sovereign into his insufferable rejoinder. The correspondence might remind one of that which is said to have passed between two Irish chieftains. "Pay me my tribute," wrote the one, "or else!" "I owe you no tribute," replied the other, "and if. . . ."

England's ultimatum to Russia was despatched on February 27, 1854. It was conveyed in a letter from Lord Clarendon to Count Nesselrode. It declared that the British government had exhausted all the efforts of negotiation, and was compelled to announce that "if Russia should decline to restrict within purely diplomatic limits the discussion in which she has for some time past been engaged with the sublime porte, and does not, by return of the messenger who is the bearer of my present letter, announce her intention of causing the Russian troops under Prince Gortschakoff to commence their march with a view to recross the Pruth, so that the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia shall be completely evacuated on April 30 next, the British government must consider the refusal for the silence of the cabinet of St. Petersburg as equivalent to a declaration of war and will take its measures accordingly." It is not perhaps very profitable work for the historian to criticise the mere terms of a document announcing a course of action which long before its issue had become inevitable. But it is worth while remarking perhaps that it would have been better and more dignified to confine the letter to the simple demand for the evacuation of the Danubian provinces. To ask Russia to promise that her controversy with the porte should be thenceforward restricted within purely diplomatic limits was to make a demand with which no great power would, or indeed could, undertake to comply. A member of the peace society itself might well hesitate to give a promise that a dispute in which he was engaged should be forever confined within purely diplomatic limits. In any case it was certain that Russia would not now make any concessions tending toward peace. The messenger who was the bearer of the letter was ordered not to wait more than six days for an answer. On the fifth day the messenger was informed by word of mouth from Count Nesselrode that the emperor did not think it becoming in him to give any



reply to the letter. The die was cast. Rather, truly, the fact was recorded that the die had been cast. A few days after a crowd assembled in front of the royal exchange to watch the performance of a ceremonial that had been little known to the living generation. The sergent-at-arms, accompanied by some of the officials of the city, read from the steps of the royal exchange her majesty's declaration of war against Russia.

The causes of the declaration of war were set forth in an official statement published in the *London Gazette*. This document is an interesting and a valuable state paper. It recites with clearness and deliberation the successive steps by which the allied powers had been led to the necessity of an armed intervention in the controversy between Turkey and Russia. It described, in the first place, the complaint of the emperor of Russia against the sultan with reference to the claims of the Greek and Latin Churches, and the arrangement promoted satisfactorily by her majesty's ambassador at Constantinople for rendering justice to the claim, "an arrangement to which no exception was taken by the Russian government." Then came the sudden unmasking of the other and quite different claims of Prince Mentschikoff, "the nature of which in the first instance he endeavored, as far as possible, to conceal from her majesty's ambassador." These claims, "thus studiously concealed," affected not merely, or at all, the privileges of the Greek Church at Jerusalem, "but the position of many millions of Turkish subjects in their relations to their sovereign the sultan." The declaration recalled the various attempts that were made by the queen's government in conjunction with the governments of France, Austria, and Prussia, to meet any just demands of the Russian emperor without affecting the dignity and independence of the sultan; and showed that if the object of Russia had been solely to secure their proper privileges and immunities for the Christian populations of the Ottoman empire, the offers that were made could not have failed to meet that object. Her majesty's government, therefore, held it as manifest that what Russia was really seeking was not the happiness of the Christian communities of Turkey, but the right to interfere in the ordinary relations between Turkish subjects and their sovereign. The sultan refused to consent to this, and declared war in self-defense. Yet

the government of her majesty did not renounce all hope of restoring peace between the contending parties until, advice and remonstrance proving wholly in vain, and Russia continuing to extend her military preparations, her majesty felt called upon, "by regard for an ally, the integrity and independence of whose empire have been recognized as essential to the peace of Europe; by the sympathies of her people with right against wrong; by a desire to avert from her dominions most injurious consequences, and to save Europe from the preponderance of a power which has violated the faith of treaties and defies the opinion of the civilized world, to take up arms in conjunction with the emperor of the French for the defense of the sultan."

Some passages of this declaration have invited criticism from English historians. It opens, for example, with a statement of the fact that the efforts for an arrangement were made by her majesty in conjunction with France, Austria and Prussia. It speaks of this concert of the four powers down almost to the very close; and then it suddenly breaks off and announces, that, in consequence of all that has happened, her majesty has felt compelled to take up arms "in conjunction with the emperor of the French." What strange diplomatic mismanagement, it was asked, has led to this singular *non sequitur*? Why, after having carried on the negotiations through all their various stages with three other great powers, all of them supposed to be equally interested in a settlement of the question, is England at the last moment compelled to take up arms with only one of those powers as an ally?

The principle reason for the separation of the two western powers of Europe from the other great states was found in the condition of Prussia. Prussia was then greatly under the influence of the Russian court. The Prussian sovereign was related to the emperor of Russia; and his kingdom was almost overshadowed by Russian influence. Prussia had come to occupy a lower position in Europe than she had ever before held during her existence as a kingdom. It seemed almost marvelous how by any process the country of the Great Frederick could have sunk to such a condition of insignificance. She had been compelled to stoop to Austria after the events of 1848. The King of Prussia, tampering with the offers of the strong

national party who desired to make him emperor of Germany, now moving forward and now drawing back, "letting I dare not wait upon I would," was suddenly pulled up by Austria. The famous arrangement, called afterward "the humiliation of Olmütz," and so completely revenged at Sadowa, compelled him to drop all his triflings with nationalism and repudiate his former instigators. The king of Prussia was a highly-cultured, amiable, literary man. He loved letters and art in a sort of *dilettante* way; he had good impulses and a weak nature; he was a dreamer; a sort of philosopher *manqué*. He was unable to make up his mind to any momentous decision until the time for rendering it effective had gone by. A man naturally truthful he was often led by very weakness into acts that seemed irreconcilable with his previous promises and engagements. He could say witty and sarcastic things, and when political affairs went wrong with him, he could console himself with one or two sharp sayings only heard by those immediately around him; and then the world might go its way for him. He was, like Rob Roy, "ower good for banning and ower bad for blessing." Like our own Charles II., he never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one. He ought to have been an æsthetic essayist, or a lecturer on art and moral philosophy to young ladies; and an unkind destiny had made him the king of a state specially embarrassed in a most troublous time. So unkindly was popular rumor as well as fate to him, that he got the credit in foreign countries of being a stupid sensualist, when he was really a man of respectable habits and refined nature; and in England at least the nickname "King Clicquot" was long the brand by which the popular and most mistaken impression of his character was signified.

The king of Prussia was the elder brother of the present German emperor. Had the latter been then on the throne he would probably have taken some timely and energetic decision with regard to the national duty of Prussia during the impending crisis. Right or wrong, he would doubtless have contrived to see his way and make up his mind at an early stage of the European movement. It is by no means to be assumed that he would have taken the course most satisfactory to England and France; but it is likely that his action might have prevented the war, either by rendering the allied powers far too strong to be resisted by Russia,

or by adding to Russia an influence which would have rendered the game of war too formidable to suit the calculations of the emperor of the French. The actual king of Prussia, however, went so far with the allies as to lead them for awhile to believe that he was going all the way; but at the last moment he broke off, declared that the interests of Prussia did not require or allow him to engage in a war, and left France and England to walk their own road. Austria could not venture upon such a war without the co-operation of Prussia; and indeed the course which the campaign took seemed likely to give both Austria and Prussia a good excuse for assuming that their interests were not closely engaged in the struggle. Austria would most certainly have gone to war if the emperor of Russia had kept up the occupation of the Danubian principalities and for that purpose her territorial situation made her irresistible. But when the seat of war was transferred to the Black Sea, and when after awhile the czar withdrew his troops from the principalities and Austria occupied them by virtue of a convention with the sultan, her direct interest in the struggle was reduced almost to nothing. Austria and Prussia were in fact solicited by both sides of the dispute, and at one time it was even thought possible that Prussia might give her aid to Russia. This, however, she refrained from doing; Austria and Prussia made an arrangement between themselves for mutual defense in case the progress of the war should directly imperil the interests of either; and England and France undertook in alliance the task of chastising the presumption and restraining the ambitious designs of Russia. Mr. Kinglake finds much fault with the policy of the English government, on which he lays all the blame of the severance of interests between the two western states and the other two great powers. But we confess that we do not see how any course within the reach of England could have secured just then the thorough alliance of Prussia; and without such an alliance it would have been vain to expect that Austria would throw herself unreservedly into the policy of the western powers. It must be remembered that the controversy between Russia and the west really involved several distinct questions, in some of which Prussia had absolutely no direct interest and Austria very little. Let us set out some of these questions separately. There was

the Russian occupation of the principalities. In this Austria frankly acknowledged her capital interest. Its direct bearing was on her more than any other power. It concerned Prussia as it did England and France, inasmuch as it was an evidence of an aggressive purpose which might very seriously threaten the general stability of the institutions of Europe; but Prussia had no closer interest in it. Austria was the state most affected by it, and Austria was the state which could with most effect operate against it, and was always willing and resolute if needs were to do so. Then there was the question of Russia's claim to exercise a protectorate over the Christian populations of Turkey. This concerned England and France in one sense as part of the general pretensions of Russia, and concerned each of them separately in another sense. To France it told of a rivalry with the right she claimed to look after the interests of the Latin Church; to England it spoke of a purpose to obtain a hold over populations nominally subject to the sultan which might in time make Russia virtual master of the approaches to our eastern possessions. Austria too had a direct interest in repelling these pretensions of Russia, for some of the populations they referred to were on her very frontier. But Prussia can hardly be said to have had any direct national interest in that question at all. Then there came, distinct from all these, the question of the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

This question of the straits, which had so much to do with the whole European aspect of the war, is not to be understood except by those who bear the conformation of the map of Europe constantly in their minds. The only outlet of Russia on the southern side is the Black Sea. The Black Sea is, save for one little outlet at its southwestern extremity, a huge land-locked lake. That little outlet is the narrow channel called the Bosphorus. Russia and Turkey between them surround the whole of the Black Sea with their territory. Russia has the north and some of the eastern shore; Turkey has all the southern, the Asia Minor shore, and nearly all the western shore. Close the straits of the Bosphorus and Russia would be literally locked into the Black Sea. The Bosphorus is a narrow channel, as has been said; it is some seventeen miles in length, and in some places it is hardly more than half a mile in breadth. But it is very deep all through, so that

ships of war can float close up to its very shores on either side. This channel in its course passes between the city of Constantinople and its Asiatic suburb of Seutari. The Bosphorus then opens into the little Sea of Marmora; and out of the Sea of Marmora the way westward is through the channel of the Dardanelles. The Dardanelles form the only passage into the Archipelago, and thence into the Mediterranean. The channel of the Dardanelles is, like the Bosphorus, very narrow and very deep, but it pursues its course for some forty miles. Any one who holds a map in his hand will see at once how Turkey and Russia alike are affected by the existence of the straits on either extremity of the Sea of Marmora. Close up these straits against vessels of war, and the capital of the sultan is absolutely unassailable from the sea. Close them, on the other hand, and the Russian fleet in the Black Sea is absolutely cut off from the Mediterranean and the western world. But then it has to be remembered that the same act of closing would secure the Russian ports and shores on the Black Sea from the approach of any of the great navies of the west. The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus being alike such narrow channels, and being edged alike by Turkish territory, were not regarded as high seas. The sultans always claimed the right to exclude foreign ships of war from both the straits. The treaty of 1841 secured this right to Turkey by the agreement of the five great powers of Europe. The treaty acknowledged that the porte had the right to shut the straits against the armed navies of any foreign power; and the sultan, for his part, engaged not to allow any such navy to enter either of the straits in time of peace. The closing of the straits had been the subject of a perfect succession of treaties. The treaty of 1809 between Great Britain and Turkey confirmed by engagement "the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire" forbidding vessels of war at all times to enter the "Canal of Constantinople." The treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi between Russia and Turkey, arising out of Russia's co-operation with the porte to put down the rebellious movement of Mohammed Ali, the Egyptian vassal of the latter, contained a secret clause binding the porte to close "the Dardanelles" against all war vessels whatever, thus shutting Russia's enemies out of the Black Sea, but leaving Russia free to pass the Bosphorus, so far at least, as that treaty engagement was concerned.

Later, when the great powers of Europe combined to put down the attempts of Egypt, the treaty of July 13, 1841, made in London, engaged that in time of peace no foreign ships of war should be admitted into the straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. This treaty was but a renewal of a convention made the year before, while France was still sulking away from the European concert and did nothing more than record her return to it.

As matters stood then, the sultan was not only permitted but was bound to close the straits in times of peace, and no navy might enter them without his consent even in times of war. But in times of war he might of course give the permission and invite the presence and co-operation of the armed vessels of a foreign power in the Sea of Marmora. By this treaty the Black Sea fleet of Russia became literally a Black Sea fleet, and could no more reach the Mediterranean and western Europe than a boat on the Lake of Lucerne could do. Naturally Russia chafed at this; but at the same time she was not willing to see the restriction withdrawn in favor of an arrangement that would leave the straits, and consequently the Black Sea, open to the navies of France and England. Her supremacy in eastern Europe would count for little, her power of coercing Turkey would be sadly diminished, if the war-flag of England, for example, were to float side by side with her own in front of Constantinople or in the Euxine. Therefore it was natural that the ambition of Russia should tend toward the ultimate possession of Constantinople and the straits for herself; but as this was an ambition the fulfillment of which seemed far off and beset with vast dangers, her object, meanwhile, was to gain as much influence and ascendancy as possible over the Ottoman government; to make it practically the vassal of Russia, and in any case to prevent any other great power from obtaining the influence and ascendancy which she coveted for herself. Now the tendency of this ambition and of all the intermediate claims and disputes with regard to the opening or closing of the straits was of importance to Europe generally as a part of Russian aggrandizement; but of the great powers they concerned England most; France as a Mediterranean and a naval power; Austria only in a third and remoter degree; and Prussia at the time of King Frederick William least of all. It is not surprising therefore that the

two western powers were not able to carry their accord with Prussia to the extent of an alliance in war against Russia; and it was hardly possible then for Austria to go on if Prussia insisted on drawing back. Thus it came that at a certain point of the negotiations Prussia fell off absolutely or nearly so; Austria undertook but a conditional co-operation, of which, as it happened, the conditions did not arise; and the queen of England announced that she had taken up arms against Russia "in conjunction with the emperor of the French."

To the great majority of the English people this war was popular. It was popular, partly because of the natural and inevitable reaction against the doctrines of peace and mere trading prosperity which had been preached somewhat too pertinaciously for some time before. But it was popular too because of its novelty. It was like a return to the youth of the world when England found herself once more preparing for the field. It was like the pouring of new blood into old veins. The public had grown impatient of the common saying of foreign capitals that England had joined the peace society and would never be seen in battle any more. Mr. Kinglake is right when he says that the doctrines of the peace society had never taken any hold of the higher classes in this country at all. They had never, we may venture to add, taken any real hold of the humbler classes; of the working men, for example. The well-educated thoughtful middle-class, who knew how much of worldly happiness depends on a regular income, moderate taxation, and a comfortable home, supplied most of the advocates of "peace," as it was scornfully said, "at any price." Let us say, in justice to a very noble and very futile doctrine, that there were no persons in England who advocated peace "at any price," in the ignominious sense which hostile critics pressed upon the words. There was a small, a serious and a very respectable body of persons who, out of the purest motives of conscience, held that all war was criminal and offensive to the Deity. They were for peace at any price, exactly as they were for truth at any price, or conscience at any price. They were opposed to war as they were to falsehood or to impiety. It seemed as natural to them that a man should die unresisting rather than resist and kill, as it does to most persons who profess any sentiment of religion, or even of honor, that a man



should die rather than abjure the faith he believed in, or tell a lie. It is assumed as a matter of course that any Englishman worthy of the name would have died by any torture tyranny could put on him rather than perform the old ceremony of trampling on the crucifix which certain heathen states were said to have sometimes insisted on as the price of a captive's freedom. To the believers in the peace doctrine the act of war was a trampling on the crucifix, which brought with it evil consequences unspeakably worse than the mere performance of a profane ceremonial. To declare that they would rather suffer any earthly penalty of defeat or national servitude than take part in a war was only consistent with the great creed of their lives. It ought not to have been held as any reproach to them. Even those who, like this writer, have no personal sympathy with such a belief, and who hold that a war in a just cause is an honor to a nation, may still recognize the purity and nobleness of the principle which inspired the votaries of peace and do honor to it. But these men were in any case not many at the time when the Crimean War broke out. They had very little influence on the course of the national policy. They were assailed with a flippant and a somewhat ignoble ridicule. The worst reproach that could be given to men like Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright was to accense them of being members of the peace society. It does not appear that either man was a member of the actual organization. Mr. Bright's religious creed made him necessarily a votary of peace; Mr. Cobden had attended meetings called with the futile purpose of establishing peace among nations by the operation of good feeling and of common sense. But for a considerable time the temper of the English people was such as to render any talk about peace not only unprofitable, but perilous to the very cause of peace itself. Some of the leading members of the peace society did actually get up a deputation to the emperor Nicholas to appeal to his better feelings; and of course they were charmed by the manners of the emperor, who made it his business to be in a very gracious humor, and spoke them fair, and introduced them in the most unceremonious way to his wife. Such a visit counted for nothing in Russia, and at home it only tended to make people angry and impatient, and to put the cause of peace in greater jeopardy than ever. Viewed as a prac-

tical influence the peace doctrine was completely broken down, as a general resolution against the making of money might have done during the time of the mania for speculation in railway shares. But it did not merely break down of itself. It carried some great influences down with it for the time—influences that were not a part of itself. The eloquence that had coerced the intellect and reasoning power of Peel into a complete surrender to the doctrines of free trade, the eloquence that had aroused the populations of all the cities of England and had conquered the House of Commons, was destined now to call aloud to solitude. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright addressed their constituents and their countrymen in vain. The fact that they were believed to be opposed on principle to all wars put them out of court in public estimation, as Mr. Kinglake justly observes, when they went about to argue against this particular war.

In the cabinet itself there were men who disliked the idea of a war quite as much as they did. Lord Aberdeen detested war, and thought it so absurd a way of settling national disputes, that almost until the first cannon-shot had been fired he could not bring himself to believe in the possibility of the intelligent English people being drawn into it. Mr. Gladstone had a conscientious and a sensitive objection to war in general as a brutal and an unchristian occupation, although his feelings would not have carried him so far away as to prevent his recognition of the fact that war might often be a just, a necessary and a glorious undertaking on the part of a civilized nation. The difficulties of the hour were considerably enhanced by the differences of opinion that prevailed in the cabinet.

There were other differences there as well as those that belonged to the mere abstract question of the glory or the guilt of war. It soon became clear that two parties of the cabinet looked on the war and its objects with different eyes and interests. Lord Palmerston wanted simply to put down Russia and uphold Turkey. Others were especially concerned for the Christian populations of Turkey and their better government. Lord Palmerston not merely thought that the interests of England called for some check to the aggressiveness of Russia; he liked the Turk for himself; he had faith in the future of Turkey; he went so far even as to proclaim his belief in the endur-

ance of her military power. Give Turkey single-handed a fair chance, he argued, and she would beat Russia. He did not believe either in the disaffection of the Christian populations or in the stories of their oppression. He regarded all these stories as part of the plans and inventions of Russia. He had no half-beliefs in the matter at all. The Christian populations and their grievances he regarded, in plain language, as mere humbugs; he looked upon the Turk as a very fine fellow whom all chivalric minds ought to respect. He believed all that was said upon the one side, and nothing upon the other; he had made up his mind to this long ago, and no arguments or facts could now shake his convictions. A belief of this kind may have been very unphilosophic. It was undoubtedly in many respects the birth of mere prejudice independent of fact or reasoning. But the temper born of such a belief is exactly that which should have the making of a war entrusted to it. Lord Palmerston saw his way straight before him. The brave Turk had to be supported; the wicked Russian had to be put down. On one side there were Lord Aberdeen, who did not believe any one seriously meant to be so barbarous as to go to war, and Mr. Gladstone, who shrank from war in general and was not yet quite certain whether England had any right to undertake this war; the two being furthermore concerned far more for the welfare of Turkey's Christian subjects than for the stability of Turkey or the humiliation of Russia. On the other side was Lord Palmerston, gay, resolute, clear as to his own purpose, convinced to the heart's core of everything which just then it was for the advantage of his cause to believe. It was impossible to doubt on which side were to be found the materials for the successful conduct of the enterprise which was now so popular with the country. The most conscientious men might differ about the prudence or the moral propriety of the war; but to those who once accepted its necessity and wished our side to win, there could be no possible doubt, even for members of the peace society, as to the importance of having Lord Palmerston either at the head of affairs or in charge of the war itself. The moment the war actually broke out, it became evident to every one that Palmerston's interval of comparative inaction and obscurity was well nigh over.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.

ENGLAND then and France entered the war as allies. Lord Raglan, formerly Lord Fitzroy Somerset, an old pupil of the Great Duke in the Peninsular War, and who had lost his right arm serving under Wellington at Waterloo, was appointed to command the English forces. Marshal St. Arnaud, a bold, brilliant soldier of fortune, was entrusted by the emperor of the French with the leadership of the soldiers of France. The allied forces went out to the east and assembled at Varna, on the Black Sea shore, from which they were to make their descent on the Crimea. The war, meantime, had gone badly for the emperor of Russia in his attempt to crush the Turks. The Turks had found in Omar Pasha a commander of remarkable ability and energy; and they had in one or two instances received the unexpected aid and counsel of clever and successful Englishmen. A singularly brilliant episode in the opening part of the war was the defense of the earthworks of Silistria, on the Bulgarian bank of the Danube, by a body of Turkish troops under the directions of three young Englishmen, Captain Butler, of the Ceylon Rifles, Lieut. Nasmyth, of the East India Company's service, and Lieut. J. A. Ballard, of the Bombay Engineers.

These young soldiers had voluntarily undertaken the danger and responsibility of the defense. Butler was killed, but the Russians were completely foiled and had to raise the siege. At Giurgevo and other places the Russians were likewise repulsed; and the invasion of the Danubian provinces was already, to all intents, a failure.

Mr. Kinglake and other writers have argued that but for the ambition of the emperor of the French and the excited temper of the English people the war might well have ended then and there. The emperor of Russia had found, it is contended, that he could not maintain an invasion of European Turkey; his fleet was confined to its ports in the Black Sea, and there was nothing for him but to make peace. But we confess we do not see with what propriety or wisdom the allies, having entered on the enterprise at all, could have abandoned it at such a moment and allowed the czar to escape thus merely scorched.

However brilliant and gratifying the successes obtained against the Russians, they were but a series of what might be called outpost actions. They could not be supposed to have tested the resources of Russia or weakened her strength. They had humbled and vexed her just enough to make her doubly resentful and no more. It seems impossible to suppose that such trivial disasters could have affected in the slightest degree the historic march of Russian ambition, supposing such a movement to exist. If we allow the purpose with which England entered the war to be just and reasonable, then we think the instinct of the English people was sound and true which would have refused to allow Russia to get off with one or two trifling checks, and to nurse her wrath and keep her vengeance waiting for a better chance some other time. The allies went on. They sailed from Varna for the Crimea nearly three months after the raising of the siege of Silistria.

There is much discussion as to the original author of the project for the invasion of the Crimea. The emperor Napoleon has had it ascribed to him; so has Lord Palmerston; so has the Duke of Newcastle; so, according to Mr. Kinglake, has the *Times* newspaper. It does not much concern us to know in whom the idea originated, but it is of some importance to know that it was essentially a civilian's and not a soldier's idea. It took possession almost simultaneously, so far as we can observe, of the minds of several statesmen, and it had a sudden fascination for the public. The Emperor Nicholas had raised and sheltered his Black Sea fleet at Sebastopol. That fleet had sallied forth from Sebastopol to commit what was called the massacre of Sinope. Sebastopol was the great arsenal of Russia. It was the point from which Turkey was threatened; from which, it was universally believed, the embodied ambition of Russia was one day to make its most formidable effort of aggression. Within the fence of its vast sea-forts the fleet of the Black Sea lay screened. From the moment when the vessels of England and France entered the Euxine, the Russian fleet had withdrawn behind the curtain of these defenses, and was seen upon the open waves no more. If, therefore, Sebastopol could be taken or destroyed, it would seem as if the whole material fabric, put together at such cost and labor, for the execu-

tion of the schemes of Russia would be shattered at a blow. There seemed a dramatic justice in the idea. It could not fail to commend itself to the popular mind.

Mr. Kinglake has given the world an amusing picture of the manner in which the despatch of the Duke of Newcastle, ordering the invasion of the Crimea—for it really amounted to an order—was read to his colleagues in the cabinet. It was a despatch of the utmost importance, for the terms in which it pressed the project on Lord Raglan really rendered it almost impossible for the commander-in-chief to use his own discretion. It ought to have been considered sentence by sentence, word by word. It was read, Mr. Kinglake affirms, to a number of cabinet ministers most of whom had fallen fast asleep. The day was warm, he says; the despatch was long; the reading was somewhat monotonous. Most of those who tried to listen found the soporific influence irresistible. As Sam Weller would have said, poppies were nothing to it. The statesmen fell asleep; and there was no alteration made in the despatch. All this is very amusing; and it is, we believe, true enough that at the particular meeting to which Mr. Kinglake refers there was a good deal of nodding of sleepy heads and closing of tired eyelids. But it is not fair to say that these slumbers had anything to do with the subsequent events of the war. The reading of the despatch was purely a piece of formality; for the project it was to recommend had been discussed very fully before, and the minds of most members of the cabinet were finally made up. The 28th of June, 1854, was the day of the slumbering cabinet. But Lord Palmerston had during the whole of the previous fortnight at least been urging on the cabinet, and on individual members of it separately, the Duke of Newcastle in especial, the project of an invasion of the Crimea and an attempt on Sebastopol. With all the energy and strenuousness of his nature he had been urging this, by arguments in the cabinet, by written memoranda for the consideration of each member of the cabinet separately, and by long earnest letters addressed to particular members of the cabinet. Many of these documents, of the existence of which Mr. Kinglake was doubtless not aware when he set down his vivacious and satirical account of the sleeping cabinet, have since been published. The plan had also been greatly favored and much urged by the emperor of the French be-

fore the day of the sleep of the statesmen; indeed, as has been said already, he receives from many persons the credit of having originated it. The plan therefore, good or bad, was thoroughly known to the cabinet, and had been argued for and against over and over again before the Duke of Newcastle read aloud to drowsy ears the despatch recommending it to the commander-in-chief of the British forces in the field. The perusal of the despatch was a mere form. It would indeed have been better if the most wearied statesman had contrived to pay full attention to it, but the want of such respect in no wise affected the policy of the country. It is a pity to have to spoil so amusing a story as Mr. Kinglake's; but the commonplace truth has to be told that the invasion of the Crimea was not due to the crotchet of one minister and the drowsiness of all the rest.

The invasion of the Crimea, however, was not a soldier's project. It was not welcomed by the English or the French commander. It was undertaken by Lord Raglan out of deference to the recommendations of the government; and by Marshal St. Arnaud out of deference to the emperor of the French and because Lord Raglan too did not see his way to decline the responsibility of it. The allied forces were therefore conveyed to the south-western shore of the Crimea, and effected a landing in Kalamita Bay, a short distance north of the point at which the river Alma runs into the sea. Sebastopol itself lies about thirty miles to the south; and then more southward still, divided by the bulk of a jutting promontory from Sebastopol, is the harbor of Balaklava. The disembarkation began on the morning of September 14, 1854. It was completed on the fifth day; and there were then some 27,000 English, 30,000 French, and 7,000 Turks, landed on the shores of Catherine the Great's Crimea. The landing was effected without any opposition from the Russians. On September 19th the allies marched out of their encampments and moved southward in the direction of Sebastopol. They had a skirmish or two with a reconnoitering force of Russian cavalry and Cossacks; but they had no business of genuine war until they reached the nearer bank of the Alma. The Russians in great strength had taken up a splendid position on the heights that fringed the other side of the river. The allied forces reached the Alma about noon on September 20th. They found that they had to cross the

river in the face of the Russian batteries armed with heavy guns on the highest point of the hills or bluffs, of scattered artillery, and of dense masses of infantry which covered the hills. The Russians were under the command of Prince Mentschikoff. It is certain that Prince Mentschikoff believed his position unassailable, and was convinced that his enemies were delivered into his hands when he saw the allies approach and attempt to effect the crossing of the river. He had allowed them, of deliberate purpose, to approach thus far. He might have attacked them on their landing, or on their two days' march toward the river. But he did not choose to do anything of the kind. He had carefully sought out a strong and what he considered an impregnable position. He had found it, as he believed, on the south bank of the Alma; and there he was simply biding his time. His idea was that he could hold his ground for some days against the allies with ease; that he would keep them there, play with them, until the great reinforcements he was expecting could come to him; and then he would suddenly take the offensive and crush the enemy. He proposed to make of the Alma and its banks the grave of the invaders. But with characteristic arrogance and lack of care he had neglected some of the very precautions which were essentially necessary to secure any position, however strong. He had not taken the pains to make himself certain that every easy access to his position was closed against the attack of the enemy. The attack was made with desperate courage on the part of the allies, but without any great skill of leadership or tenacity of discipline. It was rather a pell-mell sort of fight, in which the headlong courage and the indomitable obstinacy of the English and French troops carried all before them at last. A study of the battle is of little profit to the ordinary reader. It was an heroic scramble. There was little coherence of action between the allied forces. But there was happily an almost total absence of generalship on the part of the Russians. The soldiers of the czar fought stoutly and stubbornly as they have always done; but they could not stand up against the blended vehemence and obstinacy of the English and French. The river was crossed, the opposite heights were mounted, Prince Mentschikoff's great redoubt was carried, the Russians were driven from the field, the allies occupied their ground; the victory was to



the western powers. Indeed, it would not be unfair to say that the victory was to the English; owing to whatever cause, the French did not take that share in the heat of the battle which their strength and their military genius might have led men to expect. St. Arnaud, their commander-in-chief, was in wretched health, on the point of death, in fact; he was in no condition to guide the battle; a brilliant enterprise of General Bosquet was ill-supported and had nearly proved a failure; and Prince Napoleon's division got hopelessly jammed up and confused. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that in the confusion and scramble of the whole affair we were more lucky than the French. If a number of men are rushing headlong and in the dark toward some distant point, one may run against an unthought-of obstacle and fall down and so lose his chance, while his comrade happens to meet with no such stumbling-block and goes right on. Perhaps this illustration may not unfairly distribute the parts taken in the battle. It would be superfluous to say that the French fought splendidly where they had any real chance of fighting. But the luck of the day was not with them. On all sides the battle was fought without generalship. On all sides the bravery of the officers and men was worthy of any general. Our men were the luckiest. They saw the heights; they saw the enemy there; they made for him; they got at him; they would not go back; and so he had to give way. That was the history of the day. The big scramble was all over in a few hours. The first field was fought, and we had won.

The Russians ought to have been pursued. They themselves fully expected a pursuit. They retreated in something like utter confusion, eager to put the Katcha river, which runs south of the Alma and with a somewhat similar course, between them and the imaginary pursuers. Had they been followed to the Katcha they might have been all made prisoners or destroyed. But there was no pursuit. Lord Raglan was eager to follow up the victory; but the French had as yet hardly any cavalry, and Marshal St. Arnaud would not agree to any further enterprise that day. Lord Raglan believed that he ought not to persist; and nothing was done. The Russians were unable at first to believe in their good fortune. It seemed to them for a long time impossible that any commanders in the

world could have failed, under conditions so tempting, to follow a flying and disordered enemy.

Except for the bravery of those who fought, the battle was not much to boast of. The allies together considerably outnumbered the Russians, although, from the causes we have mentioned, the Englishmen were left throughout the greater part of the day to encounter an enemy numerically superior, posted on difficult and commanding heights. But it was the first great battle which for nearly forty years our soldiers had fought with a civilized enemy.

The military authorities and the country were well disposed to make the most of it. At this distance of time it is almost touching to read some of the heroic contemporaneous descriptions of the great scramble of the Alma. It might almost seem as if, in the imaginings of the enthusiastic historians, Englishmen had never mounted heights and defeated superior numbers before. The sublime triumphs against every adverse condition which had been won by the genius of a Marlborough or a Wellington could not have been celebrated in language of more exalted dithyrambic pomp. The gallant medley on the banks of the Alma and the fruitless interval of inaction that followed it were told of as if men were speaking of some battle of the gods.

Very soon, however, a different note came to be sounded. The campaign had been opened under conditions differing from those of most campaigns that went before it. Science had added many new discoveries to the art of war. Literature had added one remarkable contribution of her own to the conditions amid which campaigns were to be carried on. She had added the "special correspondent." The old-fashioned historiographer of wars traveled to please sovereigns and minister to the self-conceit of conquerors. The modern special correspondent had a very different purpose. He watched the movements of armies and criticized the policy of generals in the interest of some journal, which for its part was concerned only for the information of the public. No favor that courts or monarchs could bestow was worthy a moment's consideration in the mind even of the most selfish proprietor of a newspaper when compared with the reward which the public could give to him and to his paper for quick accurate news and trustworthy comment. The business of the special correspon-

dent has grown so much since the Crimean War that we are now inclined to look back upon the war correspondents of those days almost as men then did upon the old-fashioned historiographer. The war correspondent now scrawls his despatches as he sits in his saddle under the fire of the enemy; he scrawls them with a pencil, noting and describing each incident of the fight, so far as he can see it, as coolly as if he were describing a review of volunteers in Hyde Park; and he contrives to send off his narrative by telegraph before the victor in the fight has begun to pursue, or has settled down to hold the ground he won; and the war correspondent's story is expected to be as brilliant and picturesque in style as it ought to be exact and faithful in its statements. In the days of the Crimea things had not advanced quite so far as that; the war was well on before the submarine telegraph between Varna and the Crimea allowed of daily reports; but the feats of the war correspondent then filled men's minds with wonder. When the expedition was leaving England it was accompanied by a special correspondent from each of the great daily papers of London. The *Times* sent out a representative whose name almost immediately became celebrated—Mr. William Howard Russell, the *preux chevalier* of war correspondents in that day as Mr. Archibald Forbes of the *Daily News* is in this. Mr. Russell rendered some service to the English army and to his country, however, which no brilliancy of literary style would alone have enabled him to do. It was to his great credit as a man of judgment and observation that, being a civilian who had never before seen one puff of war-smoke, he was able to distinguish between the confusion inseparable from all actual levying of war and the confusion that comes of distinctly bad administration. To the unaccustomed eye of an ordinary civilian the whole progress of a campaign, the development of a battle, the arrangements of the commissariat, appear, at any moment of actual pressure, to be nothing but a mass of confusion. He is accustomed in civil life to find everything in its proper place, and every emergency well provided for. When he is suddenly plunged into the midst of a campaign he is apt to think that everything must be going wrong; or else he assumes contentedly that the whole is in the hands of persons who knew better than he, and that it would be absurd on his part to attempt to

criticise the arrangements of the men whose business it is to understand them. Mr. Russell soon saw that there was confusion; and he had the soundness of judgment to know that the confusion was that of a breaking-down system. Therefore, while the fervor of delight in the courage and success of our army was still fresh in the minds of the public at home, while every music-hall was ringing with the cheap rewards of valor in the shape of popular glorifications of our commanders and our soldiers, the readers of the *Times* began to learn that things were faring badly indeed with the conquering army of the Alma. The ranks were thinned by the ravages of cholera. The men were pursued by cholera to the very battle-field, Lord Raglan himself said. No system can charm away all the effects of climate; but it appeared only too soon that the arrangements made to encounter the indirect and inevitable dangers of a campaign were miserably inefficient. The hospitals were in a wretchedly disorganized condition. Stores of medicines and strengthening food were decaying in places where no one wanted them or could well get at them, while men were dying in hundreds among our tents in the Crimea for lack of them. The system of clothing, of transport, of feeding, of nursing—everything had broken down. Ample provisions had been got together and paid for; and when they came to be needed no one knew where to get at them. The special correspondent of the *Times* and other correspondents continued to din these things into the ears of the public at home. Exultation began to give way to a feeling of dismay. The patriotic anger against the Russians was changed for a mood of deep indignation against our own authorities and our own war administration. It soon became apparent to every one that the whole campaign had been planned on the assumption that it was to be like the career of the hero whom Byron laments, "brief, brave, and glorious." Our military authorities here at home—we do not speak of the commanders in the field—had made up their minds that Sebastopol was to fall like another Jericho at the sound of the war-trumpets' blast.

Our commanders in the field were, on the contrary, rather disposed to overrate than to underrate the strength of the Russians. It was, therefore, somewhat like the condition of things described in Macaulay's ballad: those behind cried forward, those in front called back. It is very

likely that if a sudden dash had been made at Sebastopol by land and sea, it might have been taken almost at the very opening of the war. But the delay gave the Russians full warning; and they did not neglect it. On the third day after the battle of the Alma the Russians sank seven vessels of their Black Sea fleet at the entrance of the harbor of Sebastopol. This was done full in the sight of the allied fleets, who, at first, misunderstanding the movements going on among the enemy, thought the Russian squadron were about to come out from their shelter and try conclusions with the western ships. But the real purpose of the Russians became soon apparent. Under the eyes of the allies the seven vessels slowly settled down and sank in the water until at last only the tops of their masts were to be seen; and the entrance of the harbor was barred as by sunken rocks against any approach of an enemy's ship. There was an end to every dream of a sudden capture of Sebastopol.

The allied armies moved again from their positions on the Alma; but they did not direct their march to the north side of Sebastopol. They made for Balaklava, which lies south of the city, on the other side of a promontory, and which has a port that might enable them to secure a constant means of communication between the armies and the fleets. To reach Balaklava the allied forces had to undertake a long and fatiguing flank march, passing Sebastopol on their right. They accomplished the march in safety and occupied the heights above Balaklava, while the fleets appeared at the same time in the harbor. Sebastopol was but a few miles off, and preparations were at once made for an attack on it by land and sea. On October 17th the attack began. It was practically a failure. Nothing better indeed could well have been expected. The fleet could not get near enough to the sea-forts of Sebastopol to make their broadsides of any real effect, because of the shallow water and the sunken ships; and although the attack from the land was vigorous and was fiercely kept up, yet it could not carry its object. It became clear that Sebastopol was not to be taken by any *coup de main*; and the allies had not men enough to invest it. They were, therefore, to some extent themselves in the condition of a besieged force, for the Russians had a large army outside Sebastopol ready to make every sacrifice for

the purpose of preventing the English and French from getting even a chance of undisturbed operations against it.

The Russians attacked the allies fiercely on October 25th, in the hope of obtaining possession of Balaklava. The attempt was bold and brilliant; but it was splendidly repulsed. Never did a day of battle do more credit to English courage, or less perhaps to English generalship. The cavalry particularly distinguished themselves. It was in great measure on our side a cavalry action. It will be memorable in all English history as the battle in which occurred the famous charge of the light brigade. Owing to some fatal misconception of the meaning of an order from the commander-in-chief, the light brigade, six-hundred and seven men in all, charged what has been rightly described as "the Russian army in position." The brigade was composed of 118 men of the 4th light Dragoons; 104 of the 8th Hussars; 110 of the 11th Hussars; 130 of the 13th Light Dragoons; and 145 of the 17th Lancers. Of the 607 men 198 came back. Long, painful, and hopeless were the disputes about this fatal order. The controversy can never be wholly settled. The officer who bore the order was one of the first who fell in the outset. All Europe, all the world, rang with wonder and admiration of the futile and splendid charge. The poet laureate sang of it in spirited verses. Perhaps its best epitaph was contained in the celebrated comment ascribed to the French General Bosquet, and which has since become proverbial, and been quoted until men are well nigh tired of it—"It was magnificent, but it was not war."

Next day the enemy made another vigorous attack, on a much larger scale, moving out of Sebastopol itself, and were again repulsed. The allies were able to prevent the troops who made the sortie from co-operating with the Russian army outside who had attacked at Balaklava. The latter were endeavoring to entrench themselves at the little village of Inkerman, lying on the north of Sebastopol; but the stout resistance they met with from the allies frustrated their plans. On November 5th the Russians made another grand attack on the allies, chiefly on the British, but were once more splendidly repulsed. The plateau of Inkerman was the principal scene of the struggle. It was occupied by the guards and a few British regiments, on whom fell, until General Bosquet with his French

was able to come to their assistance, the task of resisting a Russian army. This was the severest and the fiercest engagement of the campaign. The loss to the English was 2,612, of whom 145 were officers. The French lost about, 1,700. The Russians were believed to have lost 12,000 men; but at no time could any clear account be obtained of the Russian losses. It was believed that they brought a force of 50,000 men to the attack. Inkerman was described at the time as the soldier's battle. Strategy, it was said everywhere, there was none. The attack was made under cover of a dark and drizzling mist. The battle was fought for awhile almost absolutely in the dark. There was hardly any attempt to direct the allies by any principles of scientific warfare. The soldiers fought stubbornly a series of hand-to-hand fights, and we are entitled to say that the better men won in the end. We fully admit that it was a soldier's battle. All the comment we have to make upon the epithet is, that we do not exactly know which of the engagements fought in the Crimea was anything but a soldier's battle. Of course with the soldiers we take the officers. A battle in the Crimea with which generalship had anything particular to do has certainly not come under the notice of this writer. Mr. Kinglake tells that at Alma, Marshal St. Arnaud, the French commander-in-chief, addressing General Canrobert and Prince Napoleon, said—"With such men as you, I have no orders to give; I have but to point to the enemy." This seems to have been the general principle on which the commanders conducted the campaign. There were the enemy's forces—let the men go at them any way they could. Nor, under the circumstances, could anything much better have been done. When orders were given it appeared more than once as if things would have gone better without them. The soldier won his battle always. No general could prevent him from doing that.

Meanwhile what were people saying in England? They were indignantly declaring that the whole campaign was a muddle. It was evident now that Sebastopol was not going to fall at once; it was evident too that the preparations had been made on the assumption that it must fall at once. To make disappointment more bitter at home, the public had been deceived for a few days by a false report of the taking of Sebastopol; and the disappointment

naturally increased the impatience and dissatisfaction of Englishmen. The fleet that had been sent out to the Baltic came back without having accomplished anything in particular; and although there really was nothing in particular that it could have accomplished under the circumstances, yet many people were as angry as if it had culpably allowed the enemy to escape it on the open seas. The sailing of the Baltic fleet had indeed been preceded by ceremonials especially calculated to make any enterprise ridiculous which failed to achieve some startling success. It was put under the command of Sir Charles Napier, a brave old salt of the fast-fading school of Smollett's Commodore Trunnion—rough, dashing, bull-headed, likely enough to succeed where sheer force and courage could win victories, but wanting in all the intellectual qualities of a commander, and endowed with a violent tongue and an almost unmatched indiscretion. Sir Charles Napier was a member of a family famed for its warriors; but he had not anything like the capacity of his cousin the other Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, or the intellect of Sir William Napier, the historian of the Peninsular War. He had won some signal and surprising successes in the Portuguese civil war and in Syria; all under conditions wholly different and with an enemy wholly different from those he would have to encounter in the Baltic. But the voice of admiring friends was tumultuously raised to predict splendid things for him before his fleet had left its port, and he himself quite forgot, in his rough self-confidence, the difference between boasting when one is taking off his armour and boasting when one is only putting it on. His friends entertained him at a farewell dinner at the reform club. Lord Palmerston was present and Sir James Graham, the first lord of the admiralty, and a great deal of exuberant nonsense was talked. Lord Palmerston, carried away by his natural *bonhomie* and his high animal spirits, showered the most extravagant praises upon the gallant admiral intermixed with jokes which set the company laughing consumedly, but which read by the outer public next day seemed unbecoming preludes to an expedition that was to be part of a great war and of terrible national sacrifices. The one only thing that could have excused the whole performance would have been some overwhelming success on the part of him who was its hero. But it is



not probable that a Dundonald, or even a Nelson have done much in the Baltic just then; and Napier not a Dundonald or a Nelson. The Baltic fleet came home safely after awhile, its commander having brought with him nothing but a grievance which lasted him all the remainder of his life. The public were amazed, scornful, wrathful; they began to think that they were destined to see nothing but failure as the fruit of the campaign. In truth, they were extravagantly impatient. Perhaps they were not to be blamed. Their leaders, who ought to have known better, had been filling them with the idea that they had nothing to do but to sweep the enemy from sea and land.

The temper of a people thus stimulated and thus disappointed is almost always indiscriminating and unreasonable in its censure. The first idea is to find a victim. The victim on whom the anger of a large portion of the public turned in this instance was the prince consort. The most absurd ideas, the most cruel and baseless calumnies, were in circulation about him. He was accused of having out of some inscrutable motive made use of all his secret influence to prevent the success of the campaign. He was charged with being in a conspiracy with Prussia, with Russia, with no one knew exactly whom, to weaken the strength of England and secure a triumph for her enemies. Stories were actually told at one time of his having been arrested for high treason. He had in one of his speeches about this time said that constitutional government was under a heavy trial, and could only pass triumphantly through it if the country would grant its confidence to her majesty's government. In this observation, as the whole context of the speech showed, the prince was only explaining that the queen's government were placed at a disadvantage, in the carrying on of a war, as compared with a government like that of the emperor of the French, who could act of his own arbitrary will, without check, delay, or control on the part of any parliamentary body. But the speech was instantly fastened on as illustrating the prince's settled and unconquerable dislike of all constitutional and popular principles of government. Those who opposed the prince had not indeed been waiting for his speech at the Trinity House dinner to denounce and condemn him; but the sentence in that speech to which refer-

ence has been made opened upon him a new torrent of hostile criticism. The charges which sprang of this heated and unjust temper on the part of the public did not indeed long prevail against the prince consort. When once the subject came to be taken up in parliament it was shown almost in a moment that there was not the slightest ground or excuse for any of the absurd surmises and cruel suspicions which had been creating so much agitation. The agitation collapsed in a moment. But while it lasted it was both vehement and intense, and gave much pain to the prince, and far more pain still to the queen his wife.

We have seen more lately and on a larger scale something like the phenomenon of that time. During the war between France and Germany the people of Paris went nearly wild with the idea that they had been betrayed, and were clamorous for victims to punish anywhere or anyhow. To many calm Englishmen this seemed monstrously unreasonable and unworthy; and the French people received from English writers many grave rebukes and wise exhortations. But the temper of the English public at one period of the Crimean War was becoming very like that which set Paris wild during the disastrous struggle with Germany. The passions of peoples are, it is to be feared, very much alike in their impulses and even in their manifestations; and if England during the Crimean War never came to the wild condition into which Paris fell during the later struggle it is perhaps rather because, on the whole, things went well with England, than in consequence of any very great superiority of Englishmen in judgment and self-restraint over the excitable people of France. Certainly, those who remember what we may call the dark days of the Crimean campaign, when disappointment following on extravagant confidence had incited popular passion to call for some victim, will find themselves slow to set a limit to the lengths that passion might have reached if the Russians had actually been successful even in one or two battles.

The winter was gloomy at home as well as abroad. The news constantly arriving from the Crimea told only of devastation caused by foes far more formidable than the Russians—sickness, bad weather, bad management. The Black Sea was swept and scourged by terrible storms. The destruction of transport-ships laden with winter stores for our men was of incalculable injury to the army.

Clothing, blanketing, provisions, hospital necessaries of all kinds, were destroyed in vast quantities. The loss of life among the crews of the vessels was immense. A storm was nearly as disastrous in this way as a battle. On shore the sufferings of the army were unspeakable. The tents were torn from their pegs and blown away. The officers and men were exposed to the bitter cold and the fierce stormy blasts. Our soldiers had for the most part little experience or even idea of such cold as they had to encounter this gloomy winter. The intensity of the cold was so great that no one might dare to touch any metal substance in the open air with his bare hand under penalty of leaving the skin behind him. The hospitals for the sick and wounded at Scutari were in a wretchedly disorganized condition. They were for the most part in an absolutely chaotic condition as regards arrangement and supply. In some instances medical stores were left to decay at Varna or were found lying useless in the holds of vessels in Balaklava Bay, which were needed for the wounded at Scutari. The medical officers were able and zealous men; the stores were provided and paid for so far as our government was concerned; but the stores were not brought to the medical men. These had their hands all but idle, their eyes and souls tortured by the sight of sufferings which they were unable to relieve for the want of the commonest appliances of the hospital. The most extraordinary instances of blunder and confusion were constantly coming to light. Great consignments of boots arrived and were found to be all for the left foot. Mules for the conveyances of stores were contracted for and delivered, but delivered so that they came into the hands of the Russians and not of us. Shameful frauds were perpetrated in the instance of some of the contracts for preserved meat. "One man's preserved meat," exclaimed *Punch* with bitter humor, "is another man's poison." The evils of the hospital disorganization were happily made a means of bringing about a new system of attending to the sick and wounded in war which has already created something like a revolution in the manner of treating the victims of battle. Mr. Sidney Herbert, horrified at the way in which things were managed in Scutari and the Crimea, applied to a distinguished woman who had long taken a deep interest in hospital reform to superintend personally the nursing

of the soldiers. Miss Florence Nightingale was the daughter of a wealthy English country gentleman. She had chosen not to pass her life in fashionable or æsthetic inactivity, and had from a very early period turned her attention to sanitary questions. She had studied nursing as a science and a system; had made herself acquainted with the working of various continental institutions; and about the time when the war broke out she was actually engaged in reorganizing the Sick Governess' Institution in Harley street, London. To her Mr. Sidney Herbert turned. He offered her, if she would accept the task he proposed, plenary authority over all the nurses, and unlimited power of drawing on the government for whatever she might think necessary to the success of her undertaking. Miss Nightingale accepted the task, and went out to Scutari accompanied by some women of rank like her own and a trained staff of nurses. They speedily reduced chaos into order; and from the time of their landing in Scutari there was at least one department of the business of war which was never again a subject of complaint. The spirit of the chivalrie days had been restored under better auspices for its abiding influence. Ladies of rank once more devoted themselves to the service of the wounded; and the end was come of the Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig type of nurse. Sidney Herbert, in his letter to Miss Nightingale, had said that her example, if she accepted the task he proposed, would "multiply the good to all time." These words proved to have no exaggeration in them. We have never seen a war since in which women of education and of genuine devotion have not given themselves up to the task of caring for the wounded. The Geneva Convention and the bearing of the Red Cross are among the results of Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea.

But the siege of Sebastopol was meanwhile dragging heavily along; and sometimes it was not quite certain which ought to be called the besieged—the Russians in the city or the allies encamped in sight of it. During some months the allied armies did little or nothing. The commissariat system and the land transport system had broken down. The armies were miserably weakened by sickness. Cholera was ever and anon raging anew among our men. Horses and mules were dying of cold and

starvation. The roads were only deep irregular ruts filled with mud; the camp was a marsh; the tents stood often in pools of water; the men had sometimes no beds but straw dripping with wet; and hardly any bed coverings. Our unfortunate Turkish allies were in a far more wretched plight than even we ourselves. The authorities who ought to have looked after them were impervious to the criticisms of special correspondents and unassailable by parliamentary votes of censure. A condemnation of the latter kind was hanging over our government. Lord John Russell became impressed with the conviction that the Duke of Newcastle was not strong enough for the post of war minister, and he wrote to Lord Aberdeen urging that the war department should be given to Lord Palmerston. Lord Aberdeen replied that although another person might have a better choice when the appointments were made in the first instance, yet, in the absence of any proved defect or alleged incapacity, there was no sufficient ground for making a kind of speculative change. Parliament was called together before Christmas; and after the Christmas recess Mr. Roebuck gave notice that he would move for a select committee to inquire into the condition of the army before Sebastopol and into the conduct of those departments whose duty it had been to minister to the wants of the army. Lord John Russell did not believe for himself that the motion could be conscientiously resisted; but as it necessarily involved a censure upon some of his colleagues, he did not think he ought to remain longer in the ministry, and he therefore resigned his office. The sudden resignation of the leader of the House of Commons was a death-blow to any plans of resistance by which the government might otherwise have thought of encountering Mr. Roebuck's motion. Lord Palmerston, although Lord John Russell's course was a marked tribute to his own capacity, had remonstrated warmly with Russell by letter as to his determination to resign. "You will have the appearance," he said, "of having remained in office aiding in carrying on a system of which you disapprove until driven out by Roebuck's announced notice, and the government will have the appearance of self-condemnation by flying from a discussion which they dare not face; while as regards the country the action of the executive will be paralyzed for a time in a critical moment of a great war,

with an impending negotiation, and we shall exhibit to the world a melancholy spectacle of disorganization among our political men at home similar to that which has prevailed among our military men abroad." The remonstrance, however, came too late, even if it could have had any effect at any time. Mr. Roebuck's motion came on, and was resisted with vigor by Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone. Lord Palmerston insisted that the responsibility ought to fall not on the Duke of Newcastle, but on the whole cabinet; and with a generosity which his keenest opponents might have admitted to be characteristic of him, he accepted the task of defending an administration whose chief blame was in the eyes of most persons that they had not given the control of the war into his hands. Mr. Gladstone declared that the inquiry sought for by the resolution could lead to nothing but "confusion and disturbance, increased disasters, shame at home and weakness abroad; it would convey no consolation to those whom you seek to aid, but it would carry malignant joy to the hearts of the enemies of England." The House of Commons was not to be moved by any such argument or appeal. The one pervading idea was that England had been endangered and shamed by the breakdown of her army organization. When the division took place three hundred and five members voted for Mr. Roebuck's motion and only one hundred and forty-eight against. The majority against ministers were therefore one hundred and fifty-seven. Every one knows what a scene usually takes place when a ministry is defeated in the House of Commons. Cheering again and again renewed, counter-cheers of defiance, wild exultation, vehement indignation, a whole whirlpool of various emotions seething in that little hall in St. Stephen's. But this time there was no such outburst. The house could hardly realize the fact that the ministry of all the talents had been thus completely and ignominiously defeated. A dead silence followed the announcement of the numbers. Then there was a half-breathless murmur of amazement and incredulity. The speaker repeated the numbers, and doubt was over. It was still uncertain how the house would express its feelings. Suddenly some one laughed. The sound gave a direction and a relief to perplexed, pent-up emotion. Shouts of laughter followed. Not merely the pledged

opponents of the government laughed. Many of those who had voted with ministers found themselves laughing too. It seemed so absurd, so incongruous, this way of disposing of the great coalition government. Many must have thought of the night of fierce debate, little more than two years before, when Mr. Disraeli, then on the verge of his fall from power and realizing fully the strength of the combination against him, consoled his party and himself for the imminent fatality awaiting them by the defiant words, "I know that I have to face a coalition; the combination may be successful. A combination has before this been successful; but coalitions, though they may be successful, have always found that their triumphs have been brief. This I know, that England does not love coalitions." Only two years had passed and the great coalitions had fallen, overwhelmed with reproach and popular indignation, and amid sudden shouts of laughter.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.

ON February 15, 1855, Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother: "A month ago if any man had asked me to say what was one of the most improbable events, I should have said my being prime minister. Aberdeen was there, Derby was the head of one great party, John Russell of the other; and yet in about ten days' time they all gave way like straws before the wind; and so here am I, writing to you from Downing street as first lord of the treasury."

No doubt Lord Palmerston was sincere in the expression of surprise which we have quoted; but there were not many other men in the country who felt in the least astonished at the turn of events by which he had become prime minister. Indeed it had long become apparent to almost every one that his assuming that place was only a question of time. The country was in that mood that it would absolutely have somebody at the head of affairs who knew his own mind and saw his way clearly before him. When the coalition ministry broke down, Lord Derby was invited by the queen to form a government. He tried

and failed. He did all in his power to accomplish the task with which the queen had entrusted him. He invited Lord Palmerston to join him, and it was intimated that if Palmerston consented Mr. Disraeli would waive all claim to the leadership of the House of Commons, in order that Palmerston should have that place. Lord Derby also offered, through Lord Palmerston, places in his administration to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Palmerston did not see his way to join a Derby administration and without him Lord Derby could not go on. The queen then sent for Lord John Russell; but Russell's late and precipitate retreat from his office had discredited him with most of his former colleagues; and he found that he could not get a government together. Lord Palmerston was then, to use his own phrase, *l'inévitable*. There was not much change in the *personnel* of the ministry. Lord Aberdeen was gone, and Lord Palmerston took his place; and Lord Pannure, who had formerly as Fox Maule administered the affairs of the army, succeeded the Duke of Newcastle. Lord Pannure, however, combined in his own person the functions, up to that time absurdly separated, of secretary-at-war and secretary-for-war. The secretary-at-war under the old system was not one of the principal secretaries of state. He was merely the officer by whom the regular communications was kept up between the war office and the ministry, and has been described as the civil officer of the army. The secretary-for-war was commonly entrusted with the colonial department as well. The two war offices were now made into one. It was hoped that by this change great benefit would come to our whole army system. Lord Palmerston acted energetically too in sending out a sanitary commission to the Crimea, and a commission to superintend the commissariat, a department that, almost more than any other, had broken down. Nothing could be more strenuous than the terms in which Lord Palmerston recommended the sanitary commission to Lord Raglan. He requested that Lord Raglan would give the commissioners every assistance in his power. "They will, of course, be opposed and thwarted by the medical officers, by the men who have charge of the port arrangements, and by those who have the cleaning of the camp. Their mission will be ridiculed, and their recommendations and directions set aside, unless enforced by the per-



empty exercise of your authority. But that authority I must request you to exert in the most peremptory manner for the immediate and exact carrying into execution whatever changes of arrangement they may recommend; for these are matters on which depend the health and lives of many hundreds of men, I may indeed say of thousands." Lord Palmerston was strongly pressed by some of the more strenuous reformers of the house. Mr. Layard, who had acquired some celebrity before in a very different field, as a discoverer, that is to say, in the ruins of Ninevah and Babylon, was energetic and incessant in his attacks on the administration of the war, and was not disposed even now to give the new government a moment's rest. Mr. Layard was a man of a certain rough ability, immense self-sufficiency and indomitable egotism. He was not in any sense an eloquent speaker; he was singularly wanting in all the graces of style and manner. But he was fluent, he was vociferous, he never seemed to have a moment's doubt on any conceivable question, he never admitted that there could by any possibility be two sides to any matter of discussion. He did really know a great deal about the east at a time when the habit of traveling in the east was comparatively rare. He stamped down all doubt or difference of view with the overbearing dogmatism of Sir Walter Scott's "Touchwood," or of the proverbial man who has been there and ought to know; and he was in many respects admirably fitted to be the spokesman of all those, and they were not a few, who saw that things had been going wrong without exactly seeing why, and were eager that something should be done, although they did not clearly know what. Lord Palmerston strove to induce the house not to press for the appointment of the committee recommended in Mr. Roebuck's motion. The government, he said, would make the needful inquiries themselves. He reminded the house of Richard II.'s offer to lead the men of the fallen Tyler's insurrection himself; and in the same spirit he offered on the part of the government to take the lead in every necessary investigation. Mr. Roebuck, however, would not give way, and Lord Palmerston yielded to a demand which had undoubtedly the support of a vast force of public opinion. The constant argument of Mr. Layard had some sense in it; the government now in office was very much like the government in which the house

had declared so lately that it had no confidence. It could hardly, therefore, be expected that the house should accept its existence as guarantee enough that everything should be done which its predecessor had failed to do. Lord Palmerston gave way, but his unavoidable concession brought on a new ministerial crisis. Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert declined to hold office any longer. They had opposed the motion for an inquiry most gravely and strenuously, and they would not lend any countenance to it by remaining in office. Sir Charles Wood succeeded Sir James Graham as first lord of the admiralty; Lord John Russell took the place of secretary for the colonies, vacated by Sidney Herbert; and Sir George Cornwall Lewis followed Mr. Gladstone as chancellor of the exchequer.

Meanwhile new negotiations for peace, set afoot under the influence of Austria, had been begun at Vienna, and Lord John Russell had been sent there to represent the interests of England. The conference opened at Vienna under circumstances that might have seemed especially favorable to peace. We had got a new ally, a state not indeed commanding any great military strength, but full of energy and ambition, and representing more than any other perhaps the tendencies of liberalism and the operation of the comparatively new principle of the rights of nationalities. This was the little kingdom of Sardinia, whose government was then under the control of one of the master-spirits of modern politics; a man who belonged to the class of the Richelieus and the Orange Williams, the illustrious Count Cavour. Sardinia, it may be frankly said, did not come into the alliance because of any particular sympathies that she had with one side or the other of the quarrel between Russia and the western powers. She went into the war in order that she might have a *locus standi* in the councils of Europe from which to set forth her grievances against Austria. In the marvelous history of the uprising of the kingdom of Italy there is a good deal over which, to use the words of Carlyle, moralities not a few must shriek aloud. It would not be easy to defend on high moral principles the policy which struck into a war without any particular care for either side of the controversy, but only to serve an ulterior and personal, that is to say, national purpose. But regarding the policy merely

by the light of its results, it must be owned that it was singularly successful and entirely justified the expectations of Cavour. The Crimean War laid the foundations of the kingdom of Italy.

That was one fact calculated to inspire hopes of a peace. The greater the number and strength of the allies, the greater obviously the pressure upon Russia and the probability of her listening to reason. But there was another event of a very different nature, the effect of which seemed at first likely to be all in favor of peace. This was the death of the man whom the united public opinion of Europe regarded as the author of the war. On March 2, 1855, the Emperor Nicholas of Russia died of pulmonary apoplexy, after an attack of influenza. In other days it would have been said he had died of a broken heart. Perhaps the description would have been more strictly true than the terms of the medical report. It was doubtless the effect of utter disappointment, of the wreck and ruin of hopes to which a life's ambition had been directed and a life's energy dedicated, which left that frame of adamant open to the sudden dart of sickness. One of the most remarkable illustrations of an artist's genius devoted to a political subject was the cartoon which appeared in *Punch*, and which was called "General Février turned Traitor." The emperor Nicholas had boasted that Russia had two generals on whom she could always rely—General Janvier and General Février; and now the English artist represented General February, a skeleton in Russian uniform, turning traitor and laying his bony ice-cold hand on the heart of the sovereign and betraying him to the tomb. But, indeed, it was not General February alone who doomed Nicholas to death. The czar died of broken hopes; of the recklessness that comes from defeat and despair. He took no precautions against cold and exposure; he treated with a magnanimous disdain the remonstrances of his physicians and his friends. As of Max Piccolomini in Schiller's noble play, so of him: men whispered that he wished to die. The Alma was to him what Austerlitz was to Pitt. From the moment when the news of that defeat was announced to him he no longer seemed to have hope of the campaign. He took the story of the defeat very much as Lord North took the surrender of Cornwallis—as if a bullet had struck him. Thenceforth he was like one

whom the old Scotch phrase would describe as *fey*; one who moved, spoke and lived under the shadow of coming death, until the death came.

The news of the sudden death of the emperor created a profound sensation in England. Mr. Bright, at Manchester, shortly after rebuked what he considered an ignoble levity in the manner of commenting on the event among some of the English journals; but it is right to say that on the whole nothing could have been more decorous and dignified than the manner in which the English public generally received the news that the country's great enemy was no more. At first there was, as we have said, a common impression that Nicholas' son and successor, Alexander II., would be more anxious to make peace than his father had been. But this hope was soon gone. The new czar could not venture to show himself to his people in a less patriotic light than his predecessor. The prospects of the allies were at the time remarkably gloomy. There must have seemed to the new Russian emperor considerable ground for the hope that disease, and cold, and bad management would do more harm to the army of England at least than any Russian general could do. The conference at Vienna proved a failure, and even in some respects a *fiasco*. Lord John Russell, sent to Vienna as our representative, was instructed that the object he must hold in view was the admission of Turkey into the great family of European states. For this end there were four principal points to be considered: the condition of the Danubian principalities, the free navigation of the Danube, the limitation of Russian supremacy in the Black Sea, and the independence of the ports. It was on the attempt to limit Russian supremacy in the Black Sea that the negotiations became a failure. Russia would not consent to any proposal which could really have the desired effect. She would agree to no arrangement between Turkey and herself, but this was exactly what the western powers were determined not to allow. She declined to have the strength of her navy restricted; and proposed as a counter-resolution that the straits should be opened to the war flags of all nations, so that if Russia were strong as a naval power in the Black Sea, other powers might be just as strong if they thought fit. Lord Palmerston, in a letter to Lord John Russell, drily characterized this position, involving

as it would the maintenance by England and France of permanent fleets in the Black Sea to counter-balance the fleet of Russia, as a "*mauvaise plaisanterie*." Lord Palmerston indeed believed no more in the sincerity of Austria throughout all these transactions than he did in that of Russia. The conference proved a total failure, and in its failure it involved a good deal of the reputation of Lord John Russell. Like the French representative, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, Lord John Russell had been taken by the proposals of Austria and had supported them in the first instance; but when the government at home would not have them he was still induced to remain a member of the cabinet and even to condemn in the House of Commons the recommendations he had supported at Vienna. He was charged by Mr. Disraeli with having encouraged the Russian pretensions by declaring at a critical point of the negotiations that he was disposed to favor whatever arrangement would best preserve the honor of Russia. "What has the representative of England," Mr. Disraeli indignantly asked, "to do with the honor of Russia?" Lord John had indeed a fair reply. He could say with justice and good sense that no settlement was likely to be lasting which simply forced conditions upon a great power like Russia without taking any account of what is considered among nations to be her honor. But he was not able to give any satisfactory explanation of his having approved the conditions in Vienna which he afterward condemned in Westminster. He explained in parliament that he did in the first instance regard the Austrian propositions as containing the possible basis of a satisfactory and lasting peace; but that as the government would not hear of them he had rejected them against his own judgment; and that he had afterward been converted to the opinion of his colleagues and believed them inadmissible in principle. This was a sort of explanation more likely to alarm than to reassure the public. What manner of danger, it was asked on all sides, may we not be placed in when our representatives do not know their own minds as to proper terms of peace; when they have no opinion of their own upon the subject, but are loud in approval of certain conditions one day which they are equally loud in condemning the next? There was a general impression throughout England that some of our statesmen in office had never been sincerely in

favor of the war from the first; that even still they were cold, doubtful, and half-hearted about it, and that the honor of the country was not safe in such hands. The popular instinct, whether it was right as to facts or not, was perfectly sound as to inferences. We may honor, in many instances, we must honor, the conscientious scruples of a public man who distrusts the objects and has no faith in the results of some war in which his people are engaged. But such a man has no business in the government which has the conduct of the war. The men who are to carry on a war must have no doubt of its rightfulness of purpose, and must not be eager to conclude it on any terms. In the very interests of peace itself they must be resolute to carry on the war until it has reached the end they sought for.

Lord John Russell's remaining in office after these disclosures was practically impossible. Sir E. B. Lytton gave notice of a direct vote of censure on "the minister charged with the negotiations at Vienna." But Russell anticipated the certain effect of a vote in the House of Commons by resigning his office. This step at least extricated his colleagues from any share in the censure, although the recriminations that passed on the occasion in parliament were many and bitter. The vote and censure was however withdrawn. Sir William Molesworth, one of the most distinguished of the school who were since called Philosophical Radicals, succeeded him as colonial secretary; and the ministry carried one or two triumphant votes against Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Roebuck, and other opponents, or at least unfriendly critics. Meanwhile the emperor of the French and his wife had paid a visit to London and had been received with considerable enthusiasm. The queen seems to have been very favorably impressed by the emperor. She sincerely admired him, and believed in his desire to maintain peace as far as possible, and to do his best for the promotion of liberal principles and sound economic doctrines throughout Europe. The beauty and grace of the empress likewise greatly won over Queen Victoria. The prince consort seems to have been less impressed. He was indeed a believer in the sincerity and good disposition of the emperor but he found him strangely ignorant on some subjects, even the modern political history of England and France. During the visit of the royal family of England

to France, and now while the emperor and empress were in London, the same impression appears to have been left on the mind of the prince consort. He also seems to have noticed a certain barrack-room flavor about the emperor's *entourage* which was not agreeable to his own ideas of dignity and refinement. The prince consort appears to have judged the emperor almost exactly as we know now that Prince Bismarck did then, and as impartial opinion has judged him everywhere in Europe since that time.

The operations in the Crimea were renewed with some vigor. The English army lost much by the death of its brave and manly commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan. He was succeeded by General Simpson, who had recently been sent out to the Crimea as chief of the staff, and whose administration during the short time that he held the command was at least well qualified to keep Lord Raglan's memory green and to prevent the regret for his death from losing any of its keenness. The French army had lost its first commander long before—the versatile, reckless, brilliant soldier of fortune, St. Arnaud, whose broken health had from the opening of the campaign prevented him from displaying any of the qualities which his earlier career gave men reason to look for under his command. After St. Arnaud's death the command was transferred for awhile to General Canrobert, who, finding himself hardly equal to the task, resigned it in favor of General Pélissier. The Sardinian contingent had arrived and had given admirable proof of its courage and discipline. On August 16, 1855, the Russians, under General Liprandi, made a desperate effort to raise the siege of Sebastopol by an attack on the allied forces. The attack was skillfully planned during the night, and was made in great strength. The French divisions had to bear the principal weight of the attack; but the Sardinian contingent also had a prominent place in the resistance, and bore themselves with splendid bravery and success. The attempt of the Russians was completely foiled; and all northern Italy was thrown into wild delight by the news that the flag of Piedmont had been carried to victory over the troops of one great European power, and side by side with those of two others. The unanimous voice of the country now approved and acclaimed the policy of Cavour, which had been sanctioned only by a very narrow majority, had been denounced from

all sides as reckless and senseless, and had been carried out in the face of the most tremendous difficulties. It was the first great illustration of Cavour's habitual policy of blended audacity and cool far-seeing judgment. It is a curious fact that the suggestion to send Sardinian troops to the Crimea did not originate in Cavour's own busy brain. The first thought of it came up in the mind of a woman, Cavour's niece. The great statesman was struck with the idea from the moment when she suggested it. He thought over it deeply, resolved to adopt it, and carried it to triumphant success.

The repulse of the Tchernaya was a heavy, indeed a fatal stroke for the Russians. The siege had been progressing for some time with considerable activity. The French had drawn their lines nearer and nearer to the besieged city. The Russians, however, had also been throwing up fresh works, which brought them nearer to the lines of the allies, and sometimes made the latter seem as if they were the besieged rather than the besiegers. The Malakoff tower and the Mamelon battery in front of it became the scenes and the objects of constant struggle. The Russians made desperate night-sorties again and again, and were always repulsed. On June 7th the English assaulted the quarries in front of the Redan, and the French attacked the Mamelon. The attack on both sides was successful; but it was followed on the 18th of the same month by a desperate and wholly unsuccessful attack on the Redan and Malakoff batteries. There was some misapprehension on the side of the French commander, which led to a lack of precision and unity in the carrying out of the enterprise, and it became, therefore, a failure on the part of both the allies. A pompous and exulting address was issued by Prince Gortschakoff, in which he informed the Russian army that the enemy had been beaten, driven back with enormous loss; and announced that the hour was approaching "when the pride of the enemy will be lowered, their armies swept from our soil like chaff blown away by the wind."

On September 5th the allies made an attack almost simultaneously upon the Malakoff and the Redan. It was agreed that as soon as the French had got possession of the Malakoff the English should attack the Redan, the hoisting of the French flag on the former fort to be the signal



for our men to move. The French were brilliantly successful in their part of the attack, and in a quarter of an hour from the beginning of the attempt the flag of the empire was floating on the parapets. The English then at once advanced upon the Redan; but it was a very different task from that which the French had had to undertake. The French were near the Malakoff; the English were very far away from the Redan. The distance our soldiers had to traverse left them almost helplessly exposed to the Russian fire. They stormed the parapets of the Redan despite all the difficulties of their attack; but they were not able to hold the place. The attacking party were far too small in numbers; reinforcements did not come in time; the English held their own for an hour against odds that might have seemed overwhelming; but it was simply impossible for them to establish themselves in the Redan, and the remnant of them that could withdraw had to retreat to the trenches. It was only the old story of the war. Superb courage and skill of officers and men; outrageously bad generalship. The attack might have been renewed that day, but the English commander-in-chief, General Simpson, declared with *naïveté* that the trenches were too crowded for him to do anything. Thus the attack failed because there were too few men, and could not be renewed because there were too many. The cautious commander resolved to make another attempt the next morning. But before the morrow came there was nothing to attack. The Russians withdrew during the night from the south side of Sebastopol. A bridge of boats had been constructed across the bay to connect the north and the south sides of the city, and across this bridge Prince Gortschakoff quietly withdrew his troops. The bombardment kept up by the allies had been so terrible and so close for several days, and their long-range guns were so entirely superior to anything possessed by or indeed known to the Russians, that the defenses of the south side were irreparably destroyed. The Russian general felt that it would be impossible for him to hold the city much longer, and that to remain there was only useless waste of life. But, as he said in his own despatch, "it is not Sebastopol which we have left to them, but the burning ruins of the town, which we ourselves set fire to, having maintained the honor of the defense in such a manner that our great grandchild-

dren may recall with pride the remembrance of it and send it on to all posterity." It was some time before the allies could venture to enter the abandoned city. The arsenals and power-magazines were exploding, the flames were bursting out of every public building and every private house. The Russians had made of Sebastopol another Moscow.

With the close of that long siege, which had lasted nearly a year, the war may be said to have ended. The brilliant episode of Kars, its splendid defense and its final surrender, was brought to its conclusion, indeed, after the fall of Sebastopol; but, although it naturally attracted peculiar attention in this country, it could have no effect on the actual fortunes of such a war. Kars was defended by Colonel Fenwick Williams, an English officer, who had been sent all too late, to reorganize the Turkish forces in Armenia after they had suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of the Russians. Never probably had a man a more difficult task than that which fell to the lot of Williams. He had to contend against official stupidity, corruption, delay; he could get nothing done without having first to remove whole mountains of obstruction, and to quicken into life and movement an apathy which seemed like that of a paralyzed system. He concentrated his efforts at last upon the defense of Kars, and he held the place against overwhelming Russian forces, and against an enemy far more appalling, starvation itself. With his little garrison he repelled a tremendous attack of the Russian army under General Mouravieff, in a battle that lasted nearly seven hours, and as the result of which the Russians left on the field more than five thousand dead. He had to surrender at last to famine; but the very articles of surrender to which the conqueror consented became the trophy of Williams and his men. The garrison were allowed to leave the place with all the honors of war; and, "as a testimony to the valorous resistance made by the garrison of Kars, the officers of all ranks are to keep their swords." Williams and his English companions, Colonel Lake, Major Teesdale, Major Thompson, and Dr. Sandwith, had done as much for the honor of their country at the close of the war as Butler and Nasmyth and Ballard had done at its opening. The curtain of that great drama rose and fell upon a splendid scene of English heroism.

The war was virtually over. Austria had been exerting herself throughout its progress in the interests of peace, and after the fall of Sebastopol she made a new effort with greater success. Two of the belligerents were indeed now anxious to be out of the struggle almost on any terms. These were France and Russia. The new emperor of Russia was not a man personally inclined for war; nor had he his father's overbearing and indomitable temper. He could not but see that his father had greatly overrated the military strength and resources of his country. He had accepted the war only as a heritage of necessary evil, with little hope of any good to come of it to Russia; and he welcomed any chance of ending it on fair terms. France, or at least her emperor, was all but determined to get back again into peace. If England had held out, it is highly probable that she would have had to do so alone. For this indeed Lord Palmerston was fully prepared as a last resource, sooner than submit to terms which he considered unsatisfactory. He said so and he meant it. "I can fancy," Lord Palmerston wrote to Lord Clarendon in his bright good-humored way, "how I should be hooted in the House of Commons if I were to get up and say that we had agreed to an imperfect and unsatisfactory arrangement.

. . . I had better beforehand take the Chiltern Hundreds." Lord Palmerston, however, had no occasion to take the Chiltern Hundreds; the Congress of Paris opened on February 26, 1856, and on March 30th the treaty of peace was signed by the plenipotentiaries of the great powers. Prussia had been admitted to the congress, which therefore represented England, France, Austria, Prussia, Turkey and Sardinia.

The treaty began by declaring that Kars was to be restored to the Sultan, and that Sebastopol and all other places taken by the allies were to be given back to Russia. The sublime porte was admitted to participate in all the advantages of the public law and system of Europe. The other powers engaged to respect the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey. They guaranteed in common the strict observance of that engagement, and announced that they would in consequence consider any act tending to a violation of it as a question of general interest. The sultan issued a firman for ameliorating the condition of his Christian subjects, and communicated to the other powers

the purposes of the firman "emanating spontaneously from his sovereign will." No right of interference, it was distinctly specified, was given to the other powers by this concession on the sultan's part. The article of the treaty which referred to the Black Sea is of especial importance. "The Black Sea is neutralized; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war either of the powers possessing its coast or of any other power, with the exceptions mentioned in articles fourteen and nineteen." The exceptions only reserved the right of each of the powers to have the same number of small armed vessels in the Black Sea to act as a sort of maritime police and to protect the coasts. The sultan and the emperor engaged to establish and maintain no military or maritime arsenals in that sea. The navigation of the Danube was thrown open. In exchange for the towns restored to him, and in order more fully to secure the navigation of the Danube, the emperor consented to a certain ratification of his frontier in Bessarabia, the territory ceded by Russia to be annexed to Moldavia under the suzerainty of the porte. Moldavia and Wallachia, continuing under the suzerainty of the sultan, were to enjoy all the privileges and immunities they already possessed under the guarantee of the contracting powers, but with no separate right of intervention in their affairs. The existing position of Servia was assured. A convention respecting the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus was made by all the powers. By this convention the sultan maintained the ancient rule prohibiting ships of war of foreign powers from entering the straits so long as the porte is at peace. During time of peace the sultan engaged to admit no foreign ships of war into the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles. The sultan reserved to himself the right as in former times of delivering firmans of passage for light vessels under the flag of war employed in the service of foreign powers—that is to say, of their diplomatic missions. A separate convention as to the Black Sea between Russia and Turkey agreed that the contracting parties should have in that sea six light steam vessels of not more than eight hundred tons, and four steam or sailing vessels of not more than two hundred tons each.

Thus the controversies about the Christian provinces,

the straits, and the Black Sea were believed to be settled. The great central business of the congress, however, was to assure the independence and the territorial integrity of Turkey, now admitted to a place in the family of European states. As it did not seem clear to those most particularly concerned in bringing about this result that the arrangements adopted in full congress had been sufficient to guarantee Turkey from the enemy they most feared, there was a tripartite treaty afterward agreed to between England, France, and Austria. This document bears date in Paris, April 15, 1856; by it the contracting parties guaranteed jointly and severally the independence and integrity of the Ottoman empire, and declared that any infraction of the general treaty of March 30th would be considered by them as *casus belli*. It is probable that not one of the three contracting parties was quite sincere in the making of this treaty. It appears to have been done, at the instigation of Austria, much less for the sake of Turkey than in order that she might have some understanding of a special kind with some of the great powers, and thus avoid the semblance of isolation which she now especially dreaded, having Russia to fear on the one side, and seeing Italy already raising its head on the other. England did not particularly care about the tripartite treaty, which was pressed upon her, and which she accepted trusting that she might never have to act upon it; and France accepted it without any liking for it, probably without the least intention of ever acting on it.

The congress was also the means of bringing about a treaty between England and France and Sweden. By this engagement Sweden undertook not to cede to Russia any part of her present territories or any rights of fishery; and the two other powers agreed to maintain Sweden by force against aggression.

The congress of Paris was remarkable too for the fact that the plenipotentiaries before separating came to an agreement on the subject of the right of search and the rules generally of maritime war. They agreed to the four following declarations. "First: privateering is and remains abolished. Second; the neutral flag covers enemies' goods, with the exception of contraband of war. Third: neutral goods with the exception of contraband of war, are not liable to capture under an enemy's flag. Fourth: block-

ades in order to be binding must be effective; that is to say, maintained by a force sufficient really to prevent access to the enemy's coast." At the opening of the war Great Britain had already virtually given up the claims she once made against neutrals, and which were indeed untenable in the face of modern civilization. She gladly agreed therefore to ratify so far as her declaration went the doctrines which would abolish forever the principle upon which those and kindred claims once rested. It was agreed, however, that the rules adopted at the congress of Paris should only be binding on those states that had acceded or should accede to them. The government of the United States had previously invited the great European powers by a circular to assent to the broad doctrine that free ships make free goods. At the instance of England it was answered that the adoption of that doctrine must be conditional on America's renouncing the right of privateering. To this the United States raised some difficulty, and the declarations of the congress were therefore made without America's assenting to them.

With many other questions too the congress of Paris occupied itself. At the instigation of Count Cavour the condition of Italy was brought under its notice; and there can be no doubt that out of the congress and the part that Sardinia assumed as representative of Italian nationality came the great succession of events which ended in the establishment of a king of Italy in the palace of the Quirinal. The adjustment of the condition of the Danubian principalities too engaged much attention and discussion and a highly ingenious arrangement was devised for the purpose of keeping those provinces from actual union, so that they might be coherent enough to act as a rampart against Russia, without being so coherent as to cause Austria any alarm for her own somewhat disjointed, not to say distracted, political system. All these artificial and complex arrangements presently fell to pieces, and the principalities became in course of no very long time an independent state under a hereditary prince. But for the hour it was hoped that the independence of Turkey and the restriction of Russia, the security of the Christian provinces, the neutrality of the Black Sea, and the closing of the straits against war vessels, had been brought by the war.

England lost some twenty-four thousand men in the

war; of whom hardly a sixth fell in battle or died of wounds. Cholera and other diseases gave grim account of the rest. Forty-one millions of money were added by the campaign to the national debt. Not much, it will be seen, was there in the way of mere military glory to show for the cost. Our fleets had hardly any chance of making their power felt. The ships of the allies took Bomarsund in the Baltic, and Kinburn in the Black Sea, and bombarded several places; but the war was not one that gave a chance to a Nelson, even if a Nelson had been at hand. Among the accidental and unpleasant consequences of the campaign it is worth mentioning the quarrel in which England became involved with the United States because of our foreign enlistment act. At the close of December, 1854, parliament hurriedly passed an act authorizing the formation of a foreign legion for service in the war, and some Swiss and Germans were recruited who never proved of the slightest service. Prussia and America both complained that the zeal of our recruiting functionaries outran the limits of discretion and of law.

One of our consuls was actually put on trial at Cologne; and America made a serious complaint of the enlistment of her citizens. England apologized; but the United States were out of temper and insisted on sending our minister, Mr. Crampton, away from Washington, and some little time passed before the friendly relations of the two states were completely restored.

So the Crimean War ended. It was one of the unlucky accidents of the hour that the curtain fell in the Crimea upon what may be considered a check to the arms of England. There were not a few in this country who would gladly have seen the peace negotiations fail, in order that England might thereby have an opportunity of reasserting her military supremacy in the eyes of Europe. Never during the campaign, nor for a long time before it, had England been in so excellent a condition for war, as she was when the warlike operations suddenly came to an end. The campaign had, indeed, only been a training time for us after the unnerving relaxation of a long peace. We had learned some severe lessons from it; and not unnaturally there were impatient spirits who chafed at the idea of England's having no opportunity of putting these lessons to account. It was but a mere chance that prevented us

from accomplishing the capture of the Redan, despite the very serious disadvantages with which we were hampered in our enterprise as compared with our allies and their simultaneous operation. With just a little better generalship the Redan would have been taken; as it was, even with the generalship that we had the next attempt would not have been likely to fail. But the Russians abandoned Sebastopol, and our principal ally was even more anxious for peace than the enemy; and we had no choice but to accept the situation. The war had never been popular in France. It had never had even that amount of popularity which the French people accorded to their emperor's later enterprise, the campaign against Austria. Louis Napoleon had had all he wanted. He had been received into the society of European sovereigns, and he had made what the French public were taught to consider a brilliant campaign. It is surprising to any one who looks calmly back now on the history of the Crimean War to find what an extravagant amount of credit the French army obtained by its share in the operations. Even in this country it was at the time an almost universal opinion that the French succeeded in everything they tried; that their system was perfect; that their tactics were beyond improvement; that they were a contrast to us in every respect. Much of this absurd delusion was no doubt the result of a condition of things among us which no reasonable Englishman would exchange for all the imaginary triumphs that a court historiographer ever celebrated. It was due to the fact that our system was open to the criticism of every pen that chose to assail it. Not a spot in our military organization escaped detection and exposure. Every detail was keenly criticised; every weakness was laid open to public observation. We invited all the world to see where we were failing and what were the causes of our failure. Our journals did the work for the military system of England that Matthew Arnold says Goethe did for the political and social systems of Europe—stuck its finger upon the weak places, "and said thou ailest here and here." While the official and officious journals of the French empire were sounding pæans to the honor of the emperor and his successes, to his generals, his officers, his commissariat, his transport service, his soldiers, his camp, pioneers, and all our leading papers of all shades of politics were only occupied in



pointing out defects, and blaming those who did not instantly remedy them. Unpatriotic conduct, it may be said. Ay, truly, if the conduct of the doctor be unfriendly when he tells that we have the symptoms of failing health, and warns us to take some measures for rest and renovation. Some of the criticisms of the English press were undoubtedly inaccurate and rash. But their general effect was bracing, healthful, successful. Their immediate result was that which has already been indicated, to leave the English army at the close of the campaign far better able to undertake prolonged and serious operations of war than it had been at any time during the campaign's continuance. For the effect of the French system on the French army we should have to come down a little later in history and study the workings of imperialism as they displayed themselves in the confidence, the surprises, and the collapse of 1870.

Still there was a feeling of disappointment in this country at the close of the war. This was partly due to dissatisfaction with the manner in which we had carried on the campaign, and partly to distrust of its political results. Our soldiers had done splendidly; but our generals and our system had done poorly indeed. Only one first-class reputation of a military order had come out of the war, and that was by the common consent of the world awarded to a Russian—to General Todleben, the defender of Sebastopol. No new name was made on our side or on that of the French; and some promising or traditional reputations were shattered. The political results of the war were to many minds equally unsatisfying. We had gone into the enterprise for two things—to restrain the aggressive and aggrandizing spirit of Russia, and to secure the integrity and independence of Turkey as a power capable of upholding herself with credit among the states of Europe. Events which happened more than twenty years later will have to be studied before any one can form a satisfactory opinion as to the degree of success which attended each of these objects. For the present, it is enough to say that there was not among thoughtful minds at the time a very strong conviction of success either way. Lord Aberdeen had been modest in his estimate of what the war would do. He had never had any heart in it, and he was not disposed to exaggerate its beneficent possibilities. He

estimated that it might perhaps secure peace in the east of Europe for some twenty-five years. His modest expectation was prophetic. Indeed, it a little overshot the mark. Twenty-two years after the close of the Crimean campaign Russia and Turkey were at war again.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE LITERATURE OF THE REIGN—FIRST SURVEY.

THE close of the Crimean War is a great landmark in the reign of Queen Victoria. This, therefore, is a convenient opportunity to cast a glance back upon the literary achievements of a period so markedly divided in political interest from any that went before it. The reign of Queen Victoria is the first in which the constitutional and parliamentary system of government came fairly and completely into recognition. It is also the reign which had the good fortune to witness the great modern development in all that relates to practical invention, and more especially in the application of science to the work of making communication rapid between men. On land and ocean, in air and under the sea, the history of rapid travel and rapid interchange of message coincides with that of the present reign. Such a reign ought to have a distinctive literature. So, in truth, it has. Of course it is somewhat bold to predict long and distinct renown for contemporaries or contemporary schools. But it may perhaps be assumed, without any due amount of speculative venturesomeness, that the age of Queen Victoria will stand out in history as the period of a literature as distinct from others as the age of Elizabeth or Anne; although not perhaps equal in greatness to the latter and far indeed below the former. At the opening of Queen Victoria's reign a great race of literary men had come to a close. It is curious to note how sharply and completely the literature of Victoria separates itself from that of the era whose heroes were Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth. Before Queen Victoria came to the throne, Scott, Byron, Coleridge, and Keats were dead. Wordsworth lived, indeed, for many years after; so did Sonthey and Moore; and Savage Landor died much later still. But

Wordsworth, Southey, Moore, and Landor had completed their literary work before Victoria came to the throne. Not one of them added a cubit or an inch to his intellectual stature from that time; some of them even did work which distinctly proved that their day was done. A new and fresh breath was soon after breathed into literature. Nothing, perhaps, is more remarkable about the better literature of the age of Queen Victoria than its complete severance from the leadership of that which had gone before it, and its evidence of a fresh and genuine inspiration. It is a somewhat curious fact, too, very convenient for the purposes of this history, that the literature of Queen Victoria's time thus far divides itself clearly enough into two parts. The poets, novelists, and historians who were making their fame with the beginning of the reign had done all their best work and made their mark before these later years, and were followed by a new and different school, drawing inspiration from wholly different sources, and challenging comparison as antagonists rather than disciples.

We speak now only of literature. In science the most remarkable developments were reserved for the later years of the reign. We use the words "remarkable developments" in the historical rather than in the scientific sense. It would be hardly possible to overrate the benefits conferred upon science and the world by some of the scientific men who made the best part of their fame in the earlier years of the reign. Some great names at once start to the memory. We think of Brewster, the experimental philosopher, who combined in so extraordinary a degree the strictest severity of scientific argument and form with a freedom of fancy and imagination which lent picturesqueness to all his illustrations and invested his later writings especially with an indefinable charm. We think of Michael Faraday, the chemist and electrician, who knew so well how to reconcile the boldest researches into the heights and depths of science with the sincerest spirit of faith and devotion; the memory of whose delightful improvisations on the science he loved to expound must remain forever with all who had the privilege of hearing the unrivaled lecturer deliver his annual discourses at the Royal Institution. It is not likely that the name of Sir John Herschel, a gifted member of a gifted family, would be forgotten by any one taking even the hastiest glance at

the science of our time—a family of whom it may truly be said, in slight alteration of Wordsworth's praise of Milton, that their souls were with the stars, and dwelt apart. Richard Owen's is, in another field of knowledge, a great renown. Owen had been called the Cuvier of England, and the Newton of natural history, and there cannot be any doubt that his researches and discoveries as an anatomist and palæontologist have marked a distinct era in the development of the study to which he devoted himself. Hugh Miller, the author of "The Old Red Sandstone" and "The Testimony of the Rocks," the devotee and unfortunately the martyr of scientific inquiry, brought a fresh and brilliant literary ability, almost as untutored and spontaneous as that of his immortal countryman Robert Burns, to bear on the exposition of the studies to which he literally sacrificed his life. If, therefore, we say that the later period of Queen Victoria's reign is more remarkable in science than the former, it is not because we would assert that the men of this later day contributed in richer measure to the development of human knowledge, and especially of practical science, than those of the earlier time. But it was in the later period that the scientific controversies sprang up and the school arose which will be, in the historian's sense, most closely associated with the epoch. The value of the labors of men like Owen and Faraday and Brewster is often to be appreciated thoroughly by scientific students alone. What they have done is to be recorded in the history of science rather than in the general and popular history of a day. But the school of scientific thought which Darwin founded and in which Huxley and Tyndall taught is the subject of a controversy which may be set down as memorable in the history of the world. All science and all common life accepted with gratitude and without contest the contributions made to our knowledge by Faraday and Brewster; but the theories of Darwin divided the scientific world, the religious world, and indeed all society, into two hostile camps, and so became an event in history which the historian can no more pass over than in telling of the growth of the United States he could omit any mention of the great civil war. Even in dealing with the growth of science it is on the story of battles that the attention of the outer world must to the end of time be turned with the keenest interest. This is, one might

almost think, a scientific law in itself, with which it would be waste of time to quarrel.

The earlier part of the reign was richer in literary genius than the later has thus far been. Of course the dividing line which we draw is loosely drawn, and may sometimes appear to be capricious. Some of those who won their fame in the earlier part continued active workers, in certain instances steadily adding to their celebrity, through the succeeding years. The figure of Thomas Carlyle is familiar still to all who live in the neighborhood of Chelsea. It was late in the reign of Victoria that Stuart Mill came out for the first time on a public platform in London, after a life divided between official work and the most various reading and study; a life divided too between the seclusion of Blackheath and the more poetic seclusion of Avignon, among the nightingales whose song was afterward so sweet to his dying ears. He came, strange and shy, into a world which knew him only in his books, and to which the gentle and grave demeanor of the shrinking and worn recluse seemed out of keeping with the fearless brain and heart which his career as a thinker proved him to have. The reign had run for forty years when Harriet Martineau was taken from that beautiful and romantic home in the bosom of the lake country to which her celebrity had drawn so many famous visitors for so long a time. The renown of Dickens began with the reign, and his death was sadly premature when he died in his quaint and charming home at Gad's Hill, in the country of Falstaff and Prince Hal, some thirty-three years after. Mrs. Browning passed away very prematurely; but it might well be contended that the fame, or at least the popularity, of Robert Browning belongs to this later part of the reign even though his greatest work belongs to the earlier. The author of the most brilliant and vivid book of travel known in our modern English, "Eothen," made a sudden renown in the earlier part of the reign, and achieved a new and a different sort of repute as the historian of the Crimean War during the later part. Still, if we take the close of the Crimean War as an event dividing the reign thus far into two parts, we shall find that there does seem a tolerably clear division between the literature of the two periods. We have therefore put in this first part of our history the men and women who had distinctly made their mark in these former years, and

who would have been famous if from that time out they had done nothing more. It is with this division borne in mind that we describe the reign as more remarkable in the literature of the earlier and in the science of these later years. It is not rash to say that, although poets, historians and novelists of celebrity came afterward and may come yet, the literature of our time gave its measure, as the French phrase is, in that earlier period.

Alike in its earlier passages and in its later the reign is rich in historical labors. The names of Grote, Macaulay and Carlyle occur at once to the mind when we survey the former period. Mr. Grote's history of Greece is indeed a monumental piece of work. It has all that patience and exhaustive care which principally mark the German historians, and it has an earnestness which is not to be found generally in the representatives of what Carlyle has called the Dryasdust school. Grote threw himself completely into the life and politics of Athens. It was said of him with some truth that he entered so thoroughly into all the political life of Greece as to become now and then the partisan of this or that public man. His own practical acquaintance with politics was undoubtedly of great service to him. We have all grown somewhat tired of hearing the words of Gibbon quoted in which he tells us that "the discipline and evolutions of a modern battalion gave a clearer notion of the phalanx and the legion; and the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire." Assuredly the practical knowledge of politics which Grote acquired during the nine or ten years of his parliamentary career was of much service to the historian of Greece. It has been said indeed of him that he never could quite keep from regarding the struggle of parties in Athens as exactly illustrating the principles disputed between the Liberals and the Tories in England. It does not seem to us, however, that his political career affected his historical studies in any way, but by throwing greater vitality and nervousness into his descriptions of Athenian controversies. The difference between a man who has mingled anywhere in the active life of politics and one who only knows that life from books and the talk of others, is specially likely to show itself in such a study as Grote's history. His political training enabled Grote to see in the

statesmen and soldiers of the Greek peoples men and not trees walking. It taught him how to make the dry bones live. Mr. Grote began life as what would have been called in later years a philosophical Radical. He was a close friend of Stuart Mill, although he did not always agree with Mill in his opinions. During his parliamentary career he devoted himself for the most part to the advocacy of the system of vote by ballot. He brought forward a motion on the subject every session as Mr. Charles Villiers did at one time for the repeal of the corn laws. He only gave up the House of Commons in order that he might be free to complete his great history. He did not retain all his radical opinions to the end of his life so thoroughly as Mill did, but owned with a certain regret that in many ways his views had undergone modification, and that he grew less and less ardent for political change; less hopeful, we may suppose, of the amount of good to be done for human happiness and virtue by the spread and movement of what are now called advanced opinions. It must be owned that it takes a very vigorous and elastic mind to enable a man to resist the growth of that natural and physical tendency toward conservatism or reaction which comes with advancing years. It is as well for society on the whole that this should be so, and that the elders as a rule should form themselves into a guard to challenge very pertinaciously all the eager claims and demands for change made by hopeful and restless youth. No one would more readily have admitted the advantage that may come from this common law of life than Grote's friend, Mill; although Mill remained to the close of his career as full of hope in the movement of liberal opinions as he had been in his boyhood, still, to quote from some noble words of Schiller, "reverencing as a man the dreams of his youth." In his later years Grote withdrew from all connection with active political controversy, and was indeed curiously ignorant of the very bearings of some of the greatest questions around the settlement of which the passions and interests of another hemisphere were brought into fierce and vast dispute.

We have already had occasion more than once to speak of Macaulay, the great parliamentary debater and statesman. It is the less necessary to say much of him as an historian; for Macaulay will be remembered rather as a man

who could do many things brilliantly than as the author of a history. Yet Macaulay's "History of England," whatever its defects, is surely entitled to rank as a great work. We do not know whether grave scholars will regard it as to the honor of the book or the reverse, that it was by far the most popular historical essay ever produced by an Englishman. The successive volumes of Macaulay's "History of England," were run after as the Waverley Novels might have been at the zenith of their author's fame. Living England talked for the time of nothing but Macaulay's "England." Certainly history had never before in our country been treated in a style so well calculated to render it at once popular, fascinating, and fashionable. Every chapter glittered with vivid and highly-colored description. On almost every page was found some sentence of glowing eloquence or gleaming antithesis, which at once lent itself to citation and repetition. Not one word of it could have failed to convey its meaning. The whole stood out in an atmosphere clear, bright, and incapable of misty illusion as that of a Swiss lake in summer. No shade or faint haze of a doubt appeared anywhere. The admirer of Macaulay had all the comfort in his studies that a votary of the Roman Catholic Church may have. He had an infallible guide. He had no need to vex himself with doubt, speculation, or even conjecture. This absolute certainty about everything was, beyond question, one great source of Macaulay's popularity. That resolute conviction which readers of a more intellectual class are especially inclined to distrust has the same charm for the ordinary reader that it has for children, who never care to hear any story if they suppose the narrator does not know all about it in such a way as to render question or contradiction impossible. But although this was one of the causes of Macaulay's popularity, it was not the most substantial cause. The brilliancy of his style, the variety and aptness of his illustrations, and the animated manner in which he contrived to set his ideas of men, places, and events before the reader—these were among the sources of success to which his admirers must look with the greatest satisfaction. It is of late somewhat the fashion to disparage Macaulay. He was a popular idol so long that, in the natural course of things, it has come to him to have his title to worship, or even to faith, very generally questioned,



To be unreasonably admired by one generation is to incur the certainty of being unreasonably disparaged by the next. The tendency of late is to assume that because Macaulay was brilliant he must necessarily be superficial. But Macaulay was not superficial. He was dogmatic; he was full of prejudice; he was in all respects a better advocate than judge; he was wanting in the calm impartial balancing faculty which an historian of the highest class ought to have; but he was not superficial. No man could make out a better and a stronger case for any side of a controversy which he was led to espouse. He was not good at drawing or explaining complex characters. He loved indeed to picture contradictory and paradoxical characters. Nothing delighted him more than to throw off an animated description of some great person, who having been shown in the first instance to possess one set of qualities in extreme prominence, was then shown to have a set of exactly antagonistic qualities in quite equal prominence. This was not describing a complex character. It was merely embodying a paradox. It was to "solder close," as Timon of Athens says, "impossibilities and make them kiss." There was something too much of trick about this, although it was often done with so much power as to bewilder the better judgment of the calmest reader. But where Macaulay happened to be right in his view of a man or an event, he made his convictions clear with an impressiveness and a brilliancy such as no modern writer has surpassed. The world owes him something for having protested, by precept and example, against the absurd notion that the "dignity of history" required of historians to be grave, pompous, and dull. He was not a Gibbon, but he wrote with all Gibbon's delight in the picturesqueness of a subject, and Gibbon's resolve to fascinate as well as to instruct his readers. Macaulay's history tries too much to be an historical portrait gallery. The dangers of such a style do not need to be pointed out. They are amply illustrated in Macaulay's sparkling pages. But it is something to know that their splendid qualities are far more conspicuous still than their defects. Perhaps very recent readers of history too may feel disposed to be grateful to Macaulay for having written without any profound philosophical theory to expound. He told history like a story. He warmed up as he went along, and grew enamored, as

a romancist does, of this character and angry with that other. No doubt he frequently thus did harm to the trustworthiness of his narrative where it had to deal with disputed questions, although he probably enhanced the charms of his animated style. But he did not set out with a mission to expound some theory as to a race or a tendency, and therefore pledged beforehand to bend all facts of the physical, the political, and the moral world to the duty of bearing witness for him and proclaiming the truth of his message to mankind.

Macaulay was not exactly what the Germans would call a many-sided man. He never was anything but the one Macaulay in all he did or attempted. But he did a great many things well. Nothing that he ever attempted was done badly. He was as successful in the composition of a pretty valentine for a little girl as he was in his history, his essays, his "Lays of Ancient Rome," and his parliamentary speeches. In everything he attempted he went very near to that success which true genius achieves. In everything he just fell short of that achievement. But he so nearly attained it that the reader who takes up one of Macaulay's books or speeches for the first time is almost sure to believe, under the influence of the instant impression, that the genuine inspiration is there. Macaulay is understood to have for a long time thought of writing a romance. If he had done so, we may feel sure that many intelligent readers would have believed on the first perusal of it that it was almost on a level with Scott, and only as the first impression gradually faded, and they came to read it over again, have found out that Macaulay was not a Scott in fiction any more than he was a Burke in eloquence or a Gibbon in history. He filled for a long time a larger space in the public mind than any other literary man in England, and his style greatly affected literary men. But his influence did not pierce deeply down into public feeling and thought as that of one or two other men of the same period undoubtedly did, and does still. He did not impress the very soul of English feeling as Mr. Carlyle, for example, has done.

No influence suffused the age from first to last more strongly than that of Thomas Carlyle. England's very way of thinking was at one time profoundly affected by Carlyle. He introduced the English people to the great

German authors, very much as Lessing had introduced the Germans to Shakespeare and the old English ballads. Carlyle wrote in a style which was so little like that ordinarily accepted as English, that the best thing to be said for it was that it was not exactly German. At one time it appeared to be so completely molded on that of Jean Paul Richter, that not a few persons doubted whether the new comer really had any ideas of his own. But Carlyle soon proved that he could think for himself; and he very often proved it by thinking wrong. There was in him a strong, deep vein of the poetic. Long after he had evidently settled down to be a writer of prose and nothing else, it still seemed to many that his true sphere was poetry. The grim seriousness which he had taken from his Scottish birth and belongings was made hardly less grim by the irony which continually gleamed or scowled through it. Truth and force were the deities of Carlyle's especial worship. "The eternal verities" sat on the top of his Olympus. To act out the truth in life and make others act it out would require some force more strong, ubiquitous, and penetrating than we can well obtain from the slow deliberations of an ordinary parliament, with its debates and divisions and everlasting formulas. Therefore, to enforce his eternal verities, Carlyle always preached up and yearned for the strong man, the poem in action, whom the world in our day had not found, and perhaps could not appreciate. If this man were found it would be his duty and his privilege to drill us all as in some vast camp, and compel us to do the right thing to his dictation. It cannot be doubted that this preaching of the divine right of force had a serious and sometimes a very detrimental effect upon the public opinion of England. It degenerated often into affectation, alike with the teacher and the disciples. But the influence of Carlyle in preaching earnestness and truth, in art and letters and everything else, had a healthy and very remarkable effect entirely outside the regions of the moralist, who in this country at least has always taught the same lesson. It is not probable that individual men were made much more truthful in England by Carlyle's glorification of the eternal verities than they would have been without it. But his influence on letters and art was peculiar, and was not evanescent. Carlyle is distinctly the founder of a school of history and a school of art. In

the meanwhile we may regard him simply as a great author, and treat his books as literary studies and not as gospels. Thus regarded, we shall find that he writes in a style which every sober critic would feel bound to condemn, but which, nevertheless, the soberest critic is forced continually, despite of himself and his rules, to admire. For, out of the strange jargon which he seems to have deliberately adopted, Carlyle has undoubtedly constructed a wonderfully expressive medium in which to speak his words of remonstrance and admonition. It is a mannerism, but a mannerism into which a great deal of the individuality of the man seems to have entered. It is not wholly affectation or superficiality. Carlyle's own soul seems to speak out in it more freely and strenuously than it would in the ordinary English of society and literature. No tongue, says Richter, is eloquent save in its own language; and this strange language which he has made for himself does really appear to be the native tongue of Carlyle's powerful and melancholy eloquence. Carlyle is endowed with a marvelous power of depicting stormy scenes and rugged, daring natures. At times strange, wild, piercing notes of the pathetic are heard through his strenuous and fierce bursts of eloquence like the wail of a clarion thrilling between the blasts of a storm. His history of the French Revolution is history read by lightning. Of this remarkable book John Stuart Mill supplied the principal material; for Mill at one time thought of writing a history of the revolution himself, but giving up the idea, placed the materials he had collected at the service of Carlyle. Carlyle used the materials in his own way. He is indebted to no one for his method of making up his history. With all its defects, the book is one of the very finest our age has produced. Its characters stand out like portraits by Rembrandt. Its crowds live and move. The picture of Mirabeau is worthy of the hand of the great German poet who gave us Wallenstein. But Carlyle's style has introduced into this country a thoroughly false method of writing history. It is a method which has little regard for the "dry light" which Bacon approved. It works under the varying glare of colored lights. Its purpose is to express scorn of one set of ideas and men, and admiration of another. Given the man we admire, then all his doings and ways must be admirable; and the his-

torian proceeds to work this principle out. Carlyle's *Mirabeau* is as truly a creature of romance, as the *Monte Cristo* of Dumas. This way of going to work became even more apparent, as the mannerisms became more incessant, in Carlyle's later writings—in the "*Frederick the Great*," for example. The reader dares not trust such history. It is of little value as an instructor in the lessons of the times and events it deals with. It only tells us what Carlyle thought of the times and the events, and the men who were the chief actors in them. Nor does Carlyle bequeath many new ideas to the world which he stirred by his stormy eloquence. That falsehood cannot prevail over truth in the end, nor simulacra do the work of realities, is not, after all, a lesson which earth can be said to have waited for up to the nineteenth century and the coming of Carlyle; and yet it would be hard to point to any other philosophical outcome of Mr. Carlyle's teaching. His value is in his eloquence, his power, his passion, and pathos; his stirring and lifelike pictures of human character, whether faithful to the historical originals or not; and the vein of poetry which runs through all his best writings, and sometimes makes even the least sympathetic reader believe that he has to do with a genuine poet.

In strongest contrast to the influence of Carlyle may be set the influence of Mill. Except where the professed teachers of religious creeds are concerned, there can be found no other man in the reign of Victoria who had anything like the influence over English thought that Mill and Carlyle possessed. Mill was a devoted believer in the possibilities of human nature and of liberty. If Rousseau was the apostle of affliction, Mill was surely the apostle of freedom. He believed that human society might be brought to something not far removed from perfection by the influence of education and of freedom acting on the best impulses and disciplining the emotions of men and women. Mill was a strange blending of political economist and sentimentalist. It was not altogether in humorous exaggeration that somebody said he was Adam Smith and Petrarch in one. The curious seclusion in which he was brought up by his father, the wonderful discipline of study to which in his very infancy he was subjected, would have made something strange and striking out of a commonplace nature; and Mill was in any case a man of genius.

There was an antique simplicity and purity about his life which removed him altogether from the ways of ordinary society. But the defect of his teaching as an ethical guide was that he made too little allowance for the influence of ordinary society. He always seemed to act on the principle that with true education and noble example the most commonplace men could be persuaded to act like heroes, and to act like heroes always. The great service which he rendered to the world in his political economy and his system of logic is of course independent of his controverted theories and teachings. These works would, if they were all he had written, place him in the very front rank of English thinkers and instructors. But these only represent half of his influence on the public opinion of his time. His faith in the principle of human liberty led him to originate the movement for what is called the emancipation of women. Opinions will doubtless long differ as to the advantages of the movement, but there can be no possible difference of judgment as to the power and fascination of Mill's advocacy and the influence he exercised. He did not succeed in his admirable essay "On Liberty" in establishing the rule or principle by which men may decide between the right of free expression of opinion and the right of authority to ordain silence. Probably no precise boundary line can ever be drawn; and in this, as in so much else, lawmakers and peoples must be content with a compromise. But Mill's is at least a noble plea for the fullest possible liberty of utterance; and he has probably carried the argument as far as it ever can be carried. There never was a more lucid and candid reasoner. The most difficult and abstruse questions became clear by the light of his luminous exposition. Something too of human interest and sympathy became infused into the most seemingly arid discussions of political economy by the virtue of his emotional and half poetic nature. It was well said of him that he reconciled political economy with human feeling. His style was clear as light. Mill, said one of his critics, lives in light. Sometimes his language rose to a noble and dignified eloquence; here and there are passages of a grave, keen irony. Into the questions of religious belief which arise in connection with his works it is no part of our business to enter; but it may be remarked that his latest writings seem to show that his views were under-

going much modification in his closing years. His opponents would have allowed as readily as his supporters that no man could have been more sincerely inspired with a desire to arrive at the truth; and that none could be more resolute to follow the course which his conscience told him to be right. He carried this resolute principle into his warmest controversies, and it was often remarked that he usually began by stating the case of the adversary better than the adversary could have done it for himself. Applying to his own character the same truthful method of inquiry which he applied to others, Mill has given a very accurate description of one at least of the qualities by which he was able to accomplish so much. He tells us in his autobiography that he had from an early period considered that the most useful part he could take in the domain of thought was that of an interpreter of original thinkers and mediator between them and the public. "I had always a humble opinion of my own powers as an original thinker, except in abstract science (logic, metaphysics, and the theoretic principles of political economy and politics), but thought myself much superior to most of my contemporaries in willingness and ability to learn from everybody; as I found hardly any one who made such a point of examining what was said in defense of all opinions, however new or however old, in the conviction that even if they were errors there might be a substratum of truth underneath them, and that in any case the discovery of what it was that made them plausible would be a benefit to truth." This was not assuredly Mill's greatest merit, but it was perhaps his most peculiar quality. He was an original thinker, despite his own sincere disclaimer; but he founded no new system. He could be trusted to examine and expound any system with the most perfect fairness and candor; and, even where it was least in harmony with his own ideas, to do the fullest justice to every one of its claims.

Harriet Martineau's career as a woman of letters and a teacher began indeed before the reign of Queen Victoria, but it was carried on almost without interruption during nearly forty years of the reign. She was a political economist, novelist, historian, biographer, and journalist; and in no path did she fail to make her mark. Few women could have turned to the occupations of a political writer

under greater physical disadvantages; and no man in this line of life, however well furnished by nature with physical and intellectual qualifications for success, could have done better work. She wrote some exquisite little stories, and one or two novels of more ambitious character. It is praise enough to give them when we say that, although fiction certainly was not work for which she was most especially qualified, yet what she did seems to be destined to live and hold a place in our literature. She was, so far as we know, the only English woman who ever achieved distinct and great success as a writer of leading articles for a daily newspaper. Her strong prejudices and dislikes prevent her from being always regarded as a trustworthy historian. Her "History of the Thirty Years' Peace"—for it may be regarded as wholly hers, although Charles Knight began it—is a work full of vigorous thought and clear description, with here and there passages of genuine eloquence. But it is marred in its effect as a trustworthy narrative by the manner in which the authoress yields here and there to inveterate and wholesale dislikes; and sometimes, though not so often or so markedly, to an over-wrought hero-worship. Miss Martineau had to a great extent an essentially masculine mind. She was often reproached with being unfeminine; and assuredly she would have been surprised to hear that there was anything womanish in her way of criticising public events and men. Yet in reading her "History" one is sometimes amused to find that that partisanship which is commonly set down as a specially feminine quality affects her estimate of a statesman. Hers is not by any means the Carlylean way of starting with a theory and finding all virtue and glory in the man who seems to embody it, and all baseness and stupidity in his opponents. But when she takes a dislike to a particular individual, she seems to assume that where he was wrong he must have been wrong of set malign purpose, and that where he chanced to be in the right it was in mistake, and in despite of his own greater inclination to be in the wrong. It is fortunate that these dislikes are not many, and also that they soon show themselves, and therefore cease to be seriously misleading. In all other respects the book well deserves careful study. The life of the woman is a study still more deeply interesting. Others of her sex there were of greater genius, even in her own time; but no English-



woman ever followed with such perseverance and success a career of literary and political labor.

"The blue-peter has long been flying at my foremast, and, now that I am in my ninety-second year, I must soon expect the signal for sailing." In this quaint and cheery way Mary Somerville, many years after the period at which we have now arrived in this work, described her condition and her quiet waiting for death. No one surely could have better earned the right to die by the labors of a long life devoted to the education and the improvement of her kind. Mary Somerville has probably no rival among women as a scientific scholar. Her summary of Laplace's "*Mécanique Céleste*," her treatise on the "Connection of the Physical Sciences," and her "*Physical Geography*," would suffice to place any student, man or woman, in the foremost rank of scientific expounders. The "*Physical Geography*" is the only one of Mrs. Somerville's remarkable works which was published in the reign of Queen Victoria; but the publication of the other two preceded the opening of the reign by so short a time, and her career and her fame so entirely belong to the Victorian period, that, even if the "*Physical Geography*" had never been published, she must be included in this history. "I was intensely ambitious," Mrs. Somerville says of herself in her earlier days, "to excel in something; for I felt in my own breast that women were capable of taking a higher place in creation than that assigned to them in my early days, which was very low." It is not exaggeration to say that Mrs. Somerville distinctly raised the world's estimate of woman's capacity for the severest and the loftiest scientific pursuits. She possessed the most extraordinary power of concentration, amounting to an entire absorption in the subject which she happened to be studying, to the exclusion of all disturbing sights and sounds. She had in a supreme degree that which Carlyle calls the first quality of genius, an immense capacity for taking trouble. She had also, happily for herself, an immense capacity for finding enjoyment in almost everything; in new places, people, and thoughts; in the old familiar scenes and friends and associations. Hers was a noble, calm, fully-rounded life. She worked as steadfastly and as eagerly in her scientific studies as Harriet Martineau did with her economics and her politics: but she had a more cheery, less sensitive, less

eager and impatient nature than Harriet Martineau. She was able to pursue her most intricate calculations after she had passed her nineteenth year; and one of her chief regrets in dying was that she should not "live to see the distance of the earth from the sun determined by the transit of Venus, and the source of the most renowned of rivers, the discovery of which will immortalize the name of Dr. Livingstone."

The paths of the two poets who first sprang into fame in the present reign are strangely remote from each other. Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning are as unlike in style and choice of subject, and indeed in the whole spirit of their poetry, as Wordsworth and Byron. Mr. Tennyson deals with incident and picturesque form, and graceful legend, and with so much of doubt and thought and yearning melancholy as would belong to a refined and cultured intellect under no greater stress or strain than the ordinary chances of life among educated Englishmen might be expected to impose. He has revived with great success the old Arthurian legends, and made them a part of the living literature of England. But the knights and ladies whom he paints are refined, graceful, noble, without roughness, without wild or at all events complex and distracting passions. It may perhaps be said that Tennyson has taken for his province all the beauty, all the nobleness, all the feeling that lie near to or on the surface of life and of nature. His object might seem to be that which Lessing declared the true object of all art, "to delight;" but it is to delight in a somewhat narrower sense than was the meaning of Lessing. Beauty, melancholy, and repose are the elements of Tennyson's poetry. There is no storm, no conflict, no complication. Mr. Browning, on the other hand, delights in perplexed problems of character and life: in studying the effects of strange contrasting forces of passion coming into play under peculiar and distracting conditions. All that lies beneath the surface; all that is out of the common track of emotion; all that is possible, that is poetically conceivable, but that the outer air and the daily walks of life never see, this is what specially attracts Mr. Browning. In Tennyson a knight of King Arthur's mythical court has the emotions of a polished English gentleman of our day, and nothing more. Mr. Browning would prefer, in treating of a polished Englishman of our day, to exhibit

him under some conditions which should draw out in him all the strange elementary passions and complications of emotion that lie far down in deeps below the surface of the best-ordered civilization. The tendency of the one poet is naturally to fall now and then into the sweetly insipid; of the other to wander away into the tangled regions of the grotesque. It is perhaps only natural that under such conditions the one poet should be profoundly concerned for beauty of form, and the latter almost absolutely indifferent to it. No poet has more finished beauty of style and exquisite charm of melody than Tennyson. None certainly can be more often wanting in grace of form and delight of soft sound than Mr. Browning. There are many passages and even many poems of Browning which show that the poet could be melodious if he would; but he seems sometimes as if he took a positive delight in perplexing the reader's ear with harsh untuneful sounds. Mr. Browning commonly allows the study of the purely psychological to absorb too much of his moods and of his genius. It has a fascination for him which he is seemingly unable to resist. He makes of his poems too often mere searchings into strange deeps of human character and human error. He seldom abandons himself altogether to the inspiration of the poet; he hardly ever deserves the definition of the minstrel given in Goethe's ballad who "sings but as the song-bird sings." Moreover, Mr. Browning has an almost morbid taste for the grotesque; he is not unfrequently a sort of poetic Callot. It has to be added that Mr. Browning is seldom easy to understand, and that there are times when he is only to be understood at the expense of as much thought and study as one might give to a controverted passage in an ancient author. This is a defect of art, and a very serious defect. The more devoted of Mr. Browning's admirers will tell us no doubt that the poet is not bound to supply us with brains as well as poetry, and that if we cannot understand what he says it is the fault simply of our stupidity. But an ordinary man who finds that he can understand Shakespeare and Milton, Dryden and Wordsworth, Byron and Keats, without any trouble, may surely be excused if he does not set down his difficulty about some of Browning's poems wholly to the account of his own dullness. It may well be doubted whether there is any idea so subtle that, if the poet can

actually realize it in his own mind clearly for himself, the English language will not be found capable of expressing it with sufficient clearness. The language has been made to do this for the most refined reasonings of philosophical schools, for transcendentalists and utilitarians, for psychologists and metaphysicians. No intelligent person feels any difficulty in understanding what Mill or Herbert Spencer or Huxley means; and it can hardly be said that the ideas Mr. Browning desires to convey to his readers are more difficult of exposition than some of those which the authors we name have contrived to set out with a white light of clearness all round them. The plain truth is that Mr. Browning is a great poet in spite of some of the worst defects that ever stood between a poet and popularity. He is a great poet by virtue of his commanding genius, his fearless imagination, his penetrating pathos. He strikes an iron harpstring. In certain of his moods his poetry is like that of the terrible lyre in the weird old Scottish ballad, the lyre that was made of the murdered maiden's breast-bone, and which told its fearful story in tones "that would melt a heart of stone." In strength and depth of passion and pathos, in wild humor, in emotion of every kind, Mr. Browning is much superior to Mr. Tennyson. The poet laureate is the completer man. Mr. Tennyson is beyond doubt the most complete of the poets of Queen Victoria's time. No one else has the same combination of melody, beauty of description, culture and intellectual power. He has sweetness and strength in exquisite combination. If a just balance of poetic powers were to be the crown of a poet, then undoubtedly Mr. Tennyson must be proclaimed the greatest English poet of our time. The reader's estimate of Browning and Tennyson will probably be decided by his predilection for the higher effort or for the more perfect art. Browning's is surely the higher aim in poetic art; but of the art which he essays Tennyson is by far the completer master. Tennyson has undoubtedly thrown away much of his sweetness and his exquisite grace of form on mere triflings and pretty conceits; and perhaps as a retribution those poems of his which are most familiar in the popular mouth are just those which least do justice to his genuine strength and intellect. The cheap sentiment of "Lady Clara Vere de Vere," the yet cheaper pathos of "The May Queen," are in the minds of

thousands the choicest representation of the genius of the poet who wrote "In Memoriam" and the "Morte d'Arthur." Mr. Browning, on the other hand, has chosen to court the approval of his time on terms of such disadvantage as an orator might who insisted in addressing an assemblage in some tongue which they but imperfectly understood. It is the fault of Mr. Browning himself if he has for his only audience and admirers men and women of culture, and misses altogether that broad public audience to which most poets have chosen to sing, and which all true poets, one would think, must desire to reach with their song. It is, on the other hand, assuredly Mr. Tennyson's fault if he has by his too frequent condescension to the drawing-room, and even the young ladies' school, made men and women of culture forget for a moment his best things, and credit him with no higher gift than that of singing "*virginibus puerisque*." One quality ought to be mentioned as common to these two poets who have so little else in common. They are both absolutely faithful to nature and truth in their pictures of the earth and its scenes and seasons. Almost all the great poets of the past age, even including Wordsworth himself, were now and then content to generalize nature; to take some things for granted; to use their memory or the eyes of others, rather than their own eyes, when they had to describe changes on leaf, or sky, or water. It is the characteristic of Tennyson and Browning that they deal with nature in a spirit of the most faithful loyalty. Not the branch of a tree, nor the cry of a bird, nor the shifting colors on sea or sky, will be found described on their pages otherwise than as the eye sees for itself at the season of which the poet tells. In reading Tennyson's description of woodland and forest scenes one might almost fancy that he can catch the exact peculiarities of sound in the rustling and moaning of each separate tree. In some of Mr. Browning's pictures of Italian scenery every detail is so perfect that many a one journeying along an Italian road and watching the little mouse-colored cattle as they drink at the stream may for the moment almost feel uncertain whether he is looking on a page of living reality or recalling to memory a page from the author of "The Ring and the Book." The poets seem to have returned to the fresh simplicity of a far distant age of poetry, when a man described exactly what he saw, and

was put to describing it because he saw it. In most of the intermediate times a poet describes because some other poet has described before, and has said that in nature there are such and such beautiful things which every true poet must see, and is bound to acknowledge accordingly in his verse.

These two are the greatest of our poets in the earlier part of the reign; indeed in the reign early or late so far. But there are other poets also of whom we must take account. Mrs. Browning has often been described as the greatest poetess of whom we know anything since Sappho. This description, however, seems to carry with it a much higher degree of praise than it really bears. It has to be remembered that there is no great poetess of whom we know anything from the time of Sappho to that of Mrs. Browning. In England we have hardly had any woman but Mrs. Browning alone who really deserves to rank with poets. She takes a place altogether different from that of any Mrs. Hemans or such singer of sweet, mild, and innocent note. Mrs. Browning would rank highly among poets without any allowance being claimed for her sex. But estimated in this way, which assuredly she would have chosen for herself, she can hardly be admitted to stand with the foremost even of our modern day. She is one of the most sympathetic of poets. She speaks to the hearts of numbers of readers who think Tennyson all too sweet, smooth, and trivial, and Robert Browning harsh and rugged. She speaks especially to the emotional in woman. In all moods when men or women are distracted by the bewildering conditions of life, when they feel themselves alternately dazzled by its possibilities and baffled by its limitations, the poems of Elizabeth Browning ought to find sympathetic ears. But the poems are not the highest which merely appeal to our own moods and echo our own plaints; and there was not much of creative genius in Mrs. Browning. Her poems are often but a prolonged sob; a burst of almost hysterical remonstrance or entreaty. It must be owned, however, that the egotism of emotion has seldom found such exquisite form of outpouring as in her so-called "Sonnets from the Portuguese;" and that what the phraseology of a school would call the emotion of "altruism" has rarely been given forth in tones of such piercing pathos as in "The Cry of the Children."

Mr. Matthew Arnold's reputation was made before this

earlier period had closed. He is a maker of such exquisite and thoughtful verse that it is hard sometimes to question his title to be considered a genuine poet. On the other hand, it is likely that the very grace and culture and thoughtfulness of his style inspire in many the first doubt of his claim to the name of poet. Where the art is evident and elaborate, we are all too apt to assume that it is all art and not genius. Mr. Arnold is a sort of miniature Goethe; we do not know that his most ardent admirers could demand a higher praise for him, while it is probable that the description will suggest exactly the intellectual peculiarities which lead so many to deny him a place with the really inspired singers of his day. Of the three men whom we have named we should be inclined to say that Mr. Arnold made the very most of his powers, and Mr. Browning the very least. Mr. Arnold is a critic as well as a poet; there are many who relish him more in the critic than in the poet. In literary criticism his judgment is refined, and his aims are always high if his range be not very wide; in politics and theology he is somewhat apt to be at once fastidious and fantastic.

The "Song of the Shirt" would give Thomas Hood a technical right, if he had none other, to be classed as a poet of the reign of Queen Victoria. The "Song of the Shirt" was published in *Punch* when the reign was well on; and after it, appeared "The Bridge of Sighs"; and no two of Hood's poems have done more to make him famous. He was a genuine though not a great poet, in whom humor was most properly to be defined as Thackeray has defined it—the blending of love and wit. The "Song of the Shirt" and the "Bridge of Sighs" made themselves a kind of monumental place in English sympathies. The "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies" was written several years before. It alone would have made for its author a reputation. The ballad of "Fair Inez" is almost perfect in its way. The name of Sir Henry Taylor must be included with the poets of this reign, although his best work was done before the reign began. In his work, clear strong intelligence prevails more than the emotional and the sensuous. He makes himself a poet by virtue of intellect and artistic judgment; for there really do seem some examples of a poet being made and not born. We can hardly bring Procter among the Victorian poets. Macaulay's

ringing verses are rather the splendid and successful *tours de force* of a clever man than the genuine lyrics of a poet. Arthur Clough was a man of rare promise, whose lamp was extinguished all too soon. Philip James Bailey startled the world by his "Festus" and for a time made people believe that a great new poet was coming; but the impression did not last, and Bailey proved to be little more than the comet of a season. A spasmodic school which sprang up after the success of "Festus," and which was led by a brilliant young Scotchman, Alexander Smith, passed away in a spasm as it came, and is now almost forgotten. "Orion," an epic poem by Richard H. Horne, made a very distinct mark upon the time. Horne proved himself to be a sort of Landor *manqué*—or perhaps a connecting link between the style of Landor and that of Browning. The earlier part of the reign was rich in singers; but the names and careers of most of them would serve rather to show that the poetic spirit was abroad, and that it sought expression in all manner of forms, than that there were many poets to dispute the place with Tennyson and Browning. It is not necessary here to record a list of mere names. The air was filled with the voices of minor singers. It was pleasant to listen to their piping, and the general effect may well be commended; but it is not necessary that the names of all the performers in an orchestra should be recorded for the supposed gratification of a posterity which assuredly would never stop to read the list.

Thirty-six years have passed away since Mr. Ruskin leaped into the literary arena, with a spring as bold and startling as that of Kean on the Kemble-haunted stage. The little volume, so modest in its appearance and self-sufficient in its tone, which the author defiantly flung down like a gauge of battle before the world, was entitled, "Modern Painters; their superiority in the art of Landscape Painting to all the Ancient Masters; by a Graduate of Oxford." It was a challenge to established beliefs and prejudices; and the challenge was delivered in the tone of one who felt confident that he could make good his words against any and all opponents. If there was one thing that more than another seemed to have been fixed and rooted in the English mind, it was that Claude and one or two others of the old masters possessed the secret of landscape painting. When, therefore, a bold young dogmatist involved



in one common denunciation "Claude, Gasper, Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Ruysdael, Paul Potter, Canaletto, and the various Van-somethings and Koek somethings, more especially and malignantly those who have libeled the sea," it was no wonder that affronted authority raised its indignant voice and thundered at him. Affronted authority, however, gained little by its thunder. The young Oxford graduate possessed, along with genius and profound conviction, an imperturbable and magnificent self-conceit against which the surges of angry criticism dashed themselves in vain. Mr. Ruskin sprang into literary life simply as a vindicator of the fame and genius of Turner. But as he went on with his task he found, or at least he convinced himself, that the vindication of the great landscape painter was essentially a vindication of all true art. Still further proceeding with his self-imposed task, he persuaded himself that the cause of true art was identical with the cause of truth, and that truth, from Ruskin's point of view, enclosed in the same rules and principles all the morals, all the science, industry, and daily business of life. Therefore, from an art-critic he became a moralist, a political economist, a philosopher, a statesman, a preacher—anything, everything that human intelligence can impel a man to be. All that he has written since his first appeal to the public has been inspired by this conviction: that an appreciation of the truth in art reveals to him who has it the truth in everything. This belief has been the source of Mr. Ruskin's greatest successes and of his most complete and ludicrous failures. It has made him the admiration of the world one week and the object of its placid pity or broad laughter the next. A being who could be Joan of Arc to-day and Voltaire's Pucelle to-morrow would hardly exhibit a stronger psychical paradox than the eccentric genius of Mr. Ruskin sometimes illustrates. But in order to do him justice, and not to regard him as a mere erratic utterer of eloquent contradictions, poured out on the impulse of each moment's new freak of fancy, we must always bear in mind the fundamental faith of the man. Extravagant as this or that doctrine may be, outrageous as to-day's contradiction of yesterday's assertion may sound, yet the whole career is consistent with its essential principles and beliefs. It may be fairly questioned whether Mr. Ruskin has any great qualities but his eloquence and

his true, honest love of nature. As a man to stand up before a society of which one part was fashionably languid and the other part only too busy and greedy, and preach to it of nature's immortal beauty and of the true way to do her reverence, Ruskin has and had a position of genuine dignity. This ought to be enough for the work and for the praise of any man. But the restlessness of Ruskin's temperament, combined with the extraordinary self-sufficiency which contributed so much to his success where he was master of a subject, sent him perpetually intruding into fields where he was unfit to labor, and enterprises which he had no capacity to conduct. Seldom has a man contradicted himself so often, so recklessly, and so complacently as Mr. Ruskin. It is venturesome to call him a great critic even in art, for he seldom expresses any opinion one day without flatly contradicting it the next. He is a great writer as Rousseau was—fresh, eloquent, audacious, writing out of the fullness of the present mood, and heedless how far the impulse of to-day may contravene that of yesterday. But as Rousseau was always faithful to his idea of truth, so Ruskin is always faithful to nature. When all his errors and paradoxes and contradictions shall have been utterly forgotten, this will remain to his praise. No man since Wordsworth's brightest days did half so much to teach his countrymen, and those who speak his language, how to appreciate and honor that silent nature "which never did betray the heart that loved her."

In fiction as well as in poetry there are two great names to be compared or contrasted when we turn to the literature of the earlier part of the reign. In the very year of Queen Victoria's accession appeared the "Pickwick Papers," the work of the author who the year before had published the "Sketches by Boz." The public soon recognized the fact that a new and wonderfully original force had come into literature. The success of Charles Dickens is absolutely unequalled in the history of English fiction. At the season of his highest popularity Sir Walter Scott was not so popular an author. But that happened to Dickens which did not happen to Scott. When Dickens was at his zenith, and when it might have been thought that any manner of rivalry with him was impossible, a literary man, who was no longer young, who had been working with but moderate success for many years in light

literature, suddenly took to writing novels, and almost in a moment stepped up to a level with the author of "Pickwick." During the remainder of their careers the two men stood as nearly as possible on the same level. Dickens always remained by far the more popular of the two; but, on the other hand, it may be safely said that the opinion of the literary world in general was inclined to favor Thackeray. From the time of the publication of "Vanity Fair" the two were always put side by side for comparison or contrast. They have been sometimes likened to Fielding and Smollett, but no comparison could be more misleading or less happy. Smollett stands on a level distinctly and considerably below that of Fielding; but Dickens cannot be said to stand thus beneath Thackeray. If the comparison were to hold at all, Thackeray must be compared to Fielding, for Fielding is not in the least like Dickens; but then it must be allowed that Smollett wants many of the higher qualities of the author of "David Copperfield." It is natural that men should compare Dickens and Thackeray; but the two will be found to be curiously unlike when once a certain superficial resemblance ceases to impress the mind. Their ways of treating a subject were not only dissimilar, but were absolutely in contrast. They started, to begin with, under the influence of a totally different philosophy of life, if that is to be called a philosophy which was probably only the result of peculiarity of temperament in each case. Dickens set out on the literary theory that in life everything is better than it looks; Thackeray with the impression that it is worse. In the one case there was somewhat too much of a mechanical interpretation of everything for the best in the best possible world; in the other the savor of cynicism was at times a little annoying. As each writer went on, the peculiarity became more and more of a mannerism. But the writings of Dickens were far more deeply influenced by his peculiarities of feeling or philosophy than those of Thackeray. A large share of the admiration which is popularly given to Dickens is undoubtedly a tribute to what people consider his cheerful view of life. In that too he is especially English. In this country the artistic theory of France and other continental nations, borrowed from the æsthetic principles of Greece, which accords the palm to the artistic treatment rather than to the subject, or the

purpose or the way of looking at things, has found hardly any broad and general acceptance. The popularity of Dickens was therefore in great measure due to the fact that he set forth life in cheerful lights and colors. He had of course gifts of far higher artistic value; he could describe anything that he saw with a fidelity which Balzac could not have surpassed; and like Balzac he had a way of inspiring inanimate objects with a mystery and motive of their own which gave them often a weird and fascinating individuality. But it must be owned that if Dickens' peculiar "philosophy" were effaced from his works the fame of the author would remain a very different thing from what it is at the present moment. On the other hand, it would be possible to cut out of Thackeray all his little cynical, melancholy sentences and reduce his novels to bare descriptions of life and character, without affecting in any sensible degree his influence on the reader or his position in literature. Thackeray had a marvelously keen appreciation of human motive and character within certain limits. If Dickens could draw an old quaint house or an odd family interior as faithfully and yet as picturesquely as Balzac, so on the other hand not Balzac himself could analyze and illustrate the weaknesses and foibles of certain types of character with greater subtlety of judgment and force of exposition than Thackeray. Dickens had little or no knowledge of human character, and evidently cared very little about the study. His stories are fairy tales made credible by the masterly realism with which he described all the surroundings and accessories, the costumes and the ways of his men and women. While we are reading of a man whose odd peculiarities strike us with a sense of reality as if we had observed them for ourselves many a time, while we see him surrounded by streets and houses which seem to us rather more real and a hundred times more interesting than those through which we pass every day, we are not likely to observe very quickly or to take much heed of the fact when we do observe it, that the man acts on various important occasions of his life as only people in fairy stories ever do act. Thackeray, on the other hand, cared little for descriptions of externals. He left his readers to construct for themselves the greater part of the surroundings of his personages from his description of the characters of the personages themselves. He

made us acquainted with the man or woman in his chapters as if we had known him or her all our life; and knowing Pemmison or Becky Sharp, we had no difficulty in constructing the surroundings of either for ourselves. Thus it will be seen that these two eminent authors had not only different ideas about life, but absolutely contrasting principles of art. One worked from the externals inward; the other realized the unseen, and left the externals to grow of themselves. Three great peculiarities, however, they shared. Each lived and wrote of and for London. Dickens created for art the London of the middle and poorer classes; Thackeray did the same for the London of the upper class and for those who strive to imitate their ways. Neither ever even attempted to describe a man kept constantly above and beyond the atmosphere of mere egotism by some sustaining greatness or even intensity of purpose. In Dickens as in Thackeray, the emotions described are those of conventional life merely. This is not to be said in disparagement of either artist. It is rather a tribute to an artist's knowledge of his own capacity and sphere of work that he only attempts to draw what he thoroughly understands. But it is proper to remark of Dickens and of Thackeray, as of Balzac, that the life they described was, after all, but the life of a coterie or a quarter, and that there existed side by side with their field of work a whole world of emotion, aspiration, struggle, defeat and triumph, of which their brightest pages do not give a single suggestion. This is the more curious to observe because of the third peculiarity which Dickens and Thackeray had in common—a love for the purely ideal and romantic in fiction. There are many critics who hold that Dickens in "Barnaby Rudge" and the "Tale of Two Cities," Thackeray in "Esmond," exhibited powers which vindicated for their possessors a very rare infusion of that higher poetic spirit which might have made of both something greater than the painters of the manners of a day and a class. But to paint the manners of a day and a class as Dickens and Thackeray have done is to deserve fame and the gratitude of posterity. The age of Victoria may claim in this respect an equality at least with that of the reign which produced Fielding and Smollett; for if there are some who would demand for Fielding a higher place on the whole than can be given either to Dickens or to Thackeray,

there are not many, on the other hand, who would not say that either Dickens or Thackeray is distinctly superior to Smollett. The age must claim a high place in art which could in one department alone produce two such competitors. Their effect upon their time was something marvelous. People talked Dickens or thought Thackeray.

Passion, it will be seen, counted for little in the works of Dickens and Thackeray. Dickens, indeed, could draw a conventionally or dramatically wicked man with much power and impressiveness; and Thackeray could suggest certain forms of vice with wonderful delicacy and yet vividness. But the passions which are common to all human natures in their elementary moods made but little play in the novels of either writer. Both were in this respect, for all their originality and genius in other ways, highly and even exclusively conventional. There was apparently a sort of understanding in the mind of each—indeed Thackeray has admitted as much in his preface to "Pendennis"—that men and women were not to be drawn as men and women are known to be, but with certain reserves to suit conventional etiquette. It is somewhat curious that the one only novel-writer who during the period we are now considering came into any real rivalry with them was one who depended on passion altogether for her material and her success. The novels of a young woman, Charlotte Brontë, compelled all English society into a recognition, not alone of their own sterling power and genius, but also of the fact that profound and passionate emotion was still the stuff out of which great fiction could be constructed. "Exultations, agonies, and love, and man's unconquerable mind" were taken by Charlotte Brontë as the matter out of which her art was to produce its triumphs. The novels which made her fame, "Jane Eyre," and "Villette," are positively aflame with passion and pain. They have little variety. They make hardly any pretense to accurate drawing of ordinary men and women in ordinary life, or, at all events, under ordinary conditions. The authoress had little of the gift of the mere story-teller; and her own peculiar powers were exerted sometimes with indifferent success. The familiar on whom she depended for her inspiration would not always come at call. She had little genuine relish for beauty except the beauty of a weird melancholy and of decay. But when she

touched the chord of elementary human emotion with her best skill, then it was impossible for her audience not to feel that they were under the spell of a power rare indeed in our well-ordered days. The absolute sincerity of the author's expression of feeling lent it great part of its strength and charm. Nothing was ever said by her because it seemed to society the right sort of thing to say. She told a friend that she felt sure "Jane Eyre" would have an effect on readers in general because it had so great an effect on herself. It would be possible to argue that the great strength of the books lay in their sincerity alone; that Charlotte Brontë was not so much a woman of extraordinary genius as a woman who looked her own feelings fairly in the face and painted them as she saw them. But the capacity to do this would surely be something which we could not better describe than by the word genius. Charlotte Brontë was far from being an artist of fulfilled power. She is rather to be regarded as one who gave evidence of extraordinary gifts which might with time and care, and under happier artistic auspices, have been turned to such account as would have made for her a fame with the very chiefs of her tribe. She died at an age hardly more mature than that at which Thackeray won his first distinct literary success; much earlier than the age at which some of our greatest novelists brought forth their first completed novels. But she left a very deep impression on her time, and the time that has come and is coming after her. No other hand in the age of Queen Victoria has dealt with human emotion so powerfully and so truthfully. Hers are not cheerful novels. A cold, gray, mournful atmosphere hangs over them. One might imagine that the shadow of an early death is forecast on them. They love to linger among the glooms of nature, to haunt her darkling wintry twilights, to study her stormy sunsets, to link man's destiny and his hopes, fears, and passions somehow with the glare and gloom of storm and darkness, and to read the symbols of his fate as the fore-doomed and passion-wasted Antony did in the cloud-masses that are "black vesper's pageants." The supernatural had a constant vague charm for Charlotte Brontë as the painful had. Man was to her a being torn between passionate love and the more ignoble impulses and ambitions and common day occupations of life. Woman was a being of equal

passion, still more sternly and cruelly doomed to repression and renunciation. It was a strange fact that in the midst of the splendid material successes and the quietly triumphant intellectual progress of this most prosperous and well-ordered age, when even in its poetry and its romance passion was systematically toned down and put in thrall to good taste and propriety, this young writer should have suddenly come out with her books all thrilling with emotion, and all protesting in the strongest practical manner against the theory that the loves and hates of men and women had been tamed by the process of civilization. Perhaps the very novelty of the apparition was in great measure a part of its success. Charlotte Brontë did not, indeed, influence the general public, or even the literary public, to anything like the same extent that Thackeray and Dickens did. She appeared and passed away almost in a moment. As Miss Martineau said of her, she stole like a shadow into literature and then became a shadow again. But she struck very deeply into the heart of the time. If her writings were only, as has been said of them, a cry of pain, yet they were such a cry as once heard lingers and echoes in the mind forever after. Godwin declared that he would write in "Caleb Williams" a book which would leave no man who read it the same that he was before. Something not unlike this might be said of "Jane Eyre." No one who read it was exactly the same that he had been before he opened its weird and wonderful pages.

The novels of Mrs. Gaskell must not be without record. "Ruth", and "Cranford," and "Wives and Daughters"—this last left unfinished, its authoress called away by death—are pictures of quiet English life, with its homely joys and sorrows, which linger long in the mind, and have a peculiar place in our literature.

No man could well have made more of his gifts than Lord Lytton. Before the coming up of Dickens and Thackeray he stood above all living English novelists. Perhaps this is rather to the reproach of the English fiction of the day than to the renown of Lord Lytton. But even after Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë and later and not less powerful and original writers had appeared in the same field, he still held a place of great mark in literature. That he was not a man of genius is, perhaps, conclusively proved by the fact that he was able



so readily to change his style to suit the tastes of each day. He began by writing of fops and *roués* of a time now almost forgotten; then he made heroes of highwaymen and murderers; afterward he tried the philosophic and mildly didactic style; then he turned to mysticism and spiritualism; later still he wrote of the French second empire. Whatever he tried to do he did well. Besides his novels he wrote plays and poems; and his plays are among the very few modern productions which manage to keep the stage. He played, too, and with much success, at being a statesman and an orator. Not Demosthenes himself had such difficulties of articulation to contend against in the beginning, and Demosthenes conquered his difficulties, while some of those in the way of Lord Lytton proved unconquerable; yet Lord Lytton did somehow contrive to become a great speaker, and to seem occasionally like a great orator in the House of Commons. He was at the very least a superb phrase-maker; and he could turn to account every scrap of knowledge in literature, art, or science which he happened to possess. His success in the House of Commons was exactly like his success in romance and the drama. He threw himself into competition with men of far higher original gifts, and he made so good a show of contesting with them that in the minds of many the victory was not clearly with his antagonists. There was always, for example, a considerable class, even among educated persons, who maintained that Lytton was in his way quite the peer of Thackeray and Dickens. His plays, or some of them, obtained a popularity only second to those of Shakespeare; and although nobody cared to read them, yet people were always found to go and look at them. When Lytton went into the House of Commons for the second time he found audiences which were occasionally tempted to regard him as the rival of Gladstone and Bright. Not a few persons saw in all this only a sort of superb *charlatanerie*; and indeed it is certain that no man ever made and kept a genuine success in so many different fields as those in which Lord Lytton tried and seemed to succeed. But he had splendid qualities; he had everything short of genius. He had indomitable patience, inexhaustible power of self-culture, and a capacity for assimilating the floating ideas of the hour which supplied the place of originality. He borrowed from the poet the

knack of poetical expression, and from the dramatist the trick of construction; from the Byronic time its professed scorn for the false gods of the world; and from the more modern period of popular science and sham mysticism its extremes of materialism and magic; and of these and various other borrowings he made up an article which no one else could have constructed out of the same materials. He was not a great author; but he was a great literary man. Mr. Disraeli's novels belong in some measure to the school of "Pelham" and "Godolphin." But it should be said that Mr. Disraeli's "Vivian Grey" was published before "Pelham" made its appearance. In all that belongs to political life Mr. Disraeli's novels are far superior to those of Lord Lytton. We have nothing in our literature to compare with some of the best of Mr. Disraeli's novels for light political satire and for easy, accurate characterization of political cliques and personages. But all else in Disraeli's novels is sham. The sentiment, the poetry, the philosophy—all these are sham. They have not half the appearance of reality about them that Lytton has contrived to give to his efforts of the same kind. In one at least of Disraeli's latest novels the political sketches and satirizing became sham also.

"Alton Locke" was published nearly thirty years ago. Then Charles Kingsley became to most boys in Great Britain who read books at all a sort of living embodiment of chivalry, liberty, and a revolt against the established order of class-oppression in so many spheres of our society. For a long time he continued to be the chosen hero of young men with the youthful spirit of revolt in them, with dreams of republics and ideas about the equality of man. Later on he commanded other admiration for other qualities—for the championship of slave systems, of oppression, and the iron reign of mere force. But though Charles Kingsley always held a high place somewhere in popular estimation, he is not to be rated very highly as an author. He described glowing scenery admirably, and he rang the changes vigorously on his two or three ideas—the muscular Englishman, the glory of the Elizabethan discoveries, and so on. He was a scholar, and he wrote verses which sometimes one is on the point of mistaking for poetry, so much of the poet's feeling have they in them. He did a great many things very cleverly. Perhaps if he had done less he

might have done better. Human capacity is limited. It is not given to mortal to be a great preacher, a great philosopher, a great scholar, a great poet, a great historian, a great novelist, and an indefatigable country parson. Charles Kingsley never seems to have made up his mind for which of these callings to go in especially, and being, with all his versatility, not at all many-sided, but strictly one-sided and almost one-idea'd, the result was, that while touching success at many points he absolutely mastered it at none. Since his novel "Westward Ho," he never added anything substantial to his reputation. All this acknowledged, however, it must still be owned that, failing in this, that, and the other attempt, and never achieving any real and enduring success, Charles Kingsley was an influence and a man of mark in the Victorian age.

Perhaps a word ought to be said of the rattling romances of Irish electioneering, love-making, and fighting which set people reading "Charles O'Malley" and "Jack Hinton," even when "Pickwick" was still a novelty. Charles Lever had wonderful animal spirits and a broad bright humor. He was quite genuine in his way. He afterward changed his style completely, and with much success; and will be found in the later part of the period holding just the same relative place as in the earlier, just behind the foremost men, but in a manner so different that he might be a new writer who had never read a line of the roystering adventures of *Light Dragoons* which were popular when Charles Lever first gave them to the world. There was nothing great about Lever, but the literature of the Victorian period would not be quite all that we know it without him. There were many other popular novelists during the period we have passed over, some in their day more popular than either Thackeray or Charlotte Brontë. Many of us can remember without being too much ashamed of the fact that there were early days when Mr. James and his cavaliers and his chivalric adventures gave nearly as much delight as Walter Scott could have given to the youth of a preceding generation. But Walter Scott is with us still, young and old, and poor James is gone. His once famous solitary horseman has ridden away into actual solitude, and the shades of night have gathered over his heroic form.

The founding of *Punch* drew together a host of clever young writers, some of whom made a really deep mark on

the literature of their time, and the combined influence of whom in this artistic and literary undertaking was on the whole decidedly healthy. Thackeray was by far the greatest of the regular contributors to *Punch* in its earlier days. But "The Song of the Shirt" appeared in its pages, and some of the brightest of Douglas Jerrold's writings made their appearance there. *Punch* was a thoroughly English production. It had little or nothing in common with the comic periodicals of Paris. It ignored absolutely and of set purpose the whole class of subjects which make up three-fourths of the stock in trade of a French satirist. The escapades of husbands and the infidelities of wives form the theme of by far the greater number of the humorous sketches with pen or pencil in Parisian comicalities. *Punch* kept altogether aloof from such unsavory subjects. It had an advantage, of course, which was habitually denied to the French papers—it had unlimited freedom of political satire and caricature. Politics and the more trivial troubles and trials of social life gave subjects to *Punch*. The inequalities of class and the struggles of ambitious and vain persons to get into circles higher than their own, or at least to imitate their manners—these supplied for *Punch* the place of the class of topics on which French papers relied when they had to deal with the domestic life of the nation. *Punch* started by being somewhat fiercely Radical, but gradually toned away into a sort of intelligent and respectable Conservatism. Its artistic sketches were from first to last admirable. Some men of true genius wrought for it with the pencil as others did with the pen. Doyle, Leech, and Tenniel were men of whom any school of art might well be proud. A remarkable sobriety of style was apparent in all their humors. Of later years caricature has had absolutely no place in the illustrations to *Punch*. The satire is quiet, delicate, and no doubt superficial. It is a satire of manners, dress, and social ways altogether. There is justice in the criticism that, of late more especially, the pages of *Punch* give no idea whatever of the emotions of the English people. There is no suggestion of grievance, of bitterness, of passion or pain. It is all made up of the pleasures and annoyances of the kind of life which is enclosed in a garden party. But it must be said that *Punch* has thus always succeeded in maintaining a good, open, convenient neutral ground, where young men and

maidens, girls and boys, elderly politicians and staid matrons, law trade, science, all sects and creeds, may safely and pleasantly mingle. It is not so, to be sure, that great satire is wrought. A Swift or Juvenal is not thus to be brought out. But a votary of the present would have his answer simple and conclusive: we live in the age of *Punch*; we do not live in the age of Juvenal or Swift.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE LORCHA ARROW.

AFTER the supposed settlement of the eastern question at the congress of Paris, a sort of languor seems to have come over parliament and the public mind in England. Lord John Russell endeavored unsuccessfully to have something done which should establish in England a genuine system of national education. He proposed a series of resolutions, one of which laid down the principle that after a certain appointed time, when any school district should have been declared to be deficient in adequate means for the education of the poor, the quarter session of the peace for the county, city, or borough should have power to impose a school rate. This was a step in the direction of compulsory education. It anticipated the principle on which the first genuine measure for national instruction was founded many years after. It was of course rejected by the House of Commons when Lord John Russell proposed it. Public opinion, both in and out of parliament, was not nearly ripe for such a principle then. All such proposals were quietly disposed of with the observation that that sort of thing might do very well for Prussians, but would never suit Englishmen. That was a time when a Prussian was regarded in England as a dull, beer-bemused, servile creature, good for nothing better than to grovel before his half-inebriated monarchs, and to get the stick from his incapable military officers. The man who suggested then that perhaps some day the Prussians might show that they knew how to fight would have been set down as on a par intellectually with the narrow-minded grumbler who did not believe in the profound sagacity of the emperor of the French. For a country of practical men England is ruled

to a marvelous extent by phrases, and the term "un-English" was destined for a considerable time to come to settle all attempts at the introduction of any system of national education which even touched on the compulsory principle. One of the regular attempts to admit the Jews to parliament was made and succeeded in the House of Commons, to fail, as usual, in the House of Lords. The House of Lords itself was thrown into great perturbation for a time by the proposal of the government to confer a peerage for life on one of the judges, Sir James Parke. Lord Lyndhurst strongly opposed the proposal, on the ground that it was the beginning of an attempt to introduce a system of life peerages, which would destroy the ancient and hereditary character of the House of Lords, allow of its being at any time broken up and remodeled according to the discretion of the minister in power, and reduce it in fact to the level of a continental life senate. Many members of the House of Commons were likewise afraid of the innovation; it seemed to foreshadow the possible revival of an ancient principle of crown nomination which might be applied to the representatives as well as to the hereditary chamber, seeing that at one time English sovereigns did undoubtedly assume the right of nominating members of the House of Commons. The government, who had really no reactionary or revolutionary designs in their mind, settled the matter for the time by creating Sir James Parke Baron Wensleydale in the usual way, and the object they had in view was quietly accomplished many years later, when the appellate jurisdiction of the Lords was remodeled.

Sir George Lewis was chancellor of the exchequer. He was as yet not credited with anything like the political ability which he afterward proved that he possessed. It was the fashion to regard him as a mere bookman, who had drifted somehow into parliament, and who, in the temporary absence of available talent, had been thrust into the office lately held by Mr. Gladstone. The contrast indeed between the style of his speaking and that of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli was enough to dishearten any political assembly. Mr. Gladstone had brought to his budget speeches and eloquence that brightened the driest details and made the wilderness of figures to blossom like the rose. Mr. Disraeli was able to make a financial statement burst into a *bouquet* of fireworks. Sir George Lewis

began by being nearly inaudible, and continued to the last to be oppressed by the most ineffective and unattractive manner and delivery. But it began to be gradually found out that the monotonous, halting, feeble manner covered a very remarkable power of expression; that the speaker had great resources of argument, humor, and illustration; that every sentence contained some fresh idea or some happy expression. It was not very long before an experienced observer in parliament declared that Sir George Lewis delivered the best speeches with the worst manner known to the existing House of Commons. After awhile a reaction set in, and the capacity of Lewis ran the risk of being overrated quite as much as it had been undervalued before. In him, men said, was seen the coming prime minister of England. Time, as it will be seen afterward, did not allow Sir George Lewis any chance of making good this prediction. He was undoubtedly a man of rare ability and refined intellect; an example very uncommon in England of the thinker, the scholar, and the statesman in one. His speeches were an intellectual treat to all with whom matter counted for more than manner. One who had watched parliamentary life from without and within for many years said he had never had his deliberate opinion changed by a speech in the House of Commons but twice, and each time it was an argument from Sir George Lewis that accomplished the conversion.

For the present, however, Sir George Lewis was regarded only as the sort of statesman whom it was fitting to have in office just then; the statesman of an interval in whom no one was expected to take any particular interest. The attention of the public was a good deal distracted from political affairs by the simultaneous outbreak of new forms of crime and fraud. The trial of Palmer in the Rugeley poisoning case, the trial of Dove in the Leeds poisoning case, these and similar events set the popular mind into wild alarm as to the prevalence of strychnine poisoning everywhere. The failure and frauds of the Royal British Bank, the frauds of Robson and Redpath, gave for the time a sort of idea that the financial principles of the country were crumbling to pieces. The culmination of the extraordinary career of John Sadleir was fresh in public memory. This man, it will be recollected, was the organizer and guiding spirit of the Irish brigade, the gang of adventurers whom

we have already described as trading on the genuine grievances of their country to get power and money for themselves. John Sadleir overdid the thing. He embezzled, swindled, forged, and finally escaped justice by committing suicide on Hampstead Heath. So fraudulent had his life been that many persons persisted in believing that his supposed suicide was but another fraud. He had got possession—such was the theory—of a dead body which bore some resemblance to his own form and features; he had palmed this off as his own corpse done to death by poison; and had himself contrived to escape with a large portion of his ill-gotten money. This extraordinary parody and perversion of the plot of Jean Paul Richter's story of "Siebenkäs" really found many faithful believers. It is worth mentioning, not as a theory credible in itself, but as an evidence of the belief that had got abroad as to the character and the stratagems of Sadleir. The brother of Sadleir was expelled from the House of Commons; one of his accomplices, who had obtained a government appointment and had embezzled money, contrived to make his escape to the United States; and the Irish brigade was broken up. It is only just to say that the best representatives of the Irish Catholics and the Irish national party, in and out of parliament, had never from the first believed in Sadleir and his band, and had made persistent efforts to expose them.

About this same time Mr. Cyrus W. Field, an energetic American merchant, came over to this country to explain to its leading merchants and scientific men a plan he had for constructing an electric telegraph line under the Atlantic. Mr. Field had had this idea strongly in his mind for some years, and he made a strenuous effort to impress the English public with a conviction of its practicability. He was received by the merchants of Liverpool on November 12, 1856, in their exchange rooms, and he made a long statement explaining his views, which were listened to with polite curiosity. Mr. Field had, however, a much better reception on the whole than M. de Lesseps, who came to England a few months later to explain his project for constructing a ship canal across the Isthmus of Suez. The proposal was received with coldness, and more than coldness, by engineers, capitalists, and politicians. Engineers showed that the canal could not be made, or at least maintained when made; capitalists proved that it never



could pay; and politicians were ready to make it plain that such a canal, if made, would be a standing menace to English interests. Lord Palmerston, a few days after frankly admitted that the English government were opposed to the project, because it would tend to the more easy separation of Egypt from Turkey, and set afloat speculations as to a ready access to India. M. de Lesseps himself has given an amusing account of the manner in which Lord Palmerston denounced the scheme in an interview with the projector. Luckily, neither Mr. Field nor M. de Lesseps was a person to be lightly discouraged. Great projectors are usually as full of their own ideas as great poets. M. de Lesseps had in the end perhaps more reason to be alarmed at England's sudden appreciation of his scheme than he had in the first instance to complain of the cold disapprobation with which her government encountered it.

The political world seemed to have made up its mind for a season of quiet. Suddenly that happened which always does happen in such a condition of things—a storm broke out. To those who remember the events at that time, three words will explain the nature of the disturbance. "The *lorcha Arrow*" will bring back the recollection of one of the most curious political convulsions known in this country during our generation. For years after the actual events connected with the *lorcha Arrow*, the very name of that ominous vessel used to send a shudder through the House of Commons. The word suggested first an impassioned controversy which had left a painful impression on the condition of political parties, and next an effort of futile persistency to open the whole controversy over again, and force it upon the notice of legislators who wished for nothing better than to be allowed to forget it.

In the speech from the throne at the opening of parliament, on February 3, 1857, the following passage occurred: "Her majesty commands us to inform you that acts of violence, insults to the British flag, and the infraction of treaty rights, committed by the local Chinese authorities at Canton, and a pertinacious refusal of redress, have rendered it necessary for her majesty's officers in China to have recourse to measures of force to obtain satisfaction." The acts of violence, the insults to the British flag, and the infraction of treaty rights alleged to have been committed by the Chinese authorities at Canton had for their

single victim the *loreha Arrow*. The *loreha Arrow* was a small boat built on the European model. The word "*loreha*" is taken from the Portuguese settlement at Macao at the mouth of the Canton river. It often occurs in treaties with the Chinese authorities. "Every British schooner, cutter, *lorcha*, etc.," are words that we constantly find in these documents. On October 8, 1856, a party of Chinese in charge of an officer boarded a boat, called the *Arrow*, in the Canton river. They took off twelve men on a charge of piracy, leaving two men in charge of the *loreha*. The *Arrow* was declared by its owners to be a British vessel. Our consul at Canton, Mr. Parkes, demanded from Yeh, the Chinese government of Canton, the return of the men, basing his demand upon the ninth article of the supplemental treaty of 1843, entered into subsequently to the treaty of 1842. We need not go deeper into the terms of this treaty than to say that there could be no doubt that it did not give the Chinese authorities any right to seize Chinese offenders or supposed offenders on board an English vessel. It merely gave them a right to require the surrender of the offenders at the hands of the English. The Chinese governor, Yeh, contended, however, that the *loreha* was not an English but a Chinese vessel—a Chinese pirate, venturing occasionally for her own purposes to fly the flag of England, which she had no right whatever to hoist. Under the treaties with China, British vessels were to be subject to consular authority only. The treaty provided amply for the registration of vessels entitled to British protection, for the regular renewal of the registration, and for the conditions under which the registration was to be granted or renewed. The *Arrow* had somehow obtained a British registration, but it had expired about ten days before the occurrence in the Canton river, and even the British authorities who had been persuaded to grant the registration were not certain whether, with the knowledge they subsequently obtained, it could legally be renewed. We believe it may be plainly stated at once, as a matter of fact, that the *Arrow* was not an English vessel, but only a Chinese vessel which had obtained by false pretenses the temporary possession of a British flag. Mr. Consul Parkes, however, was fussy, and he demanded the instant restoration of the captured men, and he sent off to our plenipotentiary at Hong Kong, Sir John Bowring, for authority and assistance in the business.

Sir John Bowring was a man of considerable ability. At one time he seemed to be a candidate for something like fame. He was the political pupil and the literary executor of Jeremy Bentham, and for some years was editor of the *Westminster Review*. He had a very large and varied, although not profound or scholarly knowledge of European and Asiatic languages (there was not much scientific study of languages in his early days), he had traveled a great deal, and had sat in parliament for some years. He understood political economy, and had a good knowledge of trade and commerce; and in those days a literary man who knew anything about trade and commerce was thought a person of almost miraculous versatility. Bowring had many friends and admirers, and he set up early for a sort of great man. He was full of self-conceit, and without any very clear idea of political principles on the large scale. Nothing in all his previous habits of life, nothing in the association and friendships by which he had long been surrounded, nothing in his studies or his writings warranted any one in expecting that when placed in a responsible position in China at a moment of great crisis he would have taken on him to act the part which aroused such a controversy. It would seem as if his eager self-conceit would not allow him to resist the temptation to display himself on the field of political action as a great English plenipotentiary, a master-spirit of the order of Clive or Warren Hastings, bidding England to be of good cheer, and compelling inferior races to grovel in the dust before her. Bowring knew China as well as it was then likely that an Englishman could know the "huge mummy empire by the hands of custom wrapped in swathing bands." He had been consul for some years at Canton, and he had held the post of chief superintendent of trade there. He sent to the Chinese authorities and demanded the surrender of all the men taken from the Arrow. Not merely did he demand the surrender of the men, but he insisted that an apology should be offered for their arrest, and a formal pledge given by the Chinese authorities that no such act should ever be committed again. If this were not done within forty-eight hours, naval operations were to be begun against the Chinese. This sort of demand was less like that of a dignified English official, conscious of the justice of his cause and the strength of his country, than like the

demeanor of Ancient Pistol formulating his terms to the fallen Frenchman on the battle-field; "I'll fer him, and firik him, and ferret him—discuss the same in French unto him." Sir John Bowring called out to the Chinese governor Yeh, that he would fer him, and firik him, and ferret him, and bade the same be discussed in Chinese unto him. Yeh sent back all the men, saying in effect that he did so to avoid the ferring, and firiking, and ferreting, and he even undertook to promise that for the future great care should be taken that no British ship should be visited improperly by Chinese officers. But he could not offer an apology for the particular case of the Arrow, for he still maintained, as was indeed the fact, that the Arrow was a Chinese vessel, and that the English had nothing to do with her. In truth, Sir John Bowring had himself written to Consul Parkes to say that the Arrow had no right to hoist the English flag, as her license, however obtained, had expired; but he got over this difficulty by remarking that after all the Chinese did not know that fact, and that they were therefore responsible. Accordingly, Sir John Bowring carried out his threat and immediately made war on China. He did something worse than making war in the ordinary way; he had Canton bombarded by the fleet which Admiral Sir Michael Seymour commanded. From October 23rd to November 13th naval and military operations were kept up continuously. A large number of forts and junks were taken and destroyed. The suburbs of Canton were battered down in order that the ships might have a clearer range to fire upon the city. Shot and shell were poured in upon Canton. Sir John Bowring thought the time appropriate for reviving certain alleged treaty rights for the admission of representatives of British authority into Canton. During the parliamentary debates that followed, Sir John Bowring was accused by Lord Derby and Mr. Cobden of having a sort of monomania about getting into Canton. Curiously enough, in his autobiographical fragments Sir John Bowring tells us when he was a little boy he dreamed that he was sent by the king of England as ambassador to China. In his later days he appears to have been somewhat childishly anxious to realize this dream of his infancy. He showed all a child's persistent strength of will and weakness of reason in enforcing his demand, and he appears, at one period of the controversy, to have

thought that it had no other end than his solemn entry into Canton. Meanwhile Commissioner Yeh retaliated by foolishly offering a reward for the head of every Englishman. Throughout the whole business Sir John Bowring contrived to keep himself almost invariably in the wrong, and even where his claim happened to be in itself good he managed to assert it in a manner at once untimely, imprudent, and indecent.

This news from China created a considerable sensation in England, although not many public men had any idea of the manner in which it was destined to affect the House of Commons. On February 24, 1857, Lord Derby brought forward in the House of Lords a motion, comprehensively condemning the whole of the proceedings of the British authorities in China. The debate would have been memorable if only for the powerful speech in which the venerable Lord Lyndhurst supported the motion, and exposed the utter illegality of the course pursued by Sir John Bowring. Lord Lyndhurst declared that the proceedings of the British authorities could not be justified upon any principle, either of law or of reason; that the Arrow was simply a Chinese vessel, built in China, and owned and manned by Chinamen; and he laid it down as a "principle which no one will successfully contest," that you may give "any rights and privileges to a foreigner or a foreign vessel as against yourself, but you cannot grant to any such foreigner a single right or privilege as against a foreign state." In other words, if the British authorities chose to give a British license to a Chinese pirate boat which would secure her some immunity against British law, that would be altogether an affair for themselves and their government; but they could not pretend by any British register or other document to give a Chinese boat in Chinese waters a right of exemption from the laws of China. Perhaps the whole question never could have arisen if it were not for the fact on which Lord Lyndhurst commented, that "when we are talking of treaty transactions with eastern nations, we have a kind of loose law and loose notion of morality in regard to them." The question as to the right conferred by the license, such as it was, to hoist the British flag, could not have been disposed of more effectually than it was by the Chinese governor Yeh himself, in a single sentence. "A lorcha," as Yeh put it, "owned by a Chinese,

purchased a British flag; did that make her a British vessel?" The lord chancellor was actually driven to answer Lord Lyndhurst by contending that, no matter whether the lorcha was legally or illegally flying the British flag, it was not for the Chinese to assume that she was flying it illegally, and that they had no right to board the vessel on the assumption that she was not what she pretended to be. To show the value of that argument, it is only necessary to say that if such were the recognized principle, every pirate in the Canton river would have nothing further to do than to hoist any old scrap of British bunting and sail on, defiant, under the very eyes of the Chinese authorities. The governor of Canton would be compelled to make a formal complaint to Sir John Bowring, and trust meanwhile that a spirit of fair play would induce the pirates to wait for a formal investigation by the British authorities. Otherwise neither Chinese nor British could take any steps to capture the offenders.

The House of Lords rejected the motion of Lord Derby by a majority of one hundred and forty-six to one hundred and ten. On February 26th, Mr. Cobden brought forward a motion in the House of Commons, declaring that "the papers which have been laid upon the table fail to establish satisfactory grounds for the violent measures resorted to at Canton in the late affair of the Arrow," and demanding "that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the state of our commercial relations with China." This must have been a peculiarly painful task for Mr. Cobden. He was an old friend of Sir John Bowring, with whom he had always supposed himself to have many or most opinions in common. But he followed his convictions as to public duty in despite of personal friendship. It is a curious evidence of the manner in which the moral principles become distorted in a political contest, that during the subsequent elections it was actually made a matter of reproach to Mr. Cobden that while acknowledging his old friendship for Sir John Bowring he was nevertheless found ready to move a vote of censure on his public conduct. The debate was remarkable more for the singular political combination which it developed as it went on than even for its varied ability and eloquence. Men spoke and voted on the same side who had probably never been brought into such companionship before and never were afterward. Mr. Cobden

found himself supported by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli, by Mr. Roebuck and Sir E. B. Lytton, by Lord John Russell and Mr. Whiteside, by Lord Robert Cecil, afterward the Marquis of Salisbury, Sir Frederiek Thesiger, Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterward Lord Selborne, Mr. Sydney Herbert, and Mr. Milner Gibson. The discussion lasted four nights, and it was only as it went on that men's eyes began to open to its political importance. Mr. Cobden had probably never dreamed of the amount or the nature of the support his motion was destined to receive. The government and the opposition alike held meetings out of doors to agree upon a general line of action in the debate and to prepare for the result. Lord Palmerston was convinced that he would come all right in the end, but he felt that he had made himself obnoxious to the advanced Liberals by his indifference, or rather hostility, to every project of reform, and he persuaded himself that the opportunity would be eagerly caught at by them to make a combination with the Tories against him. In all this he was deceiving himself as he had done more than once before. There is not the slightest reason to believe that anything but a growing conviction of the insufficiency of the defense set up for the proceedings in Canton influenced the great majority of those who spoke and voted for Mr. Cobden's motion. The truth is, that there has seldom been so flagrant and so inexcusable an example of high-handed lawlessness in the dealings of a strong with a weak nation. When the debate first began it is quite possible that many public men still believed some explanation or defense was coming forward which would enable them to do what the House of Commons is always unwilling not to do—to sustain the action of an English official in a foreign country. As the discussion went on it became more and more evident that there was no such defense or explanation. Men found their consciences coerced into a condemnation of Sir John Bowring's conduct. It was almost ludicrous when the miserable quibbling and evasions of the British officials came to be contrasted with the cruelly clear arguments of the Chinese. The reading of these latter documents came like a practical enforcement of Mr. Cobden's description of the Chinese empire as a state "which had its system of logic before the time of the Aristotle, and its code of morals before that of Socrates." The vote of censure was carried

by two hundred and sixty-three votes against two hundred and forty seven—a majority of sixteen.

Mr. Disraeli, in the course of a clever and defiant speech made toward the close of the long debate, had challenged Lord Palmerston to take the opinion of the country on the policy of the government. "I should like," he exclaimed, "to see the programme of the proud leaders of the Liberal party—no reform, new taxes, Canton blazing, Peking invaded." Lord Palmerston's answer was virtually that of Brutus: "Why, I will see thee at Philippi then." He announced two or three days after that the government had resolved on a dissolution and an appeal to the country. Lord Palmerston knew his Pappenheimers. He understood his countrymen. He knew that a popular minister makes himself more popular by appealing to the country on the ground that he has been condemned by the House of Commons for upholding the honor of England and coercing some foreign power somewhere. His address to the electors of Tiverton differed curiously in its plan of appeal from that of Lord John Russell to the electors of the city, or that of Mr. Disraeli to those of Buckinghamshire. Lord John Russell coolly and wisely argued out the controversy between him and Lord Palmerston, and gave very satisfactory reasons to prove that there was no sufficient justification for the bombardment of Canton. Mr. Disraeli described Lord Palmerston as the Tory chief of a Radical cabinet, and declared that, "with no domestic policy, he is obliged to divert the attention of the people from the consideration of their own affairs to the distractions of foreign politics." "His external system is turbulent and aggressive, that his rule at home may be tranquil and unassailed. In later days a charge not altogether unlike that was made against an English prime minister who was not Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston understood the temper of the country too well to trouble himself about arguments of any kind. He came to the point at once. In his address to the electors of Tiverton he declared that "an insolent barbarian, wielding authority at Canton, violated the British flag, broke the engagements of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassination, and poison." That of course was all-sufficient. The "insolent barbarian" was in itself almost enough. Gov-



ernor Yeh certainly was not a barbarian. His argument on the subject of international law obtained the endorsement of Lord Lyndhurst. His way of arguing the political and commercial case compelled the admiration of Lord Derby. His letters form a curious contrast to the documents contributed to the controversy by the representatives of British authority in China. However, he became for electioneering purposes an insolent barbarian; and the story of a Chinese baker who was said to have tried to poison Sir John Bowring became transfigured into an attempt at the wholesale poisoning of Englishmen in China by the express orders of the Chinese governor. Lord Palmerston further intimated that he and his government had been censured by a combination of factious persons who, if they got into power and were prepared to be consistent, must apologize to the Chinese government and offer compensation to the Chinese commissioner. "Will the British nation," he asked, "give their support to men who have thus endeavored to make the humiliation and the degradation of their country the stepping stone to power?"

No, to be sure; the British nation would do nothing of the kind. Lord Derby, Lord Lyndhurst, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Disraeli, Sir E. B. Lytton, Lord Grey, Lord Robert Cecil—these were the craven Englishmen, devoid of all patriotic or manly feeling, who were trying to make the humiliation and degradation of their country a stepping-stone to power. They were likewise the friends and allies of the insolent barbarian. There were no music halls of the modern type in those days. Had there been such, the denunciations of the insolent barbarian, and of his still baser British friends, would no doubt have been shouted forth night after night in the metropolis, to the accompaniment of rattling glasses and clattering pint-pots. Even without the alliance of the music halls, however, Lord Palmerston swept the field of his enemies. His victory was complete. The defeat of the men of peace in especial was what Mr. Ruskin once called not a fall, but a catastrophe. Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, W. J. Fox, Layard, and many other leading opponents of the Chinese policy was left without seats. There was something peculiarly painful in the circumstances of Mr. Bright's defeat at Manchester. Mr. Bright was suffering from severe illness. In the opinion of his many friends his health was

thoroughly broken. He had worked in public life with the generous disregard of his physical resources; and he was compelled to leave the country and seek rest first in Italy and afterward in Algeria. It was not a time when even political enmity could with a good grace have ventured to visit on him the supposed offenses of his party. But the "insolent barbarian" phrase overthrew him too. He sent home from Florence a farewell address to the electors of Manchester, which was full of quiet dignity. "I have esteemed it a high honor," thus ran one passage of the address, "to be one of your representatives, and have given more of mental and physical labor to your service than is just to myself. I feel it scarcely less an honor to suffer in the cause of peace, and on behalf of what I believe to be the true interests of my country, though I could have wished that the blow had come from other hands, at a time when I could have met face to face those who dealt it."

Not long after, Mr. Cobden, one of the least sentimental and the most unaffected of men, speaking in the Manchester Free Trade hall of the circumstances of Mr. Bright's rejection from Manchester, and the leave-taking address which so many regarded as the last public word of a great career, found himself unable to go on with that part of his speech. An emotion more honorable to the speaker and his subject than the most elaborate triumph of eloquence checked the flow of the orator's words, and for the moment made him inarticulate.

Lord Palmerston came back to power with renewed and redoubled strength. The little war with Persia, which will be mentioned afterward, came to an end in time to give him another claim as a conqueror on the sympathies of the constituencies. His appointments of bishops had given great satisfaction to the evangelical party, and he had become for the time quite a sort of church hero, much to the amusement of Lord Derby, who made great sport of "Palmerston, the true Protestant;" "Palmerston, the only Christian prime minister." In the royal speech at the opening of parliament it was announced that the differences between this country and China still remained unadjusted and that therefore "Her majesty had sent to China a plenipotentiary fully entrusted to deal with all matters of difference; and that plenipotentiary will be supported by an adequate naval and military force in the event of such

assistance becoming necessary." It would be almost superfluous to say that the assistance of the naval and military force thus suggested was found to be necessary. The government, however, had more serious business with which to occupy themselves before they were at liberty to turn to the easy work of coercing the Chinese.

The new parliament was engaged for some time in passing the act for the establishment of a court of divorce—that is to say, abolishing the ancient jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts respecting divorce, and setting up a regular court of law, the divorce and matrimonial-causes court, to deal with questions between husband and wife. The passing of the divorce act was strongly contested in both houses of parliament, and indeed was secured at last only by Lord Palmerston's intimating very significantly that he would keep the houses sitting until the measure had been disposed of. Mr. Gladstone, in particular, offered to the bill a most strenuous opposition. He condemned it on strictly conscientious grounds. Yet it has to be said, even as a question of conscience, that there was divorce in England before the passing of the act, the only difference being that the act made divorce somewhat cheap and rather easy. Before it was the luxury of the rich; the act brought it within the reach of almost the poorest of her majesty's subjects. We confess that we do not see how any great moral or religious principle is violated in the one case any more than in the other. The question at issue was, not whether divorce should be allowed by the law, but only whether it should be high-priced or comparatively inexpensive. It is certainly a public advantage, as it seems to us, that the change in the law has put an end to the debates that used to take place in both houses of parliament. When any important bill of divorce was under discussion, the members crowded the house, the case was discussed in all its details as any clause in a bill is now debated; long speeches were made by those who thought the divorce ought to be granted and those who thought the contrary; and the time of parliament was occupied in the edifying discussion as to whether some unhappy woman's shame was or was not clearly established. In one famous case, where a distinguished peer, orator, and statesman sought a divorce from his wife, every point of the evidence was debated in parliament for night after

night. Members spoke in the debate who had known nothing of the case until the bill came before them. One member, perhaps, was taken with a vague sympathy with the wife; he set about to show that the evidence against her proved nothing. Another sympathized with husbands in general, and made it his business to emphasize every point that told of guilt in the woman. More than one earnest speaker during those debates expressed an ardent hope that the time might come when parliament should be relieved from the duty of undertaking such unsuitable and scandalous investigations. It must be owned that public decency suffers less by the regulated action of the divorce court than it did under this preposterous and abominable system. We cannot help adding too that the divorce act, judging by the public use made of it, certainly must be held to have justified itself in a merely practical sense. It seems to have been thoroughly appreciated by a grateful public. It was not easy after awhile to get judicial power enough to keep the supply of divorces up to the ever-increasing demand.

Lord Palmerston, then, appears to be furnished with an entirely new lease of power. The little Persian War has been brought to a close; the country is not disposed to listen to any complaint as to the manner in which it was undertaken. The settlement of the dispute with China promised to be an easy piece of business. The peace party were everywhere overthrown. No one could well have anticipated that within less than a year from the general election a motion made in the House of Commons by one whom it unseated was to compel the government of Lord Palmerston suddenly to resign office.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### TRANSPORTATION.

THE year 1857 would have been memorable, if for no other reason, because it saw the abolition of the system of transportation. Transportation as a means of getting rid of part of our criminal population dates from the time of Charles II., when the judges gave power for the removal of offenders to the North American colonies. The fiction

of the years coming immediately after took account of this innovation, and one of the most celebrated, if not exactly one of the finest, of Defoe's novels deals with the history of a convict thus sent out to Virginia. Afterward the revolt of the American colonies and other cases made it necessary to send convicts farther away from civilization. The punishment of transportation was first regularly introduced into our criminal law in 1717 by an act of parliament. In 1787 a cargo of criminals was shipped out to Botany Bay, on the eastern shore of New South Wales, and near Sydney, the present thriving capital of the colony. Afterward the convicts were also sent to Van Diemen's Land or Tasmania; and to Norfolk Island, a lonely island in the Pacific, some eight hundred miles from New South Wales shore. Norfolk Island became the penal settlement, for the convicted among convicts; that is to say, criminals who, after transportation to New South Wales, committed new crimes there, might be sent by the colonial authorities for sterner punishment to Norfolk Island.

Nothing can seem on the face of it a more satisfactory way of disposing of criminals than the system of transportation. In the first place, it got rid of them, so far as the people at home were concerned; and for a long time that was about all that the people at home cared. Those who had committed crimes not bad enough to be disposed of by the simple and efficient operation of the gallows were got rid of in a manner almost as prompt and effective by the plan of sending them out in shiploads to America or to Australia. It looked, too, as if the system ought to be satisfactory in every way and to everybody. The convicts were provided with a new career, a new country, and a chance of reformation. They were usually after awhile released from actual durance in the penal settlement, and allowed conditionally to find employment, and to make themselves, if they could, good citizens. Their labor, it was thought, would be of great service to the colonists. The act of 1717 recited that "in many of his majesty's colonies and plantations in America there was a great want of servants who, by their labor and industry, might be the means of improving and making the said colonies and plantations more useful to this nation." At that time statesmen only thought of the utility of the colonies to this nation. Philanthropy might therefore for awhile beguile itself with

the belief that the transportation system was a benefit to the transported as well as to those among whom they were sent. But the colonists very soon began to complain. The convicts who had spent their period of probation in hulks or prisons generally left those homes of horror with natures so brutalized as to make their intrusion into any community of decent persons an insufferable nuisance. Pent up in penal settlements by themselves, the convicts turned into demons; drafted into an inhabited colony, they were too numerous to be wholly absorbed by the population, and they carried their contagion along with them. New South Wales began to protest against their presence. Lord John Russell, when secretary for the colonies in 1840, ordered that no more of the criminal refuse should be carted out to that region. Then Tasmania had them all to herself for awhile. Lord Stanley, when he came to be at the head of the colonial office, made an order that the free settlers of Tasmania were not to obtain convict labor at any lower rates than the ordinary market price; and Tasmania had only put up with the presence of the convicts at all for the sake of getting their labor cheap. Tasmania, therefore, began to protest against being made the refuse ground for our scoundrelism. Mr. Gladstone, while colonial secretary, suspended the whole system for awhile, but it was renewed soon after. Sir George Grey endeavored to make the Cape of Good Hope a receptacle for a number of picked convicts; but in 1849 the inhabitants of Cape Colony absolutely refused to allow a shipload of criminals to be discharged upon their shores, and it was manifestly impossible to compel them to receive such disagreeable guests. By this time public opinion in England was ready to sympathize to the full with any colony which stood out against the degrading system. For a long time there had been growing up a conviction that the transportation system carried intolerable evils with it. Romilly and Bentham had condemned it long before. In 1837 a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider and report on the system. The committee included Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Charles Buller, Sir W. Molesworth, and Lord Howick, afterward Earl Grey. The evidence they collected settled the question in the minds of all thinking men. The Rev. Walter Clay, son of the famous prison chaplain, Rev. John Clay, says

in his memoirs of his father, that probably no volume was ever published in England of which the contents were so loathsome as those of the appendix to the committee's report. There is not much exaggeration in this. The reader must be left to imagine for himself some of the horrors which would be disclosed by a minute account of what happened in a penal den like Norfolk Island, where a number of utterly brutalized men were left to herd together without anything like beneficent control, without homes, and without the society of women. In Norfolk Island the convicts worked in chains. They were roused at daylight in the morning and turned out to labor in their irons, and huddled back in their dens at night. In some rare cases convicts were sent directly from England to Norfolk Island; but as a rule the island was kept as a place of punishment for criminals who, already convicted in the mother country, were found guilty of new crimes during their residence in New South Wales.

The condition of things in New South Wales was such as civilization has not often seen. In Sydney especially it was extraordinary. When the convicts were sent out to the colony they received each in turn, after a certain period of penal probation, a conditional freedom; in other words, a ticket-of-leave. They were allowed to work for the colonists, and to support themselves. Any one who wanted laborers or artisans or servants could apply to the authorities and have convicts assigned to him for the purpose. Female convicts as well as male were thus employed. There was, therefore, a large number of convicts, men and women, moving about freely in the active life of Sydney, doing business, working in trades, performing domestic service; to all appearance occupying the place that artisans and laborers and servants occupy among ourselves. But there was a profound difference. The convict laborers and servants were in reality little better than slaves. They were assigned to masters and mistresses, and they had to work. Stern laws were enacted, and were no doubt required, to keep those terrible subordinates in order. The lash was employed to discipline the men; the women were practically unmanageable. The magistrates had the power, on the complaint of any master or mistress, to order a man to be flogged with as many as fifty lashes. Some of the punishment lists remind a reader of the days of slavery in the

United States. On every page we come on entries of the flogging of men for disobeying the orders of a master or mistress; for threatening a fellow-servant, for refusing to rub down the horses or clean the carriage, or some such breach of discipline. A master who was also a magistrate, was not allowed to adjudicate in his own case; but practically it would seem that masters and mistresses could have their convict servants flogged whenever they thought fit. At that time a great many of the native population, "the blacks" as they were called, used to stream into the town of Sydney, as the Indians now come into Salt Lake City or some other western town of America. In some of the outlying houses they would lounge into the kitchens as beggars used to do in Ireland in old days, looking out for any scraps that might be given to them. It was a common sight then to see half a dozen of the native women, absolutely naked, hanging round the doors of houses where they expected anything. Between the native women and the convicts at large an almost indiscriminate intercourse set in. The "black" men would bring their wives into the town and offer them for a drop of rum or a morsel of tobacco. In this extraordinary society there were these three strands of humanity curiously intertwined. There was the civilized Englishman with his money, his culture, his domestic habits; there was the outcast of English civilization, the jail-bird fresh from the prison and the hulks; and there was the aboriginal naked savage. In the drawing-room sat the wife and daughters of the magistrate; in the stable was the convict, whose crimes had perhaps been successive burglaries crowned with attempted murder; in the kitchen were women servants taken from the convict depot and known to be prostitutes; and hanging round the door were the savages, men and women. All the evidence seems to agree that with hardly any exceptions the women convicts were literally prostitutes. There were some exceptions, which it is well to notice. Witnesses who were questioned on the subject gave it as the result of their experience, that women convicted of any offense whatever in this country and sent out to New South Wales invariably took to profligacy, unless they were Irishwomen. That is to say, it did not follow that an Irish convict woman must necessarily be a profligate woman; it did follow as a matter of fact in the case of other women. Some of the



convicts married women of bad character and lived on their immoral earnings, and made no secret of the fact. Many of these husbands boasted that they made their wives keep them in what they considered luxuries by the wages of their sin. Tea and sugar were great luxuries to them at that time, and it was a common saying among men of this class that their wives must take care to have the tea and sugar bag filled every day. The convicts soon inoculated the natives with the vilest vices and the foulest diseases of civilization. Many an English lady found that her women servants went off in the night somewhere and came back in the morning, and they knew perfectly well that the women had been off on some wild freak of profligacy; but it was of no use to complain. In the midst of all this it would appear that a few of the convicts did behave well; that they kept to work with iron industry, and rose in the world, and were respected. In some cases the wives of convicts went out to New South Wales and started farms or shops, and had their husbands assigned to them as servants, and got on tolerably well. But in general the convicts led a life of utter profligacy, and they corrupted all that came within their reach. One convict said to a judge: "Let a man be what he will, when he comes out here he is soon as bad as the rest; a man's heart is taken from him, and there is given to him the heart of a beast." Perpetual profligacy, incessant flogging—this was the combination of the convict's life. Many of the convicts liked the life on the whole, and wrote to friends at home urging them to commit some offense, get transported, and come out to New South Wales. An idle ruffian had often a fine time of it there. This of course does not apply to Norfolk Island. No wretch could be so degraded or so unhappy anywhere else as to find relief in that hideous lair of suffering and abomination.

Such was the condition of things described to the committee of the House of Commons in 1837. It is right and even necessary to say that we have passed over almost without allusion some of the most hideous of the revelations. We have kept ourselves to abominations which at all events bear to be spoken of. From the publication of the evidence taken before the committee any one might have seen that the transportation system was doomed. It was clear that if any colony made up its mind to declare

that it would not endure the thing any longer, no English minister could venture to say that he would force it on the colonists. The doomed and odious system, however, continued for a long time to be put in operation as far as possible. It was most tempting both as to theory and as to practice. It was an excellent thing for the people at home to get rid of so much of their ruffianism; and it was easy to persuade ourselves that the system gave the convicts a chance of reform, and ought to be acceptable to the colonists.

The colonists, however, made up their minds at least in most places, and would not have any more of our convicts. Only in Western Australia were the people willing to receive them on any conditions, and Western Australia had but scanty natural resources and could in any case harbor very few of our outcasts. The discovery of gold in Australia settled the question of those colonies being troubled any more with our transportation system; for the greatest enthusiast for transportation would hardly propose to send out gangs of criminals to a region glowing with the temptations of gold. There were some thoughts of establishing a convict settlement on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north side of the great Australian Island. Some such scheme was talked of at various intervals. It always, however, broke down on a little examination. One difficulty alone was enough to dispose of it effectually. It was impossible, after the revelations of the committee of the House of Commons, to have a convict settlement of men alone; and if it was proposed to found a colony, where were the women to come from? Were respectable English and Irish girls to be enticed to go out and become the wives of convicts? What statesman would make such a proposal? The wildest projects were suggested. Let the convicts marry the savage women, one ingenious person suggested. Unfortunately in the places thought most suitable for a settlement there happened to be no savage women. Let the convict men be married to convict women, said another philosopher. But even if any colonial minister could have been found hardy enough to approach parliament with a scheme for the foundation of a colony on the basis of common crime, it had to be said that there were not nearly enough of convict women to supply brides for even a tolerable proportion of the convict men. Another

suggestion it is only necessary to mention for the purpose of showing to what lengths the votaries of an idea will go in their effort to make it fit in with the actual conditions of things. There were persons who thought it would not be a bad plan to get rid of two nuisances at once, our convicts and a portion of what is euphuistically termed our "social evil," by founding a penal settlement on some lonely shore, and sending out cargoes of the abandoned women of our large towns to be the wives of the present and the mothers of the future colonists. When it came to propositions of this kind it was clear that there was an end to any serious discussion as to the possibility of founding a convict settlement. As late as 1856 committees of both houses of parliament declared themselves greatly in favor of the transportation system—that is, of some transportation system, of an ideal transportation system; but also recorded their conviction that it would be impossible to carry on the known system any longer.

The question then arose what was England to do with the criminals whom up to that time she had been able to shovel out of her way. All the receptacles were closed but Western Australia, and that counted for almost nothing. Some prisoners were then, and since, sent out for a part of their term to Gibraltar and Bermuda; but they were always brought back to this country to be discharged, so that they may be considered as forming a part of the ordinary class of criminals kept in detention here. The transportation system was found to carry evils in its train which did not directly belong to its own organization. It had been for a long time the practice of England and Scotland to send out to a colony only those who were transported for ten years and upward, and to retain those condemned for shorter periods in the hulks and other convict prisons. In these hideous hulks the convicts were huddled together very much as in Norfolk Island, with scarcely any superintendence or discipline, and the result was that they became what were called with hardly any exaggeration "floating hells." It was quite clear that the whole system of our dealings with our convicts must be revised and reorganized. In 1853 the government took a step which has been well described as an avowal that we must take the complete charge of our criminal upon ourselves. A bill was brought in by the ministry to substitute penal servitude for trans-

portation, unless in cases where the sentence was for fourteen years and upward. The bill reduced the scale of punishment; that is to say, made a shorter period of penal servitude supply the place of a longer term of transportation. Lord Palmerston was home secretary at this time. It was during that curious episode in his career described in a former volume when he adopted, if such an expression may be used, the business of home secretary in order, as he put it, to learn how to deal with the concerns of the country internally, and to be brought in contact with his fellow countrymen. He threw all his characteristic energy into the work of carrying through the measure for the establishment of a new system of secondary punishments. It was during the passing of the bill through the House of Lords that Lord Grey suggested the introduction of a modification of the ticket-of-leave system which was in practice in the colonies. The principle of the ticket-of-leave was that the convict should not be kept in custody during the whole period of his sentence, but that he should be allowed to pass through a period of conditional liberty before he obtained his full and unrestricted freedom. Lord Grey also urged that the sentences to penal servitude should correspond in length with sentences for transportation. The government would not accept this latter suggestion, but they adopted the principle of the ticket-of-leave. The bill was introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Cranworth, the lord chancellor. When it came down to the House of Commons there was some objection made to the ticket-of-leave clauses, but the government carried them through. The effect of the measure was to substitute penal servitude for transportation, in all cases except those where the sentence of transportation was for fourteen years and upward. Now there can be no doubt that the principle of the ticket-of-leave is excellent. But it proved on its first trial in this country the most utter delusion. It got no fair chance at all. It was understood by the whole English public that the object of the ticket-of-leave was to enable the authorities to give a conditional discharge from custody to a man who had in some way proved his fitness for such a relaxation of punishment, and that the eyes of the police would be on him even during the period of his conditional release. This was in fact the construction put on the act in Ireland, where accordingly the ticket-

of-leave system was worked with the most complete success. Under the management of Sir Walter Crofton, chairman of the board of prison directors, the principle was applied exactly as any one might have supposed it would be applied everywhere, and as indeed the very conditions endorsed on the ticket-of-leave distinctly suggested. The convicts in Ireland were kept away from the general community in a little penal settlement near Dublin; they were put at first to hard, monotonous, and weary labor; they were then encouraged to believe that with energy and good conduct they could gradually obtain relaxation of punishment, and even some small rewards; they were subjected to a process of really reforming discipline; they got their conditional freedom as soon as they had satisfactorily proved that they deserved and were fit for it; but even then they had to report themselves periodically to the police, and they knew that if they were seen to be relapsing into old habits and old companionships they were certain to be sent back to the penal settlement to begin the hard work over again. The result was substantial and lasting reform. It was easy for the men who were let out conditionally to obtain employment. A man who had Sir Walter Crofton's ticket-of-leave was known by that very fact to have given earnest of good purpose and steady character. The system in Ireland was therefore all that its authors could have wished it to be. But for some inscrutable reason the act was interpreted in this country as simply giving every convict a right, after a certain period of detention, to claim a ticket-of-leave provided he had not grossly violated any of the regulations of the prison, or misconducted himself in some outrageous manner. In 1856 Sir George Grey, the home secretary, told the House of Commons that there never was a more fallacious idea than the supposition that a ticket-of-leave was a certificate of good character, and that a man only obtained such a ticket if he could prove that he had reformed. A ticket-of-leave, he went on to explain, was indeed withheld in the case of very bad conduct; but in any ordinary case the convicts, "unless they have transgressed the prison rules, and acted in such a manner as to incur an unfavorable report from the prison authorities, are, after a stated period of imprisonment, entitled as a matter of course to a ticket-of-leave.

It would be superfluous to examine the working of such

a system as that which Sir George Grey described. A number of scoundrels whom the judges had sentenced to be kept in durance for so many years were without any conceivable reason turned loose upon society long before the expiration of their sentence. They were in England literally turned loose upon society, for it was held by the authorities here that it might possibly interfere with the chance of a jail-bird's getting employment, if he were seen to be watched by the police. The police therefore were considerably ordered to refrain from looking after them. "I knew you once," says the hero of a poem by Mr. Browning, "but in paradise, should we meet, I will pass nor turn my face." The police were ordered to act thus discreetly if they saw Bill Sykes asking for employment in some wealthy and quiet household. They certainly knew him once, but now they were to pass nor turn their face. Nothing, surely, that we know of the internal arrangement of Timbuctoo, to adopt the words of Sydney Smith, warrants us in supposing that such a system would have been endured there for a year. Fifty per cent. of the ruffians released on ticket-of-leave were afterward brought up for new crimes, and convicted over again. Of those who although not actually convicted were believed to have relapsed into their old habits, from sixty to seventy per cent. relapsed within the first year of their liberation. Baron Bramwell stated from the bench that he had had instances of criminals coming before him who had three sentences overlapping each other. The convict was set free on ticket-of-leave, convicted of some new crime, and re-committed to prison; released again on ticket-of-leave, and convicted once again, before the period of his original sentence had expired. An alarm sprang up in England; and like all alarms it was supported both by exaggeration and misconception. The system pursued with the convicts was bad enough; but the popular impression ascribed to the ticket-of-leave men every crime committed by any one who had been previously convicted and imprisoned. A man who had worked out the whole of his sentence, and who therefore had to be discharged, committed some crime immediately after. Excited public opinion described it as a crime committed by a ticket-of-leave man. Two committees sat, as has already been said, in 1856. The result of the public alarm and the parliamentary recon-

sideration of the whole subject, was the bill brought in by Sir George Grey in 1857. This measure extended the provisions of the act of 1853 by substituting in all cases a sentence of penal servitude for one of transportation. It extended the limits of the penal servitude sentences by making them correspond with the terms of transportation to which men had previously been sentenced. It gave power also to pass sentences of penal servitude for shorter periods than was allowed by former legislation, allowing penal servitude for as short a period as three years. It attached to all sentences of penal servitude the liability to be removed from this country to places beyond seas fitted for their reception; and it restricted the range of the remission of sentences. The act, it will be seen, abolished the old-fashioned transportation system altogether, but it left the power to the authorities to have penal servitude carried out in any of the colonies where it might be thought expedient. The government had still some idea of utilizing western Australia for some of our offenders. But nothing came of this plan, or of the clause in the new act which was passed to favor it; and as a matter of fact transportation was abolished. How the amended legislation worked in other respects we shall have an opportunity of examining hereafter.

Transportation was not the only familiar institution which came to an end in this year. The Gretna Green marriages became illegal in 1857, their doom having been fixed for that time by an act passed in the previous session. Thenceforward such marriages were unlawful, unless one of the parties had lived at least twenty-one days previously in Scotland. The hurried flight to the border, the post-chaise and the panting steeds, the excited lovers, the pursuing father, passed away into tradition. Lydia Languish had to reconcile herself to the license and the blessing, and even the writers of fiction might have given up without a sigh an incident which had grown wearisome in romance long before it ceased to be interesting in reality.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE SEPOY.

ON the 23rd of June, 1857, the hundredth anniversary of the battle of Plassey was celebrated in London. One object of the celebration was to obtain the means of raising a monument to Clive in his native county. At such a meeting it was but natural that a good deal should be said about the existing condition of India, and the prospects of that great empire which the genius and the daring of Clive had gone so far to secure for the English crown. It does not appear, however, as if any alarm was expressed with regard to the state of things in Bengal, or as if any of the noblemen and gentlemen present believed that at that very moment India was passing through a crisis more serious than Clive himself had had to encounter. Indeed, a month or so before a Bombay journal had congratulated itself on the fact that India was quiet "throughout." Yet at the hour when the Plassey celebration was going on the great Indian mutiny was already six weeks old, had already assumed full and distinctive proportions, was already known in India to be a convulsion destined to shake to its foundations the whole fabric of British rule in Hindostan. A few evenings after the celebration there was some cursory and casual discussion in parliament about the doubtful news that had begun to arrive from India; but as yet no Englishman at home took serious thought of the matter. The news came at last with a rush.

Never in our time, never probably at any time, came such news upon England as the first full story of the outbreak in India. It came with terrible, not unnatural, exaggeration. England was horror-stricken by the stories of wholesale massacres of English women and children; of the most abominable tortures, the most degrading outrages inflicted upon English matrons and maidens. The newspapers ran over with the most horrifying and the most circumstantial accounts of how English ladies of the highest refinement were dragged naked through the streets of Delhi, and were paraded in their nakedness before the eyes of the aged king of Delhi, in order that his hatred might be feasted with the sight of the shame and agony of the captives. Descriptions were given, to which it is unneces-



sary to make any special allusions now, of the vile mutilations and tortures inflicted on Englishwomen to glut the vengeance of the tyrant. The pen of another Procopius could alone have done full justice to the narratives which were poured in day after day upon the shuddering ears of Englishmen, until all thought even of the safety of the Indian empire was swallowed up in a wild longing for revenge on the whole seed, breed, and race of the mutinous people who had tortured and outraged our countrywomen. It was not till the danger was all over, and British arms had reconquered Northern India, that England learned the truth with regard to these alleged outrages and tortures. Let us dispose of this most painful part of the terrible story at the very beginning, and once for all. During the Indian mutiny the blood of innocent women and children was cruelly and lavishly spilled; on one memorable occasion with a bloodthirstiness that might have belonged to the most savage times of mediæval warfare. But there were no outrages, in the common acceptation, upon women. No Englishwomen were stripped or dishonored or purposely mutilated. As to this fact all historians of the mutiny are agreed.

But if the first stories of the outbreak that reached England dealt in exaggerations of this kind, they do not seem to have exaggerated, they do not seem to have adequately appreciated, the nature of the crisis with which England was suddenly called upon to deal. The fact was, that throughout the greater part of the north and north-west of the great Indian peninsula there was a rebellion of the native races against English power. It was not alone the Sepoys who rose in revolt. It was not by any means a merely military mutiny. It was a combination, whether the growth of deliberate design and long preparation, or the sudden birth of chance and unexpected opportunity—a combination of military grievance, national hatred and religious fanaticism, against the English occupiers of India. The native princes and the native soldiers were in it. The Mohammedan and the Hindoo forgot their own religious antipathies to join against the Christian. Hatred and panic were the stimulants of that great rebellious movement. The quarrel about the greased cartridges was but the chance spark flung in among all the combustible material. If that spark had not lighted

it, some other would have done the work. In fact, there are thoughtful and well-informed historians who believe that the incident of the greased cartridges was a fortunate one for our people; that coming as it did it precipitated unexpectedly a great convulsion which, occurring later, and as the result of more gradual operations, might have been far more dangerous to the perpetuity of our rule.

Let us first see what were the actual facts of the outbreak. When the improved (Enfield) rifle was introduced into the Indian army, the idea got abroad that the cartridges were made up in paper greased with a mixture of cow's fat and hog's lard. It appears that the paper was actually greased, but not with any such material as that which religious alarm suggested to the native troops. Now a mixture of cow's fat and hog's lard would have been, above all other things, unsuitable for use in cartridges to be tributed among our Sepoys; for the Hindoo regards the cow with religious veneration, and the Mohammedan looks upon the hog with utter loathing. In the mind of the former something sacred to him was profaned; in that of the latter something unclean and abominable was forced upon his daily use. It was in 1856 that the new rifles were sent out from England, and the murmur against their use began at once. Various efforts were made to allay the panic among the native troops. The use of the cartridges complained of was discontinued by orders issued in January, 1857. The governor-general sent out a proclamation in the following May, assuring the army of Bengal that the tales told to them of offense to their religion or injury to their caste being meditated by the government of India, were all malicious inventions and falsehoods. Still the idea was strong among the troops that some design against their religion was meditated. A mutinous spirit began to spread itself abroad. In March some of the native regiments had to be disbanded. In April some executions of Sepoys took place for gross and open mutiny. In the same month several of the Bengal native cavalry in Meerut refused to use the cartridges served out to them, although they had been authoritatively assured that the paper in which the cartridges were wrapped had never been touched by any offensive material. On May 9th these men were sent to the jail. They had been tried by court-martial, and were sentenced, eighty of them, to imprisonment and hard labor

for ten years, the remaining five to a similar punishment for six years. They had chains put on them in the presence of their comrades, who no doubt regarded them as martyrs to their religious faith, and they were thus publicly marched off to the common jail. The guard placed over the jail actually consisted of Sepoys.

The following day, Sunday, May 10th, was memorable. The native troops in Meerut broke into open mutiny. The *summa dies*, the *ineluctabile tempus* had come. They fired upon their officers, killed a colonel and others, broke into the jail, released their comrades, and massacred several of the European inhabitants. The European troops rallied and drove them from their cantonments or barracks. Then came the momentous event, the turning point of the mutiny; the act that marked out its character, and made it what it afterward became. Meerut is an important military station between the Ganges and the Jumna, thirty-eight miles north-east from Delhi. In the vast palace of Delhi, almost a city in itself, a reeking Alsatia of lawless and privileged vice and crime, lived the aged king of Delhi, as he was called; the disestablished, but not wholly disendowed sovereign, the descendant of the great Timour, the last representative of the Grand Mogul. The mutineers fled along the road to Delhi; and some evil fate directed that they were not to be pursued or stopped on their way. Unchecked, unpursued, they burst into Delhi, and swarmed into the precincts of the palace of the king. They claimed his protection; they insisted upon his accepting their cause and themselves. They proclaimed him emperor of India, and planted the standard of rebellion against English rule on the battlements of his palace. They had found in one moment a leader, a flag, and a cause, and the mutiny was transfigured into a revolutionary war. The Sepoy troops, in the city and the cantonments on the Delhi ridge, two miles off, and overlooking the city, at once began to cast in their lot with the mutineers. The poor old puppet whom they set up as their emperor was some eighty years of age; a feeble creature, believed to have a mild taste for poetry and weak debauchery. He had long been merely a pensioner of the East India Company. During the early intrigues and struggles between the English and French in India the company had taken the sovereigns of Delhi under their protection, nominally

to save them from the aggressiveness of the rival power; and, as might be expected, the Delhi monarchs soon became mere pensionaries of the British authorities. It had even been determined that after the old king's death a different arrangement should be made; that the title of king would not be allowed any longer, and that the privileges of the palace, the occupants of which were thus far allowed to be a law to themselves should be restricted or abolished. A British commissioner directed affairs in the city, and British troops were quartered on the Delhi ridge outside. Still the king was living, and was called a king. He was the representative of the great dynasty whose name and effigies had been borne by all the coin of India until within some twenty years before. He stood for legitimacy and divine right; and he supplied all the various factions and sects of which the mutiny was composed, or to be composed, with a visible and an acceptable head. If the mutineers flying from Meerut had been promptly pursued and dispersed, or captured, before they reached Delhi, the tale we have to tell might have been much shorter and very different. But when they reached, unchecked, the Jumna glittering in the morning light, when they swarmed across the bridge of boats that spanned it, and when at length they clamored under the windows of the palace that they had come to restore the rule of the Delhi dynasty, they had all unconsciously seized one of the great critical moments of history, and converted a military mutiny into a national and religious war.

This is the manner in which the Indian Rebellion began and assumed its distinct character. But this dry statement of facts would go a very short way toward explaining how the mutiny of a few regiments came to assume the aspect of a rebellion. Mutinies were not novelties in India. There had been some very serious outbreaks before the time of the greased cartridges. The European officers of the company had themselves mutinied in Bengal nearly a century before; and that time the Sepoys stood firm by the company whose salt they had eaten. There was a more general and serious mutiny at Vellore, near Madras, in 1806; and the sons of the famous Tippoo Sahib took part with it, and endeavored to make it the means of regaining the forfeited power of their house. It had to be dealt with as if it were a war, and Vellore had to be

recaptured. In 1849 a Bengal regiment seized a fortress near Lahore. Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, once protested that thirty regiments of the Bengal army were ripe for revolt. Napier, however seems to have thought only of military mutiny, and not of religious and political rebellion. At Meerut itself, the very cradle of the outbreak, a pamphlet was published in 1851 by Colonel Hodgson, to argue that the admission of the priestly cast too freely into the Bengal army would be the means of fomenting sedition among the native troops. But there was a combination of circumstances at work to bring about such a revolt as Napier never dreamed of; a revolt as different from the outbreak he contemplated as the French Revolution differed from the mutiny of the Nore. These causes affected variously but at once the army, the princes, and the populations of India.

“The causes and motives for sedition,” says Bacon—and the words have been cited with much appropriateness and effect by Sir J. W. Kaye in his “History of the Sepoy War”—“are innovations in religion, taxes, alteration of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, deaths, disbanded soldiers, factions grown desperate, and whatsoever in offending people joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.” Not all these various impulses to rebellion were stirring perhaps in India, but assuredly many, possibly the majority, of them were at work. As is usual in such cases too, it happened that many changes made, nay, many privileges disinterestedly conferred by the ruling power in India for the benefit and pleasure of the native levies, turned into other causes and stimulants of sedition and rebellion. Let us speak first of the army. The Bengal army was very different in its constitution and conditions from that of Bombay or Madras, the other great divisions of Indian government at that time. In the Bengal army, the Hindoo Sepoys were far more numerous than the Mohammedans, and were chiefly Brahmins of high caste; while in Madras and Bombay the army was made up, as the Bengal regiments are now, of men of all sects and races without discrimination. Until the very year before the mutiny the Bengal soldier was only enlisted for service in India, and was exempted from any liability to be sent across the seas; across the black water which the Sepoy

dreaded and hated to have to cross. No such exemption was allowed to the soldiers of Bombay or Madras; and in July, 1856, an order was issued by the military authorities to the effect that future enlistments in Bengal should be for service anywhere without limitation. Thus the Bengal Sepoy had not only been put in the position of a privileged and pampered favorite, but he had been subjected to the indignity and disappointment of seeing his privileges taken away from him. He was indeed an excellent soldier, and was naturally made a favorite by many of his commanders. But he was very proud, and was rigidly tenacious of what he considered his rights. He lived apart with his numerous and almost limitless family, representing all grades of relationship; he cooked his food apart and ate it apart; he acknowledged one set of governing principles while he was on parade, and had a totally different code of customs and laws and morals to regulate his private life. The tie of blood relationship was very strong with the Sepoy. The elder Sepoy always took good care to keep his regiment well supplied with recruits from among his own family. As the Highland sergeant in the British army endeavors to have as many as possible of his kith and clan in the regiment with himself; as the Irishman in the New York police force is anxious to get as many of his friends and fellow countrymen as may be into the same ranks, so the Sepoy did his best to surround himself with men of his blood and of his ways. There was therefore the spirit of a clan and of a sect pervading the Sepoy regiments; a strong current flowing beneath the stream of superficial military discipline and *esprit de corps*. The Sepoy had many privileges denied to his fellow-religionists who were not in the military ranks. Let it be added that he was very often deeply in debt; that his pay was frequently mortgaged to usurers hung on him as the crimps do upon a sailor in one of our seaport towns; and that therefore he had something of Catiline's reason for desiring a general upset and clearing off of old responsibilities.

But we must above all other things take into account, when considering the position of the Hindoo Sepoy, the influence of the tremendous institution of caste. An Englishman or European of any country will have to call his imaginative faculties somewhat vigorously to his aid in order to get even an idea of the power of this monstrous

superstition. The man who by the merest accident, by the slightest contact with anything that defiled, had lost caste, was excommunicated from among the living, and was held to be forevermore accused of God. His dearest friend, his nearest relation, shrank back from him in alarm and abhorrence. When Helen Macgregor, in Scott's romance, would express her sense of the degradation that had been put upon her, she declares that her mother's bones would shrink away from her in the grave, if her corpse were to be laid beside them. The Sepoy fully believed that his mother's bones ought to shrink away from contact with the polluted body of the son who had lost caste. Now, it had become from various causes a strong suspicion in the mind of the Sepoy that there was a deliberate purpose in the minds of the English rulers of the country to defile the Hindoos, and to bring them all to the dead level of one caste or no caste. The suspicion in part arose out of the fact that this institution of caste, penetrating as it did so subtly and so universally into the business of life, could not but come into frequent collision with any system of European military and civil discipline, however carefully and considerately managed. No doubt there was in many instances a lack of consideration shown for the Hindoo's peculiar and very perplexing tenets. The Englishman is not usually a very imaginative personage; nor is he rich in those sympathetic instincts which might enable a ruler to enter into and make allowance for the influence of sentiments and usages widely different from his own. To many a man fresh from the ways of England, the Hindoo doctrines and practices appeared so ineffably absurd that he could not believe any human beings were serious in their devotion to them, and he took no pains to conceal his opinion as to the absurdity of the creed, and the hypoerisy of those who professed it. Some of the elder officers and civilians were imbued very strongly with a conviction that the work of open, and what we may call aggressive, proselytism, was part of the duty of a Christian; and in the best faith and with the purest intentions they thus strengthened the growing suspicion that the mind of the authorities was set on the defilement of the Hindoos. Nor was it among the Hindoos alone that the alarm began to be spread abroad. It was the conviction of the Mohammedans that their faith and their rites were to

be tampered with as well. It was whispered among them everywhere that the peculiar baptismal custom of the Mohammedans was to be suppressed by law, and that the Mohammedan women were to be compelled to go unveiled in public. The slightest alterations in any system gave fresh confirmation to the suspicions that were afloat among the Hindoos and Mussulmans. When a change was made in the arrangements of the prisons, and the native prisoners were no longer allowed to cook for themselves, a murmur went abroad that this was the first overt act in the conspiracy to destroy the caste, and with it the bodies and souls of the Hindoos. Another change must be noticed too. At one time it was intended that the native troops should be commanded for the most part by native officers. The men would, therefore, have had something like sufficient security that their religious scruples were regarded and respected. But by degrees the clever, pushing, and capable Briton began to monopolize the officers' posts everywhere. The natives were shouldered out of the high positions, until at length it became practically an army of native rank and file commanded by Englishmen. If we remember that a Hindoo sergeant of lower caste would, when off parade, often abase himself with his forehead in the dust before a Sepoy private who belonged to the Brahmin order, we shall have some idea of the perpetual collision between military discipline and religious principle which affected the Hindoo members of an army almost exclusively commanded by Europeans and Christians.

There was, however, yet another influence, and one of tremendous importance in determining the set of that otherwise vague current of feeling which threatened to disturb the tranquil permanence of English rule in India. We have spoken of the army and of its religious scruples; we must now speak of the territorial and political influences which affected the princes and the populations of India. There had been just before the outbreak of the mutiny a wholesale removal of the landmarks, a striking application of a bold and thorough policy of annexation; a gigantic system of reorganization applied to the territorial arrangements of the north and north-west of the great Indian peninsula. A master-spirit had been at work at the reconstruction of India; and if you cannot make revolutions with rosewater, neither can you make them without reaction.



Lord Dalhousie had not long left India on the appointment of Lord Canning to the governor-generalship when the mutiny broke out. Lord Dalhousie was a man of commanding energy, of indomitable courage, with the intellect of a ruler of men, and the spirit of a conqueror. The statesmen of India perform their parts upon a vast stage, and yet they are to the world in general somewhat like the actors in a provincial theatre. They do not get the fame of their work and their merits. Men have arisen in India whose deeds, if done in Europe, would have ranked them at least with the Richelieus and Bismarcks of history, if not actually with the Cæsars and Charlemagnes; and who are yet condemned to what may almost be called a merely local renown; a record on the roll of great officials. Lord Dalhousie was undoubtedly a great man. He had had some parliamentary experience in England and in both houses; and he had been vice-president and subsequently president of the board of trade under Sir Robert Peel. He had taken great interest in the framing of regulations for the railway legislation of the mania season of 1844 and 1845. Toward the close of 1847 Lord Hardinge was recalled from India, and Lord Dalhousie was sent out in his place. Never was there in any country an administration of more successful activity than that of Lord Dalhousie. He introduced cheap postage into India; he made railways; he set up lines of electric telegraph. Within fifteen months, according to one of his biographers, the telegraph was in operation from Calcutta to Agra, thence to Attock on the Indus, and again from Agra to Bombay and Madras. He devoted much of his attention to irrigation, to the making of great roads, to the work of the Ganges Canal. He was the founder of a comprehensive system of native education; especially female education, a matter so difficult and delicate in a country like India. He put down infanticide and the odious and extraordinary Thug system, and he carried out with vigor Lord William Bentwick's act for the suppression of the Sutte or burning of widows on the funeral pile of their husbands. These are only some of the evidences of his unresting, all-conquering energy. They are but illustrative; they are far indeed from being exhaustive even as a catalogue. But Lord Dalhousie was not wholly engaged in such works as these. Indeed, his noble and glorious triumphs over material, intellectual, and

moral obstacles run some risk of being forgotten or overlooked by the casual reader of history in the storm of that fierce controversy which his other enterprises called forth. During his few years of office he annexed the Punjaub, he incorporated part of the Burmese territory in our dominions; he annexed Nagpore, Sattara, Jhansi, Berar, and Oudh. We are not called upon here to consider in detail the circumstances of each of these annexations, or to ask the reader to pass judgment on the motives and the policy of Lord Dalhousie. It is fair to say that he was not by any means the mere imperial proconsul he is often represented to be, thirsty with the ardor of a Roman conqueror to enlarge the territory of his own state at any risk or any sacrifice of principle. There was reason enough to make out a plausible case for even the most questionable of his annexations; and in one or two instances he seems only to have resolved on annexation reluctantly and because things had come to that pass that he saw no other safe alternative left to him. But his own general policy is properly expressed in his own words; "We are lords-paramount of India, and our policy is to acquire as direct a dominion over the territories in possession of the native princes as we already hold over the other half of India." Such a principle as this could only conduct in the vast majority of cases to a course of direct-annexation, let the ruler begin by disavowing it as he will. In the Punjaub the annexation was provoked in the beginning, as so many such retributions have been in India, by the murder of some of our officers, sanctioned, if not actually ordered, by a native prince. Lord Dalhousie marched a force into the Punjaub. This land, "the land of the five waters," lies at the gateway of Hindostan and was peopled by Mussulmans, Hindoos, and Sikhs, the latter a new sect of reformed Hindoos. We found arrayed against us not only the Sikhs, but our old enemies the Afghans. Lord Gough was in command of our forces. He fought rashly and disastrously the famous battle of Chillianwallah. The plain truth may as well be spoken out without periphrasis; he was defeated. But before the outcry raised in India and in England over this calamity had begun to subside he had wholly recovered our position and *prestige* by the complete defeat which he inflicted upon the enemy at Goojrat. Never was a victory more com-

plete in itself or more promptly and effectively followed up. The Sikhs were crushed; the Afghans were driven in wild rout back across their savage passes; and Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub. He presented as one token of his conquest the famous diamond, the Koh-i-Noor surrendered in evidence of submission by the Maharajah of Lahore, to the crown of England.

Lord Dalhousie annexed Oudh on the ground that the East India Company had bound themselves to defend the sovereigns of Oudh against foreign and domestic enemies on condition that the state should be governed in such a manner as to render the lives and property of its population safe; and that while the company performed their part of the contract, the king of Oudh so governed his dominions as to make his rule a curse to his own people and to all neighboring territories. Other excuses or justifications there were of course in the case of each other annexation; and we shall yet hear some more of what came of the annexation of Sattara and Jhansi. If, however, each of these acts of policy were not only justifiable but actually inevitable, none the less must a succession of such acts produce a profound emotion among the races in whose midst they were accomplished. Lord Dalhousie wanted one quality of a truly great man: he lacked imagination. He had not that dramatic instinct, that fine sympathetic insight, by which a statesman is enabled to understand the feelings of races and men differing wholly in education, habits, and principles from himself. He appeared to be under the impression that when once a ruler had established among whatever foreign people a system of government or of society better than that which he found existing there, he might count on obtaining their instant appreciation of his work and their gratefulness for it. The sovereign of Oudh was undoubtedly a very bad ruler. His governing system, if it ought to be dignified by such a name, was a combination of anarchy and robbery. The chiefs of Oudh were reivers and bandits; the king was the head reiver and bandit. But human nature, even in the west, is not so constituted as to render a population always and at once grateful to any powerful stranger who uproots their old and bad systems and imposes a better on them by force of arms. "A tyrant, but our masters then were still at least our countrymen," is the faithful expression of a

sentiment which had embarrassed energetic reformers before the days of Lord Dalhousie. The populations of India became stricken with alarm as they saw their native princes thus successively dethroned. The subversion of thrones, the annexation of states, seemed to them naturally enough to form part of that vast scheme for rooting out all the religions and systems of India, concerning which so many vague forebodings had darkly warned the land. Many of our Sepoys came from Oudh and other annexed territories; and little reason as they might have had for any personal attachments to the subverted dynasties, they left yet that national resentment which any manner of foreign intervention is almost certain to provoke.

There were peculiar reasons, too, why, if religious and political distrust did prevail, the moment of Lord Canning's accession to the supreme authority in India should see inviting and favorable for schemes of sedition. The Afghan war had told the Sepoy that British troops are not absolutely invincible in battle. The impression produced almost everywhere in India by the Crimean War was a conviction that the strength of England was on the wane. The stories of our disasters in the Crimea had gone abroad, adorned with immense exaggerations, among all the native populations of Hindostan. Any successes that the Russians had had during the war were in Asia, and these naturally impressed the Asiatic mind more than the victories of France and England which were won farther off. Intelligent and quick-witted Mohammedans and Hindoos talked with Englishmen, English officers in India, and heard from them the accounts of the manner in which our system had broken down in the Crimea, of the blunders of our government, and the shortcomings of our leaders. They entirely misinterpreted the significance of the stories that were so freely told. The Englishmen who spoke of our failures talked of them as the provoking and inexcusable blunders of departments and individuals; the Asiatics who greedily listened were convinced that they heard the acknowledgment of the national collapse. The Englishmen were so confident in the the strength and resources of their country that it did not even occur to them to think that anybody on earth could have a doubt on the subject. It was as if a millionaire were to complain to some one in a foreign country that the neglect and blunder

of a servant had sent his remittances to some wrong place, and left him for the moment without money enough to pay his hotel bill, and the listener were to accept this as a genuine announcement of approaching bankruptcy. The Sepoy saw that the English force in Northern India was very small; and he really believed that it was small because England had no more men to send there. He was as ignorant as a child about everything which he had not seen with his own eyes; and he knew absolutely nothing about the strength, the population, and the resources of England. In his mind Russia was the great rising and conquering country; England was sinking into decay; her star waning before the strong glare of the portentous northern light.

Other impulses, too, there were to make sedition believe that its opportunity had come. Lord Canning hardly assumed office as governor-general of India when the dispute occurred between the British and Chinese authorities at Canton, and a war was imminent between England and China. Troops were sent shortly after from England to China; and although none were taken from India, yet it was well known among the native populations that England had an Asiatic war on her hands. Almost at the same moment war was declared against Persia by proclamation of the governor-general at Calcutta, in consequence of the shah having marched an army into Herat and besieged it, in violation of a treaty with Great Britain made in 1853. A body of troops was sent from Bombay to the Persian Gulf, and shortly after General Outram left Bombay with additional troops, as commander-in-chief of the field force in Persia. Therefore, in the opening days of 1857, it was known among the native populations of India that the East India company was at war with Persia, and that England had on her hands a quarrel with China. At this time the number of native soldiers in the employment of England throughout Northern India was about one hundred and twenty thousand, while the European soldiers numbered only some twenty-two thousand. The native army of the three presidencies taken together was nearly three hundred thousand, while the Europeans were but forty-three thousand, of whom some five thousand had just been told off for duty in Persia. It must be owned that, given the existence of a seditious spirit, it would have been hardly possible for it to find con-

ditions more seemingly favorable and tempting. To many a temper of sullen discontent the appointed and fateful hour must have seemed to be at hand.

There can be no doubt that a conspiracy for the subversion of the English government in India was afoot during the early days of 1857, and possibly for long before. The story of the mysterious chupatties is well known. The chupatties are small cakes of unleavened bread, "bannocks of salt and dough," they have been termed; and they were found to be distributed with amazing rapidity and precision of system at one time throughout the native villages of the north and north-west. A native messenger brought two of these mysterious cakes to the watchman or headman of the village, and bade him to have others prepared like them and to pass them on to another place. The token has been well described as the fiery cross of India, although it would not appear that its significance was as direct and precise as that of the famous Highland war-signal. It is curious how varying and unsatisfactory is the evidence about the meaning of these chupatties. According to the positive declaration of some witnesses, the sending of such a token had never been a custom, either Mohammedan or Hindoo, in India. Some witnesses believed that the chupatties were regarded as spells to avert some impending calamity. Others said the native population looked on them as having been sent round by the government itself as a sign that in future all would be compelled to eat the same food as the Christians ate. Others, again, said the intention was to make this known, but to make it known on the part of the seditious, in order that the people might be prepared to resist the plans of the English. But there could be no doubt that the chupatties conveyed a warning to all who received them that something was about to happen, and bade them to be prepared for whatever might befall. One fact alone conclusively proves that the signal given had a special reference to impending events connected with British rule in India. In no instance were they distributed among the populations of still-existing native states. They were only sent among the villagers over which English rule extended. To the quick, suspicious mind of the Asiatic a breath of warning may be as powerful as the crash of an alarm-bell or the sound of a trumpet. It may be, as some authorities

would have us to believe, that the panic about the greased cartridges disconcerted, instead of bringing to a climax, the projects of sedition.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF PLASSEY.

THE news of the outbreak at Meerut and the proclamation in Delhi broke upon Calcutta with the shock of a thunderclap. Yet it was not wholly a shock of surprise. For some time there had been vague anticipations of some impending danger. There was alarm in the air. There had long been a prophecy known to India that the hundredth anniversary of the battle of Plassey would see the end of English rule in Hindostan; and now the hundredth anniversary was near. There is a fine passage in Sir Henry Taylor's "Philip van Artevelde," in which Van Ryke says to the hero of the drama—

“ If you mark, my Lord,  
Mostly a rumor of such things precedes  
The certain tidings;”

and Philip musingly answers—

“ It is strange—yet true  
That doubtful knowledge travels with a speed  
Miraculous, which certain cannot match.  
I know not why, when this or that has chanced,  
The smoke outruns the flash; but so it is.”

The smoke had apparently outrun the flash in many parts of India during this eventful season. Calcutta heard the news of what had happened with wild alarm and horror, but hardly with much surprise.

For one or two days Calcutta was a prey to mere panic. The alarm was greatly increased by the fact that the dethroned king of Oudh was established near to the city. At Garden Reach, a few miles down the Hooghly, the dispossessed king was living. There he lived for many years after, with his host of dependants and hangers-on around him. A picturesque writer lately described the “grotesque structures” in which the old man, with his mania for building, “quarters not only his people but his

menagerie." "Tower after tower rises high above the lower buildings, on the top of each of which, comfortably quartered in a spacious den, abides a huge Bengal tiger, whose stripes glisten in the sun, in the sight of the passer-by on the river. He owns vast flocks of trained pigeons, which fly or alight at the word of command—wild but not unmusical shouts—of coolies stationed on the housetops, who appear to direct their motions by the waving of long bamboos. The inhabitants of Calcutta, when the news of the mutiny came, were convinced that the king of Oudh harbored close to their city companions more dangerous than pigeons, or even Bengal tigers. They were sure that the place was the headquarters of rebellion, and were expecting the moment when, from the residence at Garden Reach, an organized army of murderers was to be sent forth to capture and destroy the ill-fated city, and to make its streets run with the blood of its massacred inhabitants. Lord Canning took the prudent course of having the king, with his prime minister, removed to the governor-general's own residence within the precincts of Fort William.

There is no recklessness, no cruelty, like the cruelty and the recklessness of panic. Perhaps there is hardly any panic so demoralizing in its effects as that which seizes the unwarlike members of a ruling race set down in the midst of overwhelming numbers of the subject populations, at a moment when the cry goes abroad that the subjected are rising in rebellion. Fortunately, there was at the head of affairs in India a man with a cool head, a quiet, firm will and a courage that never faltered. If ever the crisis found the man, Lord Canning was the man called for by that crisis in India. He had all the divining genius of the true statesman; the man who can rise to the height of some unexpected and new emergency; and he had the cool courage of a practiced conqueror. The greatest trial to which a ruler can be subjected is to be called upon at a moment's notice to deal with events and conditions for which there is no precedent. The second-class statesman, the official statesman, if we may use such an expression, collapses under such a trial. The man of genius finds it his opportunity, and makes his own of it. Lord Canning thus found his opportunity in the Indian mutiny. Among all the distracting counsels and wild stories poured in upon him from every side, he kept his mind clear. He never



gave way either to anger or to alarm. If he ever showed a little impatience, it was only where panic would too openly have proclaimed itself by counsels of wholesale cruelty. He could not perhaps always conceal from frightened people the fact that he rather despised their terrors. Throughout the whole of that excited period there were few names, even among the chiefs of rebellion, on which fiercer denunciation was showered by Englishmen than the name of Lord Canning. Because he would not listen to the bloodthirsty clamors of mere frenzy, he was nicknamed "Clemency Canning," as if clemency were an attribute of which a man ought to be ashamed. Indeed for some time people wrote and spoke, not merely in India but in England, as if clemency were a thing to be reprobated, like treason or crime. Every allowance must be made for the unparalleled excitement of such a time, and in especial for the manner in which the elementary passions of manhood were inflamed by the stories, happily not true, of the wholesale dishonor and barbarous mutilation of women. But when the fullest allowance has been made for all this, it must be said by any one looking back on that painful time that some of the public instructors of England betrayed a fury and ferocity which no conditions can excuse on the part of civilized and Christian men who have time to reflect before they write or speak. The advices which some English journals showered upon the government, the army, and all concerned in repressing the mutiny might more fittingly have come from some of the heroes of the "Spanish Fury." Nay, the Spanish Fury itself was, in express words, held up to the English army as an example for them to imitate. An English paper, of high and well-earned authority, distinctly declared that such mercy as Alva showed the Netherlands was the mercy that English soldiers must show to the rebellious regions of India. There was for awhile but little talk of repression. Every one in England well knew that the rebellion would be repressed. It has to be remembered, to the credit of England's national courage and resolve, that not at the worst moment of the crisis did it seem to have occurred to any Englishman that there was the slightest possibility of the rebellion being allowed to succeed. It is painful to have to remember that the talk was not of repression but of revenge. Public speakers and writers were shrieking

out for the vengeance which must be inflicted on India when the rebellion had been put down. For awhile it seemed a question of patriotism which would propose the most savage and sanguinary measures of revenge. We shall see farther on that one distinguished English officer was clamorous to have powers given to him to impale, to burn alive, and to flay mutineers who had taken part in the murder of Englishwomen. Mr. Disraeli, to do him justice, raised his voice in remonstrance against the wild passions of the hour, even when these passions were strongest and most general. He declared that if such a temper were encouraged we ought to take down from our altars the images of Christ and raise the statue of Moloch there; and he protested against making Nana Sahib, of whom we shall hear more, the model for the conduct of a British officer. Mr. Disraeli did, indeed, at a later period show an inclination to back out of this courageous and honorable expression of opinion; but it stands at all events to the credit of his first impulse that he could venture, at such a time, to talk of morality, mercy, and Christianity.

If people were so carried away in England, where the danger was far remote, we can easily imagine what were the fears and passions roused in India, where the terror was or might be at the door of every one. Lord Canning was gravely embarrassed by the wild urgencies and counsels of distracted Englishmen, who were furious with him because he even thought of distinguishing friend from foe where native races were concerned. He bore himself with perfect calmness; listened to everything that any one had to say, where time gave him any chance of doing so, read as far as possible all the myriad communications poured in upon him, regarded no suggestion as unworthy of consideration, but made his own resolves and his own judgment the final arbiter. He was greatly assisted and encouraged in his counsels by his brave and noble wife, who proved herself in every way worthy to be the helpmate of such a man at such a crisis. He did not for a moment underestimate the danger; but neither did he exaggerate its importance. He never allowed it to master him. He looked upon it with the quiet resolute eye of one who is determined to be the conqueror in the struggle.

Lord Canning saw that the one important thing was to strike at Delhi which had proclaimed itself the head-

quarters of the rebellion. He knew that English troops were on their way to China for the purpose of wreaking the wrongs of English subjects there, and he took on his own responsibility the bold step of intercepting them and calling them to the work of helping to put down the mutiny in India. The dispute with China he thought could well afford to wait, but with the mutiny it must be now or never. India could not wait for reinforcements brought all the way from England. In Scott's "Betrothed" the soldier of the knight who owns the frontier castle encourages him, when the Welsh are about to attack, by the assurance that the forces of the constable of Chester will soon come to his aid, and with these reinforcements they will send the Welsh dragon-flag flying from the field. The knight sadly answers that it must fly from the field before the reinforcements arrive, "or it will fly over all our dead bodies." Thus felt Lord Canning when he thought of the strong arms that England could send to his assistance. He knew well enough, as well as the wildest alarmist could know, that the rebel flag must be forced to fly from some field before that help came, or it would fly over the dead bodies of those who then represented English authority in India. He had, therefore, no hesitation in appealing to Lord Elgin, the envoy in charge of the Chinese expedition, to stop the troops that were on their way to China, and lend them to the service of India at such a need. Lord Elgin had the courage and the wisdom to assent to the appeal at once. Fortune, too, was favorable to Canning in more ways than one. The Persian war was of short duration. Sir James Outram was soon victorious, and the Persians sued for a peace. The treaty of peace was signed at Paris in March 1857, and was arranged so quickly that Outram inflicted a crushing defeat on the Persians after the treaty was signed, but before the news of its signature had time to reach the seat of war. Outram, therefore, and his gallant companions, Colonel Jacob and Colonel Havelock, were able to lend their invaluable services to the governor-general of India. Most important for Lord Canning's purposes was the manner in which the affairs of the Punjaub were managed at this crisis. The Punjaub was under the administration of one of the ablest public servants India has ever had—Sir John, afterward Lord Lawrence. John Lawrence had

from his youth been in the civil service of the East India Company and when Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub, he made Lawrence and his soldier-brother—the gallant Sir Henry Lawrence—two out of a board of three for the administration of the affairs of the newly-acquired province. Afterward Sir John Lawrence was named the chief commissioner of the Punjaub, and by the promptitude and energy of himself and his subordinates the province was completely saved for English rule at the outbreak of the mutiny. Fortunately, the electric telegraph extended from Calcutta to Lahore, the chief city of the Punjaub. On May 11th the news of the outbreak at Meerut was brought to the authorities at Lahore. As it happened, Sir John Lawrence was then away at Rawul Pindee, in the Upper Punjaub; but Mr. Robert Montgomery, the judicial commissioner at Lahore, was invested with plenary power, and he showed that he could use it to advantage. Meean Meer is a large military cantonment five or six miles from Lahore, and there were then some four thousand native troops there, with only about thirteen hundred Europeans of the queen's and the company's service. There was no time to be lost. If the spirit of mutiny were to spread, the condition of things in the Punjaub would be desperate; but what did the condition of things in the Punjaub involve? The possible loss of a province? Something far greater than that. It meant the possibility of a momentary collapse of all British authority in India. For if any one will take the trouble to cast a glance at a map of India, he will see that the Punjaub is so placed as to become a basis of operations for the precise military movements which every experienced eye then saw to be necessary for the saving of our Indian empire. The candle would have been burning at both ends, so far as regards the north-west provinces, if the Punjaub had gone with Delhi and Lucknow. While the Punjaub held firm, it was like a barrier raised at one side of the rebellious movement, not merely preventing it from going any farther in that direction, but keeping it pent up until the moment came when the blow from the other direction could fall upon it. The first thing to be done to strike effectually at the rebellion was to make an attack on Delhi; and the possession of the Punjaub was of inestimable advantage to the authorities for that purpose. It will be seen, then,

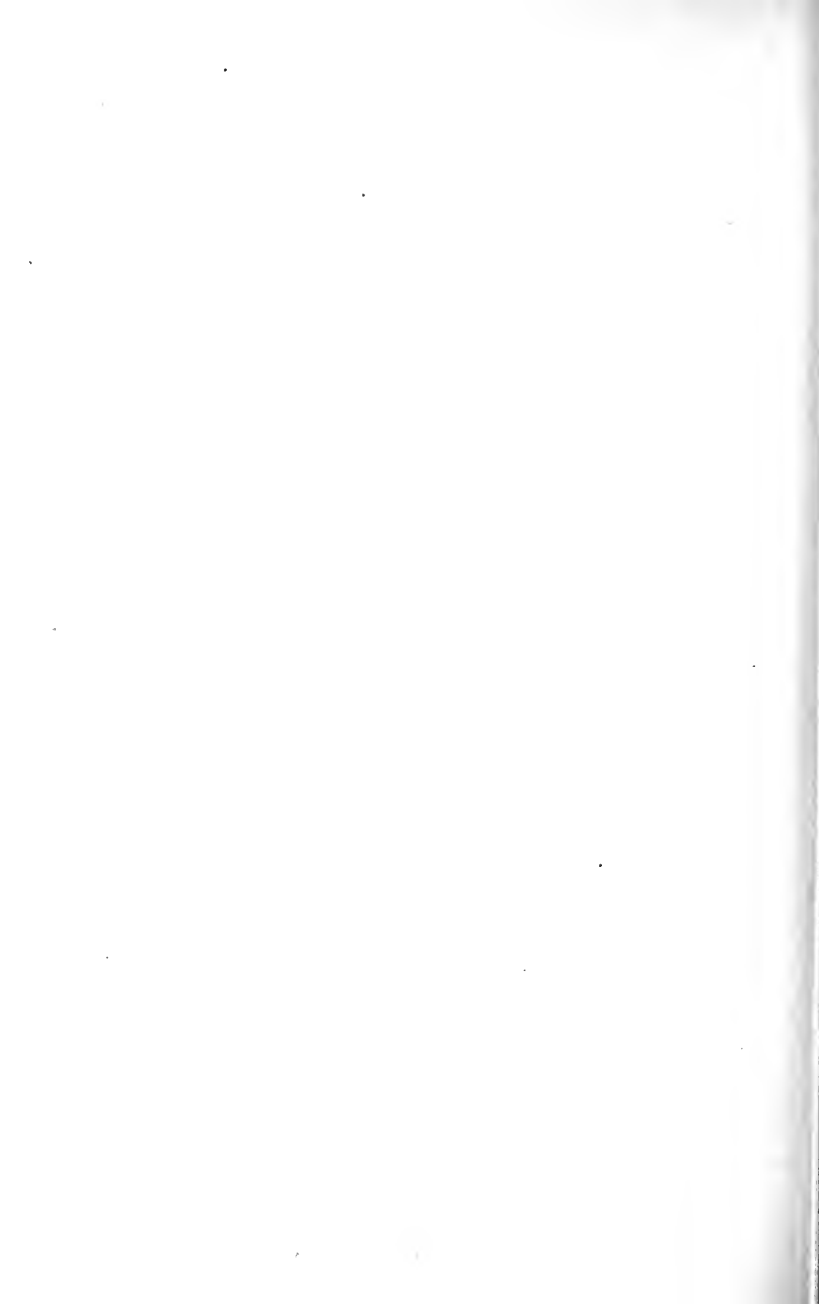
that the moment was critical for those to whose hands the administration of the great new province had been entrusted. There was no actual reason to assume that the Sepoys in Meean Meer intended to join the rebellion. There would be a certain danger of converting them into rebels if any rash movement were to be made for the purpose of guarding against treachery on their part. Either way was a serious responsibility, a momentous risk. The authorities soon made up their minds. Any risk would be better than that of leaving it in the power of the native troops to join the rebellion. A ball and supper were to be given at Lahore that night. To avoid creating any alarm it was arranged that the entertainments should take place. During the dancing and the feasting Mr. Montgomery held a council of the leading officials of Lahore, civil and military, and it was resolved at once to disarm the native troops. A parade was ordered for daybreak at Meean Meer; and on the parade-ground an order was given for a military movement which brought the heads of four columns of the native troops in front of twelve guns charged with grape, the artillerymen with their port-fires lighted, and the soldiers of one of the queen's regiments standing behind with loaded muskets. A command was given to the Sepoys to pile arms. They had immediate death before them if they disobeyed. They stood literally at the cannon's mouth. They piled their arms, which were borne away at once in carts by European soldiers, and all chances of a rebellious movement were over in that province, and the Punjaub was saved. Something of the same kind was done at Mooltan, in the Lower Punjaub, later on; and the province, thus assured to English civil and military authority, became a basis for some of the most important operations by which the mutiny was crushed, and the sceptre of India restored to the queen.

Within little more than a fortnight from the occupation of Delhi by the rebels, the British forces under General Anson, the commander-in-chief, were advancing on that city. The commander did not live to conduct any of the operations. He died of cholera almost at the beginning of the march. He had lived long enough to come in for much sharp censure. The temper of the time both in England and in India expected men to work by witchcraft rather than wit, and Anson was furiously denounced by

some of the principal English journals because he did not recapture Delhi without having even to march an army to the neighborhood of the city. He was described as "a holiday soldier who had never seen service either in peace or in war." His appointment was denounced as a "shameless job," and a tribute altogether to "the claims of family and personal acquaintance." We cannot venture now to criticise the mode of General Anson's appointment; and we had not time to show whether he was any better than a holiday soldier. But it would appear that Lord Canning had no poor opinion of his capacity, and was particularly impressed by his coolness and command of temper. He died, however, at the very outset of his march; and we only refer now to the severe attacks which were made upon him to illustrate the temper of the nation, and the manner in which it delighted to hear itself addressed. We are always rebuking other nations for their impatience and fretfulness under difficulties. It is a lesson of no slight importance for us to be reminded that when the hour of strain and pressure comes we are found to be in most ways very like our neighbors.

The siege of Delhi proved long and difficult. Another general died, another had to give up his command, before the city was recaptured. It was justly considered by Lord Canning and by all the authorities as of the utmost importance that Delhi should be taken before the arrival of great reinforcements from home. Meanwhile, the rebellion was breaking out at new points almost everywhere in these northern and north-western regions. On May 30th the mutiny declared itself at Lucknow. Sir Henry Lawrence was governor of Oudh. He endeavored to drive the rebels from the place, but the numbers of the mutineers were overwhelming. He had under his command, too, a force partly made up of native troops, and some of these deserted him in the battle. He had to retreat and to fortify the Residency at Lucknow, and remove all the Europeans, men, women, and children thither, and patiently stand a siege. Lawrence himself had not long to endure the siege. On July 2nd he had been up with the dawn, and after a great amount of work he lay on a sofa; not, as it has been well said, to rest, but to transact business in a recumbent position. His nephew and another officer were with him. Suddenly a great crash was

heard, and the room was filled with smoke and dust. One of his companions was flung to the ground. A shell had burst. When there was silence the officer who had been flung down called out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" At first there was no answer. Then a weak voice was heard to reply in just the words that Browning has put into the mouth of the gallant French lad similarly questioned by the great Napoleon. "I am killed," was the answer that came faintly but firmly from Sir Henry Lawrence's lips. The shell had wounded him in the thigh so fearfully as to leave surgery no chance of doing anything for his relief. On the morning of July 4th he died calmly and in perfect submission to the will of Providence. He had made all possible arrangements for his successor and for the work to be done. He desired that on his tomb should be engraven merely the words "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty." The epitaph was a simple, truthful summing up of a simple, truthful career. The man, however, was greater than the career. Lawrence had not opportunity to show in actual result the greatness of spirit that was in him. The immense influence he exercised over all who came within his reach bears testimony to his strength and nobleness of character better than any of the mere successes which his biographer can record. He was full of sympathy. His soul was alive to the noblest and purest aspirations. "It is the due admixture of romance and reality," he was himself accustomed to say, "that best carries a man through life." No professional teacher or philosopher ever spoke a truer sentence. As one of his many admirers says of him—"what he said and wrote, he did, or rather he was." Let the bitterest enemy of England write the history of her rule in India, and set down against her every wrong that was done in her name, from those which Brooke denounced to those which the Madras commission exposed; he will have to say that men, many men, like Henry Lawrence, lived and died devoted to the cause of that rule, and the world will take account of the admission.





# A History of our Own Times.

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### CAWNPORE.

DURING the later days of Sir Henry Lawrence's life it had another trouble added to it by the appeals which were made to him from Cawnpore for a help which he could not give. The story of Cawnpore is by far the most profound and tragic in its interest of all the chapters that make up the history of the Indian mutiny. The city of Cawnpore stands in the Doab, a peninsula between the Ganges and the Jumna, and is built on the south bank of the Ganges, there nearly a quarter of a mile broad in the dry season, and more than a mile across when swelled by the rains. By a treaty made in 1775 the East India Company engaged to maintain a force in Cawnpore for the defense of Oudh, and the revenues of an extensive district of country were appropriated to the maintenance of the troops quartered there. In 1801, for some of the various reasons impelling similar transactions in India, Lord Wellesley "closed the mortgage," as Mr. Trevelyan puts it in his interesting and really valuable little book, "Cawnpore," and the territory lapsed into the possession of the company. From that time it took rank as one of our first-class military stations. When Oudh was annexed to our dominions there was an additional reason for maintaining a strong military force at Cawnpore. The city commanded the bridge over which passed the high road to Lucknow, the capital of our new province. The distance from Cawnpore to Lucknow is about fifty miles as the bird flies.

At the time when the mutiny broke out in Meerut there were some three thousand native soldiers in Cawnpore, consisting of two regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and a company of artillerymen. There were about three

hundred officers and soldiers of English birth. The European or Eurasian population, including women and children, numbered about one thousand. These consisted of the officials, the railway people, some merchants and shopkeepers and their families. The native town had about sixty thousand inhabitants. The garrison was under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler, among the oldest of an old school of Bengal officers. Sir Hugh Wheeler was some seventy-five years of age at the time when the events occurred which we have now to describe.

The revolt was looked for at Cawnpore from the moment when the news came of the rising at Meerut; and it was not long expected before it came. Sir Hugh Wheeler applied to Sir Henry Lawrence for help; Lawrence of course could not spare a man. Then Sir Hugh Wheeler remembered that he had a neighbor whom he believed to be friendly, despite of very recent warnings from Sir Henry Lawrence and others to the contrary. He called this neighbor to his assistance, and his invitation was promptly answered. The Nana Sahib came with two guns and some three hundred men to lend a helping hand to the English commander.

The Nana Sahib resided at Bithoor, a small town twelve miles up the river from Cawnpore. He represented a grievance. Bajee Rao, Peishwa of Poonah, was the last prince of one of the great Mahratta dynasties. The East India company believed him guilty of treachery against them, of bad government of his dominions, and so forth; and they found a reason for dethroning him. He was assigned, however, a residence in Bithoor and a large pension. He had no children, and he adopted as his heir Seereek Dhoondoo Punth, the man who will be known to all time by the infamous name of Nana Sahib. It seems almost superfluous to say, that according to Hindoo belief it is needful for a man's eternal welfare that he leave a son behind him to perform duly his funeral rites; and that the adoption of a son is recognized as in every sense conferring on the adopted all the rights that a child of the blood could have. Bajee died in 1851, and Nana Sahib claimed to succeed to all his possessions. Lord Dalhousie had shown in many instances a strangely unwise disregard of the principle of adoption. The claim of the Nana to the pension was disallowed. Nana Sahib sent a confidential

agent to London to push his claim there. This man was a clever and handsome young Mohammedan who had at one time been a servant in an Anglo-Indian family, and had picked up a knowledge of French and English. His name was Azimoolah Khan. This emissary visited London in 1854, and became a lion of the fashionable season. As Hajji Baba, the barber's son, in the once popular story, was taken for a prince in London and treated accordingly, so the promoted footman, Azimoolah Khan, was welcomed as a man of princely rank in our West End society. He did not succeed in winning over the government to take any notice of the claims of his master, but being very handsome and of sleek and alluring manners, he became a favorite in the drawing-rooms of the metropolis, and was under the impression that an unlimited number of Englishwomen of rank were dying with love for him. On his way home he visited Constantinople and the Crimea. It was then a dark hour for the fortunes of England in the Crimea, and Azimoolah Khan swallowed with glad and greedy ear all the alarmist rumors that were afloat in Stamboul about the decay of England's strength and the impending domination of Russian power over Europe and Asia. In the Crimea itself Azimoolah had some opportunity of seeing how the campaign was going, and it is not surprising that with his prepossessions and his hopes, he interpreted everything he saw as a threatened disaster for the arms of England. Mr. Russell, the correspondent of the *Times*, made the acquaintance of Azimoolah Khan in Constantinople and afterward met him in the Crimea, and has borne testimony to the fact, that along with the young Mohammedan's boasts of his conquests of Englishwomen were mingled a good many grave and sinister predictions as to the prospects of England's empire. The western visit of this man was not an event without important consequences. He doubtless reported to his master that the strength of England was on the wane; and while stimulating his hatred and revenge, stimulated also his confidence in the chances of an effort to gratify both. Azimoolah Khan did afterward, as it will be seen, make some grim and genuine havoc among English ladies. The most bloodthirsty massacre of the whole mutiny is with good reason ascribed to his instigation. With Azimoolah Khan's mission and its results ended the hopes of Nana Sahib for the success of his

claims, and began, we may presume, his resolve to be revenged.

Nana Sahib, although his claim on the English government was not allowed, was still rich. He had the large private property of the man who had adopted him, and he had the residence at Bithoor. He kept up a sort of princely state. He never visited Cawnpore; the reason being it is believed, that he would not have been received there with princely honors. But he was especially lavish of his attentions to English visitors, and his invitations went far and wide among the military and civil servants of the crown and the company. He cultivated the society of English men and women; he showered his civilities upon them. He did not speak or even understand English, but he took a great interest in English history, customs, and literature. He was luxurious in the most thoroughly oriental fashion; and oriental luxury implies a great deal more than any experience of western luxury would suggest. At the time with which we are now dealing he was only about thirty-six years of age, but he was prematurely heavy and fat, and seemed to be as incapable of active exertion as of unkindly feeling. There can be little doubt that all this time he was a dissembler of more than common eastern dissimulation. It appears almost certain that while he was lavishing his courtesies and kindnesses upon Englishmen without discrimination, his heart was burning with a hatred to the whole British race. A sense of his wrongs had eaten him up. It is a painful thing to say, but it is necessary to the truth of this history, that his wrongs were genuine. He had been treated with injustice. According to all the recognized usages of his race and his religion, he had a claim indefeasible in justice to the succession which had been unfairly and unwisely denied to him.

It was to Nana Sahib, then, that poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler in the hour of his distress applied for assistance. Most gladly, we can well believe, did the Nana come. He established himself in Cawnpore with his guns and his soldiers. Sir Hugh Wheeler had taken refuge, when the mutiny broke out, in an old military hospital with mud walls, scarcely four feet high, hastily thrown up around it, and a few guns of various calibre placed in position on the so-called entrenchments. Everything seemed to have

been against our people in this hour of terror. Sir Hugh Wheeler might have chosen a far better refuge in the magazine, in a different quarter of Cawnpore; but it appeared destined that the mutineers should have this chance, too, as they had every other. The English commander selected his place in the worst position, and hardly capable of defense. Within his almost shadowy and certainly crumbling entrenchments were gathered about a thousand persons, of whom four hundred and sixty-five were men of every age and profession. The married women and grown daughters were about two hundred and eighty; the children about the same number. Of the men there were probably four hundred who could fight.

It can never be made quite clear whether Nana Sahib had in the beginning any idea of affecting to help the Englishmen. If any object of his could have been served by his assuming such a part for any given length of time, or until any particular moment arrived, he assuredly would not have been wanting in patient dissimulation. But almost as soon as his presence became known in Cawnpore he was surrounded by the mutineers, who insisted that he must make common cause with them and become one of their leaders. He put himself at their disposal. At first their idea was that he should lead them on to Delhi, the recognized center of the revolt. But he was urged by some of his advisers, and especially by Azimoolah Khan, not to allow all his personal pretensions to be lost in the cause of Delhi, and his individual influence to be absorbed into the court of the Grand Mogul. He was advised to make himself a great man in the first instance by conquering the country all round Cawnpore; and overcome by these persuasions and by the promptings of personal ambition, he prevailed upon the mutineers not to leave the city until they had first "scoured these English thence." The Nana therefore became the recognized chief of the Cawnpore movement. Let us do justice, even to Nana Sahib. It will be hard to say a word for him after this. Let us now observe that he gave notice to Sir Hugh Wheeler that if the entrenchments were not surrendered they would be instantly attacked. They were attacked. A general assault was made upon the miserable mud walls on June 12th, but the resistance was heroic and the assault failed. It was after that assault that the garrison succeeded in send-

ing a message to Sir Henry Lawrence, at Lucknow, craving for the aid which it was absolutely impossible for him to give.

From that time the fire of the mutineer army on the English entrenchments never ceased. Cawnpore was alive with all the ruffianism of the region. It became an Alsatia for the scoundrels and jail-birds of the country round, and of the province of Oudh. All these scoundrels took their turn at the pleasant and comparatively safe amusement of keeping up the fire on the English people behind the mud walls. Whenever a regular attack was made the assailants invariably came to grief. The little garrison, thinning in numbers every day and almost every hour, held out with splendid obstinacy, and always sent those who assailed it scampering back—except of course for such assailants as perforce kept their ground by the persuasion of the English bullets. The little population of women and children behind the entrenchments had no roof to shelter them from the fierce Indian sun. They cowered under the scanty shadow of the little walls often at the imminent peril of the unceasing Sepoy bullets. The only water for their drinking was to be had from a single well, at which the guns of the assailants were unceasingly leveled. To go to the well and draw water became the task of self-sacrificing heroes, who might with better chances of safety have led a forlorn hope. The water which the fainting women and children drank might have seemed to be reddened by blood; for only at the price of blood was it ever obtained. It may seem a trivial detail, but it will count for much in a history of the suffering of delicately-nurtured Englishwomen, that from the beginning of the siege of the Cawnpore entrenchments to its tragic end, there was not, as Mr. Trevelyan puts it, “one spongeful of water” to be had for the purposes of personal cleanliness. The inmates of that ghastly garrison were dying like flies. One does not know which to call the greater; the suffering of the women or the bravery of the men.

The Nana was joined by a large body of the Oudh soldiers, believed to be among the best fighting men that India could produce. These made a grand assault on the entrenchments, and these, too, were driven back by the indomitable garrison, who were hourly diminishing in numbers, in food, in ammunition, in everything but courage

and determination to fight. The repulse of the Oudh men made a deep impression on the mutineers. A conviction began to spread abroad that it was of no use attempting to conquer these terrible British sahibs; that as long as one of them was alive he would be as formidable as a wild beast in his lair. The Sepoys became unwilling to come too near to the low crumbling walls of the entrenchment. Those walls might have been leaped over as easily as that of Romulus; but of what avail to know that, when from behind them always came the fatal fire of the Englishmen? It was no longer easy to get the mutineers to attempt anything like an assault. They argued that when the Oudh men could do nothing it was hardly of any use for others to try. The English themselves began to show a perplexing kind of aggressive enterprise, and took to making little sallies, in small numbers indeed, but with astonishing effect, on any bodies of Sepoys who happened to be anywhere near. Utterly, overwhelmingly, preposterously outnumbered as the Englishmen were, there were moments when it began to seem almost possible that they might actually keep back their assailants until some English army could come to their assistance and take a terrible vengeance upon Cawnpore. Meanwhile the influence of the Nana began sensibly to wane. They who accept the responsibility of undertakings like his soon come to know that they hold their place only on condition of immediate success. Only great organizations, with roots of system firmly fixed, can afford to wait and to look over disappointment. Nana Sahib began to find that he could not take by assault those wretched entrenchments; and he could not wait to starve the garrison out. He therefore resolved to treat with the English. The terms, it is believed, were arranged by the advice and assistance of Tantia Topee, his lieutenant, and Azimoolah Khan, the favorite of English drawing-rooms. An offer was sent to the entrenchments, the terms of which are worthy of notice. "All those," it said, "who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and who are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad."

The terms had to be accepted. There was nothing else to be done. The English people were promised, during the course of the negotiations, sufficient supplies of food and boats to carry them to Allahabad, which was now once

more in the possession of England. The relief was unspeakable for the survivors of that weary defense. The women, the children, the wounded, the sick, the dying, welcomed any terms of release. Not the faintest suspicion crossed any mind of the treachery that was awaiting them. How, indeed, could there be any such suspicion? Not for years and years had even oriental warfare given example of such practice as that which Nana Sahib and the graceful and civilized Azimoolah Khan had now in preparation.

The time for the evacuation of the garrison came. The boats were in readiness on the Ganges. The long procession of men, women, and children passed slowly down; very slowly in some instances, because of the number of sick and wounded by which its progress was encumbered. Some of the chief among the Nana's counsellors took their stand in a little temple on the margin of the river, to superintend the embarkation and the work that was to follow it. Nana Sahib himself was not there. It is understood that he purposely kept away; he preferred to hear of the deed when it was done. His faithful lieutenant, Tantia Topee, had given orders, it seems, that when a trumpet sounded, some work, for which he had arranged should begin. The wounded and the women were got into the boats in the first instance. The officers and men were scrambling in afterward. Suddenly the blast of a trumpet was heard. The boats were of the kind common on the rivers of India, covered with roofs of straw, and looking, as some accounts describe them, not unlike floating haystacks. The moment the bugle sounded, the straw of the boat-roofs blazed up, and the native rowers began to make precipitately for the shore. They had set fire to the thatch, and were now escaping from the flames they had purposely lighted up. At the same moment there came from both shores of the river thick showers of grapeshot and musketry. The banks of the Ganges seemed in an instant alive with shot, a very rain of bullets poured in upon the devoted inmates of the boats. To add to the horrors of the moment if, indeed, it needed any addition, nearly all the boats stuck fast in mud-banks, and the occupants became fixed targets for the fire of their enemies. Only three of the boats floated. Two of these drifted to the Oudh shore, and those on board them were killed at once. The third floated farther along



with the stream, reserved for further adventures and horrors. The firing ceased when Tantia Topce and his confederates thought that enough had been done; and the women and children who were still alive were brought ashore and carried in forlorn procession back again through the town where they had suffered so much, and which they had hoped that they were leaving forever. They were about one hundred and twenty-five in number, women and children. Some of them were wounded. There were a few well-disposed natives who saw them and were sorry for them; who had perhaps served them, and experienced their kindness in other days, and who now had some grateful memory of it, which they dared not express by any open profession of sympathy. Certain of these afterward described the English ladies as they saw them pass. They were bedraggled and disheveled, these poor Englishwomen; their clothes were in tatters; some of them were wounded, and the blood was trickling from their feet and legs. They were carried to a place called the Savada House, a large building, once a charitable institution bearing the name of Salvador, which had been softened into Savada by Asiatic pronunciation.

On board the one boat which had floated with the stream were more than a hundred persons. The boat was attacked by a constant fire from both banks as it drifted along. At length a party of some twelve men, or thereabouts, landed with the bold object of attacking their assailants and driving them back. In their absence the boat was captured by some of the rebel gangs, and the women and the wounded were brought back to Cawnpore. Some sixty men, twenty-five women, and four children, were thus recaptured. The men were immediately shot. It may be said at once, that of the gallant little party who went ashore to attack the enemy, hand to hand, four finally escaped, after adventures so perilous and so extraordinary that a professional story-teller would hardly venture to make them part of a fictitious narrative.

The Nana had now a considerable number of Englishwomen in his hands. They were removed, after awhile, from their first prison-house to a small building north of the canal, and between the native city and the Ganges. Here they were cooped up in the closest manner, except when some of them were taken out in the evening and set

to the work of grinding corn for the use of their captors. Cholera and dysentery set in among these unhappy sufferers, and some eighteen women and seven children died. Let it be said for the credit of womanhood, that the royal widows, the relicts of the Nana's father by adoption, made many efforts to protect the captive Englishwomen, and even declared that they would throw themselves and their children from the palace windows if any harm were done to the prisoners. We have only to repeat here, that as a matter of fact no indignities other than that of the compulsory corn-grinding, were put upon the English ladies. They were doomed, one and all, to suffer death, but they were not, as at one time was believed in England, made to long for death as an escape from shame.

Meanwhile the prospects of the Nana and his rebellion were growing darker and darker. He must have begun to know by this time that he had no chance of establishing himself as a ruler anywhere in India. The English had not been swept out of the country with a rush. The first flood of the mutiny had broken on their defenses, and already the tide was falling. The Nana well knew it never would rise again to the same height in his day. The English were coming on. Neill had recaptured Allahabad, and cleared the country all round it of any traces of rebellion. Havelock was now moving forward from Allahabad toward Cawnpore, with six cannon and about a thousand English soldiers. Very small in point of numbers was that force when compared with that which Nana Sahib could even still rally round him; but no one in India now knew better than Nana Sahib what extraordinary odds the English could afford to give with the certainty of winning. Havelock's march was a series of victories, although he was often in such difficulties that the slightest display of real generalship or even soldiership on the part of his opponents might have stopped his advance. He had one encounter with the lieutenant of the Nana, who had under his command nearly four thousand men and twelve guns, and Havelock won a complete victory in about ten minutes. He defeated in the same off-hand way various other chiefs of the mutiny. He was almost at the gates of Cawnpore.

Then it appears to have occurred to the Nana, or to have been suggested to him that it would be inconvenient to have his English captives recaptured by the enemy,

their countrymen. It may be that in the utter failure of all his plans and hopes he was anxious to secure some satisfaction, to satiate his hatred in some way. It was intimated to the prisoners that they were to die. Among them were three or four men. These were called out and shot. Then some Sepoys were sent to the house where the women still were, and ordered to fire volleys through the windows. This they did, but apparently without doing much harm. Some persons are of opinion, from such evidence as can be got, that the men purposely fired high above the level of the floor, to avoid killing any of the women and children. In the evening five men—two Hindoo peasants, two Mohammedan butchers, and one Mohammedan wearing the red uniform of the Nana's body-guard—were sent up to the house, and entered it. Incessant shrieks were heard to come from that fearful house. The Mohammedan soldier came out to the door holding in his hand a sword-hilt from which the blade had been broken off, and he exchanged this now useless instrument for a weapon in proper condition. Not once but twice this performance took place. Evidently the task imposed on these men was hard work for the sword-blades. After awhile the five men came out of the now quiet house and locked the doors behind them. During that time they had killed nearly all the English women and children. They had slaughtered them like beasts in the shambles. In the morning it appeared indeed that the work, however zealously undertaken, had not been quite thorough. The strongest arms and sharpest sabers sometimes fail to accomplish a long piece of work to perfect satisfaction. In the morning it would seem that some of the women, and certainly some of the children, were still alive; that is to say, were not dead. For the five men came then with several attendants to clear out the house of the captives. Their task was to tumble all the bodies into a dry well beyond some trees that grew near. A large crowd of idlers assembled to watch this operation. Then it was seen by some of the spectators that certain of the women and children were not yet quite dead. Of the children some were alive, and even tried to get away. But the same well awaited them all. Some witnesses were of opinion that the Nana's officials took the trouble to kill the still living before they tossed them down into the well;

others do not think they stopped for any such work of humanity, but flung them down just as they came to hand, the quick and the dead together. At all events, they were all deposited in the well. Any of the bodies that had clothes worth taking, were carefully stripped before being consigned to this open grave. When Cawnpore was afterward taken by the English, those who had to look down into that well saw a sight the like of which no man in modern days had ever seen elsewhere. No attempt shall be made to describe it here. When the house of the massacre itself was entered, its floors and its walls told with terrible plainness of the scene they had witnessed. The plaster of the walls was scored and seamed with sword-slashes low down and in the corners, as if the poor women had crouched down in their mortal fright with some wild hope of escaping the blows. The floor was strewn with scraps of dresses, women's faded ragged finery, frilling, underclothing, broken combs, shoes, and tresses of hair. There were some small and neatly severed curls of hair too, which had fallen on the ground, but evidently had never been cut off by the rude weapon of a professional butcher. These doubtless were keepsakes that had been treasured to the last, parted with only when life and all were going. There was no inscription whatever on the walls when the house was first entered. Afterward a story was told of words found written there by some Englishwomen telling of hideous wrong done to them, and bequeathing to their countrymen the task of revenge. This story created a terrible sensation in England, as was but natural, and aroused a furious thirst for vengeance. It was not true. Some such inscription did appear on the walls afterward, but it is painful to have to say that it was a vulgar, and what would have been called in later times a "sensational" forgery. Our countrywomen died without leaving behind them any record of a desire on their part for vengeance. We may be sure they had other thoughts and other hopes as they died. One or two scraps of paper were found which recorded deaths and such-like interruptions of the monotony of imprisonment; but nothing more. The well of horrors has been filled up, and a memorial chapel surrounded by a garden built upon the spot. It was right to banish all trace of that hideous crime, and to replace the house and the well, as Mr. Trevelyan says, by "a fair garden and a graceful shrine."

Something, however, has still to be told of the Nana and his fortunes. He made one last stand against the victorious English in front of Cawnpore, and was completely defeated. He galloped into the city on a bleeding and exhausted horse; he fled thence to Bithoor, his residence. He had just time left, it is said, to order the murder of a separate captive, a woman who had previously been overlooked or purposely left behind. Then he took flight in the direction of the Nepalese marches; and he soon disappears from history. Nothing of his fate was ever known. Many years afterward England and India were treated to a momentary sensation by a story of the capture of Nana Sahib. But the man who was arrested proved to be an entirely different person; and indeed from the moment of his arrest few believed him to be the long-lost murderer of the English women. In days more superstitious than our own, popular faith would have found an easy explanation of the mystery which surrounded the close of Nana Sahib's career. He had done, it would have been said, the work of a fiend; and he had disappeared as a fiend would do when his task was accomplished.

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

### RECONQUEST.

THE capture of Delhi was effected on September 20th. The siege had been long and difficult; and for some time it did not seem to the general in command, Archdale Wilson, that the small force he had could with any hope of success attempt to carry the city by assault. Colonel Baird Smith, who was chief of the engineer department, urged the attempt strongly on him; and at length it was made, and made with success, though not without many moments when failure seemed inevitable. Brigadier-general Nicholson led the storming columns, and paid for his bravery and success the price of a gallant life. He was shot through the body, and died three days after the English standard had been planted on the roof of the palace of the moguls. Nicholson was one of the bravest and most capable officers whom the war produced. It is worthy of record as an evidence of the temper aroused even in men from whom

better things might have been expected, that Nicholson strongly urged the passing of a law to authorize flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children in Delhi. He contended that "the idea of simply hanging the perpetrators of such atrocities is maddening." He urged this view again and again, and deliberately argued it on grounds alike of policy and principle. The fact is recorded here not in mere disparagement of a brave soldier, but as an illustration of the manner in which the old elementary passions of man's untamed condition can return upon him in his pride of civilization and culture, and make him their slave again.

The taking of Delhi was followed by an act over which, from that time to the present, a controversy has been arising at intervals. A young officer, Hodson, of "Hodson's Horse," was acting as chief of the intelligence department. He had once been in a civil charge in the Punjab, and had been dismissed for arbitrary and high-handed conduct toward an influential chief of the district. He had been striving hard to distinguish himself, and to regain a path to success, and as the leader of the little force known as Hodson's Horse he had given evidence of remarkable military capacity. He was especially distinguished by an extraordinary blending of cool, calculating craft and reckless daring. He knew exactly when to be cautious and when to risk everything on what to other eyes might have seemed a madman's throw. He now offered to General Wilson to capture the king and the royal family of Delhi. General Wilson gave him authority to make the attempt, but stipulated that the life of the king should be spared. By the help of native spies Hodson discovered that when Delhi was taken the king and his family had taken refuge in the tomb of the emperor Hoomayoon, a structure which, with the buildings surrounding and belonging to it, constituted a sort of suburb in itself. Hodson went boldly to this place with a few of his troopers. He found that the royal family of Delhi were surrounded there by a vast crowd of armed and to all appearance desperate adherents. This was one of the moments when Hodson's indomitable daring stood him in good stead. He called upon them all to lay down their arms at once; and the very audacity of the order made them suppose he had force at hand capable of compelling obedience. They threw down their arms, and

the king surrendered himself to Hodson. Next day Hodson captured the three royal princes of Delhi. He tried, condemned, and executed them himself, and on the spot. That is to say, he treated them as rebels taken red-handed, and borrowing a carbine from one of his troopers, he shot them dead with his own hand. Their corpses, half-naked, were exposed for some days at one of the gates of Delhi. Hodson did the deed deliberately. Many days before he had a chance of doing it he wrote to a friend to say that if he got into the palace of Delhi, "the House of Timour will not be worth five minutes' purchase, I ween." On the day after the deed he wrote; "In twenty-four hours I disposed of the principal members of the House of Timour the Tartar. I am not cruel; but I confess that I do rejoice in the opportunity of ridding the earth of these ruffians." Sir J. W. Kaye, who comments on Hodson's deed with a just and manly severity, says; "I must aver without hesitation that the general feeling in England was one of profound grief not unmingled with detestation. I never heard the act approved; I never heard it even defended." Sir J. W. Kaye was more fortunate than the writer of this book who has frequently heard it defended, justified, and glorified; and has a distinct impression that the more general tendency of public opinion in England at the time, was to regard Hodson's act as entirely patriotic and laudable. If in cool blood the deed could now be defended, it might be necessary to point out that there was no evidence whatever of the princes having taken any part in the massacre of Europeans in Delhi; that even if evidence to that effect were forthcoming, Hodson did not wait for or ask for it; and that the share taken by the princes in an effort to restore the dynasty of their ancestor, however it might have justified some sternness of punishment on the part of the English government, was not a crime of that order which is held in civilized warfare to put the life of its author at the mercy of any one who captures him when the struggle is all over, and the reign of law is safe. One cannot read the history of this Indian mutiny without coming to the conclusion that in the minds of many Englishmen a temporary prostration of the moral sense took place, under the influence of which they came to regard the measure of the enemy's guilt as the standard for their right of retaliation, and to hold that if he had

no conscience they were thereby released from the necessity of having any. As Mr. Disraeli put it, they were making Nana Sahib the model for the British officer to imitate. Hodson was killed not long after; we might well wish to be free to allow him to rest without censure in his untimely grave. He was a brave and clever soldier, but one who unfortunately allowed a fierce temper to "overcrow," as the Elizabethan writers would have put it, the better instincts of his nature, and the guidance of a cool judgment.

General Havelock made his way to the relief of Lucknow. Sir James Outram, who had returned from Persia, had been sent to Oudh with full instructions to act as chief commissioner. He had complete civil and military authority. Appearing on the scene armed with such powers, he would in the natural order of things have superseded Havelock, who had been fighting his way so brilliantly, in the face of a thousand dangers, to the relief of the beleaguered English in Lucknow. But Outram was not the man to rob a brave and successful comrade of the fruits of his toil and peril. Outram wrote to Havelock: "To you shall be left the glory of relieving Lucknow, for which you have already struggled so much. I shall accompany you only in my civil capacity as commissioner, placing my military service at your disposal should you please, and serving under you as a volunteer." Havelock was enabled to continue his victorious march. He fought battle after battle against forces far superior in numbers to his own, and on September 25th he was able to relieve the besieged English at Lucknow. His coming, it can hardly be doubted, saved the women and children from such a massacre as that of Cawnpore; but Havelock had not the force that might have driven the rebels out of the field. His little army, although it had been reinforced by the coming of Sir James Outram, was yet entirely inadequate to the task which circumstances had imposed on it. The enemy soon recovered from any momentary panic into which they had been thrown by Havelock's coming, and renewed the siege; and if England had not been prepared to make greater efforts for the rescue of her imperilled people, it is but too probable that the troops whom Havelock brought to the relief of Lucknow would only have swelled the number of the victims. But in the meantime the stout soldier, Sir Colin



Campbell, whom we have already heard of in the Crimean campaign, had been appointed commander-in-chief of the Indian forces, and had arrived in India. He received, it was said, the announcement of the task assigned to him one afternoon in London, and before the evening he was on his way to the scene of his command. He arrived in Cawnpore on November 3rd, and he set out for Lucknow on the 9th. He had, however, to wait for reinforcements, and it was not until the 14th that he was able to attack. Even then he had under his command only some five thousand men, a force miserably inferior in number to that of the enemy; but in those days an English officer thought himself in good condition to attack if the foe did not outnumber him by more than four or five to one. A series of actions was fought by Sir Colin Campbell and his little force, attacking the enemy on the one side, who were attacked at the same time by the besieged garrison of the residency. On the morning of November 17th, Outram and Havelock, with their staff officers, were able to join Campbell before the general action was over, and by the combined efforts of both forces the enemy was dislodged. Sir Colin Campbell resolved, however, that the residency must be evacuated; and accordingly on the 19th heavy batteries were opened against the enemy's position, as if for the purpose of assault, and under cover of this operation the women, the sick, and the wounded were quietly removed to the Dilkoosha, a small palace in a park about five miles from the residency, which had been captured by Sir Colin Campbell on his way to attack the city. During some days following the garrison was quietly withdrawing to the Dilkoosha. By midnight of the 22nd, the whole garrison, without the loss of a single man, had left the residency. Two or three days more saw the troops established at Alumbagh, some four miles from the residency, in another direction from that of the Dilkoosha. Alumbagh is an isolated cluster of buildings, with grounds and enclosure to the south of Lucknow. The name of this place is memorable forever in the history of the war. It was there that Havelock closed his glorious career. He was attacked with dysentery, and his frame, exhausted by the almost superhuman strain which he had put upon it during his long days and sleepless nights of battle and victory, could not long resist such an enemy. On November 24th Have-

lock died. The queen created him a baronet, or rather affixed that honor to his name on the 27th of the same month, not knowing then that the soldier's time for struggle and for honor was over. The title was transferred to his son, the present Sir Henry Havelock, who had fought gallantly under his father's eyes. The fame of Havelock's exploits reached England only a little in advance of the news of his death. So many brilliant deeds had seldom in the history of our wars been crowded into days so few. All the fame of that glorious career was the work of some strenuous splendid weeks. Havelock's promotion had been slow. He had not much for which to thank the favor of his superiors. No family influence, no powerful patrons or friends had made his slow progress more easy. He was more than sixty when the mutiny broke out. He was born in April, 1795; he was educated at the Charterhouse, London, where his grave, studious ways procured for him the nickname of "old phlos"—the schoolboy's "short" for "old philosopher." He went out to India in 1823, and served in the Burmese war of 1824, and the Sikh war of 1845. He was a man of grave and earnest character, a Baptist by religion, and strongly penetrated with a conviction that the religious spirit ought to pervade and inform all the duties of military as well as civil life. By his earnestness and his example he succeeded in animating those whom he led with similar feelings; and "Havelock's saints" were well-known through India by this distinctive appropriate title. "Havelock's saints" showed, whenever they had an opportunity, that they could fight as desperately as the most reckless sinners; and their commander found the fame flung in his way, across the path of his duty, which he never would have swerved one inch from that path to seek. Amid all the excitement of hope and fear, passion and panic, in England, there was time for the whole heart of the nation to feel pride in Havelock's career and sorrow for his untimely death. Untimely? Was it after all untimely? Since when has it not been held the crown of a great career that the hero dies at the moment of accomplished victory.

Sir Colin Campbell left General Outram in charge of Alumbagh for the purpose of keeping watch upon the movements of the insurgents who were still strong in the city of Lucknow. Sir Colin himself advanced toward

Cawnpore, where he soon found that there was some serious work to be done. A large hostile force, composed chiefly of the revolted army of Scindiah, the ruler of Gwalior, had been marching upon Cawnpore; and General Windham, who held the command there, had gone out to attack them. It fared with him, however, very much as it had done with Sir Henry Lawrence near Lucknow; he found the enemy far too strong for him; he was compelled to retreat, not without severe loss, to his entrenchments at Cawnpore, and the enemy occupied the city itself. Sir Colin Campbell attacked the rebels at one place; Sir Hope Grant attacked them at another, and Cawnpore was retaken. Sir Colin Campbell then turned his attention to the very important work of reconquering the entire city of Lucknow and dispersing the great body of rebels who were concentrated there. It was not until March 19, 1858, that Lucknow fell completely into the hands of the English. Our operations had been almost entirely by artillery and had been conducted with consummate prudence as well as boldness, and our loss was therefore very small, while the enemy suffered most severely. About two thousand of the rebels were killed in the final attack, and more than one hundred of their guns were taken. Among our wounded was the gallant leader of the naval brigade, Sir William Peel, son of the great statesman; and among the killed was "Hodson, of Hodson's Horse," the executioner of the princes of Delhi. Sir William Peel died at Cawnpore shortly after, of small-pox, his death remarked and lamented even amid all the noble deaths of that eventful time. One name must not be forgotten among those who endured the siege of Lucknow. It is that of Dr. Brydon, whom we last saw as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, the one survivor come back to tell the tale of the disastrous retreat from Cabul. A gifted artist, Mrs. Butler, has lately painted that picture as no words could paint it. Dr. Brydon served through the Lucknow defense, and was especially named in the despatch of the governor-general. "After passing through the Cabul campaign of 1841-42," the governor-general says of Dr. Brydon, "he was included in the illustrious garrison who maintained the position in Jellalabad. He may now, as one of the heroes of Lucknow, claim to have witnessed and taken part in an achievement even more conspicuous, as

an example of the invincible energy and enduring courage of British soldiers."

Practically, the reconquest of Lucknow was the final blow in the suppression of the great Bengal mutiny. The two centers of the movement were Delhi and Lucknow; and when these strongholds were once more in the hands of the English, rebellion in the land had well-nigh lost its sway. There was hardly, after that time, any rebel camp left to which it would have been worth carrying a flag of truce. Some episodes of the war, however, were still worthy of notice. For example, the rebels seized Gwalior, the capital of the Maharajah Scindia, who escaped to Agra. The English had to attack the rebels, retake Gwalior, and restore Scindia. One of those who fought to the last on the rebels' side was the Ranee, or Princess of Jhansi, whose territory, as we have already seen, had been one of our annexations. She had flung all her energies into the rebellion, regarding it clearly as a rebellion, and not as a mere mutiny. She took the field with Nana Sahib and Tantia Topee. For months after the fall of Delhi she contrived to baffle Sir Hugh Rose and the English. She led squadrons in the field. She fought with her own hand. She was engaged against us in the battle for the possession of Gwalior. In the uniform of a cavalry officer she led charge after charge, and she was killed among those who resisted to the last. Her body was found upon the field, scarred with wounds enough in the front to have done credit to any hero. Sir Hugh Rose paid her the well-deserved tribute which a generous conqueror is always glad to be able to offer. He said, in his general order, that "the best man upon the side of the enemy was the woman found dead, the Ranee of Jhansi."

The Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior had deserved well of the English government. Under every temptation, every threat, and many profound perils from the rebellion, he had remained firm to his friendship. So, too, had Holkar, the maharajah of the Indore territory. Both these princes were young when the mutiny broke out, some twenty-three years old, each of them; at a time of life, therefore, when ambition and enterprise might have been expected to tempt with fullest fascination. Holkar was actually believed, in the beginning, to have favored the rebellion; he was deliberately accused of having taken part with it; there

are, even still, those who would argue that he was its accomplice; so closely were his fortunes, to all appearance, bound up with the cause of the mutineers, and so natural did it seem that he should fail to hold out against them. But he disappointed all such expectations on the part of our enemies, and proved himself a faithful friend of England. The country owes much to those two princes, for the part they took in her hour of need; and she has not, we are glad to think, proved herself ungrateful.

The administration of Patna by Mr. William Taylor supplied an episode which is still discussed with something like partisan keenness. Patna is the Mohammedan capital of the region east of Benares, and the city was the headquarters of the chiefs of the fanatical, warlike Wahabis. Mr. Taylor was the commissioner of the district; he suspected that rebellion was being planned there, and he got the supposed religious leaders of it into his power by a stratagem something like that which the Duke of Alva employed to make Egmont his prisoner. Did the end justify the means? is the question still asked. Was there a rebellious plot; and if so, was it right to anticipate oriental treachery by a stroke of more than oriental craft? The episode was interesting; but it is too purely an episode to be discussed at any length in these pages.

It is not necessary to describe, with any minuteness of detail, the final spasms of the rebellion. Tantia Topee, the lieutenant of Nana Sahib, held out obstinately in the field for a long time, and after several defeats. He was at length completely hemmed in by the English, and was deserted by the remainder of his army. He was taken prisoner in April, 1859, was tried for his share in the Cawnpore massacre, and was hanged like any vulgar criminal. The old king of Delhi was also put on trial, and being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation. He was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, but the colonists there refused to receive him, and this last of the line of the Grand Moguls had to go begging for a prison. He was finally carried to Rangoon, in British Burmah. On December 20, 1858, Lord Clyde, who had been Sir Colin Campbell, announced to the governor-general that "the campaign is at an end, there being no longer even the vestige of rebellion in the province of Ouhd;" and that "the last remnant of the mutineers and insurgents have been hopelessly driven

across the mountains which form the barrier between the kingdom of Nepal and her majesty's empire of Hindostan." On May 1, 1859, there was a public thanksgiving in England for the pacification of India.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE END OF "JOHN COMPANY."

WHILE these things were passing in India, it is needless to say that the public opinion of England was distracted by agitation and by opposing counsels. For a long time the condition of Indian affairs had been regarded in England with something like absolute indifference. India was, to the ordinary Englishman, a place where men used at one time to make large fortunes within a few years; and where lately military and civil officers had to do hard work enough without much chance of becoming nabobs. In many circles it was thought of only as the hated country where one's daughter went with her husband, and from which she had, after a few years, to send back her children to England, because the climate of India was fatal to certain years of childhood. It was associated, in the minds of some, with tiger-hunting; in the minds of others with Bishop Heber and missions to the heathen. Most persons had a vague knowledge that there had been an impeachment of Warren Hastings for something done by him in India, and that Burke had made great speeches about it. In his famous essay on Lord Clive, published only seventeen years before the Indian mutiny, Lord Macaulay complained, that while every schoolboy, as he put it in his favorite way, knew all about the Spanish conquests in the Americas, about Montezuma and Cortes, and Pizarro, very few even of cultivated English gentlemen knew anything whatever about the history of England's empire in India. In the House of Commons a debate on any question connected with India was as strictly an affair of experts as a discussion on some local gas or water bill. The house in general did not even affect to have any interest in it. The officials who had to do with Indian affairs; the men on the opposition benches, who had held the same offices while their party was in power; these, and two or

three men who had been in India, and were set down as crotchety because they professed any concern in its mode of government—such were the politicians who carried on an Indian debate, and who had the house all to themselves while the discussion lasted. The Indian mutiny startled the public feeling of England out of this state of unhealthy languor. First came the passion and panic, the cry for blood, the wholesale executions, the blowing of rebels from guns; then came a certain degree of reaction, and some eminent Englishmen were found to express alarm at the very sanguinary methods of repression and of punishment that were in favor among most of our fellow-countrymen in India.

It was during this season of reaction that the famous discussions took place on Lord Canning's proclamation. On March 3, 1858, Lord Canning issued his memorable proclamation; memorable, however, rather for the stir it created in England than for any great effect it produced in India. It was issued from Allahabad, whither the governor-general had gone to be nearer to the seat of war. The proclamation was addressed to the chiefs of Oudh, and it announced that, with the exception of the lands then held by six loyal proprietors of the province, the proprietary right in the whole of the soil of Oudh was transferred to the British government, which would dispose of it in such manner as might seem fitting. The disposal, however, was indicated by the terms of the proclamation. To all chiefs and landholders who should at once surrender to the chief commissioner of Oudh it was promised that their lives should be spared, "provided that their hands are unstained by English blood murderously shed;" but it was stated, that "as regards any further indulgence which may be extended to them, and the conditions in which they may hereafter be placed, they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British government." Read by the light of literalness, this proclamation unquestionably seemed to amount to an absolute confiscation of the whole soil of Oudh; for even the favored landowners who were to retain their properties were given to understand that they retained them by the favor of the crown and as a reward for their loyalty. This was the view taken of the governor-general's act by one whose opinion was surely entitled to the highest consideration from every one,

Sir James Outram, chief commissioner of Oudh. Sir James Outram wrote at once to Lord Canning, pointing out that there were not a dozen landholders in Oudh who had not either themselves borne arms against us or assisted the rebels with men or money, and that therefore the effect of the proclamation would be to confiscate the entire proprietary right in the province and to make the chiefs and landlords desperate, and that the result would be a "guerilla war for the extirpation, root and branch, of this class of men, which will involve the loss of thousands of Europeans by battle, disease, and exposure." Lord Canning was not ready to admit, even in deference to such authority as that of Sir James Outram, that his policy would have any such effects. But he consented to insert in the proclamation a clause announcing that a liberal indulgence would be granted to those who should promptly come forward to aid in the restoration of order, and that "the governor-general will be ready to view liberally the claims which they may thus acquire to a restitution of their former rights."

In truth, it was never the intention of Lord Canning to put in force any cruel and sweeping policy of confiscation. The whole tenor of his rule in India, the very reproaches that had been showered on him, the very nickname which his enemies had given him—that term of reproach that afterward came to be a title of honor—might have suggested to the sharpest critic that it was not likely "Clemency Canning" was about to initiate a principle of merciless punishment for an entire class of men. Lord Canning had come to the conclusion that the English government must start afresh in their dealings with Oudh. He felt that it would be impossible to deal with the chiefs and people of the province so lately annexed as if we were dealing with revolted Sepoys. He put aside any idea of imprisonment or transportation for mere rebellion, seeing that only in the conqueror's narrowest sense could men be accounted rebels because they had taken arms against a power which but a moment before had no claim whatever to their allegiance or their obedience. Nevertheless, Oudh was now a province of the British empire in Hindostan, and Lord Canning had only to consider what was to be done with it. He came to the conclusion that the necessary policy for all parties concerned was to make of the



mutiny and the consequent reorganization, an opportunity not for a wholesale confiscation of the land but for a measure which should declare that the land was held under the power and right of the English government. The principle of his policy was somewhat like that adopted by Lord Durham in Canada. It put aside the technical authority of law for the moment in order that a reign of genuine law might be inaugurated. It seized the power of a dictator over life and property, that the dictator might be able to restore peace and order at the least cost in loss and suffering to the province and the population whose affairs it was his task to administer.

But it may be freely admitted that on the face of it the proclamation of Lord Canning looked strangely despotic. Some of the most independent and liberal Englishmen took this view of it. Men who had supported Lord Canning through all the hours of clamor against him, felt compelled to express disapproval of what they understood to be his new policy. It so happened that Lord Ellenborough was then president of the board of control, and Lord Ellenborough was a man who always acted on impulse, and had a passion for fine phrases. He had a sincere love of justice, according to his lights; but he had a still stronger love for antithesis. Lord Ellenborough therefore had no sooner received a copy of Lord Canning's proclamation, than he despatched upon his own responsibility a rattling condemnation of the whole proceeding. "Other conquerors," wrote the fiery and eloquent statesman, "when they have succeeded in overcoming resistance have expected a few persons as still deserving of punishment, but have with a generous policy extended their clemency to the great body of the people. You have acted upon a different principle, you have reserved a few as deserving of special favor, and you have struck, with what they feel as the severest of punishments, the mass of the inhabitants of the country. We cannot but think that the precedents from which you have departed will appear to have been conceived in a spirit of wisdom superior to that which appears in the precedent you have made." The style of this despatch was absolutely indefensible. A French imperial prefect with a turn for eloquent letter-writing might fitly thus have admonished the erring *maire* of a village community; but it was absurd language for a man like Lord Ellen-

borough to address to a statesman like Lord Canning, who had just succeeded in keeping the fabric of English government in India together during the most terrible trial ever imposed on it by fate. The question was taken up immediately in both houses of parliament. Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords moved a resolution declaring that the house regarded with regret and serious apprehension the sending of such a despatch "through the secret committee of the court of directors"—an almost obsolete piece of machinery, we may remark—and its publication; and that such a course must prejudice our rule in India by weakening the authority of the governor-general and encouraging the resistance of rebels still in arms. A similar motion was introduced by Mr. Cardwell in the House of Commons. In both houses the arraignment of the ministry proved a failure. Lord Ellenborough at once took upon himself the whole responsibility of an act which was undoubtedly all his own; and he resigned his office. The resolution was therefore defeated in the House of Lords on a division, and had to be withdrawn in a rather ignominious manner in the House of Commons. Four nights of vehement debate were spent in the latter house. Opinion was strangely divided. Men like Mr. Bright and Sir James Graham condemned the proclamation and defended the action of the government. The position of Mr. Cardwell and his supporters became particularly awkward, for they seemed after the resignation of Lord Ellenborough to be only trying to find partisan advantage in a further pressure upon the government. The news that Sir James Outram had disapproved of the proclamation came while the debate was still going on, and added new strength to the cause of the government. It came out in the course of the discussion that Lord Canning had addressed a private letter to Mr. Vernon Smith, afterward Lord Lyveden, Lord Ellenborough's predecessor as president of the board of control, informing him that the proclamation about to be issued would require some further explanation which the pressure of work did not allow its author just then to give. Lord Canning wrote this under the belief that Mr. Vernon Smith was still at the head of the board of control. Mr. Vernon Smith did not tell Lord Ellenborough anything about this letter; and it was of course very strongly urged that, had Lord Ellenborough known of such a document being in

existence, he would have held his hand and waited for the further explanation. Mr. Vernon Smith, it was explained, was in Ireland when the letter arrived, and did not get it in time to prevent the action of Lord Ellenborough; and Lord Granville stated that he had himself had a letter to a similar effect from Lord Canning of which he told Lord Ellenborough, but that that impetuous nobleman did not show the least interest in it, and did not even hear it out to the end. Still there was an obvious difference between a letter to a friend and what might be considered an official communication to Lord Ellenborough's predecessor in the very office on behalf of which he issued his censure; and at all events the unexpected revelation tended greatly to strengthen the position of the government. The attack made by Mr. Cardwell broke down or crumbled away. Mr. Disraeli described the process of its disappearance in a speech which he delivered a few days after at Slough, and the description is one of his happiest pieces of audacious eloquence. "It was like a convulsion of nature rather than any ordinary transaction of human life. I can only liken it to one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder. No one knew whether it came from the top or the bottom of the house. There was a rent, a fissure in the ground, and then a village disappeared; then a tall tower toppled down; and the whole of the opposition benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy." Assuredly Mr. Disraeli was entitled to crow over his baffled antagonists. "Do you triumph, Roman, do you triumph?" It must have been a meeker Roman than Mr. Disraeli, who would not have triumphed over so complete and unexpected a humiliation of his enemies. The debate in the House of Commons was memorable in other ways, as well as for its direct political consequences. It first gave occasion for Mr. Cairns, as he then was, to display the extraordinary capacity as a debater which he possessed and which he afterward made of such solid and brilliant service to his party. It was also the occasion of the Count de Montalembert's celebrated pamphlet "*Un débat sur l'Inde au Parlement Anglais*," for which, and its thrilling contrast between the political freedom of England and the imperial servitude of France, he had the honor of being prosecuted by the French government, and defended by M. Berryer.

Lord Canning continued his policy, the policy which he had marked out for himself, with signal success. The actual proclamation had little or no effect, as punishment, on the landholders of Oudh. It was never intended by Lord Canning that it should have any such. In fact, within a few weeks after the capture of Lucknow, almost all the large landowners had tendered their allegiance. Lord Canning impressed upon his officers the duty of making their rule as considerate and conciliatory as possible. The new system established in Oudh was based upon the principle of recognizing the Talookdars as responsible landholders, while so limiting their power by the authority of the government as to get rid of old abuses, and protect the occupiers and cultivators of the soil. The rebellion had abundantly proved that the village communities were too feeble and broken to hold the position which had been given with success to similar communities in the Punjaub. It should be remembered in considering Lord Canning's policy that a proprietary right, by whatever name it may be distinguished or disguised, has always been claimed by the government of India. It is only parted with under leases or settlements that are liable to be revised and altered. The settlements which Lord Canning effected in India easily survived the attacks made upon their author. They would have been short-lived, indeed, if they had not long survived himself as well. Canning, like Durham, only lived long enough to hear the general acknowledgment that he had done well for the country he was sent to govern, and for the country in whose name and with whose authority he went forth.

The rebellion pulled down with it a famous old institution, the government of the East India Company. Before the mutiny had been entirely crushed, the rule of "John Company" came to an end. The administration of India had, indeed, long ceased to be under the control of the company as it was in the days of Warren Hastings. A board of directors, nominated partly by the crown, and partly by the company, sat in Leadenhall street, and gave general directions for the government of India. But the parliamentary department, called the board of control, had the right of reviewing and revising the decisions of the company. The crown had the power of nominating the governor-general, and the company had only the power of

recalling him. This odd and perhaps unparalleled system of double government had not much to defend it on strictly logical grounds; and the moment a great crisis came it was natural that all the blame of difficulty and disaster should be laid upon its head. With the beginning of the mutiny the impression began to grow up in the public mind here that something of a sweeping nature must be done for the reorganization of India; and before long this vague impression crystallized into a conviction that England must take Indian administration into her own hands, and that the time had come for the fiction of rule by a trading company to be absolutely given up. Indeed, Lord Ellenborough had recommended in his evidence before a select committee of the Commons on Indian affairs as far back as 1852, that the government of India should be transferred from the company to the crown. As we have already seen, the famous system of government which was established by Pitt was really the government of the crown; at least, Pitt made the administration of India completely subject to the English government. The difference between Pitt's measure and that introduced by Fox was, that Pitt preserved the independence of the company in matters of patronage and commerce, whereas Fox would have placed the whole commerce and commercial administration of the company under the control of a body nominated by the crown. By the act of 1853 the patronage of the civil service was taken from the company, and yet was not given to the crown. It was in fact a competitive system. Scientific and civil appointments were made to depend on capacity and fitness alone. Macaulay spoke for the last time in the House of Commons in support of the principle of admission by competitive examination to the civil service of India. In the beginning of 1858 Lord Palmerston introduced a bill to transfer the authority of the company formally and absolutely to the crown. The plan of the scheme was that there were to be a president and a council of eight members, to be nominated by the government. There was a large majority in the House of Commons in favor of the bill; but the agitation caused by the attempt to assassinate the emperor of the French, and Palmerston's ill-judged and ill-timed conspiracy bill, led to the sudden overthrow of his government. When Lord Derby succeeded to power, he brought in a bill for the better government

of India at once; but the measure was a failure. It was of preposterous construction. It bore upon its face curious evidence of the fantastic ingenuity of Lord Ellenborough. It created a secretary of state for India, with a council of eighteen. Nine of these were to be nominees of the crown; nine were to be concessions to the principle of popular election. Four of the elected must have served her majesty in India for at least ten years, or have been engaged in trade in that country for fifteen years; and they were to be elected by the votes of any one in this country who had served the queen or the government of India for ten years; or any proprietor of capital stock in Indian railways or other public works in India to the amount of a thousand pounds; or any proprietor of India stock to the amount of one thousand pounds. The other five members of the council must as their qualification have been engaged in commerce in India, or in the exportation of manufactured goods to that country, for five years, or must have resided there for ten years. These five were to be elected by the parliamentary constituencies of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast. This clause was Lord Ellenborough's device. Anything more absurdly out of tune with the whole principle of popular election than this latter part of the scheme it would be difficult to imagine. The theory of popular election is simply that every man knows best what manner of representative is best qualified to look after his interests in the legislative assembly. But by no distortion of that principle can it be made to assert the doctrine that the parliamentary electors of London and Liverpool are properly qualified to decide as to the class of representatives who could best take care of the interests of Bengal, Bombay, and the Punjaub. Again, as if it were not absurd enough to put elections to the governing body of India into the hands of such constituencies, the field of choice was so limited for them as to render it almost impossible that they could elect really suitable men. It was well pointed out at the time that by the ingenious device of the government a constituency might send to the Indian council any man who had exported beer in a small way to India for five years, but could not send Mr. John Stuart Mill there. The measure fell dead. It had absolutely no support in the house or the country. It had only to be described in order to ensure its condemnation. It

was withdrawn before it had gone to a second reading. Then Lord John Russell came to the help of the puzzled government, who evidently thought they had been making a generous concession to the principle of popular election and were amazed to find their advances so coldly and contemptuously received. Lord John Russell proposed that the house should proceed by way of resolutions—that is that the lines of a measure should be laid down by a series of resolutions in committee of the whole house; and that upon those lines the government should construct a measure. The suggestion was eagerly welcomed, and after many nights of discussion a basis of legislation was at last agreed upon. This bill passed into law in the autumn of 1858; and for the remainder of Lord Derby's tenure of power, his son, Lord Stanley, was secretary of state for India. The bill, which was called "An act for the better government of India," provided that all the territories previously under the government of the East India Company were to be vested in her majesty and all the company's powers to be exercised in her name. One of her majesty's principal secretaries of state was to have all the power previously exercised by the company, or by the board of control. The secretary was to be assisted by a council of India, to consist of fifteen members, of whom seven were to be elected by the court of directors from their own body, and eight nominated by the crown. The vacancies among the nominated were to be filled up by the crown; those among the elected by the remaining members of the council for a certain time, but afterward by the secretary of state for India. The competitive principle for the civil service was extended in its application and made thoroughly practical. The military and naval forces of the company were to be deemed the forces of her majesty. A clause was introduced declaring that, except for the purpose of preventing or repelling actual invasion of India, the Indian revenues should not, without the consent of both houses of parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of her majesty's Indian possessions. Another clause enacted that whenever an order was sent to India directing the commencement of hostilities by her majesty's forces there, the fact should be communicated to parliament within three months if parliament were then sitting, or if not,

within one month after its next meeting. These clauses were heard of more than once in later days. The viceroy and governor-general was to be supreme in India, but was to be assisted by a council. India now has nine provinces, each under its own civil government, and independent of the others, but all subordinate to the authority of the viceroy. In accordance with this act the government of the company, the famed "John Company," formally ceased on September 1, 1858; and the queen was proclaimed throughout India in the following November, with Lord Canning for her first viceroy. It was but fitting that the man who had borne the strain of that terrible crisis, who had brought our Indian empire safely through it all, and who had had to endure so much obloquy and to live down so much calumny, should have his name consigned to history as that of the first of the line of British viceroys in India.

It seems almost superfluous to say that so great a measure as the extinction of the East India Company did not pass without some protest and some opposition. The authorship of some of the protests makes them too remarkable to be passed over without a word. Among the ablest civil servants the East India Company ever had were James Mill and his son John Stuart Mill. Both had risen in succession to the same high post in the company's service. The younger Mill was still an official of the company when, as he has put it in his own words, "it pleased parliament, in other words, Lord Palmerston, to put an end to the East India Company, as a branch of the government of India under the crown, and convert the administration of that country into a thing to be scrambled for by the second and third class of English parliamentary politicians." "I," says Mr. Mill, "was the chief manager of the resistance which the company made to their own political extinction and to the letters and petitions I wrote for them, and the concluding chapter of my treatise on representative government, I must refer for my opinions on the folly and mischief of this ill-considered change." One of the remonstrances drawn up by Mr. Mill, and presented to parliament on behalf of the East India Company, is as able a state paper probably as any in the archives of modern England. This is not the place, however, in which to enter on the argument it so powerfully sustained. "It has been the



destiny of the government of the East India Company," says Mr. Mill, in closing the passage of his essay on "Representative Government," "to suggest the true theory of the government of a semi-barbarous dependency by a civilized country, and after having done this, to perish. It would be a singular fortune if, at the end of two or three more generations, this speculative result should be the only remaining fruit of our ascendancy in India; if posterity should say of us, that having stumbled accidentally upon better arrangements than our wisdom would ever have devised, the first use we made of our awakened reason was to destroy them, and allow the good which had been in course of being realized to fall through and be lost, from ignorance of the principles on which it depended." "*Di meliora*," Mr. Mill adds; and we are glad to think that after the lapse of more than twenty years, there is as yet no sign of the realization of the fears which he expressed with so much eloquence and earnestness. Mr. Mill was naturally swayed by the force of association with, and confidence in the great organization with which he and his father had been connected so long; and, moreover, no one can deny that he has, in his protests, fairly presented some of the dangers that may now and then arise out of a system which throws the responsibility for the good government of India wholly on a body so likely to be alien, apathetic, unsympathetic, as the English parliament. But the whole question was one of comparative danger and convenience; the balance of advantage certainly seemed, even as a matter of speculation, to be with the system of more direct government. It is a mistake, too, to suppose that it was the will, or the caprice, of Lord Palmerston that made the change. Rightly or wrongly, it is certain that almost the whole voice of English public opinion cried out for the abolition of the East India Company. It was the one thing which everybody could suggest to be done, at a time of excitement when everybody thought he was bound to suggest something. It would have required a minister less fond of popularity than Lord Palmerston to resist such an outcry, or pretend that he did not hear it. In this, as in so many other cases, Lord Palmerston only seemed to lead public opinion, while he was really following it. One other remark it is also fair to make. We have had no indications, as yet, of any likelihood that the adminis-

tration of India is to become a thing to be scrambled for by second and third-class parliamentary politicians. The administration of India means, of course, the viceroyalty. Now there have been since Lord Canning, five viceroys, and of these three at least were not parliamentary politicians at all. Sir John Lawrence never was in parliament until he was raised to the peerage, after his return home from India. Lord Elgin may be fairly described as never having been in parliament, unless in the technical sense which makes every man on whom a peer's title is conferred a parliamentary personage; and the same holds true of Lord Lytton, who had no more to do with parliament than was involved in the fact of his having succeeded to his father's title. Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook, to whom perhaps an invidious critic might apply the term second or third-class parliamentary politicians, on the ground that neither had obtained very high parliamentary distinction, proved nevertheless very capable, and indeed excellent administrators of Indian affairs, and fully justified the choice of the ministers who appointed them. Indeed, the truth is that the change made in the mode of governing India by the act which we have just been describing, was more of name than of reality. India was ruled by a governor-general and a board before; it has been ruled by a governor-general, called a viceroy, and a board since. The idea which Mr. Mill had evidently formed in his mind, of a restless and fussy parliament forever interfering in the affairs of India, proved to have been a false impression altogether. Parliament soon ceased to take the slightest interest, collectively, in the affairs of India. Once more it came to be observed that an Indian budget, or other question connected with the government of our great empire in the east, could thin the house as in the days before the mutiny. Again, as before, some few men profoundly in earnest took care and thought on the subject of India, and were condemned to pour out the results of their study and experience to a listening under-secretary and a chill array of green leather benches. At intervals, when some piquant question arose, of little importance save to the court official or the partisan, like the project for conferring an imperial crown, brand-new and showy as a stage diadem on the wearer of the great historic emblem of English monarchy, then, indeed, public opinion condescended to think

about India, and there were keen parliamentary debates and much excitement in fashionable circles. Sometimes, when there was talk of Russian ambition seeking, somehow, a pathway into India, a sort of public spirit was aroused, not, perhaps, wholly unlike the manly emotion of Squire Sullen, in the "Beaux Stratagem," when he discovers that a foreigner is paying court to the woman he has so long neglected. But as a rule the English parliament has wholly falsified Mr. Mill's prediction, and has not intruded itself in any way upon the political administration of India.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE ORSINI BOMBS EXPLODE IN PARIS AND LONDON.

THE last chapter has told us that Lord Palmerston introduced a measure to transfer to the crown the government of India, but that unexpected events in the meanwhile compelled him to resign office, and called Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli to power. These events had nothing to do directly with the general policy of Lord Palmerston or Lord Derby. At midday of January 14, 1858, no one could have had the slightest foreboding of anything about to happen which could affect the place of Lord Palmerston in English politics. He seemed to be as popular and as strong as a minister well could be. There had been a winter session called together on December 3rd, to pass a bill of indemnity for the government, who had suspended the bank charter act during the terrible money-panic of the autumn, and the failures of banks and commercial firms. The bank was authorized, by the suspension of the charter act, to extend its circulation two millions beyond the limit of that act. The effect of this step in restoring confidence was so great that the bank had only to put in circulation some £900,000 beyond the limit of 1844, and even that sum was replaced, and a certain reserve established by the close of the year. Most people thought the government had met the difficulty promptly and well, and were ready to offer their congratulations. Parliament adjourned at Christmas, and was to meet early in February. The Princess Victoria, eldest daughter of the queen, was

to be married to the Prince Frederick William, eldest son of the then Prince of Prussia, late German emperor, and it was to be Lord Palmerston's pleasant task, when parliament resumed in February, to move a vote of congratulation to her majesty on her child's marriage. Meantime, however, on the evening of January 14th, Felice Orsini, an Italian exile, made his memorable attempt to assassinate the emperor of the French. Orsini lost himself, and he drew the English government down at the same time.

Felice Orsini was well known in England. After his romantic escape from a prison at Mantua, he came to this country and delivered lectures in several towns. He described the incidents of his escape and denounced Austrian rule in Italy, and was made a lion of in many places. He was a handsome soldierly-looking man, with intensely dark eyes and dark beard, in appearance almost the model Italian conspirator of romance. He was not an orator, but he was able to tell his story clearly and well. One great object which he had in view was to endeavor to rouse up the English people to some policy of intervention on behalf of Italy against Austria. It is almost impossible for a man like Orsini to take the proper measure of the enthusiasm with which he is likely to be received in England. He goes to several public meetings; he is welcomed by immense crowds; he is cheered to the echo; and he gets to be under the impression that the whole country is on his side and ready to do anything he asks for. He does not understand that the crowds go for the most part out of curiosity; that they represent no policy or action whatever, and that they will have forgotten all about him by the day after to-morrow. Of those who went to hear Orsini, and who applauded him so liberally, not one in ten probably had any distinct idea as to who he was or what cause he represented. He was an Italian exile who had escaped from tyranny of some sort somewhere, and he was a good-looking man; and that was enough for many or most of his audiences. But Orsini was thoroughly deceived. He convinced himself that he was forming public opinion in England; that he was inspiring the people, that the people would inspire the government, and that the result would be an armed intervention on behalf of Lombardy and Venetia. At a meeting which he held in Liverpool a merchant of that town, who sympathized cordially with

Orsini's cause, had the good sense to get up and tell Orsini that he was cruelly deceiving himself if he fancied that England either would or could take any step to intervene on behalf of the Italian province then held by Austria. Orsini at first thought little of this warning. After awhile, however, he found out that the advice was sound and just. He saw that England would do nothing. He might have seen that even the English Liberals, with the exception of a very few enthusiasts, were entirely against his projects. They were in fact just as much opposed to the principle of intervention in the affairs of other states as the Conservatives. But Orsini set himself to devise explanations for what was simply the prudent and just determination of all the statesmen and leading politicians of the country. He found the explanation in the subtle influence of the emperor of the French. It happened that during Orsini's residence in this country the emperor and empress of the French came on a visit to the queen at Osborne; and Orsini saw in this a conclusive confirmation of his suspicions. Disappointed, despairing, and wild with anger against Louis Napoleon, he appears then to have allowed the idea to get possession of him that the removal of the emperor of the French from the scene was an indispensable preliminary to any policy having for its object the emancipation of Italy from Austrian rule. He brooded on this idea until it became a project and a passion. It transformed a soldier and a patriot into an assassin.

On January 14th, Orsini and his fellow-conspirators made their attempt in the Rue Lepelletier in Paris. As the emperor and empress of the French were driving up to the door of the opera-house in that street, Orsini and his companions flung at and into the carriage three shells or bombs shaped like a pear, and filled with detonating powder. The shells exploded, and killed and wounded many persons. So minute were the fragments into which the bombs burst that five hundred and sixteen wounds, great and little were inflicted by the explosion. This attempt at assassination was unfavorably distinguished from most other attempts by the fact that it took no account of the number of innocent lives which it imperilled. The murderers of William the Silent, of Henry IV., of Abraham Lincoln, could at least say that they only struck at the objects of their hate. In Orsini's case the emperor's wife, the em-

peror's attendants and servants, the harmless and unconcerned spectators in the crowd, who had no share in Austrian misgovernment, were all exposed to the danger of death or of horrible mutilation. Ten persons were killed; one hundred and fifty-six were wounded. For any purpose it aimed at the project was an utter failure. It only injured those who had nothing to do with Orsini's cause, or the condition of the Italian populations. We may as well dispose at once also of a theory which was for a time upheld by some who would not indeed justify or excuse Orsini's attempt, but who were inclined to believe that it was not made wholly in vain. Orsini failed, it was said; but nevertheless the emperor of the French did soon after take up the cause of Italy; and he did so because he was afraid of the still living confederates of the Lombard Scaevola, and wished to purchase safety for himself by conciliating them. Even the prince consort wrote to a friend on April 11, 1858, about Louis Napoleon; "I fear he is at this moment meditating some Italian development, which is to serve as a lightning conductor, for ever since Orsini's letter he has been all for Italian independence." Historical revelations made at a later period show that this is altogether a mistake. We now know that at the time of the congress of Paris Count Cavour had virtually arranged with the emperor the plans of policy which were afterward carried out, and that even before that time Cavour was satisfied in his own mind as to the ultimate certainty of Louis Napoleon's co-operation. Those who are glad to see Italy a nation may be glad, too, to know that Orsini's bombs had nothing to do with her success.

Orsini was arrested. Curiously enough his arrest was made more easy by the fact that he himself received a wound from one of the fragments of shell, and he was tracked by his own bloodmarks. Great as his crime was he compelled a certain admiration from all men by the manner in which he bore his fate. He avowed his guilt, and made a strenuous effort to clear of all complicity in it a man who was accused of being one of the conspirators. He wrote from his prison to the emperor, beseeching him to throw his influence into the national cause of Italy. He made no appeal on his own behalf. The emperor, it is believed, was well inclined to spare his life; but the comprehensive heinousness of the crime which took in so many

utterly blameless persons, rendered it almost impossible to allow the leading conspirator to escape. As it was, however, the French government certainly showed no unreasonable severity. Four persons were put on trial as participators in the attempt, three of them having actually thrown the bombs. Only two, however, were executed, Orsini and Pierri; the other two were sentenced to penal servitude for life. This, on the whole, was merciful dealing. Three Fenians, it must be remembered, were executed in Manchester for an attempt to rescue some prisoners, in which one police officer was killed by one shot. Orsini's project was a good deal more criminal, most sane persons will admit, than a mere attempt to rescue a prisoner; and it was the cause not of one but of many deaths. Orsini died like a soldier, without bravado and without the slightest outward show of fear. As he and his companion Pierri were mounting the scaffold, he was heard to encourage the latter in a quiet tone. Pierri continued to show signs of agitation, and then Orsini was heard to say in a voice of gentle remonstrance, "Try to be calm, my friend; try to be calm."

France was not very calm under the circumstances. An outburst of anger followed the attempt in the Rue Lepelletier; but the anger was not so much against Orsini as against England. One of the persons charged along with Orsini, although he was not tried in Paris, for he could not be found there, was a Frenchman, Simon Bernard, who had long been living in London. It was certain that many of the arrangements for the plot were made in London. The bombs were manufactured in Birmingham, and were ordered for Orsini by an Englishman. It was known that Orsini had many friends and admirers in this country. The imperialists in France at once assumed that England was a country where assassination of foreign sovereigns was encouraged by the population, and not discouraged by the laws. The French minister for foreign affairs, Count Walewski, wrote a despatch, in which he asked whether England considered that hospitality was due to assassins. "Ought English legislation," he asked, "to contribute to favor their designs and their attempts, and can it continue to shelter persons who by their flagrant acts put themselves outside the pale of common rights, and under the ban of humanity?" The Duc de Persigny, then

ambassador of France in England, made a very foolish and unfortunate reply to a deputation from the corporation of London, in which he took on himself to point out that if the law of England was strong enough to put down conspiracies for assassination it ought to be put in motion, and if it were not, it ought to be made stronger. Persigny did not indeed put this forward as his own contribution of advice to England. He gave it as an expression of the public feeling of France, and as an explanation of the anger which was aflame in that country. "France," he said, "does not understand and cannot understand this state of things; and in that lies the danger, for she may mistake the true sentiments of her ally and may cease to believe in England's sincerity." Talk of that kind would have been excusable and natural on the part of an imperialist orator in the Corps Législatif in Paris; but it was silly and impertinent when it came from a professional diplomatist. That flavor of the canteen and the barrack-room, which the prince consort detected and disliked in the emperor's associates, was very perceptible in Persigny's harangue. The barrack-room and the canteen, however, had much more to say in the matter. Addresses of congratulation were poured in upon the emperor from the French army, and many of them were full of insulting allusions to England as the sheltering-ground of assassination. One regiment declared that it longed to demand an account from "the land of impurity which contains the haunts of the monsters who are sheltered by its laws." This regiment begged of the emperor to give them the order, "and we will pursue them even to their stronghold." In another address, it was urged that "the infamous haunt (*repaire infâmie*) in which machinations so infernal are planned"—London, that is—"should be destroyed forever." Some of these addresses were inserted in the *Moniteur*, then the official organ of the French government. It was afterward explained that the official sanction thus apparently given to the rhodomontades of the French colonels was a mere piece of inadvertence. There were so many addresses sent in, it was said, that some of them escaped examination. Count Waleswki expressed the regret of the emperor that language and sentiments so utterly unlike his own should have found their way into publicity. It is certain that Louis Napoleon would never have deliberately sanctioned the obstrep-



erous buffoonery of such sentences as we have referred to; but anyhow the addresses were published, were read in England, and aroused in this country an amount of popular resentment not unlikely to explode in utterances as vehement and thoughtless as those of the angry French colonels themselves.

Let us do justice to the French colonels. Their language was ludicrous; nothing but the grossness of its absurdity saved it from being intolerably offensive. But the feeling which dictated it was not unnatural. Foreign countries always find it hard to understand the principles of liberty which are established in England. They assume that if a state allows certain things to be done it must be because the state wishes to see them done. If men are allowed to plot against foreign sovereigns in England it can only be, they argue, because the English government likes to have plots carried on against foreign sovereigns. It would be impossible to deny that people in this country are singularly thoughtless in their encouragement of any manner of foreign revolution. Even where there are restrictive laws public opinion will hardly sanction their being carried out. London is and long has been the head-quarters of revolutionary plot. No one knew that better than Louis Napoleon himself. No one had made more unscrupulous use of a domicile in London to carry out political and revolutionary projects. Associations have been formed in London to supply men and money to Don Carlos, to Queen Isabella, to the Polish revolutionists, to Hungary, to Garibaldi, to the Southern Confederation, to the Circassians, to anybody and everybody who could say that he represented a defeat, or a victory, or a national cause, or anything. In 1860, Lord John Russell admitted in the House of Commons that it would be impossible to put into execution our laws against foreign enlistment, because every political party and almost every man was concerned in breaking them at one time or another. He referred to the fact that some forty years before the cause of Greece against Turkey had been taken up openly in London by public men of the highest mark, and that money, arms, and men were got together for Greece without the slightest pretense at concealment. While he was speaking a legion was being formed in one place to fight for Victor Emmanuel against the pope; in another place to fight for the pope against

Victor Emmanuel. Every refugee was virtually free to make London a basis of operations against the government which had caused his exile. There were, it is right to say, men who construed the conditions upon which they were sheltered in England with a conscientious severity. They held that they were protected by this country on the implied understanding that they took no part in any proceedings that might tend to embarrass her in her dealings with foreign states. They argued that the obligation on them, whether declared or not, was exactly the same as that which rests on one who asks and obtains the hospitality and shelter of a private house: the obligation not to involve his host in quarrels with his neighbors. M. Louis Blanc, for example, who lived some twenty years in England, declined on principle to take part in secret political movements of any kind during all the time. But the great majority of the exiles of all countries were incessantly engaged in political plots and conspiracies; and undoubtedly some of these were nothing more or less than conspiracies to assassinate. Many of the leading exiles were intimately associated with prominent and distinguished Englishmen; and these same exiles were naturally associated to some extent with many of their own countrymen of a lower and less scrupulous class. It had therefore happened more than once before this time, and it happened more than once afterward, that when a plot at assassination was discovered the plotters were found to have been on more or less intimate terms with some leading exiles in London, who themselves were well acquainted with eminent Englishmen. Men with a taste for assassination are to be found among the camp-followers of every political army. To assume that because the leaders of the party may have been now and then associated with them, they must therefore be acquainted with, and ought to be held responsible for all their plots, is not less absurd than it would be to assume that an officer in a campaign must have been in the secret when some reprobate of his regiment was about to plunder a house. But the French colonels saw that the assassin this time was not a nameless scoundrel, but a man of birth and distinction like Felice Orsini, who had been received and welcomed everywhere in England. It is not very surprising if they assumed that his projects had the approval and favor of English public opinion. The

French government indeed ought to have known better. But the French government lost for the moment its sense and self-control. A semi-official pamphlet, published in Paris and entitled "the Emperor Napoleon the Third and England," actually went the ridiculous length of describing an obscure debating club in a Fleet Street public-house where a few dozen honest fellows smoked their pipes of a night and talked hazy politics, as a formidable political institution where regicide was nightly preached to fanatical desperadoes.

Thus we had the public excited on both sides. The feeling of anger on this side was intensified by the conviction that France was insulting us because she thought England was crippled by her troubles in India, and had no power to resent an insult. It was while men here were smarting under this sense of wrong that Lord Palmerston introduced his famous measure for the suppression and punishment of conspiracies to murder. The bill was introduced in consequence of the despatch of Count Walewski. In that despatch it was suggested to the English government that they ought to do something to strengthen their law. "Full of confidence," Count Walewski said, "in the exalted reason of the English cabinet, we abstain from all indication as regards the measures which it may be suitable to take. We rely on them for a careful appreciation of the decision which they shall judge most proper, and we congratulate ourselves in the firm persuasion that we shall not have appealed in vain to their conscience and their loyalty." The words were very civil. They were words as sweet as those of which Cassius says, that "they rob the Hybla bees and leave them honeyless." Nor was the request they contained in itself unreasonable. Long afterward this country had to acknowledge in reply to the demand of the United States, that a nation cannot get rid of her responsibility to a foreign people by pleading that her municipal legislation does not provide for this or that emergency. If somebody domiciled among us shoots his arrow over the house and hurts our foreign brother, it is not enough for us to say, when complaint is made that we have no law to prevent people from shooting arrows out of our premises. The natural rejoinder is, "Then you had better make such a law; you are not to injure us and get off by saying your

laws allow us to be injured." But the conditions under which the request was made by France had put England in the worse possible mood for acceding to it. We have all heard of the story of General Jackson, who was on one occasion very near refusing in wrath a reasonable and courteous request of the French government, because his secretary, in translating the letter for Jackson, who did not know French, began with the words "the French government demands." Jackson vehemently declared that if the French government dared to demand anything of the United States they should not have it. It was only when it had been made quite clear to him that the French word *demande* did not by any means correspond with the English word "demand," that the angry soldier consented even to listen to the representation of France. The English public mind was now somewhat in Jackson's mood. It was under the impression that France was making a demand, and was not in the temper to grant it. Ominous questions were put to the government in both houses of parliament. In the House of Commons Mr. Roebuck asked whether any communications had passed between the governments of England and France with respect to the alien act or any portion of our criminal code. Lord Palmerston answered by mentioning Count Walewski's despatch, which he said should be laid before the house. He added a few words about the addresses of the French regiments, and pleaded that allowance should be made for the irritation caused by the attempt on the life of the emperor. He was asked a significant question—had the government sent any answer to Count Walewski's despatch? No, was the reply; her majesty's government had not answered it; not yet.

Two or three days after Lord Palmerston moved for leave to bring in the conspiracy-to-murder bill. The chief object of the measure was to make conspiracy to murder a felony instead of a mere misdemeanor, as it had been in England, and to render it liable to penal servitude for any period varying from five years to a whole life. Lord Palmerston made a feeble and formal attempt to prove that his bill was introduced simply as a measure of needed reform in our criminal legislation, and without special reference to anything that had happened in France. The law against conspiracy to murder was very light in England,

he showed, and was very severe in Ireland. It was now proposed to make the law the same in both countries—that was all. Of course no one was deceived by this explanation. The bill itself was as much of a sham as the explanation. Such a measure would not have been of any account whatever as regarded the offenses against which it was particularly directed. As Lord John Russell said, in the debate, it would argue great ignorance of human nature to imagine that a fanatic of the Orsini class, or any of those whom such a man could fascinate by his influence, would be deterred by the mere possibility of a sentence of penal servitude. Lord Palmerston, we may be sure, did not put the slightest faith in the efficacy of the piece of legislation he had undertaken to recommend to parliament. It was just as in the case of the ecclesiastical titles bill. He was compelled to believe that the government would have to do something; and he came after awhile, to the conclusion that the most harmless measure would be the best. He had had an idea of asking parliament to empower the secretary of state to send out of the country foreigners whom the government believed to be engaged in plotting against the life of a foreign sovereign; the government being under obligation to explain the grounds for their belief and their action to a secret committee of parliament, or to a committee composed of the three chiefs of the law courts. Such a measure as this would probably have proved effective; but it would have been impossible to induce the House of Commons to pass such a bill, or to entrust such power to any government. Indeed, if it were not certain that Palmerston did entertain such a project, the language he used in his speech when introducing the conspiracy bill might lead one to believe that nothing could have been further from his thoughts. He disclaimed any intention to propose a measure which should give power to a government to remove aliens on mere suspicion. He “was sure it was needless for him to say he had no such intention.” He had, however, such an intention at one time. His biographer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley, is clear on that point, and there cannot be better authority. It must have been only for a moment that Palmerston even thought of making a proposal of the kind to an English parliament. He had not been long enough in the home office, it would seem, to understand thoroughly the temper of his countrymen.

Indeed, in this instance he made a mistake every way. When he assented to the introduction of the ecclesiastical titles bill he was right in thinking that English public opinion wished to have something done; but in this case the inclination of public opinion was the other way; it wished to have nothing done—at least, just at that moment. Mr. Kinglake moved an amendment, formally expressing the sympathy of the house with the French people, on account of the attempt made against the emperor, but declaring it inexpedient to legislate, in compliance with the demand made in Count Walewski's despatch of January 20th, "until further information is before it of the communications of the two governments subsequent to the date of that despatch." A discussion took place, in which Mr. Roebuck pointed out, very properly, that in any new measure of legislation it was not punishment of crime accomplished that was required, but discovery of crime meditated; and he also showed, with much effect, that in some cases, when the English government had actually warned the government of France that some plot was afoot, and that the plotters had left for Paris, the Paris police were unable to find them out, or to benefit in any way by the action of the English authorities. Mr. Disraeli voted for the bringing in of the bill, and made a cautious speech, in which he showed himself in favor of some sort of legislation, but did not commit himself to approval of that particular measure. This prudence proved convenient afterward, when the crisis of the debate showed that it would be well for him to throw himself into the ranks of the opponents of the measure. The bill was read a first time. Two hundred and ninety-nine votes were for it; only ninety-nine against. But before it came on for a second reading public opinion was beginning to declare ominously against it. The fact that the government had not answered the despatch of Count Walewski told heavily against them. It was afterward explained that Lord Cowley had been instructed to answer it verbally, and that Lord Palmerston thought this course the more prudent, and the more likely to avoid an increase of irritation between the two countries. But public opinion in England was not now to be propitiated by counsels of moderation. The idea had gone abroad that Lord Palmerston was truckling to the emperor of the French, and that

the very right of asylum which England had so long afforded to the exiles of all nations, was to be sacrificed at the bidding of one who had been glad to avail himself of it in his hour of need.

This idea received support from the arrest of Dr. Simon Bernard, a French refugee, who was immediately put on trial as an accomplice in Orsini's plot. Bernard was a native of the South of France, a surgeon by profession, and had lived a long time in England. He must have been, in outward aspect at least, the very type of a French Red Republican conspirator, to judge by the description given of him in the papers of the day. He is described as thin and worn, "with dark restless eyes, sallow complexion, a thick mustache, and a profusion of long black hair combed backward and reaching nearly to his shoulders, and exposing a broad but low and receding forehead." The arrest of Bernard may have been a very proper thing, but it came in with most untimely effect upon the government. It was understood to have been made by virtue of information sent over from Paris, and no one could have failed to observe that the loosest accusations of that kind were always coming from the French capital. Many persons were influenced in their belief of Bernard's innocence by the fact, which does assuredly count for something, that Orsini himself had almost with his dying breath declared that Bernard knew nothing of the intended assassination. Not a few made up their minds that he was innocent because the French government accused him of guilt; and still more declared that innocent or guilty he ought not to be arrested by English authorities at the bidding of a French emperor. At the same time the Cantillon story was revived; the story of the legacy left by the First Napoleon to the man who attempted to assassinate the Duke of Wellington, and it was insisted that the legacy had been paid to Cantillon by the authority of Napoleon III.

The debate was over and the conspiracy bill disposed of before the Bernard trial came to an end; but we may anticipate by a few days, and finish the Bernard story. Bernard was tried at the central criminal court under existing law; he was defended by Mr. Edwin James, a well-known criminal lawyer, and he was acquitted. The trial was a practical evidence of the inutility of such special legislation as that which Lord Palmerston attempted to

introduce. A new law of conspiracy could not have furnished any new evidence against Bernard or persuaded a jury to convict him on such evidence as there was. In the prevailing temper of the public the evidence should have been very clear indeed to induce an ordinary English jury to convict a man like Bernard, and the evidence of his knowledge of an intended assassination was anything but clear. Mr. Edwin James improved the hour. He made the trial an occasion for a speech denunciatory of tyrants generally, and he appealed in impassioned language to the British jury to answer the French tyrant by their verdict; which they did accordingly. Mr. James became a sort of popular hero for the time in consequence of his oration. He had rhetorical talent enough to make him a sort of Old Bailey Erskine, a Buzfurz Berryer. He set up for a liberal politician and tribune of the people, and was enabled after a while to transfer his eloquence to the House of Commons. He vaped about as a friend of Italy and Garibaldi and oppressed nationalities generally for a year or two after; got into money and other difficulties, and had to extinguish his political career suddenly and ignominiously. He was indeed heard of after. He went to America, and he came back again. But we need not speak of him any more.

In the midst of the commotion caused by Bernard's arrest, and by the offer of £200 reward for the detection of an Englishman named Allsopp, also charged with complicity in the plot, Mr. Milner Gibson quietly gave notice of an amendment to the second reading of the conspiracy bill. The amendment proposed to declare that while the house heard with regret the allegation that the recent crime had been devised in England, and was always ready to assist in remedying any proved defects in the criminal law, "yet it cannot but regret that her majesty's government, previously to inviting the house to amend the law of conspiracy by the second reading of this bill at the present time, have not felt it to be their duty to make some reply to the important despatch received from the French government, dated Paris, January 20, 1858, and which has been laid before parliament." It might have been seen at once that this was a more serious business for the government than Mr. Kinglake's amendment. In forecasting the result of a motion in the House of Commons much depends on the person who brings it forward. Has he a party



behind him? If so, then the thing is important. If not, let his ability be what it will, his motion is looked on as a mere expression of personal opinion, interesting, perhaps, but without political consequence. Mr. Kinglake was emphatically a man without a party behind him; Mr. Gibson was emphatically a man of party and of practical politics. Mr. Kinglake was a brilliant literary man who had proved little better than a failure in the House; Mr. Gibson was a successful member of parliament and nothing else. No one could have supposed that Mr. Gibson was likely to get up a discussion for the mere sake of expressing his own opinion or making a display. He was one of those who had been turned out of parliament when Palmerston made his triumphant appeal to the country on the China question. He was one of those whom *Punch* made fun of by a new adaptation of the old "*il n'y a pas de quoi*" story; one of those who could not sit because they had no seats. Now he had just been returned to parliament by another constituency; and he was not likely to be the mouthpiece of a merely formal challenge to the policy of the government. When the debate on the second reading came on it began soon to be seen that the condition of things was grave for Lord Palmerston. Every hour and every speech made it more ominous. Mr. Gladstone spoke eloquently against the government. Mr. Disraeli suddenly discovered that he was bound to vote against the second reading, although he had voted for the first. The government, he argued, had not yet answered the despatch as they might have done in the interval, and as they had not vindicated the honor of England, the House of Commons could not entrust them with the measure they demanded. Lord Palmerston saw that, in homely phrase, the game was up. He was greatly annoyed; he lost his temper, and did not even try to conceal the fact that he had lost it. He attacked Mr. Milner Gibson fiercely; declared that "he appears for the first time in my memory as the champion of the dignity and honor of the country." He wandered off into an attack on the whole peace party, or Manchester school, and told some story about one of their newspapers which laid it down as a doctrine, that it would not matter if a foreign enemy conquered and occupied England so long as they were allowed to work their mills. All this was in curiously bad taste. For a genial and kindly

as well as a graceful man, it was singular how completely Lord Palmerston always lost his good manners when he lost his temper. Under the influence of sudden anger, luckily a rare influence with him, he could be actually vulgar. He was merely vulgar, for example, when on one occasion, wishing to throw ridicule on the pacific principles of Mr. Bright, he alluded to him in the House of Commons as "the honorable and reverend gentleman." Lord Palmerston, in his reply to Mr. Milner Gibson, showed a positive spitefulness of tone and temper very unusual in him and especially unbecoming in a losing man. A statesman may rise as he will, but he should fall with dignity. When the division was taken it appeared that there were two hundred and fifteen votes for the second reading and two hundred and thirty-four against it. The government, therefore, were left in a minority of nineteen; one hundred and forty-six Conservatives were in the majority and eighty-four Liberals. Besides these there were such of the Peelite party as Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Lord Palmerston at once made up his mind to resign. His resignation was accepted. Not quite a year had passed since the general elections sent Lord Palmerston into power triumphant over the routed Liberals and the prostrate Manchester school. The leaders of the Manchester party were actually driven from their seats. There was not a Cobden or a Bright to face the conqueror in parliament. Not quite a year, and now, on the motion of one of the lieutenants of that same party returned to their position again, Lord Palmerston is ejected from office. Palmerston once talked of having his "tit-for-tat with John Russell." The peace party now had their tit-for-tat with him. "Cassio hath beaten thee, and thou by that small hurt has cashiered Cassio."

Lord Palmerston had the satisfaction before he left office of being able to announce the capture of Canton. The operations against China had been virtually suspended, it will be remembered, when the Indian mutiny broke out. To adopt the happy illustration of a clever writer, England had dealt with China for the time as a backwoodsman sometimes does with a tree in the American forests—"girdled" it with the ax, so as to mark it for felling at a more convenient opportunity. She had now got the co-operation of France. France had a complaint of long

standing against China on account of the murder of some missionaries, for which redress had been asked in vain. The emperor of the French was very glad to have an opportunity of joining his arms with those of England in any foreign enterprise. It advertised the empire cheaply; it showed to Frenchmen how active the emperor was, and how closely he had at heart the honor and the interests of France. An expedition to China in association with England could not be much of a risk, and would look well in the newspapers; whereas if England were to be allowed to go alone she would seem to be making too much of a position for herself in the east. There was, therefore, an allied attack made upon Canton, and of course the city was easily captured. Commissioner Yeh himself was taken prisoner, not until he had been sought for and hunted out in most ignominious fashion. He was found at last hidden away in some obscure part of a house. He was known by his enormous fatness. One of our officers caught hold of him; Yeh tried still to get away. A British seaman seized Yeh by his pigtail, twisted the tail several times round his hand, and the unfortunate Chinese dignitary was thus a helpless and ludicrous prisoner. He was not hurt in any serious way; but otherwise he was treated with about as much consideration as schoolboys show toward a captured cat. The whole story of his capture may be read in the journals of the day, in some of which it is treated as though it were an exploit worthy of heroes, and as if a Chinese with a pigtail were obviously a person on whom any of the courtesies of war would be thrown away. When it was convenient to let loose Yeh's pigtail, he was put on board an English man-of-war, and afterward sent to Calcutta, where he died early in the following year. Unless report greatly belied him he had been exceptionally cruel, even for a Chinese official. It was said that he had ordered the beheading of about one hundred thousand rebels. There may be exaggeration in this number, but, as Voltaire says in another case, even if we reduce the total to half, "*cela seroit encore admirable.*"

The English and French Envoys, Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, succeeded in making a treaty with China. By the conditions of the treaty, England and France were to have ministers at the Chinese court, on certain special occasions at least, and China was to be represented in London and

Paris; there was to be toleration of Christianity in China, and a certain freedom of access to Chinese rivers for English and French mercantile vessels, and to the interior of China for English and French subjects. China was to pay the expenses of the war. It was further agreed that the term "barbarian" was no longer to be applied to Europeans in China. There was great congratulation in England over this treaty, and the prospect it afforded of a lasting peace with China. The peace thus procured lasted in fact exactly a year.

Lord Palmerston then was out of office. Having nothing in particular to do, he presently went over to Compiègne on a visit to the emperor of the French. For the second time his friendship for Louis Napoleon had cost him his place.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### "ON THE TRUE FAITH OF A CHRISTIAN."

WHEN Mr. Disraeli became once more leader of the House of Commons, he must have felt that he had almost as difficult a path to tread as that of him described in "Henry the Fourth," who has to "o'er walk a current roaring loud on the unsteadfast footing of a spear." The ministry of Lord Derby, whereof Mr. Disraeli was undoubtedly the sense-carrier, was not supported by a parliamentary majority nor could it pretend to great intellectual and administrative ability. It had in its ranks two or three men of something like statesman capacity, and a number of respectable persons possessing abilities about equal to those of any intelligent business man or county magistrate. Mr. Disraeli of course became chancellor of the exchequer. Lord Stanley undertook the colonies; Mr. Walpole made a painstaking and conscientious home secretary, as long as he continued to hold the office. Lord Malmesbury muddled on with foreign affairs somehow; Lord Ellenborough's brilliant eccentric light preplexed for a brief space the Indian department. General Peel was secretary for war, and Mr. Henley president of the board of trade. Lord Naas, afterward Lord Mayo, became chief secretary for Ireland, and was then supposed to be nothing more than

a kindly, sweet-tempered man, of whom his most admiring friends would never have ventured to foreshadow such a destiny as that he should succeed to the place of a Canning and an Elgin, and govern the new India to which so many anxious eyes were turned. Sir John Pakington was made first lord of the admiralty, because a place of some kind had to be found for him, and he was as likely to do well at the head of the navy as anywhere else. A ridiculous story, probably altogether untrue, used to be told of President Lincoln in some of the difficult days of the American civil war. He wanted a commander-in-chief, and he happened to be in conversation with a friend on the subject of the war. Suddenly addressing the friend, he asked him if he had ever commanded an army. "No, Mr. President," was the reply. "Do you think you could command an army?" "I presume so, Mr. President; I know nothing to the contrary." He was appointed commander-in-chief at once. One might without great stretch of imagination conceive of a conversation of the same kind taking place between Sir John Pakington and Lord Derby. Sir John Pakington had no reason to know that he might not prove equal to the administration of the navy, and he became first lord of the admiralty accordingly. No conservative government could be supposed to get on without Lord John Manners, and luckily there was the department of public works for him.

Lord Stanley was regarded as a statesman of great and peculiar promise. The party to which he belonged were inclined to make him an object of especial pride because he seemed to have in a very remarkable degree the very qualities which most of their leading members were generally accused of wanting. The epithet which Mr. Mill at a later period applied to the Tories, that of the stupid party, was the expression of a feeling very common in the political world, and under which many of the Conservatives themselves winced. The more intelligent a Conservative was the more was he inclined to chafe at the ignorance and dullness of many of the party. It was therefore with particular satisfaction that intelligent Tories saw among themselves a young statesman, who appeared to have all those qualities of intellect and those educational endowments which the bulk of the party did not possess, and what was worse did not even miss. Lord Stanley had a

calm, meditative intellect. He studied politics as one may study a science. He understood political economy, that new-fangled science which had so bewildered his party, and of which the Peelites and the Manchester men made so much account. He had traveled much; not merely making the old-fashioned grand tour, which most of the Tory country gentlemen had themselves made, but visiting the United States and Canada and the Indies, East and West. He was understood to know all about geography and cotton and sugar; and he had come up into politics in a happy age when the question of free trade was understood to be settled. The Tories were proud of him, as a democratic mob is proud of an aristocratic leader, or as a working-men's convention is proud of the co-operation of some distinguished scholar. Lord Stanley was strangely unlike his father in intellect and temperament. The one man was indeed almost the very opposite of the other. Lord Derby was all instinct and passion; Lord Stanley was all method and calculation. Lord Derby amused himself in the intervals of political work by translating classic epics and odes; Lord Stanley beguiled an interval of leisure by the reading of Blue-books. Lord Derby's eloquence when at its worst became fiery nonsense; Lord Stanley's sank occasionally to be nothing better than platitude. The extreme of the one was rhapsody, and of the other commonplace. Lord Derby was too hot and impulsive to be always a sound statesman; Lord Stanley was too coldly methodical to be the statesman of a crisis. Both men were in a certain sense superficial and deceptive. Lord Derby's eloquence had no great depth in it; and Lord Stanley's wisdom often proved somewhat thin. The career of Lord Stanley did not afterward bear out the expectations that were originally formed of him. He proved to be methodical, sensible, conscientious, slow. He belonged, perhaps, to that class of men about whom Goethe said, that if they could only once commit some extravagance we should have greater hopes of their future wisdom. He did not commit any extravagance; he remained careful, prudent, and slow. But at the time when he accepted the Indian secretaryship it was still hoped that he would, to use a homely expression, warm to his work, and on both sides of the political contest people looked to him as a new and a great figure in Conservative politics. He was not an orator; he had nothing

whatever of the orator in language or in temperament. His manner was ineffective; his delivery was decidedly bad. But his words carried weight with them, and even his commonplaces were received by some of his party as the utterances of an oracle. There were men among the Conservatives of the back benches who secretly hoped that in this wise young man was the upcoming statesman who was to deliver the party from the thralldom of eccentric genius, and of an eloquence which, however brilliantly it fought their battles, seemed to them hardly a respectable sort of gift to be employed in the service of gentlemanlike Tory principles.

Lord Stanley had been in office before. During his father's first administration he had acted as under secretary for foreign affairs. On the death of Sir William Molesworth, Lord Palmerston had offered the colonial secretaryship to Lord Stanley; but the latter, although his Toryism was of the most moderate and liberal kind, did not see his way to take a seat in a Liberal administration. His appearance therefore as a cabinet minister in the government formed by his father was an event looked to with great interest all over the country. The Liberals were not without a hope that he might some day find himself driven by his conscientiousness and his clear unprejudiced intelligence into the ranks of avowed Liberalism. It was confidently predicted of him in a Liberal review two or three years after this time, that he would one day be found a prominent member of a liberal cabinet under the premiership of Mr. Gladstone. For the present, however, he is still the rising light—a somewhat cold and colorless light indeed—of Conservatism.

Arrayed against the Conservatives was a party disjoined indeed for the present, but capable at any moment, if they could only agree, of easily overturning the government of Lord Derby. The superiority of the opposition in debating power was simply overwhelming. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli was the only first-class debater, with the exception, perhaps, of the new solicitor-general, Sir Hugh Cairns; and Sir Hugh Cairns, being new to office, was not expected as yet to carry very heavy metal in great debate. The best of their colleagues could only be called a respectable second class. Against them were Lord Palmerston, and Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham,

Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright, every one of whom was a first-class debater; some of them great parliamentary orators; some too, with the influence that comes from the fact of their having led ministries and conducted wars. In no political assembly in the world does experience of office and authority tell for more than in the House of Commons. To have held office confers a certain dignity even on mediocrity. The man who has held office, and who sits on the front bench opposite the ministry, has a sort of prescriptive right to be heard whenever he stands up to address the house, in preference to the most rising and brilliant talker who has never yet been a member of an administration. Mr. Disraeli had opposed to him not merely the eloquence of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, but the authority of Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston. It required much dexterity to make a decent show of carrying on a government under such conditions. Mr. Disraeli well knew that his party held office only on sufferance from their opponents. If they attempted nothing, they were certain to be censured for inactivity; if they attempted anything, there was the chance of their exposing themselves to the combined attack of all the factions of the Liberal party. Luckily for them it was not easy to bring about such a combination just yet; but whenever it came, there was foreshown the end of the ministry.

Lord Derby's government quietly dropped the unlucky conspiracy bill. England and France were alike glad to be out of the difficulty. There was a short interchange of correspondence in which the French government explained that they really had meant nothing in particular, and it was then announced to both houses of parliament that the misunderstanding was at an end, and that friendship had set in again. We have seen already how the India bill was carried. Lord Derby's tenure of office was made remarkable by the success of one measure which must have given much personal satisfaction to Mr. Disraeli. The son of a Jewish father, the descendant of an ancient Jewish race, himself received as a child into the Jewish community, Mr. Disraeli had since his earliest years of intelligence been a Christian. "I am, as I have ever been," he said himself when giving evidence once in a court of law, "a Christian." But he had never renounced his sympathies with the race to which he belonged, and the faith in which his fathers



worshipped. He had always stood up for the Jews. He had glorified the genius and the influence of the Jews in many pages of romantic, high-flown, and sometimes very turgid eloquence. He had in some of his novels seemingly set about to persuade his readers that all of good and great the modern world had seen was due to the unceasing intellectual activity of the Jew. He had vindicated with as sweeping a liberality the virtues of the Jewish race. In one really fine and striking sentence he declares that "a Jew is never seen upon the scaffold unless it be at an *auto-da-fé*." "Forty years ago," he says in his "Lord George Bentinck,"—"not a longer period than the children of Israel were wandering in the desert—the two most dishonored races in Europe were the Attic and the Hebrew, and they were the two races that had done most for mankind."

Mr. Disraeli had the good fortune to see the civil emancipation of the Jews accomplished during the time of his leadership of the House of Commons. It was a coincidence merely. He had always assisted the movement toward that end; unlike some other men who carried on their faces the evidences of their Hebrew extraction, and who yet made themselves conspicuous for their opposition to it. But the success did not come from any inspiration of his; and most of his colleagues in power resisted it as long as they could. His former chief, Lord George Bentinck, it will be remembered, had resigned his leadership of the party in the House of Commons, because of the complaints made when he spoke and voted for the removal of Jewish disabilities. It was in July, 1858, that the long political and sectarian struggle came to an end. Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild, who has but lately died was allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons on the 26th of that month as one of the representatives of the city of London, and the controversy about Jewish disabilities was over at last. It is not uninteresting, before we trace the history of this struggle to its close, to observe how completely the conditions under which it was once carried on had changed in recent years. Of late the opposition to the claims of the Jews came almost exclusively from the Tories, and especially from the Tories in the House of Lords, from the high churchmen and from the bishops. A century before that time the bishops were for the most

part very willing that justice should be done to the Jews; and statesmen and professional politicians, looking at the question perhaps rather from the view of obvious necessity and expediency, were well-inclined to favor the claim made for rather than by their Jewish fellow-subjects. But at that time the popular voice cried out furiously against the Jews. The old traditions of calumny and hatred still had full influence, and the English people, as a whole, were determined that they would not admit the Jews to the rights of citizenship. They would borrow from them, buy from them, accept any manner of service from them, but they would not allow of their being represented in parliament. As time went on all this feeling changed. The public in general became either absolutely indifferent to the question of Jewish citizenship or decidedly in favor of it. No statesman had the slightest excuse for professing to believe that an outcry would be raised by the people if he attempted to procure the representation of Jews by Jews in parliament. We have seen how by steps the Jews made their way into municipal office and into the magistracy. At the same time persistent efforts were being made to obtain for them the right to be elected to the House of Commons. On April 5, 1830, Mr. Robert Grant, then a colleague of one of the Gurney family in the representation of Norwich, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the civil disabilities affecting British-born subjects professing the Jewish religion. The claim which Mr. Grant made for the Jews was simply that they should be allowed to enjoy all those rights which we may call fundamental to the condition of the British subject, without having to profess the religion of the state. At that time the Jews were unable to take the oath of allegiance, passed in Elizabeth's reign, although it had nothing in its substance or language opposed to their claims, inasmuch as it was sworn on the Evangelists. Nor could they take the oath of adjuration, intended to guard against the return of the Stuarts, because that oath contained the words "on the true faith of a Christian." Before the repeal of the test and corporations act in 1828, the sacrament had to be taken as a condition of holding any corporate office, and had to be taken before admission. In the case of offices held under the crown it might be taken after admission. Jews, however, did obtain admission to corporate offices, not expressly as Jews,

but as all Dissenters obtained it; that is to say by breaking the law, and having an annual indemnity bill passed to relieve them from the penal consequences. The test and corporations act put an end to this anomaly as regarded the Dissenters, but it unconsciously imposed a new disability on the Jew. The new declaration, substituted for the old oath, contained the words "on the true faith of a Christian." "The operation of the law was fatal," says Sir Erskine May, "to nearly all the rights of a citizen. A Jew could not hold any office, civil, military, or corporate. He could not follow the profession of the law as barrister or attorney, or attorney's clerk; he could not be a school-master or an usher at a school. He could not sit as a member of either house of parliament, nor even exercise the electoral franchise, if called upon to take the elector's oath." Thus, although no special act was passed for the exclusion of the Jew from the rights of citizenship, he was effectually shut up in a sort of political and social Ghetto.

The debate on Mr. Grant's motion was made memorable by the fact that Macaulay delivered then his maiden speech. He rose at the same time with Sir James Mackintosh, and according to the graceful usage of the House of Commons, the new member was called on to speak. We need not go over the arguments used in the debate. Public opinion has settled the question so long and so completely that they have little interest for a time like ours. One curious argument is, however, worth a passing notice. One speaker, Sir John Wrottesley, declared that when it was notorious that seats were to be had in that house to any extent for money, he could not consent to allow any one to become a member who was not also a Christian. Bribery and corruption were so general and so bad that they could not with safety to the state be left to be the privilege of any but Christians. "If I be drunk," says Master Slender, "I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God and not with drunken knaves." The proposal for the admission of Jews to parliament was supported by Lord John Russell, O'Connell, Brougham and Mackintosh. Its first reading—for it was opposed even on the first reading—was carried by a majority of eighteen; but on the motion for the second reading the bill was thrown out by a majority of sixty-three, the votes for it being

one hundred and sixty-five and those against it two hundred and twenty-eight. In 1883 Mr. Grant introduced his bill again, and this time was fortunate enough to pass it through the Commons. The Lords rejected it by a majority of fifty. The following year told a similar story. The Commons accepted; the Lords rejected. Meantime the Jews were being gradually relieved from other restrictions. A clause in Lord Denman's act for amending the laws of evidence allowed all persons to be sworn in courts of law in form which they held most binding on their conscience. Lord Lyndhurst succeeded in passing a bill for the admission of Jews to corporate offices. Jews had, as we have already seen, been admitted to the shrievalty and the magistracy in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1848 the struggle for their admission to parliament was renewed, but the Lords still held out and would not pass a bill. Meanwhile influential Jews began to offer themselves as candidates for seats in parliament. Mr. Salomons contested Shoreham and Maidstone successively and unsuccessfully. In 1847 Baron Lionel Rothschild was elected one of the members for the city of London. He resigned his seat when the House of Lords threw out the Jews bill, and stood again and was again elected. It was not, however, until 1850 that the struggle was actually transferred to the floor of the House of Commons. In that year Baron Rothschild presented himself at the table of the house as O'Connell had done, and offered to take the oaths in order that he might be admitted to take his seat. For four sessions he had sat as a stranger in the house of which he had been duly elected a member by the votes of one of the most important English constituencies. Now he came boldly up to the table and demanded to be sworn. He was sworn on the Old Testament. He took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; but when the oath of abjuration came he omitted from it the words "on the true faith of a Christian." He was directed to withdraw, and it was decided that he could neither sit nor vote unless he would consent to take the oath of abjuration in the fashion prescribed by the law. In other words, he could only sit in the House of Commons on condition of his perjuring himself. Had he sworn "on the true faith of a Christian," the House of Commons, well knowing that he had sworn to a falsehood, would have admitted him as one of its members.

Baron Rothschild quietly fell back to his old position. He sat in one of the seats under the gallery, a place to which strangers are admitted, but where also members occasionally sit. He did not contest the matter any further. Mr. David Salomons was inclined for a rougher and a bolder course. He was elected for Greenwich in 1851, and he presented himself as Baron Rothschild had done. The same thing followed; he refused to say the words, "on the true faith of a Christian," and he was directed to withdraw. He did withdraw. He sat below the bar. A few evenings after a question was put to the government by a member friendly to the admission of Jews, Sir Benjamin Hall, afterward Lord Llanover: "If Mr. Salomons should take his seat, would the government sue him for the penalties provided by the act of parliament in order that the question of right might be tried by a court of law?" Lord John Russell replied on the part of the government that they did not intend to take any proceedings; in fact, implied that they considered it no affair of theirs. Then Sir Benjamin Hall announced that Mr. Salomons felt he had no alternative but to take his seat and let the question of right be tested in that way. Forthwith, to the amazement and horror of steady old constitutional members, Mr. Salomons, who had been sitting below the bar, calmly got up, walked into the sacred precincts of the house, and took his seat among the members. A tumultuous scene followed. Half the house shouted indignantly to Mr. Salomons to "withdraw, withdraw," the other half called out encouragingly to him to keep his place. The perplexity was indescribable. What is to be done with a quiet and respectable gentleman who insists that he is a member of parliament, comes and takes his seat in the house, and will not withdraw? To be sure if he were an absolute intruder he could be easily removed by the sergeant-at-arms and his assistants. But in such a case, unless indeed the intruder were a lunatic, he would hardly think of keeping his place when he had been bidden by authority to take himself off. Mr. Salomons, however, had undoubtedly been elected member for Greenwich by a considerable majority. His constituents believed him to be their lawful representative, and in fact had obtained from him a promise that if elected he would actually take his seat. Even then, perhaps, something might have been

done if the house in general had been opposed to the claim of Mr. Salomons and of Greenwich. When Lord Cochrane escaped from prison and presented himself in the house from which he had been expelled, he, too, was ordered to withdraw. He, too, refused to do so. The speaker directed that he should be removed by force. Cochrane had a giant's strength, and on this occasion he used it like a giant. He struggled hard against the efforts of many officials to remove him, and some of the woodwork of the benches was actually torn from its place before the gallant seaman could be got out of the house. But in the case of Lord Cochrane the general feeling of the house was with the authorities and against the expelled member, who, however, happened to be in the right while the house was in the wrong. The case of Mr. Salomons was very different. Many members were of opinion, and eminent lawyers were among them, that in the strictest and most technical view of the law, he was entitled to take his seat. Many more were convinced that the principle which excluded him was stupid and barbarous, and that the course he was at present taking was necessary for the purpose of obtaining its immediate repeal.

Therefore any idea of expelling Mr. Salomons was out of the question. The only thing that could be done was to set to work and debate the matter. Lord John Russell moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Salomons be ordered to withdraw. Lord John Russell, it need hardly be said, was entirely in favor of the admission of Jews, but thought Mr. Salomon's course irregular. Mr. Bernal Osborne moved an amendment declaring Mr. Salomons entitled to take his seat. A series of irregular discussions, varied and enlivened by motions for adjournment, took place; and Mr. Salomons not only voted in some of the divisions, but actually made a speech. He spoke calmly and well, and was listened to with great attention. He explained that in the course he had taken he was acting in no spirit of contumacy or presumption, and with no disregard for the dignity of the house, but that he had been lawfully elected, and that he felt bound to take his seat for the purpose of asserting his own rights and those of his constituents. He intimated also that he would withdraw if just sufficient force were used to make him feel that he was acting under coercion. The motion that he be ordered

to withdraw was carried. The speaker requested Mr. Salomons to withdraw. Mr. Salomons held his place. The speaker directed the sergent-at-arms to remove Mr. Salomons. The Sergent-at-arms approached Mr. Salomons and touched him on the shoulder, and Mr. Salomons then quietly withdrew. The farce was over. It was evident to every one that Mr. Salomons had virtually gained his object, and that something must soon be done to get the House of Commons and the country out of the difficulty. It is curious that even in ordering him to withdraw, the speaker called Mr. Salomons "the honorable member."

Mr. Salomons did well to press his rights in that practical way upon the notice of the house. It is one of the blots upon our parliamentary system that a great question, like that of the removal of Jewish disabilities, is seldom settled upon its merits. Parliament rarely bends to the mere claims of reason and justice. Some pressure has almost always to be put on it to induce it to see the right. Its tendency is always to act exactly as Mr. Salomons himself formally did in this case; to yield only when sufficient pressure has been put on it to signify coercion. Catholic emancipation was carried by such a pressure. The promoters of the Sunday trading bill yield to a riot in Hyde Park. A Tory government turn reformers in obedience to a crowd who pull down the railing of the same enclosure. A chancellor of the exchequer modifies his budget in deference to a demonstration of match-selling boys and girls. In all these instances it was right to make the concession; but the concession was not made because it was right. The Irish home rulers, or some of them at least, are convinced that they will carry home rule in the end by the mere force of a pressure brought to bear on parliament; and their expectation is justified by all previous experience. They have been told often enough that they must not expect to carry it by argument. If parliamentary institutions do really come to be discredited in this country, as many people love to predict, one especial reason will be this very experience on the part of the public, that parliament has invariably conceded to pressure the reforms which it persistently denied to justice. A reform is first refused without reason, to be at last conceded without grace.

Mr. Salomons acted wisely therefore for the cause he had at heart when he thrust himself upon the House of Com-

mons. The course taken by Baron Rothschild was more dignified no doubt; but it did not make much impression. The victory seems to us to have been practically won when Mr. Salomons sat down after having addressed the House of Commons from his place among the members. But it was not technically won just then, nor for some time after. Two actions were brought against Mr. Salomons, not by the government, to recover penalties for his having unlawfully taken his seat. One of the actions was withdrawn, the object of both alike being to get a settlement of the legal question, for which one trial would be as good as twenty. The action came on for trial in the court of exchequer on December 9, 1851, before Mr. Baron Martin and a special jury. Baron Martin suggested that, as the question at issue was one of great importance, a special case should be prepared for the decision of the full court. This was done, and the case came before the court in January, 1852. The issue really narrowed itself to this: were the words "on the true faith of a Christian" merely a form of affirmation, or were they purposely inserted in order to obtain a profession of Christian faith? Did not the framers of the measure merely put in such words as at the moment seemed to them most proper to secure a true declaration from the majority of those to be sworn, and with the understanding that in exceptional cases other forms of asseveration might be employed as more suited to other forms of faith? Or were the words put in for the express purpose of making it certain that none but Christians should take the oath? We know as a matter of fact that the words were not put in with any such intention. No one was thinking about the Jews when the asseveration was thus constructed. Still the court of exchequer decided by three voices to one that the words must be held in law to constitute a specially Christian oath, which could be taken by no one but a Christian, and without taking which no one could be a member of parliament; of that parliament which had had Bolingbroke for a leader, and Gibbon for a distinguished member.

The legal question then being settled, there were renewed efforts made to get rid of the disabilities by an act of parliament. The House of Commons continued to pass bills to enable Jews to sit in parliament, and the House of Lords continued to throw them out. Lord John Russell,



who had taken charge of the measure, introduced his bill early in 1858. The bill was somewhat peculiar in its construction. On a former occasion the House of Lords found another excuse for not passing a measure for the same purpose, in the fact that it mixed up a modification of the oath of supremacy with the question of the relief of the Jews. In the present measure the two questions were kept separate. The bill proposed to reconstruct the oath altogether. Some obsolete words about the pretender and the Stuart family were to be taken out. The asseverations relating to succession, supremacy, and allegiance were to be condensed into one oath, to which were added the words "on the true faith of a Christian." Thus far the measure merely reconstructed the form of oath so as to bring it into accord with the existing condition of things. But then there came a separate clause in the bill, providing that where the oath had to be administered to a Jew the words "on the true faith of a Christian" might be left out. This was a very sensible and simple way of settling the matter. It provided a rational form of oath for all sects alike; it got rid of obsolete anomalies, and it likewise relieved the Jews from the injustice which had been unintentionally imposed on them. Unfortunately the very convenience of the form in which the bill was drawn only put, as it will be seen, a new facility into the hands of the anti-reformers in the House of Lords for again endeavoring to get rid of it. Lord John Russell had no difficulty with the House of Commons. He had brought up his bill in good time, in order that it might reach the House of Lords as quickly as possible; and it passed a second reading in the Commons without any debate. When it came up to the House of Lords, the majority simply struck out the particular clause relating to the Jews. This made the bill of no account whatever for the purpose it specially had in view. The Commons, on the motion of Lord John Russell, refused to assent to the alteration made by the Lords, and appointed a committee to draw up a statement of their reasons for refusing to agree to it. On the motion of Mr. Duncombe, it was actually agreed that Baron Rothschild should be a member of the committee, although a legal decision had declared him not to be a member of the house. During the debate to which all this led, Lord Lucan made a suggestion of compromise in the House of Lords which

proved successful. He recommended the insertion of a clause in the bill allowing either house to modify the form of oath according to its pleasure. Lord John Russell objected to this way of dealing with a great question, but did not feel warranted in refusing the proposed compromise. A bill was drawn up with the clause suggested, and it was rattled, if we may use such an expression, through both houses. It passed with the oaths bill, which the Lords had mutilated, and which now stood as an independent measure. A Jew, therefore, might be a member of the House of Commons, if it chose to receive him, and might be shut out of the House of Lords if that house did not think fit to let him in. More than that, the House of Commons might change its mind at any moment, and by modifying the form of oath shut out the Jews again; or shut out any new Jewish candidates. Of course such a condition of things as that could not endure. An act passed not long after which consolidated the acts referring to oaths of allegiance, abjuration, and supremacy, and enabled Jews on all occasions whatever to omit the words "on the true faith of a Christian." Thus the Jew was at last placed in a position of political equality with his Christian fellow-subjects, and an anomaly and a scandal was removed from our legislation.

About the same time as that which saw Baron Rothschild admitted to take his seat in the House of Commons, the absurd property qualification for members of parliament was abolished. This ridiculous system originally professed to secure that no man should be a member of the House of Commons who did not own a certain amount of landed property. The idea of defining a man's fitness to sit in parliament according to his possession of landed property, was in itself preposterous; but such as the law was it was evaded every day. It had not the slightest real force. Fictitious conveyances were issued as a matter of course. Any one who desired a seat in parliament could easily find some friend or patron who would convey to him by formal deed the fictitious ownership of landed property enough to satisfy the requirements of the law. This was done usually with as little pretense at concealment as the borrowing of an umbrella. It was perfectly well known to everybody that a great many members of the House of Commons did not possess, and did not even pretend to possess, a single

acre of land their own property. What made the thing more absurd was that men who were rich enough to spend thousands of pounds in contesting boroughs and counties, had often to go through this form of having a fictitious conveyance made to them, because they did not happen to have invested any part of their wealth in land. Great city magnates, known for their wealth, and known in many cases for their high personal honor as well, had to submit to this foolish ceremonial. The property qualification was a device of the reign of Anne. The evasions of it became so many and so notorious that in George II.'s time an act was passed making it necessary for every member to take an oath that he possessed the requisite amount of property. In the present reign a declaration was substituted for the oath, and it was provided that if a man had not landed property, it would be enough for him to prove that he had funded property to the same amount—£600 a year for counties and £300 for boroughs. The manufacture of fictitious qualifications went on as fast as ever. There were many men in good position, earning large incomes by a profession or otherwise, who yet had not realized money enough to put them in possession of a property of £600 or £300 a year—it might take £10,000 to secure an income of £300 a year; £20,000 to secure £600 a year. Scores of members of parliament were well known not to have any such means. To make the anomaly more absurd, it should be noted that there was no property qualification in Scotland, and the Scotch members were then, as now, remarkable for their respectability and intelligence. Members for the universities, too, were elected without a property qualification. Mr. Loeke King stated in the House of Commons that after every general election there were from fifty to sixty cases in which it was found that persons had declared themselves to be possessed of the requisite qualification who were notoriously not in possession of it. Many men, too, it was well known, were purposely qualified by wealthy patrons, in order that they might sit in parliament as mere nominees and political servants.

As usual with parliament, this anomaly was allowed to go on until a sudden scandal made its abolition necessary. One luckless person, who probably had no position and few friends, was actually prosecuted for having made a false declaration as to his property qualification. He had been

a little more indiscreet, or a little more open in his performance, than other people, and he was pounced upon by old "father antic," the law. This practically settled the matter. Every one knew that many other members of parliament deserved in point of fact just as well as he the three months' imprisonment to which he was sentenced. Mr. Locke King introduced a bill to abolish the property qualification hitherto required from the representatives of English and Irish constituencies, and it became law in a few days.

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

WHEN Lord Ellenborough abruptly resigned the place of president of the board of control he was succeeded by Lord Stanley, who, as we have seen already, became secretary of state for India, under the new system of government. Lord Stanley had been secretary for the colonies, and in this office he was succeeded by Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton. For some time previously Sir Edward Lytton had been taking so marked a place in parliamentary life as to make it evident that when his party came into power he was sure to have a chance of distinguishing himself in office. Bulwer's political career had up to this time been little better than a failure. He started in public life as a Radical and a friend of O'Connell; he was indeed the means of introducing Mr. Disraeli to the leader of the Irish party. He began his parliamentary career before the reform bill. He was elected for St. Ives in 1831. After the passing of the bill, he represented Lincoln for several years. At the general election of 1841 he lost his seat, and it was not until July, 1852, that he was again returned to parliament. This time he came in as member for the county of Herts. In the interval many things had happened—to quote the expression of Mr. Disraeli in 1874. Lytton had succeeded to wealth and to landed estates, and he had almost altogether changed his political opinions. From a poetic Radical he had become a poetic Conservative. In the "Parliamentary Companion" for the year 1855 we find him thus quaintly described—by his own hand it may be assumed:

“Concurs in the general policy of Lord Derby; would readjust the income-tax, and mitigate the duties on malt, tea, and soap; some years ago advocated the ballot, but seeing its utter inefficiency in France and America can no longer support that theory; will support education on a religious basis, and vote for a repeal of the Maynooth Grant.” It will perhaps be assumed from this confession of faith, that Lytton had not very clear views of any kind as to practical politics. It probably seemed a graceful and poetic thing, redolent of youth and Ernest Maltravers, to stand forth as an impassioned Radical in early years; and it was quite in keeping with the progress of Ernest Maltravers to tone down into a thoughtful Conservative, opposing the Maynooth Grant and mitigating the duty on malt and soap, as one advanced in years, wealth, and gravity. At all events, it was certain that whatever Lytton attempted he would in the end carry to some considerable success. His first years in the House of Commons had come to nothing. When he lost his seat most people fancied that he had accepted defeat, and had turned his back on parliamentary life forever. But Lytton possessed a marvelously strong will, and had a faith in himself which almost amounted to genius. When he wrote a play which proved a distinct failure, some of the leading critics assured him that he had no dramatic turn at all. He believed on the contrary that he had; and he determined to write another play which should be of all things dramatic, and which should hold the stage. He went to work and produced the “Lady of Lyons;” a play filled with turgid passages and preposterous situations, but which has nevertheless in so conspicuous a degree the dramatic or theatric qualities that it has always held the stage, and has never been wholly extinguished by any change of fashion or of fancy. In much the same way Sir Edward Lytton seems to have made up his mind that he would compel the world to confess him capable of playing the part of a politician. We have in a former chapter of this work alluded to the physical difficulties which stood in the way of his success as a parliamentary speaker, and in spite of which he accomplished his success. He was deaf, and his articulation was so defective that those who heard him speak in public for the first time often found themselves unable to understand him. Such difficulties would assuredly have scared any

ordinary man out of the parliamentary arena forever. But Lytton seems to have determined that he would make a figure in parliament. He set himself to public speaking as coolly as if he were a man like Gladstone or Bright, whom nature had marked out for such a competition by her physical gifts. He became a decided, and even in a certain sense a great success. He could not strike into a debate actually going on; his defect of hearing shut him off from such a performance; and no man who is not a debater will ever hold a really high position in the House of Commons. But he could review a previous night's arguments in a speech abounding in splendid phrases and brilliant illustrations. He could pass for an orator. He actually did pass for an orator. Mr. Disraeli seems to have admired his speaking with a genuine and certainly a disinterested admiration; for he described it as though it were exactly the kind of eloquence in which he would gladly have himself excelled if he could. In fact, Lytton reached the same relative level in parliamentary debate that he had reached in fiction and the drama. He contrived to appear as if he ought to rank among the best of the craftsmen.

Sir Edward Lytton, as secretary for the colonies, seemed resolved to prove by active and original work that he could be a practical colonial statesman as well as a novelist, a playwright, and a parliamentary orator. He founded the colony of British Columbia, which at first was to comprise all such territories within the queen's dominions "as are bounded to the south by the frontier of the United States of America, to the east by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains, to the north by Simpson's River and the Finlay branch of the Peace River, to the west by the Pacific Ocean." It was originally intended that the colony should not include Vancouver's Island, but her majesty was allowed, on receiving an address from the two houses of the legislature of Vancouver's Island, to annex that island to British Columbia. Vancouver's Island was in fact incorporated with British Columbia in 1866, and British Columbia was united with the Dominion of Canada in 1871.

Something, however, more strictly akin to Sir Edward Lytton's personal tastes was found in the mission to which he invited Mr. Gladstone. There had long been dissatisfaction and even disturbance in the Ionian Islands. These seven islands were constituted a sort of republic or com-

monwealth by the treaty of Vienna. But they were assigned to the protectorate of Great Britain, which had the right of maintaining garrisons in them. Great Britain used to appoint a lord high commissioner, who was generally a military man, and whose office combined the duties of commander-in-chief with those of civil governor. The little republic had a senate of six members and a legislative assembly of forty members. It seems almost a waste of words to say that the islanders were not content with British government. For good or ill, the Hellenes wherever they are found, are sure to be filled with an impassioned longing for Hellenic independence. The people of the Ionian Islands were eager to be allowed to enter into one system with the kingdom of Greece. It was idle to try to amuse them by telling them they constituted an independent republic, and were actually governing themselves. A duller people than the Greeks of the islands could not be deluded into the idea that they were a self-governing people, while they saw themselves presided over by an English lord high commissioner who was also the commander in-chief of a goodly British army garrisoned in their midst. They saw that the lord high commissioner had a way of dismissing the republican parliament whenever he and they could not get on together. They knew that if they ventured to resist his orders, English soldiers would make short work of their effort at self-assertion. They might, therefore, well be excused if they failed to see much of the independent republic in such a system. It is certain that they got a great deal of material benefit from the presence of the energetic road-making British power. But they wanted to be above all things Greek. Their national principles and aspirations, their personal vanities, their truly Greek restlessness and craving for novelty, all combined to make them impatient of that foreign protectorate which was really foreign government. The popular constitution which had been given to the Septinsular Republic some ten years before Sir E. B. Lytton's time had enabled Hellenic agitation to make its voice and its claims more effectual. In England, after the usual fashion, a great many shallow politicians were raising an outcry against the popular constitution, as if it were the cause of all the confusion. Because it enabled discontent to make its voice heard they condemned it as the cause of the discontent. They would

have been for silencing the alarm-bell immediately, and then telling themselves that all was safe. As was but natural, local politicians rose to popularity in the islands in proportion as they were loud in their denunciation of foreign rule, and in their demands for union with the kingdom of Greece. Anybody might surely have foretold all this years before. It might have been taken for granted that so long as any sort of independent Greek kingdom held its head above the waters the Greek populations everywhere would sympathize with its efforts, and long to join their destiny with it. Many English public men, however, were merely angry with these pestilential Greeks who did not know what was good for them. A great English journal complained, with a simple egotism that was positively touching, that in spite of all argument the national assembly, the municipalities, and the press of the Ionian Islands had now concentrated their pretensions on the project of a union with the kingdom of Greece. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had not been long enough in office to have become soaked in the ideas of routine. He did not regard the unanimous opinions of the insular legislature, municipalities, and press as evidence merely of the unutterable stupidity or the incurable ingratitude and wickedness of the Ionian populations. He thought the causes of the complaints and the dissatisfaction were well worth looking into, and he resolved on sending a statesman of distinction out to the islands to make the inquiry. Mr. Gladstone had been for some years out of office. He had been acting as an independent supporter of Lord Palmerston's government. It occurred to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton that Mr. Gladstone was the man best fitted to conduct the inquiry. He was well known to be a sympathizer with the struggles and the hopes of the Greeks generally; and it seemed to the new colonial secretary that the mere fact of such a man having been appointed would make it clear to the islanders that the inquiry was about to be conducted in no hostile spirit. He offered therefore to Mr. Gladstone the office of lord high commissioner extraordinary to the Ionian Islands, and Mr. Gladstone accepted the offer and its duties. The appointment created much surprise, some anger, and a good deal of ridicule here at home. There seemed to certain minds to be something novel, startling, and positively unseemly in such a proceed-



ing. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had alluded in his despatch to Mr. Gladstone's Homeric scholarship, and this was, in the opinion of some politicians, an outrage upon all the principles and proprieties of routine. This, it was muttered, is what comes of literary men in office. A writer of novels is leader of the House of Commons, and he has another writer of novels at his side as colonial secretary, and between them they can think of nothing better than to send a man out to the Ionian Islands to listen to the trash of Greek demagogues, merely because he happens to be fond of reading Homer.

Mr. Gladstone went out to the Ionian Islands, and arrived in Corfu in the November of 1858. He called together the senate, and endeavored to satisfy them as to the real nature of his mission. He explained that he had not come there to discuss the propriety of maintaining the English protectorate, but only to inquire into the manner in which the just claims of the Ionian Islands might be secured by means of that protectorate. Mr. Gladstone's visit, however, was not a successful enterprise for those who desired that the protectorate should be perpetual, and that the Ionians should be brought to accept it as inevitable. The population of the islands persisted in regarding him, not as the commissioner of a Conservative English government, but as "Gladstone the Philhellene." He was received wherever he went with the honors due to a liberator. His path everywhere was made to seem like a triumphal progress. In vain he repeated his assurances that he came to reconcile the islands to the protectorate, and not to deliver them from it. The popular instinct insisted on regarding him as at least the precursor of their union to the kingdom of Greece. The national assembly passed a formal resolution declaring for union with Greece. All that Mr. Gladstone's persuasions could do was to induce them to appoint a committee, and draw up a memorial to be presented in proper form to the protecting powers. By this time the news of Mr. Gladstone's reception in the islands, and in Athens, to which also he paid a visit, had reached England, and the most extravagant exaggerations were put into circulation. Mr. Gladstone was attacked in an absurd manner. He was accused not merely of having encouraged the pretensions of the Ionian Islanders, but even talked of as if he, and he alone, had

been their inspiration. One might have imagined that there was something portentous and even unnatural in a population of Hellenic race feeling anxious to be united with a Greek kingdom instead of being ruled by a British protectorate imposed by the arbitrary decree of a congress of foreign powers. National complacency could hardly push sensible men to greater foolishness than it did when it set half England wondering and raging over the impertinence of a Greek population who preferred union with a Greek kingdom to dependence upon an English protectorate. English writers and speakers went on habitually as if the conduct of the islanders were on a par with that of some graceless daughter who forsakes her father's house for the companionship of strangers, or of some still more guilty wife who deserts her loving husband to associate herself with some strolling musician. There can be no doubt that in every material sense the people of the islands were much better governed under England's protectorate than they could be for generations, probably for centuries to come, under any Greek administration. They had admirable means of communication by land and sea, splendid harbors, regular lines of steamers, excellent roads everywhere, while the people of the kingdom of Greece were hardly better off for all these advantages under Otho than they might have been under Codrus. M. Edmond About declared that the inhabitants of the Ionian Islands were richer, happier, and a hundred times better governed than the subjects of King Otho. M. About detested Greece and all about it; but his testimony thus far is that of the most enthusiastic Philhellene. Indeed it seems a waste of words to say, that where Englishmen ruled they would take care to have good roads and efficient lines of steamers. But M. About was mistaken in assuming that the populations of the islands were happier under British rule than they would have been under that of a Greek kingdom. Such a remark only showed a want of the dramatic sympathy which understands the feelings of others, and which we especially look for in a writer of any sort of fiction. M. About would not have been so successful a romaneist if he had always acted on the assumption that people are made happy by the material conditions which, in the opinion of other people, ought to confer happiness. He would not, we may presume, admit that the people of

Alsace and Lorraine are happier under the Germans than they were under the French, even though it were to be proved beyond dispute that the Germans made better roads and managed more satisfactorily the lines of railways.

The populations of the islands persevered in the belief that they understood better what made them happy than M. About could do. The visit of Mr. Gladstone, whatever purpose it may have been intended to fulfill, "had the effect of making them agitate more strenuously than ever for annexation to the kingdom of Greece. Their wish, however, was not to be granted yet. A new lord high commissioner was sent out after Mr. Gladstone's return, doubtless with instructions to satisfy what was supposed to be public opinion at home by a little additional stringency in maintaining the connexion between Great Britain and the protected populations. Still, however, the idea held ground that sooner or later Great Britain would give up the charge of the islands. A few years after an opportunity occurred for making the cession. The Greeks got rid quietly of their heavy German King Otho, and on the advice chiefly of England they elected as sovereign a brother of the Princess of Wales. The Greeks themselves were not very eager for any other experiment in the matter of royalty. They seemed as if they thought they had had enough of it. But the great powers, and more especially England, pressed upon them that they could never be really respectable if they went without a king; and they submitted to the dictates of conventionality. They first asked for Prince Alfred of England, now Duke of Edinburgh; but the arrangements of European diplomacy did not allow of a prince of any of the great reigning houses being set over Greece. In any case, nothing can be less likely than that an English prince would have accepted such a responsibility. The French government made some significant remark, to the effect that if it were possible for any of the great powers to allow one of their princes to accept the Greek crown, France had a prince disengaged, who she thought might have at least as good a claim as another. This was understood to be Prince Napoleon, son of Jerome, king of Westphalia, a prince of whom a good deal was heard after, as a good deal had been heard before, in the politics of Europe. The suggestion then about the prince of the house of Denmark was made either by or to

the Greeks, and it was accepted. The second son of the king of Denmark was made king of Greece; and Lord John Russell, on behalf of the English government, then handed over to the kingdom of Greece the islands of which Great Britain had had so long to bear the unwilling charge, and the retention of which, according to some uneasy politicians, was absolutely necessary alike to the national safety and the imperial glory of England. This is anticipating by a few years the movement of time; but the effects of Mr. Gladstone's visit so distinctly foreshadowed the inevitable result that it is not worth while dividing into two parts this little chapter of our history. Mr. Gladstone's visit, the mistaken interpretation put upon it by the islanders, and the reception which chiefly on account of that mistake he had among them, must have made it clear to every intelligent person in England that this country could not long continue to force her protectorate upon a reluctant population over whom it could not even claim the right of conquest. It ought to have been plain to all the world that England could not long consent, with any regard for her own professions and principles, to play the part of Europe's jailer or man in possession. The cession of the Ionian Islands marked, however, the farthest point of progress attained for many years in that liberal principle of foreign policy which recognizes fairness and justice as motives of action more imperative than national vanity, or the imperial pride of extended possession. England had to suffer for some time under the influence of a reaction which the cession of the islands, all just and prudent though it was, unquestionably helped to bring about.

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## CHAPTER XL.

### THE TORY DIOGENES ROLLING HIS TUB.

THERE was once, we read, a mighty preparation for war going on in Athens. Everybody was busy in arrangement of some kind to meet the needs of coming battle. Diogenes had nothing in particular to do, but was unwilling to appear absolutely idle when all else were so busy. He set to work, therefore, with immense clatter and energy to roll his tub up and down the streets of Athens. The

Conservative government, seeing Europe all in disturbance and having nothing very particular to do, began to roll a tub of their own, and to show a preternatural and wholly unnecessary activity in doing so.

The year 1859 was one of storm and stress on the European continent. The war-drum throbbed through the whole of it. The year began with the memorable declaration of the emperor of the French to the Austrian ambassador at the Tuileries that the relations between the two empires were not such as he could desire. This he said, according to the description given of the event in a despatch from Lord Cowley, "with some severity of tone."

In truth, Count Cavour had had his way. He had prevailed upon Louis Napoleon, and the result was a determination to expel the Austrians from Italy. It seems clear enough that the emperor, after awhile, grew anxiously inclined to draw back from the position in which he had placed himself. Great pressure was brought to bear upon him by the English government, and by other governments as well, to induce him to refrain from disturbing the peace of Europe. He was probably quite sincere in the assurances he repeatedly gave that he was doing his best to prevent a rupture with Austria; and he would possibly have given much to avoid the quarrel. The turn of his mind was such that he scarcely ever formed any resolution or entered into any agreement, but the moment the step was taken he began to see reasons for wishing that he had followed a different course. In this instance it is evident that he started at the sound himself had made. It was not, however, any longer in his power to guide events. He was in the hands of a stronger will and a more daring spirit than his own. In the career of Count Cavour our times have seen perhaps the most remarkable illustration of that great Italian statesmanship which has always appeared at intervals in the history of Europe. There may be very different opinions about the political morality of Cavour. Rather, indeed, may it be said that his strongest admirer is forced to invent a morality of his own, in order to justify all the political actions of a man who knew no fear, hesitation, or scruple. Cavour had the head of a Machiavelli, the daring of a Caesar Borgia, the political craft and audacity of a Richelieu. He was undoubtedly a patriot and a lover of his country; but he was willing to

serve his country by means from which the conscience of modern Europe, even as it shows itself in the business of statesmanship, is forced to shrink back. If ends were to justify means, then the history of united Italy may be the justification of the life of Cavour; but until ends are held to justify means one can only say that he did marvelous things; that he broke up and reconstructed political systems; that he made a nation; that he realized the dreams of Dante, and some of the schemes of Alexander VI.; and that he accomplished all this for the most part at the cost of other people and not of Italians. Louis Napoleon was simply a weapon in the hands of such a man. Cavour knew precisely what he wanted, and was prepared to go all lengths and to run all risks to have it. When once the French emperor had entered into a compact with him there was no escape from it.

Cavour did not look like an Italian; at least a typical Italian. He looked more like an Englishman. He reminded Englishmen oddly of Dickens' Pickwick, with his large forehead, his general look of moony good-nature, and his spectacles. That commonplace homely exterior concealed unsurpassed force of character, subtlety of scheming, and power of will. Cavour was determined that France should fight Austria. If Louis Napoleon had shown any decided inclination to draw back, Cavour would have flung Piedmont single-handed into the fight, and defied France, after what had passed, to leave her to her fate. Louis Napoleon dared not leave Piedmont to her fate. He had gone too far with Cavour for that. The war between France and Austria broke out. It was over, one might say, in a moment. Austria had no generals; the French army rushed to success; and then Louis Napoleon stopped short as suddenly as he had begun. He had proclaimed that he went to war to set Italy free from the Alps to the sea; but he made peace on the basis of the liberation of Lombardy from Austrian rule, and he left Venetia for another day and for other arms. He drew back before the very serious danger that threatened on the part of the German states, who showed ominous indications of a resolve to make the cause of Austria their own if France went too far. He held his hand from Venetia because of Prussia; seven years later Prussia herself gave Venetia to Italy.

The English government had made futile attempts to prevent the outbreak of war. Lord Malmesbury had elaborated quires of heavy commonplace in the vain hope that the great conflicting forces then let loose could be brought back into quietude by the gentle charm of plenteous platitude. Meanwhile, the Conservative government could not exactly live on the mere reputation of having given good advice abroad to which no one would listen. They had to do something more at home. They began to roll a tub. While Europe was aflame with war-passion and panic, the Conservatives determined to try their hand at a reform bill. Mr. Disraeli, as leader of the House of Commons, knew that a reform bill was one of the certainties of the future. It suited him well enough to praise the perfection of existing institutions in his parliamentary and platform speeches; but no one knew better than he that the reform bill of 1832 had left some blanks that must be, one day or another, filled up by some government. Lord John Russell had made an attempt more than once and failed. He had tried a reform bill in 1852, and lost his chance because of the defeat of the ministry on the militia bill; he had tried another experiment in 1854, but the country was too eager about war with Russia to care for domestic reform, and Lord John Russell had to abandon the attempt, not without an emotion which he could not succeed in concealing. Mr. Disraeli knew well enough that whenever Lord John Russell happened to be in power again he would return to his first love in politics, a reform bill. He knew also that a refusal to have anything to do with reform would always expose the Tories in office to a coalition of all the Liberal factions against them. At present he could not pretend to think that his party was strong. The Conservatives were in office, but they were not in power. At any moment, if the Liberals chose, a motion calling for reform, or censuring the government because they were doing nothing for reform, might be brought forward in the House of Commons and carried in the teeth of the Tory party. Mr. Disraeli had to choose between two dangers. He might risk all by refusing reform; he might risk all by attempting reform. He thought on the whole the wiser course would be to endeavor to take possession of the reform question for himself and his party.

The reappearance of Mr. Bright in politics stimulated no

doubt this resolve on the part of the Conservative leader. We speak only of the one leader; for it is not likely that the prime minister, Lord Derby, took any active interest in the matter. Lord Derby had outlived political ambition, or he had had perhaps all the political success he cared for. There was not much to tempt him into a new reform campaign. Times had changed since his fiery energy went so far to stimulate the Whigs of that day into enthusiasm for the bill of Lord Grey. Lord Derby had had nearly all in life that such a man could desire. He had station of the highest; he had wealth and influence; he had fame as a great parliamentary debater. Now that Brougham had ceased to take any leading part in debate, he had no rival in the House of Lords. He had an easy, bonyant temperament; he was, as we have said already, something of a scholar, and he loved the society of his Homer and his Horace, while he could enjoy out-door amusements as well as any Squire Western or Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone of them all. He was a sincere man without any pretense; and, if he did not himself care about reform, he was not likely to put on any appearance of enthusiasm about it. Nor did he set much store on continuing in office. He would be the same Lord Derby out of office as in. It is probable, therefore, that he would have allowed reform to go its way for him and never troubled; and if loss of office came of his indifference, he would have gone out of office with unabated cheerfulness. But this way of looking at things was by no means suitable to his energetic and ambitious lieutenant. Mr. Disraeli had not nearly attained the height of his ambition, nor had he by any means exhausted his political energies. Mr. Disraeli, therefore, was not a man to view with any satisfaction the consequences likely to come to the Conservative party from an open refusal to take up the cause of reform. He had always, too, measured fairly and accurately the popular influence and the parliamentary strength of Mr. Bright. It is clear that, at a time when most of the Conservatives, and not a few of the Whigs, regarded Mr. Bright as only an eloquent and respectable demagogue, Mr. Disraeli had made up his mind that the Manchester orator was a man of genius and foresight, who must be taken account of as a genuine political power. Mr. Bright now returned to public life. He had for a long time been withdrawn by ill-health from



all share in political agitation, or politics of any kind. At one time it was indeed fully believed that the House of Commons had seen the last of him. To many his return to parliament and the platform seemed almost like a resurrection. Almost immediately on his returning to public life he flung himself into a new agitation for reform. He addressed great meetings in the north of England and in Scotland, and he was induced to draw up a reform bill of his own. His scheme was talked of at that time by some of his opponents as though it were a project of which Jack Cade might have approved. It was practically a proposal to establish a franchise precisely like that which we have now, ballot and all, only that it threw the expenses of the returning officer on the county or borough rate, and it introduced a somewhat large measure of redistribution of seats. The opponents of reform were heard everywhere assuring themselves and their friends that the country in general cared nothing about reform. Mr. Bright himself was accredited with having said that his own effort to arouse a reforming spirit even in the North was like flogging a dead horse. But Mr. Disraeli was far too shrewd to be satisfied with such consolations as his followers would thus have administered. He knew well enough that the upper and middle classes cared very little about a new reform bill. They had had all the reform they wanted in 1832. But so long as the bill of 1832 remained unsupplemented, it was evident that any political party could appeal to the support of the working-classes throughout the country in favor of any movement which promised to accomplish that object. In short, Mr. Disraeli knew that reform had to come some time, and he was resolved to make his own game if he could.

This time, however, he was not successful. The difficulties in his way were too great. It would have been impossible for him to introduce such a reform bill as Mr. Bright would be likely to accept. His own party would not endure such a proposition. He could only go so far as to bring in some bill which might possibly seem to reformers to be doing something for reform, and at the same time might be commended to Conservatives on the ground that it really did nothing for it. Mr. Disraeli's reform bill was a curiosity. It offered a variety of little innovations which nobody wanted or could have cared

about, and it left out of sight altogether the one reform which alone gave an excuse for any legislation. We have explained more than once that Lord Grey's reform bill admitted the middle-class to legislation but left the working-class out. What was now wanted was a measure to let the working-class in. Nobody seriously pretended that any other object than this was sought by those who called out for reform. Yet Mr. Disraeli's scheme made no more account of the working-class as a whole than if they already possessed the vote every man of them. It proposed to give a vote in boroughs to persons who had property to the amount of £10 a year in the funds, bank stock or East India stock; to persons who had £60 in a savings bank; to persons receiving pensions in the naval, military, or civil service, amounting to £20 a year; to professional men, to graduates of universities, ministers of religion, and certain schoolmasters; in fact, to a great number of persons who either already had the franchise or could have it if they had any interest that way. The only proposition in the bill not absolutely farcial and absurd was that which would have equalized the franchise in counties and in boroughs, making £10 the limit in each alike. The English working-classes cried out for the franchise, and Mr. Disraeli proposed to answer the cry by giving the vote to graduates of universities, medical practitioners, and schoolmasters.

Yet we may judge of the difficulties Mr. Disraeli had to deal with by the reception which even this poor little measure met with from some of his own colleagues. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley resigned office rather than have anything to do with it. Mr. Henley was a specimen of the class who might have been described as a fine old English gentleman. He was shrewd, blunt, honest, and narrow; given to broad jokes and to arguments flavored with a sort of humor which reminded not very faintly of the drollery of Fielding's time. Mr. Walpole was a man of gentle bearing, not by any means a robust politician, nor liberally endowed with intellect or eloquence, but pure-minded and upright enough to satisfy the most exacting. Mr. Walpole wrote to Lord Derby a letter which had a certain simple dignity and pathos in it, to explain the reason for his resignation. He frankly said that the measure which the cabinet were prepared to recommend was one which they should all of them have stoutly opposed if either Lord

Palmerston or Lord John Russell had ventured to bring it forward. This seemed to Mr. Walpole reason enough for his declining to have anything to do with it. It did not appear to him honorable to support a measure because it had been taken up by one's own party, which the party would assuredly have denounced and opposed to the uttermost if it had been brought forward by the other side. Mr. Walpole's colleagues no doubt respected his scruples, but some probably regarded them with good-natured contempt. Such a man, it was clear, was not destined to make much of a way in politics. Public opinion admired Mr. Walpole and applauded his decision. Public opinion would have pronounced even more strongly in his favor had it known that at the time of his making this decision and withdrawing from a high official position Mr. Walpole was in circumstances which made the possession of a salary of the utmost importance to him. Had he even swallowed his scruples and held on a little longer, he would have become entitled to a pension. He did not appear to have hesitated a moment. He was a high-minded gentleman; he could very well bear to be poor; he could not bear to surrender his self-respect.

This resignation, however, so honorable to Mr. Walpole and to Mr. Henley, will serve to show how great were the difficulties which then stood in Mr. Disraeli's way. Probably Mr. Disraeli's own feelings were in favor of a liberally extended suffrage. It is not a very rash assumption to conjecture that he looked with contempt on the kind of reasoning which fancied that the safety of a state depends upon the narrowness of its franchise. But his bill bore the character of a measure brought in with the object of trying to reconcile irreconcilable claims and principles. To be the author of something which should give the government the credit with their opponents of being reformers at heart, and with their friends of being non-reformers at heart, was apparently the object of Mr. Disraeli. The attempt was a complete failure. It was vain to preach up the beauty of "lateral extension" of the franchise as opposed to extension downward. The country saw through the whole imposture at a glance. One of Mr. Disraeli's defects as a statesman has always been that he is apt to be just a little too clever for the business he has in hand. This ingenious reform bill was a little too clever.

More matter and less art would have served its turn. It was found out in a moment. Some one described its enfranchising clauses as "fancy franchises;" Mr. Bright introduced the phrase to the House of Commons, and the clauses never recovered the epithet. The savings bank clause provoked immense ridicule. Suppose, it was asked, a man draws out a few pounds to get married, or to save his aged parent from starvation, or to help a friend out of difficulties, is it fair that he should be immediately disfranchised as a penalty for being loving and kindly? One does not want to make the electoral franchise a sort of Monthyon prize for the most meritorious of any class; but still is it reasonable that a man who is to have a vote as long as he hoards his little sum of money is to forfeit the vote the moment he does a kind or even a prudent thing? Even as a matter of mere prudence, it was very sensibly argued, is it not better that a man should do something else with his money than invest it in a savings bank which is, after all, only a safer version of the traditional old stocking? It would be useless to go into any of the discussions which took place on this extraordinary bill. It can hardly be said to have been considered seriously. It had to be got rid of somehow, and therefore Lord John Russell moved an amendment, declaring that no readjustment of the franchise would satisfy the House of Commons or the country which did not provide for a greater extension of the suffrage in cities and boroughs than was contemplated in the government measure. Perhaps the most remarkable speech made during the debate was that of Mr. Gladstone, who, accepting neither the bill nor the resolution, occupied himself chiefly with an appeal to parliament and public opinion on behalf of small boroughs. The argument was ingenious. It pointed to the number of eminent men who had been enabled to begin public life very early by means of a nomination for some pocket-borough, or who, having quarreled with the constituents of a city or county, might for awhile have been exiled from parliament if some pocket-borough, or rather pocket-borough's master, had not admitted them by that little postern-gate. The argument, however, went no further than to show that in a civilized country every anomaly, however absurd, may be turned to some good account. If, instead of creating small pocket-boroughs, the English

constitutional system had conferred on a few great peers the privilege of nominating members of parliament directly by their own authority, this arrangement would undoubtedly work well in some cases. Beyond all question some of these privileged peers would send into parliament deserving men who otherwise might be temporarily excluded from it. The same thing would sometimes happen no doubt, if they made over the nomination to their wives or their wives' waiting-women. But the system of pocket-boroughs, taken as a whole, was stuffed with injustice and corruption. It worked direct evil in twenty cases for every one case in which it brought about indirect good. The purchase of seats in the parliament of Paris undoubtedly did good in some cases. Some of the men for whom seats were bought proved themselves useful and impartial members of that curious tribunal.

Lord John Russell's resolution was carried by a majority of three hundred and thirty against two hundred and ninety-one, or a majority of thirty-nine. The government dissolved parliament, and appealed to the country. The elections did not excite very much public interest. They took place during the most critical moments of the war between France and Austria. While such news was arriving as that of the defeat of Magenta, the defeat of Solferino, the entrance of the emperor of the French and the king of Sardinia into Milan, it was not likely that domestic news of a purely parliamentary interest could occupy all the attention of Englishmen. It was not merely a great foreign war that the people of these islands looked on with such absorbing interest. It was what seemed to be the birth of a new era for Europe. There were some who felt inclined to echo the celebrated saying of Pitt after Austerlitz, and declare that we might as well roll up the map of Europe. In the victories of the French many saw the first indications of the manifest destiny of the heir of Waterloo, the man who represented a defeat. To many the strength of the Austrian military system had seemed the great bulwark of Conservatism in Europe; and now that was gone, shriveled like a straw in fire, shattered like a potsherd. Surprise, bewilderment, rather than partisan passion of any kind, predominated over England. In such a condition of things the general election passed over hardly noticed. When it was over, it was found that the

conservatives had gained indeed, but had not gained nearly enough to enable them to hold office, unless by the toleration of their rivals. The rivals soon made up their minds that they had tolerated them long enough. A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Willis' Rooms, once the scene of Almack's famous assemblies. There the chiefs of the Liberal party met to adjust their several disputes, and to arrange on some plan of united action. Lord Palmerston represented one section of the party, Lord John Russell another. Mr. Sidney Herbert spoke for the Peelites. Not a few persons were surprised to find Mr. Bright among the speakers. It was well known that he liked Lord Palmerston little; that it could hardly be said he liked the Tories any less. But Mr. Bright was for a reform bill, from whomsoever it should come; and he thought, perhaps, that the Liberal chiefs had learned a lesson. The party contrived to agree upon a principle of action, and a compact was entered into, the effect of which was soon made clear at the meeting of the new parliament. A vote of want of confidence was at once moved by the Marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, and even then marked out by common report as a future leader of the Liberal party. Lord Hartington had sat but a short time in the House of Commons, and had thus far given no indications of any eloquence, or even of any taste for politics. Nothing could more effectively illustrate one of the peculiarities of the English political system than the choice of the Marquis of Hartington as the figurehead of this important movement against the Tory government. Lord Hartington did not then, nor for many years afterward, show any greater capacity for politics than is shown by an ordinary county member. He seemed rather below than above the average of the House of Commons. As leader subsequently of the Liberal party in that house, he can hardly be said to have shown as yet any higher qualities than a strong good sense and a manly firmness of purpose, combined with such skill in debate as constant practice under the most favorable circumstances must give to any man not absolutely devoid of all capacity for self-improvement. But even of the moderate abilities which Lord Hartington proved that he possessed in the Conservative parliament of 1874, he had given no indication in 1859. He was put up to move the vote of want of

confidence as the heir of the great Whig house of Devonshire; his appearance in the debate would have carried just as much significance with it if he had simply moved his resolution without an accompanying word. The debate that followed was long and bitter. It was enlivened by more than even the usual amount of personalities. Mr. Disraeli and Sir James Graham had a sharp passage of arms, in the course of which Sir James Graham used an expression that has been often quoted since. He described Mr. Disraeli as "the Red Indian of debate," who "by the use of the tomahawk had cut his way to power, and by recurrence to the scalping system hopes to prevent the loss of it." The scalping-system however, did not succeed this time. The division, when it came on after three nights of discussion showed a majority of thirteen in favor of Lord Hartington's motion. The result surprised no one. Everybody knew that the moment the various sections of the Liberal party contrived a combination the fate of the ministry was sealed. Willis' rooms had anticipated the decision of St. Stephen's. Rather, perhaps, might it be said that St. Stephen's had only recorded the decision of Willis' rooms.

The queen invited Lord Granville to form a ministry. Lord Granville was still a young man to be prime minister, considering how much the habits of parliamentary life had changed since the days of Pitt. He was not much over forty years of age. He had filled many ministerial offices, however, and had experience of parliament which may be said to have begun with his majority. After some nine years spent in the House of Commons, the death of his father called him, in 1846, to the House of Lords. He made no assumption of commanding abilities, nor had he any pretense to the higher class of eloquence or statesmanship. But he was a thorough man of the world and of parliament; he understood English ways of feeling and of acting; he was a clever debater, and had the genial art—very useful and very rare in English public life—of keeping even antagonists in good humor. Probably a better man could not have been found to suit all parties as prime minister of England, in times when there was no particular stress or strain to try the energies and the patience of the country. Still there was some surprise felt that the queen should have passed over two men of years and of fame like Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, and have invited a

much younger man at such a moment to undertake for the first time to form a ministry. An explanation was soon given on the part of the queen, or at least with her consent. The queen had naturally thought, in the first instance, of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; but she found it "a very invidious and unwelcome task" to make a choice between "two statesmen so full of years and honors, and possessing so just a claim on her consideration." Her majesty, therefore, thought a compromise might be best got at between the more Conservative section of the Liberal party, which Lord Palmerston appeared to represent, and the more popular section led by Lord John Russell, if both could be united under the guidance of Lord Granville, the acknowledged leader of the Liberal party in the House of Lords. The attempt was not successful. Lord John Russell declined to serve under Lord Granville, but declared himself perfectly willing to serve under Lord Palmerston. This declaration at once put an end to Lord Granville's chances and to the whole difficulty which had been anticipated. There had been a coldness for some time between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. The two men were undoubtedly rivals; at least all the world persisted in regarding them in such a light. It was not thought possible that Lord John Russell would submit to take office under Lord Palmerston. On this occasion, however, as upon others, Lord John Russell showed a spirit of self-abnegation for which the public in general did not give him credit. The difficulty was settled to the satisfaction of every one, Lord Granville included. Lord Granville was not in the slightest degree impatient to become prime minister, and indeed probably felt relieved from a very unwelcome responsibility when he was allowed to accept office under the premiership of Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston was now prime minister for life. Until his death he held the office with the full approval of Conservatives as well as Liberals; nay, indeed, with much warmer approbation from the majority of the Conservatives than from many of the Liberals.

Palmerston formed a strong ministry. Mr. Gladstone was chancellor of the exchequer; Lord John Russell had the office of foreign secretary; Sir G. C. Lewis was home secretary; Mr. Sidney Herbert minister for war. The Duke of Newcastle took charge of the colonies, Mr. Cardwell



accepted the Irish secretaryship, and Sir Charles Wood was secretary for India. Lord Palmerston endeavored to propitiate the Manchester Liberals by offering a seat in the government to Mr. Cobden and to Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden was at the time on his way home from the United States. In his absence he had been elected member for Rochdale; and in his absence, too, the office of president of the board of trade in the new ministry had been put at his disposal. His friends eagerly awaited his return, and, when the steamer bringing him home was near Liverpool a number of them went out to meet him before his landing. They boarded the steamer, and astonished him with the news that the Tories were out, that the Liberals were in, that he was member for Rochdale, and that Lord Palmerston had offered him a place in the new ministry. Cobden took the news which related to himself with his usual quiet modesty. He declined to say anything about the offer he had received from Lord Palmerston until he should have the opportunity of giving his answer directly to Lord Palmerston himself. This, of course, was only a necessary courtesy, and most of Cobden's friends were of opinion that he ought to accept Lord Palmerston's offer. Cobden explained afterward that the office put at his disposal was exactly that which would have best suited him, and in which he thought that he could do some good. He also declared frankly that the salary attached to the office would be a consideration of much importance to him. Mr. Cobden's friends were well aware that he had invested the greater part of his property in American railways, which just then were not very profitable investments, although in the long run they justified his confidence in their success. At the moment he was a poor man. Yet he did not in his own mind hesitate a moment about Lord Palmerston's offer. He disapproved of Palmerston's foreign policy, of his military expenditure, and his love of interfering in the disputes of the continent; and he felt that he could not conscientiously accept office under such a leader. He refused the offer decisively, and the chief promoter of the repeal of the corn laws never held any place in an English administration. Cobden, however, advised his friend, Mr. Milner Gibson, to avail himself of Lord Palmerston's offer, and Mr. Gibson acted on the advice. The opinions of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Gibson were the same on most subjects,

but Mr. Gibson had never stood out before the country in so conspicuous a position as an opponent of Lord Palmerston. Perhaps Cobden's advice was given in the spirit of Dr. Parr, who encouraged a modest friend to adopt the ordinary pronunciation of the Egyptian city's name. "Dr. Bentley and, I sir, must call it Alexandria; but I think you may call it Alexandria."

Mr. Cobden felt really grateful to Lord Palmerston for his offer, and for his manner of making it. "I had no personal feeling whatever," he said to his constituents at Rochdale, "in the course I took with regard to Lord Palmerston's offer. If I had had any feeling of personal hostility, which I never had toward him, for he is of that happy nature which cannot create a personal enemy, his kind and manly offer would have instantly disarmed me." Lord Palmerston had not made any tender of office to Mr. Bright; and he wrote to Mr. Bright frankly explaining his reasons. Mr. Bright had been speaking out too strongly during his recent reform campaign to make his presence in the cabinet acceptable to some of the Whig magnates for whom seats had to be found. It is curious to notice now the conviction, which at that time seemed to be universal, that Mr. Cobden was a much more moderate reformer than Mr. Bright. The impression was altogether wrong. There was in Mr. Bright's nature a certain element of Conservatism which showed itself clearly enough the moment the particular reforms which he thought necessary were carried; Mr. Cobden would have gone on advancing in the direction of reform as long as he lived. It was Mr. Cobden's conciliatory manner, and an easy, genuine *bonhomie*, worthy of Palmerston himself, that made the difference between the two men in popular estimation. Not much difference, to be sure, was ever to be noticed between them in public affairs. Only once had they voted in opposite lobbies of the House of Commons, and that was, if we are not mistaken, on the Maynooth grant; and Mr. Bright afterward adopted the views of Mr. Cobden. But where there was any difference, even of speculative opinion, Mr. Cobden went further than Mr. Bright along the path of Radicalism. Mr. Cobden's sweet temper and good-humored disposition made it hard for him to express strong opinions in tones of anger. It is doubtful whether a man of his temperament ever could be a really great orator. Indig-

nation is even more effective as an element in the making of great speeches than in the making of small verses.

The closing days of the year were made memorable by the death of Macaulay. He had been raised to the peerage, and had had some hopes of being able to take occasional part in the stately debates of the House of Lords. But his health almost suddenly broke down, and his voice was never heard in the upper chamber. He died prematurely, having only entered on his sixtieth year. We have already studied the literary character of this most successful literary man. Macaulay had had, as he often said himself, a singularly happy life, although it was not without its severe losses and its griefs. His career was one of uninterrupted success. His books brought him fame, influence, social position, and wealth, all at once. He never made a failure. The world only applauded one book more than the other, the second speech more than the first. Macaulay the essayist, Macaulay the historian, Macaulay the ballad-writer, Macaulay the parliamentary orator, Macaulay the brilliant, inexhaustible talker—he was alike, it might appear, supreme in everything he chose to do or to attempt. After his death there came a natural reaction; and the reaction, as is always the case, was inclined to go too far. People began to find out that Macaulay had done too many things; that he did not do anything as it might have been done; that he was too brilliant; that he was only brilliant; that he was not really brilliant at all, but only superficial and showy. The disparagement was more unjust by far than even the extravagant estimate. Macaulay was not the paragon, the ninth wonder of the world, for which people once set him down; but he was undoubtedly a great literary man. He was also a man of singularly noble character. He was, in a literary sense, egotistic; that is to say, he thought and talked and wrote a great deal about his works and himself; but he was one of the most unselfish men that ever lived. He appears to have enjoyed advancement, success, fame, and money only because these enabled him to give pleasure and support to the members of his family. He was attached to his family, especially to his sisters, with the tenderest affection. His real nature seems only to have thoroughly shone out when in their society. There he was loving, sportive even to joyous frolicsomeness; a glad schoolboy almost to the very end. He was remark-

ably generous and charitable, even to strangers; his hand was almost always open; but he gave so unostentatiously that it was not until after his death half his kindly deeds became known. He had a spirit which was absolutely above any of the corrupting temptations of money and rank. He was very poor at one time; and during his poverty he was beginning to make his reputation in the House of Commons. It is often said that a poor man feels nowhere so much out of place, nowhere so much at a disadvantage, nowhere so much humiliated, as in the House of Commons. Macaulay felt nothing of the kind. He bore himself as easily and steadfastly as though he had been the eldest son of a proud and wealthy family. It did not seem to have occurred to him when he was poor that money was lacking to the dignity of his intellect and his manhood; or when he was rich that money added to it. Certain defects of temper and manner, rather than of character, he had which caused men often to misunderstand him, and sometimes to dislike him. He was apt to be overbearing in tone, and to show himself a little too confident of his splendid gifts and acquirements: his marvelous memory, his varied reading, his overwhelming power of argument. He trampled on men's prejudices too heedlessly, was inclined to treat ignorance as if it were a crime, and to make dullness feel that it had cause to be ashamed of itself. Such defects as these are hardly worth mentioning, and would not be mentioned here, but that they serve to explain some of the misconceptions which were formed of Macaulay by many during his lifetime, and some of the antagonisms which he unconsciously created. Absolutely without literary affectation, undepressed by early poverty, unspoiled by later and almost unequalled success, he was an independent, quiet, self-relying man who, in all his noon of fame, found most happiness in the companionship and the sympathy of those he loved; and who, from first to last, was loved most tenderly by those who knew him best. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in the first week of the new year, and there truly took his place among his peers.

## CHAPTER XLI.

## THE FRENCH TREATY AND THE PAPER DUTIES.

LORD PALMERSTON'S ministry came into power in troublous times. All over the world there seemed to be an upheaving of old systems. Since 1848 there had not been such a period of political and social commotion. A new war had broken out in China. The peace of Villafranca had only patched up the Italian system. Every one saw that there was much convulsion to come yet before Italy was likely to settle down into order. From across the Atlantic came the first murmurings of civil war. John Brown had made his famous raid into Harper's Ferry, a town on the borders of Virginia and Maryland, for the purpose of helping slaves to escape, and he was captured, tried for the attempt, and executed. He met his death with the composure of an antique hero. Victor Hugo declared in one of his most impassioned sentences, that the gibbet of John Brown was the Calvary of the anti-slavery movement; and assuredly the execution of the brave old man was the death sentence of slavery. Abraham Lincoln had just been adopted by the National Republican Convention at Chicago as candidate for the presidency, and even here in England people were beginning to understand what that meant. At home there were distractions of other kinds. Some of the greatest strikes ever known in England had just broken out; and a political panic was further perplexed by the quarrels of class with class. A profound distrust of Louis Napoleon prevailed almost everywhere. The fact that he had been recently our ally did not do much to diminish this distrust. On the contrary, it helped in a certain sense to increase it. Against what state, it was asked, did he enter into alliance with us? Against Russia. To defend Turkey? Not at all; Louis Napoleon always acknowledged that he despised the Turks and felt sure nothing could ever be made of them. It was to have his revenge for Moscow and the Beresina, people said, that he struck at Russia; and he made us his mere tools in the enterprise. Now he turns upon Austria, to make her atone for other wrongs done against the ambition of the Bonapartes; and he has conquered. Austria, believed by all men to have the greatest military organization in Europe,

lies crushed at his feet. What next? Prussia perhaps—or England? The official classes in this country had from the first been in sympathy with Austria, and would, if they could, have had England take up her quarrel. The Tories were Austrian for the most part. Not much of the feeling for Italy which was afterward so enthusiastic and effusive had yet sprung up in England among the Liberals and the bulk of the population. People did not admit that it was an affair of Italy at all; they saw in it rather an evidence of the ambition of Piedmont. When, soon after the close of the short war, it became known that Sardinia was to pay for the alliance of France by the surrender of Nice and Savoy, the indignation in this country became irrepressible. The whole thing seemed a base transaction. The house of Savoy, said an indignant orator in parliament, had sprung from the womb of those mountains; its connection with them should be as eternal as the endurance of the mountains themselves. Men saw in the conduct of Louis Napoleon only an evidence of the most ignoble rapacity. It is of no use, they said, talking of alliances and cordial understandings with such a man. There is in him no faith and no scruple. *Cras mihi.* To-morrow he will try to humble and to punish England as he has already humbled and punished Austria; his alliance with us will prove to be of as much account as did his alliance with Sardinia. He did not scruple to wring territory from the confederate whose devoted friend and patron he professed to be; what should we have to expect, we against whom he cherishes up a national and a family hatred, if by any chance he should be enabled to strike us a sudden blow?

The feeling therefore in England was almost entirely one of revived dread and distrust of Louis Napoleon. There was a good deal to be said for his bargain about Savoy and Nice by those who were anxious to defend it. But, taken as a whole, it was a singularly unfortunate transaction. It turned back the attention of conquerors to that old-fashioned plan of partition which sanguine people were beginning to hope was gone out of European politics, like the sacking of towns and the holding of princes to ransom. It is likely that Louis Napoleon thought of this himself somewhat bitterly later on in his career, when the Germans adopted his own principle, although, as they themselves pleaded, with somewhat better excuse; for they only ex-

torted territory from an enemy; he extorted it from a friend. There could be no pretense that it was other than an act of extortion. Even the Piedmontese statesmen who conducted the transaction—Cavour cleverly dodged out of it himself—did not venture to profess that they were doing it willingly. It had to be done. Perhaps it had to be done by Louis Napoleon as well as by Victor Emmanuel. Cavour had compelled the emperor of the French to make a stand for Italy; but the emperor could hardly face his own people without telling them that France was to have something for her money and her blood. Wars for an idea generally end like this. On the whole, however, let it be owned that the Italians had made a good bargain. Savoy and Nice were provinces of which the Italian nationality was very doubtful; of which the Italian sentiment was perhaps more doubtful still. Louis Napoleon had the worst of the bargain in that as in most other transactions wherein he thought he was doing a clever thing. He went very near estranging altogether the friendly feeling of the English people from him and from France. The invasion panic sprang up again here in a moment. The volunteer forces began to increase in numbers and in ardor. Plans of coast fortification and of national defenses generally were thrust upon parliament from various quarters. A feverish anxiety about the security of the island took possession of many minds that were usually tranquil and shrewd enough. It really seemed as if the country was looking out for what Mr. Disraeli called, a short time afterward, when he was not in office and was therefore not responsible to public clamor for the defense of our coasts, “a midnight foray from our imperial ally.” The venerable Lord Lyndhurst took on himself in especial the task of rousing the nation. With a vigor of manner and a literary freshness of style well worthy of his earlier and best years, he devoted himself to the work of inflaming the public spirit of England against Louis Napoleon; a graceful and acrid lawyer Demosthenes denouncing a Philip of the *Opéra-Comique*. “If I am asked,” said Lyndhurst, “whether I cannot place reliance upon the Emperor Napoleon, I reply with confidence that I cannot, because he is in a situation in which he cannot place reliance upon himself.” “If the calamity should come,” he asked, “if the conflagration should take place, what words can describe the extent of the calamity,

or what imagination can paint the overwhelming ruin that would fall upon us?" The most harmless and even reasonable actions on the part of France were made a ground of suspicion and alarm by some agitated critics. A great London newspaper saw strong reason for uneasiness in the fact that "at this moment the French government is pushing with extraordinary zeal the suspicious project of the impracticable Suez Canal."

We have already remarked upon the fact that up to this time there was no evidence in the public opinion of England of any sympathy with Italian independence such as became the fashion a year later. At least if there was any such sympathy here and there, it did not to any perceptible degree modify the distrust which was felt toward the Emperor Napoleon. Mrs. Barrett-Browning's passionate praises of the emperor and lamentations for the failure of "his great deed," were regarded as the harmless and gushing sentimentalisms of a poet and a woman—indeed, a poet with many people seems a sort of woman. The king of Sardinia, Victor Emanuel, had visited England not long before, and had been received with public addresses and other such demonstrations of admiration here and there; but even his concrete presence had not succeeded in making impression enough to secure him the general sympathy of the English public. Some association in Edinburgh had had the singular bad taste to send him an address of welcome in which they congratulated him on his opposition to the holy see, as if he were another Achilli or Gavazzi come over to denounce the pope. The king's reply was measured out with a crushing calmness and dignity. It coldly reminded his Edinburgh admirers of the fact, which we may presume they had forgotten, that he was descended from a long line of Catholic princes, and was the sovereign of subjects almost entirely Catholic, and that he could not therefore accept with satisfaction "words of reprobation injurious to the head of the church to which he belonged." We only recall to memory this unpleasant little incident for the purpose of pointing a moral which it might of itself suggest. It is much to be feared that the popular enthusiasm for the unity and independence of Italy which afterward flamed out in England was only enthusiasm against the pope. Something no doubt was due to the brilliancy of Garibaldi's exploits in 1860, and to the



romantic halo which at that time and for long after surrounded Garibaldi himself; but no Englishman who thinks coolly over the subject will venture to deny that nine out of every ten enthusiasts for Italian liberty at that time were in favor of Italy because Italy was supposed to be in spiritual rebellion against the pope.

The ministry attempted great things. They undertook a complete remodeling of the customs system, a repeal of the paper duties, and a reform bill. The news that a commercial treaty with France was in preparation broke on the world somewhat abruptly in the early days of 1860. The arrangement was made in a manner to set old formalism everywhere shaking its solemn head and holding up its alarmed hands. The French treaty was made without any direct assistance from professional diplomacy. It was made indeed, in despite of professional diplomacy. It was the result of private conversations and an informal agreement between the emperor of the French and Mr. Cobden. The first idea of such an arrangement came, we believe, from Mr. Bright; but it was Mr. Cobden who undertook to see the Emperor Napoleon and exchange ideas with him on the subject. The emperor of the French, to do him justice, was entirely above the conventional formalities of imperial dignity. He sometimes ran the risk of seeming undignified in the eyes of the vulgar by the disregard of all formality with which he was willing to allow himself to be approached. Although Mr. Cobden had never held official position of any kind in England, the emperor received him very cordially and entered readily into his ideas on the subject of a treaty between England and France which should remove many of the prohibitions and restrictions then interfering with a liberal interchange of the productions of the two nations. Napoleon the Third was a freetrader or something nearly approaching to it. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, was still more advanced and more decided in his views of political economy. The emperor was, moreover, a good deal under the influence of Michael Chevalier, the distinguished French publicist and economist, who from having been a member of the socialistic sect of the famous Père Enfantin, had come to be a practical politician and an economist of a very high order. Mr. Cobden had the assistance of all the influence Mr. Gladstone could bring to bear. It is not likely that Lord Palma-

erston cared much about the French treaty project, but at least he did not oppose it. Mr. Cobden was under the impression, and probably not without reason, that the officials of the English embassy in Paris were rather inclined to thwart, than to assist his efforts. But if such a feeling prevailed, it was perhaps less a dislike of the proposed arrangement between England and France than an objection to the informal and irregular way of bringing it about. Diplomacy has always been mechanical and conventional in its working, and the English diplomatic service has even among diplomatic services been conspicuous for its worship of routine.

There were many difficulties in the way on both sides. The French people were for the most part opposed to the principles of free trade. The French manufacturing bodies were almost all against it. Some of the most influential politicians of the country were uncompromising opponents of free trade. M. Thiers, for example, was an almost impassioned protectionist. It may be admitted at once that if the emperor of the French had had to submit the provisions of his treaty to the vote of an independent legislative assembly, he could not have secured its adoption. He had in fact to enter into the engagement by virtue of his imperial will and power. On the other hand, a strong objection was felt in this country just then to any friendly negotiation or arrangement whatever with the emperor. His schemes in Savoy and Nice had created so much dislike and distrust of him, that many people felt as if war between the two states were more likely to come than any sincere and friendly understanding on any subject. As soon as it became known that the treaty was in course of negotiation a storm of indignation broke out in this country. Most of the newspapers denounced the treaty as a mean arrangement with a man whose policy was only perfidious, and whose vows were as little to be trusted as dicers' oaths. Not only the Conservative party condemned and denounced the proposed agreement, but a large proportion of the Liberals were bitter against it. Some critics declared that Mr. Cobden had been simply taken in; that the French emperor had "bubbled" him. Others accused Mr. Cobden of having entered into a conspiracy with the emperor to enable Louis Napoleon to "jockey his own subjects"—such was the phrase adopted by one influential member

of parliament, the late Mr. Horsman, then a speaker with a certain gift of rattling metallic declamation. Others again declared that the compromise effected by the treaty was in itself a breach of the principle of free trade. It was observable that this argument usually came from lately converted or still unconverted protectionists; just as the argument founded on the arbitrariness of the imperial action was most strenuously enforced by those who at home were least inclined to encourage the principle of government by the people. Thus Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and even Mr. Gladstone found themselves in the odd position of having to repel the charge of renouncing free trade, and rejecting the principles of representative government. It is hardly necessary to defend the course taken by Mr. Cobden in accepting a compromise where he could not possibly obtain an absolutely free interchange of commodities. The most devoted champion of the freedom of religious worship is not to be blamed if he enters into an agreement with some foreign government to obtain for its nonconforming subjects a qualified degree of religious liberty. An opponent of capital punishment would not be held to have surrendered his principle because he endeavored to reduce the number of capital sentences where he saw no hope of the immediate abolition of the death penalty. Nor do we see that there was anything inconsistent in Mr. Cobden's entering into an agreement with the emperor of the French, even though that agreement was to be carried out in France by an arbitrary exertion of imperial will, such as would have been intolerable and impossible in England. To lay down a principle of this kind would be only to say that no statesman shall conclude an arrangement of any sort with the rulers of a state not so liberal as his own in its system of government. Of course no one ever thinks of arguing for such a principle in the regular diplomatic negotiations between states. Those who found fault with Mr. Cobden because he was willing to assent to an arrangement which the Emperor Napoleon imposed upon his subjects must have known that our official statesmen were every day entering into engagements with one or the other European sovereign which were to be carried out by that sovereign on the same arbitrary principle. There was in fact no soundness or sincerity in such objections to Mr. Cobden's work. Some men opposed it because they were protec-

tionists, pure and simple; some opposed it because they detested the Emperor Napoleon. The ground of objection with not a few was their dislike of Mr. Cobden and the Manchester school. The hostility of some came from their repugnance to seeing anything done out of the regular and conventional way. All these objections coalesced against the treaty and the chancellor of the exchequer's budget; but the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone and the strength of the government prevailed against them all.

The effect of the treaty, so far as France was concerned, was an engagement virtually to remove all prohibitory duties on all the staples of British manufacture, and to reduce the duties on English coal and coke, bar and pig iron, tools, machinery, yarns, flax, and hemp. England, for her part, proposed to sweep away all duties on manufactured goods, and to reduce greatly the duties on foreign wines. In one sense, of course, England gave more than she got, but that one sense is only the protectionist's sense—more properly nonsense. England could not, with any due regard for the real meaning of words, be said to have given up anything when she enabled her people to buy light and excellent French wines at a cheap price. She could not be said to have sacrificed anything when she secured for her consumers the opportunity of buying French manufactured articles at a natural price. The whole principle of free trade stamps as ridiculous the theory that because our neighbor foolishly cuts himself off from the easy purchase of the articles we have to sell, it is our business to cut ourselves off from the easy purchase of the articles he has to sell and we wish to buy. We gave France much more reduction of duty than we got; but the reduction was in every instance a direct benefit to our consumers. The introduction of light wines, for example, made, after awhile, a very remarkable, and on the whole a very beneficial, change in the habits of our people. The heavier and more fiery drinks became almost disused by large classes of the population. The light wines of Bordeaux began to be familiar in almost every table; the portentous brandied ports, which carried gout in their very breath, were gradually banished. Some of the debates, however, on this particular part of the budget recalled to memory the days of Colonel Sibthorp and his dread of the importation of foreign wares among our countrymen. Many prophetic voices

declared in the House of Commons that with the greater use of French wines would come the rapid adoption of what were called French morals; that the maids and matrons of England would be led by the treaty to the drinking of claret, and from the drinking of claret to the ways of the French novelist's odious heroine, Madame Bovary. Appalling pictures were drawn of the orgies to go on in the shops of confectioners and pastrycooks who had a license to sell the light wines. The virtue of Englishwomen, it was insisted, would never be able to stand this new and terrible mechanism of destruction. She who was far above the temptations of the public-house would be drawn easily into the more genteel allurements of the wine-selling confectioner's shop; and in every such shop would be the depraved conventional foreigner, the wretch with a mustache and without morals, lying in wait to accomplish at last his long-boasted conquests of the blonde misses of England. One impassioned speaker, glowing into a genuine prophetic fury as he spoke, warned his hearers of the near approach of a time when a man suddenly entering one of the accursed confectioners' shops in quest of the missing female members of his family, would find his wife lying drunk in one room and his daughter disgraced in another.

In spite of all this, however, Mr. Gladstone succeeded in carrying this part of his budget. He carried, too, as far as the House of Commons was concerned, his important measure for the abolition of the duty on paper. The duty on paper was the last remnant of an ancient system of finance which pressed severely on journalism. The stamp duty was originally imposed with the object of checking the growth of seditious newspapers. It was reduced, increased, reduced again, and increased again, until in the early part of the century it stood at fourpence on each copy of a newspaper issued. In 1836 it was brought down to the penny, represented by the red stamp on every paper, which most of us can still remember. There was besides this a considerable duty—sixpence, or some such sum—on every advertisement in a newspaper. Finally, there was the heavy duty on the paper material itself. A journal, therefore, could not come into existence until it had made provision for all these factitious and unnecessary expenses. The consequence was that a newspaper was a costly thing.

Its possession was the luxury of the rich; those who could afford less had to be content with an occasional read of a paper. It was common for a number of persons to club together and take in a paper, which they read by turns, the general understanding being that he whose turn came last remained in possession of the journal. It was considered the fair compensation for his late reception of the news that he should come into the full proprietorship of the precious newspaper. The price of a daily paper then was uniformly sixpence; and no sixpenny paper contained anything like the news, or went to a tenth of the daily expense, which is supplied in the one case and undertaken in the other by the penny papers of our day. Gradually the burdens on journalism and on the reading public were reduced. The advertisement duty was abolished; in 1855 the stamp duty was abolished; that is to say, the stamp was either removed altogether or was allowed to stand as postage. On the strength of this reform many new and cheap journals were started. Two of them in London, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Morning Star*, acquired influence and reputation. But the effect of the duty on the paper material still told heavily against cheap journalism. It became painfully evident that a newspaper could not be sold profitably for a penny while that duty remained, and therefore a powerful agitation was set on foot for its removal. The agitation was carried on, not on behalf of the interests of newspaper speculation, but on behalf of the reading public and of the education of the people. It is not necessary now to enter upon any argument to show that the publication of such a paper as the *Daily News* or the *Daily Telegraph* must be a matter of immense importance in popular education. But at that time there were still men who argued that newspaper literature could only be kept up to a proper level of instruction and decorum by being made factitiously costly. It was the creed of many that cheap newspapers meant the establishment of a daily propaganda of socialism, communism, red republicanism, blasphemy, bad spelling, and general immorality.

Mr. Gladstone undertook the congenial task of abolishing the duty on paper. He was met with strong opposition from both sides of the house. The paper manufacturers made it at once a question of protection to their own trade. They dreaded the competition of all manner of adventurous

rivals under a free system. Many of the paper manufacturers had been staunch free traders when it was a case of free trade to be applied to the manufactures of other people; but they cried out against having the ingredients of the unwelcome chalice commended to their own lips. Vested interests in the newspaper business itself also opposed Mr. Gladstone. The high-priced and well-established journals did not by any means relish the idea of cheap and unfettered competition. They therefore preached without reserve the doctrine that in journalism cheap meant nasty, and that the only way to keep the English press pure and wholesome was to continue the monopoly to their own publications. The House of Commons is a good deal governed, directly and indirectly, by "interests." It is influenced by them directly, as when the railway interest, the mining interest, the brewing interest, or the landed interest, boldly stands up, through its acknowledged representatives in parliament, to fight for its own hand. It is also much influenced indirectly. Every powerful interest in the house can contrive to enlist the sympathies and get the support of men who have no direct concern one way or another in some proposed measure, who know nothing about it, and do not want to be troubled with any knowledge, and who are, therefore, easily led to see that the side on which some of their friends are arrayed must be the right side. There was a good deal of rallying up of such men to sustain the cause of the paper-making and journal-selling monopoly. The result was that although Mr. Gladstone carried his resolutions for the abolition of the excise on paper, he only carried them by dwindling majorities. The second reading was carried by a majority of fifty-three; the third by a majority of only nine. The effect of this was to encourage some members of the House of Lords to attempt the task of getting rid of Mr. Gladstone's proposed reform altogether. An amendment to reject the resolutions repealing the tax was proposed by Lord Monteaigle, and received the support of Lord Derby and of Lord Lyndhurst.

Lord Lyndhurst was then just entering on his eighty-ninth year. His growing infirmities made it necessary that a temporary railing should be constructed in front of his seat in order that he might lean on it and be supported. But although his physical strength thus needed support

his speech gave no evidence of failing intellect. Even his voice could hardly be said to have lost any of its clear, light, musical strength. He entered into a long and a very telling argument to show that although the peers had abandoned their claim to alter a money bill, they had still a right to refuse their assent to a repeal of taxation, and that in this particular instance they were justified in doing so. There was not much perhaps in this latter part of the argument. Lord Lyndhurst fell back on some of his familiar alarms about the condition of Europe and the possible schemes of Louis Napoleon, and out of these he extracted reasons for contending that we ought to maintain unimpaired the revenue of the country, to be ready to meet emergencies, and encounter unexpected liabilities. In an ordinary time not much attention would be paid to criticism of this kind. It would be regarded as the duty of the finance minister, the government, and the House of Commons to see that the wants of the coming year were properly provided for in taxation; and when the government and the House of Commons had once decided that a certain amount was sufficient, the House of Lords would hardly think that on it lay any responsibility for a formal revision of the ministerial scheme. Some peer would in all probability make some such observations as those of Lord Lyndhurst; but they would be accepted as mere passing criticisms of the ministerial scheme, and it would not occur to any one to think of taking a division on the suggested amendment. In this instance the House of Lords was undoubtedly influenced by a dislike for the proposed measure of reduction, for the manner in which it had been introduced, for its ministerial author, or at least for his general policy, and for some of the measures by which it had been accompanied. It is not unlikely, for example, that Lord Lyndhurst himself felt something like resentment for the policy which answered all his eloquent warnings about the schemes of the Emperor Napoleon, by producing a treaty of commerce with the supposed invader of England. The repeal of the paper duty was known also to have the warm advocacy of Mr. Bright; and it was advocated by the *Morning Star*, a journal greatly influenced by Mr. Bright's opinions, and in which popular rumor said, very untruly, that Mr. Bright was a writer of frequent leading articles. Thus the repeal of the paper duty



got to seem in the eyes of many peers a proposal connected somehow with the spread of democracy, the support of the Manchester school, and the designs of Napoleon III.

The question which the House of Lords had to face was somewhat serious. The Commons had repealed a tax; was it constitutionally in the power of the House of Lords to reimpose it? Was not this, it was asked, simply to assert for the House of Lords a taxing power equal to that of the Commons? Was it not to reduce to nothing the principle that taxation and representation go together? Suppose, instead of re-enacting the paper duty, the House of Lords had thought fit to introduce into the new budget a new and different tax, what was there to hinder them, on their own principle, from doing so? On the other hand, those who took Lord Lyndhurst's view of the question insisted that when the budget scheme was laid before them for their approval, the House of Lords had as good a right constitutionally to reject as to accept any part of it, and that to strike out a clause in a budget was quite a different thing from taking the initiative in the imposition of taxation. It was contended that the House of Lords had not only a constitutional right to act as they were invited to do in the case of the paper duty, but that as a matter of fact they had often done so, and that the country had never challenged their authority. The Conservative party in the House of Lords can always carry any division, and in this instance it was well known that they could marshal a strong majority against Mr. Gladstone's proposed remission of taxation. But it was commonly expected that they would on this occasion, as they had done on many others, abstain from using their overpowering numerical strength; that prudent counsels would prevail in the end, and that the amendment would not be pressed to a division. The hope, however, was deceived. The House of Lords was in an unusually aggressive mood. The majority were resolved to show that they could do something. Mr. Disraeli in one of his novels had irreverently said of the Lords, that when the peers accomplish a division they cackle as if they had laid an egg. On this occasion they were determined to have a division. The majority against the government was overwhelming. For the second reading of the paper duty bill, ninety peers voted and there were fourteen proxies; in all one hundred and four. For Lord Mont-

eagle's amendment there were one hundred and sixty-one votes of peers actually present and thirty-two proxies, or one hundred and ninety-three in all. The majority against the government was therefore eighty-nine; and the repeal of the excise duty on paper was done with for that session. The peers went home cackling; not a few of them, however, a little in doubt as to the wisdom of the course they had pursued, a little afraid to think on what they had done. The House of Lords had not taken any very active step in politics for some time, and many of them were uncertain as to the manner in which the country would regard their unwonted exertion of authority.

The country took it rather coolly on the whole. Lord Palmerston promptly came forward and moved in the House of Commons for a committee to ascertain and report on the practice of each house with regard to the several descriptions of bills imposing or repealing taxes. By thus interposing at once he hoped to take the wind out of the sails of a popular agitation which he disliked and would gladly have avoided. The committee took two months to consider their report. They found, by a majority of fourteen, a series of resolutions to the effect that the privilege of the House of Commons did not extend so far as to make it actually unconstitutional for the lords to reject a bill for the repeal of a tax. Mr. Walpole was the chairman of the committee, and he drew up the report, which cited a considerable number of precedents in support of the view adopted by the majority. Mr. Bright, who was a member of the committee, did not assent to this principle. He prepared a draft report of his own in which he contended for the very reasonable view, that if the Lords might prolong or reimpose a tax by refusing their assent to its repeal when that repeal had been voted by the House of Commons, the House of Commons could not have absolute control over the taxation of the country. It seems clear that, whatever may have been the technical right of the Lords, or however precedent may have occasionally appeared to justify the course which they took, Mr. Bright was warranted in asserting that the constitution never gave the House of Lords any power of reimposing a tax which the Commons had repealed. The truth is, that if the majority of the House of Commons in favor of the repeal of the paper duties had been anything considerable, the House of Lords would

never have ventured to interfere. There was an impression among many peers that the remission was not much liked even by the majority of those who voted for it. "Gladstone has done it all," was the common saying; and it was insisted that Gladstone had done it only to satisfy Mr. Bright and the Manchester Radicals. Not a few of the peers felt convinced that the majority of the House of Commons would secretly bless them for their intervention.

Lord Palmerston followed up the report of the committee by proposing a series of resolutions which he probably considered equal to the occasion. The object of the resolutions was to reaffirm the position and the claims of the House of Commons in regard to questions of taxation. That at least was the ostensible object; the real object was to do something which should leave a way of retreat open to the Lords in another session, and at the same time make those who clamored against their intervention believe that the ministry were not indifferent to the rights of the representative chamber. The first resolution affirmed that "the right of granting aids and supplies to the crown is in the Commons alone, as an essential part of their constitution; and the limitation of all such grants as to the matter, manner, measure and time, is only in them." The second resolution declared that although the Lords had rejected bills relating to taxation by negating the whole, yet the exercise of such a power had not been frequent, and was justly regarded by the House of Commons with peculiar jealousy as affecting the right of the Commons to grant the supplies. The third resolution merely laid it down that "to guard for the future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords, and to secure to the Commons their rightful control over taxation and supply," the house reaffirmed its right to impose and remit taxes, and to frame bill of supply.

Such resolutions were not likely to satisfy the more impatient among the Liberals. An appeal was made to the people generally to thunder a national protest against the House of Lords. But the country did not, it must be owned, respond very tumultuously to the invitation. Great public meetings were held in London and the large towns of the north, and much anger was expressed at the conduct of the Lords. The *Morning Star* newspaper led the agitation. It had recourse to the ingenious device of

announcing every day in large letters and in a conspicuous part of its columns that the House of Lords had that day imposed so many thousand pounds of taxation on the English people, contrary to the fundamental principles of the constitution. It divided the whole amount of the reimposed duty by the number of days in the year, and thus arrived at the exact sum which it declared to have been each day unconstitutionally imposed on the country. This device was copied by the promoters of public meetings, and M. Taine, the French author, then in this country, was amused to see placards borne about in the streets with this portentous announcement. Mr. Bright threw his eloquence and his influence into the agitation, and Mr. Gladstone expressed himself strongly in favor of its object. Yet the country did not become greatly excited over the controversy. It did not even enter warmly into the question as to the necessity of abolishing the House of Lords. One indignant writer insisted that if the Lords did not give way the English people would turn them out of Westminster Palace and strew the Thames with the wrecks of their painted chamber. Language such as this sounded oddly out of tune with the temper of the time. The general conviction of the country was undoubtedly that the Lords were in the wrong; that whatever their technical right, if they had any, they had made a mistake, and that it would certainly be necessary to check them if they attempted to repeat it. But the feeling also was that there was not the slightest chance of such a mistake being repeated. The mere fact that so much stir had been made about it was enough to secure the country against any chance of its passing into a precedent. In truth, the country could not be induced to feel any fear of persistent unconstitutional action on the part of the House of Lords. That house is known by every one to hold most of its technical rights on condition of its rarely exercising them. When once its action in any particular case has been seriously called in question, it may be taken for granted that that action will not be repeated. Its principal function in the state now is to interpose at some moment of emergency and give the House of Commons time to think over some action which seems inconsiderate. This is a very important and may be a very useful office. At first sight it may appear a little paradoxical to compare the

functions of the English House of Lords in any way with those of the chief magistrate of the United States; and yet the delaying power which the president possesses is almost exactly the same as that which our usages, even more than our constitution, have put at the discretion of the House of Lords. The president can veto a bill in the first instance. But the legislature can afterward, if they will, pass the measure in spite of him by a certain majority. Practically this means that the president can say to the legislature, "I think this measure has not been very carefully considered; I send it back, and invite you to think the matter over again. If when you have done so, you still desire to pass the measure, I can make no further objection." This is all that the House of Lords can now do, and only in exceptional cases will the peers venture to do so much. Most people knew in 1860 that the interposition of the House of Lords only meant the delay of a session; and knew too that the controversy which had been raised upon the subject, such as it was, would be quite enough to keep the peers from carrying the thing too far. A course of action which Mr. Gladstone denounced as a "gigantic innovation," which Lord Palmerston could not approve, which the Liberal party generally condemned, and which the House of Commons made the occasion of a significantly warning resolution, was not in the least likely to be converted by repetition into an established principle and precedent. This was the reason why the country took the whole matter with comparative indifference. It was not in the least influenced by the servile arguments which many Conservatives and a few feeble Liberals employed to make out a constitutional case for the House of Lords. One orator, Mr. Horsman, carried his objection to democracy so far as to undertake an elaborate argument to prove that the House of Lords had a taxing power co-ordinate with that of the House of Commons. It may be imagined to what a depth party feeling had brought some men down when it is stated that their nonsense was applauded by the Conservatives in the House of Commons. Luckily for the privilege of the House of Lords no serious attention was paid to Mr. Horsman's argument. If that indiscreet champion of the authority of the Lords could have made out his case, if he could have shown that the peers really had a taxing power co-ordinate with that

of the Commons, there would have been nothing for it but to make new arrangements and withdraw from the hereditary assembly so inappropriate a privilege. For it may be surely taken for granted that the people of this country would never endure the idea of being taxed by a legislative body over whose members they had no manner of control.

The whole controversy has little political importance now. Perhaps it is most interesting for the evidence it gave that Mr. Gladstone was every day drifting more and more away from the opinions, not merely of his old Conservative associates, but even of his later Whig colleagues. The position which he took up in this dispute was entirely different from that of Lord Palmerston. He condemned without reserve or mitigation the conduct of the Lords and he condemned it on the very grounds which made his words most welcome to the Radicals. He did not indeed give his support to the course of extreme self-assertion which some Radical members recommended to the House of Commons; but he made it clear that he only disclaimed such measures because he felt convinced the House of Lords would soon come to its senses again, and would refrain from similar acts of unconstitutional interference in the future. The first decided adhesion of Mr. Gladstone to the doctrines of the more advanced Liberals is generally regarded as having taken place at a somewhat later period, and in relation to a different question. It would seem, however, that the first decisive intimation of the course Mr. Gladstone was thenceforward to tread was his declaration that the constitutional privileges of the representative assembly would not be safe in the hands of the Conservative opposition. Mr. Gladstone was distinctly regarded during that debate as the advocate of a policy far more energetic than any professed by Lord Palmerston. The promoters of the meetings which had been held to protest against the interference of the Lords found full warrant for the course they had taken in Mr. Gladstone's stern protest against the "gigantic innovation." Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, certainly suffered some damage in the eyes of the extreme Liberals. It became more clear than ever to them that he had no sympathy with any Radical movement here at home, however he might sympathize with every Radical movement on the Continent. Still Lord Palmerston's resolutions contained in

them quite enough to prove to the Lords that they had gone a little too far, and that they must not attempt anything of the kind again. A story used to be told of Lord Palmerston at that time which would not have been out of character if it had been true. Some one, it was said, pressed him to say what he intended to do about the Lords and the reimposition of the paper duties. "I mean to tell them," was the alleged reply of Lord Palmerston, "that it was a very good joke for once, but they must not give it to us again." This was really the effect of Palmerston's resolutions. All very well for once; but don't try it again. The Lords took the hint. They did not try it again. Even in that year, 1860, Mr. Gladstone was able to carry his resolution for removing, in accordance with the provisions of the French treaty, so much of the customs duty on imported paper as exceeded the excise duty on paper made here at home.

Meanwhile the government had sustained a severe humiliation in another way. They had had to abandon their reform bill. The bill was a moderate and simple scheme of reform. It proposed to lower the county franchise to £10, and that of the boroughs to £6; and to make a considerable redistribution of seats. Twenty-five boroughs returning two members each were to return but one for the future, and the representation of several large counties and divisions of counties was to be strengthened; Kensington and Chelsea were to form a borough with two members; Birkenhead, Staleybridge, and Burnley were to have one member each; Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Birmingham were each to have an additional member; the University of London was to have a member. It was also proposed that where there were three members to a constituency the third should represent the minority, an end to be accomplished by the simple process of allowing each elector to vote for only two of the three. The bill was brought in on March 1st. The second reading was moved on March 19th. Mr. Disraeli condemned the measure then, although he did not propose to offer any opposition to it at that stage. He made a long and labored speech, in which he talked of the bill as a "measure of a mediæval character, without the inspiration of the feudal system or the genius of the middle ages." No one knew exactly what this meant; but it was loudly applauded by Mr. Disraeli's fol-

lowers, and was thought rather fine by some of those who sat on the ministerial side. Mr. Disraeli also condemned it for being too homogeneous in its character; by which he was understood to mean that he considered there was too great a monotony or uniformity in the suffrage it proposed to introduce. Long nights of debate more or less languid followed. Mr. Disraeli, with his usual sagacity, was merely waiting to see how things would go before he committed himself or his party to any decided opposition. He began very soon to see that there was no occasion for him to take any great trouble in the matter. He and his friends had little more to do than to look on and smile complacently while the chances of the bill were being hopelessly undermined by some of the followers of the government. The milder Whigs hated the scheme rather more than the Tories did. It was Lord John Russell's scheme. Russell was faithful to the cause of reform, and he was backed up by the support of Cobden, Bright, and the Manchester and Radical party in general. But the bill found little favor in the cabinet itself. It was accepted principally as a means of soothing the Radicals and appeasing Lord John Russell. Lord Palmerston was well known to be personally indifferent to its fate. There was good reason to believe that, if left to himself, he would never have introduced such a measure, or any measure having the same object. Lord Palmerston was not so foreseeing as Mr. Disraeli. The leader of the opposition knew well enough even then that a reform bill of some kind would have to be brought in before long. There is not the least reason to suppose that he ever for a moment fell into Lord Palmerston's mistake, and fancied that the opinions of the clubs, of the respectable Whigs, and of the metropolitan shopkeepers, represented the opinions of the English people. Mr. Disraeli probably foresaw even then that it might be convenient to his own party one day to seek for the credit of carrying a Radical reform bill. He therefore took care not to express any disapproval of the principles of reform in the debates that took place on the second reading of Lord John Russell's bill. His manner was that of one who looks on scornfully at a bungling attempt to do some piece of work which he could do much better if he had a chance of making the attempt. "Call that a reform bill!" he seemed to say, "that piece of homogeneousness



and mediævalism, which has neither the genius of feudalism nor the spirit of the middle ages! Only give me a chance some day of trying my hand again, and then you shall see the genius of the middle ages, and the later ages, and feudalism, and all the rest of it, combined to perfection."

Meanwhile the bill was drifting and floundering on to destruction. If Lord Palmerston had spoken one determined word in its favor, it could have been easily carried. The Conservatives would not have taken on themselves the responsibility of a prolonged resistance. Those of the Liberals who secretly detested the measure would not have had the courage to stand up against Lord Palmerston. Their real objection to the proposed reform was that it would put them to the trouble of a new election, and that they did not like the extreme Radicals and the Manchester school. But they would have swallowed their objections if they had supposed that Lord Palmerston was determined to pass the bill. Very soon they came to understand, or at least to believe, that Lord Palmerston would be rather pleased than otherwise to see the measure brought into contempt. Lord Palmerston took practically no part in the debates. He did actually make a speech at a late period; but as Mr. Disraeli said with admirable effect, it was a speech not so much "in support of as about, the reform bill." Sir George Lewis argued for the bill so coldly and sadly that Sir E. B. Lytton brought down the laughter and cheers of both sides of the houses when he described Lewis as having "come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him." The measure was already doomed; it was virtually dead and buried. Notice was given of amendment after amendment chiefly or altogether by professing Liberals. The practice of obstructing the progress of the bill by incessant speech-making was introduced and made to work with ominous effect. Some of the more boisterous of the Tories began to treat the whole thing as a good piece of fun. Once an attempt was made to get the house counted out during the progress of the debate. It would be a capital means of reducing the whole discussion to an absurdity, some members thought, if the house could actually be counted on during a debate on the reform bill. A bill to remold the whole political constitution of the country—and the House of Commons not caring enough about the subject to contribute forty listeners, or even

forty patient watchers, within the precincts of Westminster Palace! When the attempt to count did not succeed in the ordinary way, it occurred to the genius of some of the Conservatives that the object might be accomplished by a little gentle and not unacceptable violence. A number of stout squires therefore got round the door in the lobby, and endeavored by sheer physical obstruction to prevent zealous members from re-entering the house. It will be easily understood what the temper of the majority was when horse-play of this kind could even be attempted. At length it was evident that the bill could not pass; that the talk which was in preparation must smother it. The moment the bill got into committee there would be amendments on every line of it, and every member could speak as often as he pleased. The session was passing; the financial measures could not be postponed or put aside; the opponents of the reform bill, open and secret, had the government at their mercy. On Monday, June 11th, Lord John Russell announced that the government had made up their minds to withdraw the bill. There was no alternative. Lord Palmerston had rendered to the bill exactly that sort of service which Kemble rendered to the play of "Vortigern and Rowena." Kemble laid a peculiar emphasis on the words, "And when this solemn mockery is o'er," and glanced at the pit in such a manner as to express only too clearly the contempt he had for the part which he was coerced to play; and the pit turned the piece into ridicule and would have no more of it. If Kemble had approved of the play, they might have put up with it for his sake; but when he gave them leave, they simply made sport of it. Lord Palmerston conveyed to his pit his private idea on the subject of the reform bill which he had officially to recommend; and the pit took the hint, and there was an end of the bill.

Lord Palmerston became more unpopular than ever with the advanced Liberals. He had yielded so far to public alarm as to propose a vote of two millions, the first instalment of a sum of nine millions, to be laid out in fortifying our coast against the emperor of the French. He was accused of gross inconsistency. The statesman who went out of his way to give premature recognition to Louis Napoleon after the *coup d'état*; the statesman of the conspiracy bill was now clamoring for the means to resist a

treacherous invasion from his favorite ally. Yet Lord Palmerston was not inconsistent. He had now brought himself seriously to believe that Louis Napoleon meditated evil to England; and with Palmerston, right or wrong, England was the one supreme consideration. To us he seems to have been wrong when he patronized Louis Napoleon, and wrong when he wasted money in measures of superfluous protection against Louis Napoleon; but we do not think the latter Palmerston was inconsistent with the former.

Thenceforward it was understood that Lord Palmerston would have no more of reform. This was accepted as a political condition by most of Lord Palmerston's colleagues. Even Lord John Russell accepted the condition and bowed to his leader's determination, as George III.'s ministers came to bend to his scruples with regard to Catholic emancipation. There was to be no reform bill while Lord Palmerston lived.

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## CHAPTER XLII.

### TROUBLES IN THE EAST.

THE queen's speech at the opening of parliament on January 24, 1860, mentioned, among other things, the renewal of disturbances in China. The English and French plenipotentiaries, it stated, had proceeded to the mouth of the Peiho river in order to repair to Peking and exchange in that city the ratifications of the treaty of Tien-tsin. They found their further progress opposed, and a conflict took place between the Chinese forts at the mouth of the river and the naval force by which the plenipotentiaries were escorted. The allied forces were compelled to retire; and the royal speech mentioned that an expedition had been despatched to obtain redress.

The treaty of Tien-tsin was that which, as was told in a former chapter, had been arranged by Lord Elgin and Baron Gros. The treaty contained a clause providing for the exchange of the ratifications at Peking within a year from the date of the signature, which took place in June, 1858. Lord Elgin returned to England, and his brother, Mr. Frederick Bruce, was appointed in March, 1859, envoy

extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to China. Mr. Bruce was directed to proceed by way of the Peiho to Tien-tsin and thence to Peking to exchange the ratifications of the treaty. In the instructions furnished to him, Lord Malmesbury, who was then foreign secretary, earnestly pressed upon the envoy the necessity of insisting on having the ratifications exchanged at Peking. Lord Malmesbury pointed out that the Chinese authorities, having the strongest objection to the presence of an envoy in Peking, would probably try to interpose all manner of delays and difficulties; and impressed upon Mr. Bruce that he was not to be put off from going to the capital. Mr. Bruce was distinctly directed to go to the mouth of the Peiho with "a sufficient naval force" and was told that unless some "unforeseen circumstances" should interpose to make other arrangement necessary, it would be desirable that he should go to Tien-tsin in a British man-of-war. Instructions were sent out from England at the same time to Admiral Hope, the naval commander-in-chief in China, to provide a sufficient force to accompany Mr. Bruce to the mouth of the Peiho.

The Peiho river flows from the highlands on the west into the Gulf of Pecheli, at the north-east corner of the Chinese dominions. The capital of the empire is about one hundred miles inland from the mouth of the Peiho. It does not stand on that river, which flows past it at some distance westward, but it is connected with the river by means of a canal. The town of Tien-tsin stands on the Peiho near its junction with one of the many rivers that flow into it, and about forty miles from the mouth. The entrance to the Peiho was defended by the Taku forts. On June 20, 1859, Mr. Bruce and the French envoy reached the mouth of the Peiho with Admiral Hope's fleet, some nineteen vessels in all, to escort them. Admiral Hope had sent a message two or three days before to Taku to announce that the English and French envoys were coming, and his boat had found the forts defended and the river staked by an armed crowd, who stated that they were militiamen, and said that they had no instructions as regarded the passage of the envoys, but offered to send any message to Tien-tsin and bring back any answer which the authorities there might think fit to send. Admiral Hope again sent to them, and requested them to remove the obstructions in

the river and clear a passage for the envoys. They do not appear to have actually refused the request, but they said that they had sent a messenger to T'ien-tsin to announce the approach of the fleet. When, however, the envoys reached the mouth of the river they found the defenses further increased. Some negotiations and inter-communications took place, and a Chinese official from T'ien-tsin came to Mr. Bruce and endeavored to obtain some delay or compromise. Mr. Bruce became convinced that the condition of things predicted by Lord Malmesbury was coming about, and that the Chinese authorities were only trying to defeat his purpose. He also imagined, or discovered, that there was a want of proper respect for an English envoy shown in the terms of the letter and the rank of the official by whom it was conveyed. After a consultation with the French envoy, Mr. Bruce called on Admiral Hope to clear a passage for the vessels. On June 25th the admiral brought his gunboats close to the barrier and began to attempt their removal. The forts opened fire. The Chinese artillerymen showed unexpected skill and precision. Four of the gunboats were almost immediately disabled. All the attacking vessels got aground. Admiral Hope attempted to storm the forts. The attempt was a complete failure. About one thousand Englishmen and one hundred French went into action, of whom nearly four hundred and fifty were killed or wounded. Admiral Hope himself was wounded; so was the commander of the French vessel which had contributed a contingent to the storming party. An American naval captain rendered great service to the English and French in their distress. With "magnanimous indiscretion" he disregarded the strict principles of international law; declared that "blood was thicker than water," and that he could not look on and see Englishmen destroyed by Chinese without trying to lend them a helping hand. The attempt to force a passage of the river was given up, and the mission to Peking was over for the present.

It will be easily imagined that the news created a deep sensation in England. It soon became known that although the Chinese government did not exactly accept the responsibility of what had occurred on the Peiho, yet they bluntly and rudely refused to make any apology for the attack on our ships or to punish the officials who had ordered it. People

in general made up their minds at once that the matter could not be allowed to rest there and that the mission to Peking must be enforced. At the same time a strong feeling prevailed that the envoy, Mr. Bruce, had been imprudent and precipitate in his conduct. Lord Elgin had himself stated that we could have no right to navigate the Peiho until after the ratification of the treaty; and, however discourteous or even double-dealing the conduct of the Chinese authorities might have been, it was surely a questionable policy to insist on forcing our way to the capital by one particular route to which for any reason they objected. For this, however, it seems more just to blame Lord Malmesbury than Mr. Bruce. Lord Malmesbury had of course no idea of what was likely to happen; but his instructions to the English envoy read as if they were prepared with a view to that very contingency. Mr. Bruce might well have thought that they left him no alternative but to force his way. Before the whole question came to be discussed in parliament the Conservatives had gone out and the Liberals had come in. Lord Palmerston's government were only responsible in a technical sort of way for what had happened; and to do them justice they only defended the proceeding in a very cold and perfunctory manner. But they could hardly condemn their predecessors, whose action they had to continue and whose responsibilities they had to assume, and there did not seem much use in attacking the conduct of men who were out of office and were no longer amenable to parliamentary censure. On the other hand, it seems only fair to say that the outcry raised in England about the treacherous conduct of the Chinese at the mouth of the Peiho was unfounded and even absurd. The Chinese government showed itself as usual crafty, double-dealing, and childishly arrogant for awhile; but the Chinese at the Peiho cannot be accused of perfidy. They had mounted the forts and barricaded the river openly and even ostentatiously. The English admiral knew for days and days that the forts were armed and that the passage of the river was obstructed. A man who when he sees you approaching his hall door closes and bars it against you, and holds a rifle pointed at your head while he parleys with you from an upper window, may be a very inhospitable and discourteous person; but if when you attempt to dash in his door

he fires at you with his rifle, you can hardly call him treacherous, or say that you had no expectation of what was going to happen. Some of the English officers who were actually engaged in the attempt of Admiral Hope frankly repudiated the idea of any treachery on the part of the Chinese, or any surprise on their own side. They knew perfectly well, they said, that the forts were about to resist the attempt to force a way for the envoys up the river.

The English and French governments determined that the men who had made the treaty of Tien-tsin—Lord Elgin and Baron Gros—should be sent back to insist on its reinforcement. Sir Hope Grant was appointed to the military command of our land forces, and General Cousin de Montauban, afterward Count Palikao, commanded the soldiers of France. We need not here enter into the military history of the expedition. The English and French made short work of the Chinese resistance. The Chinese, to do them justice fought very bravely, as indeed they seem to have done on all occasions when war was forced on them, but of course they had no chance whatever against such forces as those commanded by the English and French generals. The allies captured the Taku forts, occupied Tien-tsin, and marched on Peking. The Chinese government endeavored to negotiate for peace, and to interpose any manner of delay, diplomatic or otherwise, between the allies and their progress to the capital. Lord Elgin consented at last to enter into negotiations at Tungchow, a walled town ten or twelve miles nearer than Peking. The Chinese commissioners were to meet the European plenipotentiaries at Tungchow. Lord Elgin's secretaries, Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, accompanied by some English officers, by Mr. Bowlby, the correspondent of the *Times*, and by some members of the staff of Baron Gros, went to Tungchow to make the necessary arrangements for an interview between the envoys and the Chinese commissioners. On their way back they had to pass through the lines of a large Chinese force, which had occupied the ground marked out by the commissioners themselves for the use of the European allies. Some quarrel took place between a French commissariat officer and some Tartar soldiers, and a sort of general engagement was brought on. Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, and several of their companions, French and English, were seized and dragged off to various prisons, despite the

fact that they bore a flag of truce and were known to have come for the purpose of arranging a conference requested by the Chinese themselves with a view to peace. Twenty-six British subjects and twelve subjects of France were thus carried off. Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch were afterward released, after having been treated with much cruelty and indignity. Of the twenty-six British subjects thus seized, thirteen died of the horrible ill-treatment they received. The thirteen who were released all bore more or less evidence physically of the usage which had been inflicted on them. Lord Elgin refused to negotiate until the prisoners had been returned, and the allied armies were actually at one of the great gates of Peking and had their guns in position to blow the gate in, when the Chinese acceded to their terms. The gate was surrendered, the allies entered the city, and the English and French flags were hoisted side by side on the walls of Peking. It was only after entering the city that Lord Elgin learned of the murder of the captives. He then determined to inflict an exemplary and a signal punishment on the Chinese authorities. The Chinese summer palace, a building, or rather a park and collection of buildings of immense extent, had been plundered somewhat efficiently by the French on their march to Peking. The French commander-in-chief had become possessed of a magnificent diamond necklace, which, according to popular rumor, was afterward an adornment of the festivities of the imperial Tuileries. Lord Elgin now determined that the palace should be burnt down as a means of impressing the mind of the Chinese authorities generally with some sense of the danger of treachery and foul play. "What remains of the palace," such was Lord Elgin's stern notification, "which appears to be the place at which several of the British captives were subjected to the grossest indignities, will be immediately leveled to the ground; this condition requires no assent on the part of his highness" (Prince Kung, the Chinese emperor's brother and plenipotentiary), "because it will be at once carried into effect by the commander-in-chief." Two days were occupied in the destruction of the palace. It covered an area of many miles. The palace of Adrian, at Tivoli, might have been hidden in one of its courts. Gardens, temples, small lodges and pagodas, groves, grottos, lakes, bridges, terraces, artificial hills,



diversified the vast space. All the artistic treasures, all the curiosities, archæological and other, that Chinese wealth and Chinese taste, such as it was, could bring together, had been accumulated in this magnificent pleasure. The surrounding scenery was beautiful. The high mountains of Tartary ramparted one side of the enclosure. "It certainly was," says a spectator, "one of the most curious, and also one of the most beautiful scenes I had ever beheld." The buildings were set on fire; the whole place was given over to destruction. A monument was raised with an inscription in Chinese, setting forth that such was the reward of perfidy and cruelty.

Very different opinions were held in England as to the destruction of the imperial palace. To many it seemed an act of unintelligible and unpardonable vandalism. Assuredly the responsibility which Lord Elgin assumed was great. It was all the greater because the French plenipotentiary refused to share it. This was not, however, because the French envoy thought it an act of mere vandalism. The French, who had remorselessly looted the palace, who had made it a wreck before Lord Elgin converted its site into a desert, could hardly have offered any becoming protest in the interests of art and of conciliation. The French plenipotentiary was merely of opinion that the destruction of the palace might interfere with the negotiations for peace which he was naturally anxious to bring to a conclusion. Lord Elgin assumed a heavy responsibility another way, inasmuch as he did not consider the capture of the Englishmen to have been a deliberate act of treachery on the part of the Chinese authorities. "On the whole," he wrote, "I come to the conclusion that in the proceedings of the Chinese plenipotentiaries and commander-in-chief in this instance there was that mixture of stupidity, want of straightforwardness, suspicion, and bluster which characterizes so generally the conduct of affairs in this country; but I cannot believe that after the experience which Sang-kol-in-sin" (the Chinese general-in-chief) "had already had of our superiority in the field, either he or his civil colleagues could have intended to bring on a conflict in which, as the event has proved, he was sure to be worsted." Still, Lord Elgin held that for the ill-treatment and murder of men who ought never to have been touched with unfriendly hand, the Chinese

authorities must be held responsible; and that even war itself must become ten times more horrible if it were not one of its essential conditions that the messengers engaged in the preliminaries of peace are to be held sacred from harm.

In this Lord Elgin was undoubtedly right. The only question was as to his justification in adopting what seemed to be so illogical and barbarous a mode of taking vengeance. Would any breach of faith committed by the grand duke of Tuscany, when there was such a prince, have justified a foreign conqueror in destroying the Pitti Palace? Would any act of treachery committed by a Spanish sovereign justify the destruction of the Alhambra? To such demands Lord Elgin would have answered that he had no other way of recording in memorable characters his condemnation of the cruelty perpetrated by the Chinese. He explained, that if he did not demand the surrender of the actual perpetrators, it was because he knew full well that no difficulty would have been made about giving him a seeming satisfaction. The Chinese government would have handed over to him as many victims as he chose to ask for, or would have executed as many as he thought fit to suggest. They would have selected for vicarious punishment, in all probability, a crowd of mean and unfortunate wretches who had no more to do with the murders than Lord Elgin had himself, who perhaps had never heard that such murders were done, and who would possibly even go to their death without the slightest notion of the reason why they were chosen out for such a doom. That was the chief reason which determined Lord Elgin. We confess it seems to us to have some strength in it. Most of our actions in the war were unjustifiable; this was the one for which, perhaps, the best case could be made out by a moralist. It is somewhat singular that so many persons should have been roused to indignation by the destruction of a building who took with perfect composure the unjust invasion of a country.

The allied powers now of course had it all in their own way. A convention was made by which China agreed that the representatives of England and France should reside either permanently or occasionally in Peking according as the English and French governments might decide, and that the port of Tientsin should be open to trade and to

the residence of foreign subjects. China had to pay a war indemnity and a large sum of money as compensation to the families of the murdered prisoners and to those who had suffered injuries, and to make an apology for the attack by the garrison of the Taku forts. Thus England established her right to have an envoy in Peking, whether the Chinese liked it or not. The practical result was not very great. Perhaps the most important gain to Europe was the knowledge that Peking was not by any means so large a city as we had all imagined it to be. British geographies had time out of mind taught British children that Peking was the largest city in the world. Now we learned that it was not nearly so large as several other cities, and that it was, on the whole, rather a crumbling and tumble-down sort of place. There is some comfort in knowing that so much blood was not spilled wholly in vain.

The same year saw also the troubles in the mountain terraces of the Lebanon, which likewise led to the combined intervention of England and France. The disturbances arose out of the rivalries and quarrels between two sects, the Maronites and those whom Mr. Browning's poem describes as "the Druse nation, warders on the mount of the world's secret since the birth of time." In the month of May a Maronite monk was found murdered, and suspicion fell upon the Druses. Some Druses were killed apparently in retaliation. Then there were some killings on each side. On May 28th a general attack was made by the Druses on the Maronite villages in the neighborhood of Beyrout, and some of them were burned down. A large town under Mount Hermon was attacked by the Druses. The Turkish commander ordered the Maronites to lay down their arms and promised that he would protect them. They did give up their arms and the Turkish officer had the weapons removed. Then he seems to have abandoned the Maronites to their enemies. The Druses, animated by such a spirit as might have belonged to their worshiped chief and saint, Hakem, poured into the place and massacred them all. The Turkish soldiers did not make any attempt to protect them, but even, it was stated, in some cases helped the Druses in their work of butchery. In July the fanatical spirit spread to Damascus. A mob of Turkish fanatics made a general attack upon the Christian quarter and burned the greater part of it down. The con-

slates of France, Russia, Austria, Holland, Belgium, and Greece were destroyed. Nearly two thousand Christians were massacred in that one day's work. Many of the respectable Mussulman inhabitants of Damascus were most generous and brave in their attempts to save and shelter the unfortunate Christians; but the Turkish governor of Damascus, although he had a strong military force at his disposal, made no serious effort to interfere with the work of massacre; and, as might be expected, his supineness was construed by the mob as an official approval of their doings, and they murdered with all the more vigor and zest. The famous Algerian chief, Abd-el-Kader, was then living in Damascus, and he exerted himself nobly in the defense and protection of the Christians. France had treated him when fallen and a prisoner with something like generosity, and he well repaid in this season of horror to the Christians in Damascus any debt that he may have owed to a Christian people.

The news of the massacres in the Lebanon naturally created a profound sensation in England. The cause of the disturbance was not very clearly understood in the first instance, and it was generally assumed that it was a mere quarrel of religion between Christians and Mohammedans. The Maronites being Christians, "a sect of Syrian Christians, united to Rome, although preserving their own primitive discipline," the Druses were assumed to be Mussulmans. Mr. Urquhart gave an amusing, and not altogether exaggerated, description of the manner in which English public opinion is made up on eastern questions. Conversing, he says, with a Druse of the Lebanon long before this particular outbreak, he observed to the Druse, "You get up one morning and cut each other's throats; then people at Beyrout or elsewhere sit down and write letters. One says the Maronites are a very virtuous and oppressed people of Christians; another says they are served right, for they are only Roman Catholics. One says the Druses have done it all; they are savages; another, the Turks have done it all; they are ferocious, perfidious, and fanatic. Then the people in London begin to write who dwell in rooms on the housetop." This, it is to be understood, is Mr. Urquhart's playful way of describing the authors of newspaper articles, who, in accordance with a tradition still prevailing when he was young, he assumes to be the occupants of garrets.

“They say these people are very ill off; we must protect them; or we must punish them; or we must convert them. Then they all cry out, ‘We must put down the Turkish government.’ After this has been written and paid for, it is printed; and after it is printed it is sold. Then all the nation buys it, and after it has bought it reads it while it is eating its breakfast. Then each man goes out and meets his friends and talks it. This is the way the people of England occupy themselves about their affairs; and they call it by a name which being translated means universal guess. They smile then at each other, and say, ‘We are great men; we know all that is doing in the world, we govern the world; like unto us were none since Noah came out of the ark.’” Mr. Urquhart was a very clever, self-opinionated, and often curiously wrong-headed man. He had seen much of the east and had a knowledge of eastern ways and eastern history which few Englishmen could equal. But he was under the absolute dominion of a mania with regard to Russia which distorted all his faculties. Men who found that he could entertain as articles of faith some theories about English diplomacy and English statesmen which seemed almost too wild for the ordinary occupant of a madhouse, might well begin to doubt whether all his knowledge of the east must necessarily help him to any better conclusions about Asia than he had formed about the political men and affairs of his own country. In the passage which has been quoted he did, however, give a very fair exposition of the confusion of idea that prevailed in England about the disturbances in Syria. He was also able to make it quite clear that, whatever the Druses were, they were not Mussulmans. The nooks of the mountain, a well-informed writer says, “are not more sequestered from the dwellings of man than the faith of the Druses is segregated from that of Christian or Moslem.” Mr. Urquhart ascribed the cause of the quarrels to the intervention of the European powers in 1840, and of course to the secret influence of Russia working through that intervention. It is probable that the intervention did help, in one sense, to lead to the dissensions. The great powers started in 1840 and in 1841 a variety of theories about the better government of the Lebanon, one of which was that it should have two governors, a Druse and a Maronite. This was found impracticable, owing to the

fact that in many parts of the Lebanon the two sects were living in inextricable companionship. The bare idea, however, was probably effectual in starting a new sort of rivalry. The porte did finally grant a certain amount of administrative autonomy to the Lebanon, and, having granted this under pressure, it is not unlikely that they were anxious to reduce it to as little of practical value as possible. Probably the porte was unwilling to make use of any antipathy existing between Druses and Maronites. The porte was also under the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the Maronites were planning an attack upon the Druses with the object of shaking off the Turkish yoke. It may be that Constantinople was anxious to anticipate matters and to call in the fanaticism of the Druses to rid them of the Maronites. Certainly the manner in which the Turkish officials at first seemed to connive at the massacres might have justified any such suspicion in the mind of Europe.

England and France took strong and decisive steps. They resolved upon instant intervention to restore tranquillity in the Lebanon. A convention was drawn up, to which all the great powers of Europe agreed, and which Turkey had to accept. By the convention England and France were entrusted with the duty of restoring order. France undertook to supply the troops required in the first instance; further requirements were to be met as the intervening powers might think fit. The intervening powers pledged themselves reciprocally not to seek for any territorial advantage or exclusive influence. England sent out Lord Dufferin to act as her commissioner; and Lord Dufferin accomplished his task with as much spirit as judgment. The Turkish government, to do it justice, had at last shown great energy in punishing the authors and the abettors of the massacres. The sultan sent out Fuad Pasha, his minister for foreign affairs, to the Lebanon; and Fuad Pasha showed no mercy to the promoters of the disturbances, or even to the highly-placed official abettors of them. The governor of Damascus and the commander of the Turkish troops suffered death for their part in the transactions, and about sixty persons were publicly executed in the city, of whom the greater number belonged to the Turkish police force. Lord Dufferin described what he actually saw in such a manner as to prove that even alarmed rumor had hardly exaggerated the

horrors of the time. Lord Dufferin tells that he came to Deir-el-Kamer a few days after the massacre. "Almost every house was burned, and the street crowded with dead bodies, some of them stripped and mutilated in every possible way. My road led through some of the streets; my horse could not even pass, for the bodies were literally piled up. Most of those I examined had many wounds, and in each case the right hand was either entirely or nearly cut off; the poor wretch, in default of weapons, having instinctively raised his arm to parry the blow aimed at him. I saw little children of not more than four years old stretched on the ground, and old men with gray beards."

The intervention was successful in restoring order and in providing for the permanent peace of Syria. It had one great recommendation; it was thorough. It was in that respect a model intervention. To intervene in the affairs of any foreign state is a task of great responsibility. The cases are few indeed in which it can be justified or even excused. But it has long been to all seeming a principle of European statesmanship that Turkey is a country in the government of which it is necessary for other powers to intervene from time to time. The whole of the policy of what is called the eastern question is based on the assumption that Turkey is to be upheld by external influence, and that being thus virtually protected she is liable also to be rebuked and kept in order. Now there may be some doubt as to the propriety of intervening at all in the affairs of Turkey, but there can be no doubt that when intervention does take place it should be prompt and it should be thorough. The independence of Turkey is at an end when a conference of foreign ministers sits round a table to direct what she is to do; it is then merely a question of convenience and expediency as to the extent to which intervention shall go. Nothing can be more illogical and more pernicious in its way than to say, "We will intervene just far enough to take away from the Turkish government its domestic supremacy and its responsibility; but, out of consideration for its feelings, or its convenience we will not intervene far enough to make it certain that what we think necessary shall be promptly and efficiently done." In the case of the Syrian disturbances the intervention was conducted on a practical principle. The great powers, acting on the assumption, which alone could justify

their interference, that Turkey was not in a condition to restore order herself, proceeded to do this for her in the most energetic and complete manner. The consent of Turkey was not considered necessary. The sultan was distinctly informed that the interference would take place whether he approved of it or not. When the intervention had succeeded in thoroughly restoring order, the representatives of the great powers assembled in Constantinople unanimously agreed that a Christian governor of the Lebanon should be appointed in subordination to the sultan, and the sultan had, of course, no choice but to agree to this proposition. The French troops evacuated Syria in June, 1861, and thereby much relieved the minds of many Englishmen, who had long forgotten all about the domestic affairs of the Lebanon in their alarm lest the French imperial troops, having once set foot in Syria, should not easily be induced to quit the country again. This was not merely a popular and ignorant alarm. On June 26, 1861, Lord Palmerston wrote to the British ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Henry Bulwer, "I am heartily glad we have got the French out of Syria, and a hard job it was to do so. The arrangement made for the future government of the Lebanon will, I dare say, work sufficiently well to prevent the French from having any pretext for returning thither." In the same letter Lord Palmerston makes a characteristic allusion to the death of the sultan of Turkey, which had taken place the very day before; "Abd-ul-Medjid was a good-hearted and weak-headed man, who was running two horses to the goal of perdition—his own life and that of his empire. Luckily for the empire, his own life won the race." Then Palmerston adds, "If the accounts we have heard of the new sultan are true, we may hope that he will restore Turkey to her proper position among the powers of Europe." A day or two after, Lord Wodehouse, on the part of the government, expressed to the House of Lords a confident hope that a new era was about to dawn upon Turkey. Another new era!

It would hardly be fitting to close the history of this stormy year without giving a few lines to record the peaceful end of a life which had through all its earlier parts been one of "sturt and strife." Quietly in his Kensington home passed away, in the late autumn of this year, Thomas



Cochrane—the gallant Dundonald, the hero of the Basque Roads, the volunteer who lent his genius and his courage to the cause of Brazil, of Chili, and of Greece; a sort of Peterborough of the waves, a “Swiss of heaven.” Lord Dundonald had been the victim of cruel, although not surely intentional, injustice. He was accused, as every one knows, of having had a share in the famous stock-jobbing frauds of 1814; he was tried, found guilty, sentenced to fine and imprisonment; expelled from the House of Commons, dismissed from the service which he had helped to make yet more illustrious than he found it; and deprived of all his public honors. He lived to see his innocence believed in as well by his enemies as by his friends. William IV. reinstated him in his naval rank, and Queen Victoria had the congenial task of completing the restoration of his well-won honors. It was not, however, until many years after his death that the country fully acquitted itself of the mere money debt which it owed to Lord Dundonald and his family. Cochrane was a Radical in politics, and for some years sat as a colleague of Sir Francis Burdett in the representation of Westminster. He carried on in the House of Commons many a bitter argument with Mr. John Wilson Croker, when the latter was secretary to the admiralty. It cannot be doubted that Cochrane’s political views and his strenuous way of asserting them made him many enemies, and that some men were glad of the opportunity for revenge which was given by the accusation got up against him. His was an impatient spirit, little suited for the discipline of parliamentary life. His tongue was often bitter, and he was too apt to assume that a political opponent must be a person unworthy of respect. Even in his own service he was impatient of rebuke. To those under his command he was always genial and brotherly; but to those above him he was sometimes wanting in that patient submission which is an essential quality of those who would learn how to command with most success. Cochrane’s true place was on his quarter-deck; his opportunity came in the extreme moment of danger. Then his spirit asserted itself. His gift was that which wrenches success out of the very jaws of failure; he saw his way most clearly when most others began to despair. During part of his later life he had been occupying himself with some inventions of his own—some sub-

marine methods for blowing up ships, some engines which were, by their terrible destructiveness, to abridge the struggles and agonies of war. At the time of the Crimean War he offered to the government to destroy Sebastopol in a few hours by some of his plans. The proposal was examined by a committee and was not accepted. It was his death, on October 30, 1860, which recalled to the mind of the living generation the hero whose exploits had divided the admiration of their fathers with those of Nelson, of Collingwood, and of Sidney Smith. A new style of naval warfare has come up since those days, and perhaps Cochrane may be regarded as the last of the old sea-kings.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

CIVIL war broke out in the United States. The long threatened had come to pass. Abraham Lincoln's election as president, brought about by the party divisions of the southerners among themselves, seemed to the south the beginning of a new order of things, in which they and their theories of government would no longer predominate. They felt that the peculiar institution on which they believed their prosperity and their pride to depend was threatened with extinction, and they preferred secession to such a result. In truth, the two sets of institutions were incompatible. A system founded on slavery could not be worked much longer in combination with the political and social institutions of the northern states. The struggle was one for life or death between slavery and the principles of modern society. When things had come to this pass it is hardly worth stopping to consider what particular event it was which brought about the actual collision. If the election of Mr. Lincoln had not supplied the occasion, something else would have furnished it. Those who are acquainted with the history of the great emancipation struggle in America know very well that if the south had not seceded from the Union some of the northern states would sooner or later have done so. Every day in the northern states saw an increase in the number of those who would rather have seceded than give further counte-

nance to the system of slavery. It was a peculiarity of that system that it could not stand still; it could not rest content with tolerance and permission to hold what it already possessed. It must have new ground, new fields to occupy. It must get more or die. Most of the abolitionists would rather themselves secede than yield any more to slavery.

We are chiefly concerned in this history with the American civil war in so far as it affected England. It becomes part of our history, by virtue of the Alabama question and the Treaty of Washington. It is important to introduce a short narrative of the events which led to the long dispute between England and the United States, a dispute which brought us more than once to the very edge of war, and which was only settled by the almost unparalleled concession of the Washington treaty. The southern states, led by South Carolina, seceded. Their delegates assembled at Montgomery, in Alabama, on February 4, 1861, to agree upon a constitution. A southern confederation was formed, with Mr. Jefferson Davis as its president. Mr. Davis announced the determination of the south to maintain its independence by the final arbitrament of the sword, "if passion or lust of dominion should cloud the judgment or influence the ambition of the north." This announcement was made on February 18, 1861, and on March 4th following, the new president of the United States entered formally into office. Mr. Lincoln announced that he had no intention to interfere with the institution of slavery in any state where it existed; that the law gave him no power to do so, even if he had the inclination; but that, on the other hand, no state could, upon its own mere motion, lawfully get out of the union; that acts of violence against the authority of the United States must be regarded as insurrectionary or revolutionary. There was still an impression in this country, and to some extent in America, that an invitation was thus held out by Mr. Lincoln to the southern states to enter into peaceful negotiations, with a view to a dissolution of partnership. But if there was any such intention in the mind of Mr. Lincoln, or any possibility of carrying it into effect, all such contingencies were put out of the question by the impetuous action of South Carolina. This state had been the first to secede, and it was the first to commit an act of war. The traveler in South Carolina, as he stands on one of the quays of Charleston and looks

toward the Atlantic, sees the sky line across the harbor broken by a heavy-looking, solid, square fort, which soon became famous in the war. This was Fort Sumter, a place built on an artificial island, with walls some sixty feet high and eight to twelve feet thick. It was in the occupation of the Federal government, as of course were the defenses of all the harbors of the Union. It is, perhaps, not necessary to say that while each state made independently its local laws, the Federal government and congress had the charge of all business of national interest; customs duties, treaties, the army and navy, and the coast defenses. The Federal government had therefore a garrison in Fort Sumter, and when there seemed a possibility of civil war, they were anxious to reinforce it. A vessel which they sent for the purpose was fired at, from a great island in the harbor, by the excited secessionists of South Carolina and on April 12th the Confederates who had erected batteries on the mainland for the purpose, began to bombard the fort. The little garrison had no means of resistance, and after a harmless bombardment of two days it surrendered, and Fort Sumter was in the hands of the secessionists of South Carolina. The effect of this piece of news on the mind of the north has been well and tersely described by a writer of the time. It was as if while two persons were still engaged in a peaceful discussion as to some claim of right, one suddenly brought the debate to a close by giving the other a box on the ear. There was an end to all negotiation; thenceforward only strokes could arbitrate.

Four days after, President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand men to volunteer in re-establishing the Federal authority over the rebel states. President Davis immediately announced his intention to issue letters of marque. President Lincoln declared the southern ports under blockade. On May 8th Lord John Russell announced in the House of Commons, that after consulting the law officers of the crown the government were of opinion that the southern Confederacy must be recognized as a belligerent power. On May 13th the neutrality proclamation was issued by the government, warning all subjects of her majesty from enlisting on land or sea, in the service of Federals or Confederates, supplying munitions of war, equipping vessels for privateering purposes, engaging in

transport service, or doing any other act calculated to afford assistance to either belligerent. This was, in fact, the recognition of the southern Confederacy as a belligerent power; and this was the first act on the part of England which gave offense in the north. It was regarded there as an act of unseemly and even indecent haste, as evidence of an overstrained anxiety to assist and encourage the southern rebels. This interpretation was, to some extent, borne out by the fact that the English government did not wait for the daily-expected arrival of Mr. Adams, the new American minister, to hear what he might have to say before resolving on issuing the proclamation. Yet it is certain that the proclamation was made with no unfriendly motive. It was made at the instance of some of the most faithful friends the northern cause had on this side of the Atlantic, conspicuous among whom in recommending it was Mr. W. E. Foster. If such a proclamation had not been issued, the English government could not have undertaken to recognize the blockade of the southern ports. If there was no *bellum* going on, the commerce of the world could not be expected to recognize President Lincoln's blockade of Charleston and Savannah and New Orleans.

International law on the subject is quite clear. A state cannot blockade its own ports. It can only blockade the ports of an enemy. It can, indeed, order a closure of its own ports. But a closure of the ports would not have been so effective for the purposes of the Federal government as a blockade. It would have been a matter of municipal law only. An offender against the ordinance of closure could be only dealt with lawfully in American waters; an offender against the decree of blockade could be pursued into the open sea. In any case, Mr. Lincoln's government chose the blockade. They had previously announced that the crews of Confederate privateers would be treated as pirates, but their proclamation of the blockade compelled them to recede from that declaration. It was, indeed, a threat that modern humanity and the public feeling of the whole northern states would never have allowed them to carry out, and which Mr. Lincoln himself, whose temper always leaned to mercy, would never have thought of putting into effect. The proclamation of a blockade compelled the Federal government to treat privateers as belligerents. It could not but compel foreign states to admit the belligerent rights of the southern Confederation.

In England the friends of the north, or some of them at least, were anxious that the recognition should take place as quickly as possible, in order that effect should be given to the president's proclamation. The English government had trouble enough afterward to resist the importunity of those at home and abroad who thought they ought to break the blockade in the interests of European trade. They could have no excuse for recognizing it if they did not also recognize that there was a war going on which warranted it. Therefore, whether the recognition of the southern Confederates as belligerents was wise or unwise, timely or premature, it was not done in any spirit of unfriendliness to the north, or at the spiriting of any southern partisans. It was done at the urgency of friends of the north, and in what was believed to be the interest of President Lincoln's government. It seems to us that in any case the recognition was fully justified. The proclamation began by setting forth that "hostilities had unhappily begun between the government of the United States and certain states styling themselves the Confederate States of America." Before its issue Fort Sumter had been taken, Mr. Seward, the new Federal secretary of state, had announced, in a despatch, that the insurgents had "instituted revolution with open, flagrant, deadly war;" and that the United States had "accepted this civil war as an inevitable necessity." Many days before the proclamation was issued the New York chamber of commerce had stated that secession had culminated in war, and the judges of the higher courts had decided that a state of war existed. Under such circumstances it seems hardly possible to contend that England was bound by any principle of law, international or other, to withhold her recognition.

With the proclamation of neutrality on the part of her majesty's government began, curiously enough, the long diplomatic controversy which was carried on between this country and the United States. The correspondence spreads over years. It is maintained principally by Earl Russell, Mr. Adams, American minister in London, and Mr. Seward, American secretary of state. The diplomatic correspondence is conducted, as might be expected, with unvarying courtesy, and with at least the outward expression of good temper; but it deepens sometimes in tone and earnestness, so that any reader can see that it is reaching a

tension not likely to be long kept up. More than once it becomes evident that the states thus represented are on the verge of a serious quarrel. The impression on the part of the United States evidently is, all throughout, that England is the concealed and bitter enemy of the Union, and is seizing every possible opportunity to do it harm. The first cause of dispute is the recognition of belligerent rights. Then there comes the seizure of the Confederate envoys in the Trent, which England could not permit, and which apparently the public of the United States could not forgive her for not being able to permit and thus putting them in the wrong. Far more serious as a cause of quarrel was the career of the Alabama and her kindred vessels. The Mexican expedition was a grievance to the north, connected as it was with the supposed inclination of the English government to follow the promptings of the French emperor and concede to the southern Confederates their actual recognition as an independent state.

It is necessary to endeavor to follow the course of public opinion in England and ascertain, if possible, the meaning of its various changes. Let it be firmly stated at the outset, as a matter of justice, that it was not any feeling of sympathy with slavery which influenced so many Englishmen in their support of the south. No real evidence exists of any change in public opinion of that kind. It is true that sometimes a heated champion of the south did, when driven to bay for argument, contend that after all, perhaps slavery was not quite so bad a thing as people fancied. The *Times* did once venture to suggest that the Scriptures contained no express interdiction of slavery; but no great stress even there was laid upon such an argument; and it might be doubted whether the opinion of any rational man on the slavery question was changed in this country by sympathy with the south. On the contrary, strange as it may seem at first, the dislike of many Englishmen to the slave system converted them first into opponents of the north and next into partisans of the south. An impression got abroad that the northern statesmen were not sincere in their reprobation of slavery, and that they only used the arguments and the feeling against it as a means of endeavoring to crush the south. Many Englishmen could not understand—some of them perhaps would not understand—that a northern statesman might very well object to breaking

up the union in order to put down slavery, and might yet, when an enemy endeavored to destroy the union, make up his mind, with perfect consistency; that the time had come to get rid of the slave system once for all. The statesmen of the north were not to be classed as Abolitionists. Not many men in office, or likely just then to be in office, were professed opponents of slavery. Most of them regarded it as a very objectionable institution which the southern states had unfortunately inherited, which no one would think of introducing then if it had not been introduced before, but which nevertheless it was not worth risking a national convulsion for the sake of trying to root out at once. They would have been willing to trust to time and education, and all the civilizing processes, for the gradual extinction of the system. Many of them had even known so many good and kindly southern slave-owners, that they could not feel a common hatred for all the upholders of the unfortunate institution. Men like Mr. Lincoln himself would have gladly kept to the Union, even though, for the present and for some time to come, union meant the toleration of slavery in the south. Two extreme parties there were who would not compromise; the planter faction of the south and the Abolitionists of New England. The planters were not content that their institution should be tolerated; they would have it extended and made supreme. The Abolitionists took their stand on principle; slavery was to them simply a crime, and they would have nothing to do with the accursed thing. When at last the inevitable collision came, there was nothing inconsistent or unreasonable in the position of the northern statesman who said, "I am opposed to all sudden changes in our constitution; I would not have broken up the Union on the question of southern slavery; but now that the southerners themselves have chosen to secede and to begin a civil war, I say the time has come to get done with this long-standing cause of quarrel, and to decree once for all the extinction of the slave system."

That came, in fact, as the war went on, to be the position of Mr. Lincoln and of many other northern statesmen. It was the position which practical statesmen would have been likely to take, and might have been expected to take. Yet it seemed to many Englishmen to argue mere hypocrisy that a man should be intolerant of slavery when it led to



secession and civil war, if he had been willing to put up with it for the sake of peace. Again, Englishmen insisted that the northern statesmen were not going into the war with an unmixed motive; as if any state ever yet went to war with one single and undiluted purpose. A good deal was heard about the manner in which the colored race were excluded from society in New York and the northern states generally. The exclusiveness was assuredly narrow-minded and bad enough; but it is one thing to say a colored man shall not sit next us in a theatre or a church, that he shall not go to school with one's son or marry one's daughter, and it is quite another thing to say that we have a right to scourge the colored man to death, to buy his son for a slave, and sell his daughter at the auction-block. A citizen of one of the Canadian provinces might strongly object to the society of the red Indian in any form, and yet might be willing to arm against a system which would reduce the red Indian to a condition of slavery. Not a few Englishmen condemned, boldly and out of hand, the whole principle of coercion in political affairs. They declared that the north had no right to put down secession; that the south had a right to secede. Yet the same men had upheld the heaven-appointed right of England to put down the rebellion in India, and would have drenched, if need be, Ireland in blood rather than allow her to withdraw from a partnership into which, after all, unlike the southern states, she had never voluntarily entered.

At first, however, the feeling of Englishmen was almost unanimously in favor of the north. It was thought that the southern states would be allowed quietly to secede, and most Englishmen did not take a great interest in the matter, or, when they did, were inclined to regard the southerners as a turbulent and troublesome set, who had better be permitted to go off with their peculiar institution and keep it all to themselves. When, however, it became apparent that the secession must lead to war, then many of the same Englishmen began to put the blame on the north for making the question any cause of disturbance to the world. There was a kind of impatient feeling as if we and the world in general had no right to be troubled with these American quarrels, as if it was unfair to us that our cotton trade should be interrupted and we ourselves put to inconvenience for a dispute about secession. There clearly

would have been no war and no disturbance if only the north had agreed to let the south go, and therefore the people on this side of the Atlantic set themselves to find good cause for blaming the statesmen who did not give in to anything rather than disturb the world with their obstinacy and their Union. Out of this condition of feeling came the resolve to find the north in the wrong; and out of that resolve came with many the discovery that the northern statesmen were all hypocrites. Suddenly, as if to decide wavering minds, an event was reported which made hosts of admirers for the south in England. The battle of Bull Run took place on July 21, 1861, and the raw levies of the north were defeated, thrown into confusion, and in some instances driven into ignominious flight.

This was not very surprising. The southern men were infinitely better fitted for the beginning of a war than the men of the north. The southerners had always a taste for soldiering, and had kept up their state militia systems with an energy and exactness which the business men of the north had neither the time nor the inclination to imitate. The southern militia systems were splendid training schools for arms, and became the nucleus each of an excellent army when at last the war broke out. The northern government had yielded to a popular cry, and made a premature movement on Richmond, in Virginia, now the southern capital. It was not very surprising, therefore, that the south should have won the first battle. It was not very surprising either if some of the hastily-raised northern regiments of volunteers should have proved wretched soldiers and should have yielded to the sudden influence of panic. But when the news reached England, it was received by vast numbers with exultation, and with derision at the expense of the "Yankees." It had been well settled that the Yankees were hypocrites and low fellows before; but now it came out that they were mere runaways and cowards. The English people, for a brave nation, are surprisingly given to accusing their neighbors of cowardice. They have a perfect mania for discovering cowardice all over the world. Napoleon was a coward to a past generation; the French were for a long time cowards; the Italians were cowards; at the time of the Schleswig-Holstein war the Germans were cowards; the Russians still are cowards. In 1861 the Yankees were the typical cowards of

the earth. A very flame of enthusiasm leaped up for the brave south, which, though so small in numbers, had contrived with such spirit and ease to defeat the Yankees. Something of chivalry there was, no doubt, in the wish that the weaker side should win; but that chivalry was strongly dashed with the conviction that after all the south had the better fighters and was sure to succeed in the end; that the American Union was in some mysterious way a sort of danger to England, and that the sooner it was broken up the better. Mr. Cobden afterward accused the English government of having dealt with the United States as if they were dealing with Brazil or some such weak and helpless state. It is important for the fair understanding and appreciation of the events that followed, to remember that there was, among all the advocates of the south in England, a very general conviction that the north was sure to be defeated and broken up, and was therefore in no sense a formidable power. It is well also to bear in mind that there were only two European states which entertained this feeling and allowed it to be everywhere understood. The southern scheme found support only in England and in France. In all other European countries the sympathy of people and government alike went with the north. In most places the sympathy arose from a detestation of slavery. In Russia, or at least with the Russian government, it arose from a dislike of rebellion. But the effect was the same: that assurances of friendship came from all civilized countries to the northern states except England and France alone. One of the latest instructions given by Cavour on his deathbed in this year was that an assurance should be sent to the Federal government that Italy could give its sympathies to no movement which tended to the perpetuation of slavery. The pope, Pius IX, and Cardinal Antonelli repeatedly expressed their hopes for the success of the northern cause. On the other hand, the emperor of the French fully believed that the southern cause was sure to triumph and that the Union would be broken up; he was even very willing to hasten what he assumed to be the unavoidable end. He was anxious that England should join with him in some measures to facilitate the success of the south by recognizing the government of the southern Confederation. He got up the Mexican intervention, of which we shall have occasion presently to

speak, and which assuredly he would never have attempted if he had not been persuaded that the Union was on the eve of disruption. He was not without warning. Many eminent Frenchmen, well acquainted with America, urged on him the necessity of caution. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, went over to America, and surveyed the condition of affairs from both points of view, talked with the leaders on both sides, visited both camps and came back impressed with the conviction that the southern movement for independence would be a failure. The Emperor Napoleon, however, held to his own views and his own schemes. He had afterward reason to curse the day when he reckoned on the break-up of the Union and persuaded himself that there was no occasion to take account of the northern strength. Yet in France the French people in general were on the side of the north. Only the emperor and his government were on that of the south. In England, on the other hand, the vast majority of what are called the influential classes came to be heart and soul with the south. The government was certainly not so, but it can hardly be doubted that the government allowed itself sometimes to be overdone by the clamor of a West End majority, and gave the north only too much reason to suspect that its defeats were welcome to those in authority in England. Lord Palmerston made some jesting allusion in a public speech to the "unfortunate rapid movements" of the northern soldiers at Bull Run; and the jibe was bitterly resented by many Americans.

At first the northern states counted with absolute confidence upon the sympathy of England. The one reproach Englishmen had always been casting in their face was that they did not take any steps to put down slavery. Not long before this time Lord Brougham, at a meeting of a statistical congress in London, where the American minister happened to be present, delivered a sort of lecture at him on the natural equality of the black with the white. All England had just been in a state of wild excitement about the case of the fugitive slave, Anderson. An escaped slave, who had taken refuge in Canada, was demanded back by the United States government—at that time, be it remembered, still a southern government—because in trying to escape he had killed one of those who strove to stay his flight and capture him. The idea seemed monstrous to

Englishmen, that any British or colonial court of law should give back as a criminal a man who had only done that which English law would warrant him in doing—resisted, even to slaying, an attempt to make him a slave. The fugitive was not given up to the United States. The colonial courts discharged him from custody on the ground of some informality in the warrant of detention and he came to England. But the court of queen's bench here had already issued a writ of *habeas corpus* to bring him before it, on the ground that his detention in Toronto, even while waiting the decision of the colonial court, was illegal; and if it had not so happened that he was released from custody before the writ could interfere, some very important and difficult questions in international law might have had to be decided. In this country public opinion was warmly in favor of the release of Anderson, and would have gone any length to save him from being surrendered to his captors. Public opinion was expressing itself soundly and justly. It would have amounted to a recognition of slavery if an English court had consented, on any ground, to hand over as a criminal a man who merely resisted an attempt to drag him back into servitude. This was just before the accession of Mr. Lincoln to office. It was the common expectation of the northern states that England would welcome the new state of things, under which the demand for the return of a fugitive slave was never likely to insult them. The English government had had for years and years incessant difficulties with the government of the United States while the latter was in the hands of the south. Colored subjects of the queen had been seized in Charleston and carried off into slavery, and it was not possible to get any redress. For years we had been listening to complaints from our governments about the arrogance and insolence of the American statesmen in office, who were all more or less under the control of the south. It is easy to understand, therefore, how Mr. Lincoln and his friends counted on the sympathy of the English government and the English people, and how surprised they were when they found English statesmen, journalists, preachers, and English society generally, deriding their misfortunes and apparently wishing for the success of their foes. The surprise changed into a feeling of bitter disappointment, and that gave place to an angry temper,

which exaggerated every symptom of ill will, distorted every fact, and saw wrong even where there only existed an honest purpose to do right.

It was while this temper was beginning to light up on both sides of the Atlantic that the unfortunate affair of the Trent occurred. The Confederate government had resolved to send envoys to Europe to arrange, if possible, for the recognition of the southern states. Mr. W. L. Yancey, an extreme advocate of the doctrine of state sovereignty had already been in Europe with this purpose; and now Mr. Davis was anxious to have a regular envoy in London and another in Paris. Mr. Slidell, a prominent southern lawyer and politician, was to represent the south at the court of the Emperor Napoleon, provided he could obtain recognition there; and Mr. James Murray Mason, the author of the fugitive slave law, was to be despatched with a similar mission to the court of Queen Victoria. The two southern envoys escaped together from Charleston, one dark and wet October night, in a small steamer, and got to Havana. There they took passage for Southampton in the English mail steamer Trent. The United States sloop of war, San Jacinto, happened to be returning from the African coast about the same time. Her commander, Captain Wilkes, was a somewhat hot-tempered and indiscreet officer. He was cruising about in quest of the Confederate privateer Sumter, and while at Havana he learned that the Confederate agents, with their secretaries, were on their way to Europe. He determined to intercept them. Two hundred and fifty miles from Havana he awaited them in the Bahama Channel. The Trent approached; he summoned her to heave to, and his summons being disregarded, fired a shot across her bows. An armed party was then sent on board, and the Confederate envoys were seized with their secretaries, and carried as prisoners on board the San Jacinto, despite the protest of the captain of the English steamer and from under the protection of the English flag. The prisoners were first carried to New York, and then confined in one of the forts in Boston harbor.

Now, there cannot be the slightest doubt of the illegality of this proceeding on the part of Captain Wilkes. It was not long, to be sure, since England had claimed and exercised a supposed right of the same kind. But such a

claim had been given up, and could not, in 1861, have been maintained by any civilized state. It was a claim which the United States government had especially exerted themselves to abolish. This was the view taken at once by President Lincoln, whose plain good sense served him in better stead than their special studies had served some professors of international law. We have it on the excellent authority of Dr. Draper, in his "History of the American Civil War," that Mr. Lincoln at once declared that the act of Captain Wilkes could not be sustained. He said, "This is the very thing the British captains used to do. They claimed the right of searching American ships and carrying men out of them. That was the cause of the war of 1812. Now, we cannot abandon our own principles. We shall have to give these men up and apologize for what we have done." This was, in fact, the course that the American government had to take. Mr. Seward wrote a long letter in answer to Lord Russell's demand for the surrender of the prisoners, in which he endeavored to make out that Captain Wilkes had acted in accordance with English precedents, but stated that he had not had any authority from the American government to take such a course, and that the government did not consider him to have acted in accordance with the law of nations. "It will be seen," Mr. Seward went on to say, "that this government cannot deny the justice of the claim presented to us, in this respect, upon its merits. We are asked to do to the British nation what we have always insisted all nations ought to do unto us." He announced therefore, that the four prisoners would be "cheerfully liberated." On January 1, 1862, the Confederate envoys were given up on the demand of the British government, and sailed for Europe.

The question, then, it might be thought, was satisfactorily settled. Unfortunately, however, a great deal of harm had been done in the meantime. Popular clamor in the United States had entirely approved of the action of Captain Wilkes. A mass meeting held in Tammany Hall or the Cooper Institute of New York, or even in the less vehement Faneuil Hall of Boston, is not exactly an assembly qualified to give an authoritative decision on questions of international law. The secretary of the navy, however, who ought to have known better but did not, had commended the action of the captain of the *San Jacinto*. A

vote of thanks had been passed to Captain Wilkes in the House of Representatives, Washington, "for his arrest of the traitors Slidell and Mason." Under these circumstances, it is not surprising if people on this side of the ocean should have fancied that the United States were eager to sustain a great act of wrong done against us and against international law. But, on the other hand, the arrest was so absolutely without justification that the English government might well have known President Lincoln's cabinet could not sustain it. The governments of all the great European states promptly interposed their good advice, pointing out to Mr. Lincoln the impossibility of maintaining Captain Wilkes' act. The foreign envoys in Washington, and the Orleans princes, then in that city, had given the same good advice. Lord Palmerston's government acted, however, as if an instant appeal to arms must be necessary. Lord Russell sent out to Washington a peremptory demand for the liberation of the envoys and an apology, and insisted on an answer within seven days. Troops were at once ordered out to Canada, and a proclamation was issued forbidding the export of arms and munitions of war. All this was done, although on the very day that Lord Russell was despatching his peremptory letter to Washington, Mr. Seward was writing to London to assure her majesty's government that the arrest had been made without any authority from the United States government, and that the president and his advisers were then considering the proper course to take. The fact that Mr. Seward's letter had been received was, for some reason or other not made publicly known in England at the time, and the English people were left to believe that the action of Captain Wilkes either was the action of the American government or had that government's approval. Public feeling therefore raged and raved a good deal on both sides. American statesmen believed that the English government was making a wanton and offensive display of a force which they had good reason to know would never be needed. The English public was left under the impression that the American statesmen were only yielding to the display of force. The release of the prisoners did not seem to our people to come with a good grace. It did not seem to the American people to have been asked or accepted with a good grace. Mr. Seward might as well, perhaps, when he had



made up his mind to restore the prisoners, have spared himself the trouble of what the Scotch would call a long "haver," to show that if he acted as England had done he should not have given them up at all. But Mr. Seward always was a terribly eloquent despatch writer, and he could not, we may suppose, persuade himself to forego the opportunity of issuing a dissertation. On the other hand, Lord Palmerston's demeanor and language were what he would probably himself have called, in homely language, "bumptious" if some one else had been in question. Lord Palmerston could not deny himself the pleasure of a burst of cheap popularity, and of seeming to flourish the flag of England in the face of presumptuous foes. The episode was singularly unfortunate in its effect upon the temper of the majority in England and America. From that moment there was a formidable party in England who detested the north, and a formidable party in the north who detested England.

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

### THE CRUISE OF THE ALABAMA.

THE cause of peace between nations lost a good friend at the close of 1861. The prince consort died. It is believed that the latest advice he gave on public affairs had reference to the dispute between England and the United States about the seizure of the Confederate envoys, and that the advice recommended calmness and forbearance on the part of the English government. It is not to be supposed, of course, that the prince consort even thought of suggesting that the English government should acquiesce in what had been done, or allow the wrong to remain unredressed. He knew, as every reasonable man might have known, that the error of the American sailor was unjustifiable, and would have to be atoned for; but he probably assumed that for that very reason the atonement might be awaited without excitement, and believed that it would neither be politic nor generous to make a show of compelling by force what must needs be conceded to justice. The death of the prince consort, lamentable in every way, was especially to be deplored at a time when influential coun-

sels tending toward forbearance and peace were much needed in England. But it may be said, with literal truth, that when the news of the prince's death was made known, its possible effect on the public affairs of England was forgotten or unthought of in the regret for the personal loss. Outside the precincts of Windsor Castle itself the event was wholly unexpected. Perhaps even within the precincts of the castle there was little expectation up to the last that such a calamity was so near. The public had only learned a few days before that the prince was unwell. On December 8th the *Court Circular* mentioned that he was confined to his room by a feverish cold. Then it was announced that he was "suffering from fever, unattended by unfavorable symptoms, but likely, from its symptoms, to continue for some time." This latter announcement appeared in the form of a bulletin on Wednesday, December 11th. About the midnight of Saturday, the 14th, there was some sensation and surprise created throughout London by the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's. Not many people even suspected the import of the unusual sound. It signified the death of the prince consort. He died at ten minutes before eleven that Saturday night, in the presence of the queen, the Prince of Wales, and the Princesses Alice and Helena. The fever had become fierce and wasting on Friday, and from that time it was only a descent to death. Congestion of the lungs set in, the consequence of exhaustion; the prince fell into utter weakness, and died conscious but without pain. He knew the queen to the last. His latest look was turned to her. The prince consort was little more than forty-two years of age when he died. He had always seemed to be in good, although not perhaps robust health; and he had led a singularly temperate life. No one in the kingdom seemed less likely to be prematurely cut off; and his death came on the whole country with the shock of an utter surprise. The regret was universal; and the deepest regret was for the wife he had loved so dearly, and whom he was condemned so soon to leave behind. Every testimony has spoken to the singularly tender and sweet affection of the loving home the queen and prince had made for themselves. A domestic happiness rare even among the obscurest was given to them. It is one of the necessities of royal position that marriage should be seldom the union of hearts. The

choice is limited by considerations which do not affect people in private life. The convenience of states has to be taken into account; the possible likings and dislikings of peoples whom perhaps the bride and bridegroom had never seen and are never destined to see. A marriage among princes is, in nine cases out of ten, a marriage of convenience only. Seldom indeed is it made, as that of the queen was, wholly out of love. Seldom is it even in love-matches when the instincts of love are not deceived and the affection grows stronger with the days. Every one knew that this had been the strange good fortune of the queen of England. There was something poetic, romantic in the sympathy with which so many faithful and loving hearts turned to her in her hour of unspeakable distress.

We have already endeavored to do justice to the character of the prince consort; to show what was his intellectual constitution, what were its strong points, and what its weaknesses and limitations. It is not necessary to go over that task again. It will be enough to say that the country which had not understood him at first was beginning more and more to recognize his genuine worth. Even those who are still far from believing that his influence in politics always worked with good result, are ready to admit that his influence, socially and morally, was that which must always come from the example of a pure and noble life. Of him it might fairly have been said in the classic words that from his mouth "*nihil unquam insolens neque gloriosum exiit.*"

Perhaps, as we have been considering the influence of the prince consort on the councils of England during the earlier parts of the American civil war, it will be appropriate to quote some sentences in which the eminent American historian already mentioned, Dr. Draper, speaks of him. "One illustrious man there was in England," Dr. Draper says, "who saw that the great interests of the future would be better subserved by a sincere friendship with America than by the transitory alliances of Europe. He recognized the bonds of race. His prudent counsels strengthened the determination of the sovereign that the Trent controversy should have an honorable and peaceful solution. Had the desires of these, the most exalted personages of the realm, been more completely fulfilled, the administration of Lord Palmerston would not have cast a disastrous shadow on

the future of the Anglo-Saxon race." Dr. Draper may be thought unjust to Lord Palmerston; he certainly is only just to the prince consort.

After the dispute about the Trent, the feeling between England and the United States became one of distrust, and almost of hostility. We cannot help thinking that the manner in which our government managed the dispute, the superfluous display of force, like a pistol thrust at the head of a disputant whom mere argument is already bringing to reason, had a great deal to do with the growth of this bitter feeling. The controversy about the Trent was hardly over when Lord Russell and Mr. Adams were engaged in the more prolonged and far more serious controversy about the Confederate privateers.

The adventures of the Confederate cruisers began with the escape of a small schooner, the Savannah, from Charleston, in June, 1861. It scoured the seas for awhile as a privateer, and did some damage to the shipping of the northern states. The Sumter had a more memorable career. She was under the command of Captain Semmes, who afterward became famous and during her time she did some little damage. The Nashville and Petrel were also well known for awhile. These were, however, but small vessels, and each had only a short run of it. The first privateer which became really formidable to the shipping of the north was a vessel called in her earlier history the Oreto, but afterward better known as the Florida. Within three months she had captured fifteen vessels. Thirteen of these she burned, and the other two were converted into cruisers by the Confederate government. The Florida was built in Birkenhead, nominally for the use of the Italian government. She got out of the Mersey without detention or difficulty, although the American minister had warned our government of her real purpose. From that time Great Britain became what an American writer calls without any exaggeration "the naval base of the Confederacy." As fast as shipbuilders could work, they were preparing in British shipping yards a privateer navy for the Confederate government. Mr. Gladstone said in a speech which was the subject of much comment, that Jefferson Davis had made a navy. The statement was at all events not literally correct. The English shipbuilders made the navy. Mr. Davis only ordered it and paid for it. Only

seven Confederate privateers were really formidable to the United States, and of these five were built in British dock-yards. We are not including in the list any of the actual war-vessels, the rams and ironclads, that British energy was preparing for the Confederate government. We are now speaking merely of the privateers.

Of these privateers the most famous by far was the *Alabama*. It was the fortune of this vessel to be the occasion of the establishment of a new rule in the law of nations. It had nearly been her fortune to bring England and the United States into war. The *Alabama* was built expressly for the Confederate service in one of the dock-yards of the Mersey. She was built by the house of Laird, a firm of the greatest reputation in the shipbuilding trade, and whose former head was the representative of Birkenhead in the House of Commons. While in process of construction she was called the "two hundred and ninety;" and it was not until she had put to sea and hoisted the Confederate flag, and Captain Semmes, formerly commander of the *Sumter*, had appeared on her deck in full Confederate uniform that she took the name of the *Alabama*. During her career the *Alabama* captured nearly seventy northern vessels. Her plan was always the same. She hoisted the British flag, and thus decoyed her intended victim within her reach; then she displayed the Confederate colors and captured her prize. Unless when there was some particular motive for making use of the captured vessels, they were burned. Sometimes the blazing wreck became the means of decoying a new victim. Some American captain saw far off in the night the flames of a burning vessel reddening the sea. He steered to her aid; and when he came near enough, the *Alabama*, which was yet in the same waters and had watched his coming, fired her shot across his bows, hung out her flag, and made him her prisoner. One American captain bitterly complained that the fire, which seen across the waves at any other time became a summons to every seaman to hasten to the rescue, must thenceforward be a signal to him to hold his course and keep away from the blazing ship. The *Alabama* and her captain were of course much glorified in this country. Captain Semmes was eulogized as if his exploits had been those of another Cochrane or Kanaris. But the *Alabama* did not do much fighting; she preyed on merchant vessels

that could not fight. She attacked where instant surrender must be the reply to her summons. Only twice, so far as we know, did she engage in a fight. The first time was with the *Hatteras*, a small blockading ship, whose broadside was so unequal to that of the *Alabama* that she was sunk in a quarter of an hour. The second time was with the United States ship of war *Kearsarge*, whose size and armaments were about equal to her own. The fight took place off the French shore, near Cherbourg, and the career of the *Alabama* was finished in an hour. The Confederate rover was utterly shattered and went down. Captain Semmes was saved by an English steam yacht, and brought to England to be made a hero for awhile, and then forgotten. The cruise of the *Alabama* had lasted nearly two years. During this time she had contrived to drive American commerce from the seas. Her later cruising days were unprofitable; for American owners found it necessary to keep their vessels in port.

All this, however, it will be said, was but the fortune of war. America had not abolished privateering; and if the northern states suffered from so clever and daring a privateer as Captain Semmes, it was of little use their complaining of it. If they could not catch and capture the *Alabama*, that was their misfortune or their fault. What the United States government did complain of was something very different. They complained that the *Alabama* was practically an English vessel. She was built by English builders in an English dockyard; she was manned for the most part by an English crew; her guns were English; her gunners were English; many of the latter belonged to the royal naval reserve, and were actually receiving pay from the English government; she sailed under the English flag, was welcomed in English harbors, and never was in, or even saw, a Confederate port. As Mr. Forster put it very clearly and tersely, she was built by British shipbuilders and manned by a British crew; she drew prizes to destruction under a British flag, and was paid for by money borrowed from British capitalists.

Mr. Adams called the attention of the government in good time to the fact that the *Alabama* was in course of construction in the dockyard of Messrs. Laird, and that she was intended for the Confederate government. Lord Russell asked for proofs. Mr. Adams forwarded what he

considered proof enough to make out a case for the detention of the vessel pending further inquiry. The opinion of an eminent English lawyer, now Sir Robert Collier, was also sent to Lord Russell by Mr. Adams. This opinion declared that the vessel ought to be detained by the collector of customs at Liverpool; and added that it appeared difficult to make out a stronger case of infringement of the foreign enlistment act, "which if not enforced on this occasion, is little better than a dead letter." The English government still asked for proofs. It did not seem to have occurred to our authorities that if they set a little inquiry on foot themselves they might be able to conduct it much more efficiently than a stranger like Mr. Adams could do. What Mr. Adams asked for was inquiry with a view to detention. He did not ask for the infringement of any domestic law of England; he only asked for such steps to be taken as would allow the law of England to be put in force. The argument of the correspondence on our side seemed to be that a stranger had no right to the protection of our laws until he could make out a case which would amount to the legal conviction of those against whom he asked to be protected. We cannot better summarize the correspondence than by saying it was as if Mr. Adams had forwarded affidavits alleging that there was a conspiracy to murder him, had named the persons against whom he made the charge, and asked for inquiry and protection from the government; and the government had answered that until he could make out a case for the actual conviction of the accused, it was no part of the business of our police to interfere.

Let us dispose of one simple question of fact. There never was the slightest doubt on the mind of any one about the business for which the vessel in the Birkenhead dockyard was destined. There was no attempt at concealment in the matter. Newspaper paragraphs described the gradual construction of the Confederate cruiser, as if it were a British vessel of war that Messrs. Laird had in hand. There never was any question about her destination. Openly and in the face of day she was built by the Laird firm for the Confederate service. The Lairds built her as they would have built any vessel for any one who ordered it and could pay for it. We see no particular reason for blaming them. They certainly made no mystery of the

matter then or after. Whatever technical difficulties might have intervened, it is clear that no real doubt on the mind of the government had anything to do with the delays that took place. At last, Lord Russell asked for the opinion of the queen's advocate. Time was pressing; the cruiser was nearly ready for sea. Everything seemed to be against us. The queen's advocate happened to be sick at the moment, and there was another delay. At last he gave his opinion that the vessel ought to be detained. The opinion came just too late. The *Alabama* had got to sea; her cruise of nearly two years began. She went upon her destroying course with the cheers of English sympathizers and the rapturous tirades of the English newspapers glorifying her. Every misfortune that befell an American merchantman was received in this country with a roar of delight. When Mr. Bright brought on the question in the House of Commons, Mr. Laird declared that he would rather be known as the builder of a dozen *Alabamas* than be a man who, like Mr. Bright, had set class against class, and the majority of the house applauded him to the echo. Lord Palmerston peremptorily declared that in this country we were not in the habit of altering our laws to please a foreign state; a declaration which came with becoming effect from the author of the abortive conspiracy bill, got up to propitiate the emperor of the French.

The building of vessels for the Confederates began to go on with more boldness than ever. Two iron rams of the most formidable kind were built and about to be launched in 1863 for the purpose of forcibly opening the southern ports and destroying the blockading vessels. Mr. Adams kept urging on Lord Russell, and for a long time in vain, that something must be done to stop their departure. Lord Russell at first thought the British government could not interfere in any way. Mr. Adams pressed and protested, and at length was informed that the matter was "now under the serious consideration of her majesty's government." At last, on September 5th, Mr. Adams wrote to tell Lord Russell that one of the ironclad vessels was on the point of departure from this kingdom on its hostile errand against the United States; and added; "it would be superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that this is war." On September 8th Mr. Adams received the following: "Lord Russell presents his compliments to Mr.



Adams, and has the honor to inform him that instructions have been issued which will prevent the departure of the two ironclad vessels from Liverpool." Throughout the whole of the correspondence Lord Russell took up one position. He insisted that the government could only act upon the domestic laws of England and were not bound to make any alteration in these laws to please a foreign state. Nothing can be more self-evident than the fact that the government cannot infringe the laws of the country. During this controversy the law courts decided sometimes, in the case of the *Alexandra*, for example, that there was not evidence enough to justify the seizure or the stoppage of a vessel. But it has to be remembered, that in regard to the *Alabama*, what Mr. Adams asked was not the breaking of English law, but the holding, as it were, of the vessel to bail until the law could be ascertained. There is, however, a much wider question than this, in his views with regard to which Lord Russell seems to have been entirely wrong. The laws of a country are made, first of all, to suit its own people. The people have a right to keep their laws unchanged as long as they please. They are not bound to alter them to suit the pleasure or the convenience of any other nation. All that is clear. But it is equally clear, on the other hand, that they cannot get out of their responsibility to another state by merely saying, "We have such and such laws, and we do not choose to alter them." If the laws permit harm to be done to a foreign state, the people maintaining the laws must either make compensation to the foreign state or they must meet her in war. It is absurd to suppose that our neighbors are to submit to injury on our part merely because our laws do not give us the means of preventing the injury. Mr. Adams put it in the fairest manner to Lord Russell. "This is war." In other words, the American government might have said: "You can allow this sort of thing to go on if you like; but we must point out to you that it is simply war, and nothing else. You are making war or allowing war to be made on us; you cannot shelter yourselves under an imaginary neutrality. If you choose to keep your laws as they are, very good; but you must take the consequences." The extraordinary mistake which Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell made was the assumption that the existence

of certain domestic regulations of ours could be a sufficient answer to claims made upon us by our neighbors. Suppose we had no foreign enlistment act? Suppose the Confederates were allowed openly to raise armies and equip navies in England, and to fly their flag here and go forth to make war on the United States with the permission of our government? Would it be enough to say to the United States, "We are very sorry indeed; we do not like to see people making war on you from our territory; but, unluckily, we have no law to prevent it; and you must, therefore, only put up with it?" The dullest English sympathizer with the cause of the Southern Confederation would not be taken in by a plea like this, or expect the United States to admit it. Yet the case set up by Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell was really not different in kind. It merely pleaded that although our ports were made the basis, and indeed the only basis, of naval operations against the United States, we could not help it; our laws were not so framed as to give our neighbors any protection. The obvious retort on America's side was, "Then we must protect ourselves; we cannot admit that the condition of your municipal laws entitles you to become with impunity a nuisance and a pest to your neighbors."

The position which Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell took up was wisely and properly abandoned by Lord Stanley, now Lord Derby, when the Conservatives came into office. It was then frankly admitted that every state is responsible for the manner in which the working of its municipal laws may effect the interests of its neighbors. We need not, however, anticipate just now a controversy and a settlement yet to come. Lord Russell, it may be remarked, was mistaken in another part of his case. He was able to show that in some way or other the authorities of the United States had failed to prevent the enlistment of British subjects in this country for the armies of the Union. But his mistake was in supposing that this was a practical answer to the complaints made by Mr. Adams. There is some difference between a small grievance and a very great grievance. The grievance to us in the secret enlistment of a few British subjects for the northern service was not very serious. The authorities of the United States acknowledged that it was improper, and promised to

use all diligence to put a stop to it; and of course, if they had failed to do so, it would be entirely for England to consider what steps she ought to take to obtain a redress of any wrong done to her. But in a practical controversy there was no comparison between the grievances. It is not a reasonable reply to a neighbor who complains that our fierce dog has broken into his house and bitten his children, if we say that his cat has stolen into our kitchen and eaten our cream. It is strange, too, to observe that Lord Russell and the chief baron and other authorities constantly dwell on the fact that a neutral may sell arms to either belligerent, and ask triumphantly if arms, why not an armed vessel? If shot and shell, why not a cruiser or a ram? There is, at all events, one plain reason which would be enough even if there were none other. It is not possible to prove that the shot and shell have done any damage; it is possible to prove that the cruiser has. We cannot follow the rifle or the bullet to its destination; we can follow the *Alabama*. It would be idle to try to prove that a certain lot of gunpowder was discharged against a northern regiment; but it is easy to prove that the *Alabama* burned American vessels and confiscated American cargoes. The bitterness of the feeling in America was not mitigated, nor the sense of English unfairness made less keen, by the production during the controversy of a despatch sent from England to Washington at the opening of the Crimean war, in which the English government expressed a confident hope that the authorities of the United States would give orders that no privateer under Russian colors should be equipped or victualled or admitted with its prizes into any of the ports of the United States.

The controversy was carried on for some years. It became mixed up with disputes about Confederate raids from Canada into the states, and later on about Fenian raids from the states into Canada, and questions of fishery right and various other matters of discussion; but the principle subject of dispute, the only one of real gravity, was that which concerned the cruise of the *Alabama*. Lord Russell at length declined peremptorily to admit that the English government were in any way responsible for what had been done by the Confederate cruisers, or that England was called on to alter her domestic law to please her neighbors. Mr. Adams therefore dropped the matter for the

time, intimating however that it was only put aside for the time. The United States government had their hands full just then; and in any case could afford to wait. The question would keep. The British government were glad to be relieved from the discussion and from the necessity of arguing the various points with Mr. Adams, and were under the pleasing impression that they had heard the last of it.

Surveying the diplomatic controversy at this distance of time, one cannot but think that Mr. Adams comes best out of it. No minister representing the interests of his state in a foreign capital could have had a more trying position to sustain and a more difficult part to play. Mr. Adams knew that the tone of the society in which he had to move was hostile to his government and to his cause. It was difficult for him to remain always patient and yet to show that the American government could not be expected to endure everything. It was not easy to retain always the calm courtesy which his place demanded, and which was, indeed, an inheritance in his family of stately public men. He was embarrassed sometimes by the officious efforts, the volunteer intervention of some of his own countrymen, who, knowing nothing of English political life and English social ways, fancied they were making a favorable impression on public opinion here by the tactics of a full campaign at home. Moreover, it is plain that for a long time Mr. Adams was in much doubt as to the capacity of the military leaders of the north; and he well knew that nothing but military success could rescue the Union from the diplomatic conspiracies which were going on in Europe for the promotion of the southern cause. Mr. Adams appears to have borne himself all through with judgment, temper, and dignity. Lord Russell does not show to so much advantage. He is sometimes petulant; he is too often inclined to answer Mr. Adams' grave and momentous remonstrances with retorts founded on allegations against the north which, even if well-founded, were of slight comparative importance. When Mr. Adams complains that the Alabama is sweeping American commerce from the seas, Lord Russell too often replies with some complaint about the enlistment of British subjects for the service of the Union; as if the Confederates making war on the United States from English ports with English

ships and crews were no graver matter of complaint than the story true or false, of some American agent having enlisted Tim Doolan and Sandy Maesnish to fight for the north. Mr. Seward does not come out of the correspondence well. There is a curious evasiveness in his frequent floods of eloquence which contrasts unpleasantly with Mr. Adams' straightforward and manly style. Mr. Seward writes as if he were under the impression that he could palaver Mr. Adams and Lord Russell and the British public into not believing the evidence of their senses. At the gloomiest hour of the fortunes of the north, Mr. Adams faces the facts, and, confident of the ultimate future, makes no pretense at ignoring the seriousness of the present danger. Mr. Seward seems to think that public attention can be cheated away from a recognition of realities by a display of inappropriate rhetorical fireworks. At a moment when the prospect of the north seemed especially gloomy, and when it was apparent to every human creature that its military affairs had long been in hopelessly bad hands, Mr. Seward writes to inform Mr. Adams that "Our assault upon Richmond is for the moment suspended," and is good enough to add that "no great and striking movements or achievements are occurring, and the government is rather preparing its energies for renewed operations than continuing to surprise the world by new and brilliant victories." The northern commanders had, indeed, for some time been surprising the world, but not at all by brilliant victories; and the suggestion that the northern government might go on winning perpetual victories if they only wished it, but that they preferred for the present not to dazzle the world too much with their success, must have fallen rather chillingly on Mr. Adams' ear. Mr. Adams knew only too well that the north must win victories soon, or they might find themselves confronted with a European confederation against them. The Emperor Napoleon was working hard to get England to join with him in recognizing the south. Mr. Roebuck had at one time a motion in the House of Commons calling on the English government to make up their minds to the recognition; and Mr. Adams had explained again and again that such a step would mean war with the northern states. Mr. Adams was satisfied that the fate of Mr. Roebuck's motion would depend on the military events of a few days.

He was right. The motion was never pressed to a division; for during its progress there came at one moment the news that General Grant had taken Vicksburg on the Mississippi, and that General Meade had defeated General Lee at Gettysburg and put an end to all thought of a southern invasion. This news was at first received with resolute incredulity in London by the advocates and partisans of the south. In some of the clubs there was positive indignation that such things should even be reported. The outburst of wrath was natural. That was the turning-point of the war, although not many saw it even then. The south never had a chance after that hour. There was no more said in this country about the recognition of the southern confederation, and the emperor of the French was thenceforward free to follow out his plans as far as he could and alone.

The Emperor Napoleon, however, was for the present confident enough. He was under the impression that he had heard the last of the protests against his Mexican expedition. This expedition was in the beginning a joint undertaking of England, France, and Spain. Its professed object as set forth in a convention signed in London on October 31, 1861, was "to demand from the Mexican authorities more efficacious protection for the persons and properties of their (the allied sovereigns,) subjects, as well as a fulfillment of the obligations contracted toward their majesties by the republic of Mexico." Mexico had been for a long time in a very disorganized state. The constitutional government of Benito Juarez had come into power, but the reactionary party were still struggling to regain the upper hand, and a sort of guerrilla warfare was actually going on. The government of Juarez, whatever its defects, gave promise of being stronger and better than that of its predecessors. It was, however, burthened with responsibility for the debts incurred and the crimes committed by its predecessors; and it entered into an agreement with several foreign states, England among the rest, to make over a certain proportioned of the customs revenues to meet the claims of foreign creditors. This arrangement was not kept, and timely satisfaction was not given for wrongs committed against foreign subjects—wronges for the most part, if not altogether, done by the government which Juarez had expelled from power, but for which of course

he, as the successor to power, was properly responsible. Lord Russell, who had acted with great forbearance toward Mexico up to this time, now agreed to co-operate with France and Spain in exacting reparation from Juarez. But he defined clearly the extent to which the intervention of England would go. England would join in an expedition for the purpose, if necessary, of seizing on Mexican custom houses, and thus making good the foreign claims. But she would not go a step farther. She would have nothing to do with upsetting the government of Mexico, or imposing any European system on the Mexican people. Accordingly the second article of the convention pledged the contracting parties not to seek for themselves any acquisition of territory or any special advantage, and not to exercise in the internal affairs of Mexico any influence of a nature to prejudice the right of the Mexican nation to choose and to constitute freely the form of government. The emperor of the French, however, had already made up his mind that he would establish a sort of feudatory monarchy in Mexico. He had long had various schemes and ambitions floating in his mind concerning those parts of America on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico which were once the possessions of France. In his dreamy fantastic way, he had visions of restoring French influence and authority somewhere along the shores of the gulf; and the outbreak of the southern rebellion appeared to give him just the opportunity that he desired. At the time when the convention was signed the affairs of the Federal states seemed all but hopeless, and for a long time after they gave no gleam of hope for the restoration of the Union. Louis Napoleon was convinced then, and for long after, that the southern states would succeed in establishing their independence. He seems to have been of Mr. Roebuck's way of thinking, that "the only fear we ought to have is lest the independence of the south should be established without us." He was glad therefore of the chance afforded him by the Mexican convention, and at the very time when he signed the convention with the pledge contained in its second article, he had already been making arrangements to found a monarchy in Mexico. If he could have ventured to set up a monarchy with a French prince at its head, he would probably have done so; but this would have been too bold a venture. He, therefore, persuaded the

Archduke Maximilian, brother of the emperor of Austria, to accept the crown of the monarchy he proposed to set up in Mexico. The archduke was a man of pure and noble character, but evidently wanting in strength of mind, and he agreed after some hesitation to accept the offer.

Meanwhile the joint expedition sailed. We sent only a line-of-battle ship, two frigates and 700 marines. France sent in the first instance about 2,500 men, whom he largely reinforced immediately after. Spain had about 6,000 men, under the command of the late Marshal Prim. The allies soon began to find that their purposes were incompatible. There was much suspicion about the designs of France, although the French statesmen were every day repudiating in stronger and stronger terms the intentions imputed to them, and which soon proved to be the resolute purposes of the emperor of the French. Some of the claims set up by France disgusted the other allies. The Jecker claims were for a long time after as familiar a subject of ridicule as our own Pacific claims had been. The Swiss house of Jecker & Company had lent the former government of Mexico \$750,000, and got bonds from that government, which was on its very last legs, for fifteen millions of dollars. The government was immediately afterward upset, and Juarez came into power. M. Jecker modestly put in his claim for fifteen millions of dollars. Juarez refused to comply with the demand. He offered to pay the \$750,000 lent and five per cent. interest, but declined to pay exactly twenty times the amount of the sum advanced. M. Jecker had by this time become somehow a subject of France, and the French government took up his claim. It was clear that the emperor of the French had resolved that there should be war. At last the designs of the French government became evident to the English and Spanish plenipotentiaries, and England and Spain withdrew from the convention. England certainly ought never to have entered into it. But as she had been drawn in, the best thing then was for her to get out of it as decently and as quickly as she could. Nothing in the enterprise became her like to the leaving of it.

The emperor of the French "walked his own wild road whither that led him." He overran a certain portion of Mexico with his troops. He captured Puebla after a long and desperate resistance; he occupied the capital, and he



set up the Mexican empire with Maximilian as emperor. French troops remained to protect the new empire. Against all this the United States government protested from time to time. They disclaimed any intention to prevent the Mexican people from establishing an empire if they thought fit; but they pointed out that grave inconveniences must arise if a foreign power like France persisted in occupying with her troops any part of the American continent. The Monroe doctrine, which by the way was the invention of George Canning and not of President Monroe, does not forbid the establishing of a monarchy on the American continent, but only the intervention of a European power to set up such a system, or any system opposed to liberty there. However, the Emperor Napoleon cared nothing just then about the Monroe doctrine, complacently satisfied that the United States were going to pieces, and that the Southern Confederacy would be his friend and ally. He received the protests of the American government with unveiled indifference. At last the tide in American affairs turned. The Confederacy crumbled away—Richmond was taken; Lee surrendered; Jefferson Davis was a prisoner. Then the United States returned to the Mexican question, and the American government informed Louis Napoleon that it would be inconvenient, gravely inconvenient, if he were not to withdraw his soldiers from Mexico. A significant movement of American troops, under a renowned general, then flushed with success, was made in the direction of the Mexican frontier. There was nothing for Louis Napoleon but to withdraw. Up to the last he had been rocked in the vainest hopes. Long after the end had become patent to every other eye, he assured an English member of parliament that he looked upon the Mexican empire as the greatest creation of his reign.

The Mexican empire lasted two months and a week after the last of the French troops had been withdrawn. Maximilian endeavored to raise an army of his own and to defend himself against the daily increasing strength of Juarez. He showed all the courage which might have been expected from his race and from his own previous history. But in an evil hour for himself, and yielding, it is stated, to the persuasion of a French officer, he had issued a decree that all who resisted his authority in arms

should be shot. By virtue of this monstrous ordinance, Mexican officers of the regular army, taken prisoners while resisting, as they were bound to do, the invasion of a European prince, were shot like brigands. The Mexican general, Ortega, was one of those thus shamefully done to death. When Juarez conquered, and Maximilian in his turn, was made a prisoner, he was tried by court-martial, condemned, and shot. His death created a profound sensation in Europe. He had in all his previous career won respect everywhere, and even in the Mexican scheme he was universally regarded as a noble victim who had been deluded to his doom. The conduct of Juarez in thus having him put to death raised a cry of horror from all Europe; but it must be allowed that, by the fatal decree which he had issued, the unfortunate Maximilian had left himself liable to a stern retaliation. There was cold truth in the remark made at the time, that if he had been only General and not Archduke Maximilian, his fate would not have aroused so much surprise or anger.

The French empire never recovered the shock of this Mexican failure. It was chiefly in the hope of regaining his lost *prestige* that the emperor tried to show himself a strong man in German affairs. More than three years before the fall of Maximilian, the present writer, in commenting on Louis Napoleon's scheme, ventured to predict that Mexico would prove the Moscow of the second empire. Time has not shown that the prediction was rash. The French empire outlived the Mexican empire by three years and a few weeks. From the entering of Moscow to the arrival at St. Helena the interval was three years and one month.

We need not follow any further the history of the American civil war. The restoration of the Union, the assassination of President Lincoln, and the emancipation of the colored race from all the disqualifications, as well as all the bondage, of the slave system, belong to American and not to English history. But the Alabama dispute led to consequences which are especially important to England, and which shall be described in their due time. Meanwhile, it is necessary for the proper appreciation of the final terms of settlement, that we should see exactly how the dispute arose, and what was the condition of public feeling in this country at the time

when it grew into serious proportions. If the final settlement was felt to be humiliating in England, it must be owned that those who are commonly called the governing classes had themselves very much to blame. Their conviction that the civil war must lead to the disruption of the Union was at the bottom of much of the indifference and apathy which for a long time was shown by English officials in regard to the remonstrances of the United States. The impression that we might do as we liked with the north was made only too obvious. The United States must, indeed, then have felt that they were receiving a warning that to be weak is to be miserable. It is not surprising if they believed at that time that England was disposed to adopt Sir Giles Overreach's way of thinking—

“ We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen  
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand  
To lift them up, but rather set our feet  
Upon their heads to press them to the bottom.

It is not certain that the supporters of the southern side at any time actually outnumbered the champions of the north and of the Union; but they seemed for the great part of the war's duration to have the influence of the country mainly with them. A superficial observer might have been excused at one time if he said that England as a whole was on the side of the secession. This would have been a very inaccurate statement of the case; but the inaccuracy would have been excusable, and even natural. The vast majority of what are called the governing classes were on the side of the south. By far the greater number of the aristocracy, of the official world, of members of parliament, of military and naval men, were for the south. London club life was virtually all southern. The most powerful papers in London, and the most popular papers as well, were open partisans of the Southern Confederation. In London, to be on the side of the Union was at one time to be eccentric, to be un-English, to be Yankee. On the other hand, most of the great democratic towns of the midland and of the north were mainly in favor of the Union. The artisans everywhere were on the same side. This was made strikingly manifest in Lancashire. The supply of cotton from America nearly ceased in consequence of the war, and the greatest distress prevailed in

that country. The "cotton famine," called by no exaggerated name, set in. All that private benevolence could do, all that legislation, enabling money to be borrowed for public works to give employment, could do, was for a time hardly able to contend against the distress. Yet the Lancashire operatives were among the sturdiest of those who stood out against any proposal to break the blockade or to recognize the south. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, and the Manchester school generally, or at least all that were left of them, were for the north. A small but very influential number of thoughtful men, Mr. John Stuart Mill at their head, were faithful to their principles, and stood firmly by the cause of the Union. But the voice of London, that is the voice of what is called society, and of the metropolitan shopkeeping classes who draw their living from society—all this was for the south. It was not a question of Liberal and Tory. The Tories, on the whole, were more discreet than the Liberals. It was not from the Conservative benches of the House of Commons that the bitterest and least excusable denunciations of the northern cause and of the American Republic were heard. It was a Liberal who declared with exultation that "the republican bubble" had burst. It was a Liberal—Mr. Roebuck—who was most clamorous for English intervention to help the south. It was Lord Russell who described the struggle as one in which the north was striving for empire and the south for independence. It was Mr. Gladstone who said that the president of the Southern Confederation—Mr. Jefferson Davis—had made an army, had made a navy, and, more than that, had made a nation. On the other hand, it is to be remarked that among the Liberals, even of the official class, were to be seen some of the staunchest advocates of the northern cause. The Duke of Argyll championed the cause from warm sympathy; Sir George Lewis from cool philosophy. Mr. Charles Villiers and Mr. Milner Gibson were frankly and steadily on the side of the north. The Conservative leaders on the whole behaved with great discretion. Mr. Adams wrote, in July, 1863, that "the opposition leaders are generally disinclined to any demonstration whatever. Several of them in reality rather sympathize with us. But the body of their party continue animated by the same feelings to America which brought on the revolution, and

which drove us into the war of 1812." Lord Derby, indeed, expressed his conviction that the Union never could be restored; but Lord Palmerston had done the same. Mr. Disraeli abstained from saying anything that could offend any northerner, and gave no indication of partisanship on either side. Lord Stanley always spoke like a fair and reasonable man, who understood thoroughly what he was talking about. In this he was, unfortunately, somewhat peculiar among the class to which he belonged. Not many of them appeared precisely to know what they were talking about. They took their opinions for the most part from the *Times* and from the talk of the clubs. The talk of the clubs was that the southerners were all gentlemen and very nice fellows, who were sure to win; and that the northerners were low, trading, shopkeeping fellows, who did not know how to fight, were very cowardly, and were certain to be defeated. There was a theory that the northerners really rather liked slavery and would have it if they could, and that a negro slave in the south was much better off than a free negro in the northern states. The geography of the question was not very clearly understood in the clubs. Those who endeavored to show that it was not easy to find a convenient dividing line for two federations on the North American continent were commonly answered that the Mississippi formed exactly the suitable frontier. It was an article of faith with some of those who then most eagerly discussed the question in London, that the Mississippi flowed east and west, and separated neatly the seceding states from the states of the north. The *Times* was the natural instructor of what is called society in London, and the *Times* was, unfortunately, very badly informed all through the war. After the failure of General Lee's attempt to carry invasion into the north and the simultaneous capture of Vicksburg by General Grant, any one, it might have been thought, who was capable of forming an opinion at all, must have seen that the flood-tide of the rebellion had been reached and was over; that the south would have to stand on the defensive from that hour, and that the overcoming of its defense, considering the comparative resources of the belligerents, was only a question of time. Yet for a whole year or more the London public were still assured that the Confederates were sweeping from victory to victory; that wherever they

seemed even to undergo a check, that was only a part of their superior policy, which would presently vindicate itself in greater victory; that the north was staggering, crippled and exhausted; and that the only doubt was whether General Lee would not at once march for Washington and establish the southern government there. Almost to the very hour when the south, its brave and brilliant defense all over, had to confess defeat and yield its broken sword to the conquerors, the London public were still invited to believe that Mr. Davis was floating on the full flood of success. While the hearts of all in Richmond were filled with despair, and the final surrender was accounted there a question of days, the southern sympathizers in London were complacently bidden to look out for the full triumph and the assured independence of the Southern Confederation. On the last day of December, 1864, the *Times* complained that "Mr. Seward and other teachers or flatterers of the multitude still affect to anticipate the early restoration of the Union"—and in three months from that date the rebellion was over. Those who read and believed in such instruction—and up to the very last their name was legion—must surely have been bewildered when the news came of the capture of Richmond and the surrender of Lee. They might well have thought that only some miraculous intervention of a malignant fate could thus all at once have converted victory into defeat, and turned the broken, worthless levies of Grant and Sherman into armies of conquerors.

In the end the southern population were as bitter against us as the north. The southern states fancied themselves deceived. They too had mistaken the unthinking utterances of what is called society in England for the expression of English statesmanship and public feeling. It is proper to assert distinctly that at no time had the English government any thought of acting on the suggestion of the emperor of the French and recognizing the south. Lord Palmerston would not hear of it, nor would Lord Russell. What might have come to pass if the southern successes had continued a year longer it would be idle now to conjecture, but up to the turning-point our statesmen had not changed, and after the turning-point change was out of the question. There is nothing to blame in the conduct of the English government throughout all this trying time,

except as regards the manner in which they dismissed the remonstrances about the building of the privateers. But it is not likely that impartial history will acquit them of the charge of having been encouraged in their indifference by the common conviction that the Union was about to be broken up, and that the north was no longer a formidable power.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### PALMERSTON'S LAST VICTORY.

DURING the later months of his life the prince consort had been busy in preparing for another great international exhibition to be held in London. It was arranged that this exhibition should open on May 1, 1862; and although the sudden death of the prince consort greatly interfered with the prospects of the undertaking, it was not thought right that there should be any postponement of the opening. The exhibition building was erected in South Kensington, according to a design by Captain Fowke. It certainly was not a beautiful structure. None of the novel charm which attached to the bright exterior of the Crystal Palace could be found in the South Kensington building. It was a huge and solid erection of brick, with two enormous domes, each in shape so strikingly like the famous crinoline petticoat of the period that people amused themselves by suggesting that the principal idea of the architect was to perpetuate for posterity the shape and structure of the Empress Eugenie's invention. The fine arts department of the exhibition was a splendid collection of pictures and statues. The display of products of all kinds from the colonies was rich, and was a novelty, for the colonists contributed little indeed to the exhibition of 1851; and the intervening eleven years had been a period of immense colonial advance. But the public did not enter with much heart into the enterprise of 1862. No one felt any longer any of the hopes which floated dreamily and gracefully round the scheme of 1851. There was no talk or thought of a reign of peace any more. The civil war was raging in America. The continent of Europe was trembling all over with the spasms of war just done, and the

premonitory symptoms of war to come. The exhibition of 1862 had to rely upon its intrinsic merits, like any ordinary show or any public market. Poetry and prophecy had nothing to say to it.

England was left for some time to an almost absolute inactivity. As regards measures of political legislation, after the failure of the reform bill, it was quite understood, as we have already said, that there was to be no more of reform while Lord Palmerston lived. At one of his elections for Tiverton, Lord Palmerston was attacked by a familiar antagonist, a sturdy Radical butcher, and asked to explain why he did not bring in another reform bill. The answer was characteristic. "Why do we not bring in another reform bill? Because we are not geese." Lord Palmerston was heartily glad to be rid of schemes in which he had neither belief nor sympathy; and his absence of political foresight in home affairs made him satisfied that the whole question of reform was quietly shelved for another generation. It is not, perhaps, surprising that a busy statesman, whose intellect was mostly exercised on questions of foreign policy, should have come to this conclusion, when cool critics on public affairs were ready to adopt with complacency a similar faith. The *Quarterly Review* said, in 1863, "Reform is no longer talked of now. Mr. Bright has almost ceased to excite antipathy." "Our statesmen," it went on to say with portentous gravity, "have awakened to the fact that the imagined reform agitation was nothing but an intrigue among themselves, and that the nation was far too sensible to desire any further approximation to the government of the multitude." Lord Palmerston was free to indulge in his taste for foreign politics.

Between Palmerston and the Radical party in England there was a growing coldness. He had not only thrown over reform himself, but he had apparently induced most of his colleagues to accept the understanding that nothing more was to be said about it. He had gone in for a policy of large expenditure for the purpose of securing the country against the possibilities of invasion. He had lent himself openly to the propagation of what his adversaries called, not very unreasonably, the scare that was got up about another Napoleonic invasion. When drawn into argument by Mr. Cobden on the subject, Lord



Palmerston had betrayed a warmth of manner that was almost offensive, and had spoken of the commercial treaty with France as if it were a thing rather ridiculous than otherwise. He was unsparing whenever he had a chance in his ridicule of the ballot. He had very little sympathy with the grievances of the nonconformists, some of them even still real and substantial enough. He took no manner of interest in anything proposed for the political benefit of Ireland. Although an Irish landlord, an Irish peer, and occasionally speaking of himself in a half-jocular way as an Irishman, he could not be brought even to affect any sympathy with any of the complaints made by the representatives of that country. He scoffed at all proposals about tenant-right. "Tenant-right," he once said, "is landlord's wrong;" and he was cheered for saying this by the landlords on both sides of the House of Commons; and he evidently thought he had settled the question. He was indeed impatient of all "views;" and he regarded what is called philosophic statesmanship with absolute contempt. The truth is that Palmerston ceased to be a statesman the moment he came to deal with domestic interests. When actually in the home office and compelled to turn his attention to the business of that department, he proved a very efficient administrator, because of his shrewdness and his energy. But as a rule he had not much to do with English political affairs, and he knew little or nothing of them. He was even childishly ignorant of many things which any ordinary public man is supposed to know. He was at home in foreign—that is, in continental politics; for he had hardly any knowledge of American affairs, and almost up to the moment of the fall of Richmond was confident that the Union never could be restored, and that separation was the easy and natural way of settling all the dispute. He gave a pension to an absurd and obscure writer of doggerel, and when a question was raised about this singular piece of patronage in the House of Commons, it turned out that Lord Palmerston knew nothing about the man, but had got it into his head somehow that he was a poet of the class of Burns. When he read anything except despatches he read scientific treatises, for he had a keen interest in some branches of science; but he cared little for modern English literature. The world in which he delighted to mingle talked of continental politics generally,

and a great knowledge of English domestic affairs would have been thrown away there. Naturally, therefore, when Lord Palmerston had nothing particular to do in foreign affairs and had to turn his attention to England, he relished the idea of fortifying her against foreign foes. This was foreign politics seen from another point of view; it had far more interest for him than reform or tenant-right.

There were, however, some evidences of a certain difference of opinion between Lord Palmerston and some of his colleagues, as well as between him and the Radical party. His constant activity in foreign politics pleased some of his cabinet as little as it pleased the advanced Liberals. His vast fortification schemes, and his willingness to spend money on any project that tended toward war or, what seemed much the same thing, on any elaborate preparation against problematical war, was not congenial with the temperament and the judgment of some members of his administration. Lord Palmerston acted sincerely on the opinion which he expressed in a short letter to Mr. Cobden, that "man is a fighting and quarreling animal." Assuming it to be the nature of man to fight and quarrel, he could see no better business for English statesmanship than to keep this country always in a condition to resist a possible attack from somebody. He differed almost radically on this point from two at least of his more important colleagues, Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Cornwall Lewis. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, in his "Life of Lord Palmerston," has published some interesting letters that passed between Palmerston and these statesmen on this general subject. Palmerston wrote to Sir George Lewis on November 22, 1860, arguing against something Lewis had said, and which Palmerston hopes "was only a conversational paradox, and not a deliberately adopted theory." This was a dissent on the part of Lewis from the maxim, that in statesmanship prevention is better than cure. Each had clearly in his mind the prevention which would take security against the perils of war; Lord Palmerston therefore goes on at once in his letter to show that in many cases the timely adoption of spirited measures by an English government would have actually prevented war. Lewis argues that "if an evil is certain and proximate, and can be averted by diplomacy, then undoubtedly prevention is better than cure;" but that "if the evil is remote and uncertain, then I think it

is better not to resort to preventive measures, which insure a proximate and certain mischief." The purpose of the discussion is made more clear in Lewis' concluding sentence: "It seems to me that our foreign relations are on too vast a scale to render it wise for us to insure systematically against all risks; and if we do not insure systematically, we do nothing." On April 29, 1862, Lord Palmerston writes to Mr. Gladstone about a speech that the latter had just been making in Manchester, and in which, as Lord Palmerston puts it, Mr. Gladstone seems "to make it a reproach to the nation at large that it has forced, as you say it has, on the parliament and the government the high amount of expenditure which we have at present to provide for." Palmerston does not "quite agree" with Mr. Gladstone "as to the fact;" "but admitting it to be as you state, it seems to me to be rather a proof of the superior sagacity of the nation than a subject for reproach." Lord Palmerston goes on to argue that the country, so far from having, as Cobden had accused it of doing, "rushed headlong into extravagance under the influence of panic," had simply awakened from a lethargy, got rid of "an apathetic blindness on the part of the governed and the governors as to the defensive means of the country compared with the offensive means acquired and acquiring by other powers." "We have on the other side of the channel a people who, say what they may, hate us as a nation from the bottom of their hearts, and would make any sacrifice to inflict a deep humiliation upon England. It is natural that this should be so. They are eminently vain, and their passion is glory in war. They cannot forget or forgive Aboukir, Trafalgar, the Peninsula, Waterloo and St. Helena. . . . Well, then, at the head of this neighboring nation, who would like nothing so well as a retaliatory blow upon England, we see an able, active, wary, counsel-keeping but ever-planning sovereign; and we see this sovereign organizing an army which, including his reserve, is more than six times greater in amount than the whole of our regular forces in our two islands, and at the same time laboring hard to create a navy equal, if not superior, to ours. Give him a cause of quarrel, which any foreign power may at any time invent or create, if so minded; give him the command of the channel, which permanent or accidental naval superiority might afford him, and then calculate if you can—for

it would pass my reckoning power to do so—the disastrous consequences to the British nation which a landing of an army of from one to two hundred thousand men would bring with it. Surely even a large yearly expenditure for army and navy is an economical insurance against such a catastrophe.” The reader will perhaps be reminded of one of the most effective arguments of Demosthenes. Consider, he says, what even a few days of the occupation of the country by a foreign enemy would mean, and then say whether as a mere matter of economy it would not be better to spend a good deal of the resources we have in striving to avert such a calamity. There is a great difference, however, in the purpose and the application of the two arguments. Demosthenes puts the case in a way that is from its point of view perfect. He is speaking of a danger that lies at the gates; of an enemy who must be encountered one way or another; and he is pleading for instant and offensive war. It is a very different thing to argue for enormous expenditure on the ground that somebody who is now professing the most peaceful intentions may possibly one day become your enemy, and try to attack you. In such a case, the first thing to be considered is whether the danger is real and likely to be imminent, or whether it is merely speculative. Even against speculative dangers a wise people will always take precautions; but it is no part of wisdom to spend in guarding against such perils as much as would be needed to enable us actually to speak with the enemy at the gate. It is a question of proportion and comparison. As Sir George Lewis argues, it is not possible for a nation like England to secure herself against all speculative dangers. France might invade us from Boulogne or Cherbourg, no doubt. But the United States might at the same time assail us in Canada. Russia might attack, as she once thought of doing, our Australian possessions, or make an onslaught upon us in Asia. Germany might be in alliance with Russia; Austria might at the same time be in alliance with France. These are all possibilities; they might all come to pass at one and the same time. But how could any state keep fleets and armies capable of ensuring her against serious peril from such a combination? It would be better to make up our minds to wait until the assault really threatened, and then fight it out the best way we could. Lord Palmerston seemed to forget that in the

campaign against Russia it did not prove easy for France to send out an army very much smaller than his "one or two hundred thousand men;" and that Louis Napoleon was glad to finish up prematurely his campaign in Lombardy even though he had won in every battle. He had also made the mistake of assuming that all these military and naval insurances must insure. If he had lived to 1870 he would have seen that a sovereign may engage himself for years in preparing of an immense armament, that it may be the armament of a people, "eminently vain" and whose "passion is glory in war," and yet that the armament may turn out a vast failure, and may prove at the hour of need a defense like Rodomonte's bridge in Ariosto, which only conducts its owner to ignominious upset and fall. All the resources of France were strained for years, and by one who could do as he pleased, for the single purpose of creating a great overmastering army; and when the time came to test the army, it proved to be little better than what Prince Bismarek called "a crowd of fighting persons." This is surely a matter to be taken account of when we are thinking of going to vast annual expense for the purpose of maintaining a great armament. We may go to all the expense, and yet not have the armament when we fancy we have need for it. That, Lord Palmerston would doubtless have said, is a risk we must run. Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Lewis would no doubt have thought problematic invasion a risk more safe to run. That had been the view of Sir Robert Peel.

Whatever may be thought of the merits of the argument on either side—and the decision will be made more often probably by temperament than by reasoning—the controversy will serve to illustrate the sort of difference that was gradually growing up between Lord Palmerston and some of his own colleagues. Lord Palmerston had of late fallen again into a policy of suspicion and distrust as regards France. We are convinced that he was perfectly sincere; and, as has been said already in these pages, we do not think there was any inconsistency in his conduct. He had for a long time believed in the good faith of the emperor of the French; but the policy of the Lombardy campaign, and the consequent annexation of Savoy and Nice, had come on him as a complete surprise, and when he found that his friend Louis Napoleon could keep such

secrets from him, he possibly came to the conclusion that he could keep others still more important. Lord Palmerston made England his idol. He loved her in a pagan way. He did not much care for abstract justice where she was concerned. He was unscrupulous where he believed her interests were to be guarded. Nor had he any other than a purely pagan view of her interests. It did not seem to have occurred to him that England's truest interest would be to do justice to herself and to other states; to be what Voltaire's Brahmin boasts of being, a good parent and a faithful friend, maintaining well her own children and endeavoring for peace among her neighbors. Palmerston's idea was that England should hold the commanding place among European states, and that none should even seem to be in a position to do her scathe.

Lord Palmerston's taste for foreign affairs had now ample means of gratification. England had some small troubles of her own to deal with. A serious insurrection sprang up in New Zealand. The tribe of the Waikatos, living near Auckland in the northern island, began a movement against the colonists, and this became before long a general rebellion of the Maori natives. The Maoris are a remarkably intelligent race, and are skillful in war as well as in peace. Not long before this the governor of the colony, Sir George Grey, had written in the warmest praise of their industrial capabilities and their longing for mental improvement. They had a certain literary art among them; they could all, or nearly all, read and write; many of them were eloquent and could display considerable diplomatic skill. They fought so well in this instance that the British troop actually suffered a somewhat serious repulse in endeavoring to take one of the Maori palisado-fortified villages. In the end, however, they were of course defeated. The quarrel was a survival of a long-standing dispute between the colonists and the natives about land. It was, in fact, the old story; the colonists eager to increase their stock of land, and the natives jealous to guard their quickly-vanishing possession. The events led to grave discussion in parliament. The legislature of New Zealand passed enactments confiscating some nine million acres of the native lands and giving the colonial government something like absolute and arbitrary power of arrest and imprisonment. The government at home proposed to help the

colonists by a guarantee to raise a loan of one million to cover the expenses of the war, or the colonial share of them, and this proposal was keenly discussed in the House of Commons. It was on this occasion that Mr. Roebuck laid down a philosophical theory which gave a good deal of offense to sensitive people; the theory that where "the brown man" and the white meet, the brown man is destined to disappear. The doctrine is questionable enough, even as a theory. No doubt the brown man is destined to disappear if the white man, with his better weapons and greater cleverness and resources, makes it his business to extirpate him; and it was justly pointed out that whatever Mr. Roebuck may have personally meant by his theory, its inculcation at such a moment could only tend to strengthen this idea in the minds of some colonists who were already only too willing to entertain it. But until the brown man has had full fair play somewhere alongside of the white man, it is rash to come to any distinct conclusions as to his ultimate destiny. Mr. Roebuck always loved theories neatly cut and sharpened. He gave them out with a precision which lent them an appearance of power and of authority; they seemed to argue a mind that had "swallowed formulas," as Mr. Carlyle puts it, and was above the cant of humanitarianism. But such theories are more satisfactorily broached and discussed in scientific societies than in parliamentary debate. The ultimate destiny of the brown man did not particularly help the House of Commons to any conclusions concerning the New Zealand insurrection, because even Mr. Roebuck did not put forward his theory as an argument to prove that in every controversy we were bound to take the side of the white man and assist him in his predestined business of extinguishing his brown rival. The government passed their guarantee bill, not without many a protest from both sides of the house that colonists who readily engaged in quarrels with natives must some time or other be prepared to bear the expenses entailed by their own policy.

Trouble, too, arose on the gold coast of Africa. Some slaves of the king of Ashantee had taken refuge in British territory; the governor of Cape Coast Colony would not give them up; and in the spring of 1863 the king made threatening demonstrations, invading the territories of neighboring chiefs, destroying many of their villages, and

approaching within forty miles of our frontier. The governor, assuming that the settlement was about to be invaded by the Ashantees, took it upon him to anticipate the movement by sending an expedition into the territory of the king. He ordered troops to be moved for the purpose; the season was badly chosen; the climate was pestilential; even the black troops from the West Indies could not endure it and began to die like flies. The ill-advised undertaking had to be given up; and the government at home only escaped a vote of censure by a narrow majority of seven. Two hundred and twenty-six members supported Sir John Hay's resolution declaring that the movement was rash and impolitic, and two hundred and thirty-three sustained the action of the government. Much discussion, too, was aroused by occurrences in Japan. A British subject, Mr. Richardson, was murdered in the English settlement of Japan and on an open road made free to Englishmen by treaty. This was in September, 1862. The murder was committed by some of the followers of Prince Satsuma, one of the powerful feudal princes, who then practically divided the authority of Japan with the regular government. Reparation was demanded both from the Japanese government and from Prince Satsuma; the government paid the sum demanded of them, £100,000, and made an apology. Prince Satsuma was called on to pay £25,000 and to see that the murderers were brought to punishment, the crime having been committed within his jurisdiction. Satsuma did nothing, and in 1863 Colonel Neale, the English *chargé d'affaires* in Japan, called upon Admiral Kuper to go with the English fleet to Kagosima, Satsuma's capital, and demand satisfaction. Admiral Kuper entered the bay on August 11, 1863, and after waiting for a day or two proceeded to seize on some steamers. The Kagosima Forts opened fire on him, and he then bombarded the town and laid the greater portion of it in ashes. The town, it seemed, was built for the most part of wood; it caught fire in the bombardment and was destroyed. Fortunately the non-combatant inhabitants, the women and children, had had time to get out of Kagosima, and the destruction of life was not great. The whole transaction was severely condemned by many Englishmen who did not belong to the ranks of those professed philanthropists whom it is sometimes the fashion to denounce in England as if hu-



manity and patriotism were irreconcilable qualities, and as if a true Englishman ought to have no consideration for the sufferings and the blood of Japanese and Maoris and people of that sort. The House of Commons, however, sustained the government by a large majority. The government, it should be said, did not profess to justify the destruction of Kagosima. Their case was that Admiral Kuper had to do something; that there was nothing he could very well do when he had been fired upon but to bombard the town; and that the burning of the town was an accident of the conflict for which neither he nor they could be held responsible. Satsuma finally submitted and paid the money, and promised justice. But there were more murders and more bombardings yet before we came to anything like an abiding settlement with Japan; and Japan itself was not far off a revolution, the most sudden, organic, and to all appearance complete, that has ever yet been seen in the history of nations.

In the meantime, however, our government became involved in liabilities more perilous than any disputes in eastern or southern islands could bring on them. An insurrection of a very serious kind broke out in Poland. It was provoked by the Strafford-like thoroughness of the policy adopted by the Russian authorities. It was well known to the Russian government that a secret political agitation was going on in Poland, and it was determined to anticipate matters and choke off the patriotic movement by taking advantage of the periodical conscription to press into the military ranks all the young men in the cities who could by any possibility be supposed to have any sympathy with it. The attempt to execute this resolve was the occasion for the outbreak of an insurrection which at one time showed something like a claim to success. The young men who could escape fled to the woods, and there formed themselves into armed bands, which gave the Russians great trouble. The rebels could disperse and come together with such ease and rapidity that it was very difficult indeed to get any real advantage over them. The frontier of Austrian-Poland was very near, and the insurgents could cross it, escape from the Russian troops, and recross it when they pleased to resume their harassing operations. Austria was not by any means so unfriendly to the Polish patriots as both Russia and Prussia were. Austria had come

unwillingly into the scheme for the partition of Poland, and had got little profit by it; and it was well understood that if the other powers concerned could see their way to the restoration of Polish nationality, Austria, for her part, would make no objection. The insurgents counted with some confidence on the passive attitude of the Austrian authorities, and the positive sympathy of many officers and soldiers in the Austrian army. They converted the Austrian frontier for awhile into a military basis of operations against Russia. To some extent the same thing was attempted on the Prussian frontier, too; but Prussia was still very much under the dominion of Russia, and was prevailed upon or coerced to execute an odious convention with Russia, by virtue of which the Russian troops were allowed to follow Polish insurgents into Prussian territory. This convention created a strong feeling against Prussia through the whole of western Europe, and for awhile made her much more an object of general dislike than even Russia herself.

It was plain from the first that the Poles could not under the most favorable circumstances hold out long against Russia by virtue of their own strength. It was evident that wherever the insurrection could be got into a corner Russia could crush it with ease. Nevertheless, the plans of the Poles were not so imprudent as they seemed. On the contrary, they had a certain chance of success. The idea, whether clearly and definitely expressed or not, was to keep the insurrection up, by any means and at any risk, until some of the great European powers should be induced to interfere. The insurrection was a great drama, a piece of deliberate stage-play. We do not say this in any spirit of disparagement; the stage-play was got up by patriots with a true and noble purpose, and it was the only statesmanlike policy left to the Poles. Let us keep it up long enough—such was the conviction of the Polish leaders—and western Europe must intervene. Despite the lesson of subsequent events, the Poles were well justified in their political calculations. Their hopes were at one time on the very eve of being realized. The Emperor Napoleon was eager to move to their aid, and Lord Russell was hardly less eager.

The Polish cause was very popular in England. It had been the political first love of many a man, who now felt

his youthful ardor glow again as he read of the gallant struggle made in the forests of Poland. Russia was hated; Prussia was now hated even more. There was no question of party feeling about the sympathy with Poland. There were about as many Conservatives as Radicals who were ready to favor the idea of some effort being made in her behalf. Lord Ellenborough spoke up for Poland in the House of Lords with poetic and impassioned eloquence. Lord Shaftesbury from the opposite benches denounced the conduct of Russia. The Irish Catholic was as ardent for Polish liberty as the London artisan. Among its most conspicuous and energetic advocates in England were Mr. Pope Hennessy, a Catholic and Irish member of parliament; and Mr. Edmond Beales, the leader of a great Radical organization in London. The question was raised in parliament by Mr. Hennessy, and aroused much sympathy there. Great public meetings were held, at which Russia was denounced and Poland advocated, not merely by popular orators, but by men of high rank and grave responsibility. War was not openly called for at those meetings, or in the House of Commons; but it was urged that England, as one of the powers which had signed the treaty of Vienna, should join with other states in summoning Russia to recognize the rights, such as they were, which had been secured to Poland by virtue of that treaty. In France the greatest enthusiasm prevailed for the cause of Poland. The eloquent pen of Montalembert pleaded for the "nation in mourning." Prince Napoleon spoke with singular eloquence and impressiveness in the French senate on the justice and the necessity of intervention. The same cause was pleaded by Count Walewski, himself the son of a Polish lady. The Emperor Napoleon required little pressing. He was ready for intervention if he could get England to join him. Lord Russell went so far as to draw up and despatch to Russia, in concert with France and Austria, a note on the subject of Poland. It urged on the attention of the Russian government six points, as the outline of a system of pacification for Poland. These were: a complete amnesty; a national representation; a distinct national administration of Poles for the kingdom of Poland; full liberty of conscience, with the repeal of all the restrictions imposed on Catholic worship; the recognition of the Polish language as official; the establishment

of a regular system of recruiting. There was an almost universal impression at one moment that in the event of Russia declining to accept these recommendations, England, Austria, and France would make war to compel her. There was hardly any party in England absolutely opposed to the idea of intervention, except the Manchester school of Radicals. Some of these were consistently opposed to intervention in any foreign cause whatever. Others had an added impression that Poland had managed her national affairs very badly when she had a chance of managing them for herself, and that therefore there was little use in trying to set her on her feet again. Such opposition would, however, have counted for even less than it did at the time of the Crimean War, if the government had resolved on going in with France and striking a blow for Poland.

Looking back now calmly on the events of that day, and those which followed them, it does not seem that such a policy would have been unwise. There was much in the claims of Poland which deserved the sympathy of every lover of liberty and believer in the development of civilization. If this were the time or place for such a discussion, it would not be difficult to show that the faults found with Poland's old system of government had nothing to do with the condition of the present; and that a new Poland would no more be likely to fall into the errors of the past, than a new Irish parliament would be likely to refuse the right of representation to Catholics. There would assuredly have been a distinct advantage to the stability of European affairs in the resuscitation of Poland as a distinct and independent part of the Russian state system, even if she were not to be a wholly independent nation once again. This probably could not have been done without war; but it seems more than merely probable that that war would have averted the necessity for many other wars which have since been fought out with less profitable result to European stability. Whether the English alarms about the aggressive designs of Russia be founded or unfounded, the legislative independence of Poland would have made it superfluous to take much thought concerning them. The new Poland would undoubtedly have been a state with representative institutions; and set in the midst of Russia and of Prussia, her example could hardly have been without a contagious influence of a very salutary kind on each.

It soon became known, however, that there was to be no intervention. Lord Palmerston put a stop to the whole idea. It was not that he sympathized with Russia. On the contrary, he wrote a letter to Baron Brunnow, the Russian ambassador, on February 4, 1863, in which he bluntly told him that he regarded the Polish insurrection as the just punishment inflicted by heaven on Russia for Russia's having done so much to stir up revolution in the dominions of some of her neighbors. But Lord Palmerston had by this time grown into as profound a distrust of the Emperor Napoleon as any representative of the social and democratic republic could possibly entertain. He was convinced that the emperor was stirring in the matter chiefly with the hope of getting an opportunity of establishing himself in the Rhine provinces of Prussia, on the pretext of compelling Prussia to remain neutral in the struggle, or of punishing her if she took the side of Russia. Probably Lord Palmerston was mistaken in this instance. It is not likely that Louis Napoleon ever cared for any war project or annexation scheme except with the view of making his dynasty popular in France; and he may well have thought that the emancipation of Poland would gain him popularity enough to enable him to dispense with other contrivances for the remainder of his reign. However that may be, Lord Palmerston was firm. He described a proposal of the emperor for an identical note to be addressed to Prussia on the subject of the convention with Russia as a trap laid for England to fall into; and he would have nothing to do with it. After awhile it became known that England had decided not to join in any project for armed intervention; and from that moment Russia became merely contemptuous. The emperor of the French would not and could not take action single handed; and Prince Gortschakoff politely told Lord Russell that England had really better mind her own business and not encourage movements in Poland which were simply the work of "cosmopolitan revolution." Lord Russell had spoken of the responsibility which the emperor of Russia was incurring; and Prince Gortschakoff drily replied that the emperor knew all about that and was quite prepared to accept any responsibility. It used to be said at the time that Prince Gortschakoff gently intimated in diplomatic conversation that if the English government were inclined to

occupy themselves in redressing the grievances of injured nationalities they would find in Ireland a legitimate and sufficient object for the exercise of their reforming energies. It is certain that England received a snub, and that Prince Gortschakoff intended his reply to be thus accepted by England and thus interpreted by Europe.

After this Austria found it necessary to secure her frontier line more carefully and not allow it to be made any longer a basis of operations against Russia. The insurrection was flung wholly on its own resources. It was kept up gallantly and desperately for a time; but the end was certain. The Russians carried out their measures of pacification with unflinching hand. Floggings and shootings and hangings were in full vigor. The Russian authorities recognized the equal rights of women by administering the scourge and the rope and the bullet to them as well as to men. Drove of prisoners were sent to Siberia. New steps were taken for denationalizing the country and affecting its moral as well as physical subjugation. After a time the words of Marshal Sebastiani's famous announcement in 1831 became applicable once more, and order reigned in Warsaw. The intervention of England had done much the same service for Poland that the interposition of Don Quixote did for the boy whose master was flogging him. There was, to be sure, a certain difference in the conditions. Don Quixote did intervene practically; and while he remained in sight the master pretended to be forgiving and merciful. It was only when the hero had ridden away that the master grimly tied up the boy again and flogged him worse than ever. In the case of England there was no such show of forbearance. The sufferer was tied up under our very eyes and scourged again, and more fiercely, for the express reason that England had ventured to interfere with an unmeaning and ineffectual remonstrance. We have spoken of that school of Liberals who would not have intervened at all on behalf of Poland or any other nation. Many, perhaps most persons will refuse to accept their principle. But we can hardly believe there is any one who will not admit that such a course of policy is wise, manly, and dignified when compared with that which intrudes its intervention just far enough to irritate the oppressor and not far enough to be of the slightest benefit to the oppressed.

The effect of the policy pursued by England in this case was to bring about a certain coldness between the Emperor Napoleon and the English government. This fact was made apparent some little time after when the dispute between Denmark and the Germanic Confederation came up in relation to the Schleswig-Holstein succession. We need not go very deeply now into the historical bearings of this dispute, which long tormented philologists, jurists, and archaeologists as well as statesmen. An irreverent Frenchman once declared that the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but the Schleswig-Holstein question shall not pass away. Practically, however, the Schleswig-Holstein question would seem to have passed away so far as our times are concerned. It was in substance a question of the right of nationalities combined of later years with a dispute of succession. Schleswig-Holstein, and Lauenburg were duchies attached to Denmark. Holstein and Lauenburg were purely German in nationality and only held by the king of Denmark as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg on much the same tenure as that by virtue of which our kings so long held Hanover. The king of Denmark sat as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg in the old Germanic diet which used to hold its meetings in Frankfort, the diet of the Germanic Confederation which was abolished by the Prussian victory at Sadowa, and which Talleyrand once with grave sarcasm urged not to be precipitate in its decisions. Schleswig was attached more directly to the Danish crown; but a large proportion of the population, much the larger proportion in the southern districts, were German, and there had long been an agitation going on in Germany about the claims and the rights of Schleswig. One of the claims was that Schleswig and Holstein should be united into one administrative system, and should be governed independently of the kingdom of Denmark, the king of Denmark to be the ruler of this state as the emperor of Austria is king of Hungary. There can be no doubt that the heart of the German people was deeply interested in the condition of the Schleswigers and Holsteiners. It was only natural that a great people should have been unwilling to see so many of their countrymen, on the very edge of Germany itself, kept under the rule of the Danish king. The tendency of Denmark always was toward an amalgamation of the duchies into her own state system. The

tendency of the Germans was to regard with extreme jealousy any movement that way, to descry evil purpose in even harmless innovations on the part of Denmark, and to make constant complaint about the tampering of the Danish authorities with the tongue and the right of the Teutonic populations. In truth the claims of Germany and Denmark were irreconcilable. Put into plain words the dispute was between Denmark, which wanted to make the duchies Danish, and Germany, which wanted to have them German. The arrangement which bound them up with Denmark was purely diplomatic and artificial. Any one who would look realities in the face must have seen that some day or other the Germans would carry their point, and that the principle of nationalities would have its way in that case as it had done in so many others.

Suddenly the whole dispute became complicated with a question of succession. The king of Denmark, Frederick VII., died in November 1863, and was succeeded by Christian IX. Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, claimed the succession to the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. The late king of Denmark had no direct heir to succeed him, and the succession had been arranged in 1852 by the great powers of Europe. The treaty of London then settled it on Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, the father of the Princess of Wales. The settlement, however, was brought about by persuading the Duke of Augustenburg, Prince Frederick's father, heir of Holstein and claimant of Schleswig, to renounce his rights, and now Prince Frederick, the son, disputed in his own case the validity of the renunciation. The previous pretensions of Denmark to encroach on the rights of the German populations in the duchies, had roused an angry feeling in Germany, and German statesmen were willing to take advantage of any claim and any claimant to dispute the succession of the king of Denmark so far as the the duchies were concerned. The affairs of Prussia were now in the hands of a strong man; one of the strongest men modern times have known. Daring, unscrupulous, and crafty as Cavour, Von Bismarck was even already able to wield a power which had never been within Cavour's reach. The public intelligence of Europe had not yet recognized the marvelous combination of qualities which was destined to make their owner



famous, and to prove a dissolving force in the settled systems of Germany, and indeed of the whole European continent. As yet the general opinion of the world set down Herr Von Bismarck as simply a fanatical reactionary, a coarse sort of Metternich, a combination of bully and buffoon. The Schleswig-Holstein question became, however, a very serious one for Denmark when it was taken up by Von Bismarck. There does not seem the slightest reason to suppose that Bismarck ever had any idea of maintaining the pretensions of the Prince of Augustenburg. Bismarck had always ridiculed them without any affectation of concealment. From first to last the mind of Bismarck was evidently made up that the duchies should be annexed to Prussia. But for the time the claim of the Augustenburg prince came in conveniently, and Prussia put on the appearance of giving them her sanction and support. The result of all this was that the Germanic diet and the king of Denmark could not come to any terms of arrangement; and—to cut preliminaries short and get to what strictly concerns our history—war became certain. The Germanic diet entrusted the conduct of the war to the hands of Austria and Prussia, who entered into joint agreements for the purpose. The German troops entered, first, Holstein, which under the command of the diet they had a legal right to do, and then Schleswig, and war began. Denmark, one of the smallest and weakest kingdoms in the world, found herself engaged in conflict with Austria and Prussia combined. The little Danish David had defied two Goliaths to combat at one moment.

Were the Danes and their sovereign and their government mad? Not at all. They well knew that they could not hold out alone against the two German great powers. But they counted on the help of Europe. Especially they counted on the help of England. For a long time they had got it into their heads that England was pledged to defend them against any assault from the side of Germany. Lord Russell in multitudinous despatches had very often given the Danish government sound and sensible advice. He had constantly admonished them that they must for their own sakes deal fairly with the German populations. He had urgently recommended them to leave to the Germans and the German governments no fair ground for complaint. He had never countenanced or encouraged any of

the acts which tended to the enforced absorption of German populations into a Danish system. He had on the contrary more than once somewhat harshly rebuked the Danish government for neglect or breach of engagements, and sternly pointed out the certain consequences of such a policy. But he had at the same time implied that if Denmark took the advice of England, England would not see her wronged. He had at all events declared, that if Denmark did not follow England's advice England would not come to her assistance in case she were attacked by the Germans. Denmark interpreted this as an assurance that if she followed England's counsels she might count on England's protection, and she insisted that she had strictly followed England's counsels for this very reason. When the struggle seemed approaching, Lord Palmerston said some words in the House of Commons at the close of a session, which seemed to convey a distinct assurance that England would defend Denmark in case she should be attacked by the German powers. On July 23, 1863, he was questioned with reference to the course England intended to pursue in the event of the German powers pressing too hardly on Denmark, and he then said: "We are convinced—I am convinced at least—that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow the rights and interfere with the independence of Denmark, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend." These words were afterward explained as intended to be merely prophetic to indicate Lord Palmerston's private belief that in the event of Denmark being invaded, France, or Russia, or some state somewhere, would probably be generous enough to come to the assistance of the Danes. But when the words were spoken it did not occur to the mind of any one to interpret them in such a sense. The part of Lord Palmerston's speech which contained them was dealing distinctly and exclusively with the policy of England. It was not supposed that an English minister could expect to satisfy the House of Commons by merely giving a specimen of his skill in forecasting the probable policy of other states. Every one believed that Lord Palmerston was answering on behalf of the English government and the English people.

The Danes counted with confidence on the help of

England. They refused to accept the terms which Germany would have imposed. They prepared for war. Public opinion in England was all but unanimous in favor of Denmark. Five out of every six persons were for England's drawing the sword in her cause at once. Five out of every six of the small minority who were against war, were nevertheless in sympathy with the Danes. Many reasons combined to bring about this condition of national feeling. In the first instance very few people knew anything whatever of the merits of the controversy. Even professed politicians hardly understood the question. The general impression was, that it was purely the case of two strong powers oppressing in wanton and wicked combination a weak but gallant people. Austria was not popular in England; Prussia was detested. Many Englishmen were angry with her because her government had made the convention with Russia which has already been mentioned, and because she had a reactionary minister and a half-despotic king. A large number of persons did not like the Germans they met in the city and in business generally. Some had disagreeable reminiscences of their travels in Prussia, and had been unfavorably impressed by the police systems of Berlin. Moreover it was then an article of faith with most Englishmen that Prussians were miserable fellows who could only smoke and drink beer, and who, being unable to fight with any decent adversary, were trying to get a warlike reputation by attacking a very weak power. *Punch* had a cartoon representing the conventional English soldier and sailor regarding with looks of utter contempt an Austrian and a Prussian, and agreeing that Englishmen ought not to be called on to fight such fellows, but offering to kick them if it were thought desirable. In England at this time, military strength meant the army of the emperor of the French, and political sagacity was represented by the wisdom of the same sovereign.

A certain small number of persons in England sympathized with Denmark for another reason. The Prince of Wales had been married to the Princess Alexandra on March 10, 1863. The Princess Alexandra was, as it has been already said, the daughter of the king of Denmark. She was not a Dane, except as we may, if we like, call the emperor of Brazil a Brazilian. But her family had now come to rule in Denmark, and she became in that sense a

Danish princess. Her youth, her beauty, her goodness, her sweet and winning ways, had made her more popular than any foreign princess ever before was known to be in England. It seemed even to some who ought to have had more judgment that the virtues and charms of the Princess Alexandra, and the fact that she was now Princess of Wales, supplied ample proof of the justice of the Danish cause, and of the duty of England to support it in arms. Not small, therefore, was the disappointment spread over the country when it was found that the Danes were left alone to their defense, and that England was not to put out a hand to help them.

Yet it was as impossible as it would have been absurd for England to maintain in arms the cause of Denmark. To begin with, the cause was not one which England could reasonably have supported. The artificial arrangements by which the duchies were bound to Denmark could not endure. They were the device of an era and a system of policy from which England was escaping as fast as she could. It was not a controversy which specially concerned the English people. England was only one of the parties to the diplomatic arrangements which had bound up the duchies and the Danish kingdom together. Lord Russell was willing at one moment to intervene by arms in support of Denmark if France would join with England, and he made a proposal of this kind to the French government. The Emperor Napoleon refused to interfere. He had been hurt by England's refusal to join with him in sustaining Poland against Russia, and now was his time to make a return. Besides, he had, after the attempt at diplomatic intervention between Poland and Russia, issued invitations for a congress of European sovereigns to assemble in Paris and make a new settlement of Europe. The governments to which the invitation was addressed had, for the most part, returned a civil acceptance, well knowing the project would come to nothing. Lord Russell refused to have anything to do with the congress, and gave some excellent reasons for the refusal. The Emperor Napoleon was somewhat hurt by the chill common sense of Lord Russell's reply. The emperor's invitation was evidently meant to be a document of historical and monumental interest. It was drawn up in the spirit of what Burke calls "a proud humility." It made allusion to the early

misfortunes and exile of the writer, and put him forward as the one sovereign of Europe on whose face the winds of adversity had severely blown. It must have been painful to find that so much eloquence and emotion had been put into a state paper for nothing. The emperor's turn had now come, and he would not join with England in sustaining the cause of Denmark. There was absolutely nothing for it but to leave the Danes to fight out their battle in the best way they could. Lord Palmerston put the matter very plainly in a letter to Lord Russell. "The truth is," he wrote, "that to enter into a military conflict with all Germany on continental ground would be a serious undertaking. If Sweden and Denmark were actively co-operating with us, our 20,000 men might do a great deal; but Austria and Prussia could bring 200,000 or 300,000 into the field, and would be joined by the smaller German states." At a later period of the struggle Lord Palmerston spoke with full frankness to Count Apponyi, the Austrian ambassador. He explained that the English government had "abstained from taking the field in defense of Denmark, for many reasons—from the season of the year, from the smallness of our army, and the great risk of failure in a struggle with all Germany by land." But Lord Palmerston pointed out that "with regard to operations by sea, the positions would be reversed. We are strong, Germany is weak; and the German ports in the Baltic, North Sea, and Adriatic, would be greatly at our command." Therefore Lord Palmerston warned the Austrian ambassador that a collision between England and Austria might happen if an Austrian squadron were to enter the Baltic in order to help the operations against Denmark. The Austrian ambassador explained that his government did not intend to send a squadron into the Baltic. This was an unofficial conversation between Palmerston and Count Apponyi, and had no effect on the fortunes of the war or on the diplomacy that brought it to an end.

The Danes fought with a great deal of spirit; but they were extravagantly outnumbered, and their weapons were miserably unfit to contend against their powerful enemies. The Prussian needle-gun came into play with terrible effect in the campaign, and it soon made all attempt at resistance on the part of the Danes utterly hopeless. The Danes lost

their ground and their fortresses. They won one little fight on the sea, defeating some Austrian vessels in the German Ocean off Heligoland. The news was received with wild enthusiasm in England. Its announcement in the House of Commons drew down the unwonted manifestation of a round of applause from the stranger's gallery. But the struggle had ceased to be anything like a serious campaign. The English government kept up active negotiations on behalf of peace, and at length succeeded in inducing the belligerents to agree to a suspension of arms, in order that a conference of the great powers might be held in London. The conference was called together. The populations of the duchies about whom the whole dispute had taken place, were beginning now to suspect that their claims to independent existence would very probably be overlooked altogether, and that they were only about to be passed from one ruler to another. They sent a deputation to London, and claimed to be represented directly at the conference. Their claim was rejected. They, the very people whose national existence was the question in dispute, were informed that diplomacy made no account of them. They had no right to a voice, or even to a hearing, in the councils which were to dispose of their destinies. The Saxon minister, Count Beust, who afterward transferred his abilities and energies to the service of Austria, did the best he could for them, and acted so far as lay in his power as the representative of their claims; but they were not allowed any acknowledged representation at the conference. The deliberations of the conference came to nothing. Curiously enough the final rejection of all compromise came from the Danes. Whether they had still some lingering hope that by prolonging the war they could induce some great power to intervene on their behalf, or whether they were merely influenced by the doggedness of sheer desperation, we cannot pretend to know. But they proved suddenly obstinate; at the last hour they rejected a proposal which Lord Palmerston described as reasonable in itself, and the conference came to an end. The war broke out again. The renewed hostilities lasted, however, but a short time. It was plain now even to the Danes themselves that they could not hold their ground alone, and that no one was coming to help them." The Danish government sent Prince John of Denmark direct

to Berlin to negotiate for peace—they had had enough, perhaps, of foreign diplomatic intervention—and terms of peace were easily arranged. Nothing could be more simple. Denmark gave up everything she had been fighting for, and agreed to bear part of the expense which had been entailed upon the German powers by the task of chastising her. The duchies were surrendered to the disposal of the allies, and nothing more was heard of the claims of the heir of Augustenburg. That claimant only got what is called in homely language the cold shoulder when he endeavored to draw the attention of the Herr von Bismarck to his alleged right of succession. A new war was to settle the ownership of the duchies, and some much graver questions of German interest at the same time.

It was obviously impossible that the conduct of the English government should pass unchallenged. They were quite right, as it seems to us, in not intervening on behalf of Denmark; but they were not right in giving Denmark the least reason to believe that they ever would intervene in her behalf. It would have been a calamity if England had succeeded in persuading Louis Napoleon to join her in a war to enable Denmark to keep the duchies; it could not be to the credit of England that her ministers had invited Louis Napoleon to join them in such a policy and had been refused. We cannot see any way of defending Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell against some sort of censure for the part they had taken in this transaction. It would have been a discredit to England if she had become the means of coercing the duchies into subjection to Denmark, supposing such a thing possible in the long run; but her ministers could claim no credit for not having done so. They would have done it if they could. They had thus given Europe full evidence at once of their desire and their incapacity. Their political opponents could not be expected to overlook such a chance of attack. Accordingly, in the two houses of parliament notices were given of a vote of censure on the government. Lord Malmesbury, in Lord Derby's absence, proposed the resolution in the House of Lords, and it was carried by a majority of nine. The government made little account of that; the Lords always had a Tory majority. As Lord Palmerston himself had put it on a former occasion, the government knew when they took office that their opponents had a larger pack of

cards in the Lords than they had, and that whenever the cards came to be all dealt out the opposition pack must show the greater number. In the House of Commons, however, the matter was much more serious. On July 4, 1864, Mr. Disraeli himself moved the resolution condemning the conduct of the government. The resolution invited the house to express its regret that "while the course pursued by her majesty's government has failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and independence of Denmark, it has lowered the just influence of this country in the capitals of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace." Mr. Disraeli's speech was ingenious and telling. He had a case which even a far less capable rhetorician than he must have made impressive; but he contrived more than once by sheer dexterity to make it unexpectedly stronger against the government. Thus, for example, he went on during part of his opening observations to compare the policy of England and of France. He proceeded to show that France was just as much bound by the treaty of Vienna, by the London convention, by all the agreements affecting the integrity of Denmark, as England herself. Some of the ministry sitting just opposite the orator caught at this argument as if it were an admission telling against Mr. Disraeli's case. They met his words with loud and emphatic cheers. The cheers meant to say, "just so; France was responsible for the integrity of Denmark as much as England; why, then, do you find fault with us?" This was precisely what Mr. Disraeli wanted. Perhaps he had deliberately led up to this very point. Perhaps he had purposely allured his opponents on into the belief that he was making an admission in order to draw from some of them some note of triumph. He seized his opportunity now and turned upon his antagonists at once. "Yes," he exclaimed, "France is equally responsible; and how comes it then that the position of France in relation to Denmark is so free from embarrassment and so dignified; that no word of blame is uttered anywhere in Europe against France for what she has done in regard to Denmark, while your position is one of infinite perplexity, while you are everywhere accused and unable to defend yourselves? How could this be but because of some fatal mistake, some terrible mismanagement?" In truth it was not difficult for Mr. Disraeli to



show mistakes in abundance. No sophist could have undertaken to defend all that ministers had done. Such a defense would involve sundry paradoxes; for they had in some instances done the very thing to-day which they had declared the day before it would be impossible for them to do.

The government did not make any serious attempt to justify all they had done. They were glad to seize upon the opportunity offered by an amendment which Mr. Kinglake proposed, and which merely declared the satisfaction with which the house had learned "that at this conjuncture her majesty had been advised to abstain from armed interference in the war now going on between Denmark and the German powers." This amendment, it will be seen at once, did not meet the accusations raised by Mr. Disraeli. It did not say whether the ministry had or had not failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and independence of Denmark; or whether their conduct had or had not lowered the just influence of England in the capitals of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace. It gave the go-by to such inconvenient questions, and simply asserted that the house was, at all events, glad to hear there was to be no interference in the war. Many doubted at first whether the government would condescend to adopt Mr. Kinglake's amendment, or whether they would venture upon a distinct justification of their conduct. Lord Palmerston, however, had an essentially practical way of looking at every question. He was of O'Connell's opinion that, after all, the verdict is the thing. He knew he could not get the verdict on the particular issues raised by Mr. Disraeli, but he was in good hope that he could get it on the policy of his administration generally. The government therefore adopted Mr. Kinglake's amendment. Still the controversy was full of danger to Lord Palmerston. The advanced Liberals disliked him strongly for his lavish expenditure in fortification schemes, and for the manner in which he had thrown over the reform bill. They were not coerced, morally or otherwise, to support him merely because he had not gone into the war against Germany; for no responsible voice from the opposition had said that the Conservatives, if in office, would have adopted a policy of intervention. On the contrary, it was from Lord Stanley that there came

during the debate the most unwarlike sentiment uttered during the whole controversy. Lord Stanley bluntly declared that "to engage in a European war for the sake of these duchies would be an act, not of impolicy, but of insanity." There were members of the peace society itself probably who would have hesitated before adopting this view of the duties of a nation. If war be permissible at all, they might have doubted whether the oppression of a small people is not as fair a ground of warlike intervention as the grievance of a numerous population. When, however, such sentiments came from a leader of the party proposing the vote of censure, it is clear that the men who were for non-intervention as a principle were left free to vote on one side or the other as they pleased. Mr. Disraeli did not want to pledge them to warlike action any more than Lord Palmerston. Many of them would, perhaps, rather have voted with Mr. Disraeli than with Lord Palmerston if they could see their way fairly to such a course; and on the votes of even a few of them the result of the debate depended. They held the fate of Lord Palmerston's ministry in the hollow of their hand.

Lord Palmerston seems to have decided the question for them. His speech closing the debate was a masterpiece, not of eloquence, not of political argument, but of practical, parliamentary tactics. He spoke, as was his fashion, without the aid of a single note. It was a wonderful spectacle that of the man of eighty, thus in the growing morning pouring out his unbroken stream of easy effective eloquence. He dropped the particular questions connected with the vote of censure almost immediately, and went into a long review of the whole policy of his administration. He spoke as if the resolution before the house were a proposal to impeach the government for the entire course of their domestic policy. He passed in triumphant review all the splendid feats which Mr. Gladstone had accomplished in the reduction of taxation; he took credit for the commercial treaty with France, and for other achievements in which at the time of their accomplishment he had hardly even affected to feel any interest. He spoke directly at the economical Liberals; the men who were for sound finance and freedom of international commerce. The regular opposition, as he well knew, would vote against him; the regular supporters of the ministry would vote for him.

Nothing could alter the course to be taken by either of these parties. The advanced Liberals, the men whom possibly Palmerston in his heart rather despised as calculators and economists—these might be affected one way or the other by the manner in which he addressed himself to the debate. To these and at these he spoke. He knew that Mr. Gladstone was the one leading man in the ministry whom they regarded with full trust and admiration, and on Mr. Gladstone's exploits he virtually rested his case. His speech said in plain words: "If you vote for this resolution proposed by Mr. Disraeli you turn Mr. Gladstone out of office; you give the Tories, who understand nothing about free trade and who opposed the French commercial treaty, an opportunity of marring all that he has made. Some of Lord Palmerston's audience were a little impatient now and then. "What has all this to do with the question before the house?" was murmured from more than one bench. It had everything to do with the question that was really before the house. That question was, "Shall Palmerston remain in office, or shall he go out and the Tories come in?" The advanced Liberals had the decision put into their hands. As Lord Palmerston reviewed the financial and commercial history of his administration, they felt themselves morally coerced to support the ministry which had done so much for the policy that was especially the offspring of their inspiration. When the division was taken it was found that there were two hundred and ninety-five votes for Mr. Disraeli's resolution and three hundred and thirteen for the amendment. Lord Palmerston was saved by a majority of eighteen. It was not a very brilliant victory. There were not many votes to spare. But it was a victory. The conservative miss by a foot was as good for Lord Palmerston as a miss by a mile. It gave him a secure tenure of office for the rest of his life. Such as it was, the victory was won mainly by his own skill, energy, and astuteness, by the ready manner in which he evaded the question actually in debate, and rested his claim to acquittal on services which no one proposed to disparage. The conclusion was thoroughly illogical, thoroughly practical, thoroughly English. Lord Palmerston knew his time, his opportunity, and his men.

That was the last great speech made by Lord Palmerston. That was the last great occasion on which he was called

upon to address the House of Commons. The effort was worthy of the emergency and, at least in an artistic sense, deserved success. The speech exactly served its purpose. It had no brilliant passages. It had no hint of an elevated thought. It did not trouble itself with any profession of exalted purpose or principle. It did not contain a single sentence which any one could care to remember after the emergency had passed away. But it did for Lord Palmerston what great eloquence might have failed to do; what a great orator by virtue of his very genius and oratorical instincts might only have marred. It took captive the wavering minds, and it carried the division.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### EBB AND FLOW.

ONE cannot study English politics, even in the most superficial way, without being struck by the singular regularity with which they are governed by the law of action and reaction. The succession of ebb and flow in the tides is not more regular and more certain. A season of political energy is sure to come after a season of political apathy. After the sleeping comes the waking; after the day of work, the night of repose. A liberal spirit is abroad and active; it carries all before it for awhile; it pushes great reforms through; it projects others still greater. Suddenly a pause comes; and a whisper is heard that we have had too much of reform; and the whisper grows into a loud remonstrance, and the remonstrance into what seems to be an almost universal declaration. Then sets in a period of reaction, during which reform is denounced as if it were a treason, and shuddered at as though it were a pestilence. For a season people make themselves comfortable, and say to each other that England has attained political perfection; that only fools and traitors would ask her to venture on any further change, and that we are all going now to have a contented rest. Just as this condition of things seems to have become a settled habit and state of existence, the new reaction begins; and before men can well note the change, the country is in the fervor of a reform fit again. It is so in our foreign policy. We seem to have settled

down to a Washingtonian principle of absolute isolation from the concerns and complications of foreign countries, until suddenly we become aware of a rising sea of reaction, and almost in a moment we are in the thick of a policy which involves itself in the affairs of every state from Finland to Sicily, and from Japan to the Caspian Sea. It is the same with our colonies. We are just on the eve of a blunt and cool dismissal of them from all dependence on us, when suddenly we find out that they are the strength of our limbs and the light of our eyes, and that to live without them would be only death in life; and for another season the patriotism of public men consists in professions of unalterable attachment to the colonies. It is so with regard to warlike purpose and peaceful purpose; with regard to armaments, fortifications, law reform, everything. An ordinary observer ought to be able almost always to forecast the weather of the coming season in English politics. When action has run its course pretty nearly, reaction is sure; and it ought not to be very difficult to foresee when the one has had its season and the other is to succeed.

The explanation of this phenomenon is not to be found in the fact that the people of these countries are, as Mr. Carlyle says, "mostly fools." They do not all thus change their opinions in sudden mechanical springs of alternation. The explanation is not to be sought in any change of national opinion at all, but rather in a change in the ascendancy between two tolerably well-balanced parties in politics and thought. The people of these countries, or perhaps it should be said of England especially, are born into Liberalism and Conservatism. In Ireland and in Scotland the condition of things is modified by other facts, and the same general rule will hardly apply; but in England this is, roughly speaking, the law of life. Men as a rule remain in the political condition—we can hardly speak of the political convictions—to which they were born. But the majority give themselves little trouble about the matter. If there is a great stir made by those just above them in politics, and to whom they look up, they will take some interest, and will exhibit it in any desirable way; but they do not move of themselves, and when their leaders appear to acquiesce in anything for a season they withdraw their attention altogether. Many a man is hardly conscious of whether he is Liberal or Conservative until he

gets into a crowd somewhere, and hears his neighbors shouting. Then he shouts with those whom he knows to be of the opinions he is understood to hold, and he shouts himself into political conviction. This is the condition of the majority on both sides. It takes immense trouble on the part of the leaders to rouse the mass of their followers into a condition of genuine activity. The majority are like some of the heavy-winged insects who hardly ever use their wings, and who when for some reason they are anxious to hoist themselves into the air, may be seen of a summer twilight making their preparation so long and slowly that a passing observer would never suppose they meant any such unwonted movement as a flight. The political leaders, and the followers immediately within hearing of their voices, have for the most part the direction of affairs in their hands—these and the newspapers. The leaders, the House of Commons, and the active local men in cities and boroughs—these and the newspapers make up what we commonly understand to be public opinion. The change in public opinion, or what seems to be such, is when one set succeeds for a time in getting predominance over the other. The predominance is usually transferred when one set has done or said all it is quite prepared to do or say for the moment. Then the other, having lost patience or gained courage, rushes in and gets his turn. It is like a contest in some burlesque eclogue, in which each singer has his chance only when the rival is out of breath, and he can strike in and keep singing until he too feels his lungs fail him and has to give way. The Liberals are in power, and they carry some measures by the strength of their parliamentary majority. The moment comes when they go further than the patience of their opponents will bear, or when they have nothing more to suggest at the moment. In either case the managers of the opposition arouse themselves; and they say, "We cannot endure any more of this;" or they ask each other why they have endured so much. They stir up their whole party with all the energy they can muster, and at last, after tremendous effort, they get their shard-borne beetle hoisted for his drowsy flight. The others have sunk into comparative languor. They have done what they wanted to do; they have, according to the French phrase, exhausted their mandate; and there is nothing by which they can call the

whole strength of their party into action. They do not any longer see their way as well as their opponents do. They are not so angry or so resolute. Perhaps they think they have gone a little too far. The Conservative newspapers are all astir and aflame. The Conservative passion is roused. The Conservative lungs are fresh and strong; their rivals are out of breath. In a word, the Conservatives get what American politicians call "the floor;" and this is Conservative reaction. All the time it is probable that not one man in every ten thousand of the population has really changed his opinion. The Conservatives hold their place for a certain time until their opponents have recovered their energies, and have lost their patience; until their passion to attack is more thorough and genuine than the power of the men in possession to resist. Then the Liberal beetle is got upon his wings, and Liberalism has its time again.

During all these changes, however, the Liberal movement is necessarily gaining ground. Reaction in English politics never now goes the length of undoing what has been done. It only interposes a delay, and a warning against moving too far and too fast in the same direction. Therefore, after each flux and reflux it is a matter of practical necessity that the cause which means movement of some kind must be found to have gained upon the cause which would prefer to stand still. It is almost needless to say that the Liberal party have not always been the actual means of carrying a liberal movement. All great Conservative leaders have recognized in good time the necessity of accepting some principle of reform. In a practical country like England, the Conservatives could not maintain a party of any kind if it were absolutely certain that their mission was to oppose every reform, and the mission of the Liberals to promote it. As a principle, the business of Liberalism is to cry "forward;" that of Conservatism to cry "back." The action and reaction of which we speak is that of Liberalism and Conservatism; not of the leaders of Liberal and Tory administration.

The movement of reaction against reform in domestic policy was in full force during the earlier years of Lord Palmerston's government. In home politics, and where finance and commercial legislation were not concerned, Palmerston was a Conservative minister. He was probably

on the whole more highly esteemed among the rank and file of the opposition in the House of Commons than by the rank and file on his own side. Not a few of the Conservative country gentlemen would in their hearts have been glad if he could have remained prime minister forever. His thoroughly English ways appealed directly to their sympathies. His instincts went with theirs. They liked his courage and his animal spirits. He was always ready to fling cheery defiance in the face of any foreign foe; just as they had been taught to believe that their grandfathers used to fling defiance in the face of Bonaparte and France. He was a faithful member of the church of England, but his certainly was not an austere Protestantism, and he allowed religion to come no further into the affairs of ordinary life than suited a country gentleman's ideas of the fitness of things. There was among Tory country gentlemen also a certain doubt or dread as to the manner in which eccentric and exoteric genius might manage the affairs of England when the Conservatives came to have a government of their own, and when Lord Derby could no longer take command. These, therefore, all liked Palmerston, and helped by their favor to swell the sails of his popularity. Many of those who voted, with their characteristic fidelity to party, for Mr. Disraeli's resolution of censure, were glad in their hearts that Lord Palmerston came safely out of the difficulty.

But as the years went on there were manifest signs of the coming and inevitable reaction. One of the most striking of these indications was found in the position taken by Mr. Gladstone. For some time Mr. Gladstone had been more and more distinctly identifying himself with the opinions of the advanced Liberals. The advanced Liberals themselves were of two sections or factions working together almost always, but very distinct in complexion; and it was Mr. Gladstone's fortune to be drawn by his sympathies to both alike. He was of course drawn toward the Manchester school by his economic views; by his agreement with them on all subjects relating to finance and to freedom of commerce. But the Manchester Liberals were for non-intervention in foreign politics; and they carried this into their sympathies as well as into their principles. They had never shown much interest in the struggles of other nations for political liberty. They did



not seem to think it was the business of Englishmen to make demonstrations about Italians, or Poles, or French Republicans. The other section of the advanced Liberals were sometimes even flightily eager in their sympathies with the Liberal movements of the Continent. Mr. Gladstone was in communion of the movements of foreign Liberals, as he was with those of English free traders and economists. He was therefore qualified to stand between both sections of the advanced Liberals of England, and give one hand to each. During the debates on Italian questions of 1860 and 1861 he had identified himself with the cause of Italian unity and independence.

In the year 1864 Garibaldi came on a visit to England, and was received in London with an outburst of enthusiasm, the like whereof had not been seen since Kossuth first passed down Cheapside, and which perhaps was not seen even then. It was curious to notice how men of opposing parties were gradually swept or sucked into this whirlpool of enthusiasm, and how aristocracy and fashion, which had always held aloof from Kossuth, soon crowded round Garibaldi. At first the leading men of nearly all parties held aloof except Mr. Gladstone. He was among the very first and most cordial in his welcome to Garibaldi. Then the Liberal leaders in general thought they had better consult for their popularity by taking Garibaldi up.

A lady of high rank and great political influence frankly expressed her opinion that Garibaldi was nothing more than a respectable brigand, but she joined in doing public honor to him nevertheless, acknowledging that it would be inconvenient for her husband to keep aloof and risk his popularity. Then the Conservative leaders too began to think it would never do for them to hold back when the prospect of a general election was so closely overshadowing them, and they plunged into the Garibaldi welcome. Men of the class of Lord Palmerston cared nothing for Garibaldi. Men like Lord Derby disliked and despised him; but the crowd ran after him, and the leaders on both sides, after having looked on for a moment with contempt, and another moment with amazement, fairly pulled off their hats and ran with the crowd, shouting and hallooing like the rest. The peerage then rushed at Garibaldi. He was beset by dukes, mobbed by countesses. He could not, by any possibility, have so divided his day as to find

time for accepting half the invitations of the noble and new friends who fought and scrambled for him. It was a perpetual trouble to his secretaries and his private friends to decide between the rival claims of a prince of the blood and a prime minister, an archbishop and a duchess, the lord chancellor and the leader of the opposition. The Tories positively outdid the Liberals in the competition. The crowd in the streets were perfectly sincere, some acclaiming Garibaldi because they had a vague knowledge that he had done brave deeds somewhere, and represented a cause; others, perhaps the majority, because they assumed that he was somehow opposed to the pope. The leaders of society were for the most part not sincere. Three out of every four of them had always previously spoken of Garibaldi—when they spoke of him at all—as a mere buccancer and filibuster. The whole thing ended in a quarrel between the aristocracy and the democracy; and Garibaldi was got back to his island somehow. Had he ever returned to England he would probably have found himself unembarrassed by the attentions of the Windsor uniform and the order of the garter. The whole episode was not one to fill the soul of an unconcerned spectator with great respect for the manner in which crowds and leaders sometimes act in England. Mr. Gladstone was one of the few among the leaders who were undoubtedly sincere, and the course he took made him a great favorite with the advanced Radicals.

Mr. Gladstone had given other indications of a distinct tendency to pass over altogether from Conservatism, and even from Peelism, into the ranks of the Radical reformers. On May 11, 1864, Mr. Baines brought on a motion in the House of Commons for the reduction of the borough franchise from £10 rental to £6. During the debate that followed Mr. Gladstone made a remarkable declaration. He contended that the burden of proof rested upon those "who would exclude forty-nine-fiftieths of the working classes from the franchise;" "it is for them to show the unworthiness, the incapacity, and the misconduct of the working class." "I say," he repeated, "that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution." The bill was rejected, as every one knew it would be. A franchise bill

introduced by a private member on a Wednesday is not supposed to have much prospect of success. But the speech of Mr. Gladstone gave an importance to the debate and to the occasion which it would not be easy to overrate. The position taken up by all Conservative minds, no matter to which side of politics their owners belonged, had been that the claim must be made out for those seeking an extension of the suffrage in their favor; that they must show imperative public need, immense and clear national and political advantage, to justify the concession; that the mere fact of their desire and fitness for the franchise ought not to count for anything in the consideration. Mr. Gladstone's way of looking at the question created enthusiasm on the one side—consternation and anger on the other. This was the principle of Rousseau's "Social Contract," many voices exclaimed; the principle of the rights of man; the red republic; the social and democratic revolution; anything, everything that is subversive and anarchical. Early in the following session there was a motion introduced by Mr. Dillwyn, a staunch and persevering reformer, declaring that the position of the Irish state church was unsatisfactory, and called for the early attention of her majesty's government. Mr. Gladstone spoke on the motion, and drew a contrast between the state church of England and that of Ireland, pointing out that the Irish church ministered only to the religious wants of one-eighth or one-ninth of the community amid which it was established. In reply to a letter of remonstrance Mr. Gladstone explained, not long after, that he had not recommended any particular action as a consequence of Mr. Dillwyn's resolution, regarding the question as yet "remote and apparently out of all bearing on the practical politics of the day." It was evident, however, that his mind would be found to be made up at any time when the question should become practical, and it was highly probable that his own speech had greatly hastened the coming of that time. The eyes of all Radical reformers, therefore, turned to Mr. Gladstone as the future minister of reform in church and state. He became from the same moment an object of distrust and something approaching to detestation, in the eyes of all steady-going Conservatives.

Meanwhile there were many changes taking place in the social and political life of England. Many eminent men

passed away during the years that Lord Palmerston held his almost absolute sway over the House of Commons. One man we may mention in the first instance, although he was no politician, and his death in no wise affected the prospects of parties. The attention of the English people was called from questions of foreign policy and of possible intervention in the Danish quarrel, by an event which happened on the Christmas eve of 1863. That day it became known throughout London that the author of "Vanity Fair" was dead. Mr. Thackeray died suddenly at the house in Kensington which he had lately had built for him in the fashion of that Queen Anne period which he loved and had illustrated so admirably. He was still in the very prime of life; no one had expected that his career was so soon to close. It had not been in any sense a long career. Success had come somewhat late to him, and he was left but a short time to enjoy it. We have already spoken of his works and his literary character. Since the publication of "The Newcomes," he had not added to his reputation; indeed it hardly needed any addition. He had established himself in the very foremost rank of English novelists; with Fielding and Goldsmith and Miss Austen and Dickens. He had been a literary man and hardly anything else; having had little to do with politics or political journalism. Once indeed he was seized with a sudden ambition to take a seat in the House of Commons, and at the general election of 1857 he offered himself as a candidate for the city of Oxford in opposition to Mr. Cardwell. He was not elected; and he seemed to accept failure cheerfully as a hint that he had better keep to literary work for the future. He would go back to his author's desk, he said good-humoredly; and he kept his word. It is not likely that he would have been a parliamentary success. He had no gift of speech and had but little interest in the details of party politics. His political views were sentiments rather than opinions. Most of his admirers would probably have been sorry to see him involved in the partisan debates of the House of Commons, where any practiced official trained to glibness or any overbearing declaimer would have been far more than a match for him, and where he had no special need or call to go. It is not true that success in parliament is incompatible with literary distinction. Macaulay and Grote, and two of Thackeray's

own craft, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Lytton, may be called as recent witnesses to disprove that common impression. But these were men who had a distinctly political object, or who loved political life, and were only following their star when they sought seats in the House of Commons. Thackeray had no such vocation and would have been as much out of place in parliamentary debate as a painter or a musician. He had no need to covet parliamentary reputation. As it was well said when the news of his defeat at Oxford reached London, the Houses of Lords and Commons together could not have produced "Barry Lyndon" and "Pendennis." His early death was a source not only of national but of world-wide regret. It eclipsed the Christmas gaiety of nations. Thackeray was as much admired and appreciated in America as in England. Mr. Russell, the correspondent of the *Times*, has given an amusing account of a southern Confederate leader engaged in an attempt to run the northern blockade, who kept talking all the time and even at the most exciting and perilous moments, about the various characters in Thackeray's novels. If Thackeray died too soon, it was only too soon for his family and his friends. His fame was secure. He could hardly with any length of years have added a cubit to his literary stature.

A whole group of statesmen had passed prematurely away. Sir James Graham had died after several years of a quiet career; still a celebrity in the House of Commons, but not much in the memory of the public outside it. One of his latest speeches in parliament was on the Chinese war of 1860. On the last day of the session of 1861, and when almost all the other members had left the house, he remained for awhile talking with a friend and former colleague, and as they were separating, Sir James Graham expressed a cheery hope that they should meet on the first day of the next session in the same place. But Graham died in the following October. Sidney Herbert had died a few weeks before in the same year. Sidney Herbert had been raised to the peerage as Lord Herbert of Lea. He had entered the House of Lords because his breaking health rendered it impossible to stand the wear and tear of life in the Commons, and he loved politics and public affairs, and could not be induced to renounce them and live in quiet. He was a man of great gifts, and was looked upon

as a prospective prime minister. He had a graceful and gracious bearing; he was an able administrator, and a very skillful and persuasive debater. His style of speaking was what might be called, if it is a lawful to coin an expression for the purpose, the "pointed-conversational." He never declaimed; never even tried to be what is commonly called eloquent; but his sentences came out with a singularly expressive combination of force and ease, every argument telling, every stroke having the lightness of an eastern champion's sword-play. He had high social station, and was in every way fitted to stand at the head of English public affairs. He was but fifty-one years of age when he died. The country for some time looked on Sir George Lewis as a man likely to lead an administration; but he too passed away before his natural time. He died two years after Sir James Graham and Sidney Herbert, and was only some fifty-seven years old at his death. Lord Elgin, was dead and Lord Canning; and Lord Dalhousie had been some years dead. The Duke of Newcastle died in 1864. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Glasgow, said of these, that "they had been swept away in the full maturity of their faculties and in the early stages of middle life—a body of men strong enough of themselves in all the gifts of wisdom and of knowledge, of experience and of eloquence, to have equipped a cabinet for the service of the country." Nor must we omit to mention the death of Cardinal Wiseman on February 15, 1865. Cardinal Wiseman had outlived the popular clamor once raised against him in England. There was a time when his name would have set all the pulpit-drums of no-popery rattling; he came at length to be respected and admired everywhere in England as a scholar and a man of ability. He was a devoted ecclesiastic, whose zeal for his church was his honor, and whose earnest labor in the work he was set to do had shortened his busy life.

During the time from the first outbreak of the civil war in the United States to its close all these men were removed from the scene, and the civil war was hardly over when Richard Cobden was quietly laid in an English country churchyard. Mr. Cobden paid a visit to his constituents of Rochdale in November, 1864, to address them on public affairs. He was at the time struggling against a bronchial attack which made it imprudent for him to attend a public

meeting—especially imprudent to try to speak in public. He had to travel a long way in bad weather. His friends endeavored to dissuade him from going to Rochdale; but he was convinced that the condition of political affairs was so full of seriousness that he could not consistently with his strong sense of duty put off addressing his constituents. He had had probably some presentiment of his death; for not long before he had passed, in company with his friend Mr. Bright, the place where his only son lay buried, and he told Mr. Bright that he should soon be laid beside him. He went to Rochdale and spoke to a great public meeting, and he did not appear to have lacked any of his usual ease and energy. This speech, the last he ever made, contained the famous passage so often quoted and criticised, which compared the undergraduate's knowledge of Chicago with his knowledge of the Ilyssus. "I will take any undergraduate," said Cobden, "now at Oxford or Cambridge, and I will ask this young gentleman to walk up to a map of the United States and put his finger upon the city of Chicago, and I will undertake to say that he will not go within a thousand miles of it. When I was at Athens I sallied forth one summer morning to see the far-famed river the Ilyssus, and after walking some hundred yards up what appeared to be the bed of a winter torrent, I came up to a number of Athenian laundresses, and I found that they had dammed up this far-famed classic river, and that they were using every drop of the water for their linen and such sanitary purposes. I say why should not the young gentlemen who are taught all about the geography of the Ilyssus know something about the geography of the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Missouri?" Mr. Cobden has always been charged on the faith of this contrast with a desire to throw contempt on the study of the classics, and with an intention to measure the comparative value of ancient and modern literature by the relative commercial importance of Chicago and the Ilyssus. He had no such purpose. He merely meant to show that the men who dogmatized about modern countries and politics ought to know something of the subjects before they spoke and wrote. He contended that it is ridiculous to call a modern political writer educated because he knows something about classic Greece and nothing about the United States. The humorous illustration about the Ilyssus

Mr. Cobden had used in a former speech; and curiously enough something to much the same purpose had been said by Byron about the Ilyssus before, without any one falling foul of the author of "Childe Harold," and accusing him of disparaging the culture of Greece. Byron wrote that "places without a name and rivers not laid down on maps may one day, when more known, be justly esteemed superior subjects for the pencil and the pen to the dry ditch of the Ilyssus and the bogs of Bœotia." Cobden had been a good deal provoked, as most sensible persons were, by the flood of writing poured out on the country during the American civil war, in which citations from Thucydides were habitually introduced to settle questions of military and political controversy in the United States. That was the day for public instructors, of the inspired schoolboy type, who sometimes, to say the truth, knew little of the Greek literature from which they paraded their quotations, but who knew still less about the geography or the political conditions of America; who were under the impression that the Mississippi flowed east and west, and talked complacently of English war steamers getting into Lake Erie, apparently making no account of so considerable an obstacle as the Falls of Niagara.

This was Cobden's last speech. He did not come up to London until the March of 1865, and the day on which he traveled was so bitterly cold that the bronchial affection from which he was suffering became cruelly aggravated. One of the last private letters he ever wrote enclosed to a friend an unsolicited contribution for the relief of a poor young Englishwoman, whose husband, an American seaman, had just died in London, leaving her with a newly-born infant. He sank rapidly, and on April 2nd he died. The scene in the House of Commons next evening was very touching. Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli both spoke of Cobden with genuine feeling and sympathy; but Mr. Bright's few and broken words were as noble an epitaph as friendship could wish for the grave of a great and a good man. Some critics found fault with Lord Palmerston for having spoken of Cobden's as "Demosthenic eloquence." That simple conversational style, it was asked—does Lord Palmerston call that Demosthenic? Did he not use the word as a piece of unmeaning praise, merely because it came first to his lips? On the contrary, it is prob-



able that Palmerston thought the word expressed exactly what he wished to say. We are apt to think of the eloquence of Demosthenes as above all things energetic, commanding, overbearing by its strength and its action. But this is a superficial way of regarding the great orator. What is the essential characteristic of the oratory of Demosthenes, in which it differs from that of almost every other orator, ancient and modern? Surely its intensely practical nature; the fact that nothing is spoken without a present and determinate purpose; that no word is used which does not bear upon the argument the speaker would enforce. Cobden had not the power or the polish of Demosthenes, nor can his manner have been at all like that of the Athenian; but his eloquence was always moulded naturally and unconsciously in the true spirit of Demosthenes. It was the eloquence of one who claimed only to be heard for his cause, and for the arguments with which he should commend it to the intelligence of his audience. Those who found fault with Lord Palmerston's epithet only failed to understand its application.

The Liberal party then found themselves approaching a general election, with their ranks thinned by many severe losses. The government had lost one powerful member by an event other than death. The lord chancellor, Lord Westbury, had resigned his office in consequence of a vote of the House of Commons. Lord Westbury had made many enemies. He was a man of great capacity and energy, into whose nature the scorn of forms and of lesser intellects entered far too freely. His character was somewhat wanting in the dignity of moral elevation. He had a tongue of marvelous bitterness. His sarcastic power was probably unequalled in the House of Commons, while he sat there; and when he came into the House of Lords he fairly took away the breath of stately and formal peers by the unsparing manner in which he employed his most dangerous gift. His style of cruel irony was made all the more effective by the peculiar suavity of the tone in which he gave out his sarcasms and his epithets. With a face that only suggested soft bland benevolence, with eyes half closed as those of a mediæval saint, and in accents of subdued mellifluous benignity, the lord chancellor was wont to pour out a stream of irony that corroded like some deadly acid. Such a man was sure

to make enemies; and the time came when, in the Scriptural sense, they found him out. He had been lax in his manner of using his patronage. In one case he had allowed an official of the House of Lords to retire, and to receive a retiring pension, while a grave charge connected with his conduct in another public office was to Lord Westbury's knowledge impending over him; and Lord Westbury had appointed his own son to the place thus vacated. Thus at first sight it naturally appeared that Lord Westbury had sanctioned the pensioning off of a public servant against whom a serious charge was still awaiting decision, in order that a place might be found for the lord chancellor's own son. In the other case, that of an appointment to the Leeds bankruptcy court, the authority of Lord Westbury had been made use of by a member of his family to sanction a very improper arrangement. In this case, however, it was shown that Lord Westbury knew nothing of the proposal, and had never had any idea of assisting any member of his family by his influence in the matter. No one believed that even in the former case he had been influenced by any corrupt motive. He had been led into error by a too easy good-nature toward certain members of his family, and by a carelessness which the engrossing character of his other duties might at least have excused, if it could not have justified. Still there could be no doubt that the manner in which he had exercised his patronage, or allowed it to be exercised, was deserving of reprehension.

The question was taken up by the House of Commons; and somewhat unfortunately taken up in the first instance by a strong political opponent of the government. On July 3, 1865, Mr. Ward Hunt moved a distinct vote of censure on the lord chancellor. The house did not agree to the resolution, which would have branded the lord chancellor's conduct as "highly reprehensible, and calculated to throw discredit on the administration of the high offices of the state." It, however, accepted an amendment which, while acquitting Lord Westbury of any corrupt motive, declared that the granting of the pension showed a laxity of practice and a want of caution with regard to the public interests on the part of the lord chancellor. The government were not able to resist this resolution. Lord Palmerston made the best effort he could to save the lord chan-

cellor; but the common feeling of the house held that the words of the resolution were not too strong; and the government had to bow to it. The lord chancellor immediately resigned his office. No other course was fairly open to him. The government lost a man of singular ability and energy. Lord Westbury's fall was not perhaps so much the result of the one or two transactions for which the censure was passed, as of the growing dislike which both houses had come to feel for an intellect too keen to be scrupulous, and a nature which brought even to the uninspiring business of law reforms some of the fierce animosities to which the tongue of a Swift would hardly have given a more bitter expression. Many thought, when all was done, that he had been somewhat harshly used. He would, perhaps, have been greatly surprised himself to know how many kindly things were said of him.

The hour of political reaction was evidently near at hand. Five years had passed away since the withdrawal of Lord John Russell's reform bill; and five years may represent in ordinary calculation the ebb or flow of the political tide. The dissolution of parliament was near. Lord Derby described the speech from the throne, at the opening of the session of 1865, as a sort of address very proper to be delivered by an aged minister to a moribund parliament. The parliament had run its course. It had accomplished the rare feat of living out its days, and having to die by simple efflux of time. On July 6, 1865, parliament was dissolved. Mr. Disraeli's address to the electors of Buckinghamshire, sent out before the dissolution, distinctly declared that the issue which the country would have to decide concerned the national church and the franchise. "The maintenance of a national church," he said, "involves the question whether the principle of religion shall be an element of our political constitution; whether the state shall be consecrated; or whether, dismissing the sanctions that appeal to the higher feelings of man, our scheme of government should degenerate into a mere system of police." "I see nothing," he proclaimed, "in such a result but the corruption of nations and the fall of empires." As regards the franchise he was vaguely grandiloquent; and both the vagueness and grandiloquence were doubtless deliberate and to serve a purpose. "On the extension of the electoral franchise," he observed,

“depends the distribution of power.” He was of opinion that “the primary plan of our ancient constitution, so rich in various wisdom, indicates the course we ought to pursue.” What that course was Mr. Disraeli took good care not to explain too clearly. The ancient constitution, he showed, had “secured our popular rights by entrusting power not to an indiscriminate multitude, but to the estate or order of the Commons; and a wise government should be careful that the elements of that estate should bear a due relation to the moral and material development of the country.” Public opinion, he suggested, might not be yet ripe enough to legislate on the subject; but the country “might ponder over it with advantage, so that when the time comes for action we may legislate in the spirit of the English constitution, which would absorb the best of every class, and not fall into a democracy, which is the tyranny of one class, and that one the least enlightened.” Translated into plain English, these pompous generalities meant clearly enough, although perhaps men did not all see it just then, that Mr. Disraeli would be prepared, if his turn should arrive, to bring in a reform bill, and that he still had hopes of being able to satisfy the country without going too far in the direction of popular suffrage. But it seems evident now that he had left it open to him to take even that course should it come in his way. No matter how wide the extension of the franchise which he found himself driven to make, he could always say that in his opinion it only absorbed the best of a class, and did not allow us to fall into a democracy.

“Which spills the foremost foeman’s life, that party conquers in the strife.” The first blow was struck in the city of London, and the Liberals carried all the seats. Four Liberals were elected. In Westminster the contest was somewhat remarkable. The constituency of Westminster always had the generous ambition to wish to be represented by at least one man of distinction. Westminster had been represented by Fox. It had more lately had Sir Francis Burdett for one of its representatives and Cochrane for another. Byron’s friend Hobhouse long represented Westminster. More lately still it had had Sir de Lacy Evans, not much of a politician to be sure, but a very gallant soldier, a man whose name was, at all events, to adopt the French phrase, “in the play bill.” This time Mr.

Mill was induced to come out of his calm retirement in Avignon and accept the candidature for Westminster. He issued an address embodying his well-known political opinions. He declined to look after local business, and on principle he objected to pay any part of the expenses of election. It was felt to be a somewhat bold experiment to put forward such a man as Mill among the candidates for the representation of a popular constituency. His opinions were extreme. He was not known to belong to any church or religious denomination. He was a philosopher, and English political organizations do not love philosophers. He was almost absolutely unknown to his countrymen in general. Until he came forward as a leader of the agitation in favor of the northern cause during the civil war, he had never, so far as we know, been seen on an English political platform. Even of the electors of Westminster very few had ever seen him before his candidature. Many were under the vague impression that he was a clever man who wrote wise books, and died long ago. He was not supposed to have any liking or capacity for parliamentary life. More than ten years before it was known to a few that he had been invited to stand for an Irish county and had declined. That was at the time when his observations on the Irish land tenure system and the condition of Ireland generally had filled the hearts of many Irishmen with delight and wonder—delight and wonder to find that a cold English philosopher and economist should form such just and generous opinions about Irish questions, and should express them with such a noble courage. Since that time he had not been supposed to have any inclination for public life; nor we believe had any serious effort been made to tempt him out of his retirement. The idea now occurred to Mr. James Beal, a popular Westminster politician, and he pressed it so earnestly on Mill as a public duty that Mill did not feel at liberty to refuse. Mill was one of the few men who have only to be convinced that a thing was incumbent on them as a public duty to set about doing it forthwith, no matter how distasteful it might be to them personally, or what excellent excuses they might offer for leaving the duty to others. He had written things which might well make him doubtful about the prudence of courting the suffrages of an English popular constituency. He was understood to be a rationalist; he was a sup-

porter of many political opinions that seemed to ordinary persons much like "fads," or crotchets, or even crazes. He had once said in his writings, that the working-classes in England were given to lying. He had now to stand up on platforms before crowded and noisy assemblies where everything he had ever written or said could be made the subject of question and of accusation; and with enemies outside capable of torturing every explanation to his disadvantage. A man of independent opinions and who has not been ashamed to change his opinions when he thought them wrong, or afraid to put on record each opinion in the time when he held to it, is at much disadvantage on the hustings. He will find out there what it is to have written books and to have enemies. Mill triumphed over all the difficulties by downright courage and honesty. When asked at a public meeting chiefly composed of working-men, whether he had ever said the working-classes were given to lying, he answered straight out, "I did;" a bold, blunt admission without any qualification. The boldness and frankness of the reply struck home to the manhood of the workingmen who listened to him. Here they saw a leader who would never shrink from telling them the truth. Mr. Mill has himself described what followed his answer. "Scarcely were these two words out of my mouth, when vehement applause resounded through the whole meeting. It was evident that the working people were so accustomed to expect equivocation and evasion from those who sought their suffrages, that when they found, instead of that, a direct avowal of what was likely to be disagreeable to them, instead of being affronted they concluded at once that this was a person they could trust. . . . The first workingman who spoke after the incident I have mentioned (it was Mr. Odger) said that the working-classes had no desire not to be told of their fault; they wanted friends, not flatterers; and felt under obligation to any one who told them anything in themselves which he sincerely believed to require amendment. And to this the meeting heartily responded." One is in doubt whether to admire more the frankness of the speaker or the manly good sense of those to whom he spoke. "As much to my surprise," says Mr. Mill, "as to that of any one, I was returned to parliament by a majority of some hundreds over my Conservative competitor."

In many other instances there was a marked indication that the political tide had turned in favor of Liberal opinions. Mr. Thomas Hughes, author of "Tom Brown's School-days," a Radical of the "muscular Christianity" order, as it was called, was returned for Lambeth. Mr. Duncan M'Laren, brother-in-law of Mr. Bright, and an advanced Radical, was elected for Edinburgh, unseating a mild Whig. Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, a brilliant young Radical, nephew of Macaulay, came into parliament. In Ireland some men of strong opinions, of ability, and of high character found seats in the House of Commons for the first time. One of these was Mr. J. B. Dillon, a man who had been concerned in the Irish rebellion of 1848. He had long opposed the idea of an armed rising, believing it inopportune and hopeless, but nevertheless when the movement was precipitated by events he went and took his place in front of it with his leader. Mr. Dillon had lived for some years in the United States, and had lately returned to Ireland under an amnesty. He at once reassumed a leading part in Irish politics, and won a high reputation for his capacity and his integrity. He promised to have an influential part in bringing together the Irish members and the English Liberals, but his untimely death cut short what would unquestionably have been a very useful career. Wherever there was a change in the character of the new parliament it seemed to be in favor of advanced reform. It was not merely that the Tories were left in a minority, but that so many mild Whigs had been removed to give place to genuine Liberals. There seemed to be little doubt that this new parliament would do something to make its existence memorable. No one surely could have expected that it would vindicate its claim to celebrity in the peculiar manner that its short history illustrates. Mr. Disraeli himself expressed his opinion of the new parliament after it had been but a short time sitting. He spoke of it as one which had distinctly increased the strength and the following of Mr. Bright. No one could fail to see, he pointed out, that Mr. Bright occupied a very different position now from that which he had held in the late parliament. New men had come into the House of Commons, men of integrity and ability, who were above all things advanced reformers. The position of Mr. Gladstone was markedly changed. He had been defeated at the Univer-

sity of Oxford by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, but was at once put in nomination for South Lancashire, which was still open, and he was elected there. His severance from the university was regarded by Liberals as his political emancipation. The reformers then would have at their head the two great parliamentary orators (one of them undoubtedly the future prime minister), and the greatest philosophical writer and thinker of the day. This Liberal triumvirate, as they were called, would have behind them many new and earnest men, to whom their words would be a law. The alarmed Tories said to themselves that between England and the democratic flood there was left but one barrier, and that was in the person of the old statesman, now in his eighty-first year, of whom more and more doubtful rumors began to arrive in London every day.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON.

“UNARM, EROS; the long day’s task is done, and we must sleep!” A long, very long day’s task was nearly done. A marvelous career was fast drawing to its close. Down in Hertfordshire Lord Palmerston was dying. As Mirabeau said of himself, so Palmerston might have said, he could already hear the preparations for the funeral of Achilles. He had enjoyed life to the last as fully as ever Churchill did, although in a different sense. Long as his life was, if counted by mere years, it seems much longer still when we consider what it had compassed, and how active it had been from the earliest to the very end. Many men were older than Lord Palmerston; he left more than one senior behind him. But they were for the most part men whose work had long been done; men who had been consigned to the arm-chair of complete inactivity. Palmerston was a hardworking statesman until within a very few days of his death. He had been a member of parliament for nearly sixty years. He entered parliament for the first time in the year when Byron, like himself a Harrow boy, published his first poems. He had been in the House of Commons for thirty years when the queen came to the throne. He used to play chess with the unfortunate Caro-



line of Brunswick, wife of the prince regent, when she lived at Kensington as Princess of Wales. In 1808, being then one of the lords of the admiralty, he had defended the Copenhagen expedition of the year before, and insisted that it was a stroke indispensable to the defeat of the designs of Napoleon. During all his political career he was only out of office for rare and brief seasons. To be a private member of parliament was a short occasional episode in his successful life. In the words of Sadi, the Persian poet, he had obtained an ear of corn from every harvest.

It was only during the session of 1865 that Lord Palmerston began to give evidence that he was suffering severely at last from that affliction which has been called the most terrible of all diseases—old age. Up to the beginning of that year he had scarcely shown any signs of actual decay. He had, indeed, been for a long time a sufferer from occasional fits of gout, lately in hands as well as feet. During the winter of the Trent seizure he had been much disabled and tortured by a visitation of this kind, which almost entirely crippled him. But in this country the gout has long ceased to be an evidence of old age. It only too commonly accompanies middle life; and, indeed, like black Care in the poet's verse, seems able to cling on to any horseman. But during the session of 1865 Lord Palmerston began to show that he was receiving the warnings which death, in Mrs. Thrale's pretty poem, is made to give of his coming. He suffered much for some of the later months. His eyesight had become very weak, and even with the help of strong glasses he found it difficult to read. He was getting feeble in every way. He ceased to have that joy of the strife which inspired him during parliamentary debate even up to the attainment of his eightieth year. He had kept up his bodily vigor and the youthful elasticity of his spirits so long, that it must have come on him with the shock of a painful surprise when he first found that his frame and his nerves were beyond doubt giving way, and that he too must succumb to the cruel influence of years. The collapse of his vigor came on almost at a stroke. On his eightieth birthday, in October, 1864, he started, Mr. Ashley tells us, at half-past eight from Broadlands, taking his horses by train to Fareham, was met by engineer officers, and rode along the Portsdown and Hilsa lines of forts, getting off his horse and inspecting some of them,

crossing over to Anglesey forts and Gosport, and not reaching home till six in the evening." Earlier in the same year he rode one day from his house in Piccadilly to Harrow, trotting the distance of nearly two miles within one hour. Such performances testify to an energy of what one would almost call youthful vitality, rare indeed even in the history of our long-living time. But in 1865 the change set in all at once. Lord Palmerston began to discontinue his attendances at the house; when he did attend, it was evident that he went through his parliamentary duties with difficulty, and even with pain. The Tiverton election on the dissolution of parliament was his last public appearance. He went from Tiverton to Brocket, in Hertfordshire, a place which Lady Palmerston had inherited from Lord Melbourne, her brother; and there he remained. The gout had become very serious now. It had flown to a dangerous place; and Lord Palmerston had made the danger greater by venturing with his too youthful energy to ride out before he had nearly recovered from one severe attack. On October 17th a bulletin was issued, announcing that Lord Palmerston had been seriously ill, in consequence of having taken cold, but that he had been steadily improving for three days, and was then much better. Somehow this announcement failed to reassure the people in London. Many had only then for the first time heard that Palmerston was ill, and the bare mention of the fact fell ominously on the ear of the public. The very next morning these suspicions were confirmed. It was announced that Lord Palmerston's condition had suddenly altered for the worse, and that he was gradually sinking. Then every one knew that the end was near. There was no surprise when the news came next day that Palmerston was dead. He died on October 18th. Had he lived only two days longer he would have completed his eighty-first year. He was buried in Westminster Abbey with public honors on October 27th. No man since the death of the Duke of Wellington had filled so conspicuous a place in the public mind. No man had enjoyed anything like the same amount of popularity. He died at the moment when that popularity had reached its very zenith. It had become the fashion of the day to praise all he said and all he did. It was the settled canon of the ordinary Englishman's faith that what Palmerston said England must feel. To stand forward as the oppo-

ment, or even the critic, of anything done or favored by him was to be unpopular and unpatriotic. Lord Palmerston had certainly lived long enough in years, in enjoyment, in fame. It seems idle to ask what might have happened if a man of more than eighty could have lived and held his place in active public life for a few years more. But if one were to indulge in such speculation, the assumption would be that in such an event there must have been some turn in the tide of that almost unparalleled popularity and success. Fortunate in everything during his later years, Lord Palmerston was withdrawn from chance and change just when his fortune had reached its flood.

It is hardly necessary to say that the regret for Palmerston was very general and very genuine. Privately, he can hardly have had any enemies. He had a kindly heart, which won on all people who came near him. He had no enduring enmities, or capricious dislikes; and it was therefore very hard for ill-feeling to live in his beaming, friendly presence. He never disliked men merely because he had often to encounter them in political war. He tried his best to give them as good as they brought, and he bore no malice. There were some men whom he disliked, as we have already mentioned in these volumes, but they were men who for one reason or another stood persistently in his way, and who he fancied he had reason to believe had acted treacherously toward him. He liked a man to be "English," and he liked him to be what he considered a gentleman; but he did not restrict his definition of the word "gentleman" to the mere qualifications of birth or social rank. His manners were frank and genial rather than polished; and his is one of the rare instances in which a man contrived always to keep up his personal dignity without any stateliness of bearing and tone. He was a model combatant; when the combat was over, he was ready to sit down by his antagonist's side and be his friend, and talk over their experiences and exploits. He was absolutely free from affectation. This very fact gave sometimes an air almost of roughness to his manners, he could be so plain-spoken and downright when suddenly called on to express his mind. He was not in the highest sense of the word a truthful man; that is to say, there were episodes of his career in which for purposes of statecraft he allowed the House of Commons and the country to become the dupes of an

erroneous impression. Personally truthful and honorable of course it would be superfluous to pronounce him. A man of Palmerston's bringing up is as certain to be personally truthful as he is to be brave, and to be fond of open-air exercise and the cold bath. But Palmerston was too often willing to distinguish between the personal and the political integrity of a statesman. The distinction is common to the majority of statesmen; so much the worse for statesmanship. But the gravest errors of this kind which Palmerston had committed were committed for an earlier generation. The general public of 1865 took small account of them. Not many would have cared much then about the grim story of Sir Alexander Burnes' despatches, or the manner in which Palmerston had played with the hopes of foreign Liberalism, conducting it more than once rather to its grave than to its triumph. These things lived only in the minds of a few at the time when the news of his death came, and even of that few not many were anxious to dwell upon them. It was noticed at the time that the London newspaper which had persistently attacked his policy and himself since the hour when it came into existence, appeared in deep mourning the day after his death. Some thought this show of regret inconsistent; some declared it hypocritical. There is no reason to think it either the one or the other. Without retracting one word of condemnation uttered concerning Palmerston's policy, it was surely natural to feel sincere regret for the death of one who had filled so large a space in the public eye; a man of extraordinary powers, and whose love for his country had never been denied. "Dead! that quits all scores!" is the exclamation of the gypsy in "Guy Mannering;" only a simple untaught version of the "*sunt lachrimæ rerum*" of Virgil, which Fox quoted to explain his feelings when he grieved for the death of the rival whose public actions he could not even at such a moment pretend to approve.

Whether Lord Palmerston belonged to the first order of statesmen can be only matter of speculation and discussion. He was not afforded any opportunity of deciding the question. It was the happy fortune of his country during all his long career to have never been placed in any position of organic danger. Not for one moment was there any crisis of the order which enables a man to prove that he is a statesman of the foremost class. It would be almost as

profitable to ask ourselves whether the successful captain of one of the Cunard steamers might have been a Nelson or a Columbus, as to ask whether under the pressure of great emergency Palmerston might have been a really great statesman. If we were to test him by his judgment in matters of domestic policy, we should have to rate him somewhat low. The description which Grattan gave of Burke would have to be reversed in Lord Palmerston's case. Instead of saying that "he saw everything; he foresaw everything," we should have to say, he saw nothing; he foresaw nothing. He was hardly dead when the great changes which he had always scoffed at and declared impossible came to pass. Marshal MacMahon once said that in some given contingency the *chassepôts* of the French soldiers would go off of themselves. Such seemed to be the condition of the very reforms which Palmerston had persuaded himself to regard as un-English and impossible. They went off of themselves, one might say, the moment he was gone. Nor was it that his strength had withstood them. If he had been ten years younger they would probably have gone on in spite of him. They waited out of courtesy to him, to his age, and to the certainty that before very long he must be out of the way.

But of course Lord Palmerston is not to be judged by his domestic policy. We might as well judge of Frederick the Great by his poetry, or Richelieu by his play. Palmerston was himself only in the foreign office, and in the House of Commons. In both alike the recognition of his true capacity came very late. His parliamentary training had been perfected before its success was acknowledged. He was therefore able to use his faculties at any given moment to their fullest stretch. He could always count on them. They had been so well drilled by long practice that they would instantly come at call. He understood the moods of the House of Commons to perfection. He could play upon those moods as a performer does upon the keys of an instrument. The doctor in one of Dickens' stories contrives to seem a master of his business by simply observing what those around the patient have been doing and wish to do, and advising that just those things shall be done. Lord Palmerston often led the House of Commons after the same fashion. He saw what men were in the mood to do, and he did it; and they were clear that that

must be a great leader who led them just whither they felt inclined to go. The description which Burke gave of Charles Townshend would very accurately describe what Lord Palmerston came to be in his later days. He became the spoiled child of the House of Commons. Only it has to be added, that as the spoiled child usually spoils the parent, so Palmerston did much to spoil the house that petted him. He would not allow it to remain long in the mood to tolerate high principles, or any talk about them. Much earnestness he knew bored the house, and he took care never to be much in earnest. He left it to others to be eloquent. It was remarked at the time that "the prime minister who is now, and has been for years, far more influential in England than ever Bolingbroke was, wielding a political power as great as any ever owned by Chatham or Pitt; as supreme in his own country as Cavour was in Sardinia; holding a position such as no French statesman has held for generations in France, has scarcely any pretension whatever to be considered an orator, and has not during the whole course of his long career affixed his name to any grand act of successful statesmanship." Lord Palmerston never cared to go deeper in his speeches than the surface in everything. He had no splendid phraseology; and probably would not have cared to make any display of splendid phraseology even if he had the gift. No speech of his would be read except for the present interest of the subject. No passages from Lord Palmerston are quoted by anybody. He always selected, and doubtless by a kind of instinct, not the arguments which were most logically cogent, but those which were most likely to suit the character and the temper of the audience he happened to be addressing. He spoke for his hearers, not for himself; to affect the votes of those whom he was appealing, not for the sake of expressing any deep irrepressible convictions of his own. He never talked over the heads of his audience, or compelled them to strain their intellects in order to keep pace with his flights. No other statesman of our time could interpose so dexterously just before the division to break the effect of some telling speech against him, and to bring the house into a frame of mind for regarding all that had been done by the opposition as a mere piece of political ceremonial, gone through in deference to the traditions or the formal necessities of party, on which it

would be a waste of time to bestow serious thought. A writer quoted by Mr. Ashley has remarked upon Lord Palmerston's habit "of interjecting occasionally a sort of guttural sound between his words, which must necessarily have been fatal to anything like true oratorical effect, but which somehow seemed to enhance the peculiar effectiveness of his unprepared, easy, colloquial style." The writer goes on to say that this occasional hesitation "often did much to increase the humor of some of the jocular hits in which Lord Palmerston so commonly delighted." "The joke seemed to be so entirely unpremeditated; the audience were kept for a moment in such amusing suspense, while the speaker was apparently turning over the best way to give the hit, that when at last it came it was enjoyed with the keener relish."

Nothing is more rash than to attempt to convey in cold words an idea of the effect which a happy phrase from Lord Palmerston could sometimes produce upon a hesitating audience, and how it could throw ridicule upon a very serious case. Let us, however, make one experiment. Mr. Disraeli had once made a long and heavy attack on the ministry, opened quite a battery of argument and sarcasm against them for something they had done or had left undone. Toward the close of his speech he observed that it was no part of his duty to suggest to the ministry the exact course they ought to pursue; he would abstain from endeavoring to influence the house by offering any opinion of his own on that subject. Lord Palmerston began his reply by seizing on this harmless bit of formality. "The right honorable gentleman," he said, "has declared that he abstained from endeavoring to influence the house by any advice of his own. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that is indeed patriotic." The manner in which Palmerston spoke the words; the peculiar pause before he found the exact epithet with which to commend Mr. Disraeli's conduct; the twinkle of the eye; the tone of the voice—all made this ironical commendation more effective than the finest piece of satire would have been just then. Lord Palmerston managed to put it as if Mr. Disraeli, conscious of the impossibility of his having any really sound advice to offer, had out of combined modesty and love of country deliberately abstained from offering an opinion that might perhaps have misled the ignorant. The effect of Mr. Dis-

raeli's elaborate attack was completely spoiled. The house was no longer in a mood to consider it seriously. This, it may be said, was almost in the nature of a practical joke. Not a few of Palmerston's clever instantaneous effects partook to a certain extent of the nature of a good-humored practical joke; but Palmerston only had recourse to these oratorical artifices when he was sure that the temper of the house and the condition of the debate would make them serve his momentary purpose. It was hardly better than a mere joke when Palmerston, charged with having acted unfairly in China by first favoring the great rebellion, and then indirectly helping the Chinese government to put it down, blandly asked what could be more impartial conduct than to help the rebels first and the government after. It was a mere joke to declare that a member who had argued against Palmerston's scheme of fortifications, had himself admitted the necessity of such a plan by saying that he had taken care to "fortify himself" with facts in order to debate the question. These were not, however, the purely frivolous jests that when thus told they may seem to be. They had all of them the distinct purpose of convincing the house that Lord Palmerston thought nothing of the arguments urged against him; that they did not call for any serious consideration; that a careless jest was the only way in which it would be worth his while to answer them. It is certain that not only was the opponent, not only were other possible opponents, disconcerted by this way of dealing with the question, but that many listeners became convinced by it that there could be nothing in the case which Lord Palmerston treated with such easy levity. They had all, and more than all, the effect of Pitt's throwing down his pen and ceasing to take notes during Erskine's speech, or O'Connell's smile and amused shake of the head at the earnestness of an ambitious young speaker, who thought he was making a damaging case against him, and compelling a formidable and elaborate reply. The jests of Lord Palmerston always had a purpose in them, and were better adapted to the occasion and the moment than the repartees of the best debater in the house. At one time, indeed, he flung his jests and personalities about in somewhat too reckless a fashion, and he made many enemies. But of late years, whether from growing discretion or kindly feeling, he seldom indulged in any pleasantries that could wound or



offend. During his last parliament he represented to the full the average head and heart of the House of Commons; singularly devoid of high ambition or steady purpose; a house peculiarly intolerant of eccentricity, especially if it were that of genius; impatient of having its feelings long strained in any one direction, delighting only in ephemeral interests and excitements; hostile to anything which drew heavily on the energy or the intelligence. Such a house naturally acknowledged a heavy debt of gratitude to the statesman who never either puzzled or bored them. Men who distrusted Mr. Disraeli's antitheses, and were frightened by Mr. Gladstone's earnestness, found as much relief in the easy, pleasant, straightforward talk of Lord Palmerston, as a schoolboy finds in a game of marbles after a problem or a sermon.

We have not now to pronounce upon Lord Palmerston's long career. Much of this "History of Our Own Times" is necessarily the history of the life and administration of a statesman who entered parliament shortly after Austerlitz. We have commented so far as comment seemed necessary on each passage of his policy as it came under our notice. His greatest praise with Englishmen must be that he loved England with a sincere love that never abated. He had no predilection, no prejudice, that did not give way where the welfare of England was concerned. He ought to have gone one step higher in the path of public duty; he ought to have loved justice and right even more than he loved England. He ought to have felt more tranquilly convinced that the cause of justice and of right must be the best thing which an English minister could advance even for England's sake in the end. Lord Palmerston was not a statesman who took any lofty view of a minister's duties. His statesmanship never stood on any high moral elevation. He sometimes did things in the cause of England which we may well believe he would not have done for any consideration in any cause of his own. His policy was necessarily shifting, uncertain, and inconsistent; for he molded it always on the supposed interests of England as they showed themselves to his eyes at the time. His sympathies with liberty were capricious guides. Sympathies with liberty must be so always where there is no clear principle defining objects and guiding conduct. Lord Palmerston was not prevented by his liberal sympathies from sustaining

the policy of the *coup d'état*; nor did his hatred of slavery, one of his few strong and genuine emotions apart from English interests, inspire him with any repugnance to the cause of the southern slaveholders. But it cannot be doubted that his very defects were a main cause of his popularity and his success. He was able always with a good conscience to assure the English people that they were the greatest and the best, the only good and great people in the world, because he had long taught himself to believe this, and had come to believe it. He was always popular, because his speeches invariably conveyed this impression to the English crowd whom he addressed in or out of parliament. Other public men spoke for the most part to tell English people of something they ought to do which they were not doing, something which they had done and ought not to have done. It is not in the nature of things that such men should be as popular as those who told England that whatever she did must be right. Nor did Palmerston lay on his praise with coarse and palpable artifice. He had no artifice in the matter. He believed what he said, and his very sincerity made it the more captivating and the more dangerous. A phrase sprang up in Palmerston's days which was employed to stigmatize certain political conduct beyond all ordinary reproach. It was meant to stamp such conduct as outside the pale of reasonable argument or patriotic consideration. That was the word "un-English." It was enough with certain classes to say that anything was "un-English" in order to put it utterly out of court. No matter to what principles, higher, more universal, and more abiding than those that are merely English, it might happen to appeal, the one word of condemnation was held to be enough for it. Some of the noblest and the wisest men of our day were denounced as un-English. A stranger might have asked in wonder at one time whether it was un-English to be just, to be merciful, to have consideration for the claims and the rights of others, to admit that there was any higher object in a nation's life than a diplomatic success. All that would have made a man odious and insufferable in private life was apparently held up as belonging to the virtues of the English nation. Rude self-assertion, blunt disregard for the feelings and the claims of others, a self-sufficiency which would regard all earth's interests as made for England's special use alone—the yet more out-

rageous form of egotism which would fancy that the moral code as it applies to others does not apply to us—all this seemed to be considered the becoming national characteristic of the English people. It would be almost superfluous to say that this did not show its worst in Lord Palmerston himself. As in art, so in politics, we never see how bad some peculiar defect is until we see it in the imitators of a great man's style. A school of Palmerston's, had it been powerful and lasting, would have made England a nuisance to other nations.

Certainly a statesman's first business is to take care of the interests of his own country. His duty is to prefer her interests to those of any other country. In our rough-and-ready human system he is often compelled to support her in a policy, the principle of which he did not cordially approve in the first instance. He must do his best to bring her with honor out of a war, even though he would not himself have made or sanctioned the war if the decision had been in his power. He cannot break sharply away from the traditions of his country. Mr. Disraeli often succeeded in throwing a certain amount of disrepute on some of his opponents by calling them the advocates of "cosmopolitanism." If the word had any meaning, it meant, we presume, that the advocates of "cosmopolitanism" were men who had no particular prejudices in favor of their country's interests, and were as ready to take an enemy's side of a question as that of their own people. If there were such politicians—and we have never heard of any such since the execution of Anacharsis Clootz—we could not wonder that their countrymen should dislike them, and draw back from putting any trust in them at a critical moment. They might be held to resemble some of the pragmatists that at one time used to argue that the ties of family are of no account to the truly wise and just, and that a good man should love all his neighbors as well as he loved his wife and children. Such people are hopeless in practical affairs. Taking no account of the very springs of human motive, they are sure to go wrong in everything they try to do or to estimate. An English minister must be an English minister first of all; but he will never be a great minister if he does not in all his policy recognize the truth that there are considerations of higher account for him, and for England too, than England's immediate interests.

If he deliberately or heedlessly allows England to do wrong, he will prove an evil counsellor for her; he will do her harm that may be estimated some day even by the most practical and arithmetical calculation. There is a great truth in the fine lines of the cavalier-poet, which remind his mistress that he could not love her so much, loved he not honor more. It is a truth that applies to the statesman as well as to the lover. No man can truly serve his country to the best of his power who has not in his mind all the time a service still higher than that of his country. In many instances Lord Palmerston allowed England to do things which, if a nation had an individual conscience, he and every one else would say were wrong. It has to be remembered, too, that what is called England's interest comes to be defined according to the minister's personal interpretation of its meaning. The minister who sets the interest of his country above the moral law is necessarily obliged to decide according to his own judgment at the moment what the interests of his country are, and so it is not even the state which is above the moral law, but only the statesman. We have no hesitation in saying that Lord Palmerston's statesmanship on the whole lowered the moral tone of English politics for a time. This consideration alone, if there were nothing else, forbids us to regard him as a statesman whose deeds were equal to his opportunities and to his genius. To serve the purpose of the hour was his policy. To succeed in serving it was his triumph. It is not thus that a great fame is built up, unless, indeed, where the genius of the man is like that of some Cæsar or Napoleon, which can convert its very ruins into monumental records. Lord Palmerston is hardly to be called a great man. Perhaps he may be called a great "man of the time."

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

LORD RUSSELL was invited by the queen to form a government after the death of Lord Palmerston. For a few days a certain amount of doubt and speculation prevailed in London and the country generally. It was

thought not impossible that, owing to his advanced years, Lord Russell might prove unwilling to take on him the burden of such an office as that of prime minister. The name of Lord Clarendon was suggested by many as that of a probable head of the new administration. Some talked of Lord Granville. Others had a strong conviction that Mr. Gladstone would himself be invited to take that commanding position in name which he must have in fact. Even when it became certain that Lord Russell was to be the prime minister, speculation busied itself as to possible changes in the administration. Many persuaded themselves that the opportunity would be taken to make some bold and sweeping changes, and to admit the Radical element to an influence in the actual councils of the nation such as it had never enjoyed before, and such as its undoubted strength in parliament and the country now entitled it to have. According to some rumors, Mr. Bright was to become secretary for India in the new cabinet; according to others, the great free-trade orator was to hold the office of president of the board of trade, which had once been offered to his friend Mr. Cobden; and Mr. Mill was to be made secretary for India. It was soon found, however, that no such novelties were to be announced. The only changes in the cabinet were that Lord Russell became prime minister, and that Lord Clarendon, who had been chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, succeeded him as foreign secretary. One or two new men were brought into offices which did not give a seat in the cabinet. Among these were Mr. Forster, who became under secretary for the colonies in the room of Mr. Chichester Fortescue, now Irish secretary, and Mr. Goschen, who succeeded Mr. Hutt as vice-president of the board of trade. Both Mr. Forster and Mr. Goschen soon afterward came to hold high official position and to have seats in the cabinet. In each instance the appointment was a concession to the growing liberal feeling of the day; but the concession was slight and cautious. The country knew little about either Mr. Forster or Mr. Goschen at the time; and it will easily be imagined that those who thought a seat in the cabinet for Mr. Bright was due to the people more even than to the man, and who had some hopes of seeing a similar place offered to Mr. Mill, were not satisfied by the arrangement which called two comparatively obscure men to unimportant office. The

outer public did not quite appreciate the difficulties which a Liberal minister had to encounter in compromising between the Whigs and the Radicals. The Whigs included almost all the members of the party who were really influential by virtue of hereditary rank and noble station. It was impossible to overlook their claims. In a country like England one must pay attention to the wishes of "the dukes." There is a superstition about it. The man who attempted to form a Liberal cabinet without consulting the wishes of the "the dukes" would be as imprudent as the Greek commander who in the days of Xenophon would venture on a campaign without consulting the auguries. But it was not only a superstition which required the Liberal prime minister to show deference to the claims of the titled and stately Whigs. The great Whig names were a portion of the traditions of the party. More than that, it was certain that whenever the Liberal party got into difficulties, it would look to the great Whig houses to help it out. Many Liberals began to speak with more or less contempt of the Whigs. They talked of these shadows of a mighty name as Thackeray's Barnes Newcome talks of the senior members of his family, his uncle more particularly. But when the Liberal party fell into disorganization and difficulty some years after, the influence of the great Whig houses was sought for at once in order to bring about an improved condition of things. Liberalism often turns to the Whigs as a young scapegrace to his father or his guardian. The wild youth will have his own way when things are going smooth; when credit is still good, and family affection is not particularly necessary to his comfort. He is even ready enough to smile at old-fashioned ways and antiquated counsels; but when the hour of pressure comes, when obligations have to be met at last, and the gay bachelor lodgings with the fanciful furniture and the other expensive luxuries have to be given up, then he comes without hesitation to the elder, and assumes as a matter of course that his debts are to be paid and his affairs put in order.

Lord Russell had to pay some deference to the authority of the great Whig houses. Some of them probably looked with alarm enough at the one serious change brought about by the death of Lord Palmerston: the change which made Mr. Gladstone leader of the House of Commons. Meanwhile, there were some changes in the actual condition of

things which did not depend on the mere alteration of a cabinet. The political complexion of the day was likely to be affected in its color by some of these changes. The House of Commons, elected just before Lord Palmerston's death, was in many respects a very different house from that which it had been his last ministerial act to dissolve. We have already mentioned some of the changes that death had made. Palmerston was gone, and Cobden, and Sir George Lewis, and Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham. There were changes, too, not brought about by death. The Lord John Russell of the reform bill had been made a peer, and sat as Earl Russell in the House of Lords. Mr. Lowe, one of the ablest and keenest of political critics, who had for awhile been shut down under the responsibilities of office, was a free lance once more. Mr. Lowe, who had before that held office two or three times, was vice-president of the committee of council on education from the beginning of Lord Palmerston's administration until April, 1864. At that time a vote of censure was carried against his department, in other words against himself, on the motion of Lord Robert Cecil, for alleged "mutilation" of the reports of the inspectors of schools, done, as it was urged, in order to bring the reports into seeming harmony with the educational views entertained by the committee of council. Lord Robert Cecil introduced the resolution in a speech singularly bitter and offensive. The motion was carried by a majority of one hundred and one to ninety-three. Mr. Lowe instantly resigned his office; but he did not allow the matter to rest there. He obtained the appointment of a committee to inquire into the whole subject; and the result of the inquiry was not only that Mr. Lowe was entirely exonerated from the charge made against him, but that the resolution of the House of Commons was actually rescinded. It is probable, however, that Mr. Lowe felt that the government of which he was a member had not given him all the support he might have expected. It is certain that if Lord Palmerston and his leading colleagues had thrown any great energy into their support of him, the vote of censure never could have been carried, and would not have had to be rescinded. This fact was brought back to the memory of many not long after, when Mr. Lowe, still an outsider, became the very Coriolanus of a sudden movement against the reform policy of a Liberal government. The vigil

of him who treasures up a wrong, if we suppose Mr. Lowe to have had any such feeling, had not to be very long or patient in this instance. On the other hand, Mr. Layard, once a daring and somewhat reckless opponent of government and governments, a very Draweansir of political debate, a swashbuckler and soldado of parliamentary conflict, had been bound over to the peace, quietly enmeshed in the discipline of subordinate office. Not Michael Peres himself the "Copper Captain" of Beaumont and Fletcher, underwent a more remarkable and sudden change when the strong-willed Estifania once had him fast in wedlock, than many a bold and dashing free lance submits to when he has consented to put himself into the comfortable bondsmanship of subordinate office. Mr. Layard was therefore now to be regarded as one subdued in purpose. He seemed what Byron called an "extinct volcano;" a happy phrase more lately adopted by Lord Beaconsfield. Yet the volcanic fire was not wholly gone; it flamed up again on opportunity given. Perhaps Mr. Layard proved most formidable to his own colleagues, when he sometimes had to come into the ring to sustain their common cause. The old vigor of the professional gladiator occasionally drove him a little too heedlessly against the opposition. So combative a temperament found it hard to submit itself always to the prosaic rigor of mere fact and the proprieties of official decorum.

The change in the leadership of the House of Commons was of course the most remarkable, and the most momentous, of the alterations that had taken place. From Lord Palmerston; admired almost to hero-worship by Whigs and Conservatives, the foremost position had suddenly passed to Mr. Gladstone, whose admirers were the most extreme of the Liberals, and who was distrusted and dreaded by all of Conservative instincts and sympathies, on the one side of the house as well as on the other. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli were now brought directly face to face. One led the house; the other led the opposition. With so many points of difference, and even of contrast, there was one slight resemblance in the political situation of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. Each was looked on with a certain doubt and dread by a considerable number of his own followers. It is evident that in such a state of things the strategical advantage lay with the leader of the opposition. He had not to take the initiative in anything and



the least loyal of his followers would cordially serve under him in any effort to thwart a movement made by the ministry. The Conservatives naturally have always proved the more docile and easily disciplined party. Of late years their policy has necessarily been of a negative character: a policy of resistance or of delay. There is less opportunity for difference of opinion in a party acting with such a purpose than in one of which the principle is to keep pace with changing times and conditions. It came to be seen, however, before long that the Conservative leader was able to persuade his party to accept those very changes against which some of the followers of Mr. Gladstone were found ready to revolt. In order that some of the events to follow may not appear very mysterious, it is well to bear in mind that the formation of the new ministry under Lord Russell had by no means given all the satisfaction to certain sections of the Liberal party which they believed themselves entitled to expect. Some were displeased because the new government was not Radical enough. Some were alarmed because they fancied it was likely to go too far for the purpose of pleasing the Radicals. Some were vexed because men whom they looked up to as their natural leaders had not been invited to office. A few were annoyed because their own personal claims had been overlooked. One thing was certain: the government must make a distinct move of some kind in the direction of reform. So many new and energetic Liberals and Radicals had entered the House of Commons now that it would be impossible for any Liberal government to hold office on the terms which had of late been conceded to Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone had always been credited with a sensitive earnestness of temper which was commonly believed to have given trouble to his more worldly and easy-going colleagues in the cabinet of Lord Palmerston. He had what Condorcet has happily called an impatient spirit. It was to many people a problem of deep interest to see whether the genius of Mr. Gladstone would prove equal to the trying task of leadership under circumstances of such peculiar difficulty. Tact, according to many, was the quality needed for the work—not genius.

Some new men were coming up on both sides of the political field. They were needed. Many conspicuous figures during former years of debate would be missed

when the new parliament came to meet. Among the new men we have already mentioned Mr. Forster, who had taken a conspicuous part in the debates on the American civil war. Mr. Forster was a man of considerable parliamentary aptitude; a debater, who, though not pretending to eloquence, was argumentative, vigorous, and persuasive. He had practical knowledge of English politics and social affairs, and was thoroughly representative of a very solid body of English public opinion. In the House of Lords the Duke of Argyll was beginning to take a prominent and even a leading place. The Duke of Argyll was still looked upon as a young man in politics. Nothing can be more curious than the manner in which the landmarks of youth and age have of late years been re-arranged in our political life. What would be regarded as approaching to middle-age in ordinary society is now held to be little better than unfledged youth in parliamentary life. It is doubtful whether any advantages of family influence or personal capacity could in our day enable men to lead a house or a party at the age when Pitt and Fox were accepted political chiefs. Human life should indeed have stretched out almost to what are called patriarchal limits in order to give a political leader now an opportunity of enjoying a fairly proportionate tenure of leadership. The Duke of Argyll would have passed as a middle-aged man in ordinary life, but he was looked on by many as a sort of boy in politics. He had, indeed, begun life very soon. At this time he was some forty-three years of age, and he had been a prominent public man for more than twenty years. Lord Houghton, in proposing his health at a public dinner some years ago, said good-humoredly that "the duke was only seventeen years old"—he was in fact nineteen—"when he wrote a pamphlet called 'Advice to the Peers,' and he has gone on advising us ever since." Pursuing the career of his friend, Lord Houghton went on to say that "soon after he got mixed up with ecclesiastical affairs, and was excommunicated." The ecclesiastical controversy in which the Duke of Argyll engaged so early was the famous struggle concerning the freedom of the church of Scotland which resulted in the great secession headed by Dr. Chalmers, and the foundation of the free church. Into this controversy the Duke of Argyll, then Marquis of Lorne, rushed with all the energy of Scottish youth, but in it he main-

tained himself with a good deal of the proverbial Scottish caution. Dr. Chalmers welcomed the young controversialist as an able and important adherent. But the Marquis of Lorne was not prepared to follow the great divine and orator into actual secession. The heirs to dukedoms in Great Britain seldom go very far in the way of dissent. The marquis declined to accept the doctrine of Chalmers, that lay patronage and the spiritual independence of the church were "like oil and water, immiscible." The free church movement went on, and the young marquis drew back. He subsequently vindicated his course, and reviewed the whole question in an essay on the ecclesiastical history of Scotland.

Meanwhile the young controversialist had become Duke of Argyll, on the death of his father in 1847. He did battle in the House of Lords as he had done out of it. He distinguished himself by plunging almost instantaneously into the thick of debate. He very much astonished the staid and formal peers, who had been accustomed to discussion conducted in measured tones and with awful show of deference to age and political standing. The Duke of Argyll spoke upon any and every subject with astonishing fluency, and without the slightest reverence for years and authority. The general impression of the House of Lords for a long time was that youthful audacity, and nothing else, was the chief characteristic of the Duke of Argyll; and for a long time the Duke of Argyll did a good deal to support that impression. He had the temerity before he had been very long in the house to make a sharp personal attack upon Lord Derby. The peers were as much astonished as the spectators round the tilt-yard in "Ivanhoe," when they saw the strange young knight strike with his lance's point the shield of the formidable templar. Lord Derby himself was at first almost bewildered by the unexpected vehemence of his inexperienced opponent. But he soon made up his mind, and bore down upon the Duke of Argyll with all the force of scornful invective which he could summon to his aid. For the hour the Duke of Argyll was as completely overthrown as if he had got in the way of a charge of cavalry. He was in a metaphorical sense left dead on the field. Elderly peers smiled gravely, shook their heads, said they knew how it would be, and congratulated themselves that there was an end of

the audacious young debater. But they were quite mistaken. The Duke of Argyll knew of course that he had been soundly beaten, but he did not care. He got up again, and went on just as if nothing had happened. His courage was not broken; his self-confidence moulted no feather. After awhile he began to show that there was in him more than self-confidence. The House of Lords found that he really knew a great deal and had a wonderfully clear head, and they learned to endure his dogmatic and professorial ways; but he never grew to be popular among them. His style was far too self-assured; his faith in his own superiority to everybody else was too evident to allow of his having many enthusiastic admirers. He soon, however, got into high office. With his rank, his talents, and his energy, such a thing was inevitable. He joined the government of Lord Aberdeen in 1852 as lord privy seal, holding an office of dignity, but no special duties, the occupant of which has only to give his assistance in council and general debate. He was afterward postmaster-general for two or three years. Under Lord Palmerston, in 1859, he became lord privy seal again, and retained that office in the cabinet of Lord Russell.

Mr. Stansfeld was believed to be one of the rising men of the day. He was an advanced Radical, especially known for his sympathies with the movements and the cause of the more energetic of the Italian leaders. He had made a speech during one of the reform debates of 1860 which called forth a high compliment from Mr. Disraeli, who was always ready to welcome new ability and promise on whatever side it displayed itself. He had proposed a resolution in favor of reduction of expenditure when Lord Palmerston was most active in swelling the war costs of the country. The resolution was well supported, and apparently had a fair chance of success, until Lord Palmerston contrived to alarm the house with the idea that if he did not get his way he would resign; and in the eyes of not a few members the resignation of Lord Palmerston appeared to be much the same thing as the coming again of chaos. Mr. Stansfeld, however, became a person of a certain political importance, and in 1863 Lord Palmerston invited him to take office as one of the lords of the admiralty. While he held that office an incident occurred which gave rise to a controversy of rather a curious nature. A

plot was discovered in Paris for the assassination of the emperor of the French. The French government believed, or said they believed, that Mazzini was connected with the plot. Mazzini was a close friend of Mr. Stansfeld, and it appeared was in the habit of having his private letters sent for him under a feigned name to Mr. Stansfeld's house. At the trial of the accused men in Paris, it was stated by the procureur impérial in his speech, that a paper had been found in the possession of one of the prisoners authorizing him to write for money to "Mr. Flowers," at the address of Mr. Stansfeld, in London. Now it seemed that Mazzini's letters were sometimes addressed to him as Mr. "Fiori," or Flowers. After what we have already told in this history concerning the opening of Mazzini's letters in the post office here, it is not very surprising that Mazzini should prefer not to have his letters addressed to his own name. On these facts, however, some members of the House of Commons, Liberals as well as Tories, got up a sort of charge against Mr. Stansfeld. Not that any man in his senses seriously believed that Mr. Stansfeld had anything to do with an assassination plot; nor, indeed, that there was any evidence to show that Mazzini was acquainted with the peculiar designs of the accused persons in this case. Still it seemed a good chance for an attack on the ministry, through Mr. Stansfeld; and no one could deny that there was a certain amount of indiscretion, not to say impropriety, in Mr. Stansfeld's good-natured arrangement with Mazzini. A man holding ministerial office, however subordinate, is not warranted in allowing his house to be the receptacle of secret letters for one engaged, like Mazzini, in revolutionary plots against established governments. Mr. Stansfeld felt himself called on to resign his office; and Lord Palmerston, though at first he politely pressed him to reconsider the resolve, consented after awhile to accept the resignation. Mr. Stansfeld, however, was sure to be invited to take office again, and the whole episode would probably have been soon forgotten if it were not for one odd incident. During the discussions Mr. Disraeli strongly condemned Mr. Stansfeld for his avowed friendship with Mazzini, and reminded the house of a statement made by Mr. Gallenga, an Italian politician and journalist, to the effect that Mazzini once encouraged him, then a young man of wild and extravagant notions, in a design to

kill Charles Albert, king of Sardinia. Mr. Bright came to Mr. Stansfeld's defense in a very kindly and generous speech, made the more effective because of his well-known lack of sympathy with the schemes of revolutionists anywhere. He pointed out that the evidence of Mazzini's distinctly sanctioning regicide was by no means clear, and that Mr. Stansfeld might well be excused if he attached little importance to a story told of Mazzini at such a distant time. Mr. Bright went on good-humoredly to show that high-flown talk about tyrannicide was unfortunately almost a commonplace with a certain class of young rhapsodical political writers, and added that he believed there would be found in a poem called "A Revolutionary Epick," written by Mr. Disraeli himself some five-and-twenty or thirty years before, certain lines of eloquent apostrophe in praise of the slaying of tyrants. Mr. Disraeli rose at once, and with some warmth denied that any such sentiment, or any words suggesting it, could be found in the poem. Mr. Bright, of course, accepted the assurance. He explained that he had never seen the poem himself, but had been positively informed that it contained such a passage, and he withdrew the statement with a handsome apology. Every one supposed the matter would have dropped there. The "Revolutionary Epick" was a piece of metrical bombast, published by Mr. Disraeli a generation before, and forgotten by almost all the living. Mr. Disraeli, however, declared that he attached great importance to the charge made against him, and that he felt bound to refute it by more than a mere denial. He, therefore, published a new edition of the poem, which he dedicated to Lord Stanley, in order to settle the controversy. "I have therefore, thought it," he explains, "the simplest course, and one which might save me trouble hereafter, to publish the 'Revolutionary Epick.' It is printed from the only copy in my possession, and which, with slight exceptions, was corrected in 1837, when, after three years' reflection, I had resolved not only to correct, but to complete the work. The corrections are purely literary." The poem thus republished seemed more a literary curiosity than a work of art. It had a preface which was positively grotesque in its grandiloquence. "It was on the plains of Troy," the writer informed the world, "that I first conceived the idea of this work." On that interesting spot it seems to have occurred

to him for the first time that "the most heroick incident of an heroick age produced in the 'Iliad an Heroick Epick;' thus the consolidation of the most superb of empires produced in the 'Æneid a Political Epick;' the revival of learning and the birth of vernacular genius presented us in the 'Divine Comedy' with a national epick; and the reformation and its consequences called from the rapt lyre of Milton a religious epick." Then the author naturally was led to ask, should the spirit of his time "alone be uncelebrated?" As naturally came the answer that the spirit of Mr. Disraeli's time ought to be celebrated; and that Mr. Disraeli was the man to celebrate it. "Standing upon Asia and gazing upon Europe," the inspiration descended on him. "For me," he exclaimed, "remains the revolutionary epick." There was so much of the youth, not to say of the schoolboy, in these bursts of extraordinary eloquence, that no one could have thought of making any serious accusation against Mr. Disraeli in his graver days, even if the pages of such a poem had been enlivened by some nonsense about tyrannicide. The work, as reprinted, certainly contained no passage to show that the young writer entertained any such opinions. Unfortunately, however, it was found that in the republication the questionable passages had somehow undergone a process of alteration. Very few copies of the original edition were in existence. But the British museum treasured one, and from this it was found that the new version was not quite the same as the original. Thus in the new edition, published specially for the purpose of repelling the charge about tyrannicide, the lines about Brutus were very harmless:

"Rome's strong career  
Was mine; the blow bold Brutus struck, her fate."

But in the original edition it ran thus to a much more audacious note—

"The spirit of her strong career was mine;  
And the bold Brutus but propelled the blow  
Her own and nature's laws alike approved."

There were other slight modifications, too, into which it is not necessary to enter. Enough has been said to

show that, by what we must suppose to have been some unlucky accident, Mr. Disraeli came to publish as a final and complete refutation of the charge founded upon his "Revolutionary Epick" a version of that work which was altered from the original in several passages, and in the passage most important of all. We have spoken of a charge made against Mr. Disraeli; but that is giving by far too serious a name to the good-humored statement made by Mr. Bright. Neither Mr. Bright nor any one else supposed for a moment that Mr. Disraeli ever seriously approved of regicide. Neither Mr. Bright nor any one else would have thought of holding Mr. Disraeli gravely responsible for some youthful rhodomontades published in a forgotten attempt at poetry. All that Mr. Bright apparently meant to say was: "Don't be too rigid in censuring the incautious utterances of men's early and foolish years. Did not you yourself, in a poem published thirty years ago, talk some nonsense about nature's approval of tyrannicide?" The only seriousness given to the matter was when Mr. Disraeli published the new edition for the purpose of finally repudiating the charge, and the new edition was found to have the peculiar passages altered. That was unlucky. If Mr. Disraeli printed from the only copy in his possession, and which he had corrected after three years reflection, it still was a pity he did not leave the disputed passages uncorrected, or restore them to their original shape. The question was not whether after three years' reflection Mr. Disraeli was entitled to alter in 1837 what he had published in 1834. The question was only as to what he had published in 1834. Nor is it easy to understand how, considering what the controversy was about, he could have regarded the corrections as purely literary. We are bound to say, however, that the incident did Mr. Disraeli no particular harm. The English public has always been curiously unwilling to take Mr. Disraeli seriously. The great majority laughed at the whole thing, and made no further account of it.

There were some rising men on the Tory side. Sir Hugh Cairns, afterward lord chancellor and a peer, had fought his way by sheer talent and energy into the front rank of opposition. A lawyer from Belfast, and the son of middle-class parents, he had risen into celebrity and influence while yet he was in the very prime of life. He



was a lawyer whose knowledge of his own craft might fairly be called profound. He was one of the most effective debaters in parliament. His resources of telling argument were almost inexhaustible, and his training at the bar gave him the faculty of making the best at the shortest notice of all the facts he was able to bring to bear on any question of controversy. He showed more than once that he was capable of pouring out an animated and even a passionate invective. An orator in the highest sense he certainly was not. No gleam of imagination softened or brightened his lithe and nervous logic. No deep feeling animated and inspired it. His speeches were arguments not eloquence; instruments not literature. But he was on the whole the greatest political lawyer since Lyndhurst; and he was probably a sounder lawyer than Lyndhurst. He had above all things skill and discretion. He could do much for the aboriginal Tories, if we may use such a word, which they could not do of or for themselves; and his appearance in the front rank of conservatism made it much more formidable than it was before. Like Mr. Disraeli himself, however, Sir Hugh Cairns was an imported auxiliary of Toryism. The Conservative party had always to retain their foreign legion, as the French kings had their Scottish archers, their Swiss guard, or their Irish brigade. In the House of Commons there were very few genuine English Tories capable of sustaining with Mr. Disraeli the brunt of debate. The Conservative leader's most effective adjutants were men like Sir Hugh Cairns, an Irish lawyer; Mr. Whiteside, a voluble, eloquent, sometimes rather boisterous speaker, also an Irishman and a lawyer; Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, a clever Irishman, who had at least been called to the bar. Sir Stafford Northcote was a man of ability, who had had an excellent financial training under no less a teacher than Mr. Gladstone himself. But Sir Stafford Northcote, although a fluent speaker, was not a great debater, and, moreover, he had but little of the genuine Tory in him. He was a man of far too modern a spirit and training to be a genuine Tory. He was not one whit more conservative than most of the Whigs. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, afterward Lord Cranbrook, was a man of ingrained Tory instincts rather than convictions. He was a powerful speaker of the rattling declamatory kind; fluent as the sand in an hour-glass is fluent; stirring as the roll of a

drum is stirring; sometimes dry as the sand and empty as the drum. A man of far higher ability and of really great promise was Lord Robert Cecil, afterward Lord Cranborne, and now Marquis of Salisbury. Lord Robert Cecil was at this time the ablest scion of noble Toryism in the House of Commons. He was younger than Lord Stanley, and he had not Lord Stanley's solidity, caution, or political information. But he had more originality; he had brilliant ideas; he was ready in debate; and he had a positive genius for saying bitter things in the bitterest tone. The younger son of a great peer, he had at one time no apparent chance of succeeding to the title and the estates.

He had accepted honorable poverty, and was glad to help out his means by the use of his very clever pen. He wrote in several publications, it was said; especially in the *Quarterly Review*, the time-honored and somewhat time-worn organ of Toryism; and after awhile certain political articles in the *Quarterly* came to be identified with his name. He was an ultra-Tory; a Tory on principle, who would hear of no compromise. One great object of his political writings appeared to be to denounce Mr. Disraeli, his titular leader, and to warn the party against him. For a long time he was disliked by most persons in the House of Commons. His gestures were ungainly; his voice was singularly unmusical and harsh; and the extraordinary and wanton bitterness of his tongue set the ordinary listeners against him. He seemed to take a positive delight in being gratuitously offensive. One night during the session of 1862 he attacked Mr. Gladstone's financial policy, and likened it to the practice of a "pettifogging attorney." This was felt to be somewhat coarse, and there were many murmurs of disapprobation. Lord Robert Cecil cared as little for disapprobation or decorum as the son of Tisander in the story told by Herodotus, and he went on with his speech unheeding. Next night, when the debate was resumed, Lord Robert rose and said he feared he had on the previous evening uttered some words which might give offense, and which he felt that he could not justify. There were murmurs of encouraging applause; the House of Commons admires nothing more than an unsolicited and manly apology. He had, Lord Robert went on to say, compared the policy of Mr. Gladstone to the practice of a pettifogging attorney. That was language which on

cooler consideration he felt that he ought not to have used, and therefore he begged leave to tender his sincere apology—to the attorneys. There was something so wanton, something so nearly approaching to mere buffoonery in conduct like this, that many men found themselves unable to recognize the really high intellectual qualities that were hidden behind that curious mask of offensive cynicism. Lord Robert Cecil, therefore, although a genuine Tory, or perhaps because he was a genuine Tory, could not as yet be looked upon as a man likely to render great service to his party. He was just as likely to turn against them at some moment of political importance. He would not fall in with the discipline of the party; he would not subject his opinions or his caprices to its supposed interests. He was not made to swear in the words of the leader who then guided the party in the House of Commons. Some men on his own side of the house disliked him. Many feared him; some few admired him; no one regarded him as a trustworthy party man. At this period of its career, as at almost all others, Toryism, as a parliamentary party, lived and won its occasional successes by the guidance and the services of brilliant outsiders. Had it been left to the leadership of genuine Tories it would probably have come to an end long before. At this particular time to which we have now conducted it, it lived and looked upon the earth, had hope of triumph and gains, had a present and a future, only because it allowed itself to be led by men whom it sometimes distrusted; whom, according to some of its own legitimate princelings, it ought to have always disavowed.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### THE TROUBLES IN JAMAICA.

DEMOSTHENES once compared the policy of the Athenians to the manner in which a barbarian boxes. When the barbarian receives a blow his attention is at once turned to the part which has got the stroke, and he hastens to defend it. When he receives another blow in another place his hand is there just too late to stop it. But he never seems to have any idea beforehand of what

he is to expect or whither his attention ought to be directed. The immense variety of imperial, foreign, and colonial interests that England has got involved in compels a reader of English history, and indeed often compels an English statesman, to find himself in much the same condition as this barbarian boxer. It is impossible to know from moment to moment whither the attention will next have to be turned. Lord Russell's government had hardly come into power before they found themselves compelled to illustrate this truth. They had scarcely been installed when it was found that some troublesome business awaited them, and that the trouble as usual had risen in a wholly unthought-of quarter. For some weeks there was hardly anything talked of, we might almost say hardly anything thought of, in England, but the story of the rebellion that had taken place in the island of Jamaica, and the manner in which it had been suppressed and punished. The first story came from English officers and soldiers who had themselves helped to crush or to punish the supposed rebellion. All that the public here could gather from the first narratives that found their way into print was, that a negro insurrection had broken out in Jamaica, and that it had been promptly crushed but that its suppression seemed to have been accompanied by a very carnival of cruelty on the part of the soldiers and their volunteer auxiliaries. Some of the letters sent home reeked with blood. Every writer seemed anxious to credit himself with the most monstrous deeds of cruelty. Accounts were given of *battues* of negroes as if they had been game. Englishmen told with exulting glee of the number of floggings they had ordered or inflicted; of the huts they had burned down; of the men and women they had hanged. "I visited," wrote an English officer to his superior, "several estates and villages. I burned seven houses in all, but did not even see a rebel. On returning to Golden Grove in the evening, sixty-seven prisoners had been sent in by the Maroons. I disposed of as many as possible, but was too tired to continue after dark. On the morning of the 24th, I started for Morant Bay, having first flogged four and hung six rebels. I beg to state that I did not meet a single man upon the road up to Keith Hall; there were a few prisoners here, all of whom I flogged, and then proceeded to Johnstown and Beckford. At the latter place I burned seven houses and

one meeting house; in the former four houses." Another officer writes: "We made a raid with thirty men, flogging nine men and burning their negro houses. We held a court-martial on the prisoners, who amounted to about fifty or sixty. Several were flogged without court-martial, for a simple examination." Then the writer quietly added, "This is a picture of martial law. The soldiers enjoy it; the inhabitants here dread it. If they run on their approach, they are shot for running away." It will be seen that in these letters there is no question of contending with or suppressing an insurrection. The insurrection such as it was, had been suppressed. The writers only give a description of a sort of hunting expedition among the negro inhabitants for the purpose of hanging and flogging. The soldiers are pictured as enjoying the work; the inhabitants, strange to say, are observed to dread it. Their dread would seem to have been unfortunate, although certainly not unnatural; for if they ran away at the approach of the soldiers, the soldiers shot them for their want of confidence. It also became known that a colored member of the Jamaica House of Assembly, a man named George William Gordon, who was suspected of inciting the rebellion, and had surrendered himself at Kingston, was put on board an English war vessel there, taken to Morant Bay, where martial law had been proclaimed, tried by a sort of drumhead court-martial, and instantly hanged.

Such news naturally created a profound sensation in England. The Aborigines' Protection Society, the Anti-slavery Society, and other philanthropic bodies, organized a deputation, immense in its numbers, and of great influence as regarded its composition, to wait on Mr. Cardwell, secretary for the colonies, at the colonial office, and urge on him the necessity of instituting a full inquiry and recalling Governor Eyre. The deputation was so numerous that it had to be received in a great public room, and in deed the whole scene was more like that presented by some large popular meeting than by a deputation to a minister. Mr. Cardwell was so fortunate as to discover a phrase exactly suitable to the occasion. In the course of his reply to the deputation, he laid it down that every one must be careful not to "prejudge" the question. It was pointed out to him that it can hardly be called prejudging if you take

men's own formal and official statements of what they have done, and declare that on their own acknowledgments you are of opinion they have done wrong. The word "prejudge" carried thousands of uncertain minds along with it. All over the country there was one easy form of protest against the proceedings of the philanthropic societies. It was apparently enough to utter the oracular words "we must not prejudge." Mr. Cardwell, however, did so far prejudge the case himself as to suspend Mr. Eyre temporarily from his functions as governor, and to send out a commission of inquiry to investigate the whole history of the rebellion and the repression, and to report to the government. Sir Henry Storks, a man of great ability and high reputation, both as soldier and administrator, who had been lord high commissioner of the Ionian Islands, was summoned from Malta, where he was then governor and commander-in-chief, to take the governorship of Jamaica for the time, and to act as president of the commission. He had associated with him Mr. Russell Gurney, recorder of London, a lawyer of high standing and a distinguished member of parliament; and Mr. J. B. Maule, recorder of Leeds. The philanthropic associations which had taken up the question sent out two barristers to act as counsel for the widowed Mrs. Gordon during the investigation; Mr. Gorrie, afterward chief justice of the Fiji Islands, and Mr. J. Horne Payne. The commission held a very long and careful inquiry. No one could question either the ability or the impartiality of the commissioners. There was a general disposition to receive any report they might make as authoritative and decisive. Meanwhile, however, it need hardly be said that there was no disposition to wait for the story of all that had happened until the commission should have got through its patient inquiries and presented its formal report. The English public have long learned to look to the newspaper press as not only the quickest, but on the whole the most accurate, source of intelligence in all matters of public interest. In this case, as in most others, the newspapers differed in their judgment as to the conduct of the principal actors in the drama; but, in this case, as in all others of late years, each newspaper endeavored to give a correct representation of the facts. Many wild exaggerations had found their way into some newspapers. These came from private letters,

It sometimes happened that men who had been engaged in putting down the insurrection represented themselves as having done deeds of savage vengeance of which they were not really guilty. In some instances it actually turned out that Mr. Cardwell's appeal to the public not to prejudge was warranted even when men deliberately affirmed themselves to have committed the acts which made people at home shudder and exclaim. Such seemed to have been the fervor of repression in Jamaica, that persons were found eager to claim an undue share of its honors by ascribing to themselves detestable excesses which in point of fact they had not committed. It is needless to say that there was exaggeration on the other side, and that affrighted colored people in Jamaica sent forth wild rumors of wholesale massacre which would have been impossible, even in the high fever of repression. As the letters of the accredited correspondents of the newspapers began to arrive, the true state of affairs gradually disclosed itself. There was no substantial discrepancy as to the facts; and the report of the commissioners themselves, when it was received, did not add much to the materials for forming a judgment which the public already possessed, nor probably did it alter many opinions of many men. The history of the events in Jamaica, told in whatever way, must form a sad and shocking narrative. The history of this generation has no such tale to tell where any race of civilized and Christian men was concerned. Had the repression been justifiable in all its details; had the fearful vengeance taken on the wretched island been absolutely necessary to its future tranquility, it still would have been a chapter of history to read with a shudder. It will be seen, however, that excesses were committed which could not possibly plead the excuse of necessity; that some deeds were done which most moralists would say no human authority could warrant, or human peril justify.

Jamaica had long been in a more or less disturbed condition; at least, it had long been liable to periodical fits of disturbance. We have already described in this history some of the difficulties occasioned by the condition of things existing in the island. When giving an account of the Jamaica bill during the Melbourne administration, it was mentioned that the troubles then existing were in fact a survival of the slave system. So were the troubles of

1865. "I suppose there is no island or place in the world," said Chief Justice Cockburn in his celebrated charge to the grand jury at the central criminal court in 1867, "in which there has been so much of insurrection and disorder as the island of Jamaica. There is no place in which the curse which attaches to slavery, both as regards the master and the slave, has been more strikingly illustrated." What we may call the planter class still continued to look on the negroes as an inferior race, hardly entitled to any legal rights. The negroes were naturally only too ready to listen to any denunciations of the planter class, and to put faith in any agitation which promised to secure them some property in the land. The negroes had undoubtedly some serious grievances. It may be that some of the wrongs they complained of were imaginary or were exaggerated. But it is a very safe rule in politics to assume that no population is ever disturbed by wholly imaginary grievances. In such cases, unquestionably, where there is smoke there is fire. Man is by far too lazy an animal to trouble himself much with agitation about purely unreal and non-existing wrongs. The negroes of Jamaica had some very substantial wrongs. They constantly complained that they could not get justice administered to them when any dispute arose between white and black. The government had found that there was some ground for complaints of this kind at the time when it was proposed by the Jamaica bill to suspend the constitution of the island. Perhaps if the Melbourne ministry had been stronger and inspired by greater earnestness of purpose at that time, the calamities and shames of 1865 might have been avoided. In 1865, however, the common causes of dissatisfaction were freshly and further complicated by a dispute about what were called the "back lands." This was a question which might under certain circumstances have arisen in Ireland; at least it will be easily understood by those who are acquainted with the condition of Ireland. Lands belonging to some of the great estates in Jamaica had been allowed to run out of cultivation. They were so neglected by their owners that they were turning into mere bush. The quit-rents due on them to the crown had not been paid for seven years. The negroes were told that if they paid the arrears of quit-rent they might cultivate these lands and enjoy them free of rent. It may be remarked that the



tendency in Jamaica had almost always hitherto been for the crown officials to take the part of the negroes, and for the Jamaica authorities to side with the local magnates. Trusting to the assurance given, some of the negroes paid the arrears of quit-rent and brought the land into cultivation. The agent of one of the estates, however, reasserted the right of his principal, who had not been a consenting party to the arrangement, and he endeavored to evict the negro occupiers of the land. The negroes resisted, and legal proceedings were instituted to turn them out. The legal proceedings were still pending when the events took place which gave occasion to so much controversy. Jamaica was in an unquiet state. "Within the land," as in the territory of the chiefs round Lara's castle, "was many a malcontent, who cursed the tyranny to which he bent." There, too, "frequent broils within had made a path for blood and giant sin, that waited but a signal to begin new havoc such as civil discord blends." On October 7, 1865, some disturbances took place on the occasion of a magisterial meeting at Morant Bay, a small town on the south-east corner of the island. The negroes appeared to be in an excited state, and many persons believed that an outbreak was at hand. An application was made to the governor for military assistance. The governor of Jamaica was Mr. Edward John Eyre, who had been a successful explorer in central, west, and southern Australia, had acted as resident magistrate and protector of aborigines in the region of the Lower Murray in Australia, and had afterward been lieutenant-governor of New Zealand, of the Leeward Islands, and of other places. All Mr. Eyre's dealings with native races up to this time would seem to have earned for him the reputation of a just and humane man. The governor despatched a small military force by sea to the scene of the expected disturbances. Warrants had been issued meanwhile by the custos or chief magistrate of the parish in which Morant Bay is situated, for the arrest of some of the persons who had taken part in the previous disturbances—which, it may be stated, had for their object the rescue of a man on trial for a trifling offense. When the warrants were about to be put into execution, resistance by force was offered. In particular, the attempt to arrest a leading negro agitator, named Paul Bogle, was strenuously and successfully opposed. The

police were overpowered, and some were beaten, and others compelled to swear that they would not interfere with the negroes. On the 11th the negroes, armed with sticks, and the "cutlasses" used in the work of the sugar-cane fields, assembled in considerable numbers in the square of the court house in Morant Bay. The magistrates were holding a meeting there. The mob made for the court house; the local volunteer force came to the help of the magistrates. The riot act was being read when some stones were thrown. The volunteers fired, and some negroes were seen to fall. Then the rioters attacked the court house. The volunteers were few in number, and were easily overpowered; the court house was set on fire; eighteen persons, the custos among them, were killed, and about thirty were wounded; and a sort of incoherent insurrection suddenly spread itself over the neighborhood. The moment, however, that the soldiers sent by the governor, at first only one hundred in number, arrived upon the scene of disturbance, the insurrection collapsed and vanished. There never was the slightest attempt made by the rioters to keep the field against the troops. The soldiers had not in a single instance to do any fighting. The only business left for them was to hunt out supposed rebels and bring them before the military tribunals. So evanescent was the whole movement that it is to this day a matter of dispute whether there was any rebellion at all, properly so called; whether there was any organized attempt at insurrection; or whether the disturbances were not the extemporaneous work of a discontented and turbulent mob, whose rush to rescue some of their friends expanded suddenly into an effort to wreak old grievances on the nearest representatives of authority.

On October 13th, the governor proclaimed the whole of the county of Surrey, with the exception of the city of Kingston, under martial law. Jamaica is divided into three counties; Surrey covering the eastern and southern portion, including the region of the Blue Mountains, the towns of Port Antonio and Morant Bay, and the considerable city of Kingston, with its population of some thirty thousand. Middlesex comprehends the central part of the island, and contains Spanish Town, then the seat of government. The western part of the island is the county of Cornwall. At this time Jamaica was ruled by the governor

and council, and the house of assembly. The council was composed of twelve persons, nominated, like the governor, by the crown; and the house of assembly consisted of forty-five members elected by the freeholders of each parish. The council had the place of an upper house; the assembly was the representative chamber. Among the members of the assembly was a colored man of some education and property, George William Gordon. Gordon was a Baptist by religion, and had in him a good deal of the fanatical earnestness of the field-preacher. He was a vehement agitator and a devoted advocate of what he considered to be the rights of the negroes. He appears to have had a certain amount of eloquence, partly of the conventicle and partly of the stump. He was just the sort of man to make himself a nuisance to white colonists and officials who wanted to have everything their own way. Indeed, he belonged to that order of men who are almost sure to be always found in opposition to officialism of any kind. Such a man may do mischief sometimes, but it is certain that out of his very restlessness and troublesomeness he often does good. No really sensible politician would like to see a legislative assembly of any kind without some men of the type of Gordon representing the check of perpetual opposition. On the other hand, Gordon was exactly the sort of person in the treatment of whom a wise authority would be particularly cautious, in order not to allow its own prejudices to operate to his injury and the injury of political justice together. Gordon was in constant disputes with the authorities, and with Governor Eyre himself. He had been a magistrate, but was dismissed from the magistracy in consequence of the alleged violence of his language in making accusations against another justice. He had taken some part in getting up meetings of the colored population; he had made many appeals to the colonial office in London against this or that act on the part of the governor or the council, or both. He had been appointed churchwarden, but was declared disqualified for the office in consequence of his having become a "Native Baptist;" and he had brought an action to recover what he held to be his rights. He had come to hold the position of champion of the rights and claims of the black man against the white. He was a sort of constitutional opposition in himself. The governor seems to have at

once adopted the conclusion urged on him by others, that Gordon was at the bottom of the insurrectionary movement. In the historical sense he may no doubt be regarded as in some measure the cause of any disturbance, whether insurrectionary or not, which broke out. A man who tells people they are wronged is to that extent the cause of any disturbance which may come of an attempt to get their wrongs righted. A great many persons declared that Fox was the author of the Irish rebellion of 1798, because he had helped to show that the Irish people had wrongs. In this sense every man who agitates for reform anywhere is responsible should any rebellious movement take place; and the only good citizen is he who approves of all that is done by authority, and never uplifts the voice of opposition to anything. Gordon was a very energetic agitator, and he probably had some sense of self-importance in his agitation; but we entirely agree with Chief Justice Cockburn in believing that, "so far from there being any evidence to prove that Mr. Gordon intended this insurrection and rebellion, the evidence, as well as the probability of the case, appears to be exactly the other way." There does not seem to have been one particle of evidence to connect Gordon with a rebellious movement more than there would have been to condemn Mr. Bright as a promoter of rebellion, if the workingmen of the reform period, soon to be mentioned in this history, had been drawn into some fatal conflict with the police. In each case it might have been said that only for the agitator who denounced the supposed grievance all would have been quiet; and in neither case was there anything more to be said which could connect the agitator with the disturbance. Mr. Eyre and his advisers, however, had made up their minds that Gordon was the leader of a rebellious conspiracy. They took a course with regard to him which could hardly be excused if he were the self-confessed leader of as formidable a conspiracy as ever endangered the safety of a state.

We have mentioned the fact, that in proclaiming the county of Surrey under martial law, Mr. Eyre had specially excepted the city of Kingston. Mr. Gordon lived near Kingston, and had a place of business in the city; and he seems to have been there attending to his business, as usual, during the days while the disturbances were going on. The governor ordered a warrant to be issued for Gor-

don's arrest. When this fact became known to Gordon he went to the house of the general in command of the forces at Kingston and gave himself up. The governor had him put at once on board a war steamer, and conveyed to Morant Bay. Having given himself up in a place where martial law did not exist, where the ordinary courts were open, and where, therefore, he would have been tried with all the forms and safeguards of the civil law, he was purposely carried away to a place which had been put under martial law. Here an extraordinary sort of court-martial was sitting. It was composed of two young navy lieutenants and an ensign in one of her majesty's West India regiments. Gordon was hurried before this grotesque tribunal, charged with high treason, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The sentence was approved by the officer in command of the troops sent to Morant Bay. It was then submitted to the governor, and approved by him also. It was carried into effect without much delay. The day following Gordon's conviction was Sunday, and it was not thought seemly to hang a man on the Sabbath. He was allowed, therefore, to live over that day. On the morning of Monday, October 23rd, Gordon was hanged. He bore his fate with great heroism, and wrote just before his death a letter to his wife, which is full of pathos in its simple and dignified manliness. He died protesting his innocence of any share in disloyal conspiracy or insurrectionary purpose.

The whole of the proceedings connected with the trial of Gordon were absolutely illegal: they were illegal from first to last. It is almost impossible to conceive of any transaction more entirely unlawful. Every step in it was a separate outrage on law. But for its tragic end the whole affair would seem to belong to the domain of burlesque rather than to that of sober history. The act which conveyed Mr. Gordon from the protection of civil law to the authority of a drumhead court-martial was grossly illegal. The tribunal was constituted in curious defiance of law and precedent. It is contrary to all authority to form a court-martial by mixing together the officers of the two different services. It was an unauthorized tribunal, however, even if considered as only a military court-martial, or only a naval court-martial. Whatever way we take it, it was irregular and illegal. It would have

been so had all its members been soldiers, or had all been sailors. Care seemed to have been taken so to constitute it that it must in any case be illegal. The prisoner thus brought by unlawful means before an illegal tribunal was tried upon testimony taken in ludicrous opposition to all the rules of evidence. Chief Justice Cockburn says: "After the most careful perusal of the evidence which was adduced against him, I come irresistibly to the conclusion that if the man had been tried upon that evidence"—and here the chief justice checked himself and said—"I must correct myself. He could not have been tried upon that evidence; I was going too far, a great deal too far, in assuming that he could. He could not have been tried upon that evidence. No competent judge acquainted with the duties of his office could have received that evidence. Three-fourths, I had almost said nine-tenths, of the evidence upon which that man was convicted and sentenced to death was evidence, which, according to no known rules—not only of ordinary law, but of military law—according to no rules of right or justice could possibly have been admitted; and it never would have been admitted if a competent judge had presided, or if there had been the advantage of a military officer of any experience in the practice of courts-martial." Such as the evidence was, however, compounded of scraps of the paltriest hearsay, and of things said when the prisoner was not present; of depositions made apparently to supplement evidence given before, and not thought strong enough; strengthened probably in the hope of thus purchasing the safety of the witnesses, and on which the witnesses were never cross-examined—such as the evidence was, supposing it admissible, supposing it trustworthy, supposing it true beyond all possibility of question, yet the chief justice was convinced that it testified rather to the innocence than to the guilt of the prisoner. By such a court, on such evidence, Gordon was put to death.

Meanwhile the carnival of repression was going on. The insurrection, or whatever the movement was which broke out on October 11th, was over long before. It never offered the slightest resistance to the soldiers. It never showed itself to them. An armed insurgent was never seen by them. Nevertheless, for weeks after, the hangings, the floggings, the burnings of houses, were kept

up. Men were hanged, women were flogged merely "suspect of being suspect." Many were flogged or hanged for no particular reason but that they happened to come in the way of men who were in a humor for flogging and hanging. Women—to be sure they were only colored women—were stripped and scourged by the saviors of society with all the delight which a savage village population of the middle ages might have felt in torturing witches. The report of the royal commissioners stated that four-hundred and thirty-nine persons were put to death, and that over six hundred, including many women, were flogged, some under circumstances of revolting cruelty. Cats made of piano-wire were in some instances used for the better effect of flagellation. Some of the scourges were shown to the commissioners, who observe that it is "painful to think that any man should have used such an instrument for the torturing of his fellow-creatures." The commissioners summed up their report by declaring that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were reckless, and in some cases positively barbarous; that the burning of one thousand houses was wanton and cruel." The fury at last spent itself. *Lassata necdum satiata.*

When the story reached England in clear and trustworthy form, two antagonistic parties were instantly formed. The extreme on the one side glorified governor Eyre, and held that by his prompt action he had saved the white population of Jamaica from all the horrors of triumphant negro insurrection. The extreme on the other side denounced him as a mere fiend. The majority on both sides were more reasonable; but the difference between them was only less wide. An association called the Jamaica Committee was formed for the avowed purpose of seeing that justice was done. It comprised some of the most illustrious Englishmen. Men became members of that committee who had never taken part in public agitation of any kind before. Another association was founded, on the opposite side, for the purpose of sustaining Governor Eyre, and it must be owned that it too had great names. Mr. Mill may be said to have led the one side, and Mr. Carlyle the other. The natural bent of each man's genius and temper turned him to the side of the Jamaica negroes, or of the Jamaica governor. Mr. Tennyson, Mr.

Kingsley, Mr. Ruskin, followed Mr. Carlyle; we know now that Mr. Dickens was of the same way of thinking. Mr. Herbert Spencer, Professor Huxley, Mr. Goldwin Smith, were in agreement with Mr. Mill. We have purposely omitted the names of politicians, whom any reader can range without difficulty according to his knowledge of their career and ways of thinking. No one needs to be told that Mr. Bright took the side of the oppressed, and Mr. Disraeli that of authority. The case on either side may be briefly stated. We put out of consideration altogether the position taken up by only too many of those who proclaimed themselves advocates of Mr. Eyre, and who volunteered a line of defense on his behalf for which he would probably have given them little thanks. That was what some one at the time in blunt expressive words described as the "damned nigger" principle; the principle that any sort of treatment is good enough for negroes, and generally speaking serves them right. This kind of argument was very effective among considerable classes of persons, but it was not allowed to make its appearance much in public debate. In the House of Commons it never, at all events, got higher than the smoking-room; the reporters in the gallery were not allowed any opportunity of recording it. Perhaps, on the other side, we may fairly put out of our consideration the view of those who, having from the most benevolent motives identified themselves all their lives long with the cause of oppressed negroes, fell instinctively and at once into the ranks of any movement professing to defend a negro population. The more reasonable of those who supported Mr. Eyre did not concern themselves to vindicate the legality or even the justice of all that he had done. Lord Carnarvon, the new colonial secretary, frankly admitted that in his opinion acts of cruelty and injustice had been done during and after the rebellion. Many were quite willing to admit that the trial of Gordon had been irregular, and that his hasty execution was to be deplored. What they did contend was, that at a terrible crisis Mr. Eyre did the best he could; that he was confronted with the fearful possibility of a negro insurrection, where the whites were not one in twenty of the blacks, and where a moment's success to the rebels might have put the life of every white man, and the honor of every white woman, at the mercy of furious mobs of savage negroes.



“Say what you will,” they urged, “he stamped out the rebellion. He acted illegally, because there was no time for being legal. He sanctioned unmerciful deeds, because he had to choose between mercy to murderous blacks and mercy to loyal and innocent whites. You complain of the flogging of black women; he was thinking of the honor and the lives of white women. He crushed the rebellion utterly; he positively frightened it into submission. He was dealing with savages; he took the only steps which could have saved the loyal people he had in charge from an orgy of cruelty and licentiousness. Had he stayed his hand a moment all was lost. Many things were done which we deplore; which we would not have done; which he would not have done, or sanctioned, if there were time to balance claims and consider nicely individual rights. But he saved the white population, and put down the insurrection; and we feel gratitude to him first of all.”

Such is, we think, a fair statement of the case relied upon by the more reasonable of the defenders of Mr. Eyre. To this the opposite party answered that in fact the insurrection, supposing it to have been an insurrection, was all over before the floggings, the hangings, and the burnings set in. Not merely were the troops masters of the field, but there was no armed enemy anywhere to be seen in the field or out of it. They contended that men are not warranted in inflicting wholesale and hideous punishments merely in order to strike such terror as may prevent the possibility of any future disturbance. As an illustration of the curious ethical principles which the hour called forth, it may be mentioned that one of the best-instructed and ablest of the London journals distinctly contended that excess of punishment would be fully justified as a means of preventing further outbreaks. “Consider,” such was the argument, “what the horrors of a successful outbreak in Jamaica might be, or even of an outbreak successful for a few days, consider what blood its repression would cost even to the negroes themselves; and then say whether any one ought to shrink from inflicting a few superfluous floggings and hangings if these would help to strike terror, and make new rebellion impossible? Even the flogging of women—disagreeable work, no doubt, for English soldiers to have to do—if it struck terror into their husbands and brothers, and thus discouraged rebel-

lion, would it too not be justified?" One cannot better deal with this argument than by pushing it just a little further. Suppose the burning alive of a few women and children seemed likely to have a deterrent effect on disloyal husbands and fathers generally, would it not be well to light the pile? What would the torture and death of a score or so of women and children be when compared with the bloodshed which such a timely example might avert? Yet any sane man would answer that rather than that he would brave any risk; and so we get to the end of the argument at once. We have only arrived at an acknowledgment of the fact that the repression of insurrection, like everything on earth, has its restraining moral code, which custom and civilization, if there were nothing else, must be allowed to establish. The right of Englishmen to rule in Jamaica is a right which has to be exercised with, and not without, regard for human feelings and Christian laws. Not a few persons endeavored to satisfy their own and the public conscience by praising the virtues of Governor Eyre's career, and casting aspersions on the character of the unfortunate Gordon. Professor Huxley disposed once for all that sort of argument by the quiet remark that he knew of no law authorizing virtuous persons as such to put to death less virtuous persons as such.

The report of the commissioners was made in April, 1866. It declared in substance that the disturbances had their immediate origin in a planned resistance to authority, arising partly out of a desire to obtain the land free of rent, and partly out of the want of confidence felt by the laboring class in the tribunals by which most of the disputes affecting their interests were decided; that the disturbance spread rapidly, and that Mr. Eyre deserved praise for the skill and vigor with which he had stopped it in the beginning; but that martial law was kept in force too long; that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were barbarous, and the burnings wanton and cruel; that although it was probable that Gordon, by his writings and speeches, had done much to bring about excitement and discontent, and thus rendered insurrection possible, yet there was no sufficient proof of his complicity in the outbreak, or in any organized conspiracy against the government; and, indeed, that there was no widespread

conspiracy of any kind. Of course this finished Mr. Eyre's career as a colonial governor. A new governor, Sir J. P. Grant, was sent out to Jamaica, and a new constitution was given to the island. The Jamaica committee, however, did not let the matter drop there. They first called upon the attorney-general to take proceedings against Mr. Eyre and some of his subordinates. The government had, meanwhile, passed into Conservative hands, in consequence of events which have yet to be told; and the attorney-general declined to prosecute. Probably a Liberal attorney-general would have done just the same thing. Then the Jamaica committee decided on prosecuting Mr. Eyre and his subordinates themselves. They took various proceedings, but in every case with the same result. We need not go into the history of these proceedings, and the many controversies, legal and otherwise, which they occasioned. The bills of indictment never got beyond the grand jury stage. The grand jury always threw them out. On one memorable occasion the attempt gave the lord chief justice of England an opportunity of delivering the charge to the grand jury from which we have already cited some passages: a charge entitled to the rank of an historical declaration of the law of England, and the limits of the military power even in cases of insurrection. Mr. Carlyle found great fault with the chief justice for having merely laid down the law of England. "Lordship," he wrote, "if you were to speak for six hundred years, instead of six hours, you would only prove the more to us that, unwritten if you will, but real and fundamental, anterior to all written laws and first making written laws possible, there must have been, and is, and will be, coeval with human society from its first beginnings to its ultimate end, an actual martial law of more validity than any other law whatever." The business of the lord chief justice, however, was not to go in philosophical quest of those higher laws of which Mr. Carlyle assumed to be the interpreter. His was the humbler but more practical part to expound the laws of England, and he did his duty.

The prosecutions can hardly be said to have been without use which gave opportunity for this most important exposition from such high authority. But they had no effect as against Mr. Eyre. Even the chief justice, who exposed with such just severity the monstrous misuse of

power which had been seen in Jamaica, still left it to the grand jury to say whether after all—considering the state of things that prevailed in the island, the sudden danger, the consternation, and the confusion—the proceedings of the authorities, however mistaken were not done honestly and faithfully in what was believed to be the proper administration of justice. After many discussions in parliament, the government in 1872—once again a Liberal government—decided on paying Mr. Eyre the expenses to which he had been put in defending himself against the various prosecutions; and the House of Commons, after a long debate, agreed to the vote by a large majority. The Jamaica committee were denounced by many voices, and in very unmeasured language, for what they had done. Yet no public body ever were urged on to an unpopular course by purer motives than those which influenced Mr. Mill and his associates. They were filled with the same spirit of generous humanity which animated Burke when he pressed the impeachment against Warren Hastings. They were sustained by a desire to secure the rights of British subjects for a despised and maltreated negro population. They were inspired with a longing to cleanse the name of England from the stain of a share in the abominations of that unexampled repression. Yet we do not think, on the whole, that there was any failure of justice. A career full of bright promise was cut short for Mr. Eyre, and for some of his subordinates as well; and no one accused Mr. Eyre personally of anything worse than a fury of mistaken zeal. The deeds which were done by his authority, or to which, when they were done, he gave his authority's sanction, were branded with such infamy that it is almost impossible such things could ever be done again in England's name. Even those who excused under the circumstances the men by whom the deeds were done, had seldom a word to say in defense of the acts themselves. The cruelties of that saturnalia of vengeance are absolutely without parallel in the history of our times; perhaps the very horror they inspired, the very shame of the few arguments employed to defend them, may make for mercy in the future. The one strong argument for severity, on which so many relied when upholding the acts of Mr. Eyre, is curiously confuted by the history of Jamaica itself. That argument was, that severity of an extraordinary kind

was necessary to prevent the repetition of rebellion. Rigor of repression had been tried long enough in Jamaica without producing any such effect. During one hundred and fifty years there had been about thirty insurrections, in some of which the measures of repression employed were sweeping and stern enough to have shaken the nerves of a Couthon and disturbed the conscience of a Claverhouse. The chief justice declared that there was not a stone in the island of Jamaica which, if the rains of heaven had not washed off from it the stains of blood, might not have borne terrible witness to the manner in which martial law had been exercised for the suppression of native discontent. The deeds, therefore, that were under the authority of Mr. Eyre found no plea to excuse them in the history of the past. Such policy had been tried again and again, and had failed. The man who tried it again in 1865 undertook the responsibility of defying the authority of experience, as well as that of constitutional and moral law.

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## CHAPTER L.

### DRIVEN BACK ACROSS THE RUBICON.

THE queen opened the new parliament in person. She then performed the ceremony for the first time since the death of the prince consort. The speech from the throne contained a paragraph which announced that her majesty had directed that information should be procured in reference to the right of voting in the election of members of parliament, and that when the information was complete, "the attention of parliament will be called to the result thus obtained, with a view to such improvements in the laws which regulate the right of voting in the election of members of the House of Commons as may tend to strengthen our free institutions and conduce to the public welfare." Some announcement on the subject of reform was expected by every one. Nobody could have had any doubt that the new government would at once bring forward some measure to extend the franchise. The only surprise felt was perhaps at the cautions and limited way in which the proposed measure was indicated in the royal speech. Some of the more extreme reformers thought there was some-

thing ominous in this way of opening the question. A mere promise to obtain information on the subject of the franchise appeared to be minimizing as much as possible the importance of the whole subject. Besides, it was asked, what information is required more than we have already? Is this to be merely an investigation as to the number of persons whom this or that scale of franchise would add to the constituencies? Is the character of the reform to be decided by the mere addition which it would make to the voters' lists rather than by the political principles which an extended franchise represents? Is there to be what Burke calls "a low-minded inquisition into numbers," in order that too many Englishmen should not be allowed the privilege of a vote?

There was something ominous, therefore, in the manner in which the first mention of the new reform bill was received, as well as in the terms of the announcement. Many circumstances too made the time unpropitious for such an undertaking. The cattle plague had broken out toward the close of the previous year, and had spread with most alarming rapidity. At the end of 1865 it was announced that about eighty thousand cattle had been attacked by the disease, of which some forty thousand had died. From six thousand to eight thousand animals were dying every week. The government, the cattle-owners, and the scientific men, were much occupied in devising plans for the restriction of the malady. Some keen controversy had arisen over the government proposals for making good the losses of the cattle-owners whose animals had to be killed in obedience to official orders to prevent the spread of disease. There were already rumors of the approach of that financial distress which was to break out shortly in disastrous commercial panic. Cholera was believed to be traveling ominously westward. There were threatened disturbances in Ireland and alarms about a gigantic Fenian conspiracy. It did not need to be particularly keen-eyed to foresee that there was likely soon to be a collision of irreconcilable interests on the continent. There was uneasiness about Jamaica; there was uneasiness about certain English men and women who were detained as prisoners by Theodore, king of Abyssinia. Moreover the parliament had only just been elected, and a reform bill would mean a speedy dissolution, with a renewal of

expense and trouble to the members of the House of Commons. Certainly the time did not seem tempting for a sudden revival of the reform controversy which had been allowed to sleep in a sort of Kyffhäuser cavern during the later years of Lord Palmerston's life.

Many Conservatives did not believe that the studied moderation of the announcement in the queen's speech could really be taken as evidence of a moderate intention on the part of the ministry. While Radicals generally insisted that the strength of the old Whig party, "the dukes," as the phrase went, had been successfully exerted to compel a compromise and keep Mr. Gladstone down, most of the Tories would have it that Mr. Gladstone now had got it all his own way, and that the cautious vagueness of the queen's speech would only prove to be the prelude to very decisive and alarming changes in the constitution. Not since the introduction by Lord John Russell of the measure which became law in 1832 had a reform bill been expected in England with so much curiosity, with so much alarm, with so much disposition to a foregone conclusion of disappointment. On March 12th Mr. Gladstone introduced the bill. His speech was eloquent; but the House of Commons was not stirred. It was evident at once that the proposed measure was only a compromise; and a compromise of the most unattractive kind. The substance of the government scheme may be explained in a single sentence. The bill proposed to reduce the county franchise from fifty pounds to fourteen pounds, and the borough franchise from ten to seven pounds. There was a savings bank franchise, and a lodger franchise, but we need not discuss smaller details and qualifying provisions. The borough franchise of course was the central question in any reform measure; and this was to be reduced by three pounds. The man who could be enthusiastic over such a reform must have been a person whose enthusiasm was scarcely worth arousing. The peculiarity of the situation was, that without a genuine popular enthusiasm nothing could be done. The House of Commons as a whole did not want reform. For one obvious reason the house had only just been elected; members had spent money and taken much trouble; and they did not like the idea of having to encounter the risk and expense all over again almost immediately. All the Conservatives were of course

openly and consistently opposed to reform; not a few of the professing Liberals secretly detested it. These latter would accept it and try to put on an appearance of welcoming it if popular excitement and the demeanor of the government showed that they must be for it or against it. Only a small number of men in the house were genuine in their anxiety for immediate change; and of these the majority were too earnest and extreme to care for a reform which only meant a reduction of the borough franchise from ten pounds to seven pounds. It seemed a ridiculous anticlimax, after all the indignant eloquence about "unenfranchised millions," to come down to a scheme for enfranchising a few hundreds here and there. It was hard for ordinary minds to understand that a ten pounds franchise meant servitude and shame, but a seven pounds franchise was national liberty and salvation. All this for three pounds was a little too much for plain people to comprehend. The bill was founded on no particular principle; it merely said, "we have at present a certain scale of franchise; let us make it a little lower, and our successors, if they feel inclined, can keep on lowering it." No well-defined basis was reached; there seemed no reason why, if such a bill had been passed, some politician might not move the session after for a bill to reduce the franchise a pound or two lower. Absolute finality in politics is of course unattainable, but a statesman would do well to see at least that a distinct and secure ledge is reached in his descent. He ought not to be content to slip a little way down today, and leave chance to decide whether he may not have to slip a little way further to-morrow.

The announcement made by the government had only what is called in theatrical circles a *succès d'estime*. Those who believed in the sincerity and high purpose of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and who therefore assumed that if they said this was all they could do there was nothing else to be done—these supported the bill. Mr. Bright supported it; somewhat coldly at first, but afterward, when warmed by the glow of debate and of opposition, with all his wonted power. It was evident, however, that he was supporting Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone rather than their reform bill. Mr. Mill supported the bill; partly no doubt for the same reason, and partly because it had the support of Mr. Bright. But it would have been



hard to find any one who said that he really cared much about the measure itself, or that it was the sort of thing he would have proposed if he had his way. There were public meetings got up of course in support of the bill, and the agitation naturally gathered heat as it went on. Mr. Gladstone became for a time a popular agitator on behalf of his measure, and stumped the country during the Easter holidays. It was during this political campaign that he made the famous speech in Liverpool, in which he announced that the government had passed the Rubicon; had broken the bridge and burned the boats behind them. He truly had done so. His career was to be thenceforward as the path of an arrow in the direction of popular reform; but his government had to recross the Rubicon; to make use of the broken bridge somehow for the purposes of retreat.

Before, however, the delivery of this celebrated speech, the defects of the bill, and the lack of public interest in it, had produced their natural effect in the House of Commons. The moment it was evident that the public, as a whole, were not enthusiastic about the measure, the House of Commons began to feel that it could do as it pleased in the matter. It may seem rather surprising now that the Conservatives, or at least those of them who had foresight enough to know that some manner of change was inevitable, did not accept this trivial and harmless measure, and so have done with the unwelcome subject for some time to come. Many of the Conservatives, however, were not only opposed to all reform of the suffrage on principle, but were still under the firm belief that they could stave it off for their time. Others there were who honestly believed that if a change were inevitable it would be better for the good of the country that it should be something in the nature of a permanent settlement, and that there should not be a periodical revival of agitation incessantly perplexing the public mind. Others, too, no doubt, saw even already that there would be partisan chances secured by embarrassing the government anyhow. Therefore the Conservatives as a man opposed the measure; but they had allies. Day after day saw new secessions of emboldened Whigs and half-hearted Liberals. The Thanes were flying from the side of the government. Mr. Gladstone had announced his intention also to bring in a bill dealing

with the redistribution of seats; but he preferred to take this after the reform bill. At once he was encountered by an amendment from his own side of the house, and from very powerful representatives of Whig family interest, calling on him to take the redistribution scheme at once; to alter the rental to a rating franchise; to do all manner of things calculated to change the nature of the bill, or to interfere with the chances of its being passed into law. The ministerial side of the house was fast becoming demoralized. The Liberal party was breaking up into mutinous camps and unmanageable coteries.

The fate of this unhappy bill is not now a matter of great historical importance. Far more interesting than the process of its defeat is the memory of the eloquence by which it was assailed and defended. One reputation sprang into light with these memorable debates. Mr. Robert Lowe was the hero of the opposition that fought against the bill. He was the Achilles of the anti-reformers. His attacks on the government had, of course, all the more piquancy that they came from a Liberal, and one who had held office in two Liberal administrations. The Tory benches shouted and screamed with delight, as in speech after speech of admirable freshness and vigor Mr. Lowe poured his scathing sarcasms in upon the bill and its authors. Even their own leader and champion, Mr. Disraeli, became of comparatively small account with the Tories when they heard Mr. Lowe's invectives against their enemies. Much of Mr. Lowe's success was undoubtedly due to the manner in which he hit the tone and temper of the Conservatives and of the disaffected Whigs. Applause and admiration are contagious in the House of Commons. When a great number of voices join in cheers and in praise, other voices are caught by the attraction, and cheer and praise out of sheer infection of sympathy. It is needless to say that the applause reacts upon the orator. The more he feels that the house admires him, the more likely he is to make himself worthy of the admiration. The occasion told on Mr. Lowe. His form seemed, metaphorically at least, to grow greater and grander on that scene, as the enthusiasm of his admirers waxed and heated. Certainly he never after that time made any great mark by his speeches, or won back any of the fame as an orator which was his during that short and to him splendid

period. But the speeches themselves were masterly as mere literary productions. Not many men could have fewer physical qualifications for success in oratory than Mr. Lowe. He had an awkward and ungainly presence; his gestures were angular and ungraceful; his voice was harsh and rasping; his articulation was so imperfect that he became now and then almost unintelligible; his sight was so short that when he had to read a passage or extract of any kind, he could only puzzle over its contents in a painful and blundering way, even with the paper held up close to his eyes; and his memory was not good enough to allow him to quote anything without the help of documents. How, it may be asked in wonder, was such a speaker as this to contend in eloquence with the torrent-like fluency, the splendid diction, the silver-trumpet voice of Gladstone; or with the thrilling vibrations of Bright's noble eloquence, now penetrating in its pathos, and now irresistible in its humor? Even those who well remember these great debates may ask themselves in unsatisfied wonder the same question now. It is certain that Mr. Lowe has not the most distant claim to be ranked as an orator with Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. Yet it is equally certain that he did for that season stand up against each of them, against them both; against them both at their very best; and that he held his own.

Mr. Disraeli was thrown completely into the shade. Mr. Disraeli was not, it is said, much put out by this. He listened quietly, perhaps even contemptuously, looking upon the whole episode as one destined to pass quickly away. He did not believe that Mr. Lowe was likely to be a peer of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright—or of himself—in debate. "You know I never made much of Lowe," he said in conversation with a political opponent some years after, and when Mr. Lowe's eloquence had already become only a memory. But for the time Mr. Lowe was the master spirit of the opposition to the reform bill. In sparkling sentences, full of classical allusion and of illustrations drawn from all manner of literatures, he denounced and satirized demagogues, democratic governments, and every influence that tended to bring about any political condition which allowed of an ominous comparison with something in Athenian history. Reduced to their logical and philosophical meaning, Mr. Lowe's speeches were really nothing but

arguments for that immemorial object of desire, the government by the wise and good. They had nothing in particular to do with the small question in domestic legislation, as to whether seven pounds or ten pounds was to be the limit of a borough franchise. They would have been just as effective if used in favor of an existing seven pounds qualification, and against a proposed qualification of six pounds fifteen shillings. Seven pounds, it might have been insisted, was just the low-water mark of the wise and good; any lower we shall have the rule of the unwise and the wicked. Nor did Mr. Lowe show how, if the fierce wave of democracy was rising in such terrible might, it could be dammed out by the retention of a ten pounds franchise. His alarms and his portents were in amazing contrast to his proposed measures of safety. He hoped to bind Leviathan with packthread. Alaric was at the gates; Mr. Lowe's last hope was in the power of the court of chancery to serve the invader with an injunction. The simple-minded deputies who during the *coup d'état* in Paris went forth to meet the soldiers of the usurper with their scarfs of office, in the belief that they could thus restrain them from violation of the constitutional law, were on a philosophical level with Mr. Lowe when he proclaimed to England that her ancient system must fall into cureless ruin and become the shame and scandal of all time, if she abandoned her last rampart, the ten pounds franchise. But Mr. Lowe was embodying in brilliant sarcasm and vivid paradox the fears, prejudices, and spites, the honest dislikes and solid objections of a large proportion of English society, Trades' unions, strikes, rumors of political disaffection in Ireland, the angry and extravagant words of artisan orators and agitators in London; a steady hatred of all American principles; a certain disappointment that the American republic had not fulfilled most men's predictions and gone to pieces—these and various other feelings combined to make a great many Englishmen particularly hostile to any proposals for political reform at that moment. Mr. Lowe was not merely the mouthpiece of all these sentiments, but he gave what seemed to be an overwhelming philosophical argument to prove their wisdom and justice. The conservatives made a hero, and even an idol, of him. Shrewd old members of the party, who ought to have known better, were heard to declare that he was not only the greatest

orator, but even the greatest statesman, of the day. In truth, Mr. Lowe was neither orator nor statesman. He had some of the gifts which are needed to make a man an orator, but hardly any of those which constitute a statesman. He was a literary man and a scholar, who had a happy knack of saying bitter things in an epigrammatic way; he really hated the reform bill, toward which Mr. Disraeli probably felt no emotion whatever, and he started into prominence as an anti-reformer just at the right moment to suit the Conservatives and embarrass and dismay the Liberal party. He was greatly detested for a time among the working classes, for whose benefit the measure was chiefly introduced. He not only spoke out with cynical frankness his own opinion of the merits and morals of the people "who live in these small houses," but he implied that all the other members of the house held the same opinion, if they would only venture to give it a tongue. He was once or twice mobbed in the streets; he was strongly disliked and dreaded for the hour by the Liberals; he was the most prominent figure on the stage during those weeks of excitement; and no doubt he was perfectly happy.

The debates on the bill brought out some speeches which have not been surpassed in the parliamentary history of our time. Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone were at their very best. Mr. Bright likened the formation of the little band of malcontents to the doings of David in the cave of Adullam when he called about him "every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented," and become a captain over them. The allusion told upon the house with instant effect, for many had suspected and some had said that if Mr. Horsman and Mr. Lowe had been more carefully conciliated by the prime minister at the time of his government's formation, there might have been no such acrimonious opposition to the bill. The little third party were at once christened the Adullamites, and the name still survives and is likely long to survive its old political history. Mr. Gladstone's speech, with which the great debate on the second reading concluded, was aflame with impassioned eloquence. One passage, in which he met the superfluous accusation, that he had come over a stranger to the Liberal camp, was filled with a certain pathetic dignity. The closing words of the speech,

in which he prophesied a speedy success to the principles then on the verge of defeat, brought the debate fittingly up to its highest point of interest and excitement. "You cannot," he said in his closing words, fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great social forces which move on in their might and majesty, and the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you; they are marshaled on our side, and the banner which we now carry, though perhaps at this moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet soon again will float in the eye of heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms perhaps not to an easy, but to a certain and a not distant victory."

This speech was concluded on the morning of April 28th. The debate which it brought to a close had been carried on for eight nights. The House of Commons was wrought up to a pitch of the most intense excitement when the division came to be taken. The closing passages of Mr. Gladstone's speech had shown clearly enough that he did not expect much of a triumph for the government. The house was crowded to excess. The numbers voting were large beyond almost any other previous instance. There were for the second reading of the bill three hundred and eighteen: there were against it three hundred and thirteen. The second reading was carried by a majority of only five. The wild cheers of the Conservatives and the Adullamites showed on which "sword sat laurel victory." Every one knew then that the bill was doomed. It only remained for those who opposed it to put a few amendments on the paper as a prelude to the bill's going into committee, and the opposition must succeed. The question now was, not whether the measure would be a failure but only when the failure would have to be confessed.

The time for the confession soon came. The opponents of the reform scheme kept pouring in amendments on the motion to go into committee. These came chiefly from the ministerial side of the house. As in 1860, so now in 1866, the Conservative leader of the House of Commons had the satisfaction of seeing his work done for him very effectively by those who were in general his political opponents. He was not compelled to run the risk or incur the responsibility of pledging himself or his party against all

reform in order to get rid of this particular scheme. All that he wanted was being done for him by men who had virtually pledged themselves over and over again in favor of reform. The bill at last got into committee; and here the strife was renewed. Lord Stanley moved an amendment to postpone the clauses relating to the county franchise until the redistribution of seats should first have been dealt with. This amendment was rejected, but not by a great majority. Mr. Ward Hunt moved that the franchise in counties be fourteen pounds rateable value, instead of gross estimated rental. This too was defeated. Lord Dunkellin, usually a supporter of the government, moved that the seven pounds franchise in boroughs be on a rating instead of a rental qualification. The effect of this would be to make the franchise a little higher than the government proposed to fix it. Houses are generally rated at a value somewhat below the amount of the rent paid on them, and therefore a rating franchise of seven pounds would probably in most places be about equivalent to a rental franchise of eight pounds. Therefore the opponents of reform would have interposed another barrier of twenty shillings in certain cases between England and the flood of democracy. Prudent and law-abiding men might accept with safety a franchise of eight pounds, or even say seven pounds ten shillings, in boroughs; but a franchise of seven pounds would mean the red republic, mob-rule, the invasion of democracy, the shameful victory, and all the other terrible things which Mr. Lowe had been foreshadowing in his prophetic fury. Lord Dunkellin carried his amendment; three hundred and fifteen voted for it, only three hundred and four against. The announcement of the numbers was received with tumultuous demonstrations of joy. The Adullamites had saved the state. Lord Russell's last reform scheme was a failure; and the Liberal ministry had come to an end.

Lord Russell and his colleagues tendered their resignation to the queen, and after a little delay and some discussion, the resignation was accepted. It would hardly have been possible for Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone to do otherwise. Their reform bill was the one distinctive measure of the session. It was the measure which especially divided their policy from that of Lord Palmerston's closing years. To abandon it would be to abandon their

chief reason for being in office at all. They could not carry it. They had got as far in the session as the last few days of June, and everything was against them. The commercial panic had intervened. The suspension of the great firm of Overend and Gurney had brought failure after failure with it. The famous "Black Friday," Friday, May 11th, had made its most disastrous mark in the history of the city of London. The bank charter had to be suspended. The cattle plague, although checked by the stringent measures of the government, was still raging, and the landlords and cattle-owners were still in a state of excitement and alarm, and had long been clamoring over the insufficiency of the compensation which other classes condemned as unreasonable alike in principle and in proportion. The day before the success of Lord Dunkellin's motion, the emperor of Austria had issued a manifesto explaining the course of events which compelled him to draw the sword against Prussia. A day or two after, Italy entered into the quarrel by declaring war against Austria. The time seemed hopeless for pressing a small reform bill on in the face of an unwilling parliament, and for throwing the country into the turmoil and expense of another general election. Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone accepted the situation, and resigned office.

The one mistake they had made was to bring in a reform bill of so insignificant and almost unmeaning a character. It is more than probable that the difficulties Lord Russell had with the Whig section of his cabinet compelled him to compromise to a degree which his own inclinations and his own principles would not have approved, and to which Mr. Gladstone could only yield a reluctant assent. But if this be the explanation of what happened, it would have been better to put off the measure for a session or two, and allow public opinion out of doors to express itself so clearly as to convince the Whigs that the people in general were really in earnest about reform. No reform bill can be carried unless it is sustained by such an amount of enthusiasm among its supporters in and out of parliament as to convince the timid, the selfish, and the doubting that the measure must be passed. In the nature of things the men actually in parliament cannot be expected to enter with any great spontaneous enthusiasm into a project for sending them back to their constituencies to run the risk and bear



the cost of a new election by untried voters. It will, therefore, always be easy for the men in possession to persuade their consciences that the public good is opposed to any change, if no strong demand be made for the particular change in question. Now the compromise which Lord Russell's government offered in the shape of a reform bill was not calculated to stir up the enthusiasm of any one. The ardor with which in the end it came to be advocated was merely the heat which in men's natures is always generated by a growing controversy and by fierce opposition. The strongest and most effective attack made by the opposition, that led by Mr. Lowe, was not directed against that particular measure so much as against all measures of reform; against the fundamental principle of a popular suffrage, and indeed of a representative assembly. As soon as the doubtful men in the house discovered that there was no genuine enthusiasm existing on behalf of the bill, its fate became certain. When the more extreme reformers came to think over the condition of things, and when their spirits were set free from the passion of recent controversy, very few of them could have felt any great regret for the defeat of the bill. Those who understood the real feelings of the yet unenfranchised part of the population, knew well that some administration would have to introduce a strong measure of reform before long. They were content to wait. The interval of delay proved shorter than they could well have expected.

The defeat of the bill and the resignation of the ministry brought the political career of Lord Russell to a close. He took advantage of the occasion soon after to make a sort of formal announcement that he handed over the task of leading the Liberal party to Mr. Gladstone. He appeared indeed in public life on several occasions after his resignation of office. He took part sometimes in the debates of the House of Lords; he even once or twice introduced measures there, and endeavored to get them passed. During the long controversies on the Washington treaty and the claims of the United States, he took a somewhat prominent part in the discussions of the peers, and was always listened to with attention and respect. About a year after the fall of his administration he was one of the company at a breakfast given to Mr. Garrison, the American anti-slavery leader, in St. James' Hall, and he

won much applause there by the frankness and good spirit of his tribute to the memory of President Lincoln, and by his manly acknowledgment of more than one mistake in his former judgments of Lincoln's policy and character. Lord Russell spoke on this occasion with a vigor quite equal to that which he might have displayed some twenty years before; and indeed many of those present felt surprised at his resolve to abandon active public life while he still seemed so well capable of bearing a part in it. Lord Russell's career, however, was practically at an end. It had been a long and an interesting career. It was begun amid splendid chances. Lord John Russell was born in the very purple of politics; he was cradled and nursed among statesmen and orators; the fervid breath of young liberty fanned his boyhood; his tutors, friends, companions, were the master-spirits who rule the fortunes of nations; he had the ministerial benches for a training ground, and had a seat in the administration at his disposal when another young man might have been glad of a seat in an opera-box. He must have been brought into more or less intimate association with all the men and women worth knowing in Europe since the early part of the century. He was a pupil of Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh, and he sat as a youth at the feet of Fox. He had accompanied Wellington in some of his peninsular campaigns; he measured swords with Canning and Peel successively through years of parliamentary warfare. He knew Metternich and Talleyrand. He had met the widow of Charles Stuart, the young chevalier, in Florence; and had conversed with Napoleon in Elba. He knew Cavour and Bismarck. He was now an ally of Daniel O'Connell, and now of Cobden and Bright. He was the close friend of Thomas Moore; he knew Byron, and was one of the few allowed to read the personal memoirs which were unfortunately destroyed by Byron's friends. Lord John Russell had tastes for literature, for art, for philosophy, for history, for politics; and his æstheticism had the advantage that it made him seek the society and appreciate the worth of men of genius and letters. Thus he never remained a mere politician like Pitt or Palmerston. His public career suggests almost as strange a series of contradictions, or paradoxes, as Macaulay finds in that of Pitt. He who began with a reputation for a heat of temperament worthy

of Achilles was for more than half his career regarded as a frigid and bloodless politician. In Ireland he was long known rather as the author of the ecclesiastical titles bill than as the early friend of Catholic emancipation; in England as the parent of petty and abortive reform bills, rather than as the promoter of the one great reform bill. Abroad and at home he came to be thought of as the minister who disappointed Denmark and abandoned Poland, rather than as the earnest friend and faithful champion of oppressed nationalities. No statesman could be a more sincere and thorough opponent of slavery in all its forms and works; and yet in the mind of the American people Lord Russell's name was for a long time associated with the idea of a scarcely-concealed support of the slaveholder's rebellion. Much of this curious contrast, this seeming inconsistency, is due to the fact that for the greater part of his public life Lord Russell's career was a mere course of see-saw between office and opposition. The sort of superstition that long prevailed in our political affairs limited the higher offices of statesmanship to two or three conventionally acceptable men on either side. If not Sir Robert Peel, then it must be Lord John Russell; if it was not Lord Derby, it must be Lord Palmerston. Therefore, if the business of government was to go on at all, a statesman must take office now and then with men whom he could not mold wholly to his purpose, and must act in seeming sympathy with principles and measures which he would himself have little cared to originate. Lord Palmerston complained humorously in one of his later letters, that a prime minister could no longer have it all his own way in his cabinet. Men were coming up who had wills and consciences, ideas and abilities of their own, and who would not consent to be the mere clerks of the prime minister. Great popular parties too, he might have added, were growing up in the country with powerful leaders, men whose opinions must be taken into account on every subject even though they never were to be in office. It is easy enough to understand how under such conditions the minister who had seemed a daring reformer to one generation might seem but a chilly compromiser to another. It is easy too to understand how the career, which at its opening was illumined by the splendid victory of the reform bill of 1832, should have been clouded at its close

by the rather ignominious failure of the reform bill of 1866. The personal life of Lord Russell was consistent all through. He began as a reformer; he ended as a reformer. If the "might-have-beens" were not always a vanity, it would be reasonable as well as natural to regret that it was not given to Lord Russell to complete the work of 1832 by a genuine and successful measure of reform in 1866.

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## CHAPTER LI.

### THE REFORM AGITATION.

THE reform banner, then, had "drooped over the sinking heads" of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and the Liberal administration was at an end. The queen, of course, sent for Lord Derby. There was no one else to send for. Somebody must carry on the queen's government; and therefore Lord Derby had no alternative but to set to work and try to form an administration. He did not appear to have done so with much good-will. He had no personal desire to enter office once again; he had no inclination for official responsibilities. He was not very fond of work, even when younger and stronger, and the habitual indolence of his character had naturally grown with years, and just now with infirmities. There was therefore, something of a genuine patriotic self-sacrifice in the consent which he gave to relieve the sovereign and the country from difficulties by accepting at such a time the office of prime minister and undertaking to form a government. It was generally understood, however, that he would only consent to be the prime minister of an interval, and that whenever with convenience to the interests of the state some other hand could be entrusted with power, he would expect to be released from the trouble of official life. The prospect for a Conservative ministry was not inviting. Despite the manner in which Lord Russell's reform bill had been hustled out of existence, no sagacious Tory seriously believed that the new government could do as Lord Palmerston had done; that is, could treat the whole reform question as if it were shelved by the recent action of the House of Commons, and take no further trouble about it. Lord Derby, too, when he came to form a government,

found himself met by one unexpected difficulty. He had hoped to be able to weld together a sort of coalition ministry, which should to a certain extent represent both sides of the house. It seemed to him only reasonable to assume that the men who had co-operated with the Conservatives so earnestly in resisting the reform measures of the late government would consent to co-operate with the Conservative ministry which their action had forced into existence. Accordingly, he had at once invited the leading members of the Adullamite party to accept places in his administration. He was met by disappointment. The Adullamite chiefs agreed to decline all such co-operation. A leading article appeared one morning in a journal which was understood to have Mr. Lowe for one of its contributors, announcing, in a solemn sentence made more solemn by being printed in capital letters, that those who had thrown out the Liberal ministry on principle were bound to prove that they had not been animated by any ambition or self-seeking of their own. Indeed, the voice of public opinion freely acquitted some of them of any such desire from the beginning. Mr. Lowe, for example, was always thought to be somewhat uncertain and crotchety in his views. There were not wanting persons who said that he had no set and serious political opinions at all; that he was more easily charmed by antithesis than by principle; and that he would have been at any time ready to sacrifice his party to his paradox. But no one doubted his personal sincerity; and no one was surprised that he should have declined to accept any advantage from the reaction of which he had been the guiding spirit. About the rest of the Adullamites, truth to say, very few persons thought at all. No one doubted their sincerity, for indeed no one asked himself any question on the subject. Some of them were men of great territorial influence; some were men of long standing in parliament. But they were absolutely unnoticed now that the crisis was over. The reaction was ascribed to one man alone. There was some curiosity felt as to the course that one man would pursue; but when it was known that Mr. Lowe would not take office under Lord Derby, nobody cared what became of the other denizens of the cave. They might take office or let it alone; the public at large were absolutely indifferent on the subject.

The session had advanced far toward its usual time of

closing when Lord Derby completed the arrangements for his administration. Mr. Disraeli, of course, became chancellor of the exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Lord Stanley was foreign secretary. Lord Cranborne, formerly Lord Robert Cecil, was entrusted with the care of India; Lord Carnarvon undertook the colonies; General Peel became war minister; Sir Stafford Northcote was president of the board of trade; and Mr. Walpole took on himself the management of the home office, little knowing what a troublous business he had brought upon his shoulders. Sir John Pakington boldly assumed the control of the admiralty, an appropriation of office to which only the epigram of a Beaumarchais could supply adequate illustration. On July 9th Lord Derby was able to announce to the peers that he had put together his house of cards.

The new ministry had hardly taken their places when a perfect storm of agitation broke out all over the country. The Conservatives and the Adullamites had both asserted that the working people in general were indifferent about the franchise; and a number of organizations now sprang into existence, having for their object to prove to the world that no such apathy prevailed. Reform leagues and reform unions started up as if out of the ground. Public meetings of vast dimensions began to be held day after day for the purpose of testifying to the strength of the desire for reform. The most noteworthy of these was the famous Hyde Park meeting. The reformers of the metropolis determined to hold a monster meeting in the Park. The authorities took the very unwise course of determining to prohibit it, and a proclamation or official notice was issued to that effect. The reformers were acting under the advice of Mr. Edmond Beales, president of the reform league, a barrister of some standing, and a man of character and considerable ability. Mr. Beales was of opinion that the authorities had no legal power to prevent the meeting; and of course it need hardly be said that a commissioner of police, or even a home secretary, is not qualified to make anything legal or illegal by simply proclaiming it so. The London reformers, therefore, determined to try their right with the authorities. On July 23rd, a number of processions, marching with bands and banners, set out from different parts of London and made for Hyde Park.

The authorities had posted notices announcing that the gates of the park would be closed at five o'clock that evening. When the first of the processions arrived at the park the gates were closed, and a line of policemen was drawn outside. The president of the reform league, Mr. Beales, and some other prominent reformers, came up in a carriage, alighted, and endeavored to enter the park. They were refused admittance. They asked for the authority by which they were refused; and they were told that it was the authority of the commissioner of police. They then quietly re-entered the carriage. It was their intention first to assert their right, and then, being refused, to try it in the regular and legal way. It was no part of their intention to make any disturbance. They seem to have taken every step which they thought necessary to guard against any breach of the peace. It was clearly their interest, as it was no doubt their desire, to have the law on their side. They went to Trafalgar Square, followed by a large crowd, and there a meeting was extemporized, at which resolutions were passed demanding the extension of the suffrage, and thanking Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other men who had striven to obtain it. The speaking was short; it was not physically possible to speak with any effect to so large an assemblage. Then that part of the demonstration came quietly to an end.

Meantime, however, a different scene had been going on at Hyde Park. A large and motley crowd had hung about the gates and railings. The crowd was composed partly of genuine reformers, partly of mere sightseers and curiosity-mongers, partly of mischievous boys, and to no inconsiderable extent of ordinary London roughs. Not a few of all sections, perhaps, were a little disappointed that things had gone so quietly off. Many of the younger lookers-on felt aggrieved exactly as the boys did in the "Bride of Lammermoor," when they found that the supposed fire was not to end in any explosion after all, and that the castle had "gane out like an auld wife's spunk." The mere mass of people pressed and pressing round the railings would almost in any case have somewhat seriously threatened their security and tried their strength. Emerson has said that every revolution, however great, is first of all, a thought in the mind of a single man. One disappointed reformer lingering in Park Lane, with his breast

against the rails, as the poetic heroine had hers, metaphorically, against the thorn, became impressed with the idea that the barrier was somewhat frail and shaky. How would it be, he vaguely thought for a moment, if he were to give an impulse and drive the railing in? What, he wondered to himself, would come of that? The temptation was great. He shook the rails; the rails began to give way. Not that alone, but the sudden movement was felt along the line, and into a hundred minds came at once the grand revolutionary idea which an instant before had been a thought in the mind of one hitherto unimportant man. A simultaneous impulsive rush, and some yards of railing were down, and men in scores were tumbling, and floundering, and rushing over them. The example was followed along Park Lane, and in a moment half a mile of iron railing was lying on the grass, and a tumultuous and delighted mob were swarming over the park. The news ran wildly through the town. Some thought it a revolt; others were of opinion that it was a revolution. The first day of liberty was proclaimed here—the breaking loose of anarchy was shrieked at there. The mob capered and jumped over the sward for half the night through. Flower-beds and shrubs suffered a good deal, not so much from wanton destruction as from the pure boisterousness which came of an unexpected opportunity for horse-play. There were a good many little encounters with the police; stones were thrown on the one side and truncheons used on the other pretty freely; a detachment of foot guards was kept near the spot in readiness, but their services were not required. Indeed, the mob good-humoredly cheered the soldiers whenever they caught sight of them. A few heads were broken on both sides, and a few prisoners were made by the police; but there was no revolution, no revolt, no serious riot even, and no intention in the mind of any responsible person that there should be a riot. Mr. Disraeli that night declared in the House of Commons—half probably in jest, half certainly in earnest—that he was not quite sure whether he had still a house to go to. He found his house yet standing, and firmly roofed, when he returned home that night. London slept feverishly, and awoke next day to find things going on very much as before. Crowds hastened, half in amusement half in fear, to look upon the scene of the previous evening's turmoil. There



were the railings down sure enough; and in the park was still a large idle crowd, partly of harmless sight-seers, partly of roughs, with a considerable body of police keeping order. But there was no popular rising; and London began once more to eat its meals in peace. The sudden tumult was harmlessly over, and the one personage whose impulse first shook the railings of the park may even now console himself in his obscurity by the thought that his push carried reform.

Nothing can well be more certain than the fact that the Hyde Park riot, as it was called, convinced her majesty's ministers of the necessity of an immediate adoption of the reform principle. The government took the Hyde Park riot with portentous gravity. Mr. Beales and some of his colleagues waited upon the home secretary next day, for the purpose of advising him to withdraw the military and police from the park, and leave it in the custody of the reformers. Mr. Beales gravely lectured the government for what they had done; and declared, as was undoubtedly the fact, that the foolish conduct of the administration had been the original cause of all the disturbance. The home secretary, Mr. Walpole, a gentle and kindly man, had lost his head in the excitement of the hour. He mentally saw himself charged with the responsibility of civil strife and bloodshed. He was melted out of all self-command by the kindly bearing of Mr. Beales and the reformers; and when they assured him that they were only anxious to help him to keep order, he fairly broke down and wept. He expressed himself with meek gratitude for their promised co-operation, and agreed to almost anything they could suggest. It was understood that the right of meeting in Hyde Park was left to be tested in some more satisfactory way at a future day, and the leaders of the reform league took their departure undoubted masters of the situation.

All through the autumn and winter meetings were held in the great towns and cities to promote the cause of reform. They were for the most part mere demonstrations of numbers; and every one of any sagacity knew perfectly well that it was by display of numbers the greatest effect would be produced upon the ministry. Therefore the meetings were usually preceded by processions, and the attention of the public was turned far more to the

processions than to the meetings. Hardly any one took the trouble to discuss what was said at the meetings; but a constant public controversy was going on about the numerical strength of the processions. A hundred witnesses on both sides of the dispute rushed to the newspapers to bear testimony to the length of time which a particular procession had occupied in passing a given point. Rival calculations were elaborately made to get at the number of persons marching which such a length of time implied. The most extraordinary differences of calculation were exhibited. It was a remarkable fact that the opponents of reform saw invariably a much smaller gathering than its supporters beheld. The calculations of the one set of observers brought out only hundreds, where those of the other resulted in thousands. A procession which one critic proved by the most elaborate and careful statistics to have contained a quarter of a million of men, a rival calculator was prepared to show could not by any possibility have contained more than ten or twelve thousand. Cooler observers than the professed partisans of one side or the other, thought that the most significant feature of these demonstrations was the part taken by the organized trades' associations of workmen. Some of the processions were made up exclusively of the members of these organized trades' unions. They acted in strict deference to the resolutions and the discipline of their associations. They were great in numbers, and most imposing in their silent united strength. They had grown into all that discipline and that power unpatronized by any manner of authority; unrecognized by the law, unless indeed where the law occasionally went out of its way to try to prevent or to thwart the aims of their organization. They had now grown to such strength that law and authority must see to make terms with them. The most extravagant rumors as to their secret doings and purposes alarmed the timid; and there can be no doubt that if a popular or social revolution were needed or were impending, the action taken by the workmen's associations would have been of incalculable moment to the cause it espoused. As rank after rank of these men marched in quiet confidence through the principal streets of London, the thought must have occurred to many minds that here was an entirely new element in the calculations alike of statesmen and of demagogues well

capable of being made a new source of strength to a state under honest leadership and any really sound system of legislation, but qualified also to become a source of serious public danger, if misled by the demagogue or unfairly dealt with by the reactionary legislator. Some of these associations had supported great industrial strikes in which the judgment and the sympathies of all the classes that usually lead was against them. The capitalist and all who share his immediate interests; the employers, the rich of every kind, the aristocratic, the self-appointed public instructors, had all been against them; and they had nevertheless gone deliberately and stubbornly their own way. Sometimes they, or the cause they represented, had prevailed; often they and it had been defeated; but they had never acknowledged a defeat in principle, and they had kept on their own course undismayed, and, as many would have put it, unconvinced and unreconciled. At this very time some of the doings of trades' unions, or of those who took on themselves to represent the purposes of such organizations, were creating dismay in many parts of England, and were a subject of excited discussion everywhere over the country. It could not but be a matter of the gravest moment when the "organization of labor," as it would once have been grandiloquently called, thus turned out of its own direct path and identified itself, its cause, its resources, and its discipline with any great political movement.

Thus in England the year passed away. Men were organizing reform demonstrations on the one side and showing the futility of them on the other. The calculations as to the lengths of processions and the time occupied in passing particular street-corners or lamp-posts went on unceasingly. Stout Tories vowed that the government never would yield to popular clamor. Not a few timid reformers hoped in their secret hearts that Lord Derby would really stand fast. Many Liberals who could admit of no hope from the Tories, were already prepared with the conviction that the government would risk all on the resolution to deny extended suffrage to the working classes. Not a few on both sides had a strong impression that Mr. Disraeli would do something to keep his friends in power, although they did not perhaps quite suspect that he was already engaged in the work of educating his party.

While England was thus occupied, stirring events were taking place elsewhere. In the interval between the resignation of Lord Russell and the completion of Lord Derby's ministry, the battle of Sadowa had been fought. The leadership of Germany had been decisively won by Prussia. The "humiliation of Olmutz" had been avenged. Venetia had been added to Italy, Austria had been excluded from any share in German affairs, and Prussia and France had been placed in that position which M. Prévost-Paradol likened to that of two express trains starting along the same line from opposite directions. The complete overthrow of Austria came with the shock of a bewildering surprise upon the great mass of the English public. Faith in the military strength of Austria had survived even the evidence of Solferino. English public instructors were for the most part as completely agreed about the utter incapacity of the Prussians for the business of war as if nobody had ever heard of Frederick the Great. Not many days before Sadowa, a leading London newspaper had a description, half pitiful, half contemptuous, of the unfortunate shop-boys and young mechanics of whom the Prussian army was understood to be composed, being hurried and driven along to the front to make food for powder for the well-trained legions of Austria under the command of the irresistible Benedek.

Just before the adjournment of parliament for the recess, a great work of peace was accomplished; perhaps the only work of peace then possible which could be mentioned after the warlike business of Sadowa without producing the effect of an anti-climax. This was the completion of the Atlantic cable. On the evening of July 27, 1866, the cable was laid between Europe and America. Next day Lord Stanley, as foreign minister, was informed that perfect communication existed between England and the United States by means of the thread of wire that lay beneath the Atlantic. Words of friendly congratulation and greeting were interchanged between the queen and the president of the United States. Ten years all but a month or two had gone by since Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the American promoter of the Atlantic telegraph project, had first tried to inspire cool and calculating men in London, Liverpool, and Manchester with some faith in his project. He was not a scientific man; he was not the in-

ventor of the principle of inter-oceanic telegraphy; he was not even the first man to propose that a company should be formed for the purpose of laying a cable beneath the Atlantic. So long before as 1845 an attempt had been made by the Messrs. Brett to induce the English government to assist them in a scheme for laying an electric wire to connect Europe with America. A plan for the purpose was actually registered; but the government took no interest in the project, probably regarding it as on a par with the frequent applications which are made for the countenance and help of the treasury in the promotion of flying machines and of projectiles to destroy an enemy's fleet at a thousand miles' distance. But the achievement of the Atlantic cable was none the less as distinctly the work of Mr. Cyrus Field as the discovery of America was that of Columbus. It was not he who first thought of doing the thing; but it was he who first made up his mind that it could be done, and showed the world how to do it, and did it in the end. The history of human invention has not a more inspiring example of patience living down discouragement, and perseverance triumphing over defeat. The first attempt to lay the cable was made in 1857, but the vessels engaged in the expedition had only got about three hundred miles from the west coast of Ireland when the cable broke, and the effort had to be given up for that year. Next year the enterprise was renewed upon a different principle. Two ships of war, the *Agamemnon*, English, and the *Niagara*, American, sailed out together for the mid-Atlantic, where they were to part company, having previously joined their cables, and were each to make for her own shore, each laying the line of wire as she went. Stormy weather arose suddenly and prevented the vessels from doing anything. The cable was broken several times in the effort to lay it, and at last the expedition returned. Another effort, however, was made that summer. The cable was actually laid. It did for a few days unite Europe and America. Messages of congratulation passed along between the queen and the president of the United States. The queen congratulated the president upon "the successful completion of the great international work," and was convinced that "the president will unite with her in fervently hoping that the electric cable which now connects Great Britain with the United States

will prove an additional link between the nations whose friendship is founded in their common interest and reciprocal esteem." The rejoicings in America were exuberant. Suddenly, however, the signals became faint; the messages grew inarticulate, and before long the power of communication ceased altogether. The cable became a mere cable again; the wire that spoke with such a miraculous eloquence had become silent. The construction of the cable had proved to be defective, and a new principle had to be devised by science. Yet something definite had been accomplished. It had been shown that a cable could be stretched and maintained under the ocean more than two miles deep and two thousand miles across. Another attempt was made in 1865, but it proved again a failure, and the shivered cable had to be left for the time in the bed of the Atlantic. At last, in 1866 the feat was accomplished, and the Atlantic telegraph was added to the realities of life. It has now become a distinct part of our civilized system. We have ceased to wonder at it. We accept it and its consequent facts with as much composure as we take the existence of the inland telegraph or the penny post. It seems hard now to understand how people got on when it took a fortnight to receive news from the United States. Since the success of the Atlantic cable many telegraphic wires have been laid in the beds of oceans. All England chafed as at an insufferable piece of negligence on the part of somebody the other day, when it was found, in a moment of national emergency, that there was a lack of direct telegraphic communication between this country and the Cape of Good Hope, and that we could not ask a question of South Africa and have an answer within a few minutes. Perhaps it may encourage future projectors and inventors to know that, in the case of the Atlantic cable as in that of the Suez Canal, some of the highest scientific authority was given to proclaim the actual hopelessness, the wild impracticability, the sheer physical impossibility of such an enterprise having any success. "Before the ships left this country with the cable," wrote Robert Stephenson in 1857, "I very publicly predicted as soon as they got into deep water a signal failure. It was in fact inevitable." Nine years after, the inevitable had been avoided; the failure turned to success.

## CHAPTER LII.

## THE LEAP IN THE DARK.

THE autumn and winter of agitation passed away, and the time was at hand when the new ministry must meet a new session of parliament. The country looked with keen interest, and also with a certain amused curiosity, to see what the government would do with reform in the session of 1867. When Lord Derby took office he had not in any way committed himself and his colleagues against a reform bill. On the contrary, he had announced that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see a very considerable proportion of the now excluded class admitted to the franchise; but he had qualified this announcement by the expression of a doubt whether any measure of reform on which the two great political parties could agree would be likely to satisfy the extreme reformers, or to put a stop to agitation. More than once Lord Derby had intimated plainly enough that he was willing to make one other effort at a settlement of the question, but if that effort should not succeed he would have nothing more to do with the matter. He was well known to have taken office reluctantly, and he gave it to be clearly understood that he did not by any means propose to devote the remainder of his life to the business of rolling reform bills a little way up the parliamentary hill merely in order to see them rolled down again. Most persons assumed, however, that Mr. Disraeli would look at the whole question from a different point of view; that he had personal and natural ambition still to gratify; and that he was not likely to allow the position of his party to be greatly damaged by any lack of flexibility on his part. The Conservatives were in office, but only in office; they were not in power. The defection among the Liberals, and not their own strength or success, had set the Tories on the ministerial benches. They could not possibly keep their places there without at least trying to amuse the country on the subject of reform. The great majority of Liberals felt sure that some effort would be made by the government to carry a bill, but their general impression was that it would be a measure cleverly put together with the hope of

inducing the country to accept shadow for substance; and that nothing would come of it except an interval during which the demand of the unenfranchised classes would become more and more earnest and impassioned. It had not entered into the mind of any one to conceive that Lord Derby's government were likely to entertain the country by the odd succession of surprises which diversified the session, and to assist at the gradual formation, by contribution from all sides, sets, and individuals, of a reform measure far more broadly liberal and democratic than anything which Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone would have ventured or cared to introduce.

Parliament opened on February 5th. The speech from the throne alluded, as every one had expected that it would, to the subject of reform. "Your attention," so ran the words of the speech, "will again be called to the state of the representation of the people in parliament;" and then the hope was expressed that "Your deliberations, conducted in a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the elective franchise." The hand of Mr. Disraeli, people said, was to be seen clearly enough in these vague and ambiguous phrases. How, it was asked, can the franchise be freely extended, in the reformers' sense, without disturbing the balance of political power unduly, in Mr. Disraeli's sense? Again and again, in session after session, he had been heard arguing that a great enlargement of the suffrage to the working classes must disturb the balance of political power; that it would in itself be a disturbance of the balance of political power; that it would give an immense preponderance to a class "homogeneous"—such was Mr. Disraeli's own favorite word—in their interests and fashions. How then could he now offer to introduce any such change? And what other change did any one want? What other change would satisfy anybody who wanted a change at all? More and more the conviction spread that Mr. Disraeli would only try to palm off some worthless measure on the House of Commons, and by the help of the insincere reformers and the Adullamites, endeavor to induce the majority to accept it. People had little idea, however, of the flexibility the government were soon to display. The history of parliament in our modern days,



or indeed in any days that we know much of, has nothing like the proceedings of that extraordinary session.

On February 11th, Mr. Disraeli announced that the government had made up their minds to proceed "by way of resolution." The great difficulty, he explained, in the way of passing a reform bill was that the two great political parties could not be got to agree beforehand on any principles by which to construct a measure. "Let us then, before we go to work at the construction of a reform bill this time, agree among ourselves as to what sort of measure we want. The rest will be easy." He, therefore, announced his intention to put into the parliamentary caldron a handful of resolutions, out of which, when they had been allowed to simmer, would miraculously arise the majestic shape of a good reform bill made perfect. Mr. Disraeli relied greatly on the example afforded by the construction of the new system of government for India as an encouragement to the course he now recommended. We have seen that after the suppression of the Indian mutiny there was much difficulty felt about the creation of a new scheme for the government of India. The House of Commons then agreed to proceed carefully by way of resolution in the first instance, and thus got the principles on which they proposed to govern India completely settled before they set about embodying them in practical legislation. Only the curious ingenuity of Mr. Disraeli's mind could have discovered any resemblance between the two cases. When parliament had to take on itself the government of India, the first difficulty was to settle the principles on which India could best be governed. It was not a question of party; one party was as much in a difficulty as another; neither was pledged to any particular course. It was a time for consultation, for the hearing of all opinions, for the consideration and comparison of all testimonies and suggestions. It was, in short, a time of novelty and of uncertainty, when the only reasonable course was for the two great parties to take informal counsel before either committed itself to any defined scheme or even principle of action. What resemblance did such a condition of things bear to that in which parliament found itself now that it had to consider the subject of an extended franchise? The difficulty arose not from a lack of knowledge, but from the existence of different opinions and different principles.

All that could be got at in the way of information had been times out of mind showered out over the whole subject of reform. It had been discussed down to the very dregs in parliament after parliament. Neither of the two great political parties wanted more information of any kind, but both having long been in possession of all the information accessible to the quest of man, they were unable to agree as to the course which ought to be taken, and differed absolutely in their political principles. One party was pledged by its traditions and its supposed interests to oppose a popular suffrage; the other was pledged in exactly the same way to support it. What possible chance was there of a common ground being found by the discussion of a series of resolutions? If either party was willing to compromise, it had only to say so; two sentences would sufficiently explain what the compromise was to be. Each saw as distinctly as the other what it wanted to have; if either was willing to renounce any part of its supposed claim, it would be enough to say so. A suitor asks for a girl in marriage; her father refuses to consent. Would the two be brought any nearer to an agreement if they were to hold a solemn conference, and draw up a series of resolutions setting forth what in the opinion of each were the true conditions of a happy union? Just as well might Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Bright have set about drawing up a series of resolutions to embody what each thought of the conditions of a reform bill.

The resolutions which Mr. Disraeli proposed to submit to the house were for the most part sufficiently absurd. Some of them were platitudes which it could not be worth any one's while to take the trouble of affirming by formal resolution. What advantage could there be in declaring by resolution that "it is contrary to the constitution of this realm to give to any one class or interest a predominating power over the rest of the community?" Who ever said, or was likely to say, that to give one class a preponderating power over the rest of the community was in accordance with the principles of the constitution? Even if Jack Cade were prepared to demand such a power for his own class, he would not take the trouble of trying to convince people that it could be done in conformity with the existing principles of the constitution. To what purpose was the House of Commons invited to declare that in any

redistribution of seats the main consideration should be "the expediency of supplying representation to places not at present represented, and which may be considered entitled to that privilege?" What other main consideration could any sane person have in preparing a scheme for the redistribution of seats? It would be as wise to recommend the judges of our civil courts to declare by a formal resolution, that their main consideration in hearing causes should be to allow litigants an opportunity of setting forth their claims and obtaining justice. But then, on the other hand, it has to be observed that most of the resolutions which were not simple truisms embodied propositions such as no prime minister could possibly have expected the house to agree on without violent struggles, determined resistance, and eager divisions. The principle of rating as a basis of qualification, the device of plurality of votes, the plan of voting by means of polling-papers—these were some of the propositions which Mr. Disraeli calmly suggested that the house should affirm along with the declarations that one party ought not to have all the power, and that the object of redistribution was to redistribute properly. The Liberal party, especially that section of it which acknowledged the authority of Mr. Bright, would have had to be beaten to its knees before it would consent to accept some of these devices.

Mr. Disraeli seems to have learned almost at once, from the demeanor of the house, that it would be hopeless to press his resolutions. On February 25th he quietly substituted for them a sort of reform bill, which he announced that the government intended to introduce. The occupation franchise in boroughs was to be reduced to six pounds, and in counties to twenty pounds, in each case the qualification to be based on rating; that is, the right of a man to vote was to be made dependent on the arrangements by his local vestry or other rate-imposing body: There were to be all manner of "fancy franchises." A man who had fifty pounds in the funds, or had thirty pounds in a savings bank and had kept that amount untouched for a year, was to be rewarded with the vote. If he had given a ten-pound note to his daughter to buy her wedding clothes; or had laid out five pounds in the burial of a poor and aged parent, or lent a sovereign to a friend in distress, he would of course be disfranchised by his improvidence. If he

paid twenty shillings in direct taxes during the year he was to have a vote. If he bore the degree of a university, or was a minister of religion, a lawyer, a doctor, or a certified schoolmaster, he was to have the franchise: a whimsical sort of educational franchise which would have refused a vote to Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Mill, or to Mr. Disraeli himself. There seemed something unintelligible, or at least mysterious, about the manner in which this bill was introduced. It was to all appearance not based upon the resolutions; certainly it made no reference to some of the more important of their provisions. We need not go into the plan of redistribution which was tacked to the bill; for the bill itself never had any substantial existence. The House of Commons received with contemptuous indifference Mr. Disraeli's explanation of its contents, and the very next day Mr. Disraeli announced that the government had determined to withdraw it, to give up at the same time the whole plan of proceeding by resolution, and to introduce a real and substantial reform bill in a few days.

Parliament and the public were amazed at these sudden changes. The whole thing seemed turning into burlesque. The session had seen only a few days, and here already was a third variation in the shape of the government's reform project. To increase the confusion and scandal it was announced three or four days after that three leading members of the cabinet—General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne—had resigned. The whole story at last came out. The revelation was due to the "magnificent indiscretion" of Sir John Pakington, whose lucky incapacity to keep a secret has curiously enriched one chapter of the political history of his time. In consequence of the necessary reconstruction of the cabinet, Sir John Pakington was transferred from the admiralty to the war office, and had to go down to his constituents of Droitwich for re-election. In the fullness of his heart he told a story which set all England laughing. The government, it would appear, started with two distinct reform bills, one more comprehensive and liberal, as they considered, than the other. The latter was kept ready only as a last resource, in case the first should meet with a chilling reception from the conservatism of the House of Commons. In that emergency they proposed to be ready to produce

their less comprehensive scheme. A shopman sometimes offers a customer some article which he assures him is the only thing of the kind fit to have; but if the customer resolutely declares that its price is more than he will pay, the shopman suddenly remembers that he has something of the same sort on hand which although cheaper will, he has no doubt, be found to serve the purpose quite as well. So the chiefs of the Conservative cabinet had their two reform bills in stock. If the house should accept the extensive measure, well and good; but in the event of their drawing back from it, there was the other article ready to hand, cheaper to be sure, and not quite so fine to look at, but a very excellent thing in itself, and warranted to serve every purpose. The more liberal measure was to have been strictly based on the resolutions. The cabinet met on Saturday, February 23rd, and then, as Sir John Pakington said, he and others were under the impression that they had come to a perfect understanding; that they were unanimous; and that the comprehensive measure was to be introduced on Monday, the 25th. On that Monday, however, the cabinet were hastily summoned together. Sir John rushed to the spot, and a piece of alarming news awaited him. Some leading members of the cabinet had refused point blank to have anything to do with the comprehensive bill. Here was a coil! It was two o'clock. Lord Derby had to address a meeting of the Conservative party at half-past two. Mr. Disraeli had to introduce the bill, some bill, in the House of Commons at half-past four. Something must be done. Some bill must be introduced. All eyes, we may suppose, glanced at the clock. Sir John Pakington averred that there were only ten minutes left for decision. It is plain that no man, whatever his gift of statesmanship or skill of penmanship, can draw up a complete reform bill in ten minutes. Now came into full light the wisdom and providence of those who had hit upon the plan of keeping a second-class bill, if we may use such an expression, ready for emergencies. Out came the second-class bill, and it was promptly resolved that Mr. Disraeli should go down to the House of Commons and gravely introduce that, as if it were the measure which the government had all along had it in their minds to bring forward. Sir John defended that resolution with simple and practical earnestness. It was not a wise resolve, he admitted; but

who can be certain of acting wisely with only ten minutes for deliberation? If they had had even an hour to think the matter over, he had no doubt, he said, that they would not have made any mistake. But what skills talking?—they had not an hour, and there was an end of the matter. They had to do something; and so Mr. Disraeli brought in his second-class measure; the measure which Sir John Pakington's piquant explanation sent down into political history with the name of "the Ten Minutes Bill."

The trouble arose, it seems, in this way. General Peel at first felt some scruples about the original measure, the comprehensive bill. Lord Cranborne pressed him to give the measure further consideration, and General Peel consented. So the cabinet broke up on the evening of Saturday, February 23rd, in seeming harmony. Next day, however, being Sunday, Lord Cranborne, having probably nothing else to do, bethought him that it would be well to look a little into the details of the bill. He worked out the figures, as he afterward explained, and he found that according to his calculation they would almost amount to household suffrage in some of the boroughs. That would never do, he thought; and so he tendered his resignation. This would almost, as a matter of course, involve other resignations too. Therefore there came the hasty meeting of the cabinet on Monday, the 25th, which Sir John Pakington described with such unconscious humor. Lord Cranborne, and those who thought with him, were induced to remain, on condition that the comprehensive bill should be quietly put aside, and the ten minutes bill as quietly substituted. Unfortunately, the reception given to the ten minutes bill was, as we have told already, utterly discouraging. It was clear to Mr. Disraeli's experienced eye that it had not a chance from either side of the house. Mr. Disraeli made up his mind, and Lord Derby assented. There was nothing to be done but to fall back on the comprehensive measure. Unwilling colleagues must only act upon their convictions and go. It would be idle to secure their co-operation by persevering farther with a bill that no one would have. Therefore it was that on February 26th Mr. Disraeli withdrew his bill of the day before, the ten minutes bill, and announced that the government would go to work in good earnest, and bring in a real bill on March 18th. This proved to be the bill based on the

resolutions; the comprehensive bill, which had been suddenly put out of sight at the hasty meeting of the cabinet on Monday, February 25th, as described in the artless and unforgotten eloquence of Sir John Pakington's Droitwich speech. Then General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne resigned their offices. Lord Carnarvon explained that he did not object to have the franchise lowered, but he objected to a measure which seemed to him to leave all the political power divided between the rich and the poor, reducing to powerlessness the influence of all the intervening classes. The objection of Lord Cranborne has already been explained. General Peel, a man of straightforward, honorable character, and good abilities, was opposed to what he regarded as the distinctly democratic character of the bill. For the second time within ten years a Conservative cabinet had been split up on a question of reform and the borough franchise.

It must be owned that it required some courage and nerve on Mr. Disraeli's part to face the House of Commons with another scheme and a newly-constructed cabinet, after all these surprises. The first thing to do was to reorganize the cabinet by getting a new war secretary, colonial secretary, and secretary for India. Before March 8th this was accomplished. The men who had resigned carried with them into their retirement the respect of all their political opponents. During his short administration of India, Lord Cranborne had shown not merely capacity, for that everyone knew he possessed, but a gravity, self-restraint, and sense of responsibility, for which even his friends had not previously given him credit. Sir John Pakington, as we have already mentioned, became war minister, Mr. Corry succeeding him as first lord of the admiralty. The Duke of Buckingham—the Lord Chandos whose maiden speech, in the great debate of Thursday, June 25th, 1846, which closed the Peel administration, Mr. Disraeli has described in his "Lord George Bentinck"—became colonial secretary. The administration of the India department was transferred to Sir Stafford Northcote, whose place at the head of the board of trade thus vacated was taken by the Duke of Richmond.

Then, having thrown their mutineers overboard, the government went to work again at their reform scheme. On March 18th Mr. Disraeli introduced the bill. As regarded

the franchise, this measure proposed that in boroughs all who paid rates, or twenty shillings a year in direct taxation, should have the vote; and also that property in the funds and savings banks, and so forth, should be honored with the franchise; and that there should be a certain educational franchise as well. The clauses for the extension of the franchise were counterbalanced and fenced around with all manner of ingeniously devised qualifications to prevent the force of numbers among the poorer classes from having too much of its own way. There was a disheartening elaborateness of ingenuity in all these devices. The machine was far too daintily adjusted; the checks and balances were too cleverly arranged by half; it was apparent to almost every eye that some parts of the mechanism would infallibly get out of working order, and that some others would never get into it. Mr. Bright compared the whole scheme to a plan for offering something with one hand and quietly withdrawing it with the other. There was, however, one aspect of the situation which to many reformers seemed decidedly hopeful. It was plain to them now that the government were determined to do anything whatever in order to get a reform bill of some kind passed that year. They would have anything which could command a majority rather than nothing. Lord Derby afterward frankly admitted that he did not see why a monopoly of reform should be left to the Liberals; and Mr. Disraeli had clearly made up his mind that he would not go out of office this time on a reform bill. How little idea some of his colleagues had of whither they were drifting may be understood from a speech made by Lord Stanley on March 5th, after the resignation of Lord Cranborne and the others. If, he said, Mr. Lowe, or any of those who sat near him, believed seriously "that it is the intention of the government to bring in a bill which shall be in accordance with the view which has always been so ably and so consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), they are greatly mistaken." It will be seen before long that the government consented to carry a measure going much farther in the direction of democracy than anything that had been ably and consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham. Mr. Disraeli himself could not possibly have had any idea at first of the length to which he would be induced to go. He told Lord



Cranborne, and with especial emphasis, at one stage of the debates, that the government would never introduce household suffrage pure and simple. The bill became in the end a measure to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the towns.

The leading spirits of the government were now determined to carry a reform bill that session, come what would. They were partly influenced, no doubt, by the conviction that it was better to settle the question on some terms, once for all, and let the country have done with it. But, as they themselves avowed more than once, they were also influenced by the idea that if the country would have reform, the men in office might as well keep in office and give it to them. This is not high-minded statesmanship, to be sure; but high-minded statesmanship not uncommonly conducts men out of office, instead of keeping them in it. One by one, all Mr. Disraeli's checks, balances, and securities were abandoned. The dual vote, a proposal to give a double-voting power in boroughs to a rate-paying occupier who also paid 20 shillings of assessed taxes, was laughed out of the bill. The voting-paper principle was abandoned. The fancy franchise was swept clear away. A lodger franchise was introduced. At last it came to a struggle about the nature of the main franchise in boroughs. The bill fixed it that any one rated to the relief of the poor in a borough should have the vote, provided that he had lived two years in the house for which he was rated. An amendment, reducing the two years of qualification to one, was carried in the teeth of the government by a large majority. The government, therefore, agreed to accept the amendment. At various stages of the bill Mr. Disraeli kept announcing that if this or that amendment were carried against the government, the government would not go any farther with the bill; but when the particular amendment was carried, Mr. Disraeli always announced that the ministers had changed their minds after all, and were willing to accept the new alteration. At last this little piece of formality began to be regarded by the house as mere ceremonial. The borough franchise was now reduced to household suffrage with a qualification; but that qualification was one of great importance. If Mr. Disraeli could succeed in inducing the house to admit the qualification, he would have good reason to say that he had kept his promise

to Lord Cranborne, and that he had not consented to accept household suffrage pure and simple. The clause as it now stood excluded from the franchise the compound householder. The compound householder figures largely in the debates of that session. The controversialists on both sides battled for him, like the Greeks and Trojans fighting round the body of Patroclus. He sprang at once into prominence and into history. He and his claims were the theme of discussion and conversation everywhere. Those who did not know what the compound householder was could not possibly have understood the reform debates of 1867. The story goes that a witty public man being asked by a French friend to explain who the compound householder was, described him as the male of the *femme incomprise*. The compound householder, in plain fact, was the occupier of one of the small houses the tenants of which were not themselves rated to the relief of the poor. By certain acts of parliament the owners of small houses were allowed to compound for their rates. The landlord became himself responsible to the parochial authorities, and not the tenant. He paid up the rates on a number of those tenements, and he received a certain reduction in consideration of his assuming the responsibility and saving the local authorities the trouble of collecting by paying up the amounts in a lump sum. As a matter of fact, it need hardly be said that the occupier did actually pay the rates; for the landlord took good care to add the amount in each case to the rent he demanded; but the occupier's name did not appear on the rate-book, nor had he any direct dealing with the parish authorities. The compound householders were so numerous that they were said actually to constitute two-thirds of all the occupiers under £10. In some boroughs, it was stated, an occupier's franchise excluding compound householders would suddenly reduce with sweeping hand the number of existing voters, and the reform bill of Lord Derby's government would be a disfranchising, instead of an enfranchising, measure.

A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Mr. Gladstone's house to decide upon the course which should be taken. Mr. Gladstone had a device of his own to meet the difficulty. His idea was that a line should be drawn, below which houses should not be rated in any form; but that

in every case where a house was rated, the occupier should be entitled to a vote, whether he or his landlord paid the rates. Mr. Gladstone was anxious that the very poorest occupiers should at once be relieved of the obligation to pay rates and not allowed to give a vote. He, and Mr. Bright as well, were haunted by the fear of carrying the vote down too low in the social scale, and introducing to the franchise that class which Mr. Bright described as the *residuum* of the constituency. Now it must be remembered that the Liberal party, if they acted together, could command a majority. They were, therefore, in a position to compel Mr. Disraeli to adopt the principle recommended by Mr. Gladstone. But a remarkable difference of opinion suddenly sprang up. After the meeting at Mr. Gladstone's house a group made up principally of the more advanced Liberals began to doubt the advantage of Mr. Gladstone's proposed low-water line. They thought it would be better to let all householders in boroughs have the vote without distinction. They held a meeting of their own in the tea-room of the House of Commons, and they resolved to inform Mr. Gladstone that they could not support his amendment. They were known from that time forth as the "Tea-room Party;" and they came in for nearly as much condemnation as if they had been concerned in a new gunpowder plot. By their secession Mr. Gladstone's scheme was defeated, and it was made certain that there were not to be two classes of householders, the rated and unrated, in the boroughs. A bold attempt was made then to get rid of the compounding system altogether; and at length, to the surprise of all parties, the government yielded to the pressure. They undertook to abolish the system absolutely, to have the name of every occupier put on the ratebook, to give every occupier the vote, and, in a word, to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the borough constituencies. The tea-room party had conquered both ways. They had prevailed against Mr. Gladstone, and prevailed over Mr. Disraeli.

Many hard words, as we have said, were flung at the tea-room party. Mr. Bright denounced them in severe and scornful language, and asked what could be done in parliamentary politics if every man was to pursue his own little game? "A costermonger and donkey," Mr. Bright said, "would take a week to travel from here to London" (he

was addressing a meeting in Birmingham); "and yet, by running athwart the London and North-western line, they might bring to total destruction a great express train." "Thus," he went on to say, "very small men, who during their whole political lives have not advanced the question of reform by one hair's-breadth, or by one moment in time, can at a critical hour like this throw themselves athwart the objects of a great party, and mar, it may be, a great measure that ought to affect the interests of the country beneficially for all time." The tea-room party, ventured, no doubt, upon a serious parliamentary responsibility when they thus struck out a little policy for themselves independently of their leaders. Yet it can hardly be questioned now that they were in the right as regards their principle. It was a great advantage to get rid of all complications, and all various graduations of franchise, and come at once to the intelligible point of household suffrage. As Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright had themselves admitted and argued at various stages of the debates, it was decidedly objectionable to have the question of franchise mixed up with varying parochial arrangements of any kind, and left to depend on the views of a vestry here and a vestry there. Nor were the tea-room party mutineers who by their conduct had enabled the enemy to triumph. On the contrary they were at the worst only adventurous volunteers who at some risk had won a more decided victory over the enemy than their regular chiefs once ventured to think possible. Certain of them were, perhaps, a little inclined to give themselves airs, because of the risk they had run and the success they had won. But it is only justice to some of them at least to say that they had acted from deliberate calculation as well as from a sense of duty. They were convinced that the government, if pressed, would give in to anything rather than allow the bill to be defeated; and they thought they saw a sudden and secure opportunity for establishing the borough franchise at once on the sound and simple basis of household suffrage.

The struggle now was practically over. The bill had become from a sham a reality; from unmeaning complication it had grown into straightforward clearness. It accomplished a great purpose by establishing a sound principle. It had gone much farther in the way of pure democracy than Mr. Bright had ever proposed, or probably ever

desired, to go. During the discussions Mr. Mill introduced an amendment to admit women who were registered occupiers as well as men to the franchise; in other words, to make the qualification one of occupation only, without reference to sex. The majority of the house were at first disposed to regard this proposition as something merely droll, and to deal with it only in the spirit of pleasantry, and with facetious commentary; but the debate proved a very interesting, grave, and able discussion, and it was the opening of a momentous chapter of political controversy. Mr. Mill got seventy-three members to follow him into the lobby; and although one hundred and ninety-six voted the other way, he was probably well content with the result of the debate. He also raised the question of the representation of minorities, but he did not press it to any positive test. It had, however, a certain distinct triumph before the completion of the measure. When the bill went up to the House of Lords, Lord Cairns moved an amendment to the effect that in places returning three members no elector should vote for more than two. This amendment was carried, although Mr. Disraeli had announced beforehand that the government thought such an arrangement would be "erroneous in principle and pernicious in practice;" and although it had been strongly opposed by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The new principle, it will be seen, acknowledges the propriety of securing a certain proportion of representation to minorities. In a constituency with three representatives each elector votes for only two. Obviously, then, the third is the representative of a minority. It does not by any means follow, however, that he is always the representative of a minority differing in political opinions from the majority. In some of the constituencies to which the bill gave three members, it so happens that there is a majority of one way of thinking large enough to secure the return of all three members. There are electors enough for one party to secure a majority to the two candidates who are especially popular, and yet to spare as many votes as will enable them to carry a third candidate also. Thus the new principle does not in practice always accomplish the object for which it was intended. Indeed, it is plain that in the very instances in which the advocates of the representation of minorities would most desire to secure it—those of places where the minority had

before no chance of obtaining any expression of their views—they would still have little chance under the new arrangement, and would be most easily overborne by combination, discipline, and skill on the part of the majority. The new arrangement was of moment, however, as the first recognition of a principle which may possibly yet have a fuller development; and which if it does can hardly fail to have a serious effect on the present system of government by party. One or two clauses of some importance, not bearing on the general question of reform, were introduced. It was established that parliament need not dissolve on the death of the sovereign, and that members holding places of profit from the crown need not vacate their seats on the acceptance of another office; on their merely passing from one department to another. This was a reasonable and judicious alteration. It is of great importance that when a member of parliament joins an administration, he should give his constituents an opportunity of saying whether they are content to be represented by a member of the government. But when they have answered that question in the affirmative, it can hardly be necessary to undergo the cost and trouble of a new election if their representative happens to be transferred from one office to another. A constituency may have good reason for refusing to elect a member of the administration; but they can hardly have any good reason for rejecting a secretary for the colonies whom they were willing to retain as their representative while he was secretary for India. We are glad, however, that the change in the law was not made a little sooner. History could ill have spared Sir John Pakington's speech at his re-election for Droitwich.

The reform bill passed through its final stage on August 15th, 1867. We may summarize its results thus concisely. It enfranchised in boroughs all male householders rated for the relief of the poor, and all lodgers resident for one year, and paying not less than £10 a year rent; and in counties, persons of property of the clear annual value of £5, and occupiers of lands or tenements paying £12 a year. It disfranchised certain small boroughs, and reduced the representation of other constituencies; it created several new constituencies; among others the borough of Chelsea and the borough of Hackney. It gave a third member to Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds; it gave a

representative to the University of London. It enacted that where there were to be three representatives, each elector should vote for only two candidates; and that in the city of London, which has four members, each elector should only vote for three. The Irish and Scotch reform bills were put off for another year. We may, however, anticipate a little, and dispose of the Scotch and Irish bills at once; the more especially as both, but especially the Irish bill, proved to be very trivial and unsatisfactory. The Scotch bill gave Scotland a borough franchise the same as that of England; and a county franchise based either on £5 clear annual value of property, or an occupation of £14 a year. The government proposed at first to make the county occupation franchise the same as that in England. All qualification as to rating for the poor was, however, struck out of the bill by amendments, the rating systems of Scotland being unlike those of England. The government then put in £14 as the equivalent of the English occupiers £12 rating franchise. Some new seats were given to Scotland which the government at first proposed to get by increasing the number of members of the House of Commons, but which they were forced by amendments to obtain by the disfranchisement of some small English boroughs. The Irish bill is hardly worth mentioning. It left the county franchise as it was, £12, reduced the borough franchise from £8 to £4, and did nothing in the way of redistribution.

While the English reform bill was passing through its several stages, the government went deliberately out of their way to make themselves again ridiculous with regard to the public meetings in Hyde Park. The reform league convened a public meeting to be held in that park on May 6th. Mr. Walpole, on May 1st, issued a proclamation intended to prevent the meeting, and warning all persons not to attend it. The league took legal advice, found that their meeting would not be contrary to law, and accordingly issued a counter-proclamation asserting their right, and declaring that the meeting would be held in order to maintain it. The government found out a little too late that the league had strict law on their side. The law gave to the crown control over the parks, and the right of prosecuting trespassers of any kind; but it gave the administration no power to anticipate trespass from the holding of a

public meeting and to prohibit it in advance. The meeting was held; it was watched by a large body of police and soldiers; but it passed over very quietly, and indeed to curious spectators looking for excitement seemed a very humdrum sort of affair. Mr. Walpole, the home secretary, who had long been growing weary of the thankless troubles of his office at a time of such excitement, and who was not strong enough to face the difficulties of the hour, resigned his post. Mr. Walpole retained, however, his seat in the cabinet. "He will sit on these benches," said Mr. Disraeli in announcing to the House of Commons his colleague's resignation of the home office; "and although not a minister of the crown, he will be one of her majesty's responsible advisers." He was a man highly esteemed by all parties; a man of high principle and of amiable character. But he was not equal to the occasion when any difficulty arose, and he contrived to put himself almost invariably in the wrong when dealing with the reform league. He exerted his authority at a wrong time, and in a wrong way; and he generally withdrew from his wrong position in somewhat too penitent and humble an attitude. He strained too far the authority of his place, and he did not hold high enough its dignity. He was succeeded in office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who left the poor law board to become home secretary.

The reform bill then was passed. The "leap in the dark" was taken. Thus did the prime minister, Lord Derby, describe the policy of himself and his colleagues. The phrase has become historical, and its authorship is invariably ascribed to Lord Derby. It was in fact Lord Cranborne who first used it. During the debates in the House of Commons he had taunted the government with taking a leap in the dark. Lord Derby adopted the expression, and admitted it to be a just description of the movement which he and his ministry had made. It is impossible to deny that the government acted sagaciously in settling the question so promptly and so decisively; in agreeing to almost anything rather than postpone the settlement of the controversy even for another year. But one is still lost in wonder at the boldness, the audacity, with which the Conservative government threw away in succession every principle which they had just been proclaiming essential to Conservatism and put on Radicalism as a garment.



On a memorable occasion Mr. Disraeli said that Peel caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes. Now he himself had ventured on a still less scrupulous act of spoliation. He helped to turn the Whigs out of their clothes in order that he might get into the garments. Nothing could have been more surprising than the courage with which he undertook the series of transformations, unless, perhaps, the elaborate simplicity with which toward the end he represented himself as one who was acting in the truest spirit of consistency. Few could help being impressed, or at least imposed upon, by the calm earnestness of his declarations. Juvenal's Greek deceived the very eyesight of the spectators by the cleverness of his personation. Mr. Disraeli was almost equally successful. The success was not, perhaps, likely to conduce to an exalted political morality. The one thing, however, which most people were thinking of in the autumn of 1867 was that the reform question was settled at last, and for a long time. Nothing more would be heard of the unenfranchised millions and the noble workingman, on the one hand; of the swart mechanic's bloody thumbs and the reign of anarchy, on the other. Mr. Lowe is entitled to the last word of the controversy. The workingmen, the majority, the people who live in the small houses, are enfranchised; "we must now," Mr. Lowe said, "at least educate our new masters."

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## CHAPTER LIII.

### THE FENIAN MOVEMENT.

THE session of parliament which passed the reform bill was not many days over when the country was startled by the news that a prison van had been stopped and broken open under broad day in Manchester, and two political prisoners rescued from the custody of the police. The political prisoners were Fenians. We have spoken already of the Fenian movement as one of the troubles now gathering around the path of successive governments. It was at an early period of Lord Russell's administration that the public first heard anything substantial about the movement. On February 16th, 1866; parliament was surprised not a little

by an announcement which the government had to make. Lord Russell told the House of Lords, and Sir George Grey announced to the House of Commons, that the government intended to suspend the *habeas corpus* act in Ireland, and that both houses of parliament were to be called together next day for the purpose of enabling the ministry to carry out this resolve. The next day was Saturday, an unusual day for a parliamentary sitting at any early part of the session; unusual, indeed, when the session had only just begun. The government could only excuse such a summons to the Lords and Commons on the plea of absolute urgency; and the word soon went round in the lobbies that a serious discovery had been made; and that a conspiracy of a formidable nature was preparing a rebellion in Ireland. The two houses met next day, and a measure was introduced to suspend the *habeas corpus* act in Ireland, and give the lord-lieutenant almost unlimited power to arrest and detain suspected persons. The measure was run through its three readings in both houses in the course of the day. The House of Lords had to keep up their sitting until the document should arrive from Osborne to authorize the commissioners to give the queen's assent to the bill. The Lords, therefore, having discussed the subject sufficiently to their satisfaction at a comparatively early hour of the evening, suspended the sitting until eleven at night. They then resumed, and waited patiently for the authority to come from Osborne, where the queen was staying. Shortly before midnight the needful authority arrived, and the bill became law at twenty minutes before one o'clock on Sunday morning.

It seems almost superfluous to say that such a bill was not allowed to pass without some comment, and even some opposition, in the House of Commons. Mr. Bright made a speech which has always since been regarded as in every sense one of the very finest he ever delivered. That was the speech in which he declared his conviction that, "if the majority of the people of Ireland, counted fairly out, had their will and had the power, they would unmoor the island from its fastenings in the deep, and move it at least two thousand miles to the west." That was in itself a sufficiently humiliating confession for an English statesman to have to make. It was not humiliating to Mr. Bright personally; for he had always striven to obtain

such legislation for Ireland as should enable her to feel that hers was a friendly partnership with England, and not a compulsory and unequal connection. But it was humbling to any Englishman of spirit and sense to have to acknowledge that, after so many years and centuries of experiment and failure, the government of England had not yet learned the way to keep up the connection between the countries without coercion acts and measures of repression in Ireland. No Englishman who puts the question fairly to his conscience will deny that, if he were considering a matter that concerned a foreign country and a foreign government, he would regard the mere fact as a condemnation of its system of rule. It would be idle to try to persuade him that it was all the fault of the Poles if the Russians had to govern by mere force in Poland; all the fault of the Venetians if the Austrians could never get beyond a mere encampment in Venetia. His strong common sense, unclouded in such a case by prejudice, would at once enable him to declare with conviction, that where, after long trial, a state cannot govern a population except by sheer force, the cause must be sought in the badness of the governing system rather than in the perversity of human nature among the governed. Mr. Mill who spoke in the same debate, put the matter effectively enough when he observed that if the captain of a ship, or the master of a school, has continually to have recourse to violent measures to keep crew or boys in order, we assume, without asking for further evidence, that there is something wrong in his system of management. Mr. Mill dwelt with force and justice on one possible explanation of the difficulty which English governments seem always to encounter in Ireland. He spoke of the "eternal political *non possumus*" which English statesmen opposed to every special demand for legislation in Ireland; a *non possumus* which, as he truly said, only means, "we don't do it in England."

The *habeas corpus* act was, therefore, suspended once more in Ireland. The government acknowledged that they had to deal with a new rebellion in that country. That rebellion this time might have sprung up from the ground, so suddenly did the knowledge of it seem to have come upon the vast majority of the public here. Yet there had for a long time been symptoms enough to give warning of such a movement, and it soon proved to be formidable to a degree which not many even then suspected.

The Fenian movement differed from nearly all previous movements of the same kind in Ireland, in the fact that it arose and grew into strength without the patronage or the help of any of those who might be called the natural leaders of the people. In 1798 and in 1848 the rebellion bore unmistakably what may be called the "follow-my-leader" character. Some men of great ability, or strength of purpose, or high position, or all attributes combined, made themselves leaders, and the others followed. In 1798 the rising had the impulse of almost intolerable personal as well as national grievance; but it is doubtful whether any formidable and organized movement might have been made but for the leadership of such men as Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. In 1848 there were such impulses as the traditional leadership of Smith O'Brien, the indomitable purpose of Mitchel, and the impassioned eloquence of Meagher. But Fenianism seemed to have sprung out of the very soil of Ireland itself. Its leaders were not men of high position, or distinguished name, or proved ability. They were not of aristocratic birth; they were not orators; they were not powerful writers. It was not the impulse of the American civil war that engendered Fenianism; although that war had great influence on the manner in which Fenianism shaped its course. Fenianism had been in existence, in fact, although it had not got its peculiar name, long before the American war created a new race of Irishmen—the Irish-American soldiers—to turn their energies and their military inclination to a new purpose.

Agitation in the form of secret association had never ceased in Ireland. One result of prosecutions for seditious speaking and writing in Ireland is invariably the encouragement of secret combination. Whether it be right or wrong, necessary or unnecessary, to prosecute for seditious speaking or writing in Ireland, is not a matter with which we have to concern ourselves when we make this statement. We state a fact which cannot be controverted. It is assuredly a fact to be taken into the gravest consideration by those who are entrusted with the maintenance of order. It ought at least to impress them with a sense of the necessity for being cautious how they run the risk of government prosecutions for mere indiscretions of pen or tongue. "When popular discontents are abroad," said

Curran, condemning the policy of the Irish administration of his day, "a wise government would put them into a hive of glass; you hid them." The suspension of the *habeas corpus* act, in consequence of the 1848 movement, led, as a matter of course, to secret association. Before the trials of the Irish leaders were well over in that year, a secret association was formed by a large number of young Irishmen in cities and towns. It was got up by young men of good character and education; it spread from town to town; it was conducted with the most absolute secrecy; it had no informer in its ranks. It had its oath of fidelity and its regular leaders, its nightly meetings, and even to a limited and cautious extent its nightly drillings. It was a failure, because in the nature of things it could not be anything else. The young men had not arms enough anywhere to render them formidable in any one place; and the necessity of carrying on their communications with different towns in profound secrecy, and by roundabout ways of communication, made a prompt concerted action impossible. After two or three attempts to arrange for a simultaneous rising had failed, or had ended only in little abortive and isolated ebullitions, the young men became discouraged. Some of the leaders went to France, some to the United States, some actually to England; and the association melted away. That was the happiest end it could possibly have had. Concerted action would only have meant the useless waste of a few scores or hundreds of brave young lives. Some years after this, the "Phœnix" clubs began to be formed in Ireland. They were for the most part associations of the peasant class, and were on that account, perhaps, the more formidable and earnest; for the secret association of which we have already spoken was mainly the creation of young men of a certain culture who felt ashamed and disappointed that the Young Ireland movement should have ended without a more gallant display of arms. The Phœnix clubs led to some of the ordinary prosecutions and convictions; and that was all. Up to that time it did not seem to have entered into the mind of any official English statesman that such things might possibly be a consequence and not a cause. It was thought enough to put them down and punish them when they came. It was accounted an offense against law and order hardly less flagrant than that of the secret agitators them-

selves to ask whether, perhaps, there was not some real cause for all this agitation, with which serious statesmanship could easily deal if it only took a little honest thought and trouble. After the Phoenix associations came the Fenians. "This is a serious business now," said a clever English literary man when he heard of the Fenian organization; "the Irish have got hold of a good name this time; the Fenians will last." The Fenians are said to have been the ancient Irish militia. In Scott's "Antiquary," Hector M'Intyre, jealous for the honor and the genuineness of Ossian's songs of Selma, recites a part of one in which Ossian asks St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, whether he ventures to compare his psalms "to the tales of the bare-armed Fenians." There can be no doubt that the tales of the bare-armed Fenians were passed from mouth to mouth of the Celts in Ireland and the highlands of Scotland, from a time long before that at which any soothsayer or second-sighted sage could have dreamed of the landing of Strongbow and the perfidy of the wife of Bressni. There was an air of Celtic antiquity and of mystery about the name of Fenian which merited the artistic approval given to it by the impartial English writer whose observation has just been quoted. The Fenian agitation began about 1858, and it came to perfection about the middle of the American civil war. It was ingeniously arranged on a system by which all authority converged toward one center, and those farthest away from the seat of direction knew proportionately less and less about the nature of the plans. They had to obey instructions only, and it was hoped by this means weak or doubtful men would not have it in their power prematurely to reveal, to betray, or to thwart the purposes of their leaders. A convention was held in America, and the Fenian association was resolved into a regular organized institution. A provisional government was established in the neighborhood of Union Square, New York, with all the array and mechanism of an actual working administration. Soon after this there began to be frequent visitations of mysterious strangers to Ireland.

The emigration of the Irish to America had introduced an entirely new element into political calculations. One of the men of 1848, who took refuge in the United States at first, and who afterward went to Canada and became very influential there, wrote home from New York to say that

“we have the long arm of the lever here.” There was much truth in this view of the state of things. The Irish grew rapidly in numbers and in strength all over the United States. The constitutional system adopted there enabled them almost at once to become citizens of the republic. They availed themselves of this privilege almost universally. The American political system, whatever may be thought of its various merits or defects, is peculiarly adapted to fill the populations with a quick interest in politics. There are undoubtedly certain classes among the wealthier who are so engrossed in money-making and in business as to have little time left to trouble themselves about politics; and there are many who, out of genuine or affected distaste for noisy controversy and the crowd, hold aloof deliberately from all political organizations. But the working part of the community, especially in the cities, are almost invariably politicians. Every election, every political trial of strength, has its practical beginning at the primary meetings of the electors of each place. These meetings are attended largely, one might almost say mainly, by the humbler classes of voters. From the primary meeting to the fall elections, and from the ordinary fall elections to the choice of the president, the system is so adjusted as to take the humblest voter along with it. The Irish workingman, who had never probably had any chance of giving a vote in his own country, found himself in the United States a person of political power, whose vote was courted by the leaders of different parties, and whose sentiments were flattered by the wire-pullers of opposing factions. He was not slow to appreciate the value of this influence in its bearing on that political question which in all the sincerity of his American citizenship was still the dearest to his heart—the condition of Ireland. In the United States—we do not say in Canada—the differences between Irishmen of different religions and factions have not much interfered with their views on purely Irish questions. Dislike of England, or at least of English governments, prevails among many Irishmen from the northern province settled in the United States, who assuredly, if they had remained at home, would have brought up their children in devotion to English rule and the traditions of the House of Orange. But of course the vast, the overwhelming majority of the Irish in America is made up of

men who have come from the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, and whose anti-English sentiments have only become stronger and stronger in proportion to the length of time and distance that divided them from their old home. If it were to be distinctly declared that every Irishman in the United States was in his heart an enemy of England, there might probably be found instances enough the other way to discredit the literal accuracy of the assertion. But we know with what contempt Dr. Johnson spoke of the literal accuracy which replied to the statement that a certain orchard contained no fruit by showing that it actually had three apples and four pears. To all who do not insist on that sort of accuracy it will be proper to say that, speaking generally, all the Irish population in the United States is animated by feelings of hostility to English dominion in Ireland. Filled with this feeling, the Irish in the states made their political organizations the means of keeping up a constant agitation, having for its object to secure the co-operation of American parties in some designs against England. One of the great political parties into which the northern states were divided made it a part of their electioneering business to conciliate the Irish vote in the populous cities. They professed great affection for Ireland and sympathy with Irish grievances; they gave the word of order to their American followers to patronize the Irish; their leaders were often to be seen on the platform at Irish meetings; the municipal authorities of some of the great towns took part in the Irish processions on St. Patrick's Day; more than once the American mayor of an American city exhibited himself arrayed in garments of green on that anniversary. The Irish vote was at one time absolutely necessary to the democratic party in the United States; and the democratic party were ready to give a seeming countenance to any scheme which happened for the moment to allure the hopes of the Irish populations. After the civil war the feelings of almost all the political parties in the states, in the south as well as in the north, were hostile to England. At such a moment and under such a condition of things, it cannot be matter of surprise if the hopes of the Irish populations were excited to the highest degree. The confidence felt by so many persons in this country that the Alabama controversy had been dropped forever by American statesmen, had not the



slightest support from the bearing or resolve of any of the great American parties. It is quite easy to imagine a condition of things just then, which would have led a light-hearted American president to try to bring together all classes of the American population in a war against England. The length of the almost indefensible Canadian frontier line would have given America the immense advantage of being able to choose her own battle-ground. Such a war would at one time have been welcomed with enthusiasm all over the states. The objections of calm and cautious minds would have been borne down and swept away in a very wave of popular passion. It is not surprising if, under such circumstances, many of the Fenian leaders in America should have thought it easy to force the hand of the government, and to bring on a war with England. At all events, it is not surprising if they should have believed that the American government would put forth little effort to prevent the Fenians from using the frontier of the United States as a basis of operations against England.

The civil war had introduced a new figure to the world's stage. This was the Irish-American soldier. He had the bright, humorous countenance of the Celt, with the peculiar litheness and military swagger of the American "boy in blue." He had some of the American shrewdness grafted on to his Irish love of adventure. In thousands of cases he spoke with an American accent, and had never set foot on the soil of that Ireland from which his fathers came, and which, to do him justice, he loved with a passion at once romantic and sincere. He might have fought for the north, or he might have fought for the south. He might have ranged himself under the colors borne by Thomas Francis Meagher—"Meagher of the Sword"—or he might have followed the fearless lead of "Pat Cleburne." Perhaps he was one of the Irish brigade who joined in the desperate charges up the heights of Fredericksburg; or perhaps he was one of the equally brave men who successfully held those heights for the south. It was all the same when the interests of Ireland came to be concerned: he was ready to forget all differences in a companionship on that question. Many of these men—thousands of them—were as sincerely patriotic in their way as they were simple and brave. It is needless to say that they

were fastened on in some instances by adventurers, who fomented the Fenian movement out of the merest and the meanest self-seeking. Men swaggered about Union Square, New York, as Fenian leaders, who had not the faintest notion of risking their own valuable lives in any quarrel more dignified than a bar-room row in the sixth ward—"the Big Sixth" of New York. Some were making a living out of the organization—out of that, and apparently nothing else. The contributions given by poor Irish hack-drivers and servant girls, in the sincere belief that they were helping to man the ranks of an Irish army of independence, enabled some of these self-appointed leaders to wear fine clothes and to order expensive dinners. Of course something of this kind is to be said of every such organization. It is especially likely to be true of any organization got up in a country like America, where the field of agitation is open to everybody alike, with little of authority or prescription to govern the taking of places. But, in the main, it is only fair to say that the Fenian movement in the United States was got up, organized, and manned by persons who, however they may have been mistaken as to their ends and misguided as to their means, were single-hearted, unselfish, and faithfully devoted to their cause. It is necessary that this should be said somewhat emphatically, for the mind of the English public has always been curiously misled with regard to the character of the Fenian organization. In this, as in other instances, the public conscience of England has too often been lulled to sleep by the assurance that all who reject the English point of view must be either fools or knaves, and that there is no occasion for sensible men to take any account of their demands or their protestations. It may be well, too, to emphasize the fact that the plans of the Fenians were not by any means the fantastically foolish projects that it is the custom here to believe them. They resembled in some respects the projects of the Polish insurgents, which we have described in another chapter of this work. Like the Polish schemes, they were founded on calculations which did not turn out as might have been expected, but which, nevertheless, might very easily have come right. The Polish rebellion was started in the hope that some of the European powers would come to the help of Poland; and no European power did come to its help. But there was at one time, as we

know now, a very great chance indeed that such help would be strongly given. The Fenian rising was inspired by the hope that the United States and England would be at war; and we know now that they were more than once on the very verge of war. It is, we believe, quite certain that the officers were already named by the American authorities who were to have conducted an invasion of Canada. Those who did not happen to have known America and American life in the days shortly after the close of the civil war, can have hardly any idea of the bitterness of feeling against England that prevailed then all over the states, in the south just as much as in the north. If the English government had peremptorily and absolutely rejected the idea of arbitration with regard to the Alabama claims, at any time between 1865 and 1868, it is all but certain that America would have declared war. An American invasion of Canada would have made a Fenian rising in Ireland a very different trouble from that which under the actual conditions it afterward proved to be.

Meanwhile there began to be a constant mysterious influx of strangers into Ireland. They were strangers who for the most part had Celtic features and the bearing of American soldiers. They distributed themselves throughout the towns and villages; most of them had relatives or old friends here and there, to whom they told stories of the share they had had in the big wars across the Atlantic and of the preparations that were making in the states for the accomplishment of Irish independence. All this time the Fenians in the states were filling the columns of friendly journals with accounts of the growth of their organization and announcements of the manner in which it was to be directed to its purpose. After awhile things went so far that the Fenian leaders in the United States issued an address, announcing that their officers were going to Ireland to raise an army there for the recovery of the country's independence; of course the government here were soon quite prepared to receive them; and indeed the authorities easily managed to keep themselves informed by means of spies of all that was going on in Ireland. The spy system was soon flourishing in full force. Every considerable gathering of Fenians had among its numbers at least one person who generally professed a yet fiercer devotion to the cause than any of the rest, and who was in the habit of

carrying to Dublin Castle every night his official report of what his Fenian colleagues had been doing. It is positively stated that in one instance a Protestant detective in the pay of the government actually passed himself off as a Catholic, and took the sacrament openly in a Catholic church in order to establish his Catholic orthodoxy in the eyes of his companions. One need not be a Catholic in order to understand the grossness of the outrage which conduct like this must seem to be in the eyes of all who believe in the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Meanwhile the head center of Fenianism in America, James Stephens, who had borne a part in the movement of 1848, arrived in Ireland. He was arrested in company of Mr. James Kickham, the author of many poems of great sweetness and beauty; a man of pure and virtuous character. Stephens was committed to Richmond prison, Dublin, early in November, 1865; but before many days had passed the country was startled by the news that he had contrived to make his escape. The escape was planned with skill and daring. For a time it helped to strengthen the impression on the mind of the Irish peasantry that in Stephens there had at last been found an insurgent leader of adequate courage, craft, and good fortune.

Stephens disappeared for a moment from the stage. In the meantime disputes and dissensions had arisen among the Fenians in America. The schism had gone so far as to lead to the setting up of two separate associations. There were of course distracted plans. One party was for an invasion of Canada; another pressed for operations in Ireland itself. The Canadian attempt actually was made. A small body of Fenians, a sort of advance guard, crossed the Niagara river on the night of May 31st, 1866, occupied Fort Erie, and drove back the Canadian volunteers who first advanced against them. For a moment a gleam of success shone on the attempt; but the United States enforced the neutrality of their frontier line with a sudden energy and strictness wholly unexpected by the Fenians. They prevented any further crossing of the river, and arrested several of the leaders on the American side. The Canadian authorities hurried up reinforcements; several Fenians were taken and shot; others recrossed the river, and the invasion scheme was over.

Then Stephens came to the front again. It was only

for a moment. He had returned to New York, and he now announced that he was determined to strike a blow in Ireland. Before long the impression was spread abroad that he had actually left the states to return to the scene of his proposed insurrection. The American-Irish kept streaming across the Atlantic, even in the stormy winter months, in the firm belief that before the winter had passed away, or at the farthest while the spring was yet young, Stephens would appear in Ireland at the head of an insurgent army. Not many, surely, of those actually living in Ireland could have had any faith in the possibility of such a movement having even a momentary success on Irish soil. All who knew anything of the condition of the country must have known that the peasantry were unarmed, and utterly unprepared for any such attempt; that the great majority of the populations everywhere were entirely opposed to such wild enterprises; that the Catholic clergy especially were endeavoring everywhere to keep their people back from secret organization or insurrectionary scheme. But the Irish-Americans, who had made their way into Ireland, were for the most part not acquainted with the condition of the country; and it was owing to their presence and their influence that at length an attempt at rebellion was actually made. Stephens did not reappear in Ireland. He made no attempt to keep his warlike promise. He may be said to have disappeared from the history of Fenianism. But the preparations had gone too far to be suddenly stopped. Many of his followers were filled with shame at the collapse of the enterprise on which they had risked so much, and they were impatient to give some sign of their personal energy and sincerity. It was hastily decided that something should be done. One venture was a scheme for the capture of Chester Castle. The plan was that a sufficient number of the Fenians in England should converge toward the ancient town of Chester, should suddenly appear there on a given day in February, 1867, capture the castle, seize the arms they found there, cut the telegraph wires, make for Holyhead, but a short distance by rail, seize on some vessels there, and then steam for the Irish coast. The government were fully informed of the plot in advance; the police were actually on the look-out for the arrival of strangers in Chester, and the enterprise melted away. In March, 1867, an attempt at a

general rising was made in Ireland. It was a total failure; the one thing on which the country had to be congratulated was that it failed so completely and so quickly as to cause little bloodshed. Every influence combined to minimize the waste of life. The snow fell that spring as it had scarcely ever fallen before in the soft, mild climate of Ireland. Silently, unceasingly it came down all day long and all night long; it covered the roads and the fields; it made the gorges of the mountains untenable, and the gorges of the mountains were to be the encampments and the retreats of the Fenian insurgents. The snow fell for many days and nights, and when it ceased falling the insurrectionary movement was over. The insurrection was literally buried in that unlooked-for snow. There were some attacks on police barracks in various places—in Cork, in Kerry, in Limerick, in Tipperary, in Louth; there were some conflicts with the police; there were some shots fired, many captures made, a few lives lost; and then for the time at least all was over. The Fenian attempt thus made had not from the beginning a shadow of hope to excuse it. Every patriotic Irishman of whatever party must have felt a sense of relief when it was evident that the insurrection was over and that so little harm had been done.

There was, however, much feeling in England as well as in Ireland for some of the Fenian leaders who now began to be put upon their trials. They bore themselves with manliness and dignity. Some of them had been brave soldiers in the American civil war, and were entitled to wear honorable marks of distinction. Many had given up a successful career or a prosperous calling in the United States to take part in what they were led to believe would be the great national uprising of the Irish people. They spoke up with courage in the dock, and declared their perfect readiness to die for what they held to be a sacred cause. They indulged in no bravado and uttered no word of repining. All manhood should have deserted the English heart if the English people did not acknowledge some admiration for such men. Many did acknowledge such admiration freely and generally. The newspaper in London which most of all addresses itself to the gratification of the popular passion of the hour, frankly declared that the Fenian leaders were entitled to the respect of Englishmen because they had given such earnest of their

sincerity, and such proof that they knew how to die. One of the leaders, Colonel Burke, who had served with distinction in the army of the southern confederation, was sentenced to death in May, 1867. A great public meeting was held in St. James' Hall, in London, to adopt a memorial praying that the sentence might not be carried out. Among those who addressed the meeting was Mr. Mill. It was almost altogether an English meeting. The hall was crowded with English workmen. The Irish element had hardly any direct representation there. Yet there was absolute unanimity, there was intense enthusiasm, in favor of the mitigation of the sentence on Colonel Burke and his companions. The great hall rang with cheer after cheer as Mr. Mill, in a voice made stronger than its wont by the intensity of his emotions, pleaded for a policy of mercy. It is satisfactory to be able to say that the voice of that great meeting was heard in the ministerial councils, and that the sentence of death was not inflicted.

Not many months after this event the world was roused to amazement by the news of the daring rescue of Fenian prisoners in Manchester. Two Fenian prisoners named Kelly and Deasy were being conveyed in the prison van from one of the police courts to the borough jail to await further examination. On the way the van was stopped by a number of armed Fenians who demanded the surrender of the prisoners. They surrounded the van and endeavored to break in the door of it. The door was locked on the inside, and the key was in the keeping of a police officer, Brett, who sat within. A shot was fired at the key-hole, probably in the hope of blowing off the lock—this was the opinion of one at least of the police who gave evidence—and poor Brett was just in the way of the bullet. The unfortunate policeman, who was only preparing to do his duty bravely by refusing to give up his charge, and by defending his position to the last, received a wound of which he died soon after. The doors were then opened, a woman prisoner in the van handing out the keys which she found in the pocket of the unfortunate officer; and the prisoners were rescued. "Kelly, I'll die for you!" was the exclamation heard to be uttered by one of the Fenian rescuers. He kept his word.

The rescue was accomplished; the prisoners were hurried away, and were never after seen by English officials. The

principal rescuers died for them. Several men were put on their trial for the murder of Brett. Five were found guilty; their names were Allen, Larkin, O'Brien, Condon or Shore, and Maguire. Allen was a young fellow—a mere lad under twenty. The defense was that the prisoners only meditated a rescue, and that the death of the policeman was but an accident. It should be said, also, that each of those who avowed having taken part in the rescue, denied that he had fired the fatal shot. Legally, of course, this would have availed them nothing. Shots were fired. Those who take part in an unlawful assemblage for an unlawful purpose, become responsible for the acts of their confederates. But it is worth noting as a fact that the men who gloried in the rescue, and died glorying in it, declared to the last that they had not fired the shot which killed Brett. All the five were sentenced to death. Then followed an almost unprecedented occurrence. One of the five, Maguire, had simply pleaded in his defense that he had been arrested by mistake; that he never was near the spot on the day of the rescue; that he was a loyal private in the Marines, and no Fenian; that he never knew anything about the plot or heard of it until he was arrested. The jury convicted him along with all the others. But the reporters for the press had been so struck with the apparent genuineness of the man's defense, that they took the unprecedented step of joining in a memorial to the government, expressing their conviction that in his case the finding of the jury was a mistake. The government made inquiry, and it was found that Maguire's defense was a truth, and that his arrest was a mere blunder. He received a pardon at once, that being the only way in which he could be extricated from the effect of the mistaken verdict. Naturally the news of this singular miscarriage of justice threw a great doubt on the soundness of the verdict in the other cases. Many strenuous attempts were made to procure a commutation of the sentence. Mr. Bright exerted himself with characteristic energy and humanity. Mr. Swinburne, the poet, made an appeal to the people of England in lines of great power and beauty on behalf of a policy of mercy to the prisoners. Lord Derby, who had then come to be at the head of the government, refused to listen to any appeal. He declared that it was not a political offense, but simply a murder, common-



place in everything save its peculiar atrocity. He was even ungenerous enough to declare that the act for which he had determined that the men should die was a "dastardly" deed. This was not merely a superfluous piece of ungenerosity; it was simply a misapplication of words. A minister of the crown might well denounce, in the strongest language that could be made appropriate to the occasion, so lawless an act as that for which Allen and his companions were condemned; but there was no excuse for calling it dastardly. The conduct of a handful of men, who stopped a police-van in a great city at the risk of their own lives rescued some of their political heroes from custody, proclaiming at the same time their readiness to die for the deed, might be called lawless, might even be called criminal; but, if words have any meaning at all, it could not be called dastardly. We can easily test the question, if we do not maintain the creed that moral laws change according as they are applied by different persons. Let us suppose that, instead of the rescue of two Fenians in Manchester, Lord Derby had been talking of the rescue of two Garibaldians in Rome. Let us suppose that the papal police were carrying off two of the followers of Garibaldi to a Roman prison, and that a few Garibaldians stopped the van in open day, and within reach of the whole force of the papal gendarmes, broke the van open and rescued the prisoners, and that in the affray one of the papal police was killed. Does anybody suppose that Lord Derby would have stigmatized the conduct of the rescuing Garibaldians as dastardly? Is it not more likely that, even if he yielded so far to official proprieties as to call it misguided, he would have qualified his disapprobation by declaring that it was also heroic?

One other of the five prisoners who were convicted together escaped the death-sentence. This was Condon, or Shore, an American by citizenship if not by birth. He had undoubtedly been concerned in the attempt at rescue; but for some reason a distinction was made between him and the others. This act of mercy, in itself highly commendable, added to the bad effect produced in Ireland by the execution of the other three men; for it gave rise to the belief that Shore had been spared only because the protection of the American government might have been invoked on his behalf. The other three, Allen, Farkin,

and O'Brien, were executed. They all met death with courage and composure. It would be superfluous to say that their deaths did not discourage the spirit of Fenianism. On the contrary, they gave it a new lease of life.

Indeed, the execution of these men did not even tend to prevent crime. The excitement caused by the attempt they had made and the penalty they paid had hardly died away when a crime of a peculiarly atrocious nature was committed in the name of Fenianism. On November 23, 1867, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were hanged at Manchester. On December 13th an attempt was made to blow up the house of detention at Clerkenwell. About four o'clock that day all London was startled by a shock and a sound resembling the distant throb of an earthquake or the blowing up of a powder-magazine. The explanation soon came. Two Fenian prisoners were in the Clerkenwell house of detention, and some sympathizers outside had attempted to rescue them by placing a barrel of gunpowder close to the wall of the prison, and exploding the powder by means of a match and a fuse. About sixty yards of the prison wall were blown in, and numbers of small houses in the neighborhood were shattered to pieces. Six persons were killed on the spot; about six more died from the effects of the injuries they received; some hundred and twenty persons were wounded. Forty premature confinements were the consequence of the shock received by women, and twenty of the babes died in their birth. The clumsiness of the crime was only surpassed by its atrocity. Had the prisoners on whose behalf the attempt was made been near the wall at the time, they must have shared the fate of those who were victimized outside. Had they even been taking exercise in the yard, they would, in all probability, have been killed. They would have been taking exercise at the time had it not been for a warning the authorities at Scotland Yard received two days before, to the effect that an attempt at rescue was to be made by means of gunpowder and the blowing in of the wall. In consequence of this warning the governor of the prison had the prisoners confined to their cells that day; and thus, in all probability, they owed their lives to the disclosure of the secret plan which their officious and ill-omened admirers had in preparation for their rescue. Why the prison authorities and the police, thus forewarned, did not keep a sufficient watch upon

the line of prison wall to prevent the possibility of any such scheme being put into execution, it passes the wit of man to comprehend. At the very time that this horrible crime and blunder was perpetrated, one of the London theaters was nightly crowded by spectators eager to see an Irish melodrama, among the incidents of which was the discussion of a plan for the rescue of a prisoner from a castle cell. The audience were immensely amused by the proposal of one confederate to blow up the castle altogether, and the manner in which it occurred to the simple plotters, just in time, that if they carried out this plan they must send the prisoner himself flying into air. The Clerkenwell conspirators had either not seen the popular drama or had missed the point of its broadest joke.

Five men and a woman were put on trial for the crime. The chief justice, before whom the charge was tried, directed the withdrawal of the proceedings against the woman and one of the men, as there seemed to be no case against them. Three others were acquitted after a long trial; one man was convicted. Unfortunately for the moral effect of the conviction, the man was found guilty on the evidence of an informer; and a very strong attempt had been made to prove that the prisoner was not in London at all at the time when he was charged with the commission of the crime. A sort of official but extra-judicial inquiry took place as to the validity of the plea of *alibi*, and the result was that the chief justice and the authorities at the home office declared themselves satisfied with the verdict. Mr. Bright raised the question in the House of Commons, and urged a further delay of the execution; but he was answered with the assurance that no doubt was any longer felt as to the propriety of the verdict. The man was executed. So far as it is possible to judge, the persons who were concerned in the plot to blow in the prison wall appear to have been of that irresponsible crew who hang on to the skirts of all secret political associations, and whose adhesion is only one other reason for regarding such associations as deplorable and baneful. Such men are of the class who bring a curse, who bring many curses, on even the best cause that strives to work in secret. They prowl after the heels of organized conspiracy, and what it will not do they are ready in some fatal moment to attempt. It would be the merest injustice to deny that among the

recognized leaders of the Fenian movement were men of honorable feeling and sincere although misguided patriotism. It would be as cruel and as unjust to suppose that these men could have had any sympathy with such an outrage as that which destroyed the innocent women and children at Clerkenwell. But the political conspirator may well pause, before entering on his schemes, to reflect that an authority exercised in secret can never be sure of making itself thoroughly felt, and of preventing some desperate follower from undertaking on his own account a deed which his leaders would never have sanctioned. If no other reason existed, this thought alone might be enough to set men's hearts against secret political confederation.

It is not necessary to follow out the steps of the Fenian movement any further. There were many isolated attempts; there were many arrests, trials, imprisonments, banishments. The effect of all this, it must be stated as a mere historical fact, was only to increase the intensity of dissatisfaction and discontent among the Irish peasantry. It is curious to notice how entirely Irish in its character the movement was, and how little sympathy it gave to or got from the movements of continental revolution. In one or two instances some restless soldier of universal democracy found his way from the Continent to place his services at the disposal of the Fenians. The alliance was never successful. The stranger did not like the Irish; the Irish did not take to the stranger. Their ways were different. The Irish people, and more especially the Irish peasantry, failed altogether to be captivated by the prospect of the "democratic and social republic." They did not even understand what was meant by the vague grandeur of the phraseology which describes the supposed common cause as "the revolution." Eloquence about the solidarity of peoples was lost on them. The most extreme of them only dreamed of the independence of Ireland; they had no ambition to bear a part in a general pulling down of old institutions.

The phenomena of the Fenian movement did not fail to impress some statesman-like minds in England. There were some public men who saw that the time had come when mere repression must no longer be relied upon as a cure for Irish discontent. We know since that time that even the worst excesses of the movement impressed the

mind of Mr. Gladstone with a conviction that the hour was appropriate for doing something to remove the causes of the discontent that made Ireland restless. The impatient and silly nurse tries to stop the child's crying by beating it; a more careful and intelligent person makes a prompt investigation, and finds that a pin is sticking into the little sufferer. The English government had for a long time been the stupid nurse to the crying child. They had tried threatening words and quick blows. The cry of complaint still was heard. It occurred at last to some men of responsible authority to seek out the cause and quietly try to remove it. While many public instructors lost themselves in vain shriekings over the wickedness of Fenianism and the incurable perversity of the Irish people, one statesman was already convinced that the very shock of the Fenian agitation would arouse public attention to the recognition of substantial grievance, and to the admission that the business of statesmanship was to seek out the remedy and provide redress.

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## CHAPTER LIV.

### TRADES-UNIONS.

ENGLISH society was much distressed and disturbed about the same time by the stories of outrages more cruel, and of a conspiracy more odious and alarming in its purpose, than any that could be ascribed to the Fenian movement. It began to be common talk that among the trades-associations there was systematic terrorizing of the worst kind, and that a *Vehmgericht* more secret and more grim than any known to the middle ages was issuing its sentences in many of our great industrial communities. Ordinary intimidation had long been regarded as one of the means by which some of the trades-unions kept their principles in force. Now, however, it was common report that secret assassination was in many cases the doom of those who brought on themselves the wrath of the trades-unions. For many years the great town of Sheffield had had a special notoriety in consequence of the outrages of the kind that were believed to be committed there. When a workman had made himself obnoxious to the leaders of some

local trades-union, it occasionally happened that some sudden and signal misfortune befell him. Perhaps his house was set on fire; perhaps a canister of gunpowder was exploded under his windows; or some rudely constructed infernal-machine was flung into his bedroom at midnight. The man himself, supposing him to have escaped with his life, felt convinced that in the attempt to destroy him he saw the hand of the union; his neighbors were of his opinion; but it sometimes happened, nevertheless, that there was no possibility of bringing home the charge upon evidence that could satisfy a criminal court. The comparative impunity which such crimes were enabled to secure made the perpetrators of them feel more and more safe in their enterprises; and the result was that outrages began to increase in atrocity, boldness, and numbers. The employers offered large rewards for the discovery of the offenders; the government did the same; but not much came of the offers. The employers charged the local trades-unions with being the authors of all the crimes; the officials of the unions distinctly and indignantly denied the charge. In some instances they did more. They offered on their own account a reward for the detection of the criminals, in order that their own innocence might thereby be established once for all in the face of day. At a public meeting held in Sheffield to express public opinion on the subject, the secretary of one of the local unions, a man named Broadhead, spoke out with indignant and vehement eloquence in denunciation of the crimes and in protest against the insinuation that they were sanctioned by the authority or done with the connivance of the trades-organization. Most persons who read the report of the meeting were much impressed with the earnestness of Broadhead; and even among those who had no sympathy with the principles of unionism, there were not a few who were of opinion that Broadhead and his colleagues had been gravely wronged by the accusations made against them. On the other hand, it would seem that impartial persons who heard the speech made by Broadhead listened with a growing conviction that it was a little too virtuously indignant, and that it repudiated the idea of any appeal to force in maintaining the authority of the union somewhat more comprehensively than any recognition of known facts would warrant. At all events an appeal was made to the government with appar-

ently equal earnestness by the employers and by the union; and the government resolved to undertake a full investigation into the whole condition of the trades-unions. A commission was appointed, and a bill passed through parliament enabling it to take evidence upon oath. The commissioners sent down to Sheffield three examiners, the chief of whom was Mr. Overend, a queen's counsel of distinction, to make inquiry as to the outrages. The examiners had authority to offer protection to any one, even though himself engaged in the commission of the outrages, who should give information which might lead to the discovery of the conspiracy. This offer had its full effect. The government were now so evidently determined to get at the root of all the evil, that many of those actively engaged in the commission of the crimes took fright and believed they had best consult for their personal safety. Accordingly the commission got as much evidence as could be desired, and it was soon put beyond dispute that more than one association had systematically employed the most atrocious means to punish offenders against their self-made laws and to deter men from venturing to act in opposition to them. The saw-grinders' union in Sheffield had been particularly active in such work, and the man named William Broadhead, who had so indignantly protested the innocence of his union, was the secretary of that organization. Broadhead was proved to have ordered, arranged, and paid for the murder of at least one offender against his authority, and to have set on foot in the same way various deeds scarcely if at all less criminal. The crimes were paid for out of the funds of the union. There were gradations of outrage, ascending from what might be called mere personal annoyance up to the serious destruction of property, then to personal injury, to mutilation, and to death. "Rattening" was one of the milder forms of tyranny. The tools of obnoxious workers were destroyed; machinery was spoiled. Then the houses of the obnoxious were blown up, or cans of explosive material were flung into them at night. In one instance a woman was blinded; in another a woman was killed. Men were shot at with the object of so wounding them as to prevent them from carrying on their work; one man was shot at and killed. A ghastly account was given by one sufferer of the manner in which his house was set on fire at midnight by an explosive

material flung in, and how the room and the bedcurtains flamed and blazed about him and his wife, and how he saved his wife with the utmost difficulty and at extreme risk to his own life, by tearing from her scorching body the nightdress already burning, and dropping her thus naked into the street. Broadhead himself came before the examiners and acknowledged the part he had taken in the direction of such crimes. He explained how he had devised them, organized them, selected the agents by whom they were to be committed, and paid for them out of the funds of the union. The men whom he selected had sometimes no personal resentment against the victims they were bidden to mutilate or destroy. They were ordered and paid to punish men whom Broadhead considered to be offenders against the authority and the interests of the union, and they did the work obediently. In Manchester a state of things were found to exist only less hideous than that which prevailed in Sheffield. It was among the brick-makers of Manchester that the chief offenses were committed. The clay which offending brickmakers were to use was sometimes stuffed with thousands of needles, in order to pierce and maim the hands of those who unsuspectingly went to work with it. The sheds of a master who dismissed union men were burned with naphtha. An obnoxious man's horse was roasted to death. Many persons were shot at and wounded. Murder was done in Manchester too. Other towns were found to be not very far distant from Sheffield and Manchester in the audacity and ingenuity of their trade outrages. During the alarms caused by such revelations, many people began to cry out that the whole structure of our society was undermined, and that the "organization of labor" was simply a vast conspiracy to make capital, science, and energy the mere bondslaves of the trades-unions and of the tyrants and serfs, knaves and dupes, who kept it up.

Society, however, does not long continue in a mood for the indulgence of mere alarm and inarticulate shrieking. Society soon began to reflect that if it had heard terrible things, it had probably heard all the worst. The great majority of the trades-unions appeared after the most searching investigation to be absolutely free from any complicity in the crimes, or any sanction of them. Men of sense began to ask whether society had not itself to blame



in some measure even for the crimes of the trades-unions. The law had always dealt unfairly and harshly with the trade-associations. Public opinion had for a long time regarded them as absolutely lawless. There was a time when their very existence would have been an infraction of the law. For centuries our legislation had acted on the principle that the workingman was a serf of society, bound to work for the sake of the employer and on the employer's terms. The famous statute of laborers, passed in the reign of Edward III., declared that every person under the age of sixty not having any means to live should on being required be "bound to serve him that doth require him," or else be committed to jail "until he find surety to serve." If a workman or a servant left his service before the time agreed upon, he was to be imprisoned. The same statute contained a section fixing the scale of wages, and declaring that no higher wages should be paid. An act passed in the reign of Elizabeth contained provisions making the acceptance of wages compulsory, and fixing the hours and the wages of labor. A master wrongfully dismissing the servant was made liable to a fine, but a servant leaving his employment was to be imprisoned. The same principle continued to be embodied in our legislation with regard to masters and workmen, with hardly any modification, down to 1813, and indeed, to a great extent, down to 1824. Even after that time, and down to the period of which we are now writing, there was still a marked and severe distinction drawn between master and servant, master and workman, in our legislation. In cases of breach of contract the remedy against the employer was entirely civil; against the employed, criminal. A workman might even be arrested on a warrant for alleged breach of contract, and taken to prison before the case had been tried. The laws were particularly stringent in their declarations against all manner of combination among workmen. Any combined effort to raise wages would have been treated as conspiracy of a specially odious and dangerous order. Down to 1825 a mere combination of workmen for their own protection was unlawful; but long after 1825 the law continued to deal very harshly with what was called conspiracy among workmen for trade purposes. The very laws which did this were a survival of the legislation which for centuries had compelled a man to work for whomsoever choose to call on

him, and either fixed his maximum of wages for him or left it to be fixed by the justices. Not many years ago it was held that, although a strike could not itself be pronounced illegal, yet a combination of workmen to bring about a strike was a conspiracy, and was to be promptly punished by law. In 1867, the very year when the commission we have described held its inquiries at Sheffield and Manchester, a decision given by the court of queen's bench affirmed that a friendly society, which was also a trades-union, had no right to the protection of the law in enforcing a claim for a debt. It was laid down that because the rules of the society appeared to be such as would operate in restraint of trade, therefore the society was not entitled to the protection of the civil law in any ordinary matter of account. The general objects of the trades-union, as distinguished from those of the friendly society, were regarded as absolutely outside the pale of legal protection. It was not merely that the trades-unions sometimes made illegal arrangements, which of course could not be recognized or enforced in any civil court. The principle was that because they, or some of them, did this sometimes, they and the whole of them, and all their transactions, were to be regarded as shut out from the protection of the civil law.

So rigidly was this principle applied to the trades-unions that they were apparently not allowed to defend themselves against plunder by a dishonest member. This extraordinary principle was in force for several years after the time at which we have now arrived in this history. For example, in 1869 an information was laid in Bradford against the secretary of a trades-association for having willfully misappropriated a sum of money belonging to the society. The guilt of the man was clear, but the magistrates dismissed the charge, on the ground that the society was itself established for illegal purposes, that is, for the restraint of trade, and that therefore it was not entitled to the protection of the law. An appeal was made to the court of queen's bench, and the decision was that the appeal must be dismissed, and that the society was established for illegal purposes. The judges were divided equally in opinion, and therefore, in accordance with the usage, the judgment was allowed to go in favor of the decision of the inferior court. The absurdity of such a principle of law is evident. It is proper that an illegal association should not be maintained

in illegal acts; but it is hardly a principle of our law that because an association has been established for purposes which seem in opposition to some legal principle, its members may be plundered by any one with impunity. A man who keeps a gambling-house is the proprietor of an unlawful establishment; but if a robber snatches his purse, he is free to claim the protection of the police, and it is not open to the thief to rest his defense simply on the plea that the man's occupation is illegal, and that his money, if left to him, would unquestionably have been applied to unlawful purposes. That illustration is, however, inadequate to express properly the injustice done to the trades-unions. It assumes that the objects of the unions were fairly to be considered unlawful, and to be classed with the business of gaming-houses and shops for the reception of stolen goods. But in truth the main object of the trades-unions was as strictly in accordance with public policy as that of the Inns of Court or the College of Surgeons. One result of the investigations into the outrages in Sheffield and in Manchester was that public attention was drawn directly to the whole subject; the searching light of full, free discussion was turned on to it, and after awhile every one began to see that the wanton injustice of the law and of society in dealing with the associations of workingmen was responsible for many of the errors and even of the crimes into which some of the worst of these associations had allowed themselves to be seduced. It is as certain as any problem in mathematics can be, that when the civil law excludes any class of persons from its full protection, that class will be easily drawn into lawlessness. "The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law," is a reminder that bars the advice which bids the unfriended to be not poor but break the law which denies them its protection.

It was not, however, the law alone which had set itself for centuries against the workingman. Public opinion and legislation were in complete agreement as to the rights of trades-unions. For many years the whole body of English public opinion outside the working class itself was entirely against the principle of the unions. It is, perhaps, not possible to recall to mind any question open to controversy in which public opinion was ever in our time so nearly unanimous as it was on the subject of trades-organizations.

It was an axiom among all the employing and capitalist

classes that trades-organizations were as much to be condemned in point of morality as they were absurd in the sight of political economy. Country squires, who had only just been converted from the public profession of protectionist principles, and who still in their secret intelligences failed to see that they were wrong; the whole tone of whose thinking was still, when left to itself, entirely protectionist, and who, the moment they ceased to keep a strict guard on their tongues, would talk protection as naturally as they talked English—such men were lost in wonder or consumed by anger at the workingman's infatuated notions on the subject of political economy. All the leading newspapers were constantly writing against the trades-unions at one time; not writing merely as a Liberal paper writes against some Tory measure, but as men condemn a monstrous heresy. A comfortable social theory began to spring up, that all the respectable and well-conducted workingmen were opposed to the unions, and all the ne'er-do-wells were on their side and in their ranks. The paid officers of the unions were described as mere cunning parasites, living on the sap and strength of the organization. The spokesmen of the unions were set down invariably as selfish and audacious demagogues, who incited their ignorant victims on to ruin in order that they themselves might live in comfort and revel in popular applause.

There can be no doubt that some insincere and unprincipled persons did occasionally attach themselves to the trade-organizations. Such men professed to adopt a principle in order to get money and applause. They did exactly as men do in a higher social class who profess to adopt a principle in order to get into parliament, and then into office. But on the whole the leaders of the trades-organizations appear to have been men of sincere purpose and of good character. The officers of many of the societies worked for very small pay; for no more, in fact, than they could have got by their ordinary labor. It is also, we believe, a fact that, taken on the whole, the men in the organizations represented a much better class of workmen than those who held aloof from them. The numbers of men registered on the books of the trades-unions did not by any means represent the actual number who sympathized with unionism. Much of the business of a trades-union was simply that of an ordinary benefit society. Strikes were not always going on; the

funds of the union were not often being voted to assist some mutinous brothers. By far the greater part of the occupation of a trades-union was like that of the Odd Fellows or some other benefit association. A great many workingmen, a considerable proportion indeed of the working population, were members of some friendly society, and had been so perhaps from their first starting into life. Such men did not always care to give up the society to which they had been long attached, for the purpose of joining a trades-union which was usually only performing just the same functions. Therefore one mistake very commonly made by those who entered into the controversy was to count the mere numbers on the books of the trades-unions, and assume that these represented the whole strength of the movement. The numbers would have been great, and ought to have been significant, in any case; but great as they were, they by no means fairly illustrated the strength of the hold which the principle of the trades-organization had got upon the working classes.

That sort of public opinion of which we have already spoken, well satisfied in its mind as to most things, was for many years particularly well satisfied about strikes. We can find its views expressed in every tone. Solemn disquisition and light comedy alike gave them form. Parliament, the pulpit, the press, the stage, philosophy, fiction, all were for a long time in combination to give forth one pronouncement on the subject. A strike was something always wicked and foolish; abstractly wicked; foolish to the fundamental depths of its theory. "All I have to say," a benevolent nobleman called out to a meeting of workingmen, "is—never strike!" That was his sincere advice: whatever happens, never strike; if you strike, you must be doing wrong. To engage in a strike was, according to his view, like engaging in a conspiracy to murder. Such was long the opinion of almost all above the social level of the workman himself. A strike was in their view an offense against all social laws, to be reprobated by every good man. It was not looked upon as a rough last resource to get at a decision in a controversy not otherwise to be settled, but simply as a crime. It was assumed as an axiom in political economy that a strike must be a wrong thing, because it wasted time and money, and could not in any way increase the wages fund of the country. "The

wages fund" was flung at the head of the erring artisan as a phrase to settle the whole question for him, and show him what a foolish man he was not to take any terms offered him. Undoubtedly a strike is under any circumstances the cause of the throwing away of time and money. But so too is a lawsuit. There can be no civil cause in which it would not have saved time and money if the parties could have come to a reasonable agreement among themselves, and avoided any appeal to the court. Prudent men do very often put up with a considerable loss rather than waste their time, spend their money, and sour their temper in a court of law. But it would be in vain to tell the meekest or the dullest man that he has no right to appeal to a civil court to enforce any claim. This was, however, practically the sermon which English public opinion kept preaching to the workingman for generations. He had often no way of asserting his claims effectively except by the instrumentality of a strike. A court of law could do nothing for him. If he thought his wages ought to be raised, or ought not to be lowered, a court of law could not assist him. Once it would have compelled him to take what was offered, and work for it or go to prison. Now, in better times, it would offer him no protection against the most arbitrary conduct on the part of an employer. He was admonished that he must not attempt by any combination to "fix the price of labor." Yet he knew very well that in many trades the masters did by association among themselves fix the price of labor. He knew that there were associations of employers which held meetings at regular periods for the purpose of agreeing among themselves as to the wages they would pay to their workmen. He failed to see why he and his fellows should not come to a common resolution as to the wages they would accept. The argument drawn from the "wages fund" did not affect him greatly. He reasoned the matter out in a rough-and-ready way of his own. He saw that the employer was making a great deal of money in the year, and that he and his fellows had very small wages. It seemed to him that the master ought to be content with a smaller amount of profit, and give his workmen a larger weekly rate of pay. That may not have been very sound political economy; but even as a thesis of political economy it was not to be got rid of by the familiar way of putting

the argument about the wages fund. As regarded the right of combination, he saw that other men in other occupations did combine and did have rules of their own, and in fact trades-unions of their own. What, he asked, is the bar but a trades-union? Is not a man prohibited from competing with his fellows by taking a rate of pay lower than the minimum fixed by the association? Is he not refused permission to practice at all if he will not conform to the rules of the lawyers' union. What is the medical profession but a trades-union? What the stock-exchange?

In spite of law, in spite of public opinion, the trades-unions went on and prospered. Some of them grew to be great organizations, disposing of vast funds. Several fought out against employers long battles that were almost like a social civil war. Sometimes they were defeated; sometimes they were victorious; sometimes they got at least so far that each side could claim the victory, and wrangle once more historically over the point. Many individual societies were badly managed and went to pieces. Some were made the victims of swindlers, just like other institutions among other classes. Some were brought into difficulties simply because of the childlike ignorance of the most elementary principles of political economy with which they were conducted. Still the trades-union, taken as a whole, became stronger and stronger every day. It became part of the social life of the working classes. At last it began to find public opinion giving way before it. Some eminent men, of whom Mr. Mill was the greatest, had long been endeavoring to get the world to recognize the fact that a strike is not a thing which can be called good or bad until we know its object and its history; that the men who strike may be sometimes right, and that they have sometimes been successful. But as usual in this country, and as another evidence doubtless of what is commonly called the practical character of Englishmen, the right of the trades-unions to existence and to social recognition was chiefly impressed upon the public mind by the strength of the organization itself. The processions of the trades-unions during the reform agitation had startled many alarmists and set many indolent minds thinking. This vast organization had apparently sprung out of the ground. Every influence, legal, social, and political, had

been against it. The press had condemned it; the pulpit had denounced it; parliament had passed no end of laws against it; good men mourned over it; wise men shook their heads at it; and yet there it was, stronger than ever. Many men came at once to the frankly admitted conclusion that there must be some principles, economic as well as others, to justify the existence and the growth of so remarkable an institution. The Sheffield outrages, even while they horrified every one, yet made most persons begin to feel that the time had come when there must not be left in the mouth of the worst and most worthless member of a trades-union any excuse for saying any longer that the law was unjust to him and to his class. A course of legislation was then begun which was not made complete for several years after. We may, however, anticipate here the measures which passed in 1875, and show how at length the fair claims of the unions were recognized. The masters and workmen were placed on absolute equality as regarded the matter of contract. They had been thus equal for many years in other countries; in France, Germany, and Italy, for example. A breach of contract resulting in damages was to be treated on either side as giving rise to a civil and not a criminal remedy. There was to be no imprisonment, except as it is ordered in other cases, by a county court judge; that is, a man may be committed to prison who has been ordered to pay a certain sum, and out of contumacy will not pay it, although payment is shown to be within his power. No combination of persons is to be deemed criminal if the act proposed to be done would not be criminal when done by one person. Several breaches of contract were, however, very properly made the subject of special legislation. If, for example, a man "willfully and maliciously" broke his contract of service to a gas or water company, knowing that by doing so he might cause great public injury, he might be imprisoned. This is perfectly reasonable. A man employed to watch a line of railway who willfully broke his contract of service and ran away at a time when his sudden absence might cause the destruction of a coming train, would hardly be punished adequately by a civil process and an order to pay a fine. On the other hand, it should be said that the person hiring could be imprisoned for breach of contract as well as the person hired, if his breach of contract involved serious injury, or even



serious danger, to life or property. Imprisonment too might be inflicted on any person who used either violence or intimidation to compel others to act with him. It was made strictly unlawful and punishable by imprisonment to hide or injure the tools of workmen in order to prevent them from doing their work; or to "beset" workmen in order to prevent them from getting to their place of business, or to intimidate them into keeping away from it. In principle this legislation accomplished all that any reasonable advocate of the claims of the trades-unions could have demanded. It put the masters and the workmen on an equality. It recognized the right of a combination for every purpose which is not itself actually contrary to law. It settled the fact that the right of a combination is just the same as the right of an individual. The law had long conceded to any one man the right to say for himself that he would not work for less than a certain rate of wages. It now acknowledged that a hundred or ten thousand workmen have a right to combine in the same resolution. It admitted their legal right to put this resolve into execution by way of a strike if they so think fit. The law has nothing to do with the wisdom or the folly of the act. It may be very unwise; it may be ridiculous; that is a matter for the decision of the persons concerned in it. A man may be a great fool who goes to law for some unreasonable claim, or to resist some well-sustained demand; but the law-courts are open to him all the same—if he throws away his money, that is his affair. Then, to carry the exposition a little further, an association of workmen have a perfect legal right to endeavor to persuade other workmen to adopt their views, accept their resolutions, and become members of their union. They have a right to say that any one who does not agree to their rules shall not become or shall not remain a member of their society. Further, and finally, they have a right to say that they will not work in the same establishment with men who have acted in such a way as in their opinion to do injury to the common cause of the trade. This may seem to assert a very injurious principle; yet its justice is hardly to be disputed. Its justice never would have been disputed if the upper classes in this country, and all who follow their lead, had not got into the habit of regarding trade questions from the employer's point of view. No one would have questioned the right of

an employer to dismiss a number of workmen because they belonged to a society of communists. Many persons would think him very harsh and unreasonable; but many also would hold that he was doing perfectly right; and no one would say that he was acting in excess of his strict rights as an employer. His argument would be: "Communism is a principle directly opposed to the interests of property; I as a man of property cannot have men in my employ who are engaged in a purpose which I believe destructive to the interests of my class." This is exactly what the trades-unions said of men who went in opposition to the union. They said: "These men are acting in a manner highly injurious to the interests of our class; we will not work with them." Their case is even better than that of the employer. The employer says: "I have a right to turn these men out of my place; they shall not work for me." The union men only said: "We will not work with men who set themselves in opposition to the interests of the union." Every one knows that there are eccentric employers here and there who make rules of various odd kinds with regard to the conditions on which they will accept the services of persons willing to work. One will not employ a Catholic; another will not employ a Unitarian; a third proscribes any young man who smokes. We have heard of a great establishment the proprietor of which would not employ, or continue to employ, any man who wore a mustache. The members of the trades-unions were of course fully aware of the existence of such arbitrary conditions imposed by employers. It naturally seemed intolerable to them to find that they were preached at in most of the newspapers, and condemned from all platforms except their own, because they asserted an independence of action for themselves in matters of far greater importance to the interests of their union and their class.

So far as this we believe their rights are now fully admitted. Beyond this no sensible man among the trades-unions themselves would think of asking that they should go. The unions have no right to coerce or intimidate any one into agreement with them. To refuse to associate with a man is a very different thing from claiming a right to molest or frighten him. The more fully the rights of the trades-unions are acknowledged, the more energetic

and fearless the law may be in preventing them from going beyond those rights. We say fearless, because law, or those who administer it, can always and only be fearless when the authority exerted is based on fairness and sound principle. The men who worked most earnestly to organize and maintain the trades-unions never could have had any wish that the organization should act in violation of the principles of justice, civilization, and public policy. Perhaps if the just claims and the substantial rights of the unions had been recognized long before, the world might never have been shocked by the hideous revelations of crime and outrage in Sheffield and in Manchester. No influence is more demoralizing to the character of men than to feel that the laws of a country deal unjustly with them; that the laws are made by and for a class whose sympathies are not with them; and that from the protection of those laws they are blindly or purposely excluded.

The civil laws which dealt so harshly for a long time with trades-unionism dealt unfairly too with the friendly societies, with that strong and sudden growth of our modern days—co-operation. We call it the growth of our modern days because, although there has been a principle of co-operation in some form or other working in a more or less experimental and darkened way all through the history of civilization, yet the shape it has assumed of recent days is strictly a growth of modern conditions. If workmen can combine effectively and in large numbers for a benefit society or for a strike, why should they not also co-operate for the purpose of supplying each other with good and cheap food and clothing, and dividing among themselves the profits which would otherwise be distributed among various manufacturers and shopkeepers? This is a question which had often been put before, without any very decided practical result coming of it; but in 1844, or thereabouts, it was put and tested in a highly practical manner by some workmen in the north of England. North and south of England seem to be marked out by the same differences as those which distinguish north and south in most other places: the north has more of the vigorous and practical intelligence, the south more of the poetic and artistic feeling. From the sturdy north of England have always come the great political and industrial movements which specially contributed to make

England what we now know her to be. In the north the co-operative movement first sprang into existence. The association called "The Equitable Pioneer's Co-operative Store" was founded in Rochdale by a few poor flannel-weavers. The times were bad; there had been a failure of a savings-bank, involving heavy loss to many classes; and these men cast about in their minds for some way of making their little earning go far. Most of them were, or rather had been, followers of Robert Owen, who, if he taught men to think wrongly on many subjects, taught them at least to think. These Rochdale weavers were thoughtful men, probably of the class who might have figured in the pages of "Alton Locke." One decidedly good teaching which they had from Robert Owen was a dislike to the credit system. They saw that the shop-keeper who gave his goods at long credit must necessarily have to charge a much higher price than the actual value of the goods, and even of a reasonable profit, in order to make up for his having to lie out of his money, and to secure himself against bad debts. They also saw that the credit system leads to almost incessant litigation; and besides that litigation means the waste of time and money; some of them, it appears, had a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath. It occurred to these Rochdale weavers, therefore, that if they could get together a little capital they might start a shop or store of their own, and thus be able to supply themselves with better goods, and at cheaper rates, than by dealing with the ordinary tradesmen. Twenty-eight of them began by subscribing two pence a week each. The number of subscribers was afterward increased to forty, and the weekly subscriptions to three pence. When they had got £28 they thought they had capital enough to begin their enterprise with. They took a small shop in a little back street, called Toad Lane. The name might seem a repulsive one, and perhaps ill-omened, unless indeed its omen were to be held encouraging, on the theory of the toad bearing the precious jewel in his head. But it has to be said that "Toad Lane" was only the Lancashire corruption of "The Old Lane;" "The Old" soon changing itself into "T'Owd", in a manner familiar to all who know Lancashire, and "T'Owd" becoming "Toad" by easy and rapid transmutation. After the shop had been fitted up, the equitable pioneers

had only £14 left to stock it; and the concern looked so small and shabby that the hearts of some of the pioneers might have well-nigh sunk within them. A neighboring shopkeeper, feeling utter contempt for the whole enterprise, declared that he could remove the whole stock-in-trade in a wheelbarrow. The wheelbarrow-load of goods soon, however, became too heavy to be carried away in the hold of a great steamer. The pioneers began by supplying each other with groceries; they went on to butchers' meat, and then to all sorts of clothing. From supplying goods they progressed on to the manufacturing of goods; they had a corn mill and a cotton mill, and they became to a certain extent a land and building society. They set aside parts of their profits for a library and reading room, and they founded a co-operative Turkish bath. Their capital of £28 swelled in sixteen years to over £120,000. Cash payments and the division of profits were the main sources of this remarkable prosperity. Much of their success in the beginning was due to the fact that they supplied good articles, and that those who bought could always rely on carrying home real value for their money. But the magic of the principle of division of profits worked wonders for them. Not merely did the shareholders share in the profits, but all the buyers received an equitable percentage on the price of every article they bought. Each purchaser, on paying for what he had bought, received a ticket which entitled him to that percentage at each division of profit, and thus many a poor man found at the quarterly division that he had several shillings, perhaps a pound, coming to him, which seemed at first to have dropped out of the clouds, so little direct claim did he appear to have on it. He had not paid more for his goods than he would have had to pay at the cheapest shop; he had got them of the best quality the price could buy; and at the end of each period he found that he had a sum of money standing to his credit, which he could either take away or leave to accumulate at the store. Many other institutions were soon following the example of the Rochdale pioneers. Long before their capital had swelled to the amount we have mentioned, the north of England was studded with co-operative associations of one kind or another. One of the very earliest founded was the Leeds Corn Mill. There were workingmen's-associations as well as co-operative

stores. In the working associations the workers are the capitalists. They receive the regular rate of wages, and they also receive a dividend on their profits. We need not enter into further detail as to the progress of these institutions. Many of them proved sad failures. Some started on chimerical principles; some were stupidly, some selfishly mismanaged. There came seasons of heavy strain on labor and trade, when the resources of many were taxed to their uttermost, and when some even of the best seemed for a moment likely to go under. The co-operative associations suffered in fact the trials and vicissitudes that must be met by all institutions of men. But the one result is clear and palpable; they have as a whole been a most remarkable success. Of late years the principle has been taken up by classes who would have appeared at one time to have little in common with the poor flannel-weavers of Rochdale. The civil servants of the crown first adopted the idea; and now in some of the most fashionable quarters of London the carriages of some of their most fashionable residents are seen at the crowded doors of the co-operative store. However the co-operative principle may develop, it may safely be predicted that posterity will not let it die. It has taken firm hold of our modern society. No one now any longer dreams, as some of its more enthusiastic founders once did, that it is destined to prove a regenerator of mankind; that it is to extinguish competition, and the selfishness which keeps competition up. It is in its present stage nothing but competition in a new form. The co-operative store competes with the ordinary tradesman, who winces very keenly at the competition, and calls for even the intervention of parliament to save him from at least one class of the competitors. But even very sanguine reformers do not often now ask that their one idea shall supersede every other; and most of the promoters of the co-operative system are well satisfied that it takes so conspicuous a place among established institutions. It seems certainly destined to develop rather than fade; to absorb rather than be absorbed. The law was much against the principle in the beginning. Before 1852 all co-operative associations had to come under the friendly societies act, which prohibited their dealing with any but their own members. An act obtained in 1852 allowed them to sell to persons not members of their body. For many years they

were not permitted to hold more than an acre of land. More lately this absurd restriction was abolished, and they were allowed to trade in land, to hold land to any extent, and to act as building societies. The friendly societies, which were in their origin merely workingmen's clubs, have been the subject of legislation since the later years of the last century. It may be doubted whether, even up to this day, that legislation has not done them more harm than good. The law neither takes them fairly under its protection and control, nor leaves them to do the best they can for themselves uncontrolled and on their own responsibility. At one time the sort of left-handed recognition which the law gave them had a direct tendency to do harm. An officer was appointed by the government, who might inspect the manner in which the accounts of the societies were kept, and certify that they were in conformity with the law; but he had no authority to look actually into the affairs of a society. His business was in fact nothing more than to certify that the legal conditions had been fully complied with, thus implying that on the face of things the accounts seemed all right. The mere fact, however, that there was any manner of government certificate proved sadly misleading to thousands of persons. Some actually regarded the certificate as a guarantee given by the government that their money was safe; a guarantee which bound the state to make good any loss to the depositors. Others, who were not quite so credulous, were convinced at least that the certificate testified on government authority that the funds of the society were safe, and that its accounts and its business were managed on principles of strict economical soundness. The government official certified nothing of the kind. A man at the head of a large establishment brings to some accountant the books of his household expenses. The accountant examines them and says, "All these figures add up quite correctly; the accounts seem to be kept on the proper principle. If all these goods were got which I see put down here, and if all these payments were made, then your accounts are in safe condition." But the accountant does not know whether the cook and the butler and the grooms got all the articles put down in the books, or whether the articles were all required, or whether they were paid for as stated. For all the accountant knows or professes to know, the owner

of the house may be swindled by every servant and every tradesman. His affairs may be managed for him on some such principle as that of the house in which *Gil Blas* was once a servant, and where, from the steward down, the whole body of domestics and of tradespeople were in a conspiracy to cheat the unhappy proprietor. The certificate given to the friendly societies was of no greater value than this. Many of the societies were sadly mismanaged; in certain of them there was the grossest malversion of funds; in some towns much distress was caused among the depositors in consequence. The societies had to pass, in fact, through a stage of confusion, ignorance, and experiment, and it is perhaps only to be wondered at that there was not greater mismanagement, greater blundering, and more lamentable failure. It is not by any means certain that during these earlier stages of the growth of such institutions, the interference and even the protection of government would have done them much good. But the indirect control which the government for a long time undertook, had apparently no other effect than to interpose restriction just where restriction was injurious, and to give a semblance of protection which was only calculated to create a false security in the minds of ignorant people and to lead to delusion and disappointment.

The government cannot be charged of late years with any want of active interest in the business of life among the poor. Its protecting, directing hand is almost everywhere. Sometimes the help thus given is judicious and valuable. For example, the post-office savings banks have become most popular institutions, and no one can doubt that they have tended to develop habits of prudence and economy among the poorer classes all over the country. One of the most curious phenomena of these later times is the reaction that has apparently taken place toward that system of paternal government which Macaulay detested, and which not long ago the Manchester school seemed in good hopes of being able to supersede by the virtue of individual action, private enterprise, voluntary benevolence. We shall still have to describe some much more remarkable illustrations of this reaction than any that have yet been given. Keeping for the present to trades-organizations, we would direct attention to the fact that whereas in old days the government said, "You shall do nothing to help



yourselves without our control; and we will do nothing for you but to prosecute you as often as possible," the tendency now is to say, "You may do everything you like for yourselves, but you must allow us to enter into a benevolent rivalry with you, and insist upon doing all we can for you in our way at the same time." Whatever the defects or the possible dangers of such a principle, if pushed too far, it is at least not likely to engender artisan conspiracy, to give excuse for secret association, to help men like Broadhead into the position of leaders and despots, to furnish weak minds with an excuse for following the instigations of the fire-raiser and the assassin. All that law has done lately to remove restriction from the "organization of labor," if we may once more employ that pompous but expressive phrase, has been well done. We must not hasten to anticipate ill from the almost equally rapid movement of the tendency to help labor in doing labor's own proper work.

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## CHAPTER LV.

### THE EXAMPLE OF THE NEW DOMINION.

ON February 19, 1867, Lord Carnarvon, secretary for the colonies, moved the second reading of the bill for the confederation of the North American provinces of the British empire. This was in fact a measure to carry out in practical form the great principles which Lord Durham had laid down in his celebrated report. Lord Durham had done more than merely affirm the principles on which the constitution of the Canadas should be established. He had laid the foundations of the structure. Now the time had come to raise the building to its practical completion. The bill prepared by Lord Carnarvon proposed that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in other words Upper and Lower Canada, along with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, should be joined in one federation, to be called the Dominion of Canada, having a central or federal parliament, and local or state legislatures. The central parliament was to consist of a Senate and a House of Commons. The senate was to be made up of seventy members nominated by the governor-general for life, on a summons from under the great seal of Canada. The House of Commons

was to be filled by members elected by the people of the provinces according to population, at the rate of one member for every seventeen thousand persons, and the duration of a parliament was not to be more than five years. The executive was vested in the crown, represented of course by the governor-general. The principle on which the central parliament was constructed appears to have been arrived at by adopting some of the ideas of England and some of those of the United States. The senate, for example, was made to resemble as nearly as possible the system of the English House of Lords; but the representative plan applied to the House of Commons was precisely the same as that adopted in the United States. It seems almost superfluous to observe that the whole idea on which the dominion system rests is that of the American federation. The central parliament manages the common affairs; each province has its own local laws and legislature. There is the greatest possible variety and diversity in the local systems of the different provinces of the dominion. The members are elected to the House of Commons on the most diverse principles of suffrage. In some of the provinces the vote is open; in other it is given by ballot, in secret.

The act of confederation recites that the constitution of the dominion shall be similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. But in truth the only similarity consists in the fact that one of the two chambers is nominated by the crown, and that the authority of the crown is represented in the dominion by the presence of a governor-general. In all other respects the example of the American republic has been followed. The keystone of the whole system is that principle of federation which the United States have so long represented, and which consists of local self-government for each member of the confederacy and the authority of a common parliament for strictly national affairs. This fact is not an objection to the scheme. It is, on the contrary, the best security for its success. It would have been impossible to establish in Canada anything really resembling the constitution of England. Uniformity of legislation would have been unendurable. Nothing could make the senate of Canada an institution like the English House of Lords. Nomination by the crown could not do it. There was some wisdom in the objection raised by Mr. Bright to this part of the scheme.

A good deal of sentimentalism was talked in parliament by the ministers in charge of the confederation scheme about the filial affection of Canada for the mother country, and the intense anxiety of the Canadians to make their constitution as like as possible to that of England. The Canadians appear to have very properly thought of their own interests first of all, and they adopted the system which they believed would best suit the conditions under which they lived. In doing so they did much to strengthen and to commend that federative principle on which their dominion is founded, and which appears likely enough to contain the ultimate solution of the whole problem of government as applied to a system made up of various populations with diverse nationalities, religions, and habits. So far as one may judge of the tendencies of modern times, it would seem that the inclination is to the formation of great state systems. The days of small independent states seem to be over. If this be so, it may safely be asserted that great state systems cannot be held together by uniform principles of legislation. The choice would clearly seem to be between small independent states and the principle of federation adopted in the formation of the Dominion of Canada.

The dominion scheme only provided at first for the confederation of the two Canadian provinces with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Provision was made, however, for the admission of any other province of British North America which should desire to follow suit. The newly-constructed province of Manitoba, made up of what had been the Hudson's Bay territories, was the first to come in. It was admitted into the union in 1870. British Columbia and Vancouver's Island followed in 1871, and Prince Edward's Island claimed admission in 1873. The dominion now embraces the whole of the regions constituting British North America, with the exception of Newfoundland, which still prefers its lonely system of quasi-independence. It may be assumed, however, that this curious isolation will not last long; and the act constituting the dominion opens the door for the entrance of this latest lingerer outside whenever she may think fit to claim admission.

The idea of a federation of the provinces of British North America was not new in 1867, or even in the days

of Lord Durham. When the delegates of the revolted American colonies were discussing among themselves their terms of federation, they agreed in their articles of union, that Canada "acceding to the confederation and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to the advantages of the union." No answer to this appeal was made by either of the Canadas, but the idea of union among the British provinces among themselves evidently took root then. As early as 1810 a colonist put forward a somewhat elaborate scheme for the union of the provinces. In 1814 Chief Justice Sewell, of Quebec, submitted a plan of union to the Duke of Kent. In 1827 resolutions were introduced into the legislative assembly of Upper Canada, having relation principally to a combination of the two Canadas, but also suggesting something "more politic, wise, and generally advantageous; viz., an union of the whole four provinces of North America under a viceroyalty with fac-simile of that great and glorious fabric, the best monument of human wisdom, the British constitution." Nothing further, however, was done to advance the principle of federation until after the rebellion in Canada and the brief dictatorship of Lord Durham. Then, as we have already said, the foundation of the system was laid. In 1849 an association called the North American League was formed, which held a meeting in Toronto to promote confederation. In 1854 the legislative assembly of Nova Scotia discussed and adopted resolutions recommending the closer connection of the British provinces; and in 1857 the same province urged the question upon the consideration of Mr. Labouchere, afterward Lord Taunton, and then colonial secretary. Mr. Labouchere seems to have thought that the imperial government had better not meddle or make in the matter, but leave it altogether for the spontaneous action of the colonists. In the following year the coalition ministry of Canada, during the governor-generalship of Sir Francis Head, made a move by entering into communications with the imperial government and with the other American provinces. The other provinces hung back, however, and nothing came of this effort. Then Nova Scotia tried to get up a scheme of union between herself, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island. Canada offered to enter into the scheme; and in 1864 Mr. Cardwell, then colonial secretary, gave it

his approval. New conferences were held in Quebec; but the plan was not successful. New Brunswick seems to have held back this time. It was clear, however, that the provinces were steadily moving toward an agreement, and that a basis of federation would be found before long. The maritime provinces always felt some difficulty in seeing their way to union with the Canadas. Their outlying position and their distance from the proposed seat of central government made one obvious reason for hesitation. Even at the time when the bill for the confederation was introduced into the House of Lords, Nova Scotia was still holding back. That difficulty, however, was got over, and the act was passed in March, 1867. Lord Monck was made the first governor-general of the new dominion, and its first parliament met at Ottawa in November of the same year.

In 1869—we are now somewhat anticipating—the dominion was enlarged by the acquisition of the famous Hudson's Bay territory. When the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company expired in 1869, Lord Granville, then colonial secretary, proposed that the chief part of the company's territories should be transferred to the dominion for £300,000; and the proposition was agreed to on both sides. The Hudson's Bay Charter dated from the reign of Charles II. The region to which it referred carries some of its history imprinted in its names. Prince Rupert was at the head of the association incorporated by the charter into the Hudson's Bay Company. The name of Rupert's Land perpetuates his memory, as that of Prince Edward's Island will remind posterity of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria. The Hudson's Bay Company obtained from King Charles, by virtue of the charter in 1670, the sole and absolute government of the vast watershed of Hudson's Bay, the Rupert's Land of the charter, on condition of paying yearly to the king and his successors "two elks and two black beavers," "whensoever and as often as we, our heirs and successors, shall happen to enter into the said countries, territories, and regions." The Hudson's Bay Company was opposed by the North-West Fur Company in 1783, which fought them for a long time with Indians and law, with the tomahawk of the red man and the legal judgment of a Romilly or a Keating. In 1812 Lord Selkirk founded the Red River Company. This

interloper on the battlefield was harassed by the North-West company, and it was not until 1821, when the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies—impoverished by their long warfare—amalgamated their interests, that the Red River settlers were able to reap their harvests in peace, disturbed only by occasional plagues of locusts and blackbirds. In 1835, on Lord Selkirk's death, the Hudson's Bay Company bought the settlement from his executors. It had been under their sway before that, having been committed to their care by Lord Selkirk during his lifetime. The privilege of exclusive trading east of the Rocky Mountains was conferred by royal license for twenty-one years in May, 1838, and some ten years later the company received a grant of Vancouver's Island for the term of ten years from 1849 to 1859. The Hudson's Bay Company were always careful to foster the idea that their territory was chiefly wilderness, and discountenanced the reports of its fertility and fitness for colonization which were from time to time brought to the ears of the English government. In 1857, at the instance of Mr. Labouchere, a select committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the state of the British possessions under the company's administration. Various government expeditions, and the publication of many Blue Books enlightened the public mind as to the real nature of those tracts of land which the council from the French Church street house declared to be so desolate. A curious illustration of the policy adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company is to be found in the contrast between the glowing descriptions of the lands under their sway given by Sir George Simpson, who was for forty years governor of the Hudson's Bay territories, in his "Overland Journey Round the World," and his evidence given before the select committee of the House of Commons. The company exerted itself strenuously to defend its interests. The influence of Mr. Edward Ellice, who was at once a director of the company, a member of the committee, and a witness, did much to guide the committee's decision. An amendment of Mr. Gladstone to their unsatisfactory report, urging that all lands capable of colonization be withdrawn from the company, and only land incapable of being so treated left to them, was negatived by the casting vote of the chairman. During the sittings of the committee there was cited in

evidence a petition from five hundred and seventy-five Red River settlers to the legislative assembly of Canada demanding British protection. This appeal was a proceeding curiously at variance with the later action of the settlement. When in 1869 the chief part of the territories was transferred to Canada, on the proposition of Earl Granville, the Red River country rose in rebellion, and refused to receive the new governor. Louis Riel, the insurgent chief, seized on Fort Garry and the company's treasury, and proclaimed the independence of the settlement. Sir Garnet, then Colonel Wolseley, was sent in command of an expedition which reached Fort Garry on August 23rd, when the insurgents submitted without resistance, and the district received the name of Manitoba.

Thus the Dominion of Canada now stretches from ocean to ocean. The population of British North America did not exceed one million and a half in 1841, at the time of the granting of the constitution, and it is now over four millions. The revenue of the provinces has multiplied more than twenty-fold during the same time. Canada has everything that ought to make a commonwealth great and prosperous. The fisheries of her maritime provinces, the coal and iron of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the grain-producing regions of the north-west, the superb St. Lawrence, hardly rivaled on the globe as a channel of commerce from the interior of a country to the ocean—all these are guarantees of a great future. Not unnaturally many in and out of Canada speculate as to the form that future will show. Canada sprang into prosperity when she was allowed to do the work of her political development for herself; the question is, will she never demand a more absolute self-government? Will she be captivated by the charms of a distinct national existence? For some years a feeling was spreading in England which began to find expression in repeated and very distinct suggestions that the Canadians had better begin to think of looking out for themselves. Many Englishmen complained of this country being expected to undertake the principal cost of the defenses of Canada, and to guarantee her railway schemes, especially when the commercial policy which Canada adopted toward England was one of a strictly protective character. Shall we have to fight the battles of Canada, it was asked; shall we have to become responsible

for her railway enterprises; and is Canada not even to give us an open market for our manufactures? On the other hand, some Canadians might well have asked whether Canada was to be always left open as a possible battleground on which England's quarrels were to be fought out. If the Alabama dispute had led to war, the United States would have invaded Canada. The colonists, who had had nothing to do with the cause of quarrel, would have seen their homesteads exposed to all the dangers and the terrors of invasion. It was natural that such considerations should have their influence on both sides. But, as often happens in our political life, the advocates of the policy which would urge the colonists into independence went just so far as to bring about a reaction. Then for awhile nothing was heard here but the protestations of statesmen that the connection with the Canadas and with all the colonies was the one thing for which they lived. This outcry bore down all others for a time, and the hints as to independence were heard no more. The movement that way had evidently been premature. Indeed, it not only came prematurely, but it came from the wrong side. It ought not to be part of the policy of the mother country to prompt and goad the colonies into independence. If the demand is ever made it ought to be the spontaneous suggestion of the colonies themselves. The question will be settled by the interests of Canada itself when the time for decision comes. Mere protestations of kinship and loyalty and so forth will not count for much in the final settlement. A Canadian official, Mr. J. G. Bourinot, of Ottawa, has argued with much force that there are three destinies open to Canada, one of which she will have some time or other to choose. These are, annexation to the United States, complete independence, and what he calls "consolidation into the empire." For the present at least there cannot be said to be anywhere in Canada a party in favor of annexation to the United States. Such a change is undoubtedly one of the possibilities; and we agree with Mr. Bourinot in thinking it more probable than that the connection with England should always endure on its present conditions. But the question of annexation, which once was a practical and positive reality in Canadian politics, has been losing its vitality steadily ever since the mission of Lord Durham; and just now can hardly be



called a living question at all. Independence is sure to become some time or other a demand among Canadians. It is hardly possible to believe that the dominion should long go on without seeing the rise of a political party whose watchword will be a cry for complete national independence. The dominion has already a practical independence. Except for the fact that she receives the governor-general whom the sovereign sends out, Canada is as completely mistress of her own destinies as though she were an independent republic. She frames her own tariffs to suit her own interests, and she may even, if she pleases, as Mr. Bourinot says, fix the expenses of her militia and her defenses solely with regard to Canadian inclinations. Every year, every event, only makes it more clear that she is virtually independent.

The Letellier controversy, to go forward a few years, is an illustration of this fact. In March, 1878, M. Luc Letellier, the lieutenant-governor of Quebec, quarreled with his cabinet, and dismissed the premier, M. C. B. de Boucherville, and his ministry, alleging, as justification for his act, that the government was in the habit of passing various measures without his knowledge, and of generally neglecting to consult with him. He then placed M. Joly in office, though M. Joly's ministry were unable to command a majority in the house. A petition was thereupon addressed to the governor in council, praying for M. Letellier's dismissal. Lord Lorne's ministers advised him to accede to the petition. Lord Lorne objected, on the ground that though a governor-general appointed a lieutenant-governor on the advice of his ministers, the removal of the lieutenant-governor was a matter for his own personal decision. This point of view seemed to be authorized by the words of the dominion act; but an appeal from Lord Lorne to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the colonial secretary, received a reply counseling the governor-general to give way to his ministers. Thus the imperial government withdrew from the representative of the crown all but the merest semblance of authority, and made him—what indeed he should be, but certainly was not intended to be at the time when the confederation was formed—the figure-head of the dominion, the mouth-piece for the utterances of the Canadian legislature. Acting upon the advice of the colonial secretary, Lord Lorne gave way, M.

Luc Letellier was removed, and with him went the last pretension of England to rule her North American colonies.

Still, there is a vast difference between the charm of a complete and that of a merely virtual independence. The time might come when Canada would feel ambitious of a career and a history all her own. In a merely practical point of view she might object to the dangerous fellowship of a country which is liable to be engaged in wars with states whose fleets might harass Canadian seaports; or whose armies, in at least one case, might cross the Canadian frontier line. The very reasonable policy which might induce England some time to say that the Canadians must defend themselves, might well seem to the Canadians to be appropriately followed up by a declaration on the part of the dominion, that if she must defend herself, she must be free from responsibility for the foreign policy of England. Independence, therefore, is a possibility of the future, although it has not yet come to be a question in practical politics. But then there is the third possibility to which Mr. Bourinot refers—that of “consolidation into the empire.” Canada might become one member of a great English federation, and in that way have a voice in directing the foreign policy of England, while admitting English opinion to a voice in the construction of Canadian tariffs. This question concerns the destinies of most other colonies of Great Britain; of all her colonies in time. What is to come of Australia? That colony has no United States near at hand to suggest a possibility of annexation; and her choice is apparently limited to the alternative of independence or “consolidation into the empire.” Independence is surely in this case a natural and a possible solution. Australia is well suited by her geographical position and the circumstances of her political growth to form, if it were necessary, a confederation of her own. Australia now consists of five separate colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland; all these are provinces of one vast island, the largest island in the world. We leave New Zealand and even Tasmania out of consideration for the moment. Tasmania, and even New Zealand, might naturally enough form part of an Australian confederation, and should of necessity form part of such a confederation were it Australasian. For the present, however, we prefer to speak of the colonies

which are bound together within the shore-lines of the one great island. All these colonies have now representative government, with responsible ministries, and parliamentary chambers. New South Wales is the oldest of the group. Its political life may be said to date from 1853, when it first received what is fairly to be called a constitution. For ten years previously it had possessed a sort of legislature, consisting of a single chamber, of which half the members were nominees, and the other half elected. One of the most distinguished members of that chamber for many years was Mr. Lowe, who appears to have learned to hate democratic government from watching over its earliest infancy, as some women imbibe a dislike to all children from having had to do too much nursery work in their girlhood. Victoria, which was separated from New South Wales in 1851, got her liberal constitution in 1856. The other colonies followed by degrees. The constitutional systems differ among themselves as to certain of their details. The electoral qualification, for example, differs considerably. Generally speaking, however, they may be set down as all alike illustrating the principles and exercising the influence of representative government. They are training schools for the work of complete independence, if ever it should suit the interests of the colonies to start absolutely for themselves. They have not got on so far without much confusion and many sad mistakes. The constitutional controversies and difficulties in Victoria and in other Australian colonies are a favorite example with some writers and speakers, to show the failure of the democratic principle in government. But it is always forgotten that the principle of representative government in a colony like Victoria is, as a matter of necessity, that of democracy. Even those who believe the aristocratic influence invaluable in the life of a nation must see that New South Wales and Victoria and Queensland must somehow contrive to do without such an influence. An aristocracy cannot be imported; nor can it be sown in the evening to grow up next morning. The colonists are compelled to construct a system without it. There are many difficulties in their way. It is often carelessly said that they ought to find the work easy enough, because they have the example and the experience of England to guide them. But they have no such guide. The conditions under

which the colonies have to create a constitutional system are entirely different from those of England; so different, indeed, that there must be a certain danger of going astray simply from trying to follow England's example under circumstances entirely unlike those of England.

Despite all confusion or blundering, however, it is clear that the Australian colonies are growing and prospering, and that their gradual training in the business of political government will soon bring each of them to the principles and the mechanism best suited for its condition and its development. All the lessons lately taught by the home government have been, and very properly, that they must manage their affairs and compose their domestic quarrels without the intervention of imperial authority. This has been impressed upon them just as earnestly by Conservative as by Liberal secretaries of state. The Victorian deadlock, as it was called, is a recent example. It began with a dispute between the two chambers as to the payment of members. The majority in the legislative assembly, or House of Commons, passed as usual the estimate for the payment of members, the system of paying the members having prevailed since 1872. It was thrown out by the legislative council, or senate. The chief secretary—or, as we should call him, the prime minister—of the colony, Mr. Graham Berry, added the amount to the appropriation bill. The legislative council refused to pass the bill. The ministry retorted by dismissing or threatening to dismiss a whole army of government officials—county court judges, magistrates, coroners, and other functionaries—on the ground that they had not the money to pay their salaries. Constitutional government seemed for the moment to have really come to a deadlock. Both chambers eagerly appealed to the governor. The governor, acting on the advice of the colonial office, preserved a strict neutrality. The money question was temporarily settled by a sort of compromise; but the popular assembly at once set to work, with the assistance of the colonial ministry, to diminish the power of the upper chamber. They adopted a measure for that purpose; but the question was how to get the upper chamber to pass it. Mr. Berry came to England to endeavor to prevail upon the government here to effect a change in the Victorian constitution by an imperial decree. The conservative secretary of state, Sir Michael Hicks-

Beach, firmly refused to interfere. Only in the very last extremity, it was authoritatively declared, could the mother country interfere in the domestic disputes of a colony having parliamentary institutions and a responsible ministry. This was an important declaration, and it announced a just and wise resolve. The training given by self-government would be of little value or substance indeed if the mother country were to undertake to intervene whenever anything went wrong, and on her own authority try to set it right. The Australian colonies have therefore, like the dominion of Canada, a virtual independence. They have the right of complete self-government. Only the name of a distinct nationality is wanting. As in the case of the dominion of Canada, so too in that of Australia, it is quite possible that the colonists may some time feel inspired by the longing for a national independence. In such a condition of things the geographical situation of Australia would make the experiment seem even more natural than that of Canada. Australia, girt by her oceans, and with the Tasmanian and New Zealand islands for associates, would form a natural federation apart: a federation quite capable of living for itself, and of having in the future a distinct nationality, and perhaps a great history.

But Australia, or Australasia, would also be well fitted to take her part in that wider and grander federation which is already the dream and the faith of many colonists and some Englishmen. This is the third choice which Mr. Bourinot contemplates as offered to the colonies and to England. Why, it is asked, should there not be a great confederation of England, of Ireland, and of the states that are now colonies? Why should there not be an imperial parliament, then truly imperial, in which each of these separate provinces or states should be represented for common purposes, while each had separately its local legislature to arrange its own domestic affairs? Why should Canada, should Victoria, should Cape Colony, or Natal, or New Zealand, be left absolutely without a voice in the decision of those important questions of foreign policy, of peace and war, which may have such momentous results for any one of those provinces? A war with the United States would undoubtedly bring on an invasion of Canada. The Crimean war seemed at one time destined to invite a Russian raid upon some of the Australian colonies.

Why should colonies like these be allowed no share in deciding the policy which may possibly come to its most momentous issue on their own soil? If the colonies are never to have that voice in imperial affairs, is it likely that they will long continue merely to hang on to the skirts of England? Then, again, one great difficulty between England and her colonies is caused by the different views which they take on questions of tariff and taxation. Canada, for example, enforces against Great Britain the severest protective system. English politicians and manufacturers chafe so much at this that it seems likely to be the cause at one time or other of a quarrel which no fine phrases on either side can conjure away. An English statesman of the present day has said that as we lost some of our American colonies because we insisted upon taxing them, we may lose the others because we will not permit them to tax us. Might not this difficulty, too, be removed from the path of the future if colonists and inhabitants of the mother country alike sat in the one imperial legislature, and discussed in common their great common interests? Is not some such principle, indeed, the probable solution of the problem of government for systems made up of various and widely separated provinces and nationalities? Here, too, would be a framework always wide enough for the reception of new creations. The process which in the American republic converts first a desert into a territory, and then a territory into a state, would admit new province after new province into this great federated system. Who shall say that even the future relations of the peoples of Hindostan might not be satisfactorily provided for by such a principle of federation? Immense, no doubt, are the difficulties that lie in the way of such a scheme. To many minds it will seem that only the merest dreamers could entertain the idea. But the so-called dreamers would, perhaps, have something to say for the practicable nature of their plan. They might at least retort upon their critics by asking, "What then have you, who call yourselves practical men and despise the dreamers of dreams—what have you to suggest? Do you really believe that things can always go on as they are going now? You have eyes; open them and look beyond your own parish, your own club, coterie, or village, and say whether you think it possible that great colonies like

those of British North America and those of Australasia are likely to remain always content with their present anomalous condition, or that your own people would remain forever content with it even if the colonists were never to complain? What then do you expect? Annexation to America in the one case; independence in the other, or perhaps independence in both, and in all? To that result, if it must come to that, the mind of England would have to reconcile herself. She has no imperial privilege to interfere with the destinies of the world. But in the meantime would it not be the part of you, the practical men, to consider whether that other suggestion is not more desirable as well as more easy to realize; that scheme of a great federation which should reconcile the several interests and the individual energies of the colonies with the central policy of a great free empire?"

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## CHAPTER LVI.

“BEGINS WITH SOLDAN, ENDS WITH PRESTER JOHN.”

IN the summer of 1867 England received with strange welcome a strange visitor. “*Quis nocus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?*” Looking forward into the future we may indeed apply yet other words of Dido, and say of the newcomer to these shores, “*Quibus ille jactatus falix!*” It was the sultan of Turkey who came to visit England—the Sultan Abdul-Aziz, whose career was to end ten years after in dethronement and suicide. Abdul-Aziz was the first sultan who ever set his foot on English soil. He was welcomed with a show of enthusiasm which made cool observers wonder and shrug their shoulders. The Cretan insurrection was going on, and the sultan’s generals were doing cruel work among the unfortunate rebels of that Greek race with which the people of England had so long and so loudly professed the deepest sympathy. Yet the sultan was received by Englishmen with what must have seemed to him a genuine outburst of national enthusiasm. As a matter of course he received the usual court entertainments; but he was also entertained gorgeously by the lord mayor and corporation of London; he went in state to the opera and the Crystal Palace; he saw a review of the

fleet, in company with the queen, at Spithead; he was run after and shouted for by vast crowds wherever he showed his dark and melancholy face, on which even then the sullen shadow of the future might seem to have been cast. His presence threw completely into the background that of his nominal vassal the viceroy of Egypt, who might otherwise have been a very sufficient lion in himself. Abdul-Aziz doubtless believed in the genuineness of the reception, and thought it denoted a real and a lasting sympathy with him and his state. He did not know how easily crowds are gathered and the fire of popular enthusiasm is lighted in London. The shah of Persia was to experience the same sort of reception not long after; Garibaldi had enjoyed it not long before; Kossuth had had it in his time. Some of the newspapers politely professed to believe that the visit would be productive of wonderful results to Turkey. The sultan, it was suggested, would surely return to Constantinople with his head full of new ideas gathered up in the west. He would go back much impressed by the evidences of the blessings of our constitutional government, and the progressive nature of our civic institutions. He would read a lesson in the glass and iron of the Crystal Palace, the solid splendors of the Guildhall. He would learn something from the directors of the railway companies, and something from the lord mayor. The cattle show at the agricultural hall could not be lost on his observant eyes. The result would be a new era for Turkey—another new era: the real new era this time. The poor sultan's head must have been sadly bemused by all the various sights he was forced to see. He left England just before the public had had time to get tired of him; and the new era did not appear to be any nearer for Turkey after his return home.

Mr. Disraeli astonished and amused the public toward the close of 1867 by a declaration he made at a dinner which was given in his honor at Edinburgh. The company were surprised to learn that he had for many years been a thorough reformer and an advocate of popular suffrage, and that he had only kept his convictions to himself because it was necessary to instil them gently into the minds of his political colleagues. "I had," he said, "to prepare the mind of the country, and to educate—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party.



It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure. I had to prepare the mind of parliament and the country on this question of reform." All the time, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli was fighting against reform bills, he was really trying to lead his party "with a gentle hand, thither, oh, thither," toward the principles of popular reform. This then, people said, is what Vivian Grey meant when he declared that for statesmen who would rule, "our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice." Some members of the party which Mr. Disraeli professed to have thus cleverly educated, were a little scandalized and even shocked at the frank composure of his confession; some were offended; it seemed to them that their ingenious instructor had made fools of them. But the general public, as usual, persisted in refusing to take Mr. Disraeli seriously, or to fasten on him any moral responsibility for anything he might say or do. It might have been wrong in another statesman to put on for years the profession of Conservatism in order that he might get more deeply into the confidence of Conservatives and instil into them the principles of Mr. Bright. But in Mr. Disraeli it was of no consequence; that was his way; if he were anything but that he would not be Mr. Disraeli; he would not be leader of the House of Commons; he would not be prime minister of England.

For to that it soon came; came at last. "At this moment how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a minister; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end?" What Vivian Grey once wanted to attain that end he had long since compassed. Only the opportunity was lately needed to make him prime minister; and that opportunity came early in 1868. Lord Derby's health had for some time been so weakly that he was anxious to get rid of the trouble of office as soon as possible. In February, 1868, he became so ill that his condition excited the gravest anxiety. He rallied indeed and grew much better; but he took the warning and determined on retiring from office. He tendered his resignation, and it was accepted by the queen. It fell to the lot of his son, Lord Stanley, to make the announcement in the House of Commons. There was a general regret felt for the retirement of Lord Derby from a leading place in politics; but as soon as it appeared

that his physical condition was not actually hopeless, men's minds turned at once from him to his successor. No one could now doubt that Mr. Disraeli's time had come. The patient career, the thirty years' war against difficulties, were to have their long-desired reward. The queen sent for Mr. Disraeli, and invited him to assume Lord Derby's vacated place and to form a government. By a curious coincidence the autograph letter containing this invitation was brought from Osborne to the new prime minister by General Grey, the man who defeated Mr. Disraeli in his first endeavor to enter the House of Commons. That was the contest for Wycombe in June, 1832. It was a memorable contest in many ways. It was the last election under the political conditions which the reform bill brought to a close. The reform bill had only just been passed when the Wycombe election took place, and had not come into actual operation. The state of the poll is amusing to read of now. Thirty-five voters all told registered their suffrages. Twenty-three voted for Colonel Grey as he then was; twelve were induced to support Mr. Disraeli. Then Mr. Disraeli retired from the contest, and Colonel Grey was proclaimed the representative of Wycombe by a majority of eleven. Nor had Wycombe exhausted in the contest all its electoral strength. There were, it seemed, two voters more in the borough who would have polled, if it were necessary, on the side of Colonel Grey. Mr. Disraeli's successful rival in that first struggle for a seat in parliament was now the bearer of the queen's invitation to Mr. Disraeli to become prime minister of England. The public in general were well pleased that Mr. Disraeli should reach the object of his ambition. It seemed only the fit return for his long and hard struggle against so many adverse conditions. He had battled with his evil stars; and his triumph over them pleased most of those who had observed the contest. Mr. Frank H. Hill, in that remarkable book, unrivaled in its way, which bears the modest name of "Political Portraits," speaks of Mr. Disraeli's curiously isolated position in the House of Commons. "He sits like a solitary gladiator waiting the signal for combat." The sentence is admirable as a description. Nothing could be happier as a comparison. For the very reason that Mr. Disraeli had always been like the solitary gladiator the public were all the more pleased when his long,

lonely struggle "for his own hand" carried off the prize at last. The public never looked on Mr. Disraeli, up to this period of his career at least, as anything but a brilliant gladiator. The author of "Political Portraits" observes, that "Mr. Disraeli's premiership is remarkable chiefly for the fact that he was prime minister." This too was true. It is a correct description of that short season of rule which came to Mr. Disraeli on the retirement of Lord Derby. But if Mr. Hill were to take up the subject now, he would probably admit that Mr. Disraeli's second premiership was remarkable for a good many other things besides the fact that he was a second time prime minister.

The new premier made few changes in his cabinet. His former lieutenant, Lord Cairns, had been for some time one of the lords justices of the court of chancery. Mr. Disraeli made him lord chancellor. In order to do this he had to undertake the somewhat ungracious task of informing Lord Chelmsford, who sat on the woolsack during Lord Derby's tenure of office, that his services would no longer be required. Lord Chelmsford's friends were very angry, and a painful controversy began in the newspapers. It was plainly stated by some of the aggrieved that Lord Chelmsford had been put aside because he had shown himself too firmly independent in his selection of judges. But there seems no reason to ascribe Mr. Disraeli's action to any other than its obvious and reasonable motive. His ministry was singularly weak in debating talent in the House of Lords. Lord Cairns was one of the best parliamentary debaters of the day; Lord Chelmsford was hardly entitled to be called a parliamentary debater at all. Lord Cairns was a really great lawyer; Lord Chelmsford was only a lawyer of respectable capacity. Lord Chelmsford was at that time nearly seventy-five years old, and Lord Cairns was a quarter of a century younger. It is surely not necessary to search for ungenerous or improper motives to explain the act of the new prime minister in preferring the one man to the other. Mr. Disraeli merely did his duty. Nothing could justify a minister who had the opportunity and the responsibility of such a choice in deciding to retain Lord Chelmsford rather than to bring in Lord Cairns.

No other change was important. Mr. Ward Hunt, a respectable country gentleman of no great position and of

moderate abilities, became chancellor of the exchequer in the room of Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Walpole, who had been in the cabinet for some time without office, retired from the administration altogether. A good deal of work was got through in the session. A bill was introduced to put a stop to the system of public executions, and passed with little difficulty. The only objection raised was urged by those who thought the time had come for abolishing the system of capital punishment altogether. Public executions had long grown to be a scandal to the country. Every voice had been crying out against them. The author of the "Ingoldsby Legends" had made a public execution the subject of a bitter and painful satire. Dickens had denounced the system with generous vehemence; Thackeray had borne stern testimony to its abominations. A public execution in London was a scene to fill an observer with something like a loathing for the whole human race. Through all the long night before the execution the precincts of the prison became a bivouac ground for the ruffianism of the metropolis. The roughs, the harlots, the professional robbers, and the prospective murderers held high festival there. The air reeked with the smell of strong drink, with filthy jokes and oaths and blasphemy. The soul took its flight as if it were a trapeze-performer in a circus. The moral effect of the scene, as an example to evil-doers, was about as great as the moral effect of a cock-fight. The demoralizing effect, however, was broad and deep. It may be doubted whether one in ten thousand of those who for mere curiosity came to see an execution did not go away a worse creature than he had come. As the old-fashioned intramural burial-ground made by its own vapors new corpses to fill it, so the atmosphere of the public execution generated fresh criminals to exhibit on the scaffold. Posterity will probably wonder how the age which would have scouted the idea of any wholesome effect being wrought by public floggings, could have remained so long under the belief that any manner of good could be done by the system of public executions. Since the change made in 1868, the execution takes place within the precincts of the jail; it is witnessed by a few selected persons, usually including representatives of the press, and it is certified by the verdict of a coroner's jury.

Another change of ancient system was made by the

measure which took away from the House of Commons the power of deciding election petitions. The long-established custom was, that an election petition was referred to a committee of the House of Commons, who heard the evidence on both sides, and then decided by majority of votes as to the right of the person elected to hold the seat. The system was open to some obvious objections. The one great and crying evil of our electioneering was then the bribery and corruption which attended it. A parliamentary committee could hardly be expected to deal very stringently with bribery, seeing that most of the members of the committee were sure to have carried on or authorized bribery on their own account. A false public conscience had grown up with regard to bribery. Few men held it really in hatred. The country gentleman whose own vote, when once he had been elected, was unpurchasable by any money bribe, thought it quite a natural and legitimate thing that he should buy his seat by corrupting voters. As in a former age no gentleman thought it wrong to seduce a woman, so in a very recent day no man with money thought it improper to spend some of his money in corrupting electors. What censure was it likely a country squire would have got fifty years ago if accused before a council of squires of having seduced some tenant's wife or daughter? Just so much would a rich man have got twenty years ago from a parliamentary committee if it were proved that he had allowed his agent to lay out money ingeniously for him in bribes. Then again, the decision of the parliamentary committee was very often determined by the political opinions of the majority of its members. Acute persons used to say, that when once the committee had been formed they could tell what its decision would be. "Show me the men and I'll show you the decision," was the principle. It was not always found to be so in practice. A committee with a Conservative majority did sometimes decide against a Conservative candidate. A committee with a majority of Whigs has been known to unseat a Whig occupant. But in general the decision of the committee was either influenced by the political opinions of its majority, or, what was nearly as bad so far as public influence was concerned, it was believed to be so influenced. There had therefore been for a long time an opinion growing up that something must be done

to bring about a reform, and in 1867 a parliamentary select committee reported in favor of abandoning altogether the system of referring election petitions to a tribunal composed of members of the House of Commons. The proposal of this committee was, that every petition should be referred to one of the judges of the superior courts at Westminster, with power to decide both law and fact, and to report not only as to the seat but as to the extent of bribery and corruption in the constituency. The judges themselves strongly objected to having such duties imposed upon them. The lord chief justice stated on their behalf that he had consulted with them, and was charged by them one and all to convey to the lord chancellor "their strong and unanimous feeling of insuperable objection to undertaking functions the effect of which would be to lower and degrade the judicial office, and to destroy, or at all events materially impair the confidence of the public in the thorough impartiality and inflexible integrity of the judges, when in the course of their ordinary duties political matters come incidentally before them." Notwithstanding the objections of the judges, however, the government, after having made one or two unsuccessful experiments at a measure to institute a new court for the trial of election petitions, brought in a bill to refer such petitions to a single judge, selected from a list to be made by arrangement among the judges of the three superior courts. This bill, which was to be in operation for three years as an experiment, was carried without much difficulty. It has been renewed since that time, and slightly altered. The principle of referring election petitions to the decision of a legal tribunal remains in force, and it is very unlikely indeed that the House of Commons will ever recover its ancient privilege. Many members of that house still regret the change. They say, and not unreasonably, that with time and the purifying effect of public opinion the objections to the old system would have died away. A committee of the House of Commons would have come to regard bribery as all honest and decent men must in time regard it. They would acknowledge it a crime and brand it accordingly. So too it is surely probable that members of the House of Commons sitting to hear an election petition would have got over that low condition of political morals which allowed them to give or be suspected of giving their decis-

ion for partisan purposes without regard to facts and to justice. On the other hand, it seems a strange anomaly that a judge may not only declare the candidate of the majority disentitled to a seat, but declare the candidate of the minority entitled to it. In one celebrated case of an Irish election the candidate elected by an overwhelming majority was unseated by the decision of the judge; the candidate who had a very small minority of votes in his favor was installed in the seat. It was obviously absurd to call such a man the representative of the constituency. It is right to say that none of the effects anticipated by the chief justice were felt in England. The impartiality of the judges was never called in question. In Ireland it was otherwise, at least in some instances. Judges are rarely appointed in Ireland who have not held law office; and law office is usually obtained by parliamentary, in other words, by partisan service. There is not therefore always the same confidence in the impartiality of the judges in Ireland that prevails in England, and it must be owned that in one or two instances at least, the effect of referring an election petition to the decision of an Irish judge was not by any means favorable to the public faith either in the dignity or the impartiality of the bench. Of late years some really stringent measures have been taken against bribery. Several boroughs have been disfranchised altogether because of the gross and seemingly ineradicable corruption that prevailed there. Time, education, and public opinion will probably before long cleanse our political system of the stain of bribery. Before long surely it will be accounted as base to give as to take a bribe.

The House of Lords too abandoned about this time one of their ancient usages; the custom of voting by proxy. A select committee of the peers had recommended that the practice should be discontinued. It was defended of course, as every antiquated and anomalous practice is sure to be defended. It was urged, for example, that no men can be better qualified to understand the great political questions of the day than members of the House of Peers who are employed in the diplomatic service abroad, and that it is unfair to exclude these men from affirming their opinion by a vote, even though they cannot quit their posts and return home to give the vote in person. This small grievance, if it were one, was very properly held to

be of little account when compared with the obvious objections to the practice. The House of Lords, however, were not willing absolutely and forever to give up the privilege. They only passed a standing order "that the practice of calling for proxies on a division be discontinued, and that two days' notice be given of any motion for the suspension of the order." It is not likely that any attempt will be made to suspend the order and renew the obsolete practice.

The government ventured this year on the bold but judicious step of acquiring possession of all the lines of telegraph, and making the control of communication by wire a part of the business of the post office. They did not succeed in making a very good bargain of it, and for a time the new management resulted in the most distracting confusion. But the country highly approved of the purchase. The post office has long been one of the best managed departments of the civil service.

An important event in the year's history was the successful conclusion of the expedition into Abyssinia. We have already mentioned that much alarm had long been felt in the country with regard to the fate of a number of British subjects, men and women, who were held in captivity by Theodore, king of Abyssinia. A vague, mysterious interest hung around Abyssinia. It is a land which claims to have held the primitive Christians, and to have the bones of Saint Mark among its treasury of sacred relics. It held fast to the Christian faith, according to its own views of that faith, when Egypt flung it aside after the Arab invasion. The Abyssinians trace the origin of their empire back to the time of Solomon when the queen of Sheba visited him. The emperor or king of Abyssinia was the Prester John, the mysterious king-priest of the middle ages. If Sir John Mandeville may be accepted as any authority, that traveler avers that the title of Prester John rose from the fact that one of the early kings of Abyssinia went with a Christian knight into a Christian church in Egypt, and was so charmed with the service that he vowed he would thenceforth take the title of priest. He further declared, that "he wolde have the name of the first preest that wente out of the chirche; and his name was John." A traveler whom not a few were disposed to class with Sir John Mandeville, brought back to Europe in a later day some marvelous tales of the Abyssinians. An advertisement



prefixed to the third volume of Buffon's "History of Birds" acknowledges "the free and generous communication which I had of the drawings and observations of Mr. James Bruce, who, returning from Numidia and the interior parts of Abyssinia, stayed in my house for several days, and made me a partaker of the knowledge which he had acquired in a tour no less fatiguing than hazardous." The publication of Bruce's "Travels in Abyssinia," excited an interest which was further inflamed by the fierce controversy as to the accuracy of his statements and descriptions. Some at least of Bruce's most disputed assertions have been confirmed since his day by the observations of other travelers. The curiosity as to the land of Prester John was revived for modern times by Bruce and the controversy Bruce called up, and in addition to the public anxiety on account of the English prisoners, there was in England a certain vague expectation of marvelous results to come of a military expedition into the land of ancient mystery. Among the captives in Theodore's hands were Captain Cameron, her majesty's consul at Massawah, with his secretary and some servants; Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a Syrian Christian and naturalized subject of the queen; Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blane. These men were made prisoners while actually engaged on official business of the English government, and the expedition was therefore formally charged to recover them. But there were several other captives as well, whom the commander-in-chief was enjoined to take under his protection. There were German missionaries and their wives and children, some of the women being English; some teachers, artists, and workmen, all European. The quarrel which led to the imprisonment of these people was of old standing. Some of the missionaries had been four years in duress before the expedition was sent out to their rescue. In April, 1865, Lord Chelmsford had called the attention of the House of Lords to the treatment which certain British subjects were then receiving at the hands of Theodore, the negus or supreme ruler of Abyssinia. Theodore was a usurper. Few eastern sovereigns who have in any way made their mark on history, from Haroun-al-Raschid and Saladin downward, can be described by any other name than that of usurper. Theodore seems to have been a man of strong barbaric nature, a compound of savage vir-

tue and more than savage ambition and cruelty. He was a sort of wild and barbarous Philip of Macedon. He was open to passionate and lasting friendships; his nature was swept by stormy gusts of anger and hatred. His moods of fury and mildness came and went like the thunderstorms and calms of a tropic region. He had had a devoted friendship for Mr. Plowden, a former English consul at Massowah, who had actually lent Theodore his help in putting down a rebellion, and was killed by the rebels in consequence. When Theodore had crushed the rebellion, he slaughtered more than a hundred of the rebel prisoners as a sacrifice to the manes of his English Patroclus. Captain Cameron was sent to succeed Mr. Plowden. It should be stated that neither Mr. Plowden nor Captain Cameron was appointed consul for any part of Abyssinia. Massowah is an island off the African shore of the Red Sea. It is in Turkish ownership and forms no part of Abyssinia, although it is the principal starting point to the interior of that country from Egypt, and the great outlet for Abyssinian trade. Consuls were sent to Massowah, according to the terms of Mr. Plowden's appointment in 1848, "for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and with the countries adjacent thereto." Mr. Plowden, however, had made himself an active ally of King Theodore, a course of proceeding which naturally gave great dissatisfaction to the English government. Captain Cameron, therefore, received positive instructions to take no part in the quarrels of Theodore and his subjects, and was reminded by Lord John Russell that he held "no representative character in Abyssinia." It probably seemed to Theodore that the attitude of England was altered and unfriendly, and thus the dispute began which led to the seizure of the missionaries. Captain Cameron seems to have been much wanting in discretion, and Theodore suspected him of intriguing with Egypt. Theodore wrote a letter to Queen Victoria requesting help against the Turks and for some reason the letter remained unanswered. A story went that Theodore cherished a strong ambition to become the husband of the queen of England, and even represented that his descent from the queen of Sheba made him not unworthy of such an alliance. Whether he ever put his proposal into formal shape or not, it is certain that misunderstandings arose; that Theodore fancied himself slighted; and

that he wreaked his wrongs by seizing all the British subjects within his reach, and throwing them into captivity. They were put in chains and kept in Magdala, his rock-based capital. Consul Cameron was among the number. He had imprudently gone back into Abyssinia from Massowab, and was at once pounced upon by the furious descendant of Prester John.

The English government had a difficult task before them. It seemed not unlikely that the first movement made by an invading expedition might be the signal for the massacre of the prisoners. The effect of conciliation was therefore tried in the first instance. Mr. Rassam, who held the office of assistant British resident at Aden, a man who had acquired some distinction under Mr. Layard in exploring the remains of Nineveh and Babylon, was sent on a mission to Theodore with a message from Queen Victoria. Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc were appointed to accompany him. Theodore played with Mr. Rassam for awhile, and then added him and his companions to the number of the captives. Theodore seems to have become more and more possessed with the idea that the English government were slighting him; and one or two unlucky mishaps or misconceptions gave him some excuse for cherishing the suspicion in his jealous and angry mind. At last an ultimatum was sent by Lord Stanley, demanding the release of the captives within three months on penalty of war. This letter does not seem to have ever reached the king's hands. The government made preparations for war, and appointed Sir Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, then commander-in-chief of the army of Bombay, to conduct the expedition. A winter sitting of parliament was held in November, 1867, supplies were voted, and the expeditionary force set out from Bombay.

The expedition was well managed. Its work was, if we may use a somewhat homely expression, done to time. The military difficulties were not great; but the march had to be made across some four hundred miles of a mountainous and roadless country. The army had to make its way, now under burning sun, and now amid storms of rain and sleet, through broken and perplexing mountain gorges and over mountain heights ten thousand feet above the sea level. Anything like a skillful resistance, even such resistance as savages might well have been expected

to make, would have placed the lives of all the force in the utmost danger. The mere work of carrying the supplies safely along through such a country was of itself enough to keep the energies of the invading army on the utmost strain. Meanwhile the captives were dragging out life in the very bitterness of death. The king still oscillated between caprices of kindness and impulses of cruelty. He sometimes strolled in upon the prisoners in careless undress; perhaps in European shirt and trousers, without a coat; and he cheerily brought with him a bottle of wine, which he insisted on the captives sharing with him. At other times he visited them in the mood of one who loved to feast his eyes on the anticipatory terrors of the victims he has determined to destroy. He had still great faith in the fighting power of his Abyssinians. Sometimes he was in high spirits, and declared that he longed for an encounter with the invaders. At other moments, however, and when the steady, certain march of the English soldiers was bringing them nearer and nearer, he seems to have lost heart and become impressed with a boding conviction that nothing would ever go well with him again. One description given of him as he looked into the gathering clouds of an evening sky and drew melancholy auguries of his own fate, makes him appear like a barbaric Antony watching the rack dislimn and likening its dispersion to his own vanishing fortunes. Sir Robert Napier arrived in front of Magdala in the beginning of April, 1868. One battle was fought on the tenth of the month. Perhaps it ought not to be called a battle. It is better to say that the Abyssinians made such an attack on the English troops as a bull sometimes makes on a railway train in full motion. The Abyssinians attacked with wild courage and spirit. The English weapons and the English discipline simply swept the assailants away. Others came on; wild charges were made again and again; five hundred Abyssinians were killed and three times as many wounded. Not one of the English force was killed, and only nineteen men were wounded.

Then Theodore tried to come to terms. He sent back all the prisoners, who at last found themselves safe and free under the protection of the English flag. But Theodore would not surrender. Sir Robert Napier had therefore no alternative but to order an assault on his stronghold. Magdala was perched upon cliffs so high and steep,

that it was said a cat could not climb them except at two points—one north, and one south—at each of which a narrow path led up to a strong gateway. The attack was made by the northern path, and despite all the difficulties of the ascent, the attacking party reached the gate, forced it, and captured Magdala. Those who first entered found Theodore's dead body inside the gate. Defeated and despairing he had died in the high Roman fashion: by his own hand.

The rock-fortress of King Theodore was destroyed by the conqueror. Sir Robert Napier was unwilling to leave the place in its strength, because he had little doubt that if he did so it would be seized upon by a fierce Mohammedan tribe, the bitter enemies of the Abyssinian Christians. He therefore dismantled and destroyed the place. "Nothing," to use his own language, "but blackened rock" remains of what was Magdala. The expedition returned to the coast almost immediately. In less than a week after the capture of Madgala it was on its march to the sea. On June 21st, the troopship *Crocodile* arrived at Plymouth with the first detachment of troops from Abyssinia. Nothing could have been more effectively planned, conducted, and timed than the whole expedition. It went and came to the precise moment appointed for every movement, like an express train. That was its great merit. Warlike difficulties it had none to encounter. No one can doubt that such difficulties too, had they presented themselves, would have been encountered with success. The struggle was against two tough enemies, climate and mountain; and Sir Robert Napier won. He was made Baron Napier of Magdala, and received a pension. The thanks of both houses of parliament were voted to the army of Abyssinia and its commander. It was on this occasion that Mr. Disraeli delivered that astonishing burst of eloquence which for the hour turned the attention of the country away from Lord Napier's triumph, and almost succeeded in making the capture of Magdala seem ridiculous. Lord Napier, Mr. Disraeli declared, had led the elephants of India bearing the artillery of Europe through African passes which might have startled the trapper of Canada and appalled the hunter of the Alps; and he wound up by proclaiming, that "the standard of St. George was hoisted upon the mountains of Rasselas." All

England smiled at the mountains of Rasselas. The idea that Johnson actually had in his mind the very Abyssinia of geography and of history, when he described his Happy Valley, was in itself trying to gravity. Of the rhetorical passage, it is proper to speak in the words with which the author of "Rasselas" once interrupted the too ambitious eloquence of a friend. "Sir, this is sorry stuff," said Dr. Johnson, "let me not hear you say it any more." The worst of Mr. Disraeli's burst of eloquence was, that it could not be got rid of so easily. The orator himself might have gladly consented to let it be heard no more. But the world would not so willingly let it die. Ever since that time, when the expedition to Abyssinia is mentioned in any company, a smile steals over some faces; and more than one voice is heard to murmur an allusion to the mountains of Rasselas.

The widow of King Theodore died in the English camp before the return of the expedition. Theodore's son Alamayou, aged seven years, was taken charge of by Queen Victoria, and for awhile educated in India. The boy was afterward brought to England; but he never reached maturity. All the care that could be taken of him here did not keep him from withering under the influence of an uncongenial civilization. His young life was as that of some exotic that will not long bear the transplantation to a foreign air. Doubtless too the premature tumult and troubles of his early years told heavily against him. "There is little difficulty," says the grim leach in the "Fair Maid of Perth," "in blighting a flower exhausted from having been made to bloom too soon."

No attempt was made to interfere with the internal affairs of Abyssinia. Having destroyed their monarchy, the invaders left the Abyssinians to do as they would for the establishment of another. Sir Robert Napier declared one of the chiefs a friend of the British, and this chief had some hopes of obtaining the sovereignty of the country. But his rank as a friend of the British did not prevent him from being defeated in a struggle with a rival, and this latter not long after succeeded in having himself crowned king under the title of John the Second. Another Prester John was set up in Abyssinia.

## CHAPTER LVII.

## THE IRISH CHURCH.

“THE Irish Peasant to his Mistress” is the name of one of Moore’s finest songs. The Irish peasant tells his mistress of his undying fidelity to her. “Through grief and through danger,” her smile has cheered his way. “The darker our fortunes the purer thy bright love burned;” it turned shame into glory; fear into zeal. Slave as he was, with her to guide him he felt free. She had a rival; and the rival was honored, “while thou wert mocked and scorned.” The rival wore a crown of gold; the other’s brows were girt with thorns. The rival wooed him to temples, while the loved one lay hid in caves. “Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas, are slaves!” “Yet,” he declares, “cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be than wed one I love not, or turn one thought from thee.”

The reader already understands the meaning of this poetic allegory. If he failed to appreciate its feeling it would be hardly possible for him to understand the modern history of Ireland. The Irish peasant’s mistress is the Catholic church. The rival is the state church set up by English authority. The worshipers in the Catholic faith had long to lie hid in caves, while the followers of the state church worshiped in temples. The Irish peasant remained through centuries of persecution devotedly faithful to the Catholic church. Nothing could win or wean him from it. The Irish population of Ireland—there is meaning in the words—were made apparently by nature for the Catholic faith. Hardly any influence on earth could make the genuine Celtic Irishman a materialist, or what is called in France a *Voltairean*. For him, as for Schiller’s immortal heroine, the kingdom of the spirits is easily opened. Half his thoughts, half his life, belong to a world other than the material world around him. The supernatural becomes almost the natural for him. The streams, the valleys, the hills of his native country are peopled by mystic forms and melancholy legends, which are all but living things for him. Even the railway has not banished from the land his familiar fancies and dreams. The “good people” still linger around the raths and glens. The banshee even

yet laments, in dirge-like wailings, the death of the representative of each ancient house. The very superstitions of the Irish peasant take a devotional form. They are never degrading. His piety is not merely sincere: it is even practical. It sustains him against many hard trials, and enables him to bear in cheerful patience, a life-long trouble. He praises God for everything; not as an act of mere devotional formality, but as by instinct; the praise naturally rising to his lips. Old men and women in Ireland who seem, to the observer, to have lived lives of nothing but privation and suffering, are heard to murmur with their latest breath the fervent declaration that the Lord was good to them always. Assuredly this genuine piety does not always prevent the wild Celtic nature from breaking forth into fierce excesses. Stormy outbursts of passion, gusts of savage revenge, too often sweep away the soul of the Irish peasant from the quiet moorings in which his natural piety and the teachings of his church would hold it. But deep down in his nature is that faith in the other world and its visible connection and intercourse with this; his reverence for the teaching which shows him a clear title to immortality. For this very reason, when the Irish peasant throws off altogether the guidance of religion, he is apt to rush into worse extravagances and excesses than most other men. He is not made to be a rationalist; he is made to be a believer.

The Irishman was bound by ties of indescribable strength and complication to his own church. It was the teacher of that faith which especially commended itself to his nature and his temperament. It was made to be the symbol and the synonym of patriotism and nationality. Centuries of the cruel, futile attempt to force another religion on him in the name of his English conquerors had made him regard any effort to change his faith, even by argument, as the attempt of a spy to persuade a soldier to forsake his flag. To abandon the Catholic Church was, for the Irishman, not merely to renounce his religion, but to betray his country. It seemed to him that he could not become a Protestant without also becoming a renegade to the national cause. The state church set up in Ireland was to him a symbol of oppression. It was Gessler's hat stuck up in the market-place; only a slave would bow down to it. It was idle to tell him of the free spirit of Protestantism;



Protestantism stood represented for him by the authority which had oppressed his fellow-countrymen and fellow-Catholics for generations; which had hunted men to the caves and the mountains for being Catholic, and had hanged and disembowelled them for being Irish. Almost every page of the history of the two countries was read with a different interpretation by the Irishman and the Englishmen. To the English student Spenser was a patriot as well as a poet; to the Irish scholar he was the bitterest and most unthinking enemy of Ireland. To the Englishman of modern days Cromwell was a great statesman and patriot; the Irishman thought of him only as the remorseless oppressor of Ireland and the author of the massacre of Drogheda. The Englishman hated James II. because he fought against England at the Boyne; the Irishman despised him because he gave up the fight so soon. Chesterfield was to Englishmen a fribble and a fop; he was to Irishmen of education the one English lord-lieutenant who ever seemed to have any comprehension of the real needs of Ireland. Fox was denounced in England and adored in Ireland because he made himself the champion of the principle of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. One of Bryon's chief offenses in the eyes of English Conservatives was that his enthusiasm for Ireland was almost equal to his enthusiasm for Greece. Again and again, in every generation, the object of admiration to Englishmen was the object of distrust or dislike, or both, to all Irishmen who professed to have in them anything of the sentiment of nationality. All this feeling of antagonism was undoubtedly strengthened and sharpened by the existence of the state church. There was not one rational word to be said on principle for the maintenance of such an institution. Sydney Smith said, in his humorous way: "There is no abuse like it in all Europe, in all Asia, in all the discovered parts of Africa, and in all we have heard of Timbuctoo." No foreign statesman probably ever admired English institutions more than Count Cavour did. Yet Cavour wrote that the state church in Ireland "remains to the Catholics a representative of the cause of their miseries, a sign of defeat and oppression. It exasperates their sufferings and makes their humiliation more keenly felt." Every argument in favor of the state church in England was an argument against the state church in Ireland. The English church, as an institution,

is defended on the ground that it represents the religious convictions of the great majority of the English people and that it is qualified to take welcome charge of those who would otherwise be left without any religious care or teaching in England. The Catholics in Ireland were, to all other denominations together, as five to one; the state church represented only a small proportion of a very small minority. There was not the slightest pretext for affecting to believe that it could become the mother and the guardian orphans and waifs among the Irish people. In many places the Protestant clergyman preached to a dozen listeners; in some places he thought himself lucky when he could get half a dozen. There were places with a Protestant clergyman and Protestant church and absolutely no Protestant worshipers. There had not of late years been much positive hostility to the state church among the Irish people. Since the abolition of the system of tithes, since the dues of the parson were no longer collected by an armed military force with occasional accompaniment of bloodshed, the bitterness of popular feeling had very much mitigated. The Irish people grew to be almost indifferent on the subject. "With Henry II." says Sydney Smith, "came in tithes, to which, in all probability, about one million of lives may have been sacrificed in Ireland." All that was changed at last. So long as the clergyman was content to live quietly and mind his own flock, where he had any to mind, his Catholic neighbors were not disposed to trouble themselves much about him. If, indeed, he attempted to do that which, by all strict logical reasoning, he must have regarded himself as appointed to do—if he attempted any work of conversion, then he aroused such a storm of anger that he generally found it prudent to withdraw from the odious and hopeless enterprise. If he was a sensible man he was usually content to minister to his own people and meddle no further with others. In the large towns he generally had his considerable congregation, and was busy enough. In some of the country places of the south and west he preached every Sunday to his little flock of five or six, while the congregation of the Catholic chapel a short distance off were covering great part of the hillside around the chapel door, because their numbers were many times too great to allow them to find room within the building itself. Sydney Smith has described,

in a few words, the condition of things as it existed in his time: "On an Irish Sabbath the bell of a neat parish church often summons to church only the parson and an occasionally conforming clerk; while two hundred yards off a thousand Catholics are huddled together in a miserable hovel and pelted by all the storms of heaven." In days nearer to our own the miserable hovel had for the most part given place to a large and handsome church; in many places to a vast and stately cathedral. Nothing could be more remarkable than the manner in which the voluntary offerings of the Irish Catholics covered the face of the country with churches dedicated to the uses of their faith. Often the contributions came in liberal measure from Irishmen settled in far-off countries who were not likely ever again to see their native fields. Irish Catholic priests crossed the Atlantic, crossed even the Pacific, to ask for help to maintain their churches; and there came from Quebec and Ontario, from New York, New Orleans and Chicago, from Melbourne and Sydney, from Tasmania and New Zealand, the money which put up churches and spires on the Irish mountain-sides. The proportion between the Protestants and the Catholics began to tell more and more disadvantageously for the state church as years went on. Of late the influx of the Catholic working population into the northern province threatens to overthrow the supremacy of Protestantism in Protestantism's own stronghold.

It has often been said that if England had not persecuted the Catholics, if she had not thrust her state church on them under circumstances which made it an insolent badge of conquest, the Irish people might have been gradually won over to the religion of England. To us nothing seems more unlikely than any such change. The Irish people, we are convinced, would under any circumstances whatever have remained faithful to the Catholic Church. As we have already endeavored to show, it is the church which seems specially appointed to be the guide of their feelings and their nature. But it is certain that if there had been no persecution and no state church the feelings of the Irish people toward England would have been very different from what they actually are even at this day. There would have been no rebellion of 1798. There would have been no hatred of Protestant to Catholic, Catholic to Pro-

testant. All this is obvious; every one says as much now. But there is another view of the question; there is another harmful effect of the state church and its surroundings, which is not so often considered nor so commonly admitted. This is the indirect harm which was done by the setting up in Ireland of a "British party," to employ a phrase once familiar in politics, a party supposed to represent the interests of the English government, and indeed to be, as it was commonly called, the Protestant garrison in Ireland. Naturally the government always acted on the advice of that party, and as a matter of course they were frequently deceived. The British party had no way of getting at the real feelings of the Irish people; they were among them, but not of them. They kept on continually assuring the government that there was no real cause of dissatisfaction in Ireland; that the objection to this or that odious institution or measure came only from a few agitators, and not from the whole population. It will not be forgotten that down to the very outbreak of the American War of Independence there were the remnants of a British party in the northern states, who assured the English government that there was no real dissatisfaction among the American colonists, and no idea whatever of severing the connection with England. The same sort of counsel was given, the same fatal service was rendered, on almost all important occasions by the British party in Ireland. It was probably from observing this condition of things that Mr. Gladstone came to the conclusion that the Fenian outbreak, the Manchester rescue, and the Clerkenwell explosion furnished a proper opportunity for a new system of legislation in Ireland. Few actions on the part of a public man have been more persistently misrepresented or more obstinately misunderstood than the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It has been constantly asserted that he declared himself impelled to propose new legislation for Ireland by the violence of the Fenian enterprises, and that he thus held out a premium to political agitation of the most audacious kind by offering an assurance to the agitator that if he would only be daring and lawless enough he might have full gratification of his demands. Yet Mr. Gladstone's meaning was surely plain. He saw that the one great difficulty in the way of substantial legislation for Irish grievances had always been found in the fact that the English parliament and public

did not believe in the reality of the grievance. Englishmen put aside every claim made on behalf of Ireland with the assurance that the Irish people were entirely indifferent on the subject; that the Irish people felt no grievance, and therefore had not complained of any. The Fenian movement was in Mr. Gladstone's eyes the most substantial refutation of this comfortable belief. The most easy-going and self-complacent Philistine could not feel satisfied that there was no grievance pressing on the minds of the Irish people when he found rebellion going on under his very eyes, and Fenian devotees braving death for their cause and its captains in his very streets. Mr. Gladstone was right. One of the sad defects of our parliamentary system is that no remedy is likely to be tried for any evil until the evil has made its presence felt in some startling way. The Clerkenwell explosion was but one illustration of a common condition of things. We seldom have any political reform without a previous explosion.

On March 16, 1868, a remarkable debate took place in the House of Commons. It had for its subject the condition of Ireland, and it was introduced by a series of resolutions which Mr. John Francis Maguire, an Irish member, proposed. Mr. Maguire was a man of high character and great ability and earnestness. He was a newspaper proprietor and an author; he knew Ireland well, but he also knew England and the temper of the English people. He was ardent in his national sympathies; but he was opposed to any movement of a seditious or a violent character. He had more than once risked his popularity among countrymen by the resolute stand which he made against any agitation that tended toward rebellion. Mr. Maguire always held that the geographical situation of England and Ireland rendered a separation of the two countries impossible. He had often expressed his belief that even in the event of a war between England and some foreign state—the American republic, for instance—and even in the event of England's losing temporary possession of Ireland, one of the conditions of peace which the foreign power would most freely accept would be the handing back of Ireland to Great Britain. To his mind, then, separation was a result not to be seriously thought of. But he accepted cordially the saying of Grattan that if the ocean forbade separation, the sea denied union. He was in favor of a domestic legis-

lature for Ireland, and he was convinced that such a measure would be found the means of establishing a true and genial union of feeling, a friendly partnership between the two countries. Mr. Maguire was looked on with respect and confidence by all parties in England as well as in his own country. Even the Fenians, whose schemes he condemned as he had condemned the young Ireland movement of 1848, were willing to admit his honesty and his courage, for they found that there was no stauncher advocate in parliament for a generous dealing with the Fenian prisoners. A speaker of remarkable power and earnestness, although occasionally too vehement of words and gesture, he was always listened to with attention in the House of Commons. It was well-known that he had declined tenders of office from both of the great English parties; and it was known too that he had done this at a time when his personal interests made his refusal a considerable sacrifice. When therefore he invited the attention of the House of Commons to the condition of Ireland, the house knew that it was likely to have a fair and a trustworthy exposition of the subject. In the course of his speech, Mr. Maguire laid great stress upon the evil effect wrought upon Ireland by the existence of the Irish church. He described it as "a scandalous and monstrous anomaly." During the debate Lord Mayo, then Irish secretary, made a speech in which he threw out some hint about a policy of equalizing all religious denominations in Ireland without sacrificing the Irish church. He talked in a mysterious way of "leveling up, and not leveling down." It has never since been known for certain whether he was giving a hint of a scheme actually in the mind of the government; whether he was speaking as one set up to feel his way into the opinion of the House of Commons and the public; or whether he was only following out some sudden and irresponsible speculations of his own. The words, however, produced a great effect on the House of Commons. It became evident at once that the question of the Irish church was making itself at last a subject for the practical politician. Mr. Bright in the course of the debate strongly denounced the Irish establishment, and enjoined the government and all the great English parties to rise to the occasion and resolve to deal in some serious way with the condition of Ireland. Difficulties of the

gravest nature he fully admitted were yet in the way, but he reminded the house in tones of solemn and penetrating earnestness that, "to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." But it was on the fourth night of the debate that the importance of the occasion became fully manifest. Then it was that Mr. Gladstone spoke, and declared that in his opinion the time had come when the Irish church as a state institution must cease to exist. Then every man in the house knew that the end was near. Mr. Maguire withdrew his resolutions. The cause he had to serve was now in the hands of one who, though not surely more earnest for its success, had incomparably greater power to serve it. The Protestant garrison in Ireland was doomed. There was probably not a single Englishman capable of forming an opinion who did not know that from the moment when Mr. Gladstone made his declaration, the fall of the Irish state church had become merely a question of time. Men only waited to see how Mr. Gladstone would proceed to procure its fall.

Public expectation was not long kept in suspense. A few days after the debate on Mr. Maguire's motion, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of a series of resolutions on the subject of the Irish state church. The resolutions were three in number. The first declared that in the opinion of the House of Commons it was necessary that the established church of Ireland should cease to exist as an establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property. The second resolution pronounced it expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage; and the third asked for an address to the queen, praying that her majesty would place at the disposal of parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Irish church. The object of these resolutions was simply to prepare for the actual disestablishment of the church by providing that no further appointments should be made, and that the action of patronage should be stayed, until parliament should decide the fate of the whole institution. On March 30, 1868, Mr. Gladstone proposed his resolutions. Not many persons could have had much doubt as to the result of the debate. But if there were any such their doubts must have begun to vanish when they read the notice of amendment to the resolutions which was

given by Lord Stanley. The amendment proclaimed even more surely than the resolutions the impending fall of the Irish church. Lord Stanley must have been supposed to speak in the name of the government and the Conservative party; and his amendment merely declared that the house, while admitting that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the church in Ireland might appear to be expedient, was of opinion "that any proposition tending to the disestablishment or disendowment of that church ought to be reserved for the decision of the new parliament." Mr. Gladstone seized on the evidence offered by the terms of such an amendment. He observed that before the hour at which notice was given of that amendment, he had thought the thread of the remaining life of the Irish established church was short, but since the notice was given he thought it shorter still. For, as Mr. Gladstone put it, suppose his resolutions had been declarations calling for the abolition of the House of Lords, was it possible to conceive that the government would have met them by an amendment admitting that the constitution of the upper house might appear to stand in need of considerable modification, but offering the opinion that any proposal tending to the abolition of that house ought to be left to the decision of a new parliament? If such an amendment were offered by the government, the whole country would at once understand that it was not intended to defend the existence of the House of Lords. So the country now understood with regard to the Irish church. Lord Stanley's amendment asked only for delay. It did not plead that to-morrow would be sudden; it only asked that the stroke of doom should not be allowed to fall on the Irish church to-day.

The debate was one of great power and interest. Some of the speakers were heard at their very best. Mr. Bright made a speech which was well worthy of the occasion and the orator. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was in his very element. He flung aside all consideration of amendment, compromise, or delay, and went in for a vehement defense of the Irish church. He spoke in the spirit of M. Rouher's famous *Jamais!* Mr. Hardy was not a debater of keen logical power nor an orator of genuine inspiration, but he always could rattle a defiant drum with excellent effect. He beat the war-drum this time with tremendous energy. On the



other hand Mr. Lowe threw an intensity of bitterness remarkable even for him into the unsparing logic with which he assailed the Irish church. That church, he said, was "like an exotic brought from a far country, tended with infinite pains and useless trouble. It is kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at great expense in an ungenial climate and an ungrateful soil. The curse of barrenness is upon it. It has no leaves, puts forth no blossom, and yields no fruit. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Not the least remarkable speech of the debate was that made by Lord Cranbourne, who denounced the government of which he was not long since a member with an energy of hatred almost like ferocity. He accused his late colleagues of having in every possible way betrayed the cause of Conservatism, and he assailed Mr. Disraeli personally in a manner which made older members think of the days when Mr. Disraeli was denouncing Sir Robert Peel. No eloquence and no invective however could stay the movement begun by Mr. Gladstone. When the division was called there were three hundred and thirty-one votes for the resolutions and only two hundred and seventy against them. The doom of the Irish church was pronounced by a majority of sixty-one. Mr. Disraeli made a wild effort by speech and by letter to get up an alarm in the country on the score of some imaginary alliance or conspiracy between "High Church Ritualists" and "Irish Romanists." The attempt was a complete failure; there was only a little flash; no explosion came. The country did not show the slightest alarm. An interval was afforded for agitation on both sides. The House of Commons had only decided against Lord Stanley's amendment. Mr. Gladstone's resolutions had yet to be discussed. Lord Russell presided at a great meeting held in St. James' Hall for the purpose of expressing public sympathy with the movement to disestablish the Irish church. Many meetings were held by those on the other side of the question as well; but it was obvious to every one that there was no great force in the attempt at a defense of the Irish church. That institution had in truth a position which only became less and less defensible the more it was studied. Every example and argument drawn from the history of the church of England was but another condemnation of the church of Ireland. During one of the

subsequent debates in the House of Lords, Lord Derby introduced with remarkable effect an appropriate quotation from Scott's "Guy Mannering." He was warning his listeners that if they helped the enemies of the Irish church to pull it down, they would be preparing the way for the destruction of the English church as well. He turned to that striking passage in "Guy Mannering," where Meg Merrilies confronts the laird of Ellangowan after the eviction of the gypsies, and warns him that "this day have ye quenched seven smoking hearths; see if the fire in your ain parlor burn the blyther for that; ye have riven the thack off seven cottar houses—look if your ain roof-tree stand the faster." Nothing could be more apt as a political appeal or more effective in a rhetorical sense than this quotation. But it did not illustrate the relations between the English and the Irish church. The real danger to the English church would have been a protracted and obstinate maintenance of the church of Ireland. It is not necessary here to enter upon any of the general arguments for or against the principle of a state church. But it will be admitted by every one that the claim made on behalf of the church of England is that it is the church of the great majority of the English people, and that it has a spiritual work to do which the majority of the nation admit to be its appropriate task. To maintain the church of England on that ground is only to condemn the church of Ireland. The more strongly an Englishman was inclined to support his own church, the more anxious he ought to have been to repudiate the claim of the Irish church to a similar position. The state church in Ireland was like a mildewed ear blasting its wholesome brother. If the two institutions had to stand or fall together, there could be but one end to the difficulty; both must fall.

Mr. Gladstone's first resolution came to a division about a month after the defeat of Lord Stanley's amendment. It was carried by a majority somewhat larger than that which had rejected the amendment. Three hundred and thirty votes were given for the resolution; two hundred and sixty-five against it. The majority for the resolution was therefore sixty-five. Mr. Disraeli quietly observed that the government must take some decisive step in consequence of that vote; and a few days afterward it was announced that as soon as the necessary business could be

got through, parliament would be dissolved and an appeal made to the country. On the last day of July the dissolution took place, and the elections came on in November. Not for many years had there been so important a general election. The keenest anxiety prevailed as to its results. The new constituencies created by the reform bill were to give their votes for the first time. The question at issue was not merely the existence of the Irish state church. It was a general struggle of advanced Liberalism against Toryism. No one could doubt that Mr. Gladstone, if he came into power, would enter on a policy of more decided Liberalism than had ever been put into action since the days of the reform bill of Lord Grey and Lord John Russell. The result of the elections was on the whole what might have been expected. The Liberals had a great majority. But there were many curious and striking instances of the growing strength of Conservatism in certain parts of the country. Lancashire, once a very stronghold of Liberalism, returned only Tories for its county divisions, and even in most cases elected Tories to represent its boroughs. Eight Conservatives came in from the county of Lancaster, and among those whom their election displaced were no less eminent persons than Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone was defeated in south-west Lancashire, but the result of the contest had been generally anticipated, and therefore some of his supporters put him up for Greenwich also and he was elected there. He had been passing step by step from less popular to more popular constituencies. From the University of Oxford he had passed to the Lancashire division, and now from the Lancashire constituency he went on to a place where the Liberal portion of the electors were inclined, for the most part, to be not merely radical but democratic. The contest in North Lancashire was made more interesting than it would otherwise have been by the fact that it was not alone a struggle between opposing principles and parties, but also one between two great rival houses. Lord Hartington represented the great Cavendish family. Mr. Frederick Stanley was the younger son of Lord Derby. Lord Hartington was defeated by a large majority, and was left out of parliament for a few months. He was afterward elected for the Radnor Boroughs. Mr. Mill was defeated at Westminster. His defeat was brought

about by a combination of causes. He had been elected in a moment of sudden enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm had now had time to cool away. He had given some offense in various quarters by a too great independence of action and of expression. On many questions of deep interest he had shown that he was entirely out of harmony with the views of the vast majority of his constituents, whatever their religious denomination might be. He had done some things which people called eccentric, and an English popular constituency does not love eccentricity. His opponent, Mr. W. H. Smith, was very popular in Westminster, and had been quietly canvassing it for years. Perhaps it may be hinted too that Mr. Mill's manly resolve not to pay any part of his election expenses did not contribute to make him a favorite candidate with a certain proportion of the constituency. He was known to be a generous and a charitable man. He gave largely out of his modest fortune toward any purpose which he thought deserving of support. But he disapproved of the principle of calling on a candidate to pay for permission to perform very onerous public duties, and he would not consent to recognize the principle by contributing anything toward the cost of his own candidature. This was against him in the mind of many. In every great constituency there is a certain proportion of voters who like the idea of a man's being liberal of his money in a contest, even though they do not expect to have any share of it. Some of the Westminster electors had probably grown tired of being represented by one who was called a philosopher. Some other prominent public men lost their seats. Mr. Roebuck was defeated in Sheffield. His defeat was partly due to the strong stand he had made against the trades-unions; but still more to the bitterness of the hostility he had shown to the northern states during the American civil war. Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Bernal Osborne were also unseated. The latter got into parliament again. The former disappeared from public life. He had done good service at one time as an ally of Cobden and Bright. Mr. Lowe was elected the first representative of the University of London, on which, as it will be remembered, the Conservative reform bill had conferred a seat. Mr. Disraeli afterward humorously claimed the credit of having enabled Mr. Lowe to carry on his public career by providing for him the only consti-

tuency in England which would have accepted him as its representative. One curious fact about the elections was that the extreme democratic candidates, and those who were called the workingman's candidates, were in every instance rejected. This was the first general election with household suffrage in boroughs and a lowered franchise in counties. It might have been supposed that the votes of the workingmen, of "the people who live in those small houses" would have decided many a contest in favor of the candidates representing their cause or their class. But the candidates who appealed especially to workingmen failed in every instance to secure election. Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Beales, Mr. Mason Jones, Mr. Odger, Mr. Bradlaugh, tried and failed. Either our new masters were not so powerful as they were expected to prove, or they were very much like our old masters in their taste for representation. The new parliament was to all appearance less marked in its Liberalism than that which had gone before it. But so far as mere numbers went the Liberal party was much stronger than it had been. In the new House of Commons it could count upon a majority of about one hundred and twenty, whereas in the late parliament it had but sixty. Mr. Gladstone it was clear would now have everything in his own hands, and the country might look for a career of energetic reform.

While the debates on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions were still going on, there came to England the news that Lord Brougham was dead. He had died at Cannes in his ninetyeth year. His death was a quiet passing away from a world that had well-nigh forgotten him. Seldom has a political career been so strangely cut short as that of Lord Brougham. From the time when the Whig administration was formed without him, he seemed to have no particular business in public life. He never had from that hour the slightest influence on any political party or any political movement. His restless figure was seen moving about the House of Lords like that of a man who felt himself out of place there, and was therefore out of humor with himself and his company. He often took part in debate, and for many years he continued to show all the fire and energy of his earlier days. But of late he had almost entirely dropped out of politics. Happily for him the Social Science Association was formed, and he acted for a long time as its

principal guide, philosopher, and friend. He made speeches at its meetings, presided at many of its banquets, and sometimes showed that he could still command the resources of a massive eloquence. His social science had a curious air of unreality about it. It seemed as if it had been hastily put together out of that *Penny Cyclopædia* in which at one time he had so much concern. The men of the younger generation looked at him with interest and wonder; they found it hard to realize the fact that only a few years before he was one of the most conspicuous and energetic figures in political agitation. Now he seemed oddly like some dethroned king who occupies his leisure in botanical studies; some once famous commander, long out of harness, who amuses himself with learning the flute. There were perhaps some who forgot Brougham the great reformer altogether, and only thought of Brougham the patron and orator of the Social Science Association. He passed his time between Cannes, which he may be said to have discovered, and London. At one time he had had the idea of actually becoming a citizen of France, being of opinion that it would set a good example for the brotherhood of peoples if he were to show how a man could be a French and an English citizen at the same moment. He had out-lived nearly all his early friends and foes. Melbourne, Grey, Durham, Campbell, Lyndhurst, had passed away. The death of Lyndhurst had been a great grief to him. It is said that in his failing, later years he often directed his coachman to drive him to Lord Lyndhurst's house, as if his old friend and gossip were still among the living. At last Brougham began to give unmistakable signs of vanishing intelligence. His appearances in public were mournful exhibitions. He sometimes sat at a dinner-party and talked loudly to himself of something which had no concern with the time, the place, or the company. His death created but a mere momentary thrill of emotion in England. He had made bitter enemies and cherished strong hatreds in his active years; and like all men who have strong hatreds, he had warm affections too. But the close friends and the bitter enemies were gone alike; had "passed like snow, long, long ago, with the time of the Barmecides;" and the agitation about the Irish church was scarcely interrupted for a moment by the news of his death. Brougham's writings are not read now. No

one turns to his speeches: those speeches that once set England aflame. His philosophy, his learning, his science, his Greek were all so curiously superficial, that it is no wonder if enemies sometimes declared them to be mere sham. As the memoirs of his contemporaries begin to be published we receive more and more evidence of the prodigious vanity which made Brougham believe that no one could do anything so well in any department as he could do everything in every department. The *Edinburgh Review* he appears to have regarded as a means by which he was to display the genius and acquirements, and others were to puff the speeches of Henry Brougham. A strange sight was seen one day at a meeting of the Social Science Association, when Lord Brougham, then on the eve of his complete intellectual decline, introduced to the company a man so old that he seemed to belong to an elder world altogether; a man with a wasted, wrinkled, wizard-like face, who wore a black silk skull-cap and a gaberdine. This was Robert Owen, and it was Owen's last appearance in public. He died a few days after in his ninetieth year. Brougham at that time was ten years younger, and he introduced Owen with all the respectful and almost filial carefulness which sturdy youth might show to sinking age. For the moment it would almost seem as if the self-conceit which made Brougham believe himself a great critic and a great Greek scholar had made him also believe that for him time was nothing, and that he was still a young man.

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## CHAPTER LVIII.

### “IRISH IDEAS.”

SEVENTY years before Mr. Gladstone's accession to the office of first lord of the treasury, Fox had enunciated the principle that Ireland ought to be governed by Irish ideas. “I would have the Irish government,” said Fox in 1797, “regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices; and I firmly believe, according to an Irish expression, that the more she is under Irish government, the more she will be bound to English interests.” Now for the first time a great statesman at the head of an English government was about to make an effort at the practical realization of Fox's

principle. At all other times even the most considerate of English ministers had only thought of doing good to Ireland after the English notion of what was good. The highest idea of statesmanship went no farther than that of giving Ireland what were called equal laws with England. What England had and liked must be the best for Ireland. Such was the position assumed with quiet, sincere complacency in the course of many a parliamentary debate. What more, it was asked, can Ireland want? Has she not equal laws with England? We have a state church; she has a state church. She has the same land laws that are found to suit England, or, at least, that are found to suit the landlord class in England. What can England do for her more than to give her the same legislation that England herself enjoys? Now, for the first time, the man at the head of an English government was equal to an acknowledgment of what one might have thought the simple and elementary fact in politics, that the system which is a blessing to one country may be a curse to its neighbor. That which is called equality of system is sometimes only such equality as that illustrated by the too often quoted yet very appropriate example of Procrustes' bed. Ireland had been stretched upon that bed for centuries, often with the best possible intentions on the part of some well-meaning political Procrustes, who could not for the life of him see why she should not like to be lengthened or shortened, pulled this way or that, in order to bring her into seeming harmony with the habitudes and the constitutional systems of England.

The parliament which was called together in the close of 1868 was known to have before it this great task of endeavoring to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. Mr. Gladstone had proclaimed this purpose himself. He had made it known that he would endeavor to deal with Ireland's three great difficulties—the state church, the tenure of land, and the system of national education. Men's minds were wrought up to the enterprise. The country was in a temper to try heroic remedies. The public were tired of government which merely tinkered at legislation, putting in a little patch here, and stopping up for a moment a little hole there. Perhaps, therefore, there was a certain disappointment as the general character of the new parliament began to be understood. The eminent men on whom



all eyes turned in the old parliament were to be seen of all eyes in the new. It was clear that Mr. Gladstone would be master of the situation. But there did not seem anything particularly hero-like in the general aspect of the new House of Commons. Its composition was very much the same as that of the old. Vast sums of money had been spent upon the elections. Rich men were, as before, in immense preponderance. Elder and younger sons of great families were as many as ever. The English constituencies under the new suffrage were evidently no whit less fond of lords, no whit less devoted to wealth, than they had been under the old. Not a single man of extreme democratic opinions had a seat in the new House of Commons. Where any marked change had been made, it showed itself in removing such men from parliament rather than in returning them to it.

Mr. Disraeli did not meet the new parliament as prime minister. He decided very properly that it would be a mere waste of public time to wait for the formal vote of the House of Commons, which would inevitably command him to surrender. He at once resigned his office, and Mr. Gladstone was immediately sent for by the queen, and invited to form an administration. Mr. Gladstone, it would seem, was only beginning his career. He was nearly sixty years of age, but there were scarcely any evidences of advancing years to be seen on his face, and he had all the fire of proud, indomitable youth in his voice and his manner. He had come into office at the head of a powerful party. There was hardly anything he could not do with such a following and with such personal energy. The government he formed was one of remarkable strength. The one name upon its list, after that of the prime minister himself, which engaged the interest of the public was that of Mr. Bright. Speaking to his Birmingham constituents on his re-election after accepting the office of the president of the board of trade, Mr. Bright referred to his new position in a few sentences of impressive and dignified eloquence. He had not sought office, he said; it had come to him. "I should have preferred much to remain in the common rank of the simple citizenship in which heretofore I have lived. There is a charming story contained in a single verse of the Old Testament, which has often struck me as one of great beauty. Many of you will recollect that

the prophet, in journeying to and fro, was very hospitably entertained by what is termed in the Bible a Shunammite woman. In return for the hospitality of his entertainment he wished to make her some amends, and he called her and asked her what there was that he should do for her. 'Shall I speak for thee to the king or to the captain of the host?' and it has always appeared to me a great answer that the Shunammite woman returned. She said, 'I dwell among my own people.' When the question was put to me whether I would step into the position in which I now find myself, the answer from my heart was the same—I wish to dwell among my own people." It was impossible, however, that a ministry could now be formed without Mr. Bright's name appearing in it. Mr. Gladstone at first offered him the office of secretary of state for India. The state of Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake the very laborious duties of such a place, and probably in any case it would have been repugnant to his feelings to accept a position which might have called on him to give orders for the undertaking of a war. Every man in a cabinet is of course responsible for all its acts; but there is still an evident difference, so far as personal feeling is concerned, between acquiescing in some inevitable policy of war and actually directing that war shall be made. The position of president of the board of trade was that which had been offered by Lord Palmerston to Mr. Bright's old friend, Richard Cobden, and it seemed in every way well suited to Mr. Bright himself. Many men felt a doubt as to the possibility of Mr. Bright's subduing his personal independence and his outspoken ways to the discipline and reticence of a cabinet, and Mr. Bright himself appeared to be a little afraid that he should be understood as thoroughly approving of every measure in which he might, by official order, feel compelled to acquiesce. He cautioned his Birmingham constituents not to believe that he had changed any of his opinions until his own voice publicly proclaimed the change, and he made what might almost be called an appeal to them to remember that he was now one man serving in a band of men; no longer responsible only for himself, no longer independent of the acts of others.

Lord Granville was secretary for the colonies under the new administration; Lord Clarendon foreign secretary. The Duke of Argyll was entrusted with the India office.

Mr. Cardwell, to all appearance one of the coldest and least warlike of men, was made secretary for war, and had in his charge one of the greatest reforms of the administration. Lord Hartington, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Childers, and Mr. Bruce had places assigned to them. Mr. Layard became first commissioner of public works. Mr. W. E. Forster had the office of vice-president of the council, and came in for work hardly less important than that of the prime minister himself. The lord chancellor was Lord Hatherley, formerly Sir William Page Wood. Many years before, when Lord Hatherley was only known as a rising man among advanced Liberals, and when Mr. Bright was still regarded by all true Conservatives as a Radical demagogue, Mr. Bright and Mr. Wood were talking of the political possibilities of the future. Mr. Bright jestingly expressed a hope that whenever he came to be member of a cabinet, Mr. Wood might be the lord chancellor. Nothing could then have seemed less likely to come to pass. As Lord Hatherley and Mr. Bright met on their way to Windsor to wait on the queen, Mr. Bright reminded his colleague of the jest that had apparently been prophetic.

Mr. Gladstone went to work at once with his Irish policy. The new parliament was opened by commission on December 10th, for the election of speaker and the swearing in of the members. The real work of the session began on the 16th of the following February, 1869. The royal speech declared that the ecclesiastical arrangements of Ireland would be brought under the consideration of the house at a very early date, and that "the legislation which will be necessary in order to their final adjustment will make the largest demands on the wisdom of parliament." The queen expressed her conviction that parliament, in considering that legislation, would "be governed by the constant aim to promote the welfare of religion through the principles of equal justice; to secure the action of the undivided feeling and opinion of Ireland on the side of loyalty and law; to efface the memory of former contentions, and to cherish the sympathies of an affectionate people." On March 1st the prime minister introduced his measure for the disestablishment and the partial disendowment of the Irish state church. He introduced the measure in a speech which occupied more than three hours in the delivery, but which even Mr. Disraeli admitted did not

contain one sentence that the subject and the argument could well have spared.

The proposals of the government were, that the Irish church should almost at once cease to exist as a state establishment, and should pass into the condition of a free Episcopal Church. As a matter of course the Irish bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords. A synodal, or governing body, was to be elected from the clergy and laity of the church and was to be recognized by the government, and duly incorporated. The union between the churches of England and Ireland was to be dissolved, and the Irish ecclesiastical courts were to be abolished. There were various and complicated arrangements for the protection of the life interests of those already holding positions in the Irish church, and for the appropriation of the fund which would return to the possession of the state when all these interests had been fairly considered and dealt with. It must be owned that the government dealt with vested interests in no niggard spirit. If they erred at all they erred on the side of too much generosity. But they had arrayed against them adversaries so strong that they probably felt it absolutely necessary to buy off some of the opposition by a liberal compensation to all those who were to be deprived of their dignity as clergymen of a state church. When, however, all had been paid off who could establish any claim, and some perhaps who had in strict fairness no claim whatever, there remained a large fund at the disposal of the government. This they resolved to set apart for the relief of unavoidable suffering in Ireland. It was not made very clear in the bill itself what the precise purposes were to which the surplus was to be applied, and there was a good deal of disputation afterward as to the appropriation of the money. Mr Gladstone's words, and the words used in the preamble of the bill, were the relief of "unavoidable calamity and suffering." Mr. Gladstone spoke of making provision for the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, for reformatories, the training of nurses, and the support of county infirmaries. In a speech delivered at a later stage of the debate, Mr. Bright asked the house whether it would not be better to dispose of the money in such charitable dealing than in continuing to maintain three times the number of clergymen that could be of the slightest use to the church with which they were connected.

“We can,” he said, “do but little, it is true. We cannot re-illuminate the extinguished lamp of reason; we cannot make the deaf to hear; we cannot make the dumb to speak; it is not given to us

“ ‘From the thick film to purge the visual ray,  
And on the sightless eyeballs pour the day;’

but at least we can lessen the load of affliction, and we can make life more tolerable to vast numbers who suffer.” The sum to be disposed of was very considerable. The gross value of the Irish church property was estimated at sixteen millions. From this sum would have to be deducted nearly five millions for the vested interests of incumbents; one million seven hundred thousand for compensations to curates and lay compensations; half a million for private endowments; for the Maynooth grant and the *Regium Donum* about a million and a quarter. There would be left nearly nine millions for any beneficent purpose on which the government and the country could make up their minds. The Maynooth grant and the *Regium Donum* were to go with the Irish church, and the same principle of compensation was to be applied to those who were to be deprived of them. The *Regium Donum* was an allowance from the sovereign for the maintenance of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. It was begun by Charles II. and let drop by James, but was restored by William III. William felt grateful for the support given him by the Presbyterians in Ireland during his contest with James and indeed had little preference for one form of the Protestant faith over another. William, in the first instance, fixed the grant as a charge upon the customs of Belfast. The Maynooth grant has been already described in these pages. Both these grants, each a very small thing in itself, now came to an end, and the principle of equality among the religious denominations of Ireland was to be established.

We need not carry the reader through the long course of the debates which took place in the House of Commons. The bill was stoutly resisted by Mr. Disraeli and his party. They resisted it as a whole, and they also fought it in detail. They proposed amendment after amendment in committee, and did all they could to stay its progress as

well as to alter some of its arrangements. But there did not seem to be much of genuine earnestness in the speeches made by Mr. Disraeli. The fact that resistance was evidently hopeless had no doubt some effect upon the style of his eloquence. His speeches were amusing rather than impressive. They were full of good points; they sparkled with happy illustrations and allusions, odd conceits and bewildering paradoxes. But the orator had evidently no faith in the cause he advocated; no faith, that is to say, in the possibility of its success. He must have seen too clearly that the church as a state establishment in Ireland was doomed, and he had not that intensity of interest in its maintenance which would have made him fight the course, as he had fought many a course before, with all the passionate eloquence of desperation. One of his lieutenants, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, was more effective as a champion of the sinking Irish church than Mr. Disraeli proved himself to be. Mr. Hardy was a man so constituted as to be only capable of seeing one side of a question at a time. He was filled with the conviction that the government were attempting an act of spoliation and sacrilege, and he stormed against the meditated crime with a genuine energy which occasionally seemed to supply him with something like eloquence. A peculiar interest attached to the part taken in the debate by Sir Roundell Palmer. It was natural that Sir Roundell Palmer should be with Mr. Gladstone. Every one expected in the first instance that he would have held high office in the new administration. He was one of the very foremost lawyers and the best parliamentary debaters of the day, and the woolsack seemed to be his fitting place. But Sir Roundell Palmer could not conscientiously agree to the disestablishment of the Irish state church. He was willing to consent to very extensive alterations and reductions in the establishment, but he could not go with Mr. Gladstone all the way to the abolition of the church; and he therefore remained outside the ministry, and opposed the bill. Some of the debates in the House of Lords were more interesting than those in the Commons. We have already referred to the eloquence and fervor with which Lord Derby opposed the proposition of the government. Two speeches delivered from the bench where the bishops sit attracted special attention. One may be said to have marked the close, the

other the opening of a career. One was by Dr. Thirlwall, the bishop of St. David's, the other by Dr. Magee, bishop of Peterborough. The bishop of St. David's spoke in favor of the bill, and addressed himself particularly to the demolition of the superstitious sophism which would lead people to believe that the revenues of a purely human institution like the Irish church were the sacred possession of heaven, and that to touch them even with the hand of reforming legislation would be an act of sacrilege. Dr. Thirlwall well maintained on this occasion his noble reputation both as an orator and as a man of intellect. Mr. Mill, in his "Autobiography," has given an interesting account of his first hearing Dr. Thirlwall at one of the public discussions of a society in London some forty years before. "The speaker with whom I was most struck," Mr. Mill says, "was Thirlwall, the historian, since bishop of St. David's, then a chancery barrister, unknown except by a high reputation for eloquence acquired at the Cambridge Union before the era of Austin and Macanlay. His speech was in answer to one of mine. Before he had uttered ten sentences, I set him down as the best speaker I had ever heard, and I have never since heard any one whom I placed above him." Dr. Magee, on the other hand, was only beginning his career in the House of Lords. He had been but a short time bishop of Peterborough. He had been raised to the Episcopal bench, it was said, chiefly because Mr. Disraeli when in office believed he saw in him the capacity to make a great parliamentary debater and champion of the political interests of the church. Dr. Magee delivered a speech of remarkable fluency, energy, and vividness; a speech which might fairly be classed among the best efforts of the leading orators on either side of the controversy. It was more like the speech of a layman than of a prelate; although indeed it recalled in some of its pugnacious passages the recollection of the fighting bishops of the middle ages. If the fate of the Irish church could have been averted or even postponed by impassioned eloquence, the bishop of Peterborough might alone have done something to stay the stroke of doom. But the fate of the institution was sealed at the moment that Mr. Gladstone returned from the general elections in command of a Liberal majority. The House of Lords were prudent enough not to set themselves against the clear declaration

of national opinion. Many amendments were introduced and discussed; and some of these led to a controversy between the two houses of parliament; but the controversy ended in compromise. There were at one time rumors that the peers would reject or greatly delay the bill, and Mr. Bright wrote an angry letter on the subject addressed to a Birmingham meeting, in which he warned the House of Lords that by throwing themselves athwart the national course they might meet with "accidents not pleasant for them to think of." Such a letter coming from a cabinet minister created a good deal of amazement, and was made the subject of some sharp discussion in both houses of parliament. It was clear that Mr. Bright did not intend to allow his official position to interfere greatly with the emphatic nature of his utterances on public questions. Shocked and scandalized as some of the peers professed to be, it is not impossible that the letter did some public service by virtue of its very indiscretion. It may have given timely warning to the House of Lords of the dangerous agitation that would arise if they were to set themselves in deliberate opposition to the will of the vast majority of the people. Rumors too were in circulation about the same time of the determination of the government to create new peers in such a number as to make the passing of the bill a certainty. Happily, however, it proved that there was no need for any such intervention on the part of the ministers and the crown. The time had gone by when the House of Lords cared to exhibit itself as a mere instrument of resistance to the measures of the representative chamber. The most formidable step the peers took was to carry on the debate on the second reading of the bill until three o'clock in the morning. The second reading was carried by one hundred and seventy-nine to one hundred and forty-six votes; and the remainder of the work done by the lords was only a series of attempts, generally unsuccessful, to obtain here and there a small compromise on some of the less important clauses of the bill. On July 26, 1869, the measure for the disestablishment of the Irish church received the royal assent.

Meanwhile the wildest excitement prevailed out of doors among the defenders of the state church. Furious denunciations of the government resounded from platform and from pulpit. Even in measured and solemn convocation



itself the most impassioned and vehement outcries were heard. One divine spoke of the measure as a great national sin. Another stigmatized it as altogether ungodly, wicked, and abominable. A third called upon the queen to interfere personally, and exhorted her rather to jeopardize her crown in the effort than leave the Irish church to be destroyed before her eyes. A great meeting was held in Exeter Hall, at which Mr. Gladstone was stigmatized as "a traitor to his queen, his country, and his God," and one reverend gentleman described the government as "a cabinet of brigands." At a meeting held in Ireland a Protestant clergyman reminded the pastors of every Protestant church that, sooner than give their churches up to any apostate system, a barrel of gunpowder and a box of matches would send them flying to the winds of heaven. This was, however, only superfluous fury. No one proposed to turn the Protestant clergymen out of their churches. It is not impossible that the fiery ecclesiastic who gave this Guy Fawkes advice was himself ministering in a church which had been taken by force from its Catholic owners. The agitation against the bill, produced, however, no sensible effect upon the mind of the country at large. It thundered and blazed for a few days or weeks here and there, and then, after occasional grumblings and sputterings, sank into mere silence.

The Irish church was therefore disestablished, and it was to a certain extent disendowed. Only to a certain extent. As fortunate as Cleopatra, it contrived to retain enough to purchase what it had made known. The time during which the measure was in progress was turned to good account by the authorities of the establishment. The bill provided that no new interests should be created in the interval between its passing and the actual disestablishment, which was to take place on January 1, 1871. But while the measure was still under discussion some of the rulers of the church thought it convenient to create as many new interests as possible. New curates entitled to compensation were made with an astonishing rapidity, and the incomes of some of the clergy were increased with liberal hand. Some sharp controversy was afterward created by the manner in which the period of grace was thus turned to worldly and profitable account, and there can be little doubt that the effect of the policy of disestab-

ishment was deprived of some of its satisfactory influence on the mind of Ireland by the over-liberal opportunities for compensation allowed to vested interests. It would be impossible, however, not to admit that the difficulties in Mr. Gladstone's way must have warned him that a rigorous dealing with such interests would prove dangerous to the success of his measure. The great fact was that by disestablishing the Irish church he proclaimed that the policy of religious ascendancy was banished forever from Ireland, and that the reign of equality had begun.

Lord Derby did not long survive the passing of the measure which he had opposed with such fervor and so much pathetic dignity. His last speech was that which he delivered in the House of Lords against the second reading of the Irish church bill on June 17, 1869. "I am an old man," he said; "I have already passed three score years and ten. My official life is entirely closed, my political life is nearly so, and in the course of nature my natural life cannot now be long." It was sooner ended perhaps than any one expected who heard him deliver that last eloquent protest against a measure of reform which he was unable to resist. He died before the Irish state church had ceased to live. Doomed as it was, it outlasted its eloquent champion. In the interval between the passing and the practical operation of Mr. Gladstone's bill, on October 23rd, Lord Derby died at Knowsley, the residence of the Stanleys in Lancashire. His death made no great gap in English politics. He had for some time ceased to assert any really influential place in public affairs. His career had been eminent and distinguished; but its day had long been done. Lord Derby never was a statesman; he was not even a great leader of a party; but he was a splendid figure-head for Conservatism in or out of power. He was, on the whole, a superb specimen of the English political nobleman. Proud of soul, but sweet in temper and genial in manner; dignified as men are who feel instinctively that dignity pertains to them, and therefore never think of how to assert or how to maintain it, he was eminently fitted by temperament, by nature, and by fortune for the place it was given him to hold. His parliamentary oratory has already become a tradition. It served its purpose admirably for the time; it showed, as Macaulay said that Lord Derby possessed the very instinct of parliamentary debate.

It was not weighted with the thought which could have secured it a permanent place in political literature, nor had it the imagination which would have lifted it into an atmosphere above the level of Hansard. In Lord Derby's own day the unanimous opinion of both houses of parliament would have given him a place among the very foremost of parliamentary orators. Many competent judges went so far as to set him distinctly above all living rivals. Time has not ratified this judgment. It is impossible that the influence of an orator could have faded so soon if he had really been entitled to the praise which many of his contemporaries would freely have rendered to Lord Derby. The charm of his voice and style, his buoyant readiness, his rushing fluency, his rich profusion of words, his happy knack of illustration, allusion, and retort—all these helped to make men believe him a much greater orator than he really was. Something, too, was due to the influence of his position. It seemed a sort of condescension on the part of a great noble that he should consent to be an eloquent debater also, and to contend in parliamentary sword-play against professional champions like Peel and O'Connell and Brougham. It must count for something in Lord Derby's fame that, while far inferior to any of these men in political knowledge and in mental capacity, he could compare as an orator with each in turn, and—were it but for his own day, were it but while the magic of his presence and his voice was yet a living influence—could be held by so many to have borne without disadvantage the test of comparison.

When the Irish church had been disposed of, Mr. Gladstone at once directed his energies to the Irish land system. The state church had been declared by many to be merely a sentimental grievance. The land system of Ireland, if it was to be accounted a grievance at all, must have been acknowledged to be one of a terribly practical character. Ireland is essentially an agricultural country. It has few manufactures, not many large towns. Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford—these are the only towns that could be called large; below these we come to places that in most other countries would be spoken of as villages or hamlets. The majority of the population of Ireland live on the land and by the land. The condition of the Irish tenantry may be painted effectively in a single touch when

it is said that they were tenants-at-will. That fact would of itself be almost enough to account for the poverty and the misery of the agricultural classes in Ireland. But there were other conditions, too, which tended the same way. The land of Ireland was divided among a comparatively small number of landlords, and the landlords were, as a rule, strangers, the representatives of a title acquired by conquest. Many of them were habitual absentees, who would as soon have thought of living in Ashantee as in Munster or Connaught. An able writer, Mr. James Godkin, in his "Land War in Ireland," endeavors to make the condition of Ireland clear to English readers by asking them to consider what England would be under similar circumstances. "Imagine," he says, "that in consequence of rebellions" (against the Normans) "the land of England had been confiscated three or four times, after desolating wars and famines, so that all the native proprietors were expelled, and the land was parceled out to French soldiers and adventurers, on condition that the foreign planters should assist in keeping down the "mere English" by force of arms. Imagine that the English, being crushed by a cruel penal code for a century, were allowed to reoccupy the soil as mere tenants-at-will, under the absolute power of their French landlords. If all this be imagined by English legislators and English writers, they will be better able to understand the Irish land question, and to comprehend the nature of "Irish difficulties" as well as the justice of feeble, insincere, and baffled statesmen in casting the blame of Irish misery and disorder on the unruly and barbarous nature of Irishmen." In truth, the Irish agricultural population turned out exactly as any other race of human beings would have done under similar conditions. They held the land which was their only means of living at the mercy of the landlord or his agent. They had no interest in being industrious and improving their land. If they improved the patch of soil they worked on, their rent was almost certain to be raised, or they were turned out of the land without receiving a farthing of compensation for their improvements. Of course there were many excellent landlords, humane and kindly men—men, too, who saw the wisdom of being humane and kind. But in the majority of cases the landlords and the agents held firmly by what seemed to them the right of property the

right to get as high a price for a piece of land as it would fetch in open competition. The demand for land was so great, the need of land was so vital, that men would offer any price for it. Men would offer prices which they must have known they could never pay, which they must have known the land would never enable them to pay. Offering land for hire in Ireland was like offering money on loan to needy spendthrifts; any terms would be snatched at by the desperate borrower to-day, no matter what was to happen to-morrow. When the tenant had got hold of his piece of land, he had no idea of cultivating it to the best of his strength and opportunities. Why should he? The moment his holding began to show a better appearance, that moment he might look to having his rent raised, or to being turned out in favor of some competitor who offered higher terms for occupation. Why should he improve? Whenever he was turned out of the land he would have to leave his improvement for the benefit of the landlord or the newcomer. He was, therefore, content to scratch the soil instead of really cultivating it. He extracted all he could from it in his short day. He lived from hand to mouth, from hour to hour. The whole system of feudal tenure of land under a master was new to Ireland. It began with Ireland's conquest, and it was identified in the mind of the Irish peasant with Ireland's degradation. Everything was there that could make oppression bitter. The landlord began to be looked upon at last as the tenant's natural enemy. Ribbon societies were formed for the protection of the tenant. The protection afforded was only too often that of terrorism and assassination. The ribbonism of the south and west of Ireland was as strictly the product of the land system of the country as the trades-union outrages in England were the offspring of the unequal and unjust legislation that gave all the power to the master and lent no protection to the workmen. All the while five out of every six English writers and political speakers were discoursing gravely on the incurable idleness and lawlessness of the Celtic race and the Irish peasant. The law gave the Irish tenant no security for the fruit of his labor, and Englishmen wondered that he was not laborious. The law told him that when he had sown he should not be entitled to reap, and Englishmen were angry that he would not persist in sowing. Imperial legislation

showed itself his steadfast enemy, and Englishmen marvelled at his want of respect for the law.

In one province of Ireland indeed a better condition of things existed. Over the greater part of Ulster the tenant-right system prevailed. This system was a custom merely, but it had gradually come to acquire something like the force of law. The principle of tenant-right was that a man should be allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of his holding as long as he paid his rent; that he should be entitled, on giving up the land, to compensation for unexhausted improvements and that he should be at liberty to sell the "good-will" of his farm for what it would fetch in the market. The tenant was free to do what a man who has a long lease of any holding may do; he might sell to any bidder of whom his landlord approved the right to enter on the occupancy of the place. Wherever this tenant-right principle prevailed there was industry, there was prosperity; where it did not prevail was the domain of poverty, idleness, discontent and crime. The one demand of the Irish agricultural population everywhere was for some form of fixity of tenure. Let it be sought by legalizing the Ulster custom everywhere, or by declaring that men should hold their land as long as they paid a fair rent, to be fixed by authorized and impartial valuation, or by some plan of establishing a peasant proprietary—let the demand be made as it would, there was substantially one demand and one only—security of tenure. The demand was neglected or refused by generations of English statesmen, chiefly because no statesman would take the trouble to distinguish between words and things; between shadowy, pedantic theories and clear, substantial facts. "Tenant-right," said Lord Palmerston, amid the cheers of an assembly mainly composed of landlords, "is landlords' wrong." Lord Palmerston forgot that the landlord, like every one else in the commonwealth, holds even his dearest rights of property subject to the condition that his assertion of them is not inconsistent with the general weal. The landlord holds his land as the shipowner holds his ship and the railway company its lines of rail: subject to the right of the state to see that the duties of possession are properly fulfilled, and that the ownership is not allowed to become a public danger and a nuisance. Land is, from its very nature, from the fact that it cannot be increased in extent,

and that the possession by one man is the exclusion of another—land is the form of property over which the state would most naturally be expected to reserve a right of ultimate control. Yet English statesmen for generations complacently asserted the impossibility of any legislative interference with the right of the landlord, as if legislation had not again and again interfered with the right of the factory owner, the owner of mines, the possessor of railways shares, the shopkeeper; the right of the master over his apprentice, the mistress in the hire of her maid-of-all-work. Long years before Lord Palmerston talked so decisively of the landlord's right, a man of far more truly Conservative mind than Lord Palmerston had defined in a few sentences the limits of private or corporate rights.\* In his speech on Fox's East India measure Burke frankly met this difficulty about individual and corporate rights. He was speaking for the moment especially of chartered corporations; but of course a single owner of property can claim no greater right than a company of property-owners. "It has been said, if you violate this charter, what security has the charter of the bank, in which public credit is so deeply concerned, and even the charter of London, in which the rights of so many subjects are involved? I answer: in the like case they have no security at all; no, no security at all. If the bank should, by every species of mismanagement, fall into a state similar to that of the East India Company, if it should be oppressed with demands it could not answer, engagements which it could not perform, and with bills for which it could not procure payment, no charter should protect such mismanagement from correction, and such public grievances from redress. If the city of London had the means and will of destroying an empire, and of cruelly oppressing and tyrannizing over millions of men as good as themselves, the charter of the city of London would prove no sanction to such tyranny and such oppression. Charters are kept when their purposes are maintained; they are violated when the privilege is supported against its end and its object." If ever there was a creature of law and of authority acting in the place of law, it was the landlordism of Ireland. It was a plantation made by the orders of English sovereigns and governments. It was not a growth of the soil; it was strictly an exotic. It was imposed upon the country and the people. It

could not plead in support of any of its alleged rights even that prescriptive title which grows up with the growth of an institution that has held its place during all the ages to which tradition or memory goes back. The landlordism of Ireland was, compared with most European institutions, a thing of the day before yesterday. It was the creation of conquest, the impost of confiscation. It could plead no title whatever to maintain an unlimited right of action in opposition to the welfare of the people on whom it was forced. At least it could claim no such title when once the time had passed away which insisted that the right of conquest superseded all other human rights, that the tenant, like the slave, had no rights which his master was bound to respect, and that the common weal meant simply the interests and the privileges of the ruling class. The moment the title of the Irish land system came to be fairly examined, it was seen to be full of flaws. It was dependent on conditions that had never been fulfilled. It had not even made the landlord class prosperous. It had not even succeeded, as no doubt some of its founders intended that it should succeed, in colonizing the island with English and Scotch settlers. When the famine of 1846 and 1847 had tried the whole system with its gaunt, stern hand, legislation had perforce to interfere with the fancied rights of landlordism, and invent a new judicial machinery for taking from the broken-down owner what he could keep no longer with profit to himself or the country. For generations the land tenure system of Ireland had been the subject of parliamentary debate and parliamentary inquiry. The Devon Commission had made ample investigation of its principles and its operation. Mr. Sharman Crawford had in vain devoted an honest life to the advocacy of tenant-right. Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Lord Naas had introduced measures trying more or less feebly to deal with Irish land tenure. Nothing came of all this. The supposed right of the landlord stopped the way. The one simple demand of the occasion was, as we have shown, security of tenure, and it was an article of faith with English statesmanship until Mr. Gladstone's time that security for the tenant was confiscation for the landlord.

Mr. Gladstone came into power full of genuine reforming energy and without the slightest faith in the economic



wisdom of our ancestors. In a speech delivered by him during his electioneering campaign in Lancashire, he had declared that the Irish upas-tree had three great branches: the state church, the land tenure system, and the system of education, and that he meant to hew them all down if he could. His figure of speech met with a good deal of contemptuous literary criticism; but it expressed a very resolute purpose. On February 15, 1870, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Irish land bill into the House of Commons. The measure was one of far greater importance as regarded its principles than it proved to be in its practical operation. In plain words, what it did was to recognize the fact that the whole system of land tenure in Ireland, so far as it was the creature of law, was based upon a wrong principle. Mr. Gladstone's measure overthrew once for all the doctrine of the landlord's absolute and unlimited right. It recognized a certain property or partnership of the tenant in the land which he tilled. Mr. Gladstone took the Ulster tenant-right as he found it, and made it a legal institution. In places where the Ulster practice, or something analogous to it, did not exist, he threw upon the landlord the burden of proof as regarded the right of eviction. The tenant disturbed in the possession of his land could claim compensation for improvements, and the bill reversed the existing assumption of the law by presuming all improvements to be the property of the tenant, and leaving it to the landlord, if he could, to prove the contrary. The bill established a special judicial machinery for carrying out its provisions. It allowed the tribunals thus instituted to take into consideration not merely the strict legal conditions of each case, but also any circumstances that might affect the claim of the tenant as a matter of equity. Mr. Gladstone's great object was to bring about a state of things by virtue of which a tenant should not be dispossessed of his holding so long as he continued to pay his rent, and should in any case be entitled to full compensation for any substantial improvements which his energy or his capital might have effected. The bill met on the whole with a cordial reception from the Irish members of parliament, although some of its clauses were regarded with a doubt and disfavor which subsequent events, we believe, showed to be well-founded. Mr. Gladstone allowed landlords, under certain conditions, to contract themselves out of the

provisions of the bill, and these conditions were so largely availed of in some parts of Ireland, that there were more evictions after the bill had become law than before it had yet been thought of. On this ground the measure was actually opposed by a small number of the popular representatives of Ireland. The general opinion, however, then and since was, that the bill was of inestimable value to Ireland in the mere fact that it completely upset the fundamental principle on which legislation had always previously dealt with Irish land tenure. It recognized a certain ownership on the part of the tenant as well as that of the landlord. The new principle thus introduced might well be denounced as revolutionary by certain startled Irish landlords. It put an end to the reign of the landlord's absolute power; it reduced the landlord to the level of every other proprietor, of every other man in the country who had anything to sell or to hire. It recognized the palpable fact that there are certain conditions which make the ownership of land a more responsible possession than the ownership of property which admits of limitless expansion. The existing system of legislation had been founded not merely on injustice but on untruth. It had denied the presence of conditions which were as certain and as palpable as the substance of the land itself. Therefore the new legislation might in one sense have well been called revolutionary. It decided once for all against Lord Palmerston's famous dogma, and declared that tenant-right was not landlord's wrong. That was in itself a revolution.

The bill passed without substantial alteration. The Conservatives as a party did not vote against the second reading. A division was forced on, but only eleven members voted against the motion that the bill be read a second time, and of these only two or three belonged to the Conservative party, and only one, Mr. Henley, was of any mark among Conservatives. The small minority was chiefly made up of Irish members, who thought the bill inefficient and unsatisfactory. Long discussions in committee followed, but the only serious attempt made to interfere with the actual principle of the measure, an attempt embodied in an amendment moved by Mr. Disraeli, was defeated by a majority of more than seventy votes. The bill was read a third time in the Commons on May 30th.

A debate of three nights took place in the House of Lords on the motion for the second reading, and many nights of discussion were occupied in committee. On August 1, 1870, the bill received the royal assent. The second branch of the upas-tree had been hewn down; but the woodman's ax had yet to be laid to a branch of tougher fiber, well calculated to turn the edge of even the best weapon, and to jar the strongest arm that wielded it. Mr. Gladstone had dealt with church and land; he had yet to deal with university education. He had gone with Irish ideas thus far.

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## CHAPTER LIX.

### “REFORMATION IN A FLOOD.”

ON June 10, 1870, men's minds were suddenly turned away from thought of political controversy by a melancholy announcement in the morning papers. The Irish land bill, the question of national education, the curiously ominous look of affairs in France, where the emperor had just been obtaining by means of the *plebiscite* “a new guarantee of order and liberty;” the terrible story of the capture and massacre of young English tourists by Greek brigands in the neighborhood of Marathon, these and many other exciting topics were forgotten for the hour, and the thoughts of millions were suddenly drawn away to a country house near the Gad's Hill of Shakespeare, on the road to Rochester, where the most popular author of his day was lying dead. On the evening of June 8th, Mr. Dickens became suddenly seized with paralysis. He fell into an unconscious state and continued so until his death, the evening after. The news was sent over the country on the 10th, and brought a pang as of personal sorrow into almost every home. Dickens was not of an age to die; he had scarcely passed his prime. Born early in February, 1812, he had not gone far into his fifty-ninth year. In another part of this work an attempt has been made to do justice to Dickens as a novelist; here it is only necessary to record the historical fact of his death and of the deep impression that it made. No author of our time came near him in popularity; perhaps no English author ever was so popular

during his own life. To an immense number of men and women in these countries, Dickens stood for literature; to not a few his cheery teaching was sufficient as philosophy and even as religion. Soon after his death, as might have been expected, a certain reaction took place, and for awhile it became the fashion to smile quietly at Dickens' teaching and his influence. That mood too will have its day and will pass. It may be safely predicted that Dickens will be found to have made a firm place in English literature, although that place will probably not be so high as his admirers would once have claimed for him. Londoners were familiar with Dickens' personal appearance as well as with his writings, and certain London streets did not seem quite the same when his striking face and energetic movements could be seen there no more. It is likely that Dickens overworked his exuberant vital energy, his superb resources of physical health and animal spirits. In work and play, in writing and in exercising, he was unsparing of his powers. Like the lavish youth with the full purse in "Gil Blas," he appeared to believe that his stock could never be spent. Men who were early companions of his, and who had not half his vital power, outlived him many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, although his own desire was to be laid quietly in Rochester churchyard. It was held that the national cemetery claimed him. We cannot help thinking it a pity the claim was made. All true admirers of Scott must be glad that he rests in his dear and congenial Dryburgh; most of the admirers of Dickens would have been better pleased to think that he lay beneath the green turf of the ancient churchyard, in venerable and storied Rochester, amid the scenes that he loved and taught so many others to love.

Nothing in modern English history is like the rush of the extraordinary years of reforming energy on which the new administration had now entered. Mr. Gladstone's government had to grapple with five or six great questions of reform, any one of which might have seemed enough to engage the whole attention of an ordinary administration. The new prime minister had pledged himself to abolish the state church in Ireland and to reform the Irish land tenure system. He had made up his mind to put an end to the purchase of commissions in the army. Recent events and experiences had convinced him that it was

necessary to introduce the system of voting by ballot. He accepted for his government the responsibility of originating a complete scheme of national education. Meanwhile, there were many questions of the highest importance in foreign policy waiting for solution. The American government did what every cool and well-informed observer must have known they would do; they pressed for a settlement of the claims arising out of the damage done by the Alabama and other southern cruisers which had been built in English dockyards and had sailed from English ports. In the mid-career of the government the war broke out between France and Prussia. Russia took advantage of the opportunity to insist that the treaty of Paris must be altered by the canceling of the clause which "formally and in perpetuity" refused to every power the right of having a fleet in the Black Sea. Each of these questions was of capital importance; each might have involved the country in war. It required no common energy and strength of character to keep closely to the work of domestic reform amid such exciting discussions in foreign policy all the while, and with the war-trumpet ringing for a long time in the ears of England.

Mr. Forster's education bill may be said to have been run side by side with the Irish land bill. The government undertook a great and a much-needed work when it set about establishing a national system of elementary education. The manner in which England had neglected the education of her poor children had long been a reproach to her civilization. She was behind every other great country in the world; she was behind most countries that in nowise professed to be great. Prussia and nearly all the German countries were centuries in advance of her; so were some, if not actually all, of the American states. We have already shown in these pages by what pitiful patchwork of compromises and make-shift expedients England had been trying to put together something like a plan for the instruction of the children of the poor. Private charity was eked out in a parsimonious and miserable manner by a scanty dole from the state; and as a matter of course, where the direst poverty prevailed, and naturally brought the extremest need for assistance to education, there the wants of the place were least efficiently supplied. For years the statesmanship of England had been kept from

any serious attempt to grapple with the evil by the doctrine that popular education ought not to be the business of a government. The idea prevailed that education conducted by the state would be something un-English; something which might do very well for Germans and Americans and other such people, but which was entirely unsuited to the manly independence of the true Briton. It therefore came about that more than two-thirds of the children of the country were absolutely without instruction. One of the first great tasks which Mr. Gladstone's government undertook was to reform this condition of things, and to provide England for the first time in her history with a system of national education. On February 17, 1870, Mr. Forster introduced a bill having for its object to provide for public elementary education in England and Wales. The basis of the measure was very simple, but also very comprehensive. Mr. Forster proposed to establish a system of school boards in England and Wales; and to give to each board the power to frame by-laws compelling the attendance of all children, from five to twelve years of age, within the school district. The government did not see their way to a system of direct and universal compulsion. They therefore fell back on a compromise, by leaving the power to compel in the hands of the local authorities. Existing schools were, in many instances, to be adopted by the bill, and to receive government aid, on condition that they possessed a certain amount of efficiency in education, that they submitted themselves to the examination of an undenominational inspector, and that they admitted a conscience clause as part of their regulations. The funds were to be procured partly by local rate, partly by grants from the treasury, and partly by the fees paid in the paying schools. There were of course to be free schools provided where the poverty of the population was such as, in the opinion of the local authorities to render gratuitous instruction indispensable.

The bill at first was favorably received. But the general harmony of opinion did not last long. The task proved to be one of the most difficult that the government could have undertaken. The whole body of the English and Welsh nonconformists soon declared themselves in strong hostility to some of the bill's provisions. Mr. Forster found, when he came to examine into the condition of the

machinery of education in England, that there was already a system of schools existing under the charge of religious bodies of various kinds: the state church, and the Roman Catholic church, and other authorities. These he proposed to adopt as far as possible into his scheme; to affiliate them, as it were, to the governmental system of education. But he had to make some concession to the religious principles on which such schools were founded. He could not by any stroke of authority undertake to change them all into secular schools. He therefore proposed to meet the difficulty by adopting regulations compelling every school of this kind which obtained government aid or recognition to accept a conscience clause by means of which the religious convictions of parents and children should be scrupulously regarded in the instruction given during the regular school hours. On this point the noneonformists as a body broke away from the government. They laid down the broad principle that no state aid whatever should be given to any schools but those which were conducted on strictly secular and undenominational principles. It ought to be superfluous to say that the noneonformists did not object to the religious instruction of children. It ought not to be supposed for a moment that they attached less importance to religious instruction than any other body of persons. Their principle was that public money, the contributions of citizens of all shades of belief, ought only to be given for such teaching as the common opinion of the country was agreed upon.

The contribution of the Jew, they argued, ought not to be exacted in order to teach Christianity; the Protestant ratepayer ought not be compelled to pay for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in the tenets of their faith; the Irish Catholic in London or Birmingham ought not to be called upon to pay in any way for the teaching of distinctively Protestant doctrine.

Therefore, they said, let us at any cost establish a strictly national and secular system in our public elementary schools; let us teach there what we are all agreed upon; and let us leave the duty of teaching religion to the ministers of religion, and to the parents of the children. About the truths of arithmetic and geography, about spelling and writing, we are all agreed; let our common contributions be given to common instruction, and let each denomination

provide in its own way for the religious training of its young people. This way of looking at the question left out of notice one most important element in the controversy: the existence of large bodies of citizens who conscientiously objected to any school teaching which was divorced from religious instruction, and who did not believe that there could be any education in the true sense without the influence of religion accompanying and inspiring it. We shall not here discuss the relative worth of these two opposing and irreconcilable theories of public education. The fact that they existed made it well-nigh impossible for the government to satisfy the demands of the nonconformists. Mr. Forster could not admit the principle for which they contended. He could not say that it would be a fair and equal plan to offer secular education, and that alone, to all bodies of the community; for he was well aware that there were such bodies who were conscientiously opposed to what was called secular education, and who could not agree to accept it. He therefore acknowledged existing and very palpable facts, and endeavored to establish a system which should satisfy the consciences of all the denominations. But the nonconformists would not meet him on this ground. They set up their shibboleth of undenominational education; they made a fetish of their theory of state aid; and they fought Mr. Forster long, and ably, and bitterly. The Liberal minister was compelled to accept more than once the aid of the Conservative party; for that party as a whole adopted the principle which insisted on religious instruction in every system of national education. It more than once happened, therefore, that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone found themselves appealing to the help of Conservatives and of Roman Catholics against that dissenting body of Englishmen who were usually the main support of the Liberal party. It happened, too, very unfortunately, that at this time Mr. Bright's health had so far given way as to compel him to seek complete rest from parliamentary duties. His presence and his influence with the nonconformists might perhaps have tended to moderate their course of action, and to reconcile them to the policy of the government even on the subject of national education; but his voice was silent then, and for long after. The split between the government and the nonconformists became something like a



complete severance. Many angry and bitter words were spoken in the House of Commons on both sides. On one occasion there was an almost absolute declaration on the part of Mr. Gladstone and of Mr. Miall, a leading nonconformist, that they had parted company forever. The education bill was nevertheless a great success. The school boards became really valuable and powerful institutions, and the principle of the emulative vote was tested for the first time in their elections. When school boards were first established in the great cities, their novelty and the evident importance of the work they had to do attracted to them some of the men of most commanding intellect and position. The London school board had as its chairman, for instance, Lord Lawrence, the great Indian statesman, lately a viceroy, and for one of its leading members Professor Huxley. An important peculiarity of the school boards, too, was the fact that they admitted women to the privileges of membership; and this admission was largely availed of. Women voted, proposed amendments, sat on committees, and in every way took their part of the duties of citizenship in the business of national education. When the novelty of the system wore off, some of the more eminent men gradually fell out of the work, but the school boards never failed to maintain a high and useful standard of membership. They began and continued to be strictly representative institutions. From the peer to the workman, from evangelical churchman to Catholic; from nonconformist to rationalist; from old-fashioned, middle-class paterfamilias to eager young woman shrilly representing the rights of her sex, they became a mirror of English public and business life. Most of their work even still remains to be done. The school system of the country needs many improvements and many relaxations, probably, before it can be pronounced to be in fair working order. Its existence has in many parts of England brought thus far not peace but a sword. The struggle between the conscientious belief of one class of persons and the political dogma of another is still going on. Many attempts were made to induce the government to go as far as direct compulsory education, and much dissatisfaction was expressed at the refusal of ministers to venture on the adoption of such a principle. It is therefore not unreasonable to say that the national system of education has hardly yet had a

fair and full trial. But so far as it has gone, there can be no doubt of the success it has achieved. No man exists who would, if he could, see England return to the condition of things which prevailed before the days of the Gladstone administration. But it must be owned that the Gladstone administration was weakened and not strengthened by its education scheme. One of the first symptoms of coming danger to Mr. Gladstone's government was found in the estrangement of the English nonconformists. They clung to their adopted principle with a genuine Puritan pertinacity. They admitted no respect of persons where that was concerned. Honest, conscientious and narrow, they were ready to sacrifice any party and any minister, rather than tolerate concession or compromise.

The government were a little unfortunate too as regarded another great reform: that of the organization of the army. Mr. Cardwell, the war minister, brought forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the army, by combining under one system of discipline the regular troops, the militia, the volunteers, and the reserve. One most important part of the scheme was the abolition of the purchase system for officers' commissions, and the substitution of promotion according to merit. Except in certain regiments, and in certain branches of the service outside England itself, the rule was, that an officer obtained his commission by purchase. Promotion was got in the same way. An officer bought a step up in the service. A commission was a vested interest; a personal property. The owner had paid so much for it, and he expected to get so much for it when he thought fit to sell it. The regulation price recognized by law and the Horse Guards was not by any means the actual price of the commission. It became worth much more to the holder, and of course he expected to get its real price, not its regulation, or nominal and imaginary price. The regulation price was to the real price what the cost of the ticket bought at the door of an Italian theater is to the sum which has to be paid inside for a seat from which to see the play. This anomalous and extraordinary system had grown up with the growth of the English army, until it seemed in the eyes of many an essential condition of the army's existence. It found defenders almost everywhere. Because the natural courage, energy and fighting power of Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotch-

men had made a good army in spite of this unlucky practice, because the army did not actually collapse or wither away under its influence, many men were convinced that the army could not get on without it. The abolition of the purchase system had been advocated by generations of reformers without much success. For years, a stout old soldier, Sir De Lacy Evans, had made an annual motion on the subject, which was regarded by not a few as merely one of the necessary bores of parliamentary life. More lately Mr. Trevelyan had taken up the cause with vivacity, spirit, and good effect. Lord Stanley had always supported the proposed reform, as he had supported the system of open competition for appointments in the civil service. But the question did not become really pressing and practical until Mr. Gladstone, on his accession to power, resolved to include it in his list of reforms. Of course Mr. Cardwell's proposition was bitterly and pertinaciously opposed. The principle of army purchase was part of a system in which large numbers of the most influential class had a vested interest. It was part of the aristocratic principle. To admit men to commissions in the army by pure merit and by mere competition would be to deprive the service of its specially aristocratic character. Few of those who opposed the reform on this ground were actually conscious that they were fighting merely for the maintenance of a class privilege and a selfish advantage. They had schooled themselves into the conviction that the aristocratic system was the only principle of existence for an English army; that a system of open promotion by merit would be too French or too American, or something of the kind; that it would fill the higher places in the service with persons of no rank and of vulgar habits; and they had worked themselves into the belief that in resisting Mr. Cardwell's measure they were performing a patriotic duty. A large number of the Conservative party set themselves, therefore, not merely to oppose but to obstruct the bill. They proposed all manner of amendments, and raised all manner of discussions, in which the same arguments were repeated over and over again by the same speakers in almost the same words. Men who had never before displayed the slightest interest in the saving of the public money were now clamorous opponents of the bill on the ground that the abolition of purchase would render

necessary the outlay of a large sum for compensation to officers thus deprived of their vested interests. This outlay the Liberal government, usually censured by their opponents on the ground of their pinching parsimony, were quite willing to meet. Mr. Cardwell was prepared to make provision for it. Economy, however, became suddenly a weapon in the hands of some of the Conservatives. The session was going on, and there seemed little prospect of the opposition being discouraged or slackening in their energy. The government began to see that it would be impossible to carry through the vast and complicated scheme of army reorganization which they had introduced; and Mr. Gladstone was resolved that the system of purchase must come to an end. It was thought expedient at last, and while the bill was still fighting its way through committee, to abandon a great part of the measure and persevere for the present only with those clauses which related to the abolition of the system of purchase. Under these conditions the bill passed its third reading in the Commons on July 3, 1871, not without a stout resistance at the last and not by a very overwhelming majority. This condition of things gave the majority in the House of Lords courage to oppose the scheme. A meeting of Conservative peers was held, and it was resolved that the Duke of Richmond should offer an amendment to the motion for the second reading of the army purchase bill. The Duke of Richmond was exactly the sort of man that a party under such conditions would agree upon as the proper person to move an amendment. He was an entirely respectable and safe politician; a man of great influence so far as dignity and territorial position were concerned; a seemingly moderate Tory who showed nothing openly of the mere partisan and yet was always ready to serve his party. When the motion for the second reading came on, the Duke of Richmond moved an amendment declaring that the House of Lords was unwilling to agree to the motion until a comprehensive and complete scheme of army reorganization should have been laid before it. This amendment was cleverly constructed. It did not pledge the House of Lords to reject the bill; it did not directly oppose the second reading; it merely said that before passing the second reading, the house was anxious to know more fully the plans of the government for the general

reorganization of the army. The government had brought in a scheme of vast reorganization, and had then withdrawn nearly all of it, with the avowed intention of introducing it again at a more convenient opportunity. It looked reasonable enough therefore that the House of Lords should hesitate about abandoning the system of purchase before knowing exactly what the government proposed to do as a supplement and consequence of so important a measure. But of course the object of the House of Lords was not to obtain further information; it was simply to get rid of the bill for the present. The amendment of the Duke of Richmond was adopted.

Then Mr. Gladstone took a course which became the subject of keen and embittered controversy. Purchase in the army was permitted only by a royal warrant. The whole system was the creation of royal regulation. The House of Commons had pronounced against the system. The House of Lords had not pronounced in favor of it. The House of Lords had not rejected the measure of the government, but only expressed a wish for delay and further information. Delay however would have been fatal to the measure for that session. Mr. Gladstone therefore devised a way for checkmating what he knew to be the design of the House of Lords. It was an ingenious plan; it was almost an audacious plan; it took the listener's breath away to hear of it. Mr. Gladstone announced that as the system of purchase was the creation of royal regulation, he had advised the queen to take the decisive step of canceling the royal warrant which made purchase legal. A new royal warrant was therefore immediately issued, declaring that, on and after November 1st following, all regulations made by her majesty or any of her predecessors regulating or fixing the prices at which commissions might be bought, or in any way authorizing the purchase or sale of such commissions should be canceled. As far as regarded purchase, therefore, the controversy came suddenly to an end. The House of Lords had practically nothing to discuss. All that was left of the government scheme on which the peers could have anything to say was that part of the bill which provided compensation for those whom the abolition of the system of purchase would deprive of certain vested interests. For the Lords to reject the bill as it now stood would merely be to say that

such officers should have no compensation. The Lords were, to use a homely expression, sold. To adopt a phrase which would have been good English once, and would not have been too strong to illustrate their own views of what had happened, they were "bubbled." Astonishment fell upon the minds of most who heard Mr. Gladstone's determination. After a moment of bewilderment it was received with a wild outburst of Liberal exultation. It was felt to be a splendid party triumph. The House of Lords had been completely foiled. The tables had been turned on the peers. They were as utterly baffled as Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's play, when pulling out the document on which he is to rely, he finds it only "a fair skin of parchment," with "neither wax nor words." "What prodigy is this? I am o'erwhelmed with wonder," an astounded peer might have exclaimed; "what subtle spirit hath razed out the inscription?" Nothing was left for the House of Lords but to pass the bill as quickly as possible, coupling its passing, however, with a resolution announcing that it was passed only in order to secure to officers of the army the compensation they were entitled to receive, and censuring the government for having attained, "by the exercise of the prerogative and without the aid of parliament," the principal object which they contemplated in the bill.

The House of Lords was then completely defeated. The system of purchase in the army was abolished by one sudden and clever stroke. The government were victorious over their opponents. Yet the hearts of many sincere Liberals sank within them as they heard the announcement of the triumph. Mr. Disraeli condemned in the strongest terms the sudden exercise of the prerogative of the crown to help the ministry out of a difficulty; and many a man of mark and influence on the Liberal benches felt that there was good ground for the strictures of the leader of the opposition. Mr. Fawcett in particular condemned the act of the government. He insisted that if it had been done by a Tory minister it would have been passionately denounced by Mr. Gladstone amid the plaudits of the whole Liberal party. Mr. Fawcett was a man who occupied a remarkable position in the House of Commons. In his early manhood he met with an accident which entirely destroyed the sight of his eyes. He made the noble resolve that he would

nevertheless follow unflinching the career he had previously mapped out for himself, and would not allow the terrible calamity he had suffered to drive him from the active life of the political world. His tastes were for politics and political economy. He published a manual of political economy; he wrote largely on the subject in reviews and magazines; he was elected professor of the science in his own university, Cambridge. He was in politics as well as in economics a pupil of Mr. Mill; and with the encouragement and support of Mr. Mill he became a candidate for a seat in parliament. He was a Liberal of the most decided tone; but he was determined to hold himself independent of party. He stood for Southwark against Mr. Layard in 1857 and was defeated; he contested Cambridge and Brighton at subsequent elections, and at last in 1865 he was successful at Brighton. He was not long in the House of Commons before it was acknowledged that his political career was likely to be something of a new force in parliament. A remarkably powerful reasoner, he was capable notwithstanding his infirmity of making a long speech full of figures and of statistical calculations. His memory was fortunately so quick and powerful as to enable him easily to dispense with all the appliances which even well-trained speakers commonly have to depend upon when they enter into statistical controversy. In parliament he held faithfully to the purpose with which he had entered it, and was a thorough Liberal in principles, but absolutely independent of the expedients and sometimes of the mere discipline of party. If he believed that the Liberal ministers were going wrong, he censured them as freely as though they were his political opponents. On this occasion he felt strongly about the course Mr. Gladstone had taken, and he expressed himself in language of unmeasured condemnation. It seems hard to understand how any independent man could have come to any other conclusion. The exercise of the royal prerogative was undoubtedly legal. Much time was wasted in testifying to its legality. The question in dispute was whether its sudden introduction in such a manner was a proper act on the part of the government, whether it was right to cut short by virtue of the queen's prerogative a debate which had previously been carried on without the slightest intimation that the controversy was to be settled in any other way than that of

the ordinary parliamentary procedure. There seems to be only one reasonable answer to this question. The course taken by Mr. Gladstone was unusual, unexpected, unsustained by any precedent; it was a mere surprise; it was not fair to the House of Lords, it was not worthy of the occasion, or the ministry, or the Liberal principles they professed. Great stress was laid upon an opinion which was obtained from Sir Roundell Palmer in justification of the action of the government. But Sir Roundell Palmer merely gave it as his opinion that the issuing of the warrant canceling purchase was within the constitutional power of the crown. On that subject there could be no reasonable doubt. But that was not the question which people were discussing so eagerly. They were asking whether it was fair to begin a measure of reform on the ordinary principles of parliamentary procedure, and suddenly to bring it to a close by the unexpected intervention of the royal prerogative. On this question, the only one really at issue, Sir Roundell Palmer's letter was a condemnation, not a justification, of the course taken by the government. "I should have been glad," Sir Roundell Palmer wrote to Mr. Cardwell, "if it had been generally and clearly understood from the beginning that, subject to the sense of parliament being ascertained with reference to the point of compensation, the form of procedure would be that which was eventually adopted, because it is certainly an evil that the adoption of one constitutional mode of procedure rather than another should appear to arise from an adverse vote of the House of Lords."

The introduction of the prerogative in this curious way did much to damage the influence of Mr. Gladstone's government. Every one in the end came to approve of the principle of promotion in the army by merit, and the abolition of the anomalous system of purchase. But this great reform could at most have been delayed for only a single session by the House of Lords. It would have been carried, as the ballot was carried, the moment it was sent up a second time from the representative chamber. It is not even certain, that the House of Lords, if firmly met, would have carried their opposition long enough to delay the measure by a single session. In any case the time lost would not have counted for much; better by far to have waited another session than to have carried the



point at once by a stroke of policy which seemed impatient, petulant, and even unfair. It is evident that among the independent men of his own party Mr. Gladstone suffered discredit by the manner in which he swept the purchase system away, and "bade his will vouch it." Among the many influences already combining to weaken his authority, the impression produced by this stroke of policy was not the least powerful.

The ballot bill was not carried without a struggle. It was introduced by Mr. Forster on February 20, 1871, and was a measure embodying some remarkable changes. Its principal object was of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. This Mr. Forster proposed to do by compelling each voter to use only an official voting-paper which he was to obtain at the polling-place, and there alone. Entering the polling-place, the voter was to go to the official in charge, and mention his name and his place of residence. The official, having ascertained that he was properly on the register, would hand him a stamped paper on which to inscribe his vote. The voter was to take the paper into a separate compartment and there privately mark a cross opposite the printed name of the candidate for whom he desired to record his vote. He was then to fold up the paper in such a manner as to prevent the mark from being seen, and in the presence of the official, drop it into the urn for containing the votes. By this plan Mr. Forster proposed not only to obtain secrecy, but also to prevent personation. The bill likewise undertook to abolish the old practice of nominating candidates publicly by speeches at the hustings. Instead of a public nomination it was intended that the candidates should be nominated by means of a paper containing the names of a proposer and seconder and eight assentors, all of whom must be registered voters. This paper being handed to the returning officer would constitute a nomination. Thus was abolished one of the most characteristic and time-dishonored peculiarities of electioneering. Every humorous writer, every satirist with pencil or pen, from Hogarth to Dickens, had made merry with the scenes of the nomination day. No ceremonial could be at once more useless and more mischievous. In England the candidates were proposed and seconded in face of each other on a public platform in some open street or market-place in the presence of a vast

tumultuous crowd, three-fourths of whom were generally drunk, and all of whom were inflamed by the passion of a furious partisanship. Fortunate indeed was the orator whose speech was anything more than dumb show. The Conservative part of the crowd usually made it a point of honor not to listen to the Liberal candidate or allow him to be heard; the Liberal partisans in the street were equally resolute to drown the eloquence of the Tory candidate. Brass bands and drums not unusually accompanied the efforts of the speakers to make themselves heard. Brickbats, dead cats, and rotten eggs came flying like bewildering meteors around the ears of the rival politicians on the hustings. The crowds generally enlivened the time by a series of faction fights among themselves. Anything more grotesque, more absurd, more outrageous it would be impossible to imagine. The bill introduced by Mr. Forster would have deserved the support of all rational beings, if it proposed no greater reform than simply the abolition of this abominable system. But the ballot had long become an indispensable necessity. Bribery, corruption, intimidation, were the monstrous outcome of the system of open voting. Yet for long years no reform had seemed more unlikely than the adoption of the ballot. In Mr. Grote's days there used to be an annual debate on the motion in favor of the ballot, and Mr. Grote generally found himself supported by a very respectable minority, and by some speakers of great influence. Still his proposal was even then regarded by parliament and the public in general rather as a crotchet than as a practical scheme. In "The Song of the Box" Thomas Moore made easy ridicule of Grote and his ballot.

" And oh, when at last even this greatest of Grotes  
Must bend to the power that at every door knocks,  
May he drop in the urn like his own silent votes,  
And the tomb of his rest be a large ballot-box."

Lord Palmerston made precisely the same joke years after about Mr. Henry Berkeley and his annual motion for the adoption of the ballot. He expressed a hope that when the inevitable hour came for Mr. Berkeley to quit the scene of his mortal labors, his tomb might be made in the likeness of a ballot-box. Lord Palmerston evidently was not acquainted with Moore's lines about Mr. Grote, and was under the impression that he was making an original

joke. In Mr. Berkeley's hands, the ballot debate became less important than it had been with Mr. Grote. On one remarkable occasion, indeed, Mr. Berkeley contrived to carry a sort of snap vote against the government. The division was taken unexpectedly in a very thin house, and eighty-six voted for the ballot and eighty against it. But nothing came of this, and the whole question seemed at one time in a fair way to be closed with Mr. Spooner's motion for the withdrawal of the Maynooth grant or Mr. Newdegate's appeal for the inspection of convents. Lord Palmerston used to argue complacently that the franchise was not a right but a trust; that the trust was exercised on behalf of the community in general, and that the voter was bound to discharge his duty in public so that those for whom he acted should know that he was acting fairly. This way of treating the question held out a temptation to long and futile controversy as to whether the franchise was or was not the right of a free man, and in what we may call the metaphysics of the subject the really practical object of the discussion became lost. Lord Palmerston's description of the franchise did not in the slightest degree affect the argument in favor of the ballot. If the franchise was a trust, and only a trust, there was none the less necessity that the trustee should be so protected as to enable him to discharge his trust conscientiously and properly. The objection to the open vote was that in a vast number of instances the voter could not safely vote according to his conscience and his convictions. If he was a tenant he was in terror of his landlord; if he was a workman he was afraid of his employer; if he was a small shopkeeper in a country town he was in dread of offending some wealthy customer; if he was a timid man he shrank from exposing himself to the violence of a mob. In many cases a man giving a conscientious vote would have had to do so with the certainty that he was bringing ruin upon himself and his family. In Ireland the conflicting power of the landlord and of the crowd made the vote a mere sham. A man in many places dared not vote but as the landlord bade him. Sometimes, when he thought to secure safety by pleasing the landlord, he ran serious risk by offending the crowd who supported the popular candidate. Voters were dragged to the poll like slaves or prisoners by the landlord and his agents. It was something worse than ridiculous

to tell the House of Commons and the public that it was necessary such a system should be kept up because it enabled everybody to see that the voter properly discharged his trust. Yet this argument about the trust and the need of publicity was almost the only piece of reasoning which for many years Lord Palmerston thought it worth his while to offer to the House of Commons. Mr. Mill, who had begun by advocating the ballot, became an opponent of the system, chiefly on the ground that it was unmanly to conceal one's vote. This way of arguing the question only furnished one other illustration of the generous weakness which impaired the effect of much of Mr. Mill's political and social philosophy: the tendency to construct systems based on what Burke called the heroic virtues; the belief that human affairs can be regulated on the assumption that all men can not only become heroic, but that they can be heroic always. It would be a nobler world indeed if in the giving of our votes as in everything else we could all make up our minds to do right and to defy the consequences. It would be a far finer sight for the moralist or the philosopher to see a concourse of Irish tenants going openly to the poll to vote against their landlords, and calmly accepting eviction as a consequence, than to see the same men screened from the penalty of their patriotic conduct by the mechanical protection of the ballot. The small shopkeeper who offended his most influential customer in the cause of what he believed to be the right, would be a nobler subject for contemplation than the small shopkeeper enabled to do as he thought right without any risk or loss. But an electoral system constructed on these lofty principles would be sure to turn out exactly as the open voting system proved to be: a source of almost boundless demoralization. It is curious to note that in one of the very speeches in which he condemned the ballot on this higher ground, Mr. Mill actually quoted with approval that sentence of profound practical philosophy in which Burke declared that "the system which lays its foundations in rare and heroic virtues will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption."

A change, however, suddenly took place in English public feeling. The gross and growing profligacy and violence which disgraced every election began to make men feel that something must be done to get rid of such hideous

abuses. Mr. Bright had always been an earnest advocate of the ballot system; and partly no doubt under his influence, and partly by the teaching of experience and observation, Mr. Gladstone became a convert to the same opinion. In 1869 a committee of the House of Commons was appointed on the motion of Mr. Bruce, the home secretary, to inquire into the manner of conducting parliamentary and municipal elections. Lord Hartington was chairman of the committee. Its report was on the whole decidedly in favor of the principle of secret voting. Public opinion came round in a moment. Not many years had passed since the very words "secret voting" used to be considered enough to stigmatize the ballot, and to make all true men disclaim any approval of it. Now under the impulse of that marvelous breath of reforming energy which was scattering so many ancient traditions, the repugnance to the secret vote seemed to have disappeared. We are speaking now of the public out of doors; for a great many members of both houses of parliament were still unconverted. Mr. Forster's bill was stoutly resisted by the Conservatives. It was not merely resisted in the ordinary way; its progress was delayed by that practice of talking against time which has more recently become famous under the name of obstruction. A good many Liberal members liked the ballot in their hearts little better than the Tories did. The bill contained a wise and just proposal for throwing the legitimate expenses of elections on the public rates. This was rejected in committee by a large majority. A similar proposal, it may be stated, was introduced again and again in more or less differing forms during the progress of the ballot bills, and it was invariably rejected. The majority of the House of Commons is composed of rich men; the majority, it is not unfair to say, is composed also of men who are not recommended to their constituencies by great intellect or distinguished public services. There will always therefore be many persons found to object to any change of system which tends to place a poor man and a rich man more nearly on a footing of equality in a candidature for a seat in parliament. The long delays which interposed between the introduction of Mr. Forster's bill and its passing through the House of Commons gave the House of Lords a plausible excuse for rejecting it altogether. The bill was not read a third time in the Commons until

August 8th; it was not sent up to the Lords until the 10th of that month—a date later than that usually fixed for the close of the session. Lord Shaftesbury moved that the bill be rejected on the ground that there was no time left for a proper consideration of it, and his motion was carried by ninety-seven votes to forty-eight. The manner in which the measure had been dealt with in the House of Commons made it seem clear to the Lords that there was really a very general feeling of dislike to the ballot among the members of the representative chamber, and emboldened them to think that they would be rendering a grateful service by throwing it out.

The House of Lords was right enough in assuming that many members of the House of Commons were not particularly anxious for the introduction of the ballot. The proposal of the government was welcome to the voters in general; but it was naturally regarded with hostile feelings by many men who felt small assurance that their seats would be safe if the franchise were to be exercised by every one in security and independence. The ballot was introduced, we do not hesitate to say, in defiance of the secret prejudices of the majority of the House of Commons which consented to pass it. Mr. Gladstone was determined to pass it in the interest of the voters, of political independence, and of public morals. He was now as thoroughly convinced as Mr. Bright himself that the ballot in these countries would be the very keystone of political independence. Recent publications have enabled us to know that on one occasion, at least, Lord Palmerston did all he could privately to encourage the House of Lords to reject an important measure introduced and passed in the Commons by his own chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Gladstone. This fact which would be incredible if it were not made known upon authority impossible to question, was not likely to furnish an example which Mr. Gladstone would follow. Mr. Gladstone accepted the decision of the Lords as a mere passing delay, and with the beginning of the next session the ballot came up again. It was presented in the form of a bill to amend the laws relating to procedure at parliamentary and municipal elections, and it included of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. The bill passed quickly through the House of Commons. Those who most disliked it began now to see that they

must make up their minds to meet their fate. When the bill went up to the Lords an amendment was introduced into it with the view of making the ballot optional. This preposterous alteration was of course objected to by the Commons, and finally the House of Lords gave it up. There would obviously be no protection whatever for the class of voters whom it was necessary to protect, if the ballot were made simply optional. The tenant who exercised his option of voting secretly against his landlord might just as well have voted openly. The landlord would not be slow to assume that the secrecy was adopted for the purpose of giving a vote against him. At the instance of the House of Lords, however, the ballot was introduced as an experiment, and the act was passed to continue in force for eight years; that is, until the end of 1880. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that no measure of reform introduced through all that season of splendid reforming energy has given more universal satisfaction or worked with happier effect than the ballot. There is indeed much still to be done to purify the electoral system. The ballot has not extinguished corruption in small boroughs. It is still perfectly possible to carry on the most demoralizing system of bribery there. The plan of what we may call payment by results still flourishes in many a small constituency. It is quietly given out that if a certain candidate be elected there will be money flowing through the borough after the election; and every voter who is open to corruption goes to the polling-place determined to vote for this candidate, because he knows that his vote adds to the chances of the borough's coming in for the refreshing golden shower. Probably nothing could put a stop to the corruption in very small boroughs but their utter disfranchisement, or some system which would group several of them into one constituency. But in all other objects sought by the ballot act it has been successful. It has put an end to an enormous amount of corruption, and it may be said to have almost altogether extinguished the illegitimate influence of the landlord, the employer, and the patron. During a debate on woman's suffrage in 1871, Mr. Gladstone stated that if the ballot were once introduced there would be no harm done by allowing women to vote. Nearly ten years have passed since that remarkable declaration, and the proposal to extend the franchise

to female householders does not seem to have made much practical progress. But it must be admitted that the adoption of the ballot makes a great difference in the conditions of the controversy. It was one thing to ask that women should have imposed on them the duty of going up to the open poll and recording their votes in public, and quite another thing to ask that they should be allowed to enter a quiet compartment of the polling-place and record an independent vote under the saving shelter of the ballot.

The university tests bill was one of the great measures carried successfully into legislation during this season of unparalleled activity. The effect of this bill was to admit all lay students of whatever faith to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge on equal terms. This settled practically a controversy, and removed a grievance which had been attracting keen public interest for at least five-and-thirty years. Gradually the restrictions which Oxford and Cambridge drew around their systems of education had been relaxed. Dissenters had been admitted first to the advantages of education within the sphere of the universities, and next to the honors which success in the university course was fitted to command. Twice over within a very few years had a measure for the purpose been carried through the Commons only to be rejected by the Lords. In this busy year of 1871, the Liberal government introduced the bill again, and this time, after some remonstrances and futile struggle, the Conservative majority in the House of Lords allowed their prejudices to succumb, and affirmed the principle of religious equality in the distribution of the honors which the two universities have to award to those who win success as students within the sphere of their teaching. The government also passed a trades-union bill, moderating as has already been shown the legislation which bore harshly on the workmen. They established by act of parliament the local government board, a new department of the administration entrusted with the care of the public health, the control of the poor law system, and all regulations applying to the business of districts throughout the country. The government repealed the ridiculous and almost forgotten ecclesiastical titles bill.

The popularity of Mr. Gladstone's government was all



the time somewhat impaired by the line of action, and even perhaps by the personal deportment, of some of its members. Mr. Lowe's budgets were not popular; and Mr. Lowe had a taste for sarcasm which it was pleasant no doubt to indulge in at the expense of heavy men, but which was, like other pleasant things, a little dangerous when enjoyed too freely. One of Mr. Lowe's budgets contained a proposition to make up for deficiency of income by a tax on matches. It seems not unlikely that the whole proposition first arose in Mr. Lowe's mind in connection with a pretty play upon words which he offered as its motto. "*Ex luce lucellum*," he suggested should be a device imprinted on every taxed match-box. The joke had to be explained; its humor wholly vanishes when it is put into English—"a little profit out of light;" not much drollery in that, surely. The country laughed at the joke and not with it. The match trade rose up in arms against the proposal. It was shown that the trade was really a very large one, employing vast numbers of poor people, both in the manufacture and the sale, especially in the east end of London; and it was proved that the imposition recommended by Mr. Lowe would put out the light most effectually. All the little boys and girls of the metropolis whose poor bread, whose miserable *lucellum* depended on the trade, arose in infantile insurrection against Mr. Lowe. There were vast processions of match-makers and match-sellers to Palace Yard to protest against the tax. The contest was pitiful, painful, ludicrous; no ministry could endure it long. Mr. Lowe, who had not the slightest idea when he proposed his tax of being regarded as a worse than Lucifer by the vendors of lucifer matches, was only too glad to withdraw from his unenviable position. It was not pleasant to be regarded as a sort of ogre by thousands of poor little ragged boys and girls. Mr. Lowe had ventured on the proposal chiefly because of the example of the United States, where the whole system and social conditions are so different from ours as to afford no guarantee whatever that a tax which is found endurable by the one community is likely to be found endurable by the other. He withdrew his unlucky proposal along with his ill-omened joke, and set himself to work to repair by other ways and means the ravages which warlike times had made in his financial system. No particular harm was done to anybody

but the government. They were made to seem ridiculous. The miserable match-tax was just the sort of thing to impress the popular mind as something niggling, paltry, and pitiful. Mr. Lowe did not hear the end of it for a long time. The attempt and not the deed confounded him. Another member of the administration, Mr. Ayrton, a man of much ability but still more self-confidence, was constantly bringing himself and his government into quarrels. He was blessed with a gift of offense. If a thing could be done either civilly or rudely, Mr. Ayrton was pretty sure to do it rudely. He was impatient with dull people, and did not always remember that those unhappy persons not only have their feelings, but sometimes have their votes. He quarreled with officials; he quarreled with the newspapers; he seemed to think a civil tongue gave evidence of a feeble intellect. He pushed his way along, trampling on people's prejudices with about as much consideration as a steam-roller shows for the gravel it crushes. Even when Mr. Ayrton was in the right, he had a wrong way of showing it.

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## CHAPTER LX.

### THE BLACK SEA CLAUSE—THE ALABAMA ARBITRATION.

MEANWHILE the portentous changes which were taking place on the continent of Europe had, as was natural, their effect on England and the English government. The Emperor Napoleon having taken to himself a Liberal minister, M. Emile Ollivier, one of the famous five who for years had represented opposition in the French legislative chamber, had sought to get a renewed charter for himself and his dynasty by means of a *plébiscite*. Representing the question at issue as one of revolution or social order, the emperor obtained a very large majority of ayes in favor of his policy and his house, seven and a quarter million ayes against one and a half million noes. But the minority was considerable, and one peculiarity made it specially ominous. There were more than fifty-two thousand "noes" among the votes of the army and navy. The Mexican expedition and its ghastly failure had much injured the *prestige* of the emperor with the two services.

The truth could not be concealed that he had been peremptorily ordered out of Mexico by the United States government and that he had obeyed the command, leaving Maximilian to his fate. Louis Napoleon saw that he must do something to recover his military popularity. The overthrow of Austria by Prussia had roused a strong feeling of jealousy in France. M. Thiers in particular had endeavored to keep up an angry mood against the imperial government. He constantly reproached the emperor for not interposing in some way to protect Austria and restrict the ambition of Prussia. Louis Napoleon therefore found himself driven to try the gamester's last and desperate throw. He seized the first excuse for forcing a war on Prussia.

It is probable that war would have come in any case. M. Prevost-Paradol had compared France and Prussia to two express trains started from opposite points along the same line of rails. The collision must come; it was merely a question of time. The comparison was happy. Prussia knew very well that her success over Austria had aroused the jealousy and the fears of France. France began to revive the old talk of the frontier on the Rhine. Bismarck had probably made up his mind that the quarrel would have to be fought out one day. Still it was a fatal mistake of the Emperor Napoleon to force the quarrel on such a pretext as the fact that the Spanish people had invited a distant relation of the king of Prussia to become sovereign of Spain. Louis Napoleon managed to put himself completely in the wrong. The king of Prussia at once induced his relative to withdraw from the candidature in order not to disturb the susceptibilities of France; and then the French government pressed for a general pledge that the king of Prussia would never on any future occasion allow of any similar candidature. When it came to this, there was an end to negotiation. It was clear then that the emperor was resolved to have a quarrel. Count Bismarck must have smiled a grim smile. His enemy had delivered himself into Bismarck's hands.

The emperor had been for some time in failing health. He had not been paying much attention to the details of his administration. False security and self-conceit had operated among his generals and his war department to the utter detriment of the army. Nothing was ready. The

whole system was falling to pieces. Long after France had declared war, the army that was to go to Berlin was only dragging heavily toward the frontier. The experience of what had happened to Austria might have told any one that the moment Prussia saw her opportunity she would move with the direct swiftness of an eagle's flight. But the French army stuck as if it was in mud. What every one expected came to pass. The Prussians came down on the French like the rush of a torrent. The fortunes of the war were virtually decided in a day. Then the French lost battle after battle. The emperor dared not return to Paris. The defense—for the Prussians had long since become the invaders—was carried on with regard to the emperor's political fortunes rather than to the military necessities of the hour. There was nothing but French defeats until there came at last the crowning disaster of Sedan. The emperor surrendered his sword, and was a captive in the hands of his enemies. The second empire was gone in a moment. Paris proclaimed the republic; the Empress Eugenie fled to England; the second empire was all in the dust; the conqueror at Versailles was hailed as German emperor.

We need not follow the fortunes of the war. France made many a brave and brilliant attempt to rally; but it was too late. Official neglect and mismanagement had done their work. No courage, no patriotism, could now retrieve the fortunes of the field. Marshal Bazaine, the ill-omened soldier of the Mexican campaign, surrendered at Metz with a vast army; Paris was invested, was besieged; had to give up, or famine would have done the work for her. The conquering enemy had to be spoken with at the gate. France had nothing for it but to accept the terms imposed on her. She lost two provinces and had to pay an enormous fine; and the war was over.

The sympathies of the English people generally were at first almost altogether with Prussia. The policy of the Emperor Napoleon had seemed so gross and outrageous that the public voice here applauded the resistance of Germany to his attempted dictation. But when the empire fell the feeling suddenly changed. It was the common idea that the Prussians ought to have been content with Sedan and the complete destruction of the Bonapartist empire and have made generous terms with the republic.

Great popular meetings were held in Trafalgar Square, London, and in various provincial cities, to express sympathy with the hardly-entreated French. The sympathy of the Irish populations had been with France all through. The old bonds of comradeship dating from the Irish brigade and from long before it had still their hold upon the emotional and impassioned Irish nature. Many persons everywhere thought the government ought to do something to assist the French republic. Some were of opinion that the glory of England would suffer if she did not get into a fight with some power or other. It came out in the course of the eager diplomatic discussions which were going on that there had been some secret talk at different times of a private engagement between France and Prussia which would have allowed France on certain conditions to annex Belgium. This astounding revelation excited alarm and anger in England. The government met that possible danger by at once pressing upon France and Prussia a new treaty by which these powers bound themselves jointly with England to maintain the independence of Belgium and to take up arms against any state invading it. The government might fairly claim to have thus provided satisfactorily against any menace to the integrity and independence of Belgium, and they prepared against the more general dangers of the hour by asking for a large vote to enable them to strengthen the military defenses of the country. But they were seriously embarrassed by the manner in which Russia suddenly proposed to deal with the treaty of Paris. One article of that treaty declared that "the Black Sea is neutralized; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the powers possessing its coast or of any other power," and the sultan of Turkey and the emperor of Russia engaged to establish or maintain no military or maritime arsenals on the shores of that sea. Russia now took advantage of the war between France and Prussia to say that she would not submit to be bound by that article of the treaty any longer. The Russian statesmen pleaded as a justification of this blunt and sudden proceeding that the treaty of Paris had been ignored by other powers and in a variety of ways since the time of its signature, and that Russia could not be expected to endure forever an

article which bore heavily, directly, and specially upon her. The manner of making the announcement was startling, ominous, and offensive. But there really was not much that any English statesman could do to interfere with Russia's declared intentions. Two of the great powers concerned in the treaty of Paris were occupied too gravely with concerns of their own to have much interest in the neutralization of the Black Sea. It was not likely that France or Prussia would stop just then from the death-grapple in which they were engaged to join in coercing Russia to keep to the disputed article in the treaty. Austria of course would not under such circumstances undertake to interfere. It would have been a piece of preposterous quixotry on the part of England to take on herself alone the responsibility of maintaining the sanctity of the treaty. Besides, it had long been clear to every practical politician that sooner or later, by one process or another, Russia would shake herself free from the obligation imposed on her by the clause which she now challenged. Literally it affected all the great powers alike, but in fact it only concerned Russia, and it was devised as a means of restraining her alone. The Black Sea is virtually a Russian lake. At least it may be thus described if we think of military and political questions only; for Turkey's use of the Black Sea could hardly be of vital moment to Europe, and Turkey and Russia divide between them the Euxine shores. However wise and just, therefore, the desire of the western powers to have the war flag of Russia kept out of the waters of the Black Sea, it must have been clear to every statesman, even at the time when the treaty was made, that should Russia ever be in a position to demand a release from the conditions which her defeat in the Crimea imposed upon her, she would take advantage of the opportunity. It must have been expected that she would insist upon the abrogation of the clause in the treaty of Paris which shut her navy out of the waters that washed her own southern shores. But the manner of demanding the abrogation of the clause surprised and offended even more than the demand itself. There was something Calmuck in the coarse bluntness of the obvious admission that Russia now insisted on new conditions because she found that there was no possibility of any western alliance to interfere with her will. If England had gone to war with Russia, she

would have gone to war for the maintenance of an article in the treaty of Paris, which no one believed could be long maintained in any case, and for which most of the European powers cared nothing either way. Lord Granville confined himself to remonstrating against the extraordinary assumption that any power which signed a treaty could legitimately and of its own motion repudiate any part of the treaty at any moment when it thought fit. If Russia cared about argument it must be admitted that Lord Granville's argument was beyond reply. Lord Granville merely affirmed that when several parties have entered into a joint engagement it cannot be open to any one of them to withdraw from it whenever he pleases, without consulting the others. But of course Russia cared nothing about argument or fairness in the matter. She saw that she had an unprecedented chance—a chance perhaps never to occur again—for getting out of her engagement with impunity; and she seized upon it and held to it.

We do not see how even a Russian, outside the official world, could undertake to justify the action of the Russian government. On the other hand, we fear that the Russian emperor might find a good deal in the events then passing in Europe to plead in excuse of his policy. Public law did not seem for the time to be held in very high regard. The transactions between Prussia and France with regard to Belgium were disgraceful to the statesmen who took part in them. They were cynically avowed by Count Bismarck when he found it suited his convenience to betray his late accomplices. A feeble attempt was made on the part of the accomplices to disavow them, or deny them, or escape in some way from the shame of having set them going. Each party fell back upon the policy of the husband and wife meeting by chance at the masked ball, each of whom makes overtures to the unrecognized other, and each of whom on a mutual recognition insists that the overtures were only made with the object of trying the other's virtue. Thus Europe was amused for a few days, and ought no doubt to have been scandalized, by the controversy between France and Prussia as to which was the tempter, which was the tempted, and what was the real motive of the temptation. Then again the king of Italy took advantage of the withdrawal of the French army of occupation from Rome to announce that in the interest of order and

to deliver Rome and the pope from the tyranny of the pope's foreign guards, he felt compelled to march the Italian troops into the city, take forcible possession of it, and make it the capital of his dominions. We do not propose to discuss or even to touch upon the religious question then at issue between the Vatican and the king of Italy. We are willing to look at all that took place from the point of view of those who desired that Italy should become one united kingdom and should have Rome for her capital. Even from this point of view it seems absolutely impossible to justify the course taken by the king of Italy. It is easy to understand how Italians and other men should say to themselves, "now that the thing has been done, we are glad it is done, and is over." But it would baffle the ingenuity of any casuist to find a justification for such a mode of solving a great political question unless on the bold assumption that the stronger has always a right to do anything he thinks proper with the weaker. At all events it is not surprising that when the emperor of Russia saw such strokes of policy approved of by the cabinets of great powers like England, he should have said to himself that there was no reason why he alone of all other sovereigns on the European continent should not be at liberty to lay rude hands on opportunity. There was apparently a general scramble going on; and the Emperor Alexander may not have seen why there should be any law of morality or honor specially binding on him which was not binding on his neighbors. Such of course would not have been the view of a moralist; but the Emperor Alexander was perhaps of the way of thinking of that philosopher who has argued that it is immoral to be in advance of the morality of one's age. Perhaps Alexander thought that in acting as he did he was only acting up to the morality of his contemporaries.

Lord Granville, however, continued to remonstrate. It was necessary to find some way of getting the European powers decently out of the difficulty in which they were placed. To enforce the treaty was out of the question; but on the other hand it did not look seemly that they should put up quite tamely with the dictatorial resolve of Russia. The ingenious mind of Count Bismarck found a way of putting a fair show on the action of Europe. He suggested that a conference should be held in London to



talk the whole matter over. On November 26, 1870, he addressed a circular to Austria, Turkey, Italy, and Russia, requesting them to authorize their representatives to assemble in London at a conference of the powers which had signed the treaty of March 30, 1856, in order "to discuss the questions which are raised in connection with the communications in the circular of the imperial Russian cabinet." This invitation was stated to have been issued after the English cabinet had assured Count Bismarck of its assent. Lord Granville politely assumed that the Russian government had merely announced its wish to have the clause in the treaty abrogated as a matter for the consideration of the European powers, and that the conference was to be assembled "without any foregone conclusion as to its results." This graceful little fiction was welcomed by all diplomatists. The conference met with every becoming appearance of a full belief in the minds of all its members that they were about to consider a proposal which they might either accept or reject as their free judgment should determine. The conference assembled on January 17, 1871, and began its labors by an abstract declaration of principle. A special protocol was signed, affirming it to be an essential principle of the law of nations that no state could release itself from the engagements of a treaty unless with the consent of the other contracting powers. This important declaration, which amounted exactly to the announcement of the fact that there must be at least two parties to a bargain, was solemnly agreed upon, and then the conference felt itself quite free to finish its work on March 13, 1871, by agreeing to a treaty abrogating the clause for the neutralization of the Black Sea. There was something a little farcical about the whole transaction. We learn from Madame de Remusat that when the great Napoleon played chess he liked to move the pieces occasionally in any way that suited his plans, and without any particular regard to the established rules of the game. If it seemed advantageous to him at some particular moment to give to his king the unlimited movement of the queen, he was in the habit of composedly adopting this new principle. Now we can perhaps imagine a few old-fashioned courtiers being a little offended at this arbitrary and one-sided plan of action, and conscious at the same time of their own inability to overrule the will of the great con-

queror. What could be a more honorable and prudent way of reconciling principle and interest than to hold a chess conference, pass a resolution that it is one of the essential principles of the game that no player can alter its laws merely to please himself; and then after this saving protest proceed to authorize the Emperor Napoleon to make the particular moves that he happened just then to desire? Something like this was the policy pursued by the conference held in London. It did not tend to raise the credit or add to the popularity of the English government. We do not know that there was anything better to do; we can only say that the government deserves commiseration which at an important European crisis can do nothing better.

Other troubles began to press upon Mr. Gladstone's government. A few weeks after the issue of the Russian circular repudiating the neutralization clause in the treaty of Paris, General Grant in opening the congress of the United States announced that the time had come when the American government must take some decided steps for the settlement of the Alabama claims. This dispute had reached what we may call its second stage. The first was when the English government declined to admit any responsibility for the losses inflicted on American commerce. The second was arrived at when the more sober judgment of Lord Stanley acknowledged a willingness to submit the question to some manner of arbitrament. When matters had gone so far it was natural that attempts should be made at a convention for the settlement of the claims. In one instance a convention, devised by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, then American minister in England, had actually been signed by Lord Clarendon, foreign secretary, whose death in June, 1870, was followed by Lord Granville's removal from the colonial to the foreign office. The senate of the United States, however, rejected this convention by a majority of fifty-four to one, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson resigned his office. The doom of the convention was chiefly brought about by the efforts of Mr. Charles Sumner, a leading member of the senate of the United States. Most readers are probably aware of the fact that treaties concluded on behalf of the American government have to be referred for confirmation to the United States senate, and that it is in the power of the senate either to

confirm or to reject them. In the foreign policy of the American republic the senate exercises a direct and most important influence. Mr. Sumner was at that time the most eloquent and the most influential member of the senate. He was a man of remarkable force of character, a somewhat "masterful" temperament, to use an expressive provincial word, a temperament corresponding with his great stature, his stately presence, and his singularly handsome and expressive face. He was one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement, and the murderous assault made upon him some twelve years before in the old senate chamber at Washington by a southern planter had filled the world then with horror and alarm. Sir George Cornwall Lewis happily described it as the first blow in a civil war. Mr. Sumner had been for the greater part of his life an enthusiastic admirer of England and English institutions. He had made himself acquainted with England and Englishmen, and was a great favorite in English society. He was a warm friend of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, the Duke of Argyll, and many other eminent English public men. He was particularly enthusiastic about England because of the manner in which she had emancipated her slaves and the emphatic terms in which English society always expressed its horror of the system of slavery. In his own country Mr. Sumner passed for an Anglomaniac. When the American civil war broke out he expected with full confidence to find the sympathies of England freely given to the side of the north. He was struck with amazement when he found that they were to so great an extent given to the south. But when he saw that the Alabama and other southern cruisers had been built in England, manned in England, and allowed to leave our ports with apparently the applause of three-fourths of the representative men of England, his feelings toward this country underwent a sudden and a most complete change. He now persuaded himself that the sympathies of the English people were actually with slavery, and that England was resolved to lend her best help for the setting up of a slave-owning republic to the destruction of the American Union.

In this Mr. Sumner was mistaken. Great wrong was thoughtlessly done to the American Union by the acts of statesmen and others in England, but it is not true that there was any general sympathy with slavery or any

national treachery to the American Union. The whole question has been already discussed in these pages, and the writer has not hesitated to condemn in the strongest terms much of the policy and many of the utterances of some of the leading statesmen of England. But Mr. Sumner was mistaken in his main conclusion; the conclusion that love of slavery and hatred of the union dictated the foolish things that were often said, and the unrightful things that were sometimes done. His mind, however, became filled with a fervor of anger against England. The zeal of his cause ate him up. All his love for England turned into hate. He was as little under the influence of sober reason, when he discussed the conduct of England, as Burke was when he declaimed against the French revolution. During all his career, Mr. Sumner had been a professed lover of peace; had made peace his prevailing principle of action; and yet he now spoke and acted as if he were determined that there must be war between England and the United States. Mr. Sumner denounced the convention made by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, with a force of argument and of passionate eloquence which would have borne down all opposition if the senate had not already been almost unanimously of one mind with him. It is right to say that the particular convention agreed on between Lord Clarendon and Mr. Reverdy Johnson does not seem to have been one that the American senate could reasonably be expected to accept, or that could possibly give satisfaction to the American people. Mr. Reverdy Johnson was a Marylander, and may possibly have had some tinge of southern sympathies. With a kindly and good-natured purpose to put an end to an international quarrel he does not seem to have considered the difference between skinning over a wound and healing it. The defect of his convention was that it made the whole question a mere matter of individual claims. It professed to have to deal with a number of personal and private claims of various kinds, pending since a former settlement in 1853—claims made on the one side by British subjects against the American government, and on the other by American citizens against the English government; and it proposed to throw in the Alabama claims with all the others, and have a convention for the general clearance of the whole account. Now it must be evident to any one, English or American, who considers

what the complaints made by the American government were, that this way of dealing with the question could not possibly satisfy the American people. It is surprising that a statesman like Lord Clarendon could for a moment have persuaded himself that there would be the slightest use in presenting such a convention to the American senate. That he did so persuade himself and others is only one additional illustration of the curious ignorance of the condition of American political and national feeling which misguided England's policy during the whole of the American war. The claim set up by the United States on account of the cruise of the *Alabama* was first of all a national claim. The American government and people said, "The course you have taken has prolonged the war against us. You have given comfort and strength to our enemies. You have allowed them to use your ports as arsenals and points of departure for their attacks on us; your flag has protected their cruisers; your sailors have manned their vessels and shotted their guns. We claim of you as a nation injured by a nation." To this the convention signed by Lord Clarendon made answer, "We are willing that the two nations should go into arbitration as to any individual claims for personal damages which a few Englishmen may have on the one side and a few Americans on the other. We are willing to look into the items of any little bill which Mr. Thompson, of New York, may present for injuries done to his property, provided that you will do us the favor of perusing in the same spirit any bill which may be presented to you on behalf Mr. Johnson, of Manchester." This is really a fair statement of the difference between the convention which the United States senate rejected and that which the American government afterward accepted.

The English government wisely gave way. They consented to send out a commission to Washington to confer with an American commission, and to treat the whole question in dispute as national and not merely individual. The commission was to enter upon all the various subjects of dispute unsettled between England and the United States; the *Alabama* claims, the San Juan boundary, and the Canadian fishery question. The Dominion of Canada was to be represented on the commission. The English commissioners were Earl de Grey and Ripon (afterward created

Marquis of Ripon, in return for his services at Washington), Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Montague Bernard, professor of international law at the University of Oxford; and Sir Edward Thornton, English minister at Washington. Sir John A. Macdonald represented Canada. The American commissioners were Mr. Hamilton Fish, secretary of state, General Schenck, afterward American minister in England; Mr. J. C. Bancroft Davis, Mr. Justice Nelson, Mr. Justice Williams, and Mr. E. R. Hoar.

The commissioners held a long series of meetings in Washington, and at length arrived at a basis of arbitration. This was set forth in a memorable document, the treaty of Washington. The treaty of Washington acknowledged the international character of the dispute; and it opened with a remarkable admission on the part of the English government. It announced that "Her Britannic majesty has authorized her high commissioners and plenipotentiaries to express, in a friendly spirit, the regret felt by her majesty's government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the Alabama and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels." This was a very unusual acknowledgment to make as the opening of a document intended to establish a tribunal of arbitration for the claims in dispute. It ought not in itself to be considered as anything of a humiliation. In public, as in private life, it ought to be honorable rather than otherwise to express regret that we should even unwittingly have done harm to our neighbor, or allowed harm to be done to him; that we have shot our arrow o'er the house and hurt our brother. But when compared with the stand which English ministers had taken not many years before, this was indeed a considerable change of attitude. It is not surprising that many Englishmen chafed at the appearance of submission which it presented. The treaty then proceeded to lay down three rules which it was agreed should be accepted by the arbitrators as applicable to the case. These rules were: "a neutral government is bound: first, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry

on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to warlike use. Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties."

The British commissioners followed up the acceptance of these three rules by a saving clause, declaring that the English government could not assent to them as a "statement of principles of international law which were in force at the time when the claims arose;" but that, "in order to evince its desire of strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries, and of making satisfactory provision for the future," it agreed that in deciding the questions arising out of the claims these principles should be accepted, "and the high contracting parties agree to observe these rules between themselves in future, and to bring them to the knowledge of other maritime powers, and to invite them to accede to them." The treaty then went on to provide for the settlement of the Alabama claims by a tribunal of five arbitrators, one to be appointed by the queen, and the others respectively by the president of the United States, the king of Italy, the president of the Swiss confederation, and the emperor of Brazil. This tribunal was to meet in Geneva, and was to decide by a majority all the questions submitted to it. The treaty further provided for a tribunal to settle what may be called individual claims on either side, and another commission to meet afterward at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and deal with the fishery question, an old outstanding dispute as to the reciprocal rights of British and American subjects to fish on each other's coasts. It referred the question of the northern boundary between the British North American territories and the United States to the arbitration of the German emperor. It also opened the navigation of the St. Lawrence and other rivers.

Some delay was caused in the meeting of the tribunal of arbitration at Geneva by the sudden presentation on the part of the American government of what were called the

indirect claims. To the surprise of everybody, the American case when presented was found to include claims for vast and indeed almost limitless damages, for indirect losses alleged to be caused by the cruise of the *Alabama* and the other vessels. The loss by the transfer of trade to English vessels, the loss by increased rates of insurance, and all imaginable losses incident to the prolongation of the war, were now made part of the American claims. It was clear that if such a principle were admitted there was no possible reason why the claims should not include every dollar spent in the whole operations of the war, and in supplying any of the war's damages, from the first day when the *Alabama* put to sea. No one could undertake to say as a matter of certainty that the southern Confederates might not have submitted at once if only the *Alabama* had been seized and detained, and therefore indirect claims might just as well be stretched out at once so as to cover all the subsequent expenses of the war. In truth, the indirect claims were not only absurd, but even monstrous, and the English government had not for one moment the slightest idea of admitting them as part of the case to be laid before the arbitrators at Geneva. The bare suggestion seemed more like a rude practical joke than a statesman-like proposition. Even men like Mr. Bright, who had been devoted friends of the north during the war, protested against this insufferable claim. It was at last withdrawn. We now know on the best possible authority that the American government never meant to press it. Mr. John Russell Young's interesting account of his journey "Around the World with General Grant" gives an account of a conversation he had with the late president of the United States on the subject of the indirect claims. Mr. Young assures his readers that all his reports of statements made by General Grant have been submitted to General Grant's own revision. General Grant told Mr. Young that he was personally opposed to the presentation of the indirect claims, and that his secretary of state, Mr. Fish, was also opposed to them. "I," said General Grant, "never believed in the presentation of indirect claims against England. I did not think it would do any good. I knew England would not consider them, and that it would complicate our meritorious case by giving her something to complain about." Mr. Fish agreed in this view, but was of opinion



that Mr. Sumner had to be considered. Mr. Sumner was the chairman of the senate's committee on foreign affairs, a formidable man at such a time. He was not cordial to the treaty, and was displeased because General Grant and Mr. Fish had already overruled one of his suggestions, "that the first condition of peace with England should be the withdrawal of her flag from the North American continent." That suggestion General Grant rightly described as a declaration of war, and "I wanted peace, not war." Mr. Sumner had laid great stress on indirect claims, and not to offend him, and not to leave an opening for future complaints on the part of "demagogues," it was thought by Mr. Fish that the best way of getting rid of the indirect claims would be to let them go to the Geneva arbitration. General Grant allowed himself to be convinced against his will. "But neither Mr. Fish nor myself expected any good from the presentation. It really did harm to the treaty by putting our government and those in England who were our friends in a false position. It was a mistake, but well intended. It is a mistake ever to say more than you mean, and as we never meant the indirect claims, we should not have presented them, even to please Mr. Sumner." It was indeed a profound mistake. It was a stroke of policy which no statesman should ever have stooped to sanction. The arbitration was on the point of being broken off. The excitement in England was intense. The American government had at last to withdraw the claims. The Geneva arbitrators of their own motion declared that all such claims were invalid and contrary to international law. The mere fact of their presentation went far to destroy all the credit which the United States would have obtained by the firm maintenance of their just demands and their recognition by the court of arbitration.

The decision of the Geneva tribunal went against England. The court were unanimous in finding England responsible for the acts of the Alabama. A majority found her responsible for the acts of the Florida and for some of those of the Shenandoah, but not responsible for those of other vessels. They awarded a sum of about three millions and a quarter sterling as compensation for all losses and final settlement of all claims including interest. Sir Alexander Cockburn, who attended the sittings of the court as the representative of England, presented a long

and eloquent protest against a great part of the finding of the tribunal. While admitting the decision in the case of the Alabama, and recommending submission to the general award, Sir Alexander Cockburn made a sort of historical vindication, or apologia, of the conduct of the English government during the civil war. It was an eloquent, patriotic, and impassioned *plaidoyer*, which seemed oddly out of place in the somewhat dry and business-like records of the tribunal's transactions. It occupied two hundred and fifty pages of the *London Gazette*. Many readers admired it; some smiled at it. The great majority of Englishmen did not read it. It was not so much preserved as entombed in the ponderous pages of the official journal.

The German emperor was left to decide as to the ownership of the small island of San Juan, near Vancouver's Island, a question remaining unsettled since the Oregon treaty, and already explained in this work. The emperor decided that the American claim to the island was just. San Juan had for years been in a somewhat hazardous condition of joint occupation by England and the United States. It was evacuated by England, in consequence of the award, at the close of November, 1873.

The principle of arbitration had not thus far worked in a manner calculated greatly to delight the English people. In each case the award had gone decidedly against them. No doubt it had gone against them because the right of each case was against them; and those who submit to arbitration have no business to complain because the decision is not given in their favor. England had in any case gained much by the policy which submitted the dispute to a peaceful tribunal. She had saved her own people and her opponents as well from the terrible ordeal of a war in which victory would have been only one degree better than defeat. She had avoided all the legacy of reciprocal hate which is the inevitable penalty of war. She had done her part toward the establishment of a great principle for the benefit of all coming generations. Yet it would be impossible to say that the feeling of the English people was one of unmixed satisfaction. The bulk of a population is not made up of moral philosophers; and what most of the English people saw was that England had been compelled in homely phrase to "knuckle down" to America. The policy which accepted the arbitration seems to us to have

been entirely wise, honorable, statesmanlike and just. The fault to be found was with that earlier policy which gave the United States only too fair a ground for asserting their claims. But it is certain that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues suffered in public esteem by the mere fact of their having accepted the arbitration which went so signally against England. They were somewhat in the position of a government who have to submit to rigorous and humiliating terms of peace. They may not have been responsible for the war. It may have been no act of theirs which made the acceptance of the harsh terms a cruel necessity. It may not be open to any one to say that they had any practical alternative but to submit to the demands of the occasion. All this may be true. Yet none the less is the government to be pitied which has to submit to any terms of peace by which its people seem to be humbled. The conservative party made it for a long time a great point against Mr. Gladstone's government that he had accepted the treaty of Washington. They did not always seem to reflect that a leading Conservative, Sir Stafford Northcote, had been made one of the joint commissioners in order that the arrangement might not seem the mere act of a political party. Perhaps in one or two instances the manner in which the treaty was vindicated may have helped to embitter the sacrifice. Mr. Lowe, for instance, put it as a clear saving of money, pointing out that a war would have cost much more than the expense of paying off the award. This was not the happiest way of commending the transaction to the sympathies of a proud and somewhat unreasoning public. However that may be, it is certain that the effect of the Geneva arbitration was to create a sore and angry feeling among Englishmen in general. The feeling found expression with some; smoldered in sullenness with others. It was unreasonable and unjust; but it was not altogether unnatural; and it had its effects on the popularity of Mr. Gladstone's government.

The opening of the session of 1872 was made melancholy by the announcement that Lord Mayo, the viceroy of India, had been killed by a fanatical assassin in a convict settlement, on one of the Andaman Islands, which the viceroy was inspecting. Lord Mayo had borne himself well in his difficult position, and had won the admiration of men of all parties by his firmness, his energy, his humanity, and his justice.

## CHAPTER LXI.

## THE TIDE ON THE TURN.

THE Liberal ministry continued somehow to fall off in popularity. They made a great many enemies. This fact was for the most part rather to their credit than otherwise. They came into office pledged to carry out certain reforms, and they did carry them out regardless of the offense they gave to class privileges and vested interests. A great reforming administration must always count on making enemies, and enemies whose hostility will be subtle and enduring. The prime minister himself was personally too much absorbed in the zeal of his cause not sometimes to run counter to the feelings, the prejudices, the sensitive jealousies of men less earnest and less self-forgetting. Mr. Gladstone was profoundly serious in his purposes of reform; and very serious men are seldom popular in a society like that of London. The long series of bold and vigorous reforms was undoubtedly causing the public to lose its breath. People were getting tired of going on, as an ordinary walker gets tired of trying to keep up with some man who is bent on walking as fast and as far as he possibly can without rest or interruption. The inevitable reaction was setting in. It must have come in any case. No popularity, no skill, no cunning in the management of men, no quality or endowment on the part of the prime minister, could have wholly prevented that result. Mr. Gladstone was not cunning in the management of men. He would probably have despised himself for availing of such a craft had he possessed it. He showed his feelings too plainly. If men displeased him he seldom took the trouble to conceal his displeasure. He was too often "pre-occupied," as the French phrase puts it, to think of petty courtesies and small social arts. It was murmured among his followers that he was dictatorial; and no doubt he was dictatorial in the sense that he had strong purposes himself, and was earnest in trying to press them upon other men. His very religious opinions served to interfere with his social popularity. He seemed to be a curious blending of the English high churchman and the Scottish Presbyterian. He displeased the ordinary English middle class by leaning too much to Ritualism, and, on the other hand, he

often offended the Roman Catholics by his impassioned diatribes against the pope and the church of Rome. One or two appointments made by or under the authority of Mr. Gladstone gave occasion to considerable controversy and to something like scandal. One of these was the appointment of the attorney-general, Sir Robert Collier, to a puisne judgeship of the court of common pleas, in order technically to qualify him for a seat on the bench of a new court of appeal—that is to say, to become one of the paid members of the judicial committee of the privy council. The statute required that every judge of the court of appeal should have been a judge of one of the ordinary courts; and Sir Robert Collier was passed through the court of common pleas in order that he might have the technical qualification. There was not the slightest suggestion of any improper motive on the part of Mr. Gladstone, or lack of legal or judicial fitness on the part of Sir Robert Collier. On the contrary, it was admitted that Sir Robert Collier had helped the government out of a difficulty by taking an appointment which several judges had declined and which had not quite such a position as that which the traditions of his office entitled him to expect. It seemed, however, as if there was something of a trick in the act which thus passed him through the one court in order to give him a technical qualification for the other. A vote of censure on the government was moved in the House of Lords, and the universal impression was that it would be carried. Some of the opposition leaders did all they could to make it the means of injuring the government, and even went the length of including in their complaints the fact that the lord chancellor had given an appointment as judge of a county court to the Mr. Beales who was president of the reform league when the Hyde Park railings were thrown down. The vote of censure was, however, rejected by eighty-nine against eighty-seven. A similar attempt was made in the House of Commons, and was defeated; only, however, by a majority of twenty-seven, a small majority in the house where the strength of the government was supposed to lie. Another appointment which led to controversy was that of the Rev. W. W. Harvey to the rectory of Ewelme. The law required that the rector of Ewelme should be a member of the Convocation of Oxford, and Mr. Harvey, who had been educated at Cam-

bridge, was made a member of Oxford Convocation—by Oxford, not by Mr. Gladstone—in order to qualify him for the appointment. In this instance, too, there was no question either as to the motives of the minister or the merits of the appointment. But, as in the former case, there seemed to many persons something like a trick in the manner of obtaining the qualification. Each case gave a chance to Mr. Gladstone's enemies which they were not slow to use. He was accused of casuistry, which to many Englishmen seems a sort of crime; and of jesuitry, which to some Englishmen seems the worst of crimes. It was part of Mr. Gladstone's curious fortune to be denounced by certain enemies as a Roman Catholic in disguise, at the very time when he was estranging and offending some of his most earnest Catholic supporters by the energy of his attacks upon the political influence of their church. There can be no doubt that, although in neither house of parliament could any expression of censure be obtained, the "Colliery explosion," as it was called, and the "Ewelme scandal," gave a downward push to the declining popularity of Mr. Gladstone's administration.

The "liquor interest," too, soon was in arms against him. The United Kingdom Alliance "for the suppression of the liquor traffic" had of late years been growing so strong as to become a positive influence in politics. Its object was to bring about the adoption of legislation which should leave it in the power of a two-thirds majority in each locality to stop altogether, if it were so thought fit, the public sale of intoxicating drinks. The parliamentary leader of the agitation was Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a man of position, of great energy, and of thorough earnestness. Sir Wilfrid Lawson was not, however, merely energetic and earnest. He had a peculiarly effective style of speaking, curiously unlike that which might be expected from the advocate of an austere and somewhat fanatical sort of legislation. He was a humorist of a fresh and vigorous order, and he always took care to amuse his listeners and never allowed his speeches to bore them. The alliance was always urging on the government and public opinion against the drink traffic, and it became clear that something must be done to regulate the trade. Mr. Bruce, the home secretary, brought in a bill which the alliance condemned as feebleness, and which the publicans resented as

oppression. The bill increased the penalties for drunkenness, and shortened the hours during which public-houses might be kept open on Sundays and on week days as well. The effect of the passing of this measure was to throw the publicans into open hostility to the government. The publicans had an old grudge against Mr. Gladstone himself. In former days he had been guilty of passing a measure which allowed the light wines of France to be sold in bottles by the grocers, and drunk in pastry-cook shops and refreshment houses; and the publicans highly disapproved of such innovations on the traditional ways of the British constitution. Some of their advocates indeed had denounced with a generous ardor the policy which would promote intemperance by allowing any one but a public-house keeper to sell a glass of wine. The debaucheries of the pastry-cook shops were described in language that recalled the days of Colonel Sibthorp's prognostications as to the corrupting influence of French wines and French morals. Mr. Bruce's licensing act was a new wrong charged at the door of Mr. Gladstone. Gin Lane and Beer Street rose in rebellion against him. The publicans were a numerous body; they were well organized; the network of their trade and their association spread all over the kingdom. The hostile feelings of some were perhaps not unnaturally embittered by the fact that many speakers and writers treated all publicans alike, made no distinction between the reputable and the disreputable, and involved in a common condemnation honest "Mine Host of the Garter," and roguish Boniface of "The Beaux' Stratagem." It was well known that a large proportion of the publicans carried on a respectable trade, and were losers rather than gainers by drunkenness. Yet in many instances these men found themselves classed with the owners of the most disreputable gin-palaces, with persons who flourished on the viciousness and the degradation of their fellow-creatures. The natural result of indiscriminate attack was to cause an indiscriminate alliance for the purposes of defense.

These were difficulties thickening across the path of Mr. Gladstone's government. All the time, too, a sullen suspicion prevailed among many classes that there had been a lowering of the national pride. Many men regarded the reopening of the treaty of Paris as a triumph for Russia at

the expense of England, and the Washington treaty as a submission of this country to the arrogance of the United States. No one undertook to say that there was anything the government could have done other than what they did; but the world must have changed indeed, when men will cease to associate a government with the untoward events that occur during its time, or to hold the minister who has to make the apology responsible for the humiliation which a moralist would see in the original fault, and not in the atonement.

The establishment of a republic in France could not be without its influence on English politics. A certain amount of more or less vague republican sentiment is always afloat on the surface of English radicalism. For some time before the founding of the French republic this vague sentiment had been undergoing a crystallizing and strengthening process under the influence of two causes; the success of the north in America, and the gradual degradation of the French empire under Napoleon III. De Tocqueville had observed long before that the great doubt he felt as to the stability of the American republic was on the question whether it could stand the stress of a great war. Now it had stood the stress of a great war and had come out all the stronger for the trial. Imperial France, or rather the empire imposed on France, had come for a moment into peril of collision with the American republic, and had gone down before it without even making an effort to maintain its arrogant attitude. Facts like these naturally produced a distinct impression upon certain classes in England. The establishment of the French republic now came as a climax. We have already spoken of the great meetings which were held in London, and in most of the English cities, to express sympathy with the struggling republic; and at some of these meetings a good deal of very outspoken republicanism made itself heard. There could be no doubt that a considerable proportion of the workingmen in the cities were republicans in sentiment. English writers who were not by any means of the sentimental school, but on the contrary were somewhat hard and cold in their dogmatism, began to publish articles in "advanced" reviews and magazines, distinctly pointing out the logical superiority of the republican theory. Men were already discussing the possibility of a declared republican party being formed both in



and out of parliament. Not, indeed, a party clamoring for the instant pulling down of the monarchy—no one thought of that; but a party which would avow itself republican in principle, and acknowledge that its object was to bring about such a change in public sentiment as might prepare the way for a republic in the time to come. Mr. Frederic Harrison, a writer of ability and reputation, declared in one of the reviews that the adoption of the republican form of government by the English people at some time or other was as certain as “the rising of to-morrow’s sun.” Of course there have always been republican sentiments among certain classes of Englishmen; and any breath of change on the continent is sure to fan them into a little flame that flickers for awhile. This time, however, many people thought that the sentiment was really going to convert itself into a principle, and that the principle might see itself represented by a political party.

France, which had given the impulse, gave also the shock that brought reaction. The wild theories, the monstrous excesses, the preposterous theatricism of the Paris commune had a very chilling effect on the ardor of English republicans. The movement in England had, however, one or two curious episodes before it sank into quiescence.

In March, 1872, Sir Charles Dilke brought on a motion, in the House of Commons, for inquiring into the manner in which the income and allowances of the crown are expended. Sir Charles Dilke had been for some months of the preceding autumn the best abused man in Great Britain. His name appeared over and over again in the daily papers. He monopolized for weeks the first leading article in every journal. The comic papers caricatured “Citizen Dilke” every week. In the theatrical burlesques, his name was the signal for all manner of drolleries and buffooneries. The telegraph-wires carried his doings and speeches everywhere. American correspondents “interviewed” him, and pictured him as the future president of England. He went round the towns of the north of England, delivering a lecture on the expenses of royalty; and his progress was marked by more or less serious riots everywhere. Life was sacrificed in more than one of these tumults. A Paris journal described his progress as a sort of civil war. The workingmen of London and of the north held great meetings to express their approval of his

principles and conduct, and to pass resolutions in support of the young baronet who had dared to condemn the expenses of royalty, and to avow himself a republican. Many people really thought that for good or ill the vague, fluent, incoherent movement toward republicanism in England had found its leader at last—that the hour had come, and the man. To increase and perplex the excitement, the Prince of Wales fell ill, and if Sir Charles Dilke had personally caused his illness he could not have been more bitterly denounced by some speakers and writers. He was represented as a monster of disloyalty, who had chosen to assail the queen (against whom it is only fair to say he had never uttered a disparaging word) while her eldest son lay struggling with death. The Prince of Wales, given over by all the doctors, recovered; and in the outburst of public gladness and loyalty that followed his restoration to health, Sir Charles Dilke was almost forgotten. But he had been challenged to repeat in the House of Commons the statements that he had made in the country. He answered the challenge by bringing forward the motion to inquire into the manner in which the income and allowances of the crown were spent. There was unmistakable courage in the cool, steady way in which he rose to propose his motion. He faced his houseful of antagonists with dogged calmness. It is a hard trial to the nerves to face such an audience. Sir Charles Dilke knew that every one in that house, save three or four alone, was bitterly opposed to him. He knew that the most overpowering eloquence was to pour out on him the moment he had finished his speech. But neither then nor after did he show the slightest sign of quailing. His speech was well got up as to facts, well arranged, and evidently well committed to memory, but it was not eloquent. The house began to grow apathetic before Sir Charles Dilke had nearly finished his address. The warmth of Mr. Gladstone's reply was almost startling by sheer force of contrast to Sir Charles Dilke's quiet, dry, and labored style. No one expected that Mr. Gladstone would be so passionately merciless as he proved to be. His vehemence, forcing the house into hot temper again, was one cause at least of the extraordinary tumult that arose when Sir Charles Dilke's friend and ally, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rose to speak and declared himself also a republican. This was the signal for as extraordinary a scene as the House

of Commons has ever exhibited. The tumult became so great, that if it had taken place at any public meeting, it would have been called a riot, and would have required the interference of the police. Some hundreds of strong, excited, furious men were shouting and yelling with the object of interrupting the speech and drowning the voice of one man. The speaker of the House of Commons is usually an omnipotent authority. Seldom indeed does any one presume to question his decision or to utter a word when he enjoins silence. One of the peculiarities of the House of Commons, which all strangers admire, is the respect and deference it usually shows to the president whom it has itself chosen. But on this occasion the speaker was literally powerless. "What care these roarers for the name of king?" asks the boatswain in "The Tempest," as he points to the furious waves. What cared the roarers in the House of Commons for the name of speaker? There was no authority which could overawe them. They were all men of education and position—university men, younger sons of peers, great landowners, officers in crack cavalry regiments, the very *élite*, most of them, of the English aristocracy. But they became for the moment a merely furious mob. They roared, hissed, gesticulated, with the fury of a sixpenny gallery disappointed in some boxing-night performance. The shrill "cock-crow," unheard in the House of Commons for a whole generation, shrieked once more in the ears of the bewildered officials. Probably nobody now reads Samuel Warren's once popular novel, "Ten Thousand a Year," but those who did read it long ago may remember that when Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse got into parliament, his one only contribution to debate was his admirable and distracting imitation of the crowing of a cock. Every one supposed that Titmouse and his ways were dead and gone; but it would positively seem that some of his kith and kin were alive and in good voice that night in the House of Commons.

The debate was chiefly remarkable for the fact that it noted the exact level to which the republican sentiment had arisen in English political society. Three members of the House of Commons acknowledged, in more or less qualified terms, their theoretical preference for the republican form of government. These were Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and Professor Fawcett. There were,

doubtless, some other men in the house who sympathized with republican principles, but who, well convinced that the monarchy had hitherto suited England and was not likely to be soon changed, gave themselves no more trouble about the matter than if it were some purely speculative question. Such men could not be called republicans. The name could only be given to the few who frankly declared that they would prefer to see England a republic, and even to these it must be given only in a qualified sense. Not one of them was anxious to see any sudden change. Not one of them was even inclined to set on foot any agitation for the propagation of republican principles. The excesses of the commune and the illness of the Prince of Wales were combining influences too strong for theory to contend against.

Nothing more was then heard of republicanism in England. It was clear that there was no republican party, properly so called, in the country. Some of the "philosophical Radicals," who were most strongly republican in sentiment and conviction, declared in the most explicit words that they would not make the slightest effort to agitate in favor of a republic; that they did not think the difference between a republic and the British constitution was worth the trouble of a long agitation. If a republic were to come, they said, it would come in good time. England could afford to wait. When this philosophical mood of mind prevailed among republicans it was clear that the question of a republic had not, as the phrase is, "come up." Mr. Bright expressed his opinion on the subject with his usual blunt good sense. Some one wrote to him, asking him what he thought of republicanism. Mr. Bright replied that, "as to opinions on the question of monarchy or republicanism, I hope and believe it will be a long time before we are asked to give our opinion. Our ancestors decided the matter a good while since, and I would suggest that you and I should leave any further decision to our posterity." The whole condition of things was fairly set out in Mr. Bright's letter. There was no practical question then as to the relative advantages of monarchy and republic. If that question is to come up at some time, it had not come up then.

A new figure did, however, arise about that time in English politics. It was one less expected than even the

portentous form of a cosmopolitan republican. It was that of the English agricultural laborer as a political agitator and member of a trades-union. For years and years the workingman in cities had been a conspicuous personage. He had played an influential part in every agitation. Orators had pleaded for him and sought his applause; statesmen had paid court to him; the newspapers were always filled with him; his trades-unions were a scare to half society; he figured in novels, in poetry, in satire; he was positively beginning to be a sort of fourth power in the state. All the while the rural laborer was supposed to be entirely out of the play. No one troubled about him. When he appeared in the papers it was only as the subject of some horrifying paragraph about the miseries of a laborer's family, who, nine in number, had all to sleep in one room, four of the unfortunate group being afflicted with fever or small-pox. Sometimes a London newspaper sent down a special correspondent to explore the condition of some village, and he wrote back descriptions which made the flesh creep and the blood run cold. Let any one picture to himself a poorly-fed, half-clad and wholly ignorant family of eight or nine, including, say, two grown young men and two grown young women, who habitually slept in one room, and in not a few instances in one bed. Let him think of all this, and imagine what the worst consequences must be, and his imagination will probably have fallen short of the fearful reality. That was the rural laborer at his worst. At his best he seemed a picture of hard-working, cleanly, patient, and almost hopeless poverty. Mr. Disraeli and the Tory landlords said he was too contented and happy to need a change; most other people thought that he was rendered too stolid by the monotonous misery of his condition. Suddenly, in the spring of 1872, not long after the opening of parliament, vague rumors began to reach London of a movement of some kind among the laborers of South Warwickshire. It was first reported that they had asked for an increase of wages; then that they were actually forming a laborers' union, after the pattern of the artisans; then that they were on strike. There came accounts of meetings of rural laborers—meetings positively where men made speeches. Instantly the London papers sent down their special correspondents, and for weeks the movement among the agricultural laborers of South Warwickshire—

the country of Shakespeare—became the sensation of London. The Geneva arbitration, which was then giving parliament something to talk about every night, was thrown into the shade. Even the Tichborne case, the civil part of which had just come to a close, did not divert public attention altogether from the agitation among the rural laborers. How the thing first came about is not very clear. But it seems that in one of the South Warwickshire villages was a wonderful man—a laborer who had traveled, a wanderer who had seen men and cities. This adventurous man had led a wild life; he had traveled out of his native village, away, far away, quite into the next county, and even it was reported into the county beyond that, and had seen strange and unfamiliar ways of life. He had been in the iron manufacturing regions, the Black Country, and he had heard about strikes, and had been present at meetings of grimy workingmen, who talked out and made their demands as boldly as the masters themselves could do. The wanderer returned to his native village, and he told of all the wonders he had seen, and perhaps found incredulous listeners. But there came a somewhat harder time than usual in South Warwickshire. The wages of eight or ten shillings a week utterly failed to keep up the family. There was sad and sullen talk of starvation. The farmers refused to give higher wages, declaring that the rents they had to pay to the great landlords would not allow them. The great landlords said they got no more than their land was worth, and that they could do nothing. Meanwhile it was evident that the farmers had plenty to eat, drink and wear, that the landlords were living rather better than most princes, and that the laborer was on the verge of starvation. The traveled man whispered in his village the one word "Strike." The thing took fire somehow. A few men accepted it at once. In the neighboring village was a man who, although only a day laborer, had been long accustomed to act as a volunteer preacher of Methodism, and who by his superior intelligence, his good character, and his effective way of talking, had acquired a great influence among his fellows. This man was Joseph Arch. He was consulted and he approved of the notion. He was asked if he would get together a meeting and make a speech, and he consented. Calling a meeting of day laborers then was almost as bold a step as proclaiming a

revolution. Yet it was done somehow. There were no circulars, no placards, none of the machinery which we all associate with the getting up of a meeting. The news had to be passed on by word of mouth that a meeting was to be held and where, the incredulous had to be convinced that there was really to be a meeting, the timid had to be prevailed on to take courage and go. The meeting was held under a great chestnut tree, which thereby acquired a sort of fame. There a thousand laborers came together and were addressed by Joseph Arch. He carried them all with him. His one great idea—great and bold to them, simple and small to us—was to form a laborers' union like the trades-unions of the cities. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm. New branches were formed every day. Arch kept on holding meetings and addressing crowds. The whole movement passed, naturally and necessarily, into his hands. How completely it was a rural laborers' movement, how little help or guidance it received in its origin from other sources, how profoundly isolated from the outer and active world was its scene, may be understood from the fact that it was nearly six weeks in action before its very existence was known in London. Then the special correspondents went down to the spot, and turned a blaze of light on it. Mr. Auberon Herbert, Mr. Edward Jenkins, and other active reformers, appeared on the scene and threw themselves into the movement. Meetings were held in various villages, and Mr. Arch found himself in the constant companionship of members of parliament, leaders of political organizations, and other unwonted associates. The good sense of the sturdy laborer never forsook the leader of the movement, nor did he ever show any inclination to subordinate his enterprise to any political agitation. The danger apprehended by many, that the rural laborers would allow their organization simply to drift in the wake of the mere political agitators, proved to be unreal. The laborers took the help of Mr. Herbert and Sir Charles Dilke, and of Mr. Odger and Mr. George Potter, so far as the mere conduct of the organization was concerned, but they did not show any inclination to allow their project to expand as yet beyond its simple and natural limits. On the other hand, it was clear that, so far as the laborers had any political sympathies, they were with Liberalism and against Toryism. This, too, was a little surprise for the pub-

lic. Most persons had supposed that a race of beings brought up for generations under the exclusive tutorship of the landlord, the vicar, and the wives of the landlords and the vicars, would have had any political tendencies they possessed drilled and drummed into the grooves of Toryism. The shock of surprise with which the opposite idea impressed itself upon the minds of the Conservative squires found ready and angry expression. The landlords in most places declared themselves against the movement of the laborers. Some of them denounced it in unmeasured language. Mr. Disraeli at once sprang to the front as the champion of feudal aristocracy and the British country squire. The one great delight of the author of "Vivian Grey," when he was not engaged in parliament, was to play at being a country squire. In Scott's "Guy Mannerling," the attorney, Gilbert Glossin, who has managed to get possession of an estate, makes it his grand ambition to pass off for a country gentleman, and once gives a beggar half-a-crown because the knowing vagrant has accosted him as "Ellangowan," according to the old-fashioned Scottish custom which declares it the privilege of the landlord to be addressed by the name of his estate. Mr. Disraeli seemed to have the same ambition. In birth, in nationality, in mental training, in appearance, in his instinctive way of looking at things, he was essentially a foreigner in English society. Of all classes of English society, that with which by intellect, temperament and training he might be expected to have the least sympathy was the English landlord class. Yet it seemed that his pride was to be considered an English landlord, or rather to be mistaken for an English landlord. It used to be a remarkable sight to see Mr. Disraeli presiding on certain occasions of annual celebration when, by the bounty and subscriptions of some of the landlords, the prize of a blue coat with brass buttons was to be conferred on the venerable laborer who had for the longest number of years contrived to support the largest family without having recourse to parish relief. The dignified gravity with which Mr. Disraeli admonished and blessed the happy recipient of this noble prize; the seeming assumption that a long life of privation and labor was well worth any true man's endurance for the glory of being publicly endued, at the age of seventy-five, with a remarkably high-collared blue swallow-tail coat, the indignant



repudiation of the unworthy levity of persons in London, newspaper-writers and such-like, who tried to make this ceremonial seem ridiculous; all this made up a performance of which caricature itself could hardly exaggerate the peculiarities. Joseph Arch himself mentioned in a speech the unlucky fact that one of the fortunate rustics who had actually been rewarded with this Monthyon prize, one of the proud wearers of this singular robe of honor, had been compelled after all to seek shelter in the workhouse, where they probably would not allow him to parade in the brass-buttoned blue coat even on Sundays. However that may be, Mr. Disraeli was none the less entitled and none the less willing to constitute himself the champion of the country squires, and when the agitation became public he stood forward to vindicate and glorify the impugned state of things. Mr. Disraeli insisted that everything was as it ought to be, and that the English laborer in the midland and southern counties was but another Corydon in an English Arcadia, piping for very happiness as though, like the shepherd boy in Sir Philip Sidney's tale, he could never grow old. The controversy was taken up in the House of Commons, and served, if it did nothing else, to draw all the more attention to the condition of the British laborer. An amusing little side controversy arose between Mr. Newdegate and Mr. Arch's party. As a landlord and Tory of the Tories, Mr. Newdegate was of course an opponent of the laborers' strike. It so happened that at one of the public meetings in London, where Joseph Arch spoke, Cardinal Manning was likewise a speaker. That was enough for Mr. Newdegate. He immediately proclaimed his discovery of a new popish plot, and bluntly charged Mr. Arch with being a disguised emissary and agent of the Jesuits. Poor Arch, who so short a time before was only an obscure laborer with a turn for preaching Methodism in a little country village, found himself acclaimed by half England as the apostle of a new social revolution, and denounced by the Tories generally as the pioneer of a lawless Jacquerie; he heard his name mentioned every day in the speeches of statesmen and the debates in parliament; he had to defend himself against the charge of being a secret agent of the Vatican, and to disclaim any intention of conducting an agitation for the establishment of a republic.

One indirect but necessary result of the agitation was to call attention to the injustice done to the rural population when they were left unenfranchised at the time of the passing of the last reform bill. The injustice was strongly pressed upon the government, and Mr. Gladstone frankly acknowledged that it would be impossible to allow things to remain long in their anomalous state. In truth, when the reform bill was passed nobody supposed that the rural population were capable of making any use of a vote. Therefore the movement which began in Warwickshire took two directions when the immediate effects of the partial strike were over. A permanent union of laborers was formed corresponding generally in system with the organizations of the cities. The other direction was distinctly political. The rural population through their leaders joined with the reformers of the cities for the purpose of obtaining an equal franchise in town and country; in other words, for the enfranchisement of the peasantry. The emancipation of the rural laborers began under that chestnut tree where the first meeting answered the appeals of Joseph Arch. The English peasant was the newest and latest figure on the political stage of the world. He followed the Virginian negro, and he came long after the Russian serf. Unlike these, however, he had for his leader no greater man than one of his own class. The rough-and-ready peasant preacher, Joseph Arch, had probably little idea when he began his speech under the chestnut tree, that he was speaking the first words of a new chapter of the country's history.

A few lines ought perhaps to be spared to the Tichborne trial which has just been mentioned. A claim was suddenly made upon the Tichborne baronetcy and estates by a man who came from Australia and who announced himself as the heir to the title and the property. He declared that he was the Sir Roger Tichborne who was supposed to have gone down with the wreck of the *Bella*, sailing from Rio in South America years before. The Tichborne case is certainly one of the most remarkable instances of disputed identity on record. Just now the most wonderful thing about it seems to be the extraordinary amount of popular sympathy and credit which the "claimant," as he was called, contrived to secure. He was undoubtedly an impostor; that is, if the most overwhelming accumulation

of evidence, positive and negative, could establish any fact. The person who presented himself as the long-lost Roger Tichborne bore not the slightest resemblance to the young man who sailed in the *Bella* and was believed to have perished with her. "The claimant" was indeed curiously unlike what people remembered Roger Tichborne, not only in face, but in figure and in manners. A slender, delicate, somewhat feeble young man, of fair although not finished education, who had always lived in good society and showed it in his language and bearing, went down in the *Bella* or at least disappeared with her; and thirteen years afterward there came from Australia a man of enormous bulk, ignorant to an almost inconceivable degree of ignorance, and who if he were Roger Tichborne had not only forgotten all the manners of his class, but had forgotten the very names of many of those with whom he ought to have been most familiar, including the name of his own mother; and this man presented himself as the lost heir and claimed the property. If this were the whole story, it might be said that there was nothing particularly wonderful in it. A preposterous attempt was made to carry on an imposture, and it failed; such things happen every day; in this case the attempt was only a little more outrageous and ridiculous than in others. But the really strange part of the tale is to come. Despite all the obvious arguments against the claimant, it is certain that his story was believed by the mother of Roger Tichborne, and by a considerable number of persons of undoubted veracity and intelligence who had known Roger Tichborne in his youth. True, it seems impossible that a slender Prince Hal could in a few years grow into a Falstaff. But so much the more difficult must it surely have been for the Falstaff to persuade people that he was actually the Prince Hal. So much the more wonderful is it that he did actually succeed in persuading many into full belief in himself and his story. The man who claimed to be Roger Tichborne utterly failed to make out his claim in a court of law. It was shown upon the clearest evidence that he had gradually put together and built up around him a whole system of imposture. He was then put on trial for his frauds, found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. Yet thousands of ignorant persons, and some persons not at all ignorant, continued, and to this day continue, to believe in him.

He became the figure-head of a new and grotesque agitation. His own imposture was the parent and the patron of other impostures. His story opens up a far more curious study of human credulity than that of Johanna Southcote, or that of Mary Tofts, or Perkin Warbeck, or the Cock Lane ghost.

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## CHAPTER LXII.

### THE FALL OF THE GREAT ADMINISTRATION.

THE first few days of 1873 were marked by an event which, had it occurred four or five years before, would have filled the world with a profound sensation. Happening as it did it made comparatively little stir in the political waters. It was the death of Louis Napoleon, late emperor of the French, at his house in Chislehurst, Kent. After his imprisonment, if it can be called so, at Wilhelmshöhe, in Cassel, where he was treated as an honored guest rather than a captive, the fallen emperor came to England. He settled with his wife and son at Chislehurst, and lived in dignified semi-retirement. The emperor became a sort of favorite with the public here. A reaction seemed to have set in against the dread and dislike with which he had at one time been regarded. He enjoyed a certain amount of popularity. He sometimes showed himself in public; as for example at a lecture given by Mr. Stanley, the adventurous New York "special correspondent" who had gone out to Africa and discovered Dr. Livingstone. Louis Napoleon had for a long time been in sinking health. His life had been overwrought in every way. He had lived many lives in a comparatively short space of time. Most of his friends had long been expecting his death from week to week, almost from day to day. He died on January 9th. The event created no great sensation. Perhaps even the news of his death was but an anti-climax after the news of his fall. For twenty years he had filled a space in the eyes of the world with which the importance of no man else could pretend to compare. His political bulk had towered up in European affairs like some huge castle dominating over a city. All the earth listened to the lightest word he spoke. For good or evil his influence and his name were

potent in every corner of the globe. His nod convulsed continents. His arms glittered from the Crimea to Cochin-China, from Algeria to Mexico. A signal from him and the dominion of the Austrians over Lombardy was broken at Solferino, and a new Italy arose on the horizon of Europe. A whisper from him, and Maximilian of Austria hastens across the ocean in hope to found a Mexican empire, in reality to find a premature grave. A wave of his hand, and Garibaldi is crushed at Mentana. What wonder if such a man should at one time have come to believe himself the special favorite and the spoiled child of destiny? The whole condition of things seemed changed when Louis Napoleon fell at Sedan. Some forty years of wandering, of obscurity, of futile, almost ludicrous enterprises, of exile, of imprisonment, of the world's contempt, and then twenty years of splendid success, of supreme sovereignty, had led him to this—to the disgrace of Sedan, to the quiet fading days of Chislehurst. He had overshadowed France and Europe with "the gloom of his glory," and now, to borrow John Evelyn's words, "is all in the dust." In one of his Napoleonic ballads Beranger, speaking of the fall of the first emperor, bitterly declares that the kings of Europe who despise him in his exile once crawled round his throne, and still bear on their brows the traces of the dust which his footprints left when he set his conqueror's heel upon their heads. Europe had certainly at one time shown an inclination to grovel before Louis Napoleon's throne. He was regarded as a statesman of mysterious, infallible, superhuman wisdom. He was understood to be a Brutus who had for a long time professed idiocy in order to conceal inspiration. When he fell, the world shook its wise head pityingly, and seemed inclined to fall back upon the opinion that it must have been only idiocy trying to assume the oracular ways of inspiration. Toward the closing days there was a revival of a kindlier feeling and a fairer judgment. Louis Napoleon had in his early and obscure days lived in lodgings in King Street, St. James', and when he became a great emperor a tablet was set up in the outer wall of the house to inform all the world of the fact. He came to London in the zenith of his power and his fame, and he drove by the house and looked at the tablet and said something oracular and appropriate no doubt, and the newspapers chronicled the event, and the world admired. When he

came back again after Sedan there was no account of his driving past the old place, if he did so. But the tablet had not been taken down; it is only right to say that much. It was allowed to remain there even though Louis Napoleon had fallen never to hope again. Perhaps we cannot better illustrate the manner in which the English public received him on his late return. There was no further allusion to the tablet; but it was not taken down.

Death was very busy about this time with men whose names had made deep marks on history or letters. Lord Lytton, the brilliant novelist, the successful dramatist, the composer of marvelous parliamentary speeches, died on January 18, 1873. Dr. Livingstone, the famous missionary and explorer, had hardly been discovered among the living by the enterprise and energy of Mr. Stanley when the world learned that he was dead. So many false reports of his death had been sent about at different times that the statement was now received with incredulity. The truth had to be confirmed on testimony beyond dispute before England would accept the fact that the long career of devotion to the one pursuit was over, and that Africa had had another victim. John Stuart Mill died on May 8, 1873, at his home at Avignon, where the tomb of his wife was made. "There's a great spirit gone," was the word of all men. A loftier and purer soul, more truly devoted to the quest of the truth, had not mingled in the worldly affairs of our time. There were clear evidences in the later writings of Mr. Mill, published after his death, that he had been turning toward a different point in quest of the truth from that on which early training and long habit had formerly fixed his mind. His influence over the thought and the culture of his day was immense. Time has even already begun to show it in some decay; but most of Mr. Mill's writings may safely be regarded as the possession of all the future, and he has left an example of candor in investigation and fearless moral purpose in action such as might well leaven even the most thoughtless and cynical generation. A sudden accident, the stumble of a horse, brought to a close, on July 19th, the career of the bishop of Winchester, the many-sided, energetic, eloquent Samuel Wilberforce. He had tried to succeed in everything, and he went near success. He tried to know everybody and understand everybody's way of look-

ing at every question. He was a great pulpit and parliamentary orator, a great bishop, a wit, a scholar, an accomplished man of the world. In a different and more honorable sense than that conveyed in Dryden's famous line, he "was everything by starts;" but he was a good man and a good minister always. On the very day after the death of the Bishop of Winchester died Lord Westbury, who had been lord chancellor, a man of great ability, unsurpassed as a lawyer in his time, endowed with as bitter a tongue and as vitriolic a wit as ever cursed their possessor. Lord Westbury was a failure in spite of all his gifts, partly because of a certain want of moral elevation in his nature. It is only justice to his memory to say that he was in many ways the victim of the errors of some to whom his affections made him too lenient. From one cause and another the close of his career became but a heap of ruins. The deaths of Sir Edwin Landseer, the painter, Sir Henry Holland, the famous physician and traveler, whose patients and personal friends were emperors, kings, presidents, and prime ministers, and of Professor Sedgwick, the geologist, ought to be mentioned. Nor must we omit from our death roll the name of Dr. Lushington, who, in addition to his own personal distinction, is likely to be remembered as the depositary of a secret confided to him in an earlier generation by Lady Byron, the secret of the charge she had to make against her husband. The whole story was revived before Dr. Lushington's death by a painful controversy, but he refused even by a yes or no to reveal Lady Byron's confidence.

The year which saw so many deaths was a trying time for the Liberal government. The session of that year would in any case have brought them over what may be called the grand climacteric of the parliament. The novelty of the reforming administration was well-nigh worn off, and there was yet some work which Mr. Gladstone was pledged to do. Here and there, when it happened that the death or retirement of a member of parliament gave an opportunity for a new election, it seemed of late to happen that the election went generally against the government. The Conservatives were plucking up a spirit everywhere, and were looking closely after their organization. Mr. Disraeli himself had taken to going round the country, doing what would be called in America stump oratory, and doing it

remarkably well. In the Crystal Palace of London, in the Free Trade Hall and the Pomona Gardens of Manchester, in the Conservative association of Glasgow, and in other places he had addressed great assemblages and denounced and ridiculed the Liberal government. In the Manchester Free Trade Hall he made use of a remarkably happy expression. His rivals had entered into office, he said, with a policy of violence, of sacrilege and of confiscation, and now having done their work they sat in a row on the treasury benches reminding him as he gazed across the table at them "of a range of extinct volcanoes." The government had been unlucky in the naval department; some of their ships had met with fatal accidents; and it was complained that there was defective organization and imperfect inspection. In one of his speeches, Mr. Disraeli had spoken of a new difficulty in Irish politics and a new form of agitation that had arisen in Ireland. The home rule organization had sprung suddenly into existence.

The home rule agitation came, in its first organized form, mainly from the inspiration of Irish Protestants. The disestablishment of the church had filled most of the Protestants of Ireland with hatred of Mr. Gladstone, and distrust of the imperial parliament and English parties. It was therefore thought by some of them that the time had come when Irishmen of all sects and parties had better trust to themselves and to their united efforts than to any English minister, parliament or party. Partly in a petulant mood, partly in despondency, partly out of genuine patriotic impulse, some of the Irish Protestants set going the movement for home rule. But although the actual movement came into being in that way, the desire for a native parliament had always lived among large classes of the Irish people. Attempts were always being made to construct something like a regular organization with such an object. The process of pacification was going on but slowly. It could only be slow in any case; the effects of centuries of bad legislation could not by any human possibility be effaced by two or three years of better government. But there were many Irishmen who, themselves patient and moderate, saw with distinctness that the feeling of disaffection, or at least of discontent, among the Irish people was not to be charmed away even by such measures as the disestablishment of the Irish church. They saw



what English statesmen would not or could not see, that the one strong feeling in the breast of a large porportion of the population of Ireland was dislike to the rule of an English parliament. The national sentiment, rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, had grown so powerful that it could not be overcome by mere concessions in this or that detail of legislation. These Irishmen of moderate views felt convinced that there were only two alternatives before England; either she must give back to Ireland some form of national parliament, or she must go on putting down rebellion after rebellion and dealing with Ireland as Russia had dealt with Poland. They therefore welcomed the home rule movement, and conscientiously believed that it would open the way to a genuine reconciliation between England and Ireland on conditions of fair co-partnership. The author of this history, is for obvious reasons, not inclined to discuss here the merits of the home rule demand. But he desires to put it on historical record that those who were chiefly concerned in promoting that movement were filled with the conviction that the principle of home rule contained the solution of the great problem of government which unsolved had so long divided England and Ireland, and offered a means of complete reconciliation between the two countries.

Several Irish elections took place about the time when the home rule movement had been fairly started. They were fought out on the question for or against home rule; and the home rulers were successful. The leadership of the new party came almost as a matter of course into the hands of Mr. Butt, who returned to parliament after a considerable time of exile from political life. Mr. Butt was a man of great ability, legal knowledge, and historical culture. He had begun life as a Conservative and an opponent of O'Connell. He had become one of the orators of the short-lived attempt at a protectionist reaction in England. He was taken up by the leading protectionists who were themselves somewhat deficient in intellect and eloquence, and who could not induce men like Mr. Disraeli to trouble themselves any more about the lost cause. Mr. Butt was a lawyer of great skill and success in his profession; as an advocate he had for years not a rival at the Irish bar. He had taken part in the defense of Smith O'Brien and Meagher at Clonmel, in 1848; and when the

Fenian movements broke out, he undertook the defense of many Fenian prisoners. He became gradually drawn away from Conservatism, and brought round to Nationalism. For some reason or other the Conservative chiefs had neglected him. There is extant a letter from a once conspicuous and clever unofficial Conservative, in which, among other pieces of advice to a leader of the party, he recommends him to "buy Butt." The frank cynicism of the advice was a proof that the writer did not understand Mr. Butt. It is certain that Mr. Butt was not a prudent man, and that he did not manage his private affairs well. There can be no doubt that he often fell into embarrassments which might have made observers think he would have welcomed any means of extrication; but it is certain that he was politically honest even to chivalrous forgetfulness of his own most legitimate interests. Perhaps the neglect of the Conservative chiefs came from their observation of the fact that Mr. Butt was gradually passing over from their side; perhaps it was due to other and personal causes. Mr. Butt dropped entirely out of public life for awhile; and when he reappeared it was as the leader of the new home rule movement. There was not then in Irish politics any man who could pretend to be his rival. He was a speaker at once powerful and plausible; he had a thorough knowledge of the constitutional history and the technical procedures of parliament, and he could talk to an Irish monster meeting with vivacity and energy. Almost in a moment a regular home rule party was set up in the House of Commons. Popular Irish members who had been elected previous to the organization of the movement gave in their adhesion to it; and there was in fact a sudden revival of the constitutional movement for the satisfaction of Irish national claims which had fallen asleep after the death of O'Connell and the failure of the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848.

The home rule movement unquestionably put Mr. Gladstone in a new difficulty. The press and the public men of England failed altogether at first to appreciate the strength of the demand for home rule. Many voices cried out that no English statesman must listen to it, not to say condescend to argue with it; it was to be simply brushed away as a nuisance; bidden like a fretful child to hold its tongue and go to sleep. Mr. Gladstone was not a man to

deal with political questions in that sort of way. He showed an anxiety to understand the new agitation and its objects. He asked questions of one or two prominent Irishmen; he even answered questions civilly addressed to him; he showed a willingness at least to receive information with regard to home rule. In the eyes of some jealous patriots in England such conduct was in itself a tampering with the question, an encouragement of the agitation, and a conniving at the designs of wicked men who were anxious to dismember the empire. It was now certain that when parliament met, an organized home rule party would be found there; and a good many strong Conservatives and weak Liberals were inclined to hold Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy responsible for the uprise of this new agitation. There seemed to be an idea that if Irishmen got any measure of justice accorded to them they ought not to ask for anything more; and that if they were so perverse and ungrateful as to ask for more, a large part of the guilt of their ingratitude must be put to the account of the minister who had been wrong-headed enough to give the many justice at all. The prospects were on the whole growing somewhat ominous for the Liberal government. Not only the Conservative party were plucking up a spirit, but the House of Lords had more than once made it clear that they felt themselves emboldened to deal as they thought fit with measures sent up to them from the House of Commons. When the peers begin to be firm and assert their dignity, it may always be taken for granted that there is not much popular force at the back of the government.

Parliament met on February 6, 1873. The royal speech announced that "A measure will be submitted to you on an early day, for settling the question of university education in Ireland. It will have for its object the advancement of learning in that portion of my dominions, and will be framed with a careful regard to the rights of conscience." On February 13th, Mr. Gladstone introduced his measure. It is a remarkable illustration of the legislative energy with which the government were even yet filled, that on the very same night, at the very same hour, two great schemes of reform, reform that to slow and timid minds must have seemed something like revolution, were introduced into parliament. One was the Irish university education bill, which Mr. Gladstone was explaining in the House of Commons; the

other was a measure to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and establish a judicial court of appeal in its stead. This latter measure was introduced by Lord Selborne, lately Sir Roundell Palmer, who had been raised to the office of lord chancellor, on the resignation of Lord Hatherley, whose eyesight was temporarily affected. Great as the change was which Lord Selborne proposed to introduce, public attention paid comparatively little heed to it at that moment. Every one watched with eager interest the development of Mr. Gladstone's most critical scheme for the improvement of university education in Ireland. Irish university education was indeed in a very anomalous condition. Ireland had two universities: that of Dublin which was then a distinctly Protestant institution; and the Queen's university, which was established on a strictly secular system, and which the heads of the Catholic church had on that account condemned. In a country with a population of whom five-sixths were Catholics, there was one chartered university which would not accept the Catholic as such, and another which the Catholic as such could not accept. This is a rough but accurate description of the condition of things. The remedy one might have thought would have been obvious in an ordinary case. The Catholics themselves asked for a chartered Catholic university. The answer made by most Englishmen was, that to grant a charter to a Catholic university would be to run the risk of lowering the national standard of education, and that to grant any state aid to a Catholic university would be to endow a sectarian institution out of the public funds. The Catholic made rejoinder that a mere speculative dread of lowering the common standard of university education was hardly a reason why five-sixths of the population of Ireland should have no university education of that kind at all; that the University of Dublin was in essence a state-endowed institution; and that the Queen's university was founded by state money, on a principle which excluded the vast majority of Catholics from its advantages.

Mr. Gladstone's measure was a gallant and a well-meant effort to reconcile the conflicting claims. He proposed to make the University of Dublin the one central university of the country, and to make it a teaching as well as an examining body. Trinity college, the colleges of Cork and

Belfast, the existing Catholic university, a body supported wholly by private funds and which had no charter, were at once to become members of the new university. The college at Galway was to cease to exist. The theological faculty was to be taken away from Trinity college, Dublin, and handed over to the representative body of the Irish disestablished church. The new university was to have no chairs for theology, moral philosophy, or modern history. The governing body of the university was to be composed in the first instance of twenty-eight ordinary members to be nominated in the act. Vacancies were to be filled by the crown and by co-operation alternately for ten years; after that time four members were to retire annually, one successor to be named by the crown, one by the council, one by the professors, and one by the senate. In addition to the ordinary members, the affiliated colleges would be allowed to elect one or two members of council according to the number of pupils in each college. The money to sustain the university was to come in proportionate allotments from the revenues of Trinity college, a very wealthy institution, from the consolidated fund, the fees of students, and the surplus of Irish ecclesiastical property. Trinity college and each of the other affiliated colleges would be allowed to frame schemes for their own government. Thus, therefore, Mr. Gladstone proposed to establish in Ireland one central university, to which existing colleges and colleges to exist hereafter might affiliate themselves, and in the governing of which they would have a share, while each college would make what laws it pleased for its own constitution, and might be denominational or undenominational as it thought fit. The legislature would give an open career and fair play to all alike; and in order to make the university equally applicable to every sect, it would not teach disputed branches of knowledge, or allow its examination for prizes to include any of the disputed questions. The colleges could act for themselves with regard to the teaching of theology, moral philosophy, and modern history; the central university would maintain a neutral ground so far as these subjects were concerned, and would have nothing to do with them.

This scheme looked plausible and even satisfactory for a moment. It was met that first night with something like a chorus of approval from those who spoke. But there

was an ominous silence in many parts of the house; and after awhile the ominous silence began to be very alarmingly broken. The more the scheme was examined the less it seemed to find favor on either side of the house. It was remarked that on the morning after the introduction of the measure, the *Daily News*, a journal which might have been expected to deal favorably with any proposal made by the government, came out with a criticism which, although courteous and cautious, was decidedly damaging. The defects of the scheme soon became evident. The one great defect was that it satisfied nobody. It proposed to break up and fuse together three or four existing systems, and apparently without the least prospect of satisfying any of the various sects and parties to compose whose strife this great revolution was to be attempted. The English nonconformists were indignant at the proposal to endow denominational education. The Irish Protestants complained bitterly of the breaking up of the old university system in Dublin. The Catholics declared that the measure did not in any way meet their claims for a Catholic university. The authorities of the Catholic church in Ireland pronounced decisively against the measure. The men who proclaimed themselves devoted to culture, sneered at the notion of a national university which professed to have nothing to do with moral philosophy or modern history. It may be remarked that Mr. Mill had already suggested that history is one of the branches of human knowledge which had best be left to private cultivation. It would certainly be difficult to get a theory of modern history in an Irish national university which would be acceptable to all the sects and parties in the country. It is idle to plead that history is the study of facts; in no chapter of history, even the simplest, are the facts so clearly defined as to show the same to all eyes. Two eminent men had just been making a study of the same events in English and Irish history; one particular set of state papers was the subject of each man's examination; on the study of the same set of papers the two men came to diametrically opposite conclusions, not merely as to inference but as to fact. Again, how would it be possible to teach that chapter of history which describes the political career of O'Connell in such a way as to be acceptable to the Ulster Orangeman and the Munster Catholic? Let us fancy the university of London

having a chair for the teaching of modern history, and offering prizes for proficiency in an elucidation of the political careers of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield. Yet it does seem as if the difficulty in the way of teaching history from the chair of an Irish national university ought to have been a reason for not attempting under such conditions to set up a central and sole institution of that kind. Was it, in fact, possible that there could be one Irish national university available for all sects and parties? To us it seems that this was not possible, except at such sacrifices of the educational character of the university as to make it of little worth as a permanent institution. There was great justice in the complaint that soon began to be heard from both sides of the House of Commons: "You are spoiling several institutions, and you are not satisfying the requirements of anybody whatever.

The agitation against the bill grew and grew. The late Professor Cairnes, then in fast-failing health, inspired and guided much of that part of the opposition which condemned the measure because of the depreciating effect it would have on the character of the higher education of Ireland. The English nonconformists were all against it. The Conservatives were against it, and it soon became evident that the Irish members of parliament would vote as a body against it for the second reading. The crisis came on an amendment to the motion. The amendment was moved on March 3rd by Mr. Bourke, brother of the late Lord Mayo. The debate, which lasted four nights, was brilliant and impassioned. Mr. Disraeli was exulting and his exultation lent even more than usual spirit to his glittering eloquence. He taunted Mr. Gladstone with having mistaken "the clamor of the nonconformist for the voice of the nation." "You have now had four years of it," he said. "You have despoiled churches. You have threatened every corporation and every endowment in the country. You have examined into everybody's affairs. You have criticised every profession and vexed every trade. No one is certain of his property, and nobody knows what duties he may have to perform to-morrow. I believe that the people of this country have had enough of the policy of confiscation." There was, of course, extravagance in these charges, but their very extravagance suited the temper of the house, and Mr. Disraeli understood his audience and its mood.

When Mr. Gladstone rose to speak at the close of the fourth night's debate, it soon became evident that he no longer counted on victory. How, indeed, could he? He was opposed and assailed from all sides. He knew that the senate of the University of Dublin had condemned his measure as well as the Roman Catholic prelates. He had received a deputation of Irish members to announce to him frankly that they could not support him. His speech was in remarkable contrast to the jubilant tones of Mr. Disraeli's defiant and triumphant rhetoric. It was full of dignity and resolve; but it was the dignity of anticipated defeat met without shrinking and without bravado. A few sentences, in which Mr. Gladstone spoke of his severance from the Irish representatives with whom he had worked cordially and successfully on the church and land bills, were full of a genuine and a noble pathos. They touched the heart of many an Irish member who felt all that Ireland owed to the great statesman, but who yet felt conscientiously unable to say that the measure now proposed was equal to the demand of the Irish Catholics. Mr. Gladstone was the first English prime minister who had ever really periled office and popularity to serve the interests of Ireland; it seemed a cruel stroke of fate which made his fall from power mainly the result of the Irish vote in the House of Commons. Such was, however, the fact. The second reading of the bill would have been carried by a large majority if the Irish members, who were unable to give their support, could even have conscientiously refrained from voting against it. The result of the division was awaited with breathless anxiety. It was what had been expected. The ministry had been defeated by a small majority; two hundred and eighty-seven voted against the second reading, two hundred and eighty four voted for it. By a majority of three the great Liberal administration was practically overthrown. The great minister had failed. Like the hero of Schiller's ballad, the brave swimmer had plunged once too often into the flood to bring out a prize, and he perished.

The ministry did not indeed come to an end just then. Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues resigned office, and the queen sent for Mr. Disraeli. But Mr. Disraeli prudently declined to accept office with the existing House of Commons. He had been carefully studying the evidences of



Conservative reaction, and he felt sure that the time for his party was coming. He had had bitter experience of the humiliation of a minister who tries to govern without a majority in the House of Commons. He afterward drew an amusing picture of his experiences in that way. He declined to accept office with the existing parliament. Why not then, it was asked, dissolve parliament? To that Mr. Disraeli answered, not unreasonably, that it was easy for statesmen in office to dissolve parliament, but that it would be a very different thing for a man to have to form an administration and then immediately dissolve. He could of course form a government, he said, and dissolve in May; but then he had nothing in particular to dissolve about. The functions of an opposition were critical; he could not pretend to have a regular policy cut and dry on which the country might be asked to pronounce an opinion at a general election. The Irish university bill was hardly a question on which to go to the country, and besides, it was not a question on which Mr. Disraeli could be expected to appeal to the constituencies, seeing that the House of Commons had decided it in a way of which he approved. The situation was curious. There were two great statesmen disputing, not for office, but how to get out of the responsibility of office. The result was that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues had to return to their places and go on as best they could. There was nothing else to be done. Mr. Disraeli would not accept responsibility just then, and with regard to the interests of his party he was acting like a prudent man.

Mr. Gladstone returned to office. He returned reluctantly; he was weary of the work; he was disappointed; he had suffered in health from the incessant administrative labor to which he had always subjected himself with an unsparing and almost improvident magnanimity. He must have known that, coming back to office under such conditions, he would find his power shaken, his influence much discredited. He bent to the necessities of the time, and consented to be prime minister still. He helped Mr. Fawcett to carry a bill for the abolition of tests in Dublin university, as he could do no more just then for university education in Ireland.

The end was near. During the autumn some elections happening incidentally turned out against the Liberal

party. The Conservatives were beginning to be openly triumphant in most places. Mr. Gladstone made some modifications in his ministry. Mr. Lowe gave up the chancellorship of the exchequer, in which he had been singularly unsuccessful; Mr. Bruce left the home office, in which he had not been much of a success. Mr. Gladstone took upon himself the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer together, following an example set in former days by Peel and other statesmen. Mr. Lowe became home secretary. Mr. Bruce was raised to the peerage as Lord Aberdare, and was made president of the council in the room of the Marquis of Ripon, who had resigned. Mr. Childers resigned the office of chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, and Mr. Bright, whose health had now been restored, came back to the cabinet in charge of the merely nominal business of the duchy. There could be no doubt that there were dissensions in the ministry. Mr. Baxter had resigned the office of secretary of the treasury on the ground that he could not get on with Mr. Lowe, who had not consulted him with regard to certain contracts, and had refused to take his advice. The general impression was that Mr. Childers gave up the chancellorship of the duchy because he considered that he had claims on the office of chancellor of the exchequer, which Mr. Gladstone now had taken to himself. These various changes and the rumors to which they gave birth were not calculated to strengthen the public confidence. In truth, the Liberal *regime* was falling to pieces. Lord Salisbury, speaking at a Conservative banquet, expressed his conviction that the Conservatives would at least be able "to draw the teeth and clip the claws of the Liberal administration," and exulted over the security obtained against revolutionary innovation by the fact that the country was likely to be governed for some time by a toothless Liberal ministry.

*Ne quisquam Ajacem possit superare, nisi Ajax.* It was Mr. Gladstone himself who dealt the stroke which brought the Liberal administration to an end. In the closing days of 1873 the Conservatives won a seat at Exeter; in the first few days of 1874 they won a seat at Stroud. Parliament had actually been summoned for February 5th. On the night of January 23rd, an astonishing rumor began to fly through various limited circles of London politicians.

Men were mysteriously beckoned away from dinner-tables and drawing-rooms, and club-rooms. Agitated messengers hurried to ministerial doors seeking for information. There was commotion in the newspaper offices; the telegraph was set in constant action. Next morning all the world read the news in the papers. Mr. Gladstone had suddenly made up his mind to dissolve parliament, and seek for a restoration of the authority of the Liberal government by an appeal to the people. He vindicated his decision in an address to his constituents which was unfortunately all too long for genuine popular effect. What the country understood by it was, that Mr. Gladstone did not choose to bear the humiliation of seeming to have the authority he had received in 1868 now "sunk below the point necessary for the due defense and prosecution of the public interests;" that he proposed to obtain a new lease of authority by a popular verdict; and that if restored to power he would introduce a series of financial measures which would include the total repeal of the income tax. The country was taken utterly by surprise. Many of Mr. Gladstone's own colleagues had not known what was to be done until the announcement was actually made. The feeling all over the three kingdoms was one of almost unanimous disapproval. Mr. Gladstone's sudden resolve was openly condemned as petulant and unstatesmanlike; it was privately grumbled at on various personal grounds. To us it seems to have been impatient, imprudent, irregular, but certainly spirited and magnanimous. Impolitic it no doubt was; but it ought not to have been unpopular. It must have caused great, and at that time, superfluous inconvenience to Liberal politicians everywhere; and we cannot wonder if they complained. But to the country in general there ought to have been something fascinating in the very quixotry of a resolve which proclaimed that the minister disdained to remain in office one hour after he had found reason to believe that he no longer possessed the confidence of the people. It was an error indeed, but it was at least a generous error; the mistake of a sensitive and a chivalrous nature.

Mr. Gladstone had surprised the constituencies. We do not know whether the constituencies surprised Mr. Gladstone. They certainly surprised most persons, including themselves. The result of the elections was to upset com-

pletely the balance of power. In a few days the Liberal majority was gone. Mr. Gladstone fought a gallant fight himself, and addressed vast open-air meetings at Blackheath with the energy of another O'Connell. But it was a hopeless fight against reaction. When the result of the polls came to be made up it was found that the Conservatives had a majority of about fifty, even on the calculation, far too favorable to the other side, which counted every home ruler as a Liberal. Mr. Gladstone followed the example set by Mr. Disraeli six years before, and at once resigned office. The great reforming Liberal administration was gone. The organizing energy which had accomplished such marvels during three or four resplendent years had spent itself and was out of breath. Many causes indeed concurred to bring about the fall of the Liberal administration. It had committed grave faults itself; some of its members had done it serious harm. Various powerful interests were arrayed against it. But when all allowance had been made for such considerations, it will probably be seen that the most potent influence which bore down the Gladstone government was the fact, that people in general had grown tired of doing great things, and had got into the mood of the lady described in one of Mr. Charles Reade's novels, who frankly declares that heroes are her abomination. The English constituencies had grown weary of the heroic and would have a change.

Had the Liberal ministers consented to remain in power a few days, a very few, longer, they would have been able to announce the satisfactory conclusion of a very unsatisfactory war. This was one of the least of all our little wars; a war from which it was simply impossible to extract anything in the way of glory, and in which the only honor could be just that which the skill of the English commander was able to secure—the honor of success won in the promptest manner and with the least possible expenditure of life. The Ashantee war arose out of a sort of misunderstanding. The Ashantees are a very fierce and warlike tribe on the Gold Coast of Africa. They were at war with England in 1824, and in one instance they won an extraordinary victory over a British force of about one thousand men, and carried home with them as a trophy the skull of the British commander-in-chief, Sir Charles M'Carthy. The Ashantees were afterward defeated, and a

treaty of peace was concluded with them by the governor of our Gold Coast settlements, Mr. MacLean, the husband of Miss Landon, better known to literature by her initials "L. E. L.," a woman whose poetical gifts, not in themselves very great, combined with her unhappy story to make her at one time a celebrity in England. In 1863, as has been already told in these pages, a war was begun against the Ashantees prematurely and rashly by the governor of the Gold Coast settlements, and it had to be abandoned owing to the ravages done by sickness among our men. In 1872 some Dutch possessions on the Gold Coast were transferred by purchase and arrangement of other kinds to England; and this transaction ended, like most of the same nature, by entangling us in misunderstanding, quarrel, and war. The king of Ashantee claimed a tribute formerly allowed to him by the Dutch, and refused to evacuate the territory ceded to England. He attacked the Fantees, a tribe of very worthless allies of ours, and a straggling, harassing war began between him and our garrisons. The great danger was that if the Ashantees obtained any considerable success, or seeming success even for a moment, all the surrounding tribes would make common cause with them. The government therefore determined to take up the matter seriously, and send a sufficient force under an experienced and well-qualified commander with instructions to take advantage of the cool season and penetrate to the Ashantee capital, Coomassie, and there inflict a blow which would prove that the Ashantee king could not harass the English settlers with impunity. When the choice of a commander came to be discussed, only one name, as it would seem, arose to the lips of all men. That was the name of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had commanded the successful expedition to the Red River region in 1870. Sir Garnet Wolseley had the rare good fortune to sustain the reputation conferred upon him in advance by popular acclaim. He had a very hard task to perform. Of course he could have no difficulty in fighting the Ashantees. The weapons and the discipline of the English army put all thought of serious battle out of the question. But the king of Ashantee had a force fighting on his side far more formidable than the General January and General February on whom the Emperor Nicholas of Russia vainly relied. Wordsworth in his noble ode to Toussaint L'Ouverture

tells the fallen chief to be of good heart, for he has on his side "Powers that will work for him," "great allies;" and these are, he says, "earth, air, and skies;" "not a breathing of the common wind," he declares, "that will forget," to support his cause. In a literal and terrible sense the king of Ashantee had just such allies. Earth, air, and skies—the earth, the air, the skies of the Gold Coast region would at the right time work for him; not a breathing of the common wind that would forget to breathe pestilence into the ranks of his enemies. The whole campaign must be over and done within the limited range of the cooler months, or there would come into the field to do battle for the African king allies against whom an Alexander or a Caesar would be powerless. Sir Garnet Wolseley and those who fought under him, sailors, marines, and soldiers, did their work well. They defeated the Ashantees wherever they could get at them; but that was a matter of course. They forced their way to Coomassie, compelled the king to come to terms, one of the conditions being the prohibition of human sacrifices, and they were able to leave the country within the appointed time. The success of the campaign was a question of days and almost of hours; and the victory was snatched out of the very jaws of approaching sun and fever. Sir Garnet Wolseley sailed from England on September 12, 1873, and returned to Portsmouth, having accomplished all his objects, on March 21, 1874. The war was not one to be proud of; it might easily have been avoided; it is not certain that England was entirely in the right of the quarrel first or last; but nothing could be more satisfactory than the ease, success, and completeness with which the campaign had been pushed through to its end.

The Gladstone government had also had to deal with one of the periodical famines breaking out in Bengal, and if they had remained in office might have been able within a very short time to report that their efforts had been successful. Mr. Gladstone's sudden action, however, deprived them of any such opportunity. They bequeathed to their successors the announcement of a war triumphantly concluded, and a famine checked; and they bequeathed to them also a very handsome financial surplus. So sudden a fall from power had not up to that time been known in the modern political history of the country. To find its parallel we shall have to come down six years

later still. The great Liberal administration had fallen as suddenly as the French empire; had disappeared like Aladdin's palace, which was erect and ablaze with light and splendor last night, and is not to be seen this morning.

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## CHAPTER LXIII.

### "CONSERVATIVE REACTION." INSTALLED IN OFFICE.

MR. DISRAELI was not long in forming a ministry. He reduced the number of the cabinet in the first instance to twelve. Lord Cairns became lord chancellor. Lord Derby was made foreign secretary, an appointment which gratified sober-minded men. Lord Salisbury was entrusted with the charge of the Indian department. This, too, was an appointment which gave satisfaction outside the ranges of the Conservative party as well as within it. During his former administration of the India office, Lord Salisbury had shown great ability and self-command, and he had acquired a reputation for firmness of character and large and liberal views. He was now and for some time after looked upon as the most rising man and the most high-minded politician on the Conservative side. The country was pleased to see that Mr. Disraeli made no account of the differences that formerly existed between Lord Salisbury and himself; of the dislike that Lord Salisbury had evidently felt toward him at one time, and of the manner in which he had broken away from the Conservative ministry at the time of the reform bill of 1867. Lord Carnarvon became colonial secretary. Mr. Cross, a Lancashire lawyer, who had never been in office of any kind before, was lifted into the position of home secretary. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was made secretary for war, and Mr. Ward Hunt, first lord of the admiralty. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had been trained to finance by Mr. Gladstone, accepted the office of chancellor of the exchequer. The Duke of Richmond, as lord president of the council, made a safe, inoffensive and respectable leader of the government in the House of Lords.

The Liberals seemed to have received a stunning blow. The whole party reeled under it, and did not appear capable for the moment of rallying against the shock. Nothing could be more disheartening than the appearance of the

front opposition benches during a great part of the session. To accumulate the difficulties, Mr. Gladstone suddenly announced his intention of retiring from the position of leader of the Liberal party. In a letter to Lord Granville, dated March 12, 1874, he explained that "for a variety of reasons personal to myself," he "could not contemplate any unlimited extension of active political service," and that it might be necessary "to divest myself of all the responsibilities of leadership at no distant time." For the present he held the rank of leader only in a sort of conditional way, and he had frankly announced to Lord Granville that he could not give "more than an occasional attendance in the House of Commons" during that session. This seemed the one step needed to complete the disorganization of the party. There were many complaints, not loud but deep, of the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It was contrasted openly as well as secretly with the perseverance, the unwearied patience, which Mr. Disraeli had shown in keeping his place at the head of his party during long years of what must often have seemed hopeless struggle. Mr. Gladstone pleaded his advancing years; but, it was asked, are not the years of Mr. Disraeli still further advanced? Who brought us, some discontented Liberals asked, into all this difficulty? Who but the man who now deserts us in the face of the enemy?

The opposition were for a while apparently not only without a leader, but even without a policy or a motive for existence. For awhile it seemed as if, to adopt the correct and concise description given by Mr. Clayden in his "England under Lord Beaconsfield," "the opposition had nothing to oppose." The ministry had succeeded to a handsome surplus of nearly six millions. It would be hardly possible under such circumstances to bring in a budget which should be wholly unsatisfactory. Mr. Ward Hunt contrived, indeed, to get up a momentary scare about the condition of the navy. When introducing the navy estimates he talked in tones of ominous warning about his determination not to have a fleet on paper, or to put up with phantom ships. The words sent a wild thrill of alarm through the country. The sudden impression prevailed that Mr. Hunt had made a fearful discovery—had found out that the country had really no navy; that he would be compelled to set about constructing one out of hand. The whole of the



surplus at least, people said, would have to be given up to make a beginning; nor did men forget to point to the cheerful possibility of some foreign enemy taking advantage of the opportunity to assail England's unprotected coasts. Mr. Ward Hunt, however, when pressed for an explanation, explained that he really meant nothing. It appeared that he had only been expressing his disapproval on abstract grounds of the maintenance of inefficient navies, and never meant to convey the idea that England's navy was not efficient. The country breathed again; the surplus seemed safe, and the coasts. The idea of Germany or Russia coming down upon defenseless England, like Achilles on the unarmed Hector in "Troilus and Cressida" passed away.

Two new measures belonging to the same order disturbed for awhile what Sir Wilfrid Lawson jocularly called "the almost holy calm" which prevailed in parliament now that the Conservatives had it all their own way, and the Liberals were crushed. One was the bill for the abolition of church patronage in Scotland; the other, the public worship bill for England. The church patronage bill, which was introduced by the government, is well described by Mr. Clayden as "a Liberal measure which had become a reactionary scheme by being brought into the world a generation behind its time." It took away the appointment of ministers in the church of Scotland from lay patrons, but only to give it to the male communicants of the parish kirk, not to the whole body of the parishioners. The patronage system was the cause of that great secession from the church of Scotland under Dr. Chalmers which has been described in an early chapter of this history. Such a measure as that now introduced by the government, or, at least, a measure having such a general purpose, would have prevented the secession in 1843; but it was useless for any purpose of reconciliation in 1874. Moreover, the measure of 1874, by confining the power of appointment to the actual communicants of each church, took away the national character of the church of Scotland, and converted it into a sectarian organization. In a historical sense, the passing of the measure can have little importance unless as it may have given an impulse to the question of disestablishment in Scotland. Its introduction became of some present interest to the House of Commons because it drew Mr. Glad-

stone into debate for the first time since the opening nights of the session. He opposed the bill, but, of course, in vain. Mr. Disraeli complimented him on his reappearance, and kindly expressed a hope that he would favor the house with his presence as often as possible; indeed was quite friendly and patronizing to his fallen rival.

The bill for the regulation of public worship was not a government measure. It was introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and into the House of Commons by Mr. Russell Gurney. It was strongly disliked and publicly condemned by some members of the cabinet; but after it had gone its way fairly toward success Mr. Disraeli showed a disposition to adopt it, and even to speak as if he had had the responsibility of it from the first. Once or twice it would almost seem as if he had forgotten that it was not a measure of his own proposing. The bill illustrated a curious difficulty into which the church of England had been brought, in consequence partly of its connection with the state. We have already traced in these volumes the history of the Oxford movement which was intended to quicken the state church with new life and freshness, and which before long sent some of the greatest divines of that church into the ranks of the church of Rome. The influence of the movement made itself felt in other ways as well. It set thought stirring everywhere within the church. It appealed to much that was philosophical, much that was artistic and æsthetic, and at the same time much that was skeptical. One body of churchmen were anxious to maintain the unity of the Christian church, and would not admit that the church of England began to exist with the Reformation. They claimed apostolical succession for their bishops; they declared that the clergymen of the church of England were priests in the true spiritual sense. Thus the tractarians, as they were called for a time, were thrown into direct antagonism with the Evangelicals. The latter maintained that the Bible was the sole authority; the former held that the New Testament derived its authority from the church. The tractarians therefore claimed a right to examine very freely into the meaning of doubtful passages in the Scriptures, and insisted that if the authority of the church were recognized as that of the Heaven-appointed interpreter, all difficulty about the reconciliation of the scriptural writings

with the discoveries of modern science would necessarily disappear. The tractarian party—we call them by that name now merely as a means of distinguishing them from their opponents, and not with the intention of suggesting that it properly describes them or applies at all to some of them—became divided into two sections. One section inclined toward what may almost be called free thought; the other, to the sentiments and the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church. The state was frequently called upon to interfere. Here the world saw the prosecution of some clergymen for having published an essay supposed to teach infidel doctrine; there the ecclesiastical courts were engaged in trying to find out whether the church law had been broken by ritualistic practices in some Protestant temple. The taste for beauty in decoration which was growing up in English society everywhere had already made its influence felt in the English church. Clergymen and congregations loved to have their churches adorned like those of the Catholics; they delighted in the sweet and noble music, the incense, the painted windows, the devotional effigies and symbols, the impressive and gorgeous ritual. The astonished Evangelists saw with dismay that the church as they knew it seemed likely to be torn asunder. On the one side was the philosophical clergyman writing his essay to show that a literal interpretation of certain parts of the Bible was absurd; on the other, there was the high church priest setting up his altar, swinging his censor, making his genuflexions, and even establishing his confessional. The Evangelicals had their strongest supporters among the middle and lower-middle class; the others found favor at once among the rich who went in for culture, and among the very poor.

The law, which was often invoked, proved impotent to deal with the difficulty. It could not punish the clergymen who contributed to the volume called "Essays and Reviews." It could not prevent the author of the first essay in that volume from being made a bishop. It could not remove Dr. Colenso from his colonial bishopric. One clergyman, was, in 1871, "deprived for heresy." He forthwith started a religion of his own, or at least found a place of worship after his own way of thinking and worshipers to fill it. But it would seem as if he might as well have been allowed to remain in the ranks of the clergy of the

church as many others whom the law failed to reach, or might as well have refused to go out as others had done. It was found impossible to put down ritualism by law. In some places the ritualistic practices led to grave scandal and serious riots. It happened occasionally that although the clergyman and the congregation liked the elaborate and ornate worship, their neighbors all around disapproved of it. In some instances the neighbors got into the way of crowding into the church and endeavoring to put down ritualism by noise and even by violence. All this was becoming scandalous to the eyes of sober people. Many who were otherwise little disposed to approve of the dictatorship of the state in matters of religion, and who did not see how any decision of a court could prove a religious dogma to be right or wrong, were nevertheless inclined to demand that so long as the church of England was a state institution the authority of the state should be upheld. They took very clear and simple ground. They said: "The state upholds the English church on certain conditions and to preach certain doctrines. No man is compelled to preach the doctrines if he does not feel equal in conscience to the task; but if he cannot teach them he can go out of the state church. We do not take it on us to condemn his opinions; we do not want the law to punish him for holding them. But we say the state employs him to teach one thing and he is teaching another. We employ a man to teach German, and we find he is teaching French. We do not say that he is a wicked person because he teaches French; we only say that we want to have German taught, and that if he cannot do so he must give his place to some one who can." On the other hand, the ritualists said: "You tell us that we are bound by the state-made law. We say we are only bound by the doctrines of the church. But if we are to be bound by the law, show us first that we have broken the law. Appeal to your courts of law; do your best. We say the decision has not yet gone against us." It was not easy to answer this practical argument. The law was not by any means so clear as some of the opponents of ritualism would have wished it. Moreover, even in cases where a distinct condemnation was obtained from a court of law there was often no way of putting it into execution. A ritualistic clergyman was ordered to be suspended from his ministra-

tions. He went on with his duties at his church just the same as ever. His congregation supported him, and the practices for which he had been condemned were carried on every Sunday without the slightest modification or interruption. In more than one case a clergyman was actually deposed by authority, and his successor appointed. The congregation held fast by the delinquent and would not admit the new man. The offender remained at his post just as if nothing had happened. It was clear that if all this went on much longer the establishment must come to an end. One party would renounce state control in order to get freedom; another would repudiate state control because it proved unable to maintain authority. The state of things might be likened to that which prevailed in America for some years before the civil war. There were two irreconcilable parties; if one did not soon secede the other must.

To remedy all this disorder, the archbishop of Canterbury brought in his bill for the better regulation of public worship. The object of the bill was to give offended parishioners a ready way of invoking the authority of the bishop and to enable the bishop to prohibit by his own mandate any practices which he considered improper, or else to submit the question to the decision of a judge specially appointed to decide in such cases. The discussions were chiefly remarkable for the divisions of opinion they showed on both sides of the House. Lord Salisbury opposed the bill in the House of Lords; Mr. Hardy condemned it in the House of Commons. It was condemned as too weak; it was denounced as too strong. Mr. Gladstone came forward with all the energy of his best days to oppose it, on the ground that it threatened to deprive the church of all her spiritual freedom merely to get a more easy way of dealing with the practices of a few eccentric men. Sir William Harcourt, who had been solicitor-general under Mr. Gladstone, rushed to the defense of the bill, attacked Mr. Gladstone vehemently, called upon Mr. Disraeli to prove himself the leader of the English people, and in impassioned sentences reminded him that he had put his hand to the plow and must not draw it back. Mr. Gladstone dealt with his late subordinate in a few sentences of good-humored contempt, in which he expressed his special surprise at the sudden and portentous display of erudition which Sir Will-

iam Harcourt had poured out upon the house. Sir William Harcourt was even then a distinctly rising man. He was an effective and somewhat overbearing speaker, with a special aptitude for the kind of elementary argument and the knock-down personalities which the House of Commons can never fail to understand. The house liked to listen to him. He had a loud voice, and never gave his hearers the trouble of having to strain their ears or their attention to follow him. His arguments were never subtle enough to puzzle the simplest country gentleman for one moment. His quotations had no distracting novelty about them, but fell on the ear with a familiar and friendly sound. His jokes were unmistakable in their meaning; his whole style was good strong black and white. He could get up a case admirably. He astonished the house, and must probably even have astonished himself by the vast amount of ecclesiastical knowledge which with only the preparation of a day or two he was able to bring to bear upon the most abstruse or perplexed questions of church government. He had the advantage of being sure of everything. He poured out his eloquence and his learning on the most difficult ecclesiastical questions with the resolute assurance of one who had given a life to the study. Perhaps we ought rather to say that he showed the resolute assurance which only belongs to one who has not given much of his life to the study of the subject. Probably when Sir William Harcourt had forgotten all that he had read up a little time before concerning church history, and turned back to his remarkable speeches on the public worship bill, he was as much amazed as Arthur Pendennis looking over one of his old reviews and wondering where on earth he contrived to get the erudition of which he had made such a display.

Mr. Disraeli responded so far to Sir William Harcourt's stirring appeal as to make himself the patron of the bill, and the leader of the movement in its favor. Mr. Disraeli saw that by far the greater body of English public opinion out of doors was against the Ritualists, and that for the moment public opinion accepted the whole controversy as a dispute for or against ritualism. The course taken by the prime minister further enlivened the debates by bringing about a keen little passage of arms between him and Lord Salisbury, whom Mr. Disraeli described as a great

master of jibes and flouts and jeers. All this was as good as a play to the unconcerned public. Nothing could be more lively and entertaining. People in general soon forgot all about the bill itself, and even about the Ritualists, in the interest which was awakened by the splitting up of political parties, the attacks of friend on friend, and the cheerful sallies of cabinet minister against cabinet minister. Mr. Gladstone brought forward a series of resolutions in the form of amendments defining his objections to the measure, but he forebore to press them to a division. The bill was passed in both houses of parliament and obtained the royal assent almost at the end of the session. Nothing in particular has come of it thus far, except law suits which it seems impossible to bring to any practical conclusion. The new judge and the strengthening authority have tried their hands more than once against refractory clergymen, and with no better effect than to prove that the refractory clergyman may still bid defiance to his superiors and the law. Ritualism was not put down. Doubtless it appealed to certain instincts in many hearts which the colder and less ornate ceremonial of the ordinary Church of England service failed to satisfy. The interference of the law seemed to have the effect common in such cases. It made the followers of some ritualistic clergymen regard their leaders not merely as an apostle but as a martyr. In some instances it exalted commonplace men into the worshiped of congregations and the idol of emotional women. In some instances it put good and pious men at the mercy of fussy and ignorant alarmists. On the whole, it promoted rather than suppressed ritualism.

One useful piece of legislation, or perhaps we ought rather to say the first step in a new course of useful legislation, was forced upon the government by Mr. Plimsoll. This was a measure for the protection of seamen against the danger of being sent to sea in vessels unfitted for the voyage. Mr. Plimsoll was a man who had pushed his way through life by ability and hard work into independence and wealth. He was full of human sympathy, and was especially interested in the welfare of the poor. His impassioned temperament made him apt to be eaten up by the zeal of his cause; he had many of the enthusiast's characteristic defects, but he was filled with the best qualities of a genuine enthusiasm. Mr. Plimsoll's attention

happened to be turned to the condition of our merchant seamen, and he found that the state of the law left them almost absolutely at the mercy of the shipowner. The system which prevailed with regard to maritime insurances put a great temptation in the way of unscrupulous and selfish shipowners. It was easy to insure a vessel, and once insured it mattered little to such a shipowner how soon she went to the bottom. The law dealt in very arbitrary fashion with the seaman who for any reason refused to fulfill his contract and go to sea. It gave to magistrates the power of sending him at once to the common prison. The poor seaman often made his contract with utter thoughtlessness, and when once he made it he was bound to it. The criminal law bore upon him; only the civil law applied to the employer. Mr. Plimsoll was convinced that a great many lives were lost by the unprincipled conduct of certain shipowners who sent men out in rotten but well insured vessels and left them to their fate. He actually found cases of seamen sentenced to prison because they refused to sail in crazy ships, which, when they put to sea, never touched a port, but went down in mid-ocean. Letters were found in the pockets of drowned seamen which showed that they had made their friends aware of their forebodings as to the condition of the vessel that was to be their coffin. All this stirred Mr. Plimsoll's blood to such a degree that he could not endure it. He began a regular crusade against certain shipowners. He published a book called, "Our Seamen; An Appeal," in which he made the most startling and, it must be added, the most sweeping charges. Courts of law were invoked to deal with his assertions; the authority of parliament was called on to protect shipowning members against the violence of the irrepressible philanthropist. The public had not much difficulty in understanding Mr. Plimsoll. They saw at once that he was a man likely enough to be betrayed into exaggeration, sometimes into very serious mistake; but that his purpose was genuine, that his cause was good, and that on the whole the case he made out was one calling for the instant attention of parliament. He was clearly wrong in some of his charges against individuals, but a very general opinion prevailed that he was only too just in his condemnation of the system. Mr. Plimsoll brought in a bill for the better protection of the lives of seamen. It was a stringent



measure. It proposed a compulsory survey of all ships before leaving port, various precautions against overloading, the restriction of deck-loading, and the compulsory painting of a load line, the position of which was to be determined by legislation. This measure was strongly opposed by the shipowners in the house, and by many others as well as they, who regarded it as too stringent, and who also feared that by putting too much responsibility on the government it would take all responsibility off the shipowners. The bill came to the test of a division on June 24, 1874, and was rejected by a majority of only three, one hundred and seventy voting for it, and one hundred and seventy-three against. The government then recognizing the importance of the subject, and the strong feeling which prevailed in the country with regard to it, undertook to bring in a merchant shipping bill of their own. They introduced the bill in the session of 1875. It did not go nearly so far as Mr. Plimsoll would have desired, but it did promise to be at least part of a series of legislation which, further developed, might have accomplished the object. Such as it was, however, the government did not press it, and toward the end of July Mr. Disraeli announced that they would not go further that year with the measure.

The 22d of July saw one of the most extraordinary scenes that ever took place in the House of Commons. Mr. Plimsoll, under the influence of disappointment and of anger seemed to have lost all self-control. He denounced some of the shipowners of that house; he threatened to name and expose them; he called them villains who had sent brave men to death. When interrupted by the speaker and told that he must not apply the term villains to members of the house he repeated again and again and in the most vociferous tones that they were villains and that he would abide by his words. He refused to recognize the authority of the speaker. He shouted, shook his fist at the leading members of the government and rushed out of the house in a state of excitement that seemed little less than that of an actual maniac. Thereupon Mr. Disraeli moved, "that the speaker do reprimand Mr. Plimsoll for his disorderly behavior." Mr. A. M. Sullivan, one of the home rule members, returned for the first time at the general election, a man of remarkable eloquence and of high character, rushed into the house pallid and almost

breathless with excitement, and endeavored to interpose on behalf of Mr. Plimsoll. He pleaded that Mr. Plimsoll was seriously ill and hardly able to account for his actions, owing to mental excitement arising from an overwrought system, and from the intensity of his zeal in the cause of the merchant seamen. He asked that a week should be given Mr. Plimsoll to consider his position. Mr. Fawcett and other members made a similar appeal, and the government consented to postpone a decision of the question for a week. Mr. Plimsoll had offended against the rules, the traditions, and the dignity of the house, and many even of those who sympathized with his general purpose thought he had damaged his cause and ruined his individual position. Nothing, however, could be more extraordinary and unexpected than the result. It was one of those occasions in which the public out of doors showed that they could get to the real heart of a question more quickly and more clearly than parliament itself. Out of doors it was thoroughly understood that Mr. Plimsoll's behavior in the House of Commons was a gross offense against order. It was thoroughly understood that he was too sweeping in his charges; that he was entirely mistaken in some of them; that he had denounced men who did not deserve denunciation; that he had surrounded a good cause with an unfortunate adornment of exaggeration, extravagance, and ill-temper. All this the public understood and admitted. But the difference between the public and the House of Commons was, that while understanding and admitting all this, the public clearly saw that as to the main question at issue Mr. Plimsoll was entirely in the right. They saw that, making allowance for all exaggeration and all ebullitions of temper, Mr. Plimsoll was the first man to take a just view of the hardships inflicted on merchant seamen; and that the heart of his case, if we may use that expression, was sound. The country was, therefore, determined to stand by him.

Great meetings were held all over England during the next few days, at every one of which those who were present pledged themselves to assist Mr. Plimsoll in his general object and policy. The result was that when Mr. Plimsoll appeared in the House of Commons the week after, and in a very full and handsome manner made apology for his offenses against parliamentary order, it was apparent to

every one in the house and out of it that he was master of the situation, and that the government would have to advance with more or less rapid strides along the path where he was leading. Finally, the government brought in and forcibly pushed through, a merchant shipping bill, which met for the moment some of the difficulties of the case, and which they promised to supplement afterward by a complete scheme of legislation. Mr. Disraeli indeed went so far as quietly to claim for himself and for the government some of the merit of having caused the extraordinary scene in the House of Commons. He suggested that the government were perfectly aware that nothing could be done until the temper of the country was thoroughly roused, and therefore implied, if he did not actually affirm, that it was partly by their design that Mr. Plimsoll was stirred to his extraordinary demonstration, and the assistance of the public thereby obtained for the passing of a strong measure. "Even if one does call them names," said Mrs. Gamp, vindicating her treatment of her patients, "it's only done to rouse them."

The measure did not prove to be a very strong one, but it did something toward Mr. Plimsoll's object. The government afterward promised to supplement it by legislation, regulating in some way the system of maritime insurances, which they justly declared to be essential to any satisfactory and final settlement of the question. It is clear that so long as the existing system of maritime insurance was allowed to prevail, the temptation to unscrupulous shipowners would continue to be almost irresistible, and that no legislation merely applying to the fabric of the ship could properly secure the lives of the seamen. Other things, however, interfered with the carrying out of the government proposals, such as they were. The regulation of maritime insurance was forgotten. Mr. Disraeli's colleagues soon had too many questions of imperial interest on their hands in all parts of the world to have time or inclination for business of so homely a nature as a measure for the protection of the lives of English merchant seamen. Nothing farther was done during the reign of the Conservative ministry to complete the scheme which they had promised in the beginning, and many sessions after the house saw another outburst of passion on the part of Mr. Plimsoll, another attempt of the government to put him to

censure, and another distinct declaration on the part of the country, that however Mr. Plimsoll might have offended against the rules of the house, his spirit and purpose were thoroughly in unison with the feelings of the public.

The government seemed for awhile, however, inclined to keep plodding steadily on with quiet schemes of domestic legislation. They were not usually very comprehensive or drastic schemes. They were rather of the kind which ill-natured critics would describe as tinkering. The government tinkered at a measure for the security of improvements made by agricultural tenants. They made it purely permissive, and therefore thoroughly worthless. This one defect tainted many of their schemes of domestic reform; this inclination to make every reform permissive. It seemed to be thought a clever stroke of management to introduce a measure professedly for the removal of some inequality, or other grievance, and then to make it permissive and allow all parties concerned to contract themselves out of it. Thus it was said in effect to the agricultural tenant: "Behold, here is a bill to enable you to hold fast the fruits of your expenditure and your labor;" and to the landlord: "You have no cause to be alarmed; for you see this is only a permissive bill, and you can contract yourself out of it if your tenants agree, and of course they must agree." Mr. Cross, the home secretary, however, proved a very efficient minister, and introduced many useful schemes of legislation, among the rest an artisan's dwelling bill, the object of which was to enable local authorities to pull down houses unfit for human habitation and rebuild on the sites. The government made experiments in reaction here and there. They restored the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, which had seemed actually doomed. They got into some trouble by issuing a circular to captains of war vessels on the subject of the reception of slaves on board their ships. The principle which the circular laid down was in substance a full recognition of the rights of a slave-owner over a fugitive slave. The country rose in indignation against this monstrous reversal of England's time-honored policy; and the circular was withdrawn and a new one issued. This, too, proved unsatisfactory. The government made excuse by pleading that something of the same kind had been done before under a Liberal ad-

ministration, and attempted to satisfy public feeling by declaring that a slave was not to be handed back if the slave's life would be endangered by the withdrawal of the shelter of the English flag. Thereupon it was at once asked, Is a woman slave to be handed back to a ravisher? The government became entangled in a whole network of contradictions and difficulties, and after having tried various expedients, appointed commissions, and made other futile efforts to get out of the trouble, they had at length to allow the old principle to re-assert itself and the flag of England, whether it floats on sea or land, to be a protection and a shelter for the slave. Of course it is not intended that English vessels of war shall hold out invitations to fugitive slaves or act as the propagandist agents of the principles of personal freedom. But the broad plain principle long established was, that when a slave does get on board an English vessel, just as when he touches British soil, he is free and is not to be restored to slavery; and that principle the government saw themselves at last compelled to re-affirm. It was impossible for them to resist the popular demand; some of their own men in the House of Commons fell away from them and insisted that the old principle must be kept up and that the slave-owner shall not take his slave from under the shadow of the English flag.

All this time what was Mr. Gladstone doing? He appeared to have withdrawn from the paths of parliamentary life and almost from the political world. He was a very busy man indeed in another way. He had taken to polemical literature. He was writing a series of essays to prove that the doctrine of papal infallibility if strictly acknowledged by Catholics would place their allegiance to whatever sovereign entirely at the disposal of the pope. He was stirring up a heated controversy by endeavoring to prove that absolute obedience to the Catholic Church was henceforward inconsistent with the principles of freedom and that the papal doctrine was everywhere the enemy of liberty. Cardinal Manning, Dr. Newman and other great controversialists had taken the field against Mr. Gladstone, and the argument went on for a considerable time without abatement of eagerness. Grave politicians were not a little scandalized at the position taken by a statesman who only the other day was prime minister. There seemed some-

thing curiously undignified and unseemly in Mr. Gladstone's leading a theological controversy. A speaker at an evangelical meeting in Exeter Hall would have been quite in his place when using such arguments as those employed by Mr. Gladstone; but a sharp polemical controversy provoked by a great statesman was something new in the modern world. One conclusion was adopted everywhere. It seemed clear that Mr. Gladstone never meant to take any leading part in politics again. Surely, it was said, if he had the remotest idea of entering the political field anew he never would have thus gratuitously assailed the religious belief of the Roman Catholic subjects of the queen. Nor indeed did it appear as if it would be very suitable for England to have a statesman in office again who must have given offense to all the Catholic sovereigns and ministers of Europe. Unfriendly critics hinted that Mr. Gladstone was writing against the pope and the Vatican in order to wreak his grudge because of the condemnation of his Irish university bill by the heads of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It is not probable that any personal motive influenced Mr. Gladstone in a course which all his true admirers of whatever political party must have been sorry to see him follow. He had always a keen relish for theological disputation. He had in him much of the taste and the temper of the ecclesiastic. A religious controversy came to him as the most natural sort of recreation after the fatigue and disappointments of the political arena. Carteret driven from office "retired laughing," says Macaulay, "to his books and his bottle." Fox found relief from political work in his loved Greek authors. Talleyrand played whist. Mr. Gladstone sought relaxation in religious controversy. He was as eager about it as ever he had been about a budget or a reform bill. He assailed the pope as if he were attacking Mr. Disraeli. He declared against the Vatican as if he were overwhelming the Tory opposition with his rhetoric. There was an earnestness about him which made some men smile and others feel sad. Most of his friends shook their heads; most of his enemies were delighted. Out of this depth it seemed impossible that he could ever rise. Mr. Disraeli had once said "there was a Palmerston." Did he feel tempted now to say "there was a Gladstone?"

In the beginning of 1875 Mr. Gladstone had formally

retired from the office of leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons. There was some difficulty at first about the choice of his successor. Two men stood intellectually high above all other possible competitors—Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe. But it was well known that Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake such laborious duties and Mr. Lowe was quietly assumed to have none of the leader's qualities. Sir William Harcourt had not weight enough; neither had Mr. Goschen; the time of these two men had apparently not yet come. The real choice was between Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington. Mr. Forster, however, knew that he had estranged the non-conformists from him by the course he had taken in his education measures and he withdrew from what he felt to be an untenable position. Lord Hartington was therefore arrived at by a sort of process of exhaustion. It is not too much to say that had he not been the son of a great Whig duke no human being would ever have thought of him as leader of the Liberal party. But it is only right to add that he proved much better than his promise. He had a robust, straightforward nature and by constant practice he made himself an effective debater. Men liked the courage and the candid admission of his own deficiencies with which he braced himself up to his most difficult task—to take the place of Gladstone in debate and to confront Disraeli.

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## CHAPTER LXIV.

### THE EASTERN QUESTION AGAIN.

A CHANGE soon came over the spirit of the administration. It began to be seen more and more clearly that Mr. Disraeli had not come into office merely to consider the claims of agricultural tenants and to pass measures for the pulling down of what Mr. Cross, the home secretary, called "rookeries" in the back slums of great cities. The prime minister was well known to cherish loftier ambitions. He was not supposed to have any warm personal interest in prosaic measures of domestic legislation. If a great reform bill were brought forward he could fight against it first and adopt it and enlarge it afterward. If any question of

picturesque theology were under discussion he was the man to sustain religion with epigram and array himself on the side of the angels in panoply of paradox. But his inclinations were all for the broader and more brilliant fields of foreign politics. The poetic young notary in Richter's story was found with his eyes among the stars and his soul in the blue ether. Mr. Disraeli's eyes were among the stars of imperialist ambition; his soul was in the blue ether of high policy. Since his early years he had not traveled. He had hardly ever left England even for a few days. He knew personally next to nothing of any foreign country. Perhaps for this very reason foreign affairs had all the more magical fascination for him. The prosaic dullness of Downing Street may have sent his fancy straying over the regions of Alexander's conquests; the shortness of the daily walks between the treasury and the House of Commons may have filled him with dreams of far-extended frontiers and a new empire of the east.

The marked contrast between the political aptitudes and tastes of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone came in to influence still further the difference between the policy of the new government and that of its predecessor. Mr. Gladstone delighted in the actual work and business of administration. As Dr. Johnson could grapple with whole libraries so Mr. Gladstone could grapple with whole budgets. He could assimilate almost in a moment vast masses of figures which other men would have found bewildering to look at. He could get into his mind almost in a flash all the details of the most intricate piece of legislation. During the long, involved and complicated discussions of the Irish church bill and the Irish land bill, he had conducted the controversy chiefly himself, and argued the legal details of perplexed clauses with lawyers like Cairns and Ball and Butt. He could indeed do anything but rest. Now Mr. Disraeli had neither taste nor aptitude for the details of administration. He could not keep his mind to the dry details of a bill. He could not construct a complicated measure, nor could he even argue it clause by clause when other men had constructed it for him and explained it to him. He enjoyed administration on the large scale; he loved political debate; he liked to make a great speech. But when he was not engaged in his favorite work he preferred to be doing nothing. It was natural therefore



that Mr. Gladstone's administration should be one of practical work; that it should introduce bills to deal with perplexed and complicated grievances; that it should take care to keep the finances of the country in good condition. Mr. Disraeli had no personal interest in such things. He loved to feed his mind on gorgeous imperial fancies. It pleased him to think that England was, what he would persist in calling her, an Asiatic power, and that he was administering the affairs of a great oriental empire. He was fond of legislation on a vague and liberal scale; legislation which gave opportunity for swelling praise and exalted rhetoric. It was not without justice that his opponents constantly insisted that he was not an Englishman but a foreigner, a descendant of oriental race. There was indeed something singularly narrow and ungenerous in the constant taunts thrown out against Mr. Disraeli on the score of his Jewish ancestry. Every one who was at all within the limits of the actual political world knew that these taunts came from Mr. Disraeli's political supporters as well as from his political opponents. Every discontented Conservative was ready to whisper something about his chief's Jewish descent. But although there was an inexcusable want of generosity in thus making Mr. Disraeli's extraction and ancestral faith a source of objection, it must be owned that as a matter of historical fact his foreign extraction has had a very distinct influence on his political tendencies and his ministerial career. Mr. Disraeli had never until now had an opportunity of showing what his own style of statesmanship would be. He had always been in office only, but not in power. Now he had for the first time a strong majority behind him. He could do as he liked. He had the full confidence of the sovereign. His party were now wholly devoted to him. They could not but know that it was he whose patience and sagacity had kept them together and had organized victory for them. They began to regard him as infallible. A great many on the other side admired him as much as they disliked his policy, and believed in his profound sagacity as devoutly as any of his most humble followers. He had come to occupy in the eyes of Englishmen of all parties something of the position once accorded to Napoleon III. by the public opinion of Europe. Even those who detested still feared; men believed in his power none the less be-

cause they had no faith in his policy. That Mr. Disraeli could not be mistaken in anything began to be the right sort of thing to say. He was therefore now in a position to indulge freely in his own personal predilections with regard to the way of governing England. In the House of Commons he had no longer any rival to dread in debate. Mr. Gladstone had withdrawn from the active business of politics; Mr. Bright was not strong enough in physical health to care much for controversy; there was no one else who could by any possibility be regarded as a proper adversary for Mr. Disraeli. The new prime minister therefore had everything his own way. He soon showed what sort of statesmanship he liked best. He soon turned away from the dusty and plodding paths of domestic legislation. He ceased even to pretend to have any interest in such commonplace and homely work. He showed that he was resolved to play on a vaster stage, and to seek the applauses of a more cosmopolitan audience. Napoleon invited Talma to Erfurt, that he might play to a pitful of kings. Mr. Disraeli was evidently determined to play to an audience of kings and emperors.

In politics as in art the weaknesses of the master of a school are most clearly seen in the performances of his imitators and admirers. Mr. Disraeli's admirers began to manifest his tendencies more emphatically than he allowed himself to do. At all public meetings and dinners where Conservative orators declaimed there was much talk about imperial instincts, imperial missions and destinies, and so forth. A distinguished member of Mr. Disraeli's cabinet proclaimed that since the Conservatives came into office there had been something stirring in the very air which spoke of imperial enterprise. The Elizabethan days were to be restored, it was proudly declared. England was to resume her high place among the nations. She was to make her influence felt all over the world, but more especially on the European continent. The cabinets and chancelleries of Europe were to learn that nothing was to be done any more without the authority of England. "A spirited foreign policy" was to be inaugurated, a new era was to begin. Enthusiastic Conservatives seemed almost literally to swell with pride when they talked of the things to be done under the administration of Mr. Disraeli. The long ignoble reign of peace and non-intervention was at an

end. Every man that did not proclaim that British influence was to reign paramount over Europe and Asia was anti-English, was cosmopolitan, was a member of the peace society, was a devotee of Cobden, a defender of the Alabama treaty, a disciple of non-intervention, and generally speaking, a disgrace to his country, and a traitor to his sovereign.

Thoughtful men who were not in any sense political partisans, men who were not engaged in politics on either side, began to shake their heads at these new political manifestations. There was an ominous self-consciousness about them. Empires are not made, or are not made great, they said, by persons who go about proclaiming an imperial mission. The statesmen who proved themselves truly imperial did not parade in heroic attitudes beforehand and say in pompous tones, "Behold us!—we have it for our task to be the makers of empires." Such utterances were not happy prologues to the swelling act of the imperial theme. The greatness of the age of Elizabeth is not to be revived by talking of an Elizabethan revival. Such attempts seemed insincere and shallow. They resembled some of the æsthetic pretenses and follies of the day; the sham mediævalism, the affectation of the affectations of the Queen Anne age. There was too much posturing about the new statecraft to give comfort to plain and thoughtful minds. Goethe has said very well of a certain kind of affectation, that it is a pleasant and harmless thing to dress up as a Turk once in a way when going to a masked ball, but that it is unpardonable waste of time for an honest western to try to make himself believe all day long that he is a Turk. Now England saw a few middle-aged or ancient gentlemen gravely trying to persuade themselves and their friends that they were Elizabethan conquerors of new worlds, Heaven-ordained makers of new empires. The ordinary English mind was not imaginative enough for this sort of thing. Sensible and sober men would be certain to get tired of it soon.

Perhaps the first indication of the new foreign policy was given by the purchase of the shares which the khedive of Egypt held in the Suez Canal. English governments had in the first instance opposed the scheme for the construction of the Suez Canal, and English scientific men had endeavored to prove that the scheme could never be

carried out. Now however that the canal was open and was a success, some alarmists began to find a danger to England in the fact that it made the approach to India more easy for other European powers as well as for her. The khedive of Egypt held nearly half the four hundred thousand original shares in the canal, and the khedive was going every day faster and faster on the road to ruin. He was on the brink of bankruptcy. He had been living in the true fashion of an eastern prince, gratifying every expensive whim as it crossed his listless mind; stimulating himself by the invention of new ways of spending money when the old caprices tired him; lavishing on the purchase and the keep of fat women treasures that might have saved millions of his wretched subjects from starvation. His one hundred and seventy-six thousand shares came into the market; on November 25, 1875, the world was astonished by the news that the English government had turned stock-jobber and bought them for four millions sterling. The idea was not the government's own. The editor of a London evening paper, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, was the man to whom the thought first occurred. He made it known in the first instance, it is believed, to a member of the cabinet, who threw cold water on it. Not discouraged, Mr. Greenwood tried the prime minister himself; and Mr. Disraeli was caught by the proposition, and the shares were instantly bought up in the name of the English government. Seldom in our time has any act on the part of a government been received with such general approbation. The London newspapers broke into a chorus of applause. The London clubs were delighted. The air rang with praises of the courage and spirit shown by the ministry. If here and there a faint voice was raised to suggest that the purchase was a foolish proceeding, that it was useless, that it was undignified, a shout of offended patriotism drowned the ignoble remonstrance. Some continental newspapers did a good deal to stimulate the feeling that prevailed in England by condemning the act as audacious, arrogant, and ominous of an intention to interfere too actively in foreign affairs. This was the very course to stir the feeling of Englishmen. There was a general sense of satisfaction at the idea that England was again regarded as an arrogant and dominating power. Men held up their heads grandly, and went about, pride in their port, defiance in their eye,

nobly over-conscious of belonging to a nation which could make her influence felt once more in foreign affairs. When parliament met, the Liberal leaders ventured some objection to the purchase and to the mode of completing it; but all wise persons declared that the very attempt only showed how entirely the Liberal leaders were out of sympathy with the English people. It is true that one member of the cabinet, Lord Derby, endeavored to make as little as possible of the purchase, and to represent it as a step taken merely to prevent any foreign influence from preponderating in the management of a canal which was chiefly important for English commerce. Mr. Disraeli and some of his colleagues, on the other hand, spoke in a grand and mysterious way which gave people to understand that the buying of the shares was part of some great scheme of policy destined to make England mistress of the east, and to checkmate the designs of a jealous world. Nothing in particular came of the bargain in the end, and the popular enthusiasm soon cooled down. The act, however, is of historical importance as the first of a series of strokes made by the government in foreign policy, each of which came in the nature of a surprise to parliament and the country. It is probable that Mr. Disraeli counted upon making his government popular by affording to the public at intervals the exciting luxury of a new sensation. The public were undoubtedly rather tired of having been so long quiet and prosperous. They liked to know that their government was doing something. There are fashions in politics as in literature and in dress. "Sensationalism" was now decidedly the mode in the political world. Mr. Disraeli led the fashion, and stimulated the public taste. The government tried to establish a south African confederation, and sent out Mr. Froude, the romantic historian, to act as the representative of their policy. The Prince of Wales was sent on a tour to India, a very reasonable and proper thing in itself, but which the government endeavored to surround with all the radiance of a new Avatar. The prince was taken out to India and introduced to all the princes and other persons whom officialism thought it convenient for him to meet. He got no nearer to the knowledge of the real feelings of any of the Indian populations than if he had remained at Marlborough House. The government meanwhile made some changes in the relations of the India

office here to the viceroy in Calcutta, which gave much greater power into the hands of the secretary for India. One immediate result of this was the retirement of Lord Northbrook, a prudent and able man, before the term of his administration had actually arrived. Mr. Disraeli gave the country another little surprise. He appointed Lord Lytton viceroy of India. Lord Lytton had been previously known chiefly as the writer of pretty and sensuous verse, and the author of one or two showy and feeble novels. In literary capacity he was at least as much inferior to his father as his father was to Scott or Goethe. All that was known of him besides was, that he had held several small diplomatic posts without either distinction or discredit. The world was certainly a good deal astonished at the appointment of such a man to the most important office under the sovereign; an office which had strained the intellectual energies of men like Dalhousie and Canning and Elgin. But people were in general willing to believe that Mr. Disraeli knew Lord Lytton to be possessed of a gift of administration which the world outside had not had any chance of discerning in him. Not much; it was remembered, was known of Lord Mayo's capacity for the task of governing India when he was sent out to Calcutta; and Lord Mayo's administration had undoubtedly been successful. There was no reason why Lord Lytton should not turn out a born administrator. There was no reason why he should not suddenly prove the possession of unexpected gifts, like another Cromwell, Clive, or Spinola. There was something, too, which gratified many persons in the appointment. It seemed gracious and kindly of Mr. Disraeli thus to recognize and exalt the son of his old friend and companion in arms. There was a feeling all over England which wished well to the appointment and sincerely hoped it might prove a success.

Another little sensation was created by the invention of a new title for the queen. At the beginning of the session of 1876 the royal speech announced that an addition was to be made to the sovereign's titles, and after several attempts on the part of the opposition to get at the nature of the change, Mr. Disraeli at last announced in a somewhat hesitating way that the queen was to be called "Empress of India." A strong dislike was felt to this superfluous and tawdry addition to the ancient style of the

sovereigns of England. The title of emperor had been a good deal tarnished of late. The emperor of the French had but recently fallen in the dust; there had been an emperor of Mexico and an emperor of Hayti. The title of the German emperor was in one sense only a restoration of a dignity which had been historical; and in any case the restoration was not especially popular in England. But to convert the immemorial crown of the English sovereign into a brand-new glittering imperial diadem seemed to most persons simply an act of vulgarity. The educated feeling of the country rose in revolt against this preposterous innovation. Some of the debates in the House of Commons were full of fire and spirit, and recalled the memory of more stirring times when the Liberal party was in heart and strength. Mr. Lowe spoke against the new title with a vivacity and a bitterness of sarcasm that reminded listeners of his famous opposition to the reform bill of 1866. Mr. Joseph Cowen, member for Newcastle, who had been in the house for some sessions without making any mark, suddenly broke into the debates with a speech which at once won him the name of an orator, and which a leading member of the government, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, described as having "electrified" the house. Mr. Disraeli chaffed the opposition rather than reasoned with it. He pointed out as one justification of the title, the fact that Spenser had dedicated his "Faerie Queene" to "the most highe mightie and magnificent Emprresse Elizabeth." Spenser of course only used the word after the fantastic ways of court flattery in his time, and because he thought empress sounded well. Milton's satan twice addresses Eve as empress. Mr. Disraeli also cited in evidence a letter from a young lady at school, who had directed his attention to the fact that in "Guy's Geography" the queen was already described as empress of India. This style of argument did not add much to the dignity of the debate. Mr. Lowe spoke with justifiable anger and contempt of the prime minister's introducing "the lisplings of the nursery" into a grave discussion, and asked whether Mr. Disraeli wished to make the house in general think as meanly of the subject as he did himself. The government, of course, carried their point. They deferred so far to public opinion as to put into the act a provision against the use of the imperial title in the United Kingdom. There

was indeed a desire that its use should be prohibited everywhere except in India, and most of the members of the opposition were at first under the impression that the government had undertaken to do so much. But the only restriction introduced into the act had reference to the employment of the additional title in these islands. The unlucky subject was the occasion of a new and a somewhat unseemly dispute afterward. In a speech which he delivered to a public meeting at East Retford, Mr. Lowe made an unfortunate statement to the effect that the queen had endeavored to induce two former ministers to confer upon her this new title and had not succeeded. It was a very rash act on the part of a responsible public man to make such a statement without positive certainty as to its truth; perhaps it would not have been a very wise or proper proceeding on the part of such a man to make the statement even if it were true. Mr. Lowe proved to be absolutely wrong in his assertion. No attempt of the kind had ever been made by the queen. Mr. Disraeli found his enemy delivered into his hands. The question was incidentally and indirectly brought up in the House of Commons on May 2, 1876, and Mr. Disraeli seized the opportunity. He denounced Mr. Lowe, thundered at him from across the table, piled up a heap of negative evidence to show that his assertion could not be true, and at the very close of his speech came down on the hapless offender with the crushing announcement that he had the authority of the queen herself to contradict the statement. Nothing could have been in worse taste than Mr. Disraeli's way of making this very necessary contradiction. It is evident that the right course would have been to put into the fewest and the simplest words the announcement which her majesty had very properly authorized the minister to make. The dignity of the sovereign required that her name and her word should not be introduced to the house by a somewhat coarse rhetorical artifice at the end of a speech, and that they should not be precluded by impassioned sentences of boisterous and furious denunciation. Mr. Lowe sat like one crushed, while Mr. Disraeli roared at him and banged the table at him. He said nothing that night; but on the following Thursday evening he made an apology which assuredly did not want completeness or humility. The title which was the occasion for so much debate has not



come into greater popular favor since that time. It is used in India, and we occasionally see evidences of an inclination to bring it quietly into use elsewhere; but there was a very general concurrence of opinion among educated persons in all parts of the country as to the impropriety of the measure adopted by the government and the vulgarizing effect of the new addition to the royal title. It was all part of an imperializing policy, some men said, part of a deliberate scheme to make the institutions of the country less liberal and popular. It is part, other men said, of a tawdry love for finery and frippery in language and policy; it savors of the taste which associated the banner of St. George with the mountains of Rasselas. Mr. Disraeli, however, had a large majority in both houses of parliament, and he carried his proposal by about the same preponderance of votes in the Commons as in the Lords. Then the country soon forgot all about the matter. More serious questions were coming up to engage the attention of the public.

When Mr. Disraeli was pressed during the debates on the royal title to give some really serious reason for the change, it was observed as significant that he made reference more or less vague to the necessity of asserting the position of the sovereign of England as supreme ruler over the whole empire of India. The prime minister spoke in the tone of one who feels more than he desires to express; of one who gives a warning which he wishes to be understood without need of fuller explanation. Every one knew what Mr. Disraeli meant. He had undoubtedly let drop words which were calculated to produce a deep effect on the public mind. They decided the wavering opinions of many people. There were men who sincerely disliked the idea of the fire-new title of empress, and who yet felt that after what the prime minister had said it would not be prudent to oppose the act of the government. Mr. Disraeli had purposely touched a chord which was sure to vibrate all over the country. The necessity to which he alluded was the necessity of setting up the flag of England on the citadel of England's Asiatic empire as a warning to the one enemy whom the English people believed they had reason to dread. Mr. Disraeli had raised what has been called the Russian specter. No influence during our time has been so potent to direct the foreign, and even the

domestic policy, to disturb the relations of parties and to rouse the passions of the people, as that which is exercised by the dread and distrust of Russian ambition. A great crisis was now again at hand.

It has been already mentioned that Lord Aberdeen was of opinion at the close of the Crimean war that that war might secure the peace of Europe for twenty-five years. His opinion was thought then to be hardly doing justice to the efficacy of the measures taken to sustain Turkey and to restrain the ambition of Russia. Lord Aberdeen, however, had overrated instead of underrating the endurance of the peace that was made by the treaty of Paris. Only twenty-two years had passed when Turkey and Russia were at war again. During all the interval Turkey had been occupied in throwing away every opportunity for her political and social reorganization. The influence of the statesmanship of Constantinople had been growing more and more baneful to all the populations under the control of the sultan. There had been insurrections in Crete, in the Herzegovina, in other parts of the provinces misgoverned by Turkey; and they had been put down, whenever the porte was strong enough, with a barbarous severity. Men on both sides of English politics were now losing all hope of Turkey's regeneration. Two plain facts were present to the consciousness of Europe. Turkey was sinking day by day; Russia was returning to the position she occupied before the Crimean war. Was Russia also returning to the ambition which she undoubtedly cherished before that time? She had lately been making rapid advances into central Asia. Post after post which were once believed to be secure from her approach were dropping into her hands. Her goal of one day became her starting-point of the next. Early in July, 1875, Lord Derby received an account of disturbances in the Herzegovina, and something like an organized insurrection in Bosnia. The provinces inhabited by men of alien race and religion over which Turkey rules have always been the source of her weakness. They have always in one form or another invited foreign intervention. Where the intervention was necessary and just they had been its vindication; where it was selfish and unnecessary they had given it its excuse. The revolt which ended in the independence of Greece began in the Danubian provinces. The Crimean war had its

origin in the same region. The disturbances in Herzegovina in 1862 and Crete in 1867, had each in its turn almost provoked the intervention of western Europe. This time it became quite clear in a moment to almost every eye that a crisis had arrived, and that a new chapter of the eastern question was to be opened. It is not less Turkey's misfortune than her fault—certainly not less her fault than her misfortune—that her way of governing her foreign provinces has been the cause of so much trouble to western Europe. Fate has given to the most incapable and worthless government in the world a task which would strain the resources of the loftiest public spirit and the most accomplished statesmanship. Turkey has to rule over a great variety of nationalities and of creeds all more or less jumbled together within a comparatively limited area. These different sects and races agree in hardly anything but in their common detestation of Ottoman rule. Among themselves their rivalries are unceasing and bitter. Again and again Turkey has made it her plausible excuse for maintaining a system of stern repression in the south-east of Europe, that if she lifted a strong hand from these populations they would be found carrying on something like an internecine struggle among themselves. The Slav dreads and detests the Greek. The Greek despises the Slav. The Albanian objects alike to Slav and to Greek. The Mohammedan Albanian detests the Catholic Albanian. The Slavs are drawn toward Russia by affinity of race and of religion. But this very fact, which makes in one sense their political strength, brings with it a certain condition of weakness, because by making them more formidable to Greeks and to Germans it increases the dislike of their growing power, and the determination to oppose it. It would indeed take a very wise, far-seeing, and flexible system of administration to enable a central government to rule with satisfaction and with success all these differing and contending races. The Turkish government managed the matter worse than it might seem possible for a government to do which had been brought for centuries within the action of European civilization. Turkish rule seems to exist only in one of two extremes. In certain places it means entire relaxation of authority; in others, it means the most rude and rigorous oppression. The hand of the statesman at Constantinople is absolutely unfelt in

some of the remoter provinces supposed to be under Turkish sway. The warlike inhabitants of some highland region live their wild and lawless lives, levying blackmail on travelers, and preying on the peaceable commerce of their neighbors with as much indifference to the officials of Stamboul as to the remonstrances of western statesmanship. But it may be that not far from their frontier-line there is some hapless province whose people feel the hand of Turkey strong and cruel on their necks at every moment of their lives. It happens, as is not unnatural in such a system, that the repression is heaviest where it is least needed, and that in the only cases where severity and rigor might be excused there is an entire relaxation of all central authority. In the condition of things thus hastily sketched out, it is natural that there should be constant upheavings of political and social rebellion. To the Slav populations the neighborhood of Russia has all the disturbing effect which the propinquity of a magnet might have on the works of some delicate piece of mechanism, or which the neighborhood of one great planet has on the movements of another. The settlement made by the Crimean war had since that time been gradually breaking down. Servia was an independent state in all but the name. The Danubian provinces, which were to have been governed by separate rulers, came to unite themselves first under one ruler, and then into one complete system and at last emerged into the sovereign state of Roumania under the Prussian prince, Charles of Hohenzollern. Thus the result which most of the European powers at the time of the congress of Paris endeavored to prevent was successfully accomplished in spite of their inclinations. The efforts to keep Bosnia and Herzegovina in quiet subjection to the sultan proved a miserable failure. The insurrection which now broke out in Herzegovina spread with rapidity. The Turkish statesmen insisted that it was receiving help not only from Russia but from the subjects of Austria as well as from Servia and Montenegro. An appeal was made to the English government to use its influence with Austria in order to prevent the insurgents from receiving any assistance from across the Austrian frontier. Servia and Montenegro were appealed to in a similar manner. Lord Derby seems to have acted with indecision and with feebleness. He does not appear to have appreciated the immediate

greatness of the crisis, and he offended popular feeling, and even the public conscience, by urging on the porte that the best they could do was to put down the insurrection as quickly as possible, and not allow it to swell to the magnitude of a question of European interest. Lord Derby knew the anxiety existing among many of the European powers to interfere on behalf of the Christian populations of Turkey, and it almost seemed as if he dreaded the sort of public scandal this must occasion more than the possibility of Turkey using her repressive powers with an excess of rigor.

The insurrection continued to spread, and at last it was determined by some of the western powers that the time had come for European intervention. Count Andrassy, the Austrian minister, drew up a note which was to be addressed to the porte. In this note Austria, Germany, and Russia united in a declaration that the promises of reform made by the porte had not been carried into effect, and that some combined action by the powers of Europe was necessary to insist on the fulfillment of the many engagements which Turkey had made and broken. The note declared that if something of the kind were not done, the governments of Servia and Montenegro would be compelled by the enthusiasm of their populations to support the insurrection in the Turkish provinces, and that the only means of preventing a general outbreak was a firm resolution on the part of the western powers to compel Turkey to redress the grievances of which the Christian populations complained. This note was dated December 30, 1875, and it was communicated to the powers which had signed the treaty of Paris. France and Italy were ready at once to join in it; but England delayed. In fact Lord Derby held off so long that it was not until he had received a despatch from the porte itself requesting his government to join in the note, that he at last consented to take part in the remonstrance. The Turkish government seem to have desired the presence of England in this movement as one desires the presence of a secret ally. Rightly or wrongly the statesmen of Constantinople had got it into their heads that England was their devoted friend, bound by her own interests to protect them against whatever opposition. Instead, therefore, of regarding England's co-operation in the Andrassy note as one other influence brought to compel

them to fulfill their engagements, they seem to have accepted it as a secret force working on their side to enable them to escape from their responsibilities. Lord Derby joined in the Andrassy note. It was sent to the porte. The Ottoman government showed some cleverness in their way of meeting the difficulty. They accepted politely all, or nearly all, the demands addressed to them, expressed in cool and pleasant terms their entire satisfaction with the kindly suggestions made to them, declared themselves rather gratified than otherwise to have their attention called to any little omissions on their part, and promised to carry out in the readiest manner the suggestions which the note contained.

Turkey did nothing more than promise. She took no step to meet the demands made by the European powers. After a few weeks it became perfectly evident that she had not only done nothing but had never intended to do anything. Russia, therefore, proposed that the three imperial ministers of the continent should meet at Berlin and consider what steps should be taken in order to make the Andrassy note a reality. A document, called the Berlin memorandum, was drawn up, in which the three powers pointed out the increasing danger of disturbance in the south-east of Europe, and the necessity for at once carrying into effect the objects of the Andrassy note. It was proposed that arms should be suspended for two months between the porte and the insurgent provinces, and that meanwhile peace should be negotiated, and that the consuls and the delegates of the European powers should watch over the carrying out of the proposed reforms. The memorandum ended by a significant intimation, that if the period of suspension of arms were allowed to pass without the desired objects being attained, or at least approached, there must be an agreement among the powers as to the further measures which might be called for in the interests of the general peace. The meaning of all this was perfectly clear. The Andrassy note had invited Turkey's attention to her unfulfilled engagements: Turkey had admitted her deficiencies and promised to supply them. The Berlin memorandum now proposed to consider the measures by which to enforce on Turkey the fulfillment of her broken promises. It was distinctly implied that should Turkey fail to comply, force would be used to compel her.

But, on the other hand, it is clear that this was a menace which would of itself have insured the object. It is out of the question to suppose that Turkey would have thought of resisting the concerted action of England, France, Austria, Germany, Russia, and Italy. The threat of combined action was in itself the surest guarantee of peace. The situation was described very effectively by Lord Granville a year or two after. A man is making a disturbance in the street; if one peaceful inhabitant remonstrates and interferes, it is very likely that his intervention will only lead to further violence; but if half a dozen policemen come up it is more than probable that the disturber will go quietly away. This is a fair illustration of the condition of things in Europe, and of the sense and spirit of the Berlin memorandum. Overwhelming and irresistible force was to be brought to bear against Turkey, in order that Turkey might have no possible excuse or opportunity for attempting resistance.

Unfortunately, however, Lord Derby and the English government did not see their way to join in the Berlin memorandum. Lord Derby, it seems was of opinion that a secret agreement between Germany, Austria, and Russia had existed since 1873, and he feared to allow England to be drawn into what might have been a dangerous complication. Other English statesmen were convinced that Russia was all the while secretly stirring up that discontent in the Christian provinces which the western powers were using as an argument for intervention. Lord Derby had to decide, and it seems to us he decided in the wrong way. He refused to join in the Berlin memorandum. Not merely did he refuse to join in it, but he made no suggestion as to any other course which might be taken if the memorandum were abandoned. The refusal of England was fatal to the project. The memorandum was never presented. Concert between the European powers was for the time at an end. From that moment every one in western Europe knew that war was certain in the east. A succession of startling events kept public attention on the strain. There was an outbreak of Musulman fanaticism at Salonica, and the French and German consuls were murdered. A revolutionary demonstration took place in Constantinople, and the Sultan Abdul Aziz was dethroned. The miserable Abdul Aziz committed

suicide in a day or two after. This was the sultan who had been received in England with so much official ceremony and public acclaim. It was he who had been welcomed at Windsor, had been entertained by the corporation of London, had been the lion of the season, and the sensation of the sight-seeing public. At the time when he was feasted and applauded in London the Cretan insurrection was going on, and his troops were doing the business of repression with an unsparing cruelty worthy of the Soldaus of the middle ages. His death by his own hand in a fit of despair, as he found himself dethroned, deserted, lonely, and hated, was a strange close for the career which had begun with so much promise and amid such universal expectation at the time of the Crimean war. His nephew Murad was made sultan in his place. Murad reigned only three months and was then dethroned, and his brother Hamid put in his place. Suddenly the attention of the English public was called away to events more terrible than palace revolutions in Constantinople. An insurrection had broken out in Bulgaria, and the Turkish government sent large numbers of Bashi-Bazouks and other irregular troops to crush it. They did not, however, stay their hand when the insurrection had been crushed. Repression soon turned into massacre. Rumors began to reach Constantinople of hideous wholesale murders committed in Bulgaria. The Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News* investigated the evidence, and found it but too true. In a few days after accounts were laid before the English public of the deeds which ever since have been known as "the Bulgarian atrocities." A story was told of the wholesale massacre of women and children, such as could hardly have found its parallel in the worst days of an earlier Byzantine rule, or under the odious reign of the later sovereigns of Delhi.

Nothing could have been more ill-advised and unfortunate than the manner in which Mr. Disraeli at first dealt with these terrible stories. He treated them with a levity which jarred harshly on the ears of almost all his listeners. It was plain that he did not believe them or attach any importance to them. No one ever supposed that he was really wanting in humanity; it is certain that if he had believed such crimes were committed he would have been incapable of excusing them or making light of them. But



he did not believe in any of the stories; he set them down too hastily as mere figment of rumor, and the newspaper correspondent, and what he called "coffee-house babble." He took no trouble to examine the testimony on which they rested. He therefore thought himself warranted in dealing with them as if they were merely stories to laugh at. He evidently did not know much about the Turkish provinces of our day or about Turkish affairs in general. He endeavored to make out that the Bashi-Bazonks were really the residents and occupiers of Bulgaria. He described them as Circassians who had been settled there long since with the approval of all Europe. He reproached the Liberal party with the lack of sympathy they now showed for a race of beings in whom they once professed such an interest. Mr. Disraeli's ideas of Bulgaria were evidently drawn from vague reminiscences of Voltaire's "Candide;" and he depicted the Bulgarians as cruel oppressors of the Bashi-Bazonks. He expressed entire skepticism as to the tortures said to have been inflicted on their victims by the Turkish soldiery. Oriental races, he gravely observed, did not usually have recourse to torture, "they generally terminated their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner." All this might have been what the German quack in Scott's "Antiquary" calls "very witty and comedy;" but the house was not exactly in the vein for mirth. Mr. Disraeli had always the faculty of persuading himself to believe or disbelieve anything according as he liked. The statesman who could really persuade himself into the belief that oriental races did not usually have recourse to torture, might well persuade himself of anything. Probably for the time Mr. Disraeli actually believed that the Bashi-Bazonks were gentle exiles of the class of Thaddens of Warsaw, sweetly incapable of harming any creature. But the house and the country would have preferred the prime minister in a different mood just then. The subject proved to be far too serious for light-minded treatment. Mr. Disraeli felt this himself afterward, and made an attempt to persuade the country that there was no levity in his talk about the oriental way of terminating the connection with a culprit. Mr. Baring, the English consul, sent out specially to Bulgaria to make inquiries, and who was supposed to be in general sympathy with Turkey, reported that no fewer than twelve thousand

persons had been killed in the district of Philippopolis. He confirmed substantially some of the most shocking details of the massacre of women and children, which had been given by Mr. MacGahan, a correspondent whom the *Daily News* had sent out to the spot, to see with his own eyes, and report what he saw. There was no disputing the significance of some of that testimony. The defenders of the Turks insisted that the only deaths were those which took place in fight; insurgents on one side, Turkish soldiers on the other. But Mr. Baring, as well as the *Daily News* correspondent, saw whole masses of the dead bodies of women and children piled up in places where the bodies of no combatants were to be seen. The women and children were simply massacred. The Turkish government may not have known at first of the deeds that were done by their soldiers. But it is certain that after the facts had been forced upon their attention, they conferred new honors on the chief perpetrators of the crimes which shocked the moral sense of all Europe.

Mr. Bright happily described the agitation which followed in England as an uprising of the English people. At first it was an uprising without a leader. Soon, however, it had a chief of incomparable energy and power. Mr. Gladstone came out of his semi-retirement. He threw aside polemics and criticism. He forgot for awhile Homer and the pope. He flung himself into the agitation against Turkey with the impassioned energy of a youth. He made speeches in the House of Commons and out of it; he attended monster meetings indoors and out of doors; he published pamphlets, he wrote letters, he brought forward motions in parliament; he denounced the crimes of Turkey and the policy which would support Turkey, with an eloquence that for the time set England aflame. After awhile no doubt there set in a sort of reaction against the fervent mood. The country could not long continue in this white heat of excitement. Some men began to protest against "the sentimental" in politics; others grew tired of hearing Turkey denounced; others again complained that they had got too much of the Bulgarian atrocities. Moreover, Mr. Disraeli and his supporters were able to work with great effect on that strong deep-rooted feeling of the modern Englishman, his distrust and dread of Russia. Mr. Gladstone was accused of acting in such a manner as to

make himself the instrument of Russian designs on Constantinople. He had in his pamphlet, "Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question of the East," insisted that the only way to secure any permanent good for the Christian provinces of Turkey was to turn the Turkish officials "bag and baggage" out of them. What people called the "bag and baggage" policy was denounced as a demand for the expulsion of the Turks, all the Turks, the Turkish men and women out of Europe. Of course what Mr. Gladstone meant was exactly what he said, that the rule of Turkish officialism should cease in the Christian provinces; that these provinces should have autonomous governments subject to the sultan; not that all the individual Turks should be turned out. But the cry went forth that he had called for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and that the moment the Turks went out of Constantinople the Russians must come in. Nothing could have been better suited to rouse up reaction and alarm. A sudden and strong revulsion of feeling took place in favor of the government. Mr. Gladstone was honestly regarded by millions of Englishmen as the friend and the instrument of Russia, Mr. Disraeli as the champion of England, and the enemy of England's enemy. Mr. Disraeli, was like another Chatham, bidding England be of good cheer and hurling defiance at her foes.

Mr. Disraeli? by this time there was no Mr. Disraeli. The 11th of August, 1876 was an important day in the parliamentary history of England. Mr. Disraeli made then his last speech in the House of Commons. It was a speech filled for the most part with banter and ridicule directed against those who were leading the agitation against the government. But toward the close Mr. Disraeli struck a louder and a stronger note. He sustained and defended the policy of the government as an imperial policy, the object of which was to maintain the empire of England "Nor will we ever agree to any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that empire." The House of Commons little knew that these were the last words it was to hear from Mr. Disraeli. The secret was well kept. It was made known only to the newspapers that night. Next morning all England knew that Benjamin Disraeli had become Earl of Beaconsfield. The title

once intended for Burke had come to the author of "Vivian Grey." Everybody was well satisfied that if Mr. Disraeli liked an earldom he should have it. His political career had had claims enough to any reward of the kind that his sovereign could bestow. If he had battled for honor it was but fair that he should have the prize. Coming as it did just then, the announcement of his elevation to the peerage seemed like a defiance flung in the face of those who would arraign his policy. The attacks made on Mr. Disraeli were to be answered by Lord Beaconsfield; his enemies had become his footstool.

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## CHAPTER LXV.

### THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN.

LORD BEACONSFIELD went down to the county which he had represented so long, and made a farewell speech at Aylesbury. The occasion must for him have been one to call up genuine emotion. The speech was in many parts worthy of the occasion. Lord Beaconsfield set forth his reasons for consenting to quit that splendid arena on which he had so long played a brilliant part. Years were telling on him, he explained in some sentences full of feeling and of good taste; he was no longer as young as when forty-three years before he addressed the electors of Buckinghamshire in that same place. He said that his colleagues had been more careful of his feelings than Gil Blas was of those of the archbishop of Granada; but he added that he was less self-complacent than the archbishop. He was willing therefore to retire from the field in good time, and to be content to serve his country in the more quiet ways of the House of Lords. Unfortunately Lord Beaconsfield soon went on to make a fierce attack on his political opponents. He marred the effect of his speech artistically as well as politically by the overwrought and acrimonious language in which he allowed himself to indulge. Speaking of the "sublime sentiments" which had been evoked by the crimes done in Bulgaria, he pointed to the danger of designing politicians taking advantage of them "for their own sinister ends," and described such conduct as "worse than any of those Bulgarian atrocities which now occupy

attention." Nothing could be in worse taste. It was impossible to doubt that Lord Beaconsfield's picture of the designing politicians was meant to be understood as a picture of Mr. Gladstone and those who supported him. The controversy, bitter enough before, became still more bitter now. Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone were thrown into as sharp an antagonism as that of two gladiators in a Roman arena or two duelists standing at twelve paces from each other. They had been life-long opponents; this now seemed like a duel to the death. The policy each represented may be described in a few very summary words. Lord Beaconsfield was for maintaining Turkey at all risks as a barrier against Russia. Mr. Gladstone was for renouncing all responsibility for Turkey and taking the consequences. Men who prided themselves on being practical politicians above all things went naturally with Lord Beaconsfield. Men who held that sound politics cannot exist without sound morals went with Mr. Gladstone. It is our business, the one set of men said, to secure the interests of England: if Turkey is useful to us as a barrier against Russia, we are bound to keep her in her place for our own sake; her private character is of no account to us. The other men argued that it was the duty of England to release herself from all responsibility for the crimes of Turkey, and to refuse to stand in the way of the developing freedom of the Christian populations. "The public conscience of England," said the one; "the interests of England," said the other. "Be just and fear not," Mr. Gladstone urged. "No sentiment," rejoined Lord Beaconsfield. "The crimes of Turkey," was the cry of one party; "the ambition of Russia," made the alarm-note of the other.

Each statesman made a mistake, and each mistake was characteristic of the man. Lord Beaconsfield misunderstood the condition of public feeling and the gravity of the case when he thought he could get rid of the Bulgarian events by a laugh and a light word. Mr. Gladstone afterward made a mistake when he acted on the assumption that mere sympathy and mere sensibility could long prevail in the English public mind against the traditional distrust of Russia. When Lord Beaconsfield and his supporters once had their opportunity of playing that card they had the game absolutely in their hands.

The common expectation was soon fulfilled. At the

close of June, 1876 Serbia and Montenegro declared war against Turkey. Serbia's struggle was short. The Servians were assisted by the advice and the active presence of a large number of Russian officers who volunteered for the purpose. The small Servian army, however, proved no match for the Turks. At the beginning of September the struggle was over, and Serbia was practically at Turkey's feet. The hardy Montenegrin mountaineers held their own stoutly against the Turks everywhere, but they could not seriously influence the fortunes of a war. England proposed an armistice of not less than a month. Turkey delayed, shuffled, paltered, at length suggested an armistice till the end of the following March. The suggestion was preposterous. Such a period of suspense would have been ruinous to Serbia and Montenegro, intolerable to Europe. Russia then intervened and insisted upon an armistice at once, and her demand was acceded to by Turkey. Meanwhile the general feeling in England on both sides was growing stronger and stronger. Public meetings of Mr. Gladstone's supporters were held all over the country, and the English government was urged in the most emphatic manner to bring some stronger influence to bear on Turkey. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the common suspicion of Russia's designs began to grow more keen and wakeful than ever. Lord Derby frankly made known to the Emperor Alexander what was thought or feared in England, and the emperor replied by pledging his sacred word that he had no intention of occupying Constantinople, and that if he were compelled by events to occupy any part of Bulgaria, it should be only provisionally, and until the safety of the Christians should be secured. Then Lord Derby proposed that a conference of the European powers should be held at Constantinople in order to agree upon some scheme which should provide at once for the proper government of the various provinces and populations subject to Turkey, and at the same time for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Ottoman empire. The proposal for a conference was accepted by all the great powers and on November 8, 1876, it was announced that Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliott, the English ambassador at Constantinople, were to attend as the representatives of England.

Lord Beaconsfield was apparently determined to recover the popularity that had been somewhat impaired by his unlucky way of dealing with the massacres of Bulgaria. His plan now was to go boldly in for denunciation of Russia. He sometimes talked of Russia as he might of an enemy who had already declared war against England. On November 9, 1876, he spoke at a banquet given by the new lord mayor at the Guildhall. He glorified the strength and the resources of England. If the struggle comes, he said, there is no country so prepared for war as England. "In a righteous cause, England is not the country that will have to inquire whether she can enter upon a second or a third campaign. In a righteous cause England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done." It was clear that the allusions in the speech were to Russia. The words about the second and third campaign were of unmistakable application. Either by coincidence or otherwise, the Russian emperor delivered a speech the very next day to the nobles of Moscow, which sounded like a direct answer to Lord Beaconsfield's challenge. Alexander declared that if he could not succeed in obtaining with the concert of Europe such guarantees as he thought necessary to require of Turkey, he was firmly determined to act independently, and was convinced that the whole of Russia would respond to his summons. The words of Lord Beaconsfield were spoken somewhat late on the evening of Thursday. The emperor addressed the nobles at Moscow the very next day. Still there was ample time for the ordinary telegraphic report of Lord Beaconsfield's speech to be in Alexander's hands long before the hour at which he had to address the Moscow assembly. Most persons assumed that the speech of the Russian emperor was undoubtedly an answer to that of the English prime minister. The prospects of a peaceful settlement of the European controversy seemed to become heavily overclouded. Lord Beaconsfield appeared to be holding the dogs of war by the collar, and only waiting for the convenient moment to let them slip. Every eye was turned upon him. He must have felt that his ambition was fast reaching the very seamark of its utmost sail. The decision of peace or war seemed to be absolutely with him. He held the destinies of millions in the hollow of his hand. Every one knew that some of his colleagues, Lord Derby

for example, and Lord Carnarvon, were opposed to any thought of war, and felt almost as strongly for the Christian provinces of Turkey as Mr. Gladstone did. But people shook their heads doubtfully when it was asked whether Lord Derby or Lord Carnarvon, or both combined, could prevail in strength of will against Lord Beaconsfield.

The conference at Constantinople came to nothing. The Turkish statesmen at first attempted to put off the diplomatists of the west by the announcement that the sultan had granted a constitution to Turkey, and that there was to be a parliament at which representatives of all the provinces were to speak up for themselves. There was in fact a Turkish parliament called together. The first meeting of the conference was disturbed by the sound of salvos of cannon to celebrate the opening of the first constitutional assembly of Turkey. Of course the western statesmen could not be put off by an announcement of this kind. They knew well enough what a Turkish parliament must mean. A parliament is not made by the decree of an autocrat calling a number of men into a room and bidding them debate and divide. To have a parliament there must, first of all, be something like a free people. Europe had seen a brand-new Egyptian parliament created not long before, and had felt at first a sort of languid curiosity about it; and then after awhile learned that it had sunk into the ground or faded away somehow without leaving any trace of its constitutional existence. It seems almost superfluous to say that the Turkish parliament was ordered to disappear very soon after the occasion passed away for trying to deceive the great European powers. Evidently Turkey had got it into her head that the English government would at the last moment stand by her, and would not permit her to be coerced. It is not certain, perhaps, cannot be known during this generation, whether there was any truth in the report so freely spread abroad in England, that private hints were given to Turkish statesmen by an English diplomatist encouraging them to resist the demands of the great powers, and directly or indirectly promising them the support of England. What is certain is, that Turkey held out in the end and refused to come to terms, and the conference broke up without having accomplished any good. New attempts at arrangement were made between England, Russia and others of the great



powers, but they fell through. Some unfortunate cause seemed always to prevent any kind of cordial co-operation. Then at last Russia took the field against Turkey. On April 24, 1877, Russia declared war, and on June 27th a Russian army crossed the Danube and moved toward the Balkans, meeting with comparatively little resistance, while at the same time another Russian force invaded Asia Minor.

For awhile the Russians seemed likely to carry all before them. Suddenly, however, it appeared that they had made many mistakes in their arrangements. They had made the one great mistake of altogether undervaluing their enemies. Their preparations were hasty and imperfect. The Turks, to do them justice, have never wanted fighting power. They have at all times shown great strength and skill in the mere work of resistance. Long after they had ceased to be anything of a terror to Europe as an aggressive power, they again and again showed tremendous strength and energy in defense. In this instance they were quick to see the mistakes which the Russians had made. They turned upon them unexpectedly and made a gallant and almost desperate resistance. One of their commanders, Osman Pasha, suddenly threw up defensive works at Plevna, in Bulgaria, a point the Russians had neglected to secure, and maintained himself there, repulsing the Russians many times with great slaughter. For a time success seemed altogether on the side of the Turks, and many people in England were convinced that the Russian enterprise was already an entire failure; that nothing remained for the armies of the czar, but retreat, disaster, and disgrace. Cooler observers, however, still assumed that where great superiority of strength and resources exist, military superiority must come in the end. It was evidently only a question of time to enable Russia to make good her mistakes and to recover her energies. Thus far the defeats of the Russians had really been inflicted by themselves. Their own blunders had given the battle into the hands of their enemies. Taught by experience the czar confided the direction of the campaign to the hands of General Todleben, the great soldier whose splendid defense of Sebastopol had made the one grand military reputation of the Crimean war. Under his directing skill the fortunes of the campaign soon turned.

Just at the very moment when English critics were proclaiming that the campaign in Asia Minor was over, and that Plevna never could be taken, there came a succession of crushing defeats inflicted by the Russians on the Turks, both in Europe and Asia. Kars was taken by assault on November 18, 1877; Plevna surrendered on December 10th. At the opening of 1878 the Turks were completely prostrate. The road to Constantinople was clear. Before the English public had time to recover their breath and to observe what was taking place, the victorious armies of Russia were almost within sight of the minarets of Stamboul. Meanwhile the English government were taking momentous action. In the first days of 1878 Sir Henry Elliott, who had been ambassador in Constantinople, was transferred to Vienna, and Mr. Layard, who had been minister at Madrid, was sent to the Turkish capital to represent England there. This step was doubtless meant as an evidence that the English government were determined to give to the sultan an energetic support, but at the same time to exert their influence more decisively than before in compelling him to listen to reason and to friendly remonstrance. Mr. Layard was known to be a strong believer in Turkey; more Turkish in some respects than the Turks themselves. But he was a man of superabundant energy; of what might be described as boisterous energy. The Ottoman government could not but accept his appointment as a new and stronger proof that the English government were determined to stand their friend; but they ought to have accepted it, too, as evidence that the English government were determined to use some pressure to make them amenable to reason. Unfortunately it would appear that the sultan's government accepted Mr. Layard's appointment in the one sense only and not in the other. Parliament was called together at least a fortnight before the time usual during recent years. The speech from the throne announced that her majesty could not conceal from herself that should the hostilities between Russia and Turkey unfortunately be prolonged, "some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution." This looked ominous to those who wished for peace, and it raised the spirits of the war party. There was a very large and a very noisy war party already in existence. It was particularly strong in Lon-

don. It embraced some Liberals as well as nearly all Tories. It was popular in the music-halls and the public-houses of London. The class whom Prince Bismarck once called the "gentlemen of the pavement" were in its favor, at least in the metropolis, almost to a gentleman of the pavement. The men of action got a nickname. They were dubbed the Jingo party. The term, applied as one of ridicule and reproach, was adopted by chivalrous Jingoese as a name of pride. The Jingoese of London, like the beggars of Flanders, accepted the the word of contumely as a title of honor. In order to avoid the possibility of any historical misunderstanding or puzzlement hereafter about the meaning of Jingo, such as we have heard of concerning that of Whig and Tory, it is well to explain how the term came into existence. Some Tyrtæus of the tap-tub, some Körner of the music-halls, had composed a ballad which was sung at one of these caves of harmony every night amid the tumultuous applause of excited patriots. The refrain of this war song contained the spirit-stirring words:

" We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do,  
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too."

Some one whose pulses this lyrical outburst of national pride failed to stir, called the party of its enthusiasts the Jingos. The writer of this book is under the impression that the invention of the name belongs to Mr. George Jacob Holyoake; but he declines to pledge his historical reputation to the fact. The name was caught up at once, and the party were universally known as the Jingoese. The famous adjuration of the lady in the "Vicar of Wakefield" had proved to be too prophetic. She had sworn "by the living Jingo;" and now indeed the Jingo was alive.

The government ordered the Mediterranean fleet to pass the Dardanelles and go up to Constantinople. The chancellor of the exchequer announced that he would ask for a supplementary estimate of six millions for naval and military purposes. Thereupon Lord Carnarvon, the colonial secretary at once resigned. He had been anxious to get out of the ministry before, but Lord Beaconsfield induced him to remain. He disapproved now so strongly of the despatch of the fleet to Constantinople and the supplementary vote, that he would not any longer defer his resigna-

tion. Lord Derby was also anxious to resign and indeed tendered his resignation, but he was prevailed upon to withdraw it. The fleet meanwhile was ordered back from the Dardanelles to Besika Bay. It had got as far as the opening of the straits when it was recalled. The Liberal opposition in the House of Commons kept on protesting against the various war measures of the government, but with little effect. The majority of the government kept on increasing. The strength of that majority did not lie in mere jingoism. There can be no doubt that a great many members of the House of Commons voted with Lord Beaconsfield in the sincere conviction that he was the man whom it was safest to trust, and that the protestations of pacific purpose which the government were always making would be most likely to be realized if Lord Beaconsfield had full power to carry out the policy he thought best. While all this agitation in and out of parliament was going on; while the opposition was now proposing and now withdrawing amendments; while the government were protesting their desire for peace, and the champions of the government out of doors were screaming for war; while the music-halls were cheering for the great name of Jingo, and monster meetings in Hyde Park on either side of the question were turning into mere faction-fights, generally to the defeat and rout of the peace party, the news came that the Turks, utterly broken down, had been compelled to sign an armistice, and an agreement containing a basis of peace, at Adrianople. Then, following quickly on the heels of this announcement, came a report that the Russians, notwithstanding the armistice, were pushing on toward Constantinople with the intention of occupying the Turkish capital.

A cry of alarm and indignation broke out in London. One memorable night a sudden report reached the House of Commons that the Russians were actually in the suburbs of Constantinople. The house for a time almost entirely lost its head. The lobbies, the corridors, St. Stephen's Hall, the great Westminster Hall itself, and Palace Yard beyond it, became filled with wildly excited and tumultuous crowds. If the clamor of the streets at that moment had been the voice of England, nothing could have prevented a declaration of war against Russia. Happily, however, it was proved that the rumor of Russian advance was un-

founded. The fleet was now sent in good earnest through the Dardanelles, and anchored a few miles below Constantinople. Russia at first protested that, if the English fleet passed the straits, Russian troops ought to occupy the city. Lord Derby was firm, and terms of arrangement were found—English troops were not to be disembarked and the Russians were not to advance. Russia was still open to negotiation.

Probably Russia had no idea of taking on herself the tremendous responsibility of an occupation of Constantinople. She had entered into a treaty with Turkey, the famous treaty of San Stefano, by which she secured for the populations of the Christian provinces almost complete independence of Turkey, and was to create a great new Bulgarian state with a seaport on the Egean Sea. The English government refused to recognize this treaty. Lord Derby contended that it involved an entire readjustment of the treaty of Paris, and that that could only be done with the sanction of the great powers assembled in congress. Lord Beaconsfield openly declared that the treaty of San Stefano would put the whole south-east of Europe directly under Russian influence. Russia offered to submit the treaty to the perusal, if we may use the expression, of a congress; but argued that the stipulations which merely concerned Turkey and herself were for Turkey and herself to settle between them. This was obviously an untenable position. It is out of the question to suppose that, as long as European policy is conducted on its present principles, the great powers of the west could consent to allow Russia to force on Turkey any terms she might think proper. Turkey meanwhile kept feebly moaning that she had been coerced into signing the treaty. The government determined to call out the reserves, to summon a contingent of Indian troops to Europe, to occupy Cyprus, and to make an armed landing on the coast of Syria. All these resolves were not, however, made known at the time. Every one felt sure that something important was going on, and public expectancy was strained to the full. On March 28, 1878, the House of Lords met as usual. Lord Derby was seen to come in and seat himself, not with the ministers on the front bench to the right of the lord chancellor, but below the gangway on the same side. This created some surprise; but for a

moment some peers and strangers believed that he had only taken his seat there for the purpose of conversing with a friend who sat behind. The ministers came in one by one and took their places. The business of the house began. Lord Derby remained as before in a seat below the gangway, and then it was clear to every one that he was no longer a member of the government. In a few moments he rose and made his explanation. Measures, he said, had been resolved upon of which he could not approve, and he had therefore resigned his office. He did not give any explanation of the measures to which he objected. Lord Beaconsfield spoke a few words of good feeling and good taste after Lord Derby's announcement. He had hoped, he said, that Lord Derby would soon come to occupy the place of prime minister which he now held; he dwelt upon their long friendship. Not much was said on either side of what the government were doing. The last hope of the peace party seemed to have vanished when Lord Derby left his office.

Lord Salisbury was made foreign minister. He was succeeded in the India office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now created Lord Cranbrook. Colonel Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, took the office of minister of war in Lord Cranbrook's place. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had already become secretary for the colonies on the resignation of Lord Carnarvon. The post of Irish secretary had been given to Mr. James Lowther, an unfortunate appointment, as it afterward proved. Lord Salisbury's first act in the office of foreign secretary, was to issue a circular in which he declared that it would be impossible for England to enter a congress which was not free to consider the whole of the provisions of the treaty of San Stefano. The very day after parliament had adjourned for the Easter recess, the Indian government received orders to send certain of their troops to Malta. This was a complete surprise to the country. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that nothing in the end did more harm to Lord Beaconsfield's government than his constant practice of taking the country by surprise. Some of his more vulgar admirers were delighted by these successive sensations. They thought it highly agreeable to be ruled by a minister who had always something new to amuse and excite them. But the common sense of the country was painfully shaken by

these galvanic shocks administered every now and then. The summoning of the troops to Malta became the occasion also for a very serious controversy on a grave constitutional question. It was debated in both houses of parliament. The opposition contended that the constitutional principle which left it for parliament to fix the number of soldiers the crown might maintain in England was reduced to nothingness if the prime minister could at any moment without even consulting parliament, draw what reinforcements he thought fit from the almost limitless resources of India. No reasonable person can deny the justice of this argument. It only needs to be stated in order to enforce itself. The majority then supporting Lord Beaconsfield were not, however, much disposed to care about argument or reason. They were willing to approve of any step Lord Beaconsfield might think fit to take.

Prince Bismarck had often during these events shown an inclination to exhibit himself in the new attitude of a peaceful mediator. He now interposed again and issued invitations for a congress to be held in Berlin to discuss the whole contents of the treaty of San Stefano. After some delay, discussion, and altercation, Russia agreed to accept the invitation on the conditions proposed, and it was finally resolved that a congress should assemble in Berlin on the approaching June 13th. To this congress it was supposed by most persons that Lord Salisbury would be sent to represent England. Much to the surprise of the public, Lord Beaconsfield announced that he himself would attend, accompanied by Lord Salisbury, and conduct the negotiations in Berlin. The event was, we believe, without precedent. Never before had an English prime minister left the country while parliament was sitting to act as the representative of England in a foreign capital. The part he had undertaken to play suited Lord Beaconsfield's love for the picturesque and the theatrical. It seemed a proper culmination to his career that he should take his seat at a great European council chamber, and there help in dictating terms of peace to Europe. The temptation was irresistible to a nature so fond of show, and state, and pomp. Lord Beaconsfield went to Berlin. His journey thither was a sort of triumphal progress. At every great city, almost at every railway station as he passed, crowds turned out, drawn partly by curiosity, partly by admiration, to see

the English statesman whose strange and varied career had so long excited the wondering attention of Europe. The congress was held in the Radzivil Palace, a building with a plain unpretending exterior in one of the principal streets of Berlin, and then in the occupation of Prince Bismarck. The prince himself presided, and it is said, departed from the usual custom of diplomatic assemblages by opening the proceedings in English. The use of our language was understood to be a kindly and somewhat patronizing deference to the English prime minister, whose knowledge of spoken French was supposed to have fallen somewhat into decay of late years. The congress discussed the whole, or nearly the whole, of the questions opened up by the recent war. Greece claimed to be heard there, and after some delay and some difficulty was allowed to plead in her own cause.

The congress of Berlin had to deal with four or five great distinct questions. It had to deal with the condition of the provinces or states nominally under the suzerainty of Turkey. It had then to deal with the population of alien race and religion actually under Turkey's dominion. It had to take into its consideration the claims of the Greeks; that is, of the kingdom of Greece, for extended frontier, and of the Greek populations under Turkey for a different system of rule. Finally it had to deal with the Turkish possessions in Asia. The great object of most of the statesmen who were concerned in the preparation of the treaty which came of the congress, was to open for the Christian populations of the south-east of Europe a way into gradual self-development and independence. But on the other hand it must be owned that the object of some of the powers and especially, we are afraid, of the English government, was rather to maintain the Ottoman government than to care for the future of the Christian races. These two influences acting and counteracting on each other produced the treaty of Berlin. That treaty recognized the complete independence of Roumania, of Servia, and of Montenegro, subject only to certain stipulations with regard to religious equality in each of these states. To Montenegro it gave a seaport and a slip of territory attaching to it. Thus one great object of the mountaineers was accomplished. They were able to reach the sea. The treaty created, north of the Balkans, a state of Bulgaria: a



much smaller Bulgaria than that sketched in the treaty of San Stefano. Bulgaria was to be a self-governing state tributary to the sultan and owning his suzerainty, but in other respects practically independent. It was to be governed by a prince whom the population were to elect with the assent of the great powers and the confirmation of the sultan. It was stipulated that no member of any reigning dynasty of the great European powers should be eligible as a candidate. South of the Balkans, the treaty created another and a different kind of state, under the name of Eastern Roumelia. That state was to remain under the direct political and military authority of the sultan, but it was to have, as to its interior condition, a sort of "administrative autonomy," as the favorite diplomatic phrase then was. East Roumelia was to be ruled by a Christian governor and there was a stipulation that the sultan should not employ any irregular troops, such as the Circassians and the Bashi-Bazouks, in the garrisons of the frontier. The European powers were to arrange in concert with the porte for the organization of this new state. As regarded Greece, it was arranged that the sultan, and the king of the Hellenes were to come to some understanding for a modification of the Greek frontier, and that if they could not arrange this between themselves, the great powers were to have the right of offering, that is to say, in plain words, of insisting on, their mediation. The sultan also undertook "scrupulously to apply to Crete the organic law of 1868." Bosnia and the Herzegovina were to be occupied and administered by Austria. Roumania undertook, or in other words was compelled to undertake, to return to Russia that portion of Bessarabian territory which had been detached from Russia by the treaty of Paris. Roumania was to receive in compensation some islands forming the delta of the Danube, and a portion of the Dobrudscha. As regarded Asia, the porte was to cede to Russia, Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum, with its great port on the Black Sea.

The treaty of Berlin gave rise to keen and adverse criticism. Much complaint was made of the curious arrangement which divided the Bulgarian populations into two separate states under wholly different systems of government. This, it was said, is only the example of the congress of Paris over and over again. It is just such another futile attempt as that which was made to keep the

Danubian principalities separate from each other in the hope of thereby diminishing the influence of Russia, and securing greater influence for Turkey. The simple and natural arrangement, it was urged, would have been to unite the whole of these populations at once under one form of government. To that, it was insisted, they must come in the end, and the interval of separation is only more likely to be successfully employed by Russia in spreading her influence, because each division of the population is so small as to be unable to offer any effective resistance to her advances. On the other hand, it was argued by the supporters of the treaty, that the Bulgarian question was not so simple and straightforward as might have been supposed; that there was a considerable variety of races, of religions, and of interests enclosed in what some people chose to call Bulgaria, and that no better arrangement could be found than to keep one portion still under the protection of the porte, while allowing to the other something that might almost be styled independence. The arrangement which gave Bosnia and Herzegovina to the occupation of Austria became afterward the subject of sharp controversy. The prime minister himself at a later day actually declared that this step was taken in order to put another power, not Russia, on the high road to Constantinople if the succession to the porte should ever become vacant. On the other hand Austrian statesmen themselves denied that any such intention was in the mind of the emperor of Austria. They insisted that the occupation was accepted by Austria out of no feeling of individual advantage, but on the contrary, at much inconvenience and some sacrifice, and solely in the interest of the common peace of Europe. Very bitter indeed was the controversy provoked by the surrender to Russia of the Bessarabian territory taken from her at the time of the Crimean war. Roumania, the gallant and spirited little state which had thriven surprisingly under her new system of government, was thus plundered in order to satisfy Russia's self-love. Russia had set her heart upon recovering every single one of the advantages real or only nominal, which she had been compelled to sacrifice at the close of the Crimean war. This was the last remnant of the victory obtained over her at so much cost and after such a struggle by the combined powers of the west. Now she had regained everything. The Black Sea was open to her war

vessels, and its shores to her arsenals. The last slight trace of Crimean humiliation was effaced in the restoration of the territory of Bessarabia. Profound disappointment was caused among many European populations, as well as among the Greeks themselves, by the arrangements for the rectification of the Greek frontier. The impression left in the minds of the Greek delegates was that the influence of the English ministers had in every instance been given in favor of Turkey and against the claims of Greece. Thus, speaking roughly, it may be said that the effect of the congress of Berlin on the mind of Europe was to make the Christian populations of the south-east believe that their friend was Russia and their enemies were England and Turkey; to make the Greeks believe that France was their especial friend, and that England was their enemy; and to create an uncomfortable impression everywhere that the whole congress was a pre-arranged business, a transaction with the foregone conclusion, a dramatic performance carefully rehearsed before in all its details and merely enacted as a pageant on the Berlin stage.

The latter impression was converted into a conviction by certain subsequent revelations. It came out that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been entering into secret engagements both with Russia and with Turkey. The secret engagement with Russia was the occasion of a good deal of scandal. The secret engagement was prematurely divulged by the heedlessness or the treachery of a person who had been called in at a small temporary rate of pay to assist in copying dispatches in the foreign office. The authenticity of his revelation was denied in the first instance with what appeared to be genuine earnestness, but it came out that the denial was a mere quibble as to the meaning of the word "authentic." The version of the agreement thus prematurely published by the *Globe*, a London evening paper, was to all intents and purposes perfectly genuine. The secret treaty proved to be almost exactly as it had been described in advance. It was signed at the foreign office on May 30th some days before Prince Bismarck issued his invitation to the congress. It was a memorandum determining the points on which an understanding had been come to between Russia and Great Britain, and a mutual engagement for the English and Russian plenipotentiaries at the congress. It bound England to put up

with the handing back of Bessarabia and the cession of the port of Batoum. It conceded all the points in advance which the English people believed that their plenipotentiaries had been making brave struggle for at Berlin. Lord Beaconsfield had not then frightened Russia into accepting the congress on his terms. The call of the Indian troops to Malta had not done the business; nor the reserves, nor the vote of the six millions. Russia had gone into the congress because Lord Salisbury had made a secret engagement with her that she should have what she specially wanted. The congress was only a piece of pompous and empty ceremonial.

Another secret engagement was that entered into with Turkey. The English government undertook to guarantee to Turkey her Asiatic possessions against all invasion on condition that Turkey handed over to England the island of Cyprus for her occupation. Lord Beaconsfield afterward explained that Cyprus was to be used as "a place of arms;" in other words, England had now formally pledged herself to defend and secure Turkey against all invasion or aggression, and occupied Cyprus in order to have a more effectual vantage ground from which to carry on this project. The difference therefore, between the policy of the Conservative government and the policy of the Liberals was now thrown into the strongest possible relief. Mr. Gladstone, and those who thought with him, had always made it a principle of their policy that England had no special and separate interest in maintaining the independence of Turkey. Lord Beaconsfield now declared it to be the cardinal principle of his policy that England specially, England above all, was concerned to maintain the integrity and the independence of the Turkish empire; that in fact the security of Turkey was as much part of the duty of English statesmanship as the security of the Channel Islands or of Malta. For the moment the policy of Lord Beaconsfield seemed to be entirely in the ascendant. His return home was celebrated with pomp and circumstance befitting the temperament of the statesman, if not indeed quite becoming of such an occasion. The prime minister got a great public reception in London. Crowds awaited him at the railway station, which was gaudily decorated and bedizened for the occasion. He made a conquering hero's progress through the streets. Arrived at the foreign office, he addressed from

the windows an excited and tumultous crowd, and he proclaimed, in words which became memorable, that he had brought back "Peace with Honor." This, so far as human eye can yet see, was the climax of that strange career. From the day when Mr. Disraeli first addressed the electors of Wycombe, from the day when his first speech was hooted and laughed at in the House of Commons, up to this triumphal reception in the streets of London, and this oration from the windows of the foreign office, what a distance he had traversed! Years of struggle against what seemed almost insurmountable difficulties; years of steady faith in himself undisturbed by almost universal ridicule; years of rise and fall, of action and reaction, of success and disaster, had conducted him appropriately to this climax. At this moment he was probably the most conspicuous public man in the world, unless we make one single exception in favor of Prince Bismarck. He had attained to a position of almost unrivaled popularity in England. Not even in his most successful days was Lord Palmerston ever pursued by such a clamor of noisy public acclamation. The head of the English prime minister might well have been turned as he stood at the window of the foreign office and addressed his few oracular words to the crowd, and heard the wild cheering which followed, and knew that all the world had its eyes on that single figure. He ought to have followed classic advice and sacrificed at that moment his dearest possession to the gods. No man without sacrifice could buy the lease of such a position, and the endurance of such a success.

Meanwhile, so far as could be judged by external symptoms, and in the metropolis, Mr. Gladstone and his followers were down to their lowest depth, their very zero of unpopularity. The London morning newspapers, with the one conspicuous exception of the *Daily News*, were entirely on the side of Lord Beaconsfield. Indeed, with the exception of the *Daily News* and the *Echo* there were no London daily papers of any literary name, no daily papers lying on club tables, which had not declared themselves emphatically in support of Lord Beaconsfield against Mr. Gladstone. The cheap weekly papers, which were read by hundreds of thousands of the working population, were not known to the calculations of society. Nor did society concern itself much about the public opinion of the prov-

inces. In the midland counties, and still more especially in the north of England, the condition of public feeling was somewhat different from that of London. In the provinces men examined more coolly the political conditions. They were not carried away by the gossip of the House of Commons and the clubs, and the influence of that which in London is called society. In the provinces on the whole, Liberalism still remained popular. Mr. Gladstone would still have been sure of the cheers of a great provincial meeting. But there came a day in London when, passing with his wife through one of the streets, he was compelled to seek the shelter of a friendly hall-door in order to escape from the threatening demonstrations of a little mob of patriots boisterously returning from a Jingo carnival.

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## CHAPTER LXVI.

### THE ANTI-CLIMAX OF IMPERIALISM.

DURING the excitement caused by the preparations for the congress of Berlin a long career came quietly to a close. On May 28, 1878, Lord Russell died at his residence, Pembroke Lodge, Richmond. He may be said to have faded out of life, to have ceased to live, rather than to have died; so quiet, so gradual, almost imperceptible was the passing away. Not many days before his death, on May 9th, a deputation of representative and distinguished nonconformists had waited upon him to present him with an address on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the repeal of the test and corporation acts, a reform of which he was the great promoter. Lord Russell was not able to receive the deputation; his wife and son spoke for him. He had not for some time taken any active part in public affairs. We have already in this book spoken of his political career as closed. Now and then some public event aroused his attention, and he addressed a letter to one of the newspapers. He wrote as a man speaks, who, sinking quietly and gradually into death, is suddenly roused to interest in the affairs of the living by catching some words of a half-whispered conversation around him, and who murmurs some sentences of faint remonstrance or advice. There was

something strangely pathetic in these utterances, with their imperfect application to the actual condition of things around, and the testimony they bore to the fading man's inextinguishable interest in the progress of living history. To the last moments of his life Lord Russell refused to surrender wholly his concern in the affairs of men. The world listened respectfully to these few occasional words from one who had borne a leader's part in some of the greatest political struggles of the century, and who still from the very edge of the grave was anxious to offer his whisper of counsel or of warning. No one felt bound to weigh too carefully the substantial and practical value of the advice, under the altered conditions of that actual time to which Lord Russell could hardly be said to belong any more. His had been on the whole a great career. He had not only lived through great changes, he had helped to accomplish some of the greatest changes his time had known. His life was singularly unselfish. He was often eager and pushing where he believed that he saw his way to do something needful, and men confounded the zeal of a cause with the eagerness of personal ambition. He never cared for money, and his original rank raised him above any possible consideration for enhanced social distinction. He had made many mistakes; but those who knew him best prized most highly both his political capacity and his personal character. His later years were made happy and smooth by all that the love of a household could do. He had lost a son, a young man of much political promise, Lord Amberley, who died in 1876; but on the whole he had suffered less in his later time than is commonly the lot of those who live to extreme old age. The time of his death was in a certain sense appropriate. His public career had just begun at the time of the congress of Vienna; it closed with the preparations for the congress of Berlin.

Why did not Lord Beaconsfield sacrifice to the gods his dearest possession, his political majority, immediately after the triumphal return from Berlin? The opinion of nearly all who pretended to form a judgment was, that at that time the great majority of the constituents were with him. He seemed to have reached the zenith of his own power, and to have accomplished that object which is held so dear by a certain class of Englishmen, that of making

the influence of England predominant over the councils of Europe. It is said that he was strongly advised by some of his northern supporters not to put the country then to the cost of a general election. Trade had been depressed for some time. The depression was due in the first instance to causes which had no concern with politics, but it had of course been made much deeper by the anxiety and uneasiness which the too enterprising policy of the government kept alive in these counties. It was therefore strongly pressed on Lord Beaconsfield that especially in the northern counties, where he had many influential supporters, the drain caused by bad trade had been so heavy that it would be unfair to hasten a dissolution, and thus impose large and at that time unnecessary cost on the constituencies. Whatever the reason may have been, the expected dissolution did not take place, and from that time Lord Beaconsfield never had any chance of a successful appeal to the country. From that time the popularity of his government began to go down and down. Many things were against them for which they were not responsible, many things for which they had made themselves distinctly responsible. The badness of trade and the general depression were no fault of theirs to begin with, but, as we have just said, they aggravated every evil of this kind by the strain on which they kept the expectation of the country. Their domestic policy had not been successful. They had attempted many large measures and failed to carry them through. They had not satisfied the country party, to whom they owed so much. The malt tax remained a grievance, as it had been for generations. The government had got into trouble with the home rule party. Mr. Butt had been failing in physical power and in influence for some time. His place as a leader had long been practically disputed by Mr. Parnell, and was evidently about to be taken by him. Mr. Parnell, a young man but lately come into parliament, soon proved himself the most remarkable politician who had arisen on the field of Irish politics since the day when John Mitchell was conveyed away from Dublin to Bermuda. The tactics adopted by Mr. Parnell annoyed and discredited the government. Good-natured men of respectable ability and no great force of character, like Sir Stafford Northcote, were wholly unable to cope with the pertinacity and policy of



such an antagonist. The country blamed the ministry, it scarcely knew why, for the manner in which the policy called obstructive had been allowed to come into force. It was evident that a new chapter in Irish agitation was opening, and those who disliked the prospect felt inclined to lay the blame on the government, as if, because they happened to be in office, they must be responsible for everything that took place during their official reign. All these influences combined were telling against Lord Beaconsfield's administration. Perhaps had he been still in the House of Commons, and still in the possession of his full physical vigor, he might have done something to maintain the credit of his government. But in the quiet shelter of the House of Lords he could only now and then make a show speech in which he usually succeeded in convincing the public of his entire independence and isolation from the policy and purposes of his colleagues. Scarcely ever, was a ministerial explanation of any important part of the government policy given in the House of Commons without its being followed by some explanation breathing a totally different spirit, and conveyed in utterly different words, from the lips of Lord Beaconsfield. In the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Cross almost invariably endeavored to minimize and reduce to the most practicable limits the objects of the foreign policy of the government. In the House of Lords, the prime minister almost invariably endeavored to magnify his office, and his mission, and to insist upon it that every step taken by him in foreign affairs was part of a great, new, ambitious and imperial policy. Most of all, the ministry suffered from the effect produced upon the country by the smaller wars into which they had plunged.

The first of these was the invasion of Afghanistan. This was part of the great imperial policy which Lord Lytton was sent to carry out in India. The government determined to send a mission to Shere Ali, one of the sons of Dost Mohammed, and then the ruler of Cabul. During the time when it was still uncertain whether England and Russia would not be at war, the Russian government appear to have sent an envoy of their own to Cabul, with the object, no doubt, of obtaining the direct or indirect assistance of Shere Ali. The English government determined to guard against possible danger for the future by estab-

lishing a distinct and paramount influence in Afghanistan. Shere Ali strongly objected to receive either a mission or a permanent resident. The mission was sent forward. It was so numerous as to look rather like an army than an embassy. It started from Peshawur on September 21, 1878, but was stopped on the frontier by an officer of Shere Ali who objected to its passing through until he had received authority from his master. This delay was magnified, by the news first received here, into an insolent rebuff. The unlucky performance which had been attempted in France, in 1870, was by chance, or error, or purpose, enacted over again on a small scale in England. The English envoy was made to play the part of the French ambassador, and the passion of the English people for the moment became inflamed with the idea of an insult to the English flag. The envoy was ordered to go on and before long the mission was turned into an invasion. The Afghans made but a poor resistance, and the English troops soon occupied Cabul. Shere Ali fled from his capital. One portion of our forces occupied Candahar. Lord Beaconsfield announced that the object of the invasion in Afghanistan was satisfactorily accomplished; that England was now in possession of the three great highways which connected Afghanistan with India, that he hoped the country would long remain in possession of them, and that it had secured a frontier which would render the Indian empire invulnerable. Shere Ali died, and Yakoob Khan, his son, became his successor. Yakoob Khan presented himself at the British camp which had now been established at Gandamak, a place between Jellalabad and Cabul. Here the treaty of Gandamak was signed on May 5, 1879. The Indian government undertook by this treaty to pay the ameer £60,000 a year, and the ameer ceded, or appeared to cede, what Lord Beaconsfield called the "scientific frontier," and agreed to admit a British representative to reside in Cabul. On those conditions he was to be supported against any foreign enemy with money and arms, and if necessary, with men. Hardly had the country ceased clapping its hands and exulting over the quiet establishment of an English resident at Cabul, when a telegram arrived announcing that the events of November, 1841, had repeated themselves in that city. The tragedy of Sir Alexander Burnes was enacted over again. Down almost to its

smallest details that terrible drama was played once more. Only the actors were new. A popular rising took place in Cabul, exactly as had happened in 1841. Sir Louis Cavagnari, the English envoy, and all or nearly all the members of his staff were murdered. There was nothing to be done for it but to invade Cabul over again, and take vengeance for the massacre of the English officers. The British troops hurried up, fought their way with their usual success, and on the Christmas eve of 1879 Cabul was again entered. Yakoob Khan, accused of complicity in the massacre, was sent as a prisoner to India, possibly as was then thought, to await his trial for a share in the murder. Cabul was occupied, but not possessed. The English government held in their power just as much of Afghanistan, as they could cover with their encampments. They held it for just so long as they kept the encampments standing. The treaty of Gandamak was of course nothing but waste paper. The scientific frontier had not even been defined. It was to have been provided for in a supplementary document to the treaty, which was to set forth its precise line and extent. This part of the business was never accomplished, and the terms of the bond, so far as they had any real existence at all, were washed off the paper in the blood of Sir Louis Cavagnari. We had got into Afghanistan. There now remained a far greater difficulty—to get out of it. "Blood will have blood," says Macbeth.

The war in South Africa was, if possible, less justifiable. It was also, if possible, more disastrous. The region which we call South Africa consisted of several states, native and European, under various forms of authority. Cape Colony and Natal were for a long time the only English dominions. The Orange Free State and the Transvaal republic were Dutch settlements. In 1848 the British government had established its authority over the Orange river territory, but it afterward transferred its powers to a provisional government of Dutch origin. The Transvaal was a Dutch republic with which we had until quite lately no direct connection. In 1852 the English government resolved that its operations and its responsibilities in South Africa should be limited to Cape Colony and Natal, and distinctly recognized the independence of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal republic. Besides these states of what we may call European origin, there

were a great many native communities, some of which had enough of organization to be almost regarded as states. The Kaffirs, as we all know, had often given us trouble before. The supposed insurrection of Langalibalele had been suppressed in 1874 with great severity, and Langalibalele had himself been captured, tried and imprisoned. The almost universal opinion of independent observers was that Langalibalele had not intended insurrection, and that he had been unfairly and unjustly dealt with. It is important to mention the fact here, because there can be no doubt that the treatment of Langalibalele had considerable influence on the minds of others of the native chiefs. The most powerful tribe in South Africa was that of the Zulus. Natal was divided from Zulu territory only by the river Tugela. The ruler of the Zulu tribe, Cetewayo, owed his throne to a great victory which he obtained over his brother, who was killed in the battle along with some three thousand of his adherents. Cetewayo was much inclined to a cordial alliance with the English, and was anxious to receive his crown as a kind of gift at our hands. Although he did not owe his power in any direct sense to us, yet he went through a form, in which our representatives bore their part, of accepting his crown at the hands of the English sovereign. He was often involved in disputes with the Boers, or Dutch-descended occupants of the Transvaal republic. Other native tribes were still more directly and often engaged in quarrels with the Boers. The Transvaal republic made war upon one of the greatest of these African chiefs, Secocoeni, and had the worst of it in the struggle. The republic was badly managed in every way. Its military operations were a total failure; its exchequer was ruined; there seemed hardly any chance of maintaining order within its frontier, and the prospect appeared at the time to be that its South African enemies would overrun the whole of the republic; would thus come up to the borders of the English states, and possibly might soon involve the English settlers themselves in war. Under these conditions a certain number of disappointed or alarmed inhabitants of the Transvaal made some kind of indirect proposition to England that the republic should be annexed to English territory. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent out by England to ascertain whether this offer was genuine and national. He seems to have been

entirely mistaken in his appreciation of the condition of things. Acting under the impression that the Boers were willing to accept English authority, he boldly, one might say lawlessly, declared the republic a portion of the dominions of Great Britain. Meanwhile there had been a dispute going on for a long time between Cetawayo, the Zulu king, and the Transvaal republic about a certain disputed strip of land. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of England, with whom Cetawayo was then on the most friendly terms. Four English arbitrators decided that the disputed strip of territory properly belonged to the Zulu nation.

Meanwhile, Sir Bartle Frere was sent out as lord high commissioner. From the moment of his appearance on the scene the whole state of affairs seems to have undergone a complete change. Sir Bartle Frere kept back the award of the arbitrators for several months, unwilling to hand over any new territory unconditionally to Cetawayo, whom he regarded as a dangerous enemy and an unscrupulous despot. During this time a hostile feeling was growing up in the mind of Cetawayo. It was not mere enmity; it was chiefly a fear that some treachery was being planned against him. He could not see but that a total change had taken place in the demeanor of the English representatives since the occupation of the Transvaal. He had constantly before his mind the fate of Langalibalele. He appears to have really become mastered by the conviction that the English were determined to find a pretext for making war on him, for annexing his territory, and for sending him to prison, as had been done to Langalibalele. When such a feeling as this exists on one side or the other, it is easy to imagine that cause of complaint must soon arise. On the English side there was an inclination to regard as offensive preparations which Cetawayo insisted he meant purely as measures of defense. Sir Bartle Frere was a man who had many times rendered great service to England. He had been chief commissioner in Scinde from 1852 to 1859, and had shown great ability and energy during the Indian mutiny. Since that he had been one of the council of the viceroy of India; he had been for some years governor of Bombay, and he had been appointed to the council of the secretary of the state here at home. He had been sent upon an important mission to the sultan of Zanzi-

bar in 1872, the object of which was to endeavor to obtain the suppression of the slave trade, and he succeeded. The sultan entered into a treaty for the putting down of the trade, and coming to London in 1875 was the small "*fulvus leo*," or "tawny lion," of a season. Sir Bartle Frere seems to have been really filled with that imperial instinct about which other men only talked. He seems to have had in him something of the Cromwell, combined perhaps with a good deal of the William Penn. His was a strong nature with an imperious will and an inexhaustible energy. He was undoubtedly conscientious and high-principled according to his lights. Given a great field of action, it is possible that he might have made a deep mark upon the history of his time. The fortune which lately confined his energies to South Africa turned almost into the ridiculous what might under more favorable conditions, have been the sublime. He appears to have been influenced by two strong ambitions; to spread the gospel and to extend the territory of England. It is said that in Asia he saw little opportunity for promulgating Christianity, and that he yearned for Africa as a more promising scene for such a labor. In Africa his mind appears to have become at once possessed with the conviction that alike for the safety of the whites and the improvement of the colored races it would be necessary to extend the government of England over the whole southern portion of that continent, and to efface the boundaries of native tribes by blending them all into one imperial confederation.

Cetewayo seems to have had considerable military ability and a certain degree of political intelligence. His position made him a rival to Sir Bartle Frere's policy, and Sir Bartle Frere appears to have made up his mind that these two stars were not to keep their motion in one sphere, and that South Africa was not to brook the double rule of the English commissioner and the Zulu king. Sir Bartle Frere kept the award of the four English arbitrators in his hands for some months without taking any action upon it, and when he did at length announce it to Cetewayo he accompanied it with an ultimatum declaring that the Zulu army must at once be disbanded and must return to their homes. This was in point of fact a declaration of war. The English troops immediately invaded the Zulu country, and almost the first news that reached England of the

progress of the war was the story of the complete and terrible defeat of an English force on January 22, 1879. Not within the memory of any living man had so sudden and complete a disaster fallen upon English arms. Englishmen were wholly unused to the very idea of English troops being defeated in the field. The story that an English force had been surprised, out-generaled, out-fought, completely defeated by half-naked savages, came on the country with a shock never felt since at least the time of the disasters of Cabul and the Jugdulluk Pass. Of course the disaster was retrieved. Lord Chelmsford, the commander-in-chief (son of the Lord Chelmsford just dead who had been twice lord chancellor), only wanted time, in homely language, to pull himself together in order to recover his position. The war soon came to the end which every one must have expected, first the defeat of the Zulu king and then his capture.

One melancholy incident made the war memorable not only to England but to Europe. The young French Prince Louis Napoleon, who had studied in English military schools, felt a strong desire to vary the somewhat mournful monotony of his life by taking part in the campaign. He was influenced in some measure by a desire to fight under the English flag; but it must be owned that he was influenced much more strongly by a wish to play to a French popular audience. He persuaded himself that it would greatly increase his chances of recovering the throne of France if he could exhibit himself to the eyes of the French public as a bold and brilliant young soldier. He therefore seized the opportunity of the Zulu campaign to offer his services and attach himself as a volunteer to Lord Chelmsford's staff. During one of the episodes of the war he and some of his companions were surprised by a body of Zulus. Others escaped, but Prince Louis Napoleon was killed. The news of his death created a great shock in England. Every one was sorry for the young gallant life so uselessly thrown away. Still more deep was the regret felt for the position of the bereaved mother. Hardly has any history a tale more tragic than hers. So sudden and splendid an elevation, so brilliant a career, so complete a fall, such an accumulation of sorrow, is hardly equalled even in the story of Marie Antoinette. Now in the autumn of her life she was left absolutely alone. Youth,

beauty, imperial throne, husband, son, all were gone. It was natural that considerations such as these should throw a halo of melancholy romance round the fate of the young Prince Louis Napoleon, and should rouse in this country an amount of sympathy which harsher critics condemned as sentimental and even as maudlin. It must be admitted that the poor young prince fell in a quarrel which was not his, in which he had neither right nor duty to interfere, and which he had taken on himself with a purely personal and political motive. Princes in exile have many times borne arms in quarrels not their own. It is one of the privileges and one of the consolations of exile thus to be enabled to lend a helping hand to a foreign cause. But then the cause must be great and just; it must have some noble principle to inspire it. When the Orleanist princes fought under the flag of the United States, they were contending for a principle dear to the lovers of freedom in every country in the world, a principle which it is the part of a Frenchman as well as an American to sustain. But the Zulu war was not in any sense a war of principle. It was not even a national English war. It was not a war with which the English people had any sympathy whatever.

It was not even a war of which the English government approved. For it is a strange peculiarity of this chapter of our history that the policy of Sir Bartle Frere and the war in Zululand were condemned by no one more strongly than by the members of her majesty's government in England. The despatches sent out to Sir Bartle Frere were constantly despatches of remonstrance and complaint, even of condemnation. When Prince Louis Napoleon therefore thrust himself into this quarrel, he withdrew himself from any just claim to general sympathy. Regret for the sudden extinction of a young life of promise was but natural, and that regret was freely given; but the verdict of the public remained unaltered. He had thrown away his life uselessly in a quarrel which brought no honor, and for a motive which was not unselfish and was not exalted.

Cetewayo was captured and sent into imprisonment. His territory was divided among the leading native chiefs. A portion of it was given to an Englishman, John Dunn, who had settled in the country very young and who had become a sort of potentate among the Zulus. Secocoeni, another South African chief, was also conquered and cap-



ture; and order in a certain sense might be said to reign in South Africa once more. Nothing, however, that the government had done was so unfortunate for them in popular estimation as the official sanction they were compelled to give to the policy of Sir Bartle Frere. The war, although it had ended in a practical success, was none the less regarded by the English public as a blunder and a disaster. The loss of English life had been terrible, and worse than the mere loss of life, was the fact that lives had been thrown away to no purpose. Hardly in any part of the country or among any class of politicians was there the least sympathy felt with the policy which had made the war. Quiet lookers-on began to feel that now at last the imperialistic principle had reached its anti-climax, that the Elizabethan revival was turned into a burlesque. Even the Afghan enterprise, objectionable though it was in almost every way, did not affect the popularity of the government so much as the Zulu war. The plain common sense of England held that Sir Bartle Frere, however high and conscientious his motives may have been, was in the wrong from first to last, and that the cause of Cetewayo was on the whole, a cause of fairness and of justice. The whole quarrel was so small, so miserable, that no pulse, even of imperialistic veins, could stir with any exultation at the tidings of supposed success. It seemed ignoble work for English soldiers to be engaged in a war against a simple savage like the Zulu king. Nor did any one feel the least assurance that a permanent peace had been obtained for southern Africa, even at the cost of all this shame and blood. The Transvaal difficulty remained still unsettled. The native tribes might at any time or any chance coalesce in force sufficient to oppose us. We were threatened everywhere with fresh and useless responsibilities. We had now an African question as well as an eastern question. Even the music-halls of London rang with no plaudits to songs in praise of the South African campaign. England had gone into war against her conscience; she came out of it not triumphant, but regretful and ashamed—a "victor that hath lost in gain." The attitude of the government seemed one of mere penitence. Cetewayo in his prison looked a much more respectable figure for history than the minister whose unfortunate task it was to defend the policy which he had never approved, but which he had not

strength of mind enough firmly to resist at the beginning. On the government fell the burden of Sir Bartle Frere's responsibilities, without Sir Bartle Frere's consoling and self-sufficing belief in the justice of his cause and the genuineness of his enterprise.

The distress in the country was growing deeper and deeper day by day. Some of the most important trades were suffering heavily. The winter of 1878 had been long and bitter, and there had been practically no summer. The manufacturing and mining districts almost everywhere over the country were borne down by the failure of business. The working classes were in genuine distress. In Ireland there was a forecast of something almost approaching to famine. When distress affects the trade and the population of a country, the first impulse is always to find fault with the reigning government. Lord Beaconsfield's supporters many times asked in anger and scorn whether her majesty's ministers were responsible for the bad weather. The answer which most people gave either in words or in thought was sound in its general logic. Her majesty's ministers, they said, are not responsible for the season, but they are responsible for a policy which adds to bad seasons the burden of unnecessary wars.

The authority of the government in the House of Commons was greatly shaken. Sir Stafford Northcote had not the strength necessary to make a successful leader. Like most men who want natural firmness, he occasionally put forth little efforts of a sort of petulant determination. He generally tried to be strong where he should have been yielding, and was almost invariably compelled to be yielding where he ought to have been strong. The result was that the House of Commons was becoming demoralized. The government brought in a scheme for university education in Ireland, which was nothing better than a mutilation of Mr. Gladstone's rejected bill. It was carried through both houses in a few weeks, because the government were anxious to do something which might have the appearance of conciliating the Irish people without going far enough in that direction to estrange their Conservative supporters. The measure thus devised had exactly the opposite effect from that which was intended. It estranged a good many Conservative supporters; it roused a new feeling of hostility among the nonconformists, and it did

not concede enough to the demands of the Irish Catholics to be of any use in the way of conciliation. It was plain that the mandate, to use a French phrase of the parliament was nearly out. The session of 1879 was its sixth session; it would only be possible to have one session more. Louder and louder grew the cry from the Liberal side for the government at once to go to the country. An argument more ingenious than substantial was got up to show that a government is bound to dissolve before the legal mandate of the parliament has run out. Mr. Gladstone, in especial, endeavored to prove that there ought always to be a kind of spare session left—a reserve session—which the government might use if they were driven by actual necessity, but which as a rule should not be turned to any account. In other words, Mr. Gladstone contended that if seven years be the legal mandate of a parliament, it should be an understood principle that a dissolution should not be put off longer than the close of the sixth session. There seems nothing particularly satisfactory in the argument. It is reasonable to contend that the term of seven years is too long for the duration of a parliament. There is much to be said in favor of compelling members to meet their constituents more often than once in seven years. The fact is, that no parliament ever does last seven years. It might be convenient and just to declare by legislation that its tenure shall be only for six, for five, or even for three years; but it certainly seems clear that, whatever be the legal term of a parliament, it ought to be considered fairly within the right of a government not to dissolve before the expiration of the full time if no occasion should arise to call for a prompter dissolution.

In this particular instance, however, the persistency with which the government clung to their place began to look as if they were afraid to meet the challenge of the Liberals. The more they held back the more loudly and vehemently was the challenge repeated. Many Liberals who declared that all they wanted was to meet the government at the hustings at once were probably in their hearts somewhat afraid of the result of the encounter. But as Mr. Gladstone had again and again challenged the government to appeal to the country, all his followers, and some who would not have followed him if they could have helped it, were compelled to assume the appearance of an

eagerness and courage equal to his, and to echo in notes as little faltering as they could make them his call of defiance to Lord Beaconsfield. Thus the winter passed on. Two or three elections which occurred meantime resulted in favor of the Conservatives. Constituencies became divided into unexpected sections or factions. In one remarkable case, that of the Southwark election, very little interest apparently was taken by the Liberals. The candidate they put forward was not a man to excite enthusiasm or even interest. The Conservative candidate, Mr. Clarke, was a man of ability, character, and influence, and the result was a remarkable victory for the Conservative side. About this time, then, there was a little renewal of confidence among the friends of Lord Beaconsfield, and a sudden sinking of the spirits among most of the Liberals. Parliament met in February, and the government gave it to be understood that they intended to have what one of them called "a fair working session." Suddenly, however, they made up their minds that it would be convenient to accept Mr. Gladstone's challenge, and to dissolve in the Easter holidays. The dissolution took place on March 24, 1880, and the elections began.

The result cannot be better described than in the words of Lord Beaconsfield himself, in the celebrated speech which depicted a sudden breakdown of the Liberal party in an attack upon Lord Derby's government. We have quoted the words before in the place to which they properly belong, but they bear repetition in their new application here. Only one word needs to be changed; we put in "ministerial" where Lord Beaconsfield said "opposition." "It was like a convulsion of nature rather than any ordinary transaction of human life. I can only liken it to one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder. There was a rent, a fissure in the ground, and then a village disappeared; then a tall tower toppled down; and the whole of the ministerial benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy." For with the very first day of the elections it was evident that the Conservative majority was already gone. Each succeeding day showed more and more the change that had taken place in public feeling. Defeat was turned into disaster. Disaster became utter rout and confusion. When

the elections were over it was found that the Conservative party were nowhere. A majority of some hundred and twenty sent the Liberals back into power. No Liberal statesmen in our time ever before saw themselves sustained by such an army of followers. There was a moment or two of hesitation, of delay. The queen sent for Lord Hartington, she then sent for Lord Granville; but every one knew in advance who was to come into power at last. The strife lately carried on had been the old duel between two great men. Mr. Gladstone had stood up against Lord Beaconsfield for some years and fought him alone. He had dragged his party after him into many a danger. He had compelled them more than once to fight where many of them would fain have held back and where none of them saw any chance of victory. Now at last, the battle had been given to his hands, and it was a matter of necessity that the triumph should bring back to power the man whose energy and eloquence had inspired the struggle. The queen sent for Mr. Gladstone, and a new chapter of English history opened, with the opening of which this work has to close.

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## CHAPTER LXVII.

### LITERATURE OF THE REIGN: SECOND SURVEY.

THE later period which we have now to survey is more rich in scientific literature than that former period which we assume to close with the Crimean war. In practical science, as we have already shown, the advance made during the reign of Queen Victoria has been greater in many ways than the advance made from the beginning of civilization to that time. Sir Robert Peel traveled from Rome to London to assume office as prime minister, exactly as Constantine traveled from York to Rome to become emperor. Each traveler had all that sails and horses could do for him and no more. A few years later Peel might have reached London from Rome in some forty-eight hours. Something of the same kind may be said for economical, political, and what is now called social science. The whole of that system of legislative reform which is founded on a recognition of the principles of humanity may be said to belong to our own times. Our penal systems have under-

gone a thorough reform. More than once it seemed as if the reform were going too far, and as if the tenderness to criminals were likely to prove an encouragement to crime. But, although there have been for this reason little outbursts of reaction every now and then, the growth of the principle of humanity has been steady, and the principle has taken firm and fixed root in our systems of penal legislation. Flogging in the army and navy may be said to be now wholly abolished. The senseless and barbarous system of imprisonment for debt is abandoned. There is no more transportation of convicts. Care is taken of the lives and the health of women and children in all manner of employments. Schools are managed on systems of wise gentleness. Dotheboys Hall would be an impossible picture even for caricature in these later years. We are perhaps at the beginning of a movement of legislation which is about to try to the very utmost that right of state interference with individual action which at one time it was the object of most of our legislators to reduce to its very narrowest proportions. It may be that this straining of the right of the majority over the minority is destined to bring about in due course its reaction. But we do not think that "the survival of the fittest," the doctrine on which our forefathers acted more or less consciously in the education of children and the treatment of criminals, will ever again, within any time to which speculation can safely reach, be adopted as a principle of our legislation. Much of the healthier and more humane spirit prevailing in our social systems, in our criminal laws, in the management of our schools, in the care of the state for the working classes, for women and for children, is undoubtedly due to the spread of that sound and practical scientific teaching which began to make it known everywhere that the recognition of the laws of health will always be found in the end to be a recognition of the laws of morality.

But, though the philosophy of these later days has proved itself thus essentially practical, it is to be observed that the great scientific controversy of the time is distinctly and purely speculative. The Darwinian theory, as it is commonly, we will not say vulgarly called, may be described as one of the most remarkable facts in the history of its time. Dr. Charles R. Darwin, grandson of the author of "The Botanic Garden," and "Zoonomia," was

born in 1809. He showed at an early age great capacity as a naturalist. He accompanied as naturalist the expedition of her majesty's ship *Beagle* for the survey of South America and the circumnavigation of the globe. This expedition occupied him nearly five years, and he returned to England in 1836. He published several studies in geology and in fossil species, and seemed to have made his mark as a naturalist of distinction, and nothing more. Charles Knight's "English Cyclopædia," published in 1855, twenty years after the return of Mr. Darwin from his great voyage, speaks in high terms of his contributions to the sciences he studied, and adds: "Mr. Darwin is still in the prime of life, and may therefore be expected to contribute largely to the extension of the sciences he has so successfully cultivated." If Mr. Darwin had died soon after that time the world would never have suspected that it had lost anything more than a highly-promising naturalist. In 1859 appeared "The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection; or the Preservation of the Favored Races in the Struggle of Life." The book had hardly been published when it was found that a great crisis had been reached in the history of science and of thought. The importance of Darwin's "Origin of Species," regarded as a mere historical fact, is of at least as much importance to the world as Comte's publication of his theory of historical development. In these pages we are considering Darwin's theory and his work merely as historical facts. We are dealing with them as we might deal with the fall of a dynasty or the birth of a new state. The controversy which broke out when the "Origin of Species" was published has been going on ever since without the slightest sign of diminishing ardor. It spread almost through all society. It was heard from the pulpit and from the platform; it raged in the scientific and unscientific magazines. It was trumpeted in the newspapers; it made one of the stock subjects of talk in the dining-room and the smoking-room; it tittered over the tea table. Mr. Darwin's central idea was that the various species of plants and animals, instead of being each specially created and immutable are continually undergoing modification and change through a process of adaptation, by virtue of which such varieties of the species as are in any way better fitted for the rough work of the struggle for existence are enabled to survive

and multiply at the expense of the others. Mr. Darwin considers this principle, with indeed some other and less important causes, capable of explaining the manner in which all existing types may have descended from one or a very few low forms of life. All animals, beasts, birds, reptiles, insects, have descended, he contends, from a very limited number of progenitors, and he holds that analogy points to the belief that all animals and plants whatever have descended from one common prototype. The idea that man gradually developed from some very low prototype was, of course, not Mr. Darwin's especially, nor belonging even to Mr. Darwin's time. It was an idea that had been floating about the world almost at all times. It had become somewhat fashionable in England not long before Mr. Darwin published his "Origin of Species." It was led up to in the "Vestiges of Creation," a book that once caused much stir in scientific and religious circles. A strong-minded lady in Lord Beaconsfield's "Tancred," bewilders and saddens the young hero by gravely informing him that we once were fishes, and shall probably in the end be crows. But Darwin's book, if we take it as resting for its central point of doctrine upon that principle of the survival of the fittest, was the first great systematized attempt to give the theory a solid place among the scientific opinions of the world. It was worked out with the most minute and elaborate care, and with an inexhaustible patience—qualities which we do not expect to find in the originators of new and startling theories. Mr. Darwin's work was fiercely assailed and passionately championed. It was not the scientific principle which inflamed so much commotion; it was the supposed bearing of the doctrines on revealed religion. Injustice was done to the calm examination of Darwin's theory on both sides of the controversy. Many who really had not yet given themselves time even to consider its arguments cried out in admiration of the book, merely because they assumed that it was destined to deal a blow to the faith in revealed religion. On the other side many of the believers in revealed religion were much too easily alarmed and too sensitive. Many of them did not pause to ask themselves whether, if every article of the doctrine were proved to be scientifically true, it would affect in the slightest degree the basis of their religious faith. To this writer it seems clear that Mr. Darwin's theory



might be accepted by the most orthodox believer without the firmness of his faith moulting a feather. The theory is one altogether as to the process of growth and construction in the universe, and, whether accurate or inaccurate, does not seem in any wise to touch the question which is concerned with the sources of all life, movement and being. However that may be, it is certain that the book made an era not only in science, but in scientific controversy, and not merely in scientific controversy, but in controversy expanding into all circles and among all intelligences. The scholar and the fribble, the divine and the schoolgirl, still talk and argue and wrangle over Darwin and the origin of species.

Professor Huxley is one of the most distinguished and thorough-going supporters of Mr. Darwin's principle. Professor Huxley advocates, in his own words, "the hypothesis which supposes that species living at any time must be the result of a gradual modification of pre-existing species." He maintains that to suppose each species of plant or animal to have been formed and placed on the globe at long intervals by a distinct act of creative power is an assumption "as unsupported by tradition or revelation as it is opposed to the general analogy of nature." Professor Huxley would have been a distinguished scientific man if he had never taken any part in the Darwin controversy. He would have been a distinguished scientific man even if he had not been, as he is, a great thinker and writer. In the arena of public controversy he has long been a familiar and formidable figure. He came into the field at first almost unknown, like the disinherited knight in Scott's romance; and while the good-natured spectators were urging him to turn the blunt end of the lance against the shield of the least formidable opponent, he dashed with splendid recklessness and with spear point forward against the buckler of Richard Owen himself, then the most renowned of England's living naturalists. Professor Huxley has a happy gift of shrewd sense and sarcasm combined. Few men can expose a sophism so effectively in a single sentence of exhaustive satire. It would be wrong to regard him merely as a scientific man. He is a literary man as well. What he writes would be worth reading for its form and its expression alone, were it of no scientific authority. He has a fascinating style, and a happy way of pressing

into the service of strictly scientific exposition some illustration caught from literature and art, even from popular and light literature. Mr. Huxley seemed from the first to understand that a scientific school can never become really powerful while it is content with the ear of strictly scientific men. He cultivated, therefore, sedulously and successfully the literary art of expression. His style as a lecturer has a special charm. It is free from any effort at rhetorical eloquence; but it has all the eloquence which is born of the union of deep thought with simple expression and luminous diction. There is not much of the poetic about Mr. Huxley's style; but the occasional vividness of his illustrations suggests the existence of some of the higher imaginative qualities. There was something like a gleam of the poetic in the half melancholy, half humorous introduction of Balzac's famous "Peau de Chagrin," into the well-known protoplasm lecture. But as a rule Mr. Huxley treads only the firm earth and deliberately, perhaps scornfully, rejects any aspirings after the clouds.

Professor Tyndall, another great teacher in the same school, has, like Mr. Huxley, the gift of literary expression, informed perhaps by more of the imaginative and the poetic. Mr. Tyndall has done perhaps more practical work in science than Mr. Huxley. He has written more; he has sometimes written more eloquently. But there is a certain coarseness of materialism about Mr. Tyndall's views with regard to man and nature. There is a vehement aggressiveness in him which must interfere with the clearness of his views. He has occasionally assailed the orthodox with the polemical intemperance of a field-preacher. He has more than once been carried clear away from his purpose by the unsparing vigor of his controversial style. He is sometimes one of the most impatient of sages, the most intolerant of philosophers. His temper as a controversialist may have tended sometimes to weaken his scientific authority, but of course this only happens where the subject engrossing Professor Tyndall's attention is one of that class which have in all ages proved too exciting now and then for the cool judgment even of philosophers. Mr. Tyndall has made noble contributions to scientific literature which concern in no wise the tremendous questions put by Mr. Carlyle with such solemnity and such emotion—"Whence, and, oh heavens! whither?"

Mr. Herbert Spencer may be said to have taken the sphere of the naturalist and the spheres of the metaphysician and the psychologist and drawn a circle round embracing and enfolding them all and adopting them as his province. If Mr. Darwin's attempt to map out the process by which vegetable and animal life are gradually constructed, was an ambitious effort, the task which Mr. Herbert Spencer undertook was of still more vast and venturous scope. Mr. Spencer is the author of a series of connected philosophical works intended to reduce to harmonious and scientific order the principles of biology, psychology, sociology, and morality. He has applied universally and carried out in systematic detail the doctrine of evolution or development. In 1855 appeared his "Principles of Psychology," an attempt to analyze the relations between the order of the worlds of matter and of mind. The central and governing idea of this work is that the universal law of intelligence flows directly from the co-operation of mind and nature, in the creation of our ideas. As there is a persistency in the order of events in nature, so will there be a persistency in the connection between the corresponding states of consciousness. The succession or co-existence of external phenomena produces a like succession in our mental perceptions, and when any two psychical states often occur together, there is at length established an internal tendency for those states always to recur in the same order. Starting from the law which has been thus described in words that are not ours, Mr. Spencer traces the growth of human intelligence from the lower phenomena of reflex action and instinct, and then shows how our unconscious life merges in a succession of conscious phenomena; and lastly he endeavors to carry us upward from the origin of memory to the highest exercise of reason and the scientific development of the moral feelings. In other words, Mr. Spencer endeavors to lay down the principles of development for the whole world of matter, of mind and of morals. Mr. Spencer has written essays on education, on the government of states, and on other subjects, which however scarcely seem to be marked by the precision of thought which distinguishes him as a psychological writer. His views of education and of civic government seem occasionally to degenerate almost to the degree of rotchets. His style is not fascinating. It is clear, strong, and simple, but it has

little literary beauty, and borrows little from illustration of any kind. Mr. Spencer himself utterly undervalues what he regards as superfluous words. Attractiveness of style is part of the instrumentality by which a great writer or speaker accomplishes his ends. If a man would convince he must not disdain the arts by which people can be induced to listen. Much of Mr. Spencer's greatest work had long been little better than a calling aloud to solitude, for the lack of the attractiveness of style which he despises, but which Plato or Aristotle would not have despised. Mr. Spencer, however, rather prides himself on not caring much about the Greeks and their literature. A great thinker he undoubtedly is; one of the greatest thinkers of modern times; perhaps a man to be classed among the few great and original philosophers of all time. It is only of late years that his fame has begun to spread among his own countrymen. Gradually it has become known to the English public in general that there was among them a great lonely thinker, surveying the problems of mind and matter as from some high serene watch-tower. His works were well-known among reading people in the United States long before they had ceased to be the exclusive property of a very select few in England. Of late he has come to be in a certain sense the fashion in this country among people who desire to be thought clever. It is not any part of our purpose to raise the question whether less honor is done to a great writer by neglecting him altogether, or by adopting him as one of the authors whom it is conventionally proper to have read, and with whom therefore everybody is bound to affect an acquaintance. It certainly was not for that that Mr. Spencer toiled his way over the rugged un pitying Alpine heights of thought, "*ut pueris*"—we may add, "*puellisque—placeat et declamatio fiat.*"

The name of Professor Max Müller is now by common consent enrolled with the names of famous Englishmen. Max Müller has adopted England as his home, and England has quietly annexed his reputation. He has approached the history of man's development by the study of man's speech. He has opened a new and a most important road for the student. In his hands philology ceases to be a dry science of words, and becomes quickened into a living teacher of history. Max Müller has contributed to various departments of thought, and has proved himself a

charming writer, who can invest even the least attractive subject with an absorbing interest.

Metaphysical and psychological science have lately lost a pupil of marvelous versatility in George Henry Lewes. No literary man in our time did so many different things and did them so well as Mr. Lewes. He wrote novels; he made some of the most successful adaptations from the French theater known to our stage; he was an accomplished literary and dramatic critic; he translated Spinoza; he wrote the lives of Goethe and of Robespierre; he produced a history of philosophy in which he had something of his own to say about every great philosopher from Thales down to Schelling and Comte; he was the author of all manner of physiological essays; his "Problems of Life and Mind" and his "Physical Basis of Mind" were really contributions of permanent value to the studies with which they so boldly dealt. It is not perhaps unworthy of notice that Mr. Lewes was even a remarkably good amateur actor. It seems as if he must be able to do everything well to which it pleased him to put his hand. His peculiar merit, was not, however, that he could write clever books on a great variety of subjects. London has many hack writers who could go to work at any publisher's order, and produce successively an epic poem, a novel, a treatise on the philosophy of the conditioned, a handbook of astronomy, a farce, a life of Julius Cæsar, an account of African explorations, and a volume of sermons. But none of these productions would have one gleam of native and genuine vitality about it. The moment it had served its purpose in the literary market it would go dead down to the dead. Lewes' works are of quite a different style. They have positive merit and value of their own, and they live. It was a characteristically audacious thing to attempt to cram the history of philosophy into a couple of medium-sized volumes, polishing off each philosopher in a few pages, draining him, plucking out the heart of his mystery and his system, and stowing him away in the glass jar designed to exhibit him to an edified class of students. But it must be admitted that the "History of Philosophy" is a genuine and a valuable study, although the author not then in the calmer maturity of his powers, crumples up the whole science of metaphysics, sweeps away transcendental philosophy, and demolishes *à priori* reasoning in a manner which strongly

reminds one of Arthur Pendennis upsetting in a dashing criticism and on the faith of an hour's reading in an encyclopædia, some great scientific theory of which he had never heard before, and the development of which had been the life's labor of a sage.

The period which we are surveying was especially rich in historical studies. It was prolific, not only in historians and histories, but even in new ways of studying history. The Crimean war was still going on when Mr. Froude's "History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the death of Elizabeth" began to make its appearance; and the public soon became alive to the fact that a man of great and original power had come into literature. The first volume of Mr. Buckle's "History of Civilization" was published in 1857. Mr. Freeman liberally disinterred a great part of the early history of England; cleared it of the accumulated dust of traditional error and ignorance, and for the first time showed it to us as it must have presented itself to the eyes of those who helped to make it. Mr. Kinglake began the story of the Crimean war. Mr. Lecky occupied himself with "The History of Rationalism in Europe," "The History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne," and more lately with the great days of the eighteenth century. Canon Stubbs made the "Constitutional History of England" his province; and Mr. Green undertook to compress the whole sequence of English history into a sort of literary outline map in which events stood clearly out in the just perspective and proportions of their real importance. Of the men we have named, it would not be unreasonable to say that Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake belong to the romantic school of historians; Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky to the philosophic; Mr. Freeman, Canon Stubbs, and Mr. Green to the practical and the real. To show events and people as they were, is the clear aim of this latter school; to picture them dramatically and vividly would seem to be the ambition of Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake. To show that they have a system and a sequence and are evidence of great natural laws, is the object of men like Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky. Mr. Froude is probably the most popular historian since Macaulay, although his popularity is far indeed from that of Macaulay. He is widely read where Mr. Freeman would seem intolerably learned and pedantic, and Mr. Lecky too philosophic to be

lively. His books have been the subject of the keenest controversy. His picture of Henry VIII. set all the world wondering. It set an example and became a precedent. It founded a new school in history and biography; what we may call the paradoxical school; the school which sets itself to discover that some great man had all the qualities for which the world had never before given him credit, and none of those which it had always been content to recognize as his undoubted possession. The virtues of the misprized Tiberius; the purity and meekness of Lucrezia Borgia; the disinterestedness and forbearance of Charles of Burgundy, these and other such historical discoveries naturally followed Mr. Froude's illustration of the domestic virtues, the exalted chastity, and the merciful disposition of Henry VIII. Mr. Froude has, however, qualities which raise him high above the level of the ordinary paradoxical historian. He has a genuine creative power. We may refuse to believe that his Henry VIII. is the Henry of history, but we cannot deny that Mr. Froude makes us see his Henry as vividly as if he stood in life before us. A dangerous gift for a historian; but it helps to make a great literary man. Mr. Froude may claim to be regarded as a great literary man, measured by the standard of our time. He has imagination; he has that sympathetic and dramatic instinct which enables a man to enter into the emotions and motives, the likings and dislikings, of people of a past age. His style is penetrating and thrilling; his language often rises to the dignity of a poetic eloquence. The figures he conjures up are always the semblances of real men and women. They are never waxwork, or lay figures, or skeletons clothed in words, or purple rags of description stuffed out with straw into an awkward likeness of the human form. The one distinct impression we carry away from Mr. Froude's history is that of the living reality of his figures. In Marlowe's "Faustus," the doctor conjures up for the amusement of the emperor a procession of beautiful and stately shadows to represent the great ones of the past. When the apparitions of Alexander the Great and his favorite pass by, the emperor can hardly restrain himself from rushing to clasp the hero in his arms, and has to be reminded by the wizard that "these are but shadows, not substantial." Even then the emperor can hardly get over his impression of their reality; for he cries:

“ I have heard it said  
That this fair lady, while she lived on earth,  
Had on her neck a little wart or mole ;”

and lo! there is the mark on the neck of the beautiful form which floats across his field of vision. Mr. Froude's shadows are like this; so deceptive, so seemingly vital and real; with the beauty and the blot alike conspicuous; with the pride and passion of the hero and the heroine's white neck and the wart on it. Mr. Froude's whole soul, in fact, is in the human beings whom he meets as he unfolds his narrative. He is a romantic or heroic portrait painter. He has painted some pictures which may almost compare with those of Titian. Their glances follow and haunt one like the wonderful eyes of Cæsar Borgia, or the soul-piercing resignation of that face on Guido's canvas once believed to be that of Beatrice Cenci. But Mr. Froude wants the one indispensable quality of the true historian accuracy. He wants altogether the cold, patient, stern quality which clings to facts; the scientific faculty. His narrative never stands out in that "dry light" which Bacon so commends—the light of undistorted and clear truth. The temptations to a man with a gift of heroic portrait painting are too great for Mr. Froude. His genius carries him away and becomes his master. When Titian was painting his Cæsar Borgia, is it not conceivable that his imagination may have been positively inflamed by the contrast between the man's physical beauty and moral guilt, and have unconsciously heightened the contrast by making the pride and passion lour more darkly, the superb brilliancy of the eyes burn more radiantly, than might have been seen in real life? Mr. Froude has evidently been often thus ensnared by his own special gift. There is hardly anything in our modern literature more powerful, picturesque, and dramatic than his portrait of Mary, queen of Scots. It stands out and glows and darkens with all the glare and gloom of a living form, now in sun and in shadow. It is almost as perfect and impressive as Titian. But no reasonable person can doubt that it is a dramatic and not an historical study. Without going into any controversy, as to disputed facts, even admitting for the sake of argument that Mary was as guilty as Mr. Froude would make her, it is impossible to believe that the woman he has painted is the Mary Stuart of history and



of life. No doubt his Mary is now a reality for us. We are distinctly acquainted with her; we can see her and follow her movements. But she is a fable for all that. The poets and painters have made the form of the mermaid not one whit less clear and distinct for us than the figure of a living woman. If any of us were to see a painting of a mermaid with scales upon her neck, or with feet, he would resent it or laugh at it as an inaccuracy, just as if he saw some gross anatomical blunder in a picture of a man or woman. Mr. Froude has created a Mary Stuart as art and legend have created a mermaid. He has made her one of the most imposing figures in our modern literature, to which indeed she is an important addition. His Queen Elizabeth is almost equally remarkable as a work of art. His Henry VIII. stands not quite so high and far lower comes his Cæsar, which is absurdly untrue as a portrait, and is not strong even as a romantic picture. Mr. Froude's personal integrity and candor are constantly coming into contradiction with his artistic temptation; but the portrait goes on all the same. He is too honest and candid to conceal or pervert any fact that he knows. He tells everything frankly, but continues his picture in his own way. It may be that some rather darksome vices suddenly prove their existence in the character of the person whom Mr. Froude had chosen to illustrate the brightness and glory of human nature. Mr. Froude is not abashed. He deliberately states the facts; shows how, in this or that instance, truth did tell shocking lies, mercy ordered several massacres, and virtue fell into the ways of Messalina. But he still maintains that his pictures are portraits of truth, mercy, and virtue. A lover of art, according to a story in the memoirs of Canova, was so struck with admiration of that sculptor's Venus that he begged to be allowed to see the model. The artist gratified him; but, so far from beholding a very goddess of beauty in the flesh, he only saw a well-made, rather coarse-looking woman. The sculptor seeing his disappointment, explained to him that the hand and the eye of the artist, as they work, can gradually and almost imperceptibly change the model from that which it is in the flesh to that which it ought to be in the marble. This is the process which is always going on with Mr. Froude whenever he is at work upon some model in which for love or hate he takes unusual interest. Therefore the histo-

rian is constantly involving himself in a welter of inconsistencies and errors. Mr. Froude's errors go far to justify the dull and literal old historians of the school of Dryasdust, who, if they never quickened an event into life, never, on the other hand, deluded the mind with phantoms. The chroniclers of mere facts and dates, the old almanac-makers, are weary creatures; but one finds it hard to condemn them to mere contempt when he sees how the vivid genius of a man like Mr. Froude can lead him astray. Mr. Froude's finest artistic gift becomes his greatest defect for the special work he undertakes to do. A scholar, a man of high imagination, a man likewise of patient labor, he is above all things a romantic portrait-painter; and the spell by which his works allure us is the spell of the magician, not the calm power of the teacher.

Mr. Buckle's "History of Civilization in England" created a sensation hardly less than that produced by Mr. Darwin's "Origin of Species." Indeed for a time the interest it created was keener and more widely diffused. Mr. Buckle undertook to prove four great principles, which he contended were essential to the understanding of history. First, that the progress of nations depends upon the success with which the laws of phenomena are investigated, and the extent to which a knowledge of these laws is diffused. Second, that before any such investigation can proceed a spirit of skepticism must arise "which, at first aiding the investigation, is afterward aided by it." Third, that the results of this investigation tend to increase the influence of intellectual truths, and to diminish not absolutely, but relatively, the influence of moral truths, which latter are more stationary than intellectual truths, and receive fewer additions. Fourth, that the great enemy of this progressive investigation, and consequently of human civilization, is the protective spirit in which governments undertake to watch over men and direct them what to do, and in which churches and teachers prescribe for them what they are to believe. Now it is plain that on the decision of the first point rested the whole issue between Mr. Buckle and his opponents. If the progress of civilization depended upon the discovery and right appreciation of phenomena, then the basis of the science of history would be settled beyond dispute. History would then take its ordered place like any of the physical sciences.

But it was on this very first point that the struggle had to be made in which, as it seems to us, Mr. Buckle's endeavor broke down. He labored to establish nothing less than the fact that all the movements of history, and indeed of human life through all its processes, are regulated by fixed physical laws as certain as those which rule the motions of the waves and the changes of the weather, and of which we could arrive at a sound and trustworthy knowledge if we were content to study their phenomena as we do the phenomena of the sea and the skies. Of course this was not an idea which occurred for the first time to Mr. Buckle. It is an idea which has always been more or less clearly in the minds of some men. It belongs to that principle which Comte laid down, when he endeavored to explain the development of human history. It was more than once put into the form of a principle by Goethe, and had been described more distinctly still by Lessing. But men like Goethe and Lessing suggested it rather as a probability than endeavored to define it as an actual law. Mr. Buckle set about establishing it as the law of human life by illustration, argument, and evidence drawn from the actual facts of history and of nature. He brought to his task a vast amount of more or less arranged information, an ardent spirit full of faith in his own theory, and a power of self-will and self-complacency, which enabled him to accept as certain and settled every dogma on which he had personally made up his mind. The "History of Civilization" was never finished. The author's early death brought the task to a close. It remains a great effort, a monument of courage, energy and labor; perhaps, indeed, it might not inaptly be described as a ruin. Mr. Buckle had attempted a task beyond the compass of one man's capacity and of men's combined knowledge thus far. He tried to build a literary tower of Babel, by means of which man might reach the skies and look down complacently on the mechanical movements of planets, races, and generations beneath. He died at the age of forty, lamenting almost with his latest breath that he had to leave his work unfinished, and still believing that life, mere life, was all he needed to make it complete.

Mr. Kinglake's still unfinished history of the Crimean war is full of brilliant description and of keen, penetrating thought. It shows many gleams of the poetic, and it has

some of the brightest and bitterest satirical passages in the literature of our time. The chapters in which Mr. Kinglake goes out of his way to describe the career, the character, and the companions of the Emperor Napoleon III. cut like corrosive acid. Mr. Kinglake found his mind filled with detestation of Louis Napoleon and his companions. He invented for himself the theory that the Crimean war arose only out of Louis Napoleon's peculiar position, and his anxiety to become recognized among the great sovereigns of Europe. The invention of this theory gave him an excuse for lavishing so much labor of love and hate on chapters which must always remain a masterpiece of remorseless satire. They hardly pretend to be always just in their estimate of men, but no one rates them according to their justice or their injustice. They are read for their style, and nothing more. Perhaps it would not be altogether unjust to say much the same of the history as far as it has gone. It is brilliant; it is powerful; it is full of thrilling passages; but it remains after all the historical romance rather than history. Moreover, it is a good deal too long. The Crimean war came after a generation of peace, and to many Englishmen it almost seemed as if there never had been such a war before or would be again. Mr. Kinglake set about his great book with something like the same estimate of the historical importance and proportions of the war. Even already the perspective of events is beginning to come fairly out, and it seems as if the Crimean campaign hardly needed the huge historical monument at which Mr. Kinglake is still at work.

Mr. Lecky has probably more of the philosophic mind than any of his contemporaries. He has treated history on a large scale and in the philosophical spirit. He has taken a wide and liberal survey of the progress of thought and of morals as a whole, and then has brought the knowledge and observation thus acquired to the practical purpose of illustrating certain passages of history and periods of human development. His "History of England in the Eighteenth Century" is not more remarkable thus far for the closeness and fullness of its details than for its breadth of view and its calmness of judgment. Mr. Lecky is always the historian and never the partisan. His works grow on the reader. They do not turn upon him all at once a sudden glare like the flash of a revolving light

but they fill the mind gradually with a sense of their justice, their philosophic thought, and the clear calmness of their historical observation.

Dean Stanley, the pupil and the biographer of Dr. Arnold, has made some of the most valuable contributions to ecclesiastical history which our time possesses. His "Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey," fascinates the reader by its beauty of style and by the evidences of the loving care with which the author has approached his subject. Mr. John Morley has produced monographs of Burke, of Rousseau, and of Voltaire which are original in their very form and which have made a distinct mark on the literature of their day. There are many essayists in history, biography, and the criticism of art and letters who well deserve to be named in a survey of the literature of our time, but whom we are compelled to pass over. Space would hardly allow of our even classing them in schools, as, for example, the positivists, the neo-pagans, the æsthetics, the agnostics, the satirists, and all the rest. In an age of prodigious literary activity the essayists of various schools have certainly not been the least active and productive.

The poets, however, outnumber them by far. We have had no great poet in these later days, but the number of our singers is prodigious. A great meeting of poets could be got up in London alone. Many really fine poems are the almost unnoticed result of this multitudinous labor. Sir Walter Scott once said with good-humored modesty that he had taught many ladies and gentlemen to write romances as well or nearly as well as he could himself. Of the poetic voices which literally fill the air around us, the majority must be those of mere mocking-birds, and yet it is not always easy to distinguish between the original notes and the imitation. The highest reach attained among the poets of this later day is assuredly that of Mr. Swinburne. His first volume of poems, containing "The Queen Mother," and "Rosamond," published in 1861, made no mark whatever, but his "Atalanta in Calydon," which appeared in 1865, startled the world. The mere boldness of the return to the subjects and the very forms of Greek drama would have commanded attention; but there was something much more commanding in the genuine originality with which the poet breathed new life into the antique

forms. Mr. Swinburne's mastery of melodious phrase and verse astonished even the age acquainted with the musical richness and softness of Tennyson's lines, and Mr. Swinburne had a vibrating strength in his verse such as the poet laureate never tried to have. Mr. Swinburne decidedly shot an arrow higher into the air than any of his fellows in these later days, but he only shot one arrow. To vary the illustration, we may say that the jet from his poetic source soared higher than that of any of his rivals; but it was only one thin, narrow steam and not a full fountain sending its spray and its waters broadly in the sun. His poetic ideas are very few. Even his vocabulary is not liberal. Words as well as ideas are soon exhausted. Even the greatest admirer becomes conscious of a sense of monotony as he listens again and again to the same cry of rebellion against established usages, the same hysterical appeal to lawlessness in passion and in art, poured forth in the same phraseology and with the same alliteration. Mr. Morris, the author of "Jason" and the "Earthly Paradise," is a poet of a milder and a purer strain. Nothing can be more beautiful, tender and melancholy than some of his sweet, pathetic stories. Mr. Morris has been compared to Chaucer, but he is at the best a Chaucer without strength and without humor. He has such story-teller's power as one might suppose suited to absorb the evening hours of some lady of mediæval days. She would have loved Mr. Morris' beautiful tales of love and truth and constancy and separation—tales, which, to quote the poet's own words, "would make her sweet eyes wet, at least sometimes, at least when heaven and earth on some fair eve had grown too fair for mirth." But the broad strength of Chaucer, the animal spirits, the ringing laughter, the occasional fierceness of emotion, the pain, and the passion are not to be found in Mr. Morris' exquisite and gentle verse. Mr. Dante G. Rossetti has written some sonnets which are probably entitled to rank with the best of their kind at any time, and one or two ballads of fierce, impassioned style, which seem as if they came straight from the heart of the old northern ballad world. Miss Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" is almost perfect in its way. Miss Jean Ingelow has written some tender and pathetic poems. Mr. Aubrey de Vere is a true poet, and one of a family of poets. Mr. Robert Buchanan at one time gave

promise of taking a high rank among modern poets. Assuredly he has not fulfilled all the hopes of his first days, but he must always stand well among the singers who only claim to form the second order of the poets of our time. "The Spanish Gypsy," and other productions in verse, by the novelist, George Eliot, are the clever attempts of a woman of genius who is not a poet to write poetry. The poetry of these days may boast of having produced a distinct school, which has contrived to inoculate not only literature but art, architecture, ornament, dress, and social life generally with its influence. It is possible that long after the world may have ceased to read even the best writers of the school, the school itself will live curiously in memory, with its mannerisms, its affectations, its absurdities, imitations, and quakeries, and at the same time with its genuine beauty and high spiritual aspirations. The *précieuses*, it is to be remembered, were not always ridiculous. They were not ridiculous at all to begin with. They were ladies of intellect and true artistic feeling. It was only when imitation and insincerity set in, when sentiment took the place of emotion, when mannerism tried to pass itself off as originality, that the heroines of Molière's immortal comedy could have been lifelike figures even in caricature. So it is with the pre-Raphaelite school, as a certain group of poets and painters came to be fantastically designated. Pre-Raphaelitism was in the beginning a vigorous protest in favor of truth in nature and art, of open eyes and faithful observation in artistic critics, students, and every one else, as against conventionalities and prettiness and unrealities of all kinds. Mr. Ruskin was the prophet of the new school. Mr. Dante Rossetti, Mr. Holman Hunt, Mr. Madox Brown, and Mr. Millais were its practical expounders in art. A great controversy sprang up, and England divided itself into two schools. No impartial person can deny that Mr. Ruskin and the pre-Raphaelites did great good, and that much of their influence and example was decidedly healthy. But pre-Raphaelitism became a very different thing in later years, when it professed to invade all arts, and to establish itself in all the decorative business of life, from the ornamentation of a cathedral to the fringe of a dress. Lately it has become a mere affectation, an artistic whim. It has got mixed up with æstheticism, neo-paganism, and other such fantasies. The

typical pre-Raphaelite of the school's later development is, however a figure not unworthy of description. The typical pre-Raphaelite believed Mr. Dante Rossetti and Mr. Burne Jones to be the greatest artist of the ancient or modern world. If any spoke to him of contemporary English poetry, he assumed that there was only question of Mr. Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, or Mr. Morris. In modern French literature he admired Victor Hugo, Baudelaire, and one or two others newer to song, and of whom the outer world had yet heard little. Among the writers of older France he was chiefly concerned about François Villon. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the paintings of the late Henri Regnault. Probably he spoke of France as "our France." He was angry with the Germans for having vexed our France. He professed faith in the philosophy of Schopenhauer and the music of Wagner, and he was greatly touched by Chopin. He gave himself out as familiar with the Greek poets, and was wild in his admiration of Sappho. He made for himself a sort of religion out of wall-paper, old tea-pots and fans. He thought to order and yet above all things piqued himself on his originality. He and his comrades received their opinions as Charlemagne's converts did their Christianity, in platoons. He became quite a distinct figure, in the literary history of our time, and he positively called into existence a whole school of satirists in fiction, verse, and drawing, to make fun of his follies, whimsicalities, and affectations.

The fiction of this second period has one really great name, and one only. The author of "Adam Bede" and "The Mill on the Floss" stands on a literary level with Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë. "George Eliot," as this author chooses to call herself, is undoubtedly a great writer, merely as a writer. Her literary career began as a translator and an essayist. Her taste seemed then to lead her wholly into the somewhat barren fields where German metaphysics endeavor to come to the relief or the confusion of German theology. She became a contributor to the *Westminster Review*; then she became its assistant editor, and worked assiduously for it under the direction of Dr. John Chapman, the editor. She had mastered many sciences as well as literatures. Probably no other novel-writer, since novel-writing became a business, ever possessed anything like her scientific knowledge.



Unfortunately, her scientific knowledge, "o'er informed" her later novels, and made them oppressive to readers who longed for the early freshness of "Adam Bede." George Eliot does not seem to have found out, until she had passed what is conventionally regarded as the age of romance, that she had in her, high above all other gifts, the faculty of the novelist. When an author who is not very young makes a great hit at last, we soon begin to learn that he had already made many attempts in the same direction, and his publishers find an eager demand for the stories and sketches which, when they first appeared, utterly failed to attract attention. But it does not seem that Miss Marian Evans, as she then was, ever published anything in the way of fiction previous to the series of sketches which appeared in "Blackwood's Magazine," and were called "Scenes of Clerical Life." These sketches attracted considerable attention, and were much admired; but not many people probably saw in them the capacity which produced "Adam Bede" and "Romola." With the publication of "Adam Bede" came a complete triumph. The author was elevated at once and by acclamation to the highest rank among living novelists. In one of the first numbers of the "Cornhill Magazine" Thackeray, in a gossiping paragraph about novelists of the day, whom he mentioned alphabetically and by their initials, spoke of "E" as a "star of the first magnitude just risen on the horizon." Nothing is much rarer than the union of the scientific and the literary or artistic temperaments. So rare is it that the exceptional, the almost solitary instance of Goethe comes up at once, distinct and striking to the mind. English novelists are even less likely to have anything of a scientific taste than French or German. Dickens knew nothing of science, and had, indeed as little knowledge of any kind, save that which is derived from observation, as any respectable Englishmen could well have. Thackeray was a man of varied reading, versed in the lighter literature of several languages, and strongly imbued with artistic tastes; but he had no care for science, and knew of it only what every one has to learn at school. Lord Lytton's science, was a mere sham. Charlotte Brontë was genius and ignorance. George Eliot is genius and culture. Had she never written a page of fiction, she must have been regarded with admiration by all who knew her as a woman

of deep thought and of a varied knowledge such as men complacently believe to be the possession only of men. It was not this, however, which made her a great novelist. Her eyes were not turned inward or kept down in metaphysical contemplation. She studied the living world around her. She had an eye for external things keen almost as that of Dickens or Balzac. George Eliot is the only novelist who can paint such English people as the Poyzers and the Tullivers just as they are. She looks into the very souls of such people. She tracks out their slow peculiar mental processes; she reproduces them fresh and firm from very life. Mere realism, mere photographing, even from the life, is not in art a great triumph. But George Eliot can make her dullest people interesting and dramatically effective. She can paint two dull people with quite different ways of dullness—a dull man and a dull woman, for example—and the reader is astonished to find how utterly distinct the two kinds of stupidity are, and how intensely amusing both can be made. There are two pedantic, pompous, dull advocates in Mr. Browning's "The Ring and the Book." How distinct they are; how different, how unlike, and how true are the two portraits! But then it must be owned that the poet sometimes allows his pedants to be as tiresome as they would be in real life, if each successively held a weary listener by the button. George Eliot is not guilty of any such artistic fault. No one wants to be rid of Mrs. Poyser, or Aunt Glegg, or the prattling Florentines, in "Romola." There never was or could be a Mark Tapley or a Sam Weller. We put up with these impossibilities and delight in them, because they are so amusing and so full of fantastic humor. But Mrs. Poyser lives, and every one knows an Aunt Glegg, and poor Mrs. Tulliver's "cares and hopes and little fears and pitiful reasonings are animating hundreds of Mrs. Tullivers all over England. George Eliot has infused into the novel some elements it never had before; and so thoroughly infused them, that they blend with all the other materials, and do not form anywhere a solid lump or mass distinguishable from the rest. There are philosophical novels—"Wilhelm Meister," for example—which are weighed down and loaded with philosophy, and which the world only admires in spite of the philosophy. There are political novels—Lord Beaconsfield's for instance—which are only in-

telligible to those who make politics and political personalities a study, and which viewed merely as stories would not be worth speaking about. There are novels with a great direct purpose in them, such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or "Bleak House," or Mr. Charles Reade's "Hard Cash." But these, after all, are only magnificent pamphlets, splendidly illustrated diatribes. The deep philosophic thought of George Eliot's best novels quietly suffuses and illumines them everywhere. There is no sermon here, no lecture there, no solid mass interposing between this incident and that, no ponderous moral hung around the neck of this or that personage. The reader feels that he is under the spell of one who is not merely a great story-teller, but who is also a deep thinker.

Mr. Anthony Trollope carries to its utmost limit the realism begun by Thackeray. He has none of Thackeray's genius; none of his fancy or feeling; none of his genuine creative power. He can describe with minute photographic faithfulness the ways, the talks, and sometimes even the emotions of a Belgravian family, of a nobleman's country house, or the "women-kind" of a dean in a cathedral town. He does not trouble himself with passion or deep pathos, although he has got as far as to describe very touchingly the mental pains of a pretty girl thrown over by her lover, and has suggested with some genuine power the blended emotion, half agony of sorrow, half sense of relief, experienced by an elderly clergyman on the death of a shrewish wife. It was natural that after the public had had a long succession of Mr. Trollope's novels, there should come a ready welcome for the school of fiction which was called the sensational. Of this school Mr. Wilkie Collins headed one class and Miss Braddon the other. Miss Braddon dealt in what we may call simple straightforward murders and bigamies, and such-like material; Mr. Wilkie Collins made his crimes always of an enigmatic nature, and compelled the reader to puzzle them out as if they were morbid conundrums. Mr. Trollope, however, continued to have his *clientèle* all the time that the sensational school in its various classes or branches was flourishing and fading. Mr. Trollope's readers may have turned away for a moment to hear what became of the lady who dropped her husband down the well or to guess at the secret of the mysterious Woman in White. But they soon turned loyally back to

follow the gentle fortunes of Lily Dale, and to hear what was going on in the household of Framley parsonage and under the stately roof of the Duke of Omnium.

Mr. Charles Reade, with all his imperfections as an artist, belongs to a higher order than Mr. Trollope, who is so much more thoroughly a master of his own narrower art. "Peg Woffington" and "Christie Johnstone," the former published so long ago as 1852, seem almost perfect in their symmetry and beauty. "The Cloister and the Hearth" might well-nigh have persuaded a reader that a new Walter Scott was about to arise on the horizon of our literature. In Mr. Reade's more recent works, however, the author began to devote himself to the illustration of some social or legal grievance calling for reform, and people came to understand that a new branch of the art of novel-writing was in process of development, the special gift of which was to convert a parliamentary blue-book into a work of fiction. The treatment of criminals in prison and in far-off penal settlements; the manner in which patients are dealt with in private lunatic asylums, became the main subject and backbone of the new style of novel, instead of the misunderstandings of lovers, the trials of honest poverty, or the struggles for ascendancy in the fashionable circles of Belgravia. Mr. Reade may claim the merit of standing alone in work of this kind. He can make a blue-book live and yet be a blue-book still. He takes the hard and naked facts as he finds them in some newspaper or in the report of some parliamentary commission, and he so fuses them into the other material whereof his romance is to be made up that it would require a chemical analysis to separate the fiction from the reality. The reader is not conscious that he is going through the boiled-down contents of a blue-book. He has no aggrieved sense of being entrapped into the dry details of some harassing social question. The reality reads like romance; the romance lives like reality. No author ever indulged in a fairer piece of self-glorification than that contained in the last sentence of "Put Yourself in His Place." "I have taken," says Mr. Reade, "a few undeniable truths out of many and have labored to make my readers realize those appalling facts of the day which most men know, but not one in a thousand comprehends, and not one in a hundred thousand realizes until fiction—which, whatever you may

have been told to the contrary, is the highest, widest noblest, and greatest of all the arts—comes to his aid, studies, penetrates, digests, the hard facts of chronicles and blue-books, and makes the dry bones live.”

Distinct, peculiar and lonely is the place in fiction held by Mr. George Meredith the author of “The Ordeal of Richard Feverel,” “Beauchamp’s Career,” “The Egoist,” and other novels. Mr. Meredith has been more than once described as a prose Browning. He has indeed much of Mr. Browning’s obscurity of style, not caused by any obscurity of thought, but rather by a certain perverse indifference on the part of the artist to the business of making his meaning as clear to others as it is to himself. He has a good deal of Mr. Browning’s peculiar kind of grim saturnine humor, not the humor that bubbles and sparkles—the humor that makes men laugh even while it sometimes draws tears to the eyes. He lacks the novelist’s first charm, the power of telling a story well. But, despite these defects, he is unquestionably one of the most remarkable of all the modern novelists, short of the very greatest. There are times when the reader is inclined to wonder how with so many great gifts he has failed to become a great novelist. The story called “Beauchamp’s Career,” which probably not one in every thousand novel-readers has even opened, seems to us to have only narrowly missed being one of the great romances of the age of Queen Victoria. It is full of beauty, of power, and of pathos. Some of its characters are so drawn that they not merely stand out as if in life, before us, but they enable us to enter into all their thoughts and anticipate all their purposes. We can conjecture beforehand what they will do in a given conditions of things, just as we can tell how some friend of our own is likely to act when we hear what the circumstances are under which he is called upon to take a decision. This story too, is not overladen, as others of Mr. Meredith’s unluckily are, by epigram and antithesis, by curiosities of phrase which it is difficult to follow, and conceits which rather dazzle the eyes of the reader than light up the page. If Mr. Meredith’s novels were to be examined according to their intellectual worth they would deserve and demand a much fuller analysis than has been attempted here. But in these pages we are looking at the literature of the time from the chronicler’s rather than the critic’s point of view. We tell

that a certain soldier won a battle or statesman gained a political victory, although we may ourselves be of opinion that the victory was better deserved on the other side. In the same spirit we record the fact that Mr. Meredith has not yet succeeded in gaining that place in fiction which our own judgment of his capacity would say that he is surely well qualified to attain.

Mr. Blackmore's "Lorna Doone" seems to us on the whole the best novel of the second class produced in England in our time. That is to say, we rank it distinctly below the great novels of Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, but above any novel produced by any writer short of these, and above the inferior works of these great artists themselves. Mr. William Black is the head of a school of fiction which he himself called into existence. Scottish scenery and Scottish character, alternating with certain phases of London life, are the field in which he works, and in which he has no rival. He has not as yet shown himself great in passion or in pathos. The deeper emotions of the human heart, the sterner phases of human life, he has apparently not often cared to touch. But in his own province, somewhat narrow though that be, his art approaches to perfection. He can paint not merely scenery, but even atmosphere, with a delicacy and strength of touch which in themselves constitute an art. Mr. Hardy has done something the same for certain English counties that Mr. Black has done for Scotland. He is occasionally stronger than Mr. Black, but he has not his subtle sweetness, charm, and tender grace, and he is far less equal, far less surely master of his own craft. A word must be said of the delicate porcelain of Miss Thackeray's work in fiction—her tender, gentle, womanly stories, nor should we fail to record the fact that Mrs. Craik's "John Halifax, Gentleman," was one of the literary successes of the day.

A style of novel peculiar to this age, and very unlike that of Miss Thackeray or Mrs. Craik, deserves a word of mention. That is the novel which records the lives, the romps, the ambitions, the flirtations, and the sufferings of what we may call the roaring girl of the Victorian age. With tousled, unkempt hair, disorderly dress, occasionally dirty hands and lips bubbling over with perpetual slang, this strange young woman has bounced into fiction. She

has always a true and tender heart under her somewhat uncouth appearance and manners. When she falls in love, she falls in love very intensely, and although she may have had all manner of flirtations, she generally clings to the one true passion, and is not uncommonly found dying of a broken heart at the end of the novel. Perhaps the one merit about this kind of fiction, when it is really honest and at its best, is that it recognizes the fact that women are not a distinct angelic order of beings, but that they have their strong passions and even their coarse desires like men. Such advantage as there may be in setting this fact plainly before the world, on the authority of writers who are women themselves, the school may claim to have. It is not a high, or refined, or noble, or in any way commendable school of fiction, but at its best it is sincere. At its worst—and it very soon reached its worst—it may be described as insufferable.

The fiction of this later period is, like the poetry, inferior to that of the period which we had to consider in our former survey. It has more names, but not such great names. It would almost seem as if the present school of fiction is, to borrow a phrase from French politics, exhausting its mandate. The sensation novel has had its day, and its day was but an episode, an interruption. Realism has now well-nigh done all it can. Its close details, its trivial round of common cares and ambitions, its petty trials and easy loves, seem now at last to have spent their attractive power and to urge with their fading breath the need of some new departure for the novelist. Perhaps the one common want in the more modern novel may suggest the new source of supply. Perhaps, in order to give a fresh life to our fiction, it will have to be dipped once again in the old holy well of romance.

## APPENDIX.

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THE first of the many difficulties which the Gladstone administration of 1880-85 had to encounter was the Bradlaugh difficulty. Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, elected for Northampton, desired to make affirmation instead of taking the oath in the usual manner. This he claimed the right to do under the parliamentary oaths act. This was the beginning of a long wrangle, lasting over many years, involving re-election, much litigation, and attempted legislation, creating one unhappy scene, and for long enough allotting to Mr. Bradlaugh the curious position of being at once a member and not a member of the House of Commons. It was not until the general election of 1885 that Mr. Bradlaugh, re-elected for Northampton, quietly took the oath, and for the first time enjoyed the full privileges of membership uncontested.

Out of the Bradlaugh episode arose the fourth party, called into being by a politician who up to that time had played no part of any importance in politics, but who from that time was destined to be one of the most conspicuous figures in English politics—Lord Randolph Churchill. The fourth party, led by Lord Randolph Churchill, and composed of Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and Mr. (now Sir) John Gorst, came into existence primarily to oppose Mr. Bradlaugh's admission to parliament, but it soon became a decided power in politics, working for many aims. The house was at first inclined to smile at the fourth party; it was soon to learn that the fourth party was no smiling matter. The history of the six years from the accession of the Gladstone administration to the jubilee year is in a very large degree the history of Lord Randolph Churchill. His readiness, his irreverence, his alert pugnacity, were the terror of the leaders of his own camp, but his really remarkable ability



soon made him essential to the party of which he became in due season, and for a season, the actual if not the nominal leader. It is curious to note that his rise followed so closely upon the disappearance from the political scene of his great chief and example, Lord Beaconsfield, who died in April, 1881.

The Irish question has been the predominant question of the last six years, casting all other questions of home and foreign policy entirely into the shade. Mr. Parnell had come back to Westminster as the leader of the Irish parliamentary party with a largely increased following, and under his leadership the great majority of the Irish party sat in opposition to the government, thereby intimating that they considered themselves of necessity opposed to any government which was not prepared to make some serious concession to the pressing needs of Ireland. At first it appeared as if the government and the Irish party might work harmoniously together. The Liberal party had received the full strength of the Irish vote during the election. The government announced that they were going to abandon coercion. But the distress in Ireland was great. New legislation on the land question was urgently called for, and the queen's speech contained no reference to the land. Moreover, evictions were increasing terribly. The Irish members brought in a bill to stay evictions. The government refused to accept the Irish measure, but brought in a compensation for disturbance bill, which was rejected by the House of Lords. From this point the strife between the Irish party and the government widened daily. Mr. Forster, although a capable statesman and well-meaning man, was not suited for the post of chief secretary to the lord lieutenant. There was soon open war between him and the national party in Ireland. State prosecutions, all-night sittings, coercion acts, expulsion of Irish members, imprisonment of Irish members, strife in parliament, and disturbance in Ireland, made the years from 1880 to 1885 a kind of political nightmare. The government were compelled, however, to recognize the fact that the agrarian condition of Ireland was in urgent need of reform, and in 1881 Mr. Gladstone brought forward a land bill, which, after long debate, was sent to the Lords in a much improved condition. For a short while there was a struggle between the two houses; the Tory majority

in the upper house anxious to destroy the bill, the Liberal majority in the lower house determined to maintain it. In the end the Lords gave way and the bill became law. The national party in Ireland received the bill with tempered enthusiasm; the land league prepared various test cases; the government seemed to be convinced that Mr. Parnell was determined to arrest the progress of the measure, and the *coup d'état* of 1881 was the result. A descent was made upon the leaders of the national party; Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and many other members were arrested, the land league was proclaimed, "United Ireland" was suppressed, and for the time the policy of Mr. Forster reigned supreme.

That policy was reversed in 1882, when Mr. Forster resigned—not to take office again, for he died in 1885. The political prisoners were released, and a new era of peace appeared to be opening for Ireland. The bright prospect was immediately and appallingly darkened by the tragedy of May 6, 1882, when the newly-appointed chief secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and Mr. Burke were assassinated in the Phoenix Park. The immediate result was fresh coercion and a further parliamentary struggle before the stringent measures proposed by the government became law. Under the rule of Lord Spencer and Mr. (now Sir George) Trevelyan Ireland grew no quieter, and the Irish difficulty seem no nearer to solution. The debates on the so-called Kilmainham treaty, the Errington mission to Rome, the Dublin Castle scandal—each in its turn agitated parliament. After a time Mr. Trevelyan resigned and his place was taken by Mr. Campbell Bannerman. An arrears bill drafted by Mr. Parnell while in prison, was the precursor of a government measure, which passed into law in 1882.

The foreign history of the Gladstone administration was stormy and warlike. It inherited, and concluded, the disastrous Afghan war of its predecessor; it had a war with the Boers, in which the Boers fought well, and gained what they fought for; it had its extraordinary war with Egypt, in order to uphold the khedive against the national party headed by Arabi Pasha; it had its evil-omened Sudan struggle, which gave Gordon and Khartoum to the Mahdi, and left so many brave and famous Englishmen and Irishmen the victims of the Arab spears. It had, of course, some inevitable misunderstandings with Russia.

In domestic legislature the great event was the triumph, in the face of many difficulties, of the reform and redistribution bills. The government had scarcely completed this great task before it met its fate. On June 8, 1885, the Gladstone administration was defeated on Mr. Childer's budget, and Lord Salisbury came into power. Not for long, however. Even with the aid of Lord Randolph Churchill, who was now a cabinet minister, the new story ministry could not long hold out against the odds arrayed against it. It was in its turn defeated on a now historical amendment of Mr. Jesse Collins'; there was a general election in the autumn of 1885, the result of which was to place Mr. Gladstone again in office.

By this time Mr. Gladstone's views on the Irish question had largely developed. He had never been opposed to the principle of home rule; he was now converted to entire sympathy with it. The recent election—which had sent Mr. Parnell back to parliament with a following of eighty-six, many of whom represented Ulster constituencies—was in itself sufficient proof that the majority of the Irish people ardently desired home rule. It was soon known that Mr. Gladstone was engaged upon a home rule scheme, and the appointment of Mr. John Morley as chief secretary showed at once the sympathetic attitude of the new government toward Ireland. Mr. Gladstone's home rule scheme was not, however, entirely satisfactory to all his following. Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir George Trevelyan, and others broke away from him. When the home rule bill was finally introduced on April 8, 1886, while it met with the warm approval of the Irish representatives and of the bulk of the Liberal party it caused a revolt among some of Mr. Gladstone's followers, who under the leadership of Lord Hartington, and with the title of Liberal Unionists gave battle to the measure. The home rule bill was defeated. Mr. Gladstone appealed to the country. A fierce fight was waged in the constituencies, and the result gave to the alliance of Tories and Liberal Unionists a majority over the Gladstonian Liberals and the English and Irish Home Rule. The history of the new Salisbury administration is too recent and too uncertain to be further touched on here. It belongs to the future.

In these few pages the attempt has been made to give

the very swiftest and most comprehensive summary of the events of the last six years. No thought of consecutive exhaustive narrative has been entertained; all that has been desired, and all that has been essayed, is to give in rapid record the mere headings of the great events which make the six years from 1880 to 1886 among the most momentous of a momentous reign.

J. H. McC.

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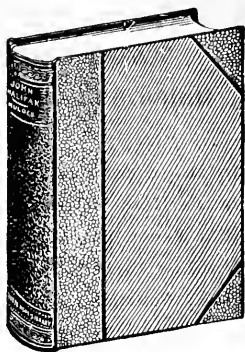
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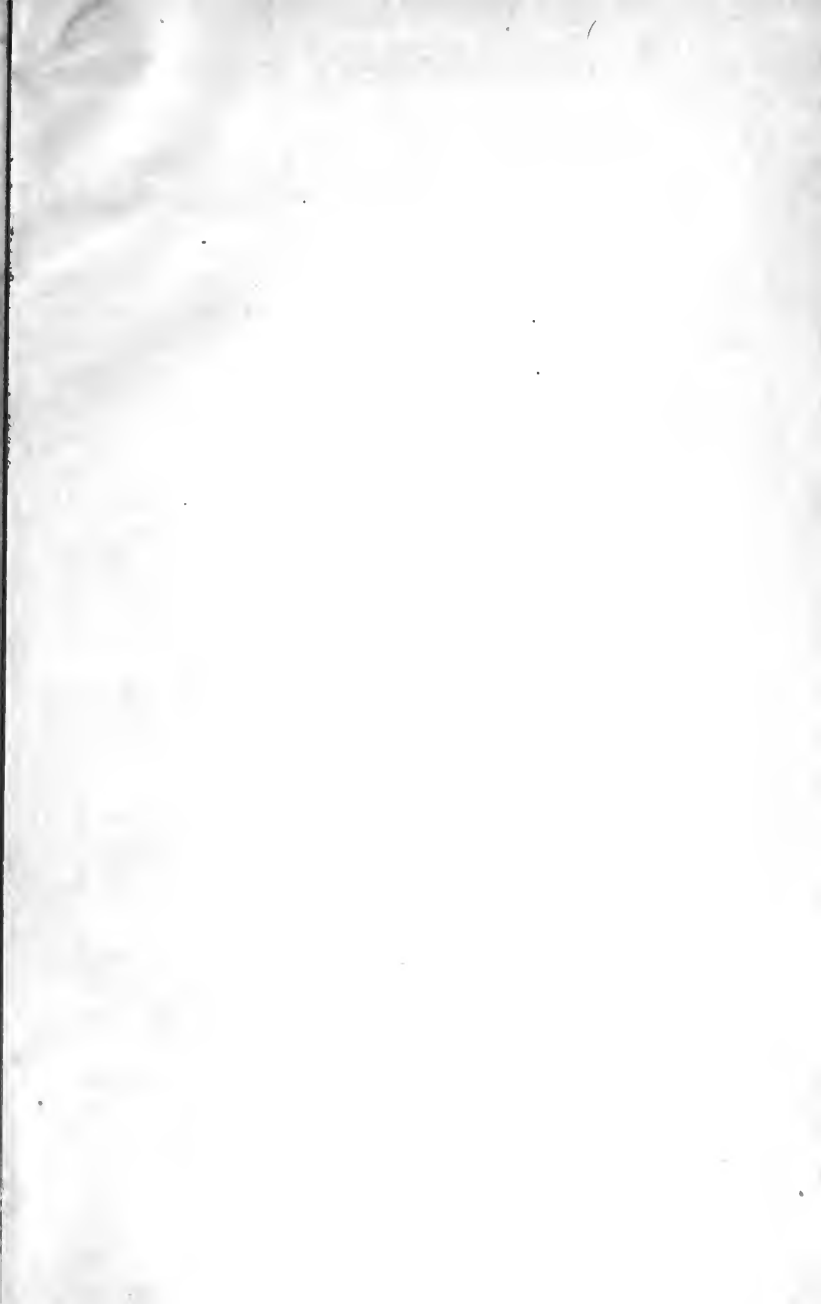
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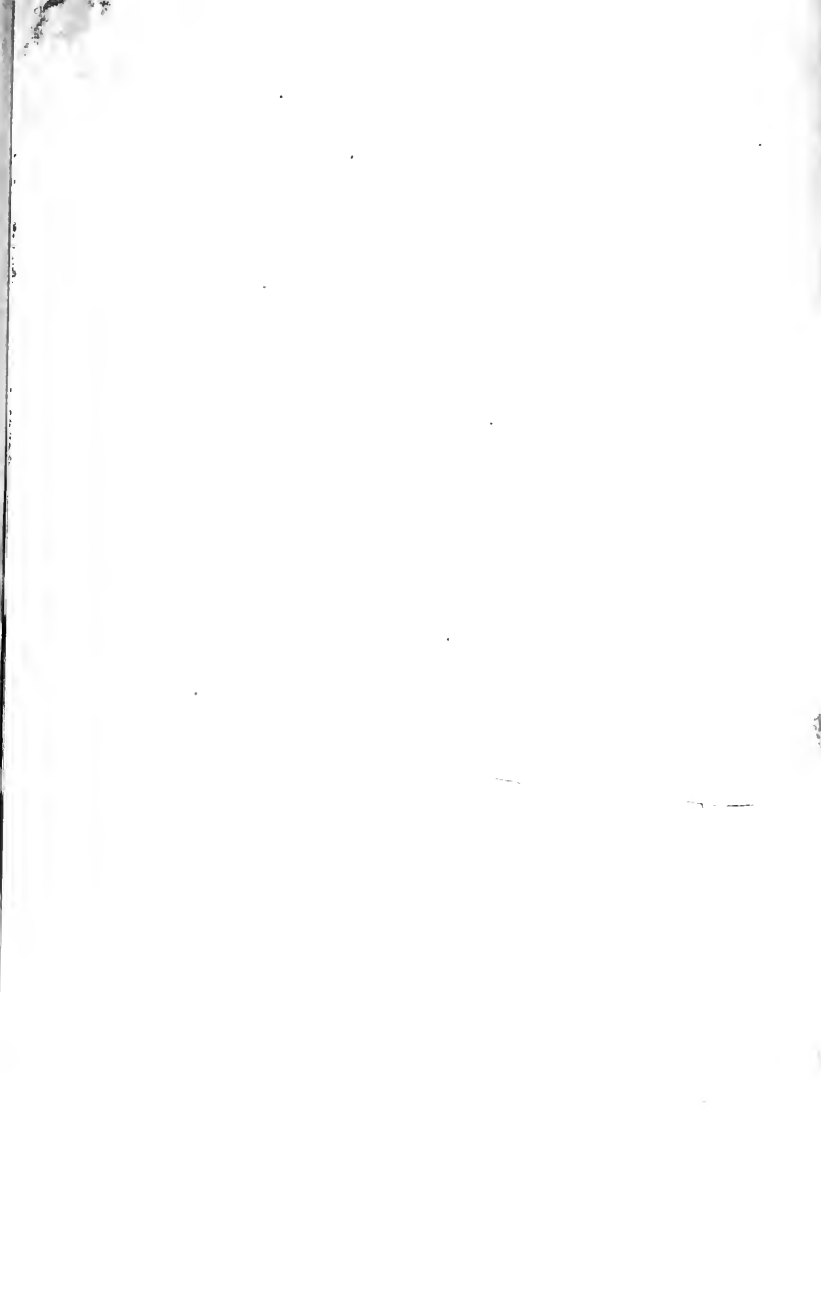
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