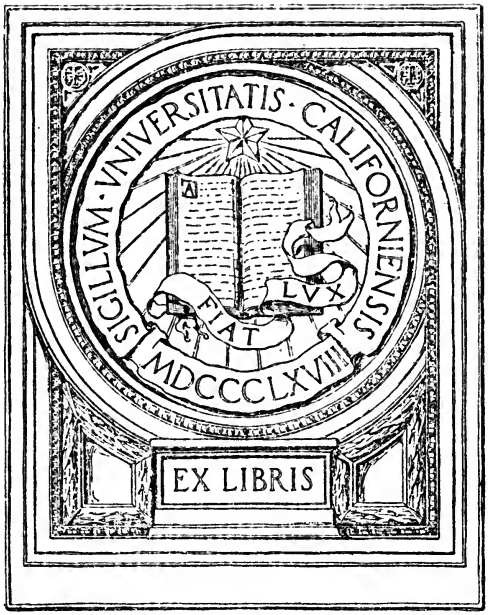
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ONE CITY AND MANY MEN

AND

DRAWN BY J. BOSTOCK

On the First Visit of the Queen to the Italian Opera.

AFTER HER MAJESTY'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA
AND
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT

ONE CITY AND MANY MEN

BY

RT. HON. SIR ALGERNON WEST, G.C.B.

AUTHOR OF "SIR CHARLES WOOD'S ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA"
"RECOLLECTIONS, 1832–1886"
"MEMOIR OF SIR HENRY KEPPEL, G.C.B.," ETC.

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

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PREFACE

A LADY once asked me whether the effect produced in society during the time of the Reform question was as great as that which existed at the time of the Home Rule Bill.

I said I was afraid that, as I was only born on the day of the Reform Bill passing, I should not be considered as a qualified authority.

I do, however, recollect a long long way back, and have seen many men and many changes, which are here reproduced as answers to questions sometimes put to me by the younger generations.

In thanking the various editors who have kindly allowed me to reprint these articles, I deeply regret the great loss of Sir James Knowles, who introduced most of them to the public in his famous Review.

ALGERNON WEST.

April 1908.

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ONE CITY AND MANY MEN

I

ASPECTS OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY 1837–1897

Lord Granville once told me that at the opening of a Parliament he had invited the mover of the Address in the House of Lords to come and have luncheon with him, in order that they might together read over the Speech from the Throne, and that he might give him some hints on the various topics to be dealt with. "No, thank you," said the mover of the Address; "I had rather trust to the inspiration of the moment." The day came. The mover, clad in Yeomanry uniform, rose in his place, but the inspiration of the moment had not arrived; so he read the Address, and sat down without a word. No friend with the knowledge or kindness of Lord Granville has offered me any hints, and no inspiration of the moment has arrived, and yet I am expected to write something new about the social changes that I have seen between 1837 and 1897.

The greatest historian of the century has described in picturesque and poetical language the social contrast between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, and has condemned the folly of those who are under a deception similar to that which misleads the traveller in the Arabian desert. Beneath the caravan all is dry and bare, but far in advance and far in the rear is the semblance of refreshing waters. The pilgrims hasten forward and find nothing but sand where an hour before they had seen a lake. They turn their eyes and see a lake where an hour before they were toiling through the sand. We who are old should avoid this fault, and teach ourselves not to be always talking of the so-called good old times, and not to look upon change as necessarily implying deterioration. Macaulay, apart from his genius and literary powers, had in drawing his comparison the great advantage of time and distance. This advantage is as yet denied to us. Mr. Chamberlain in his—well, in his other days, once remarked, with reference to the pre-eminent greatness of Mr. Gladstone :—

"I sometimes think that great men are like great mountains, and that we do not appreciate their magnitude while we are still close to them. You have to go to a distance to see which peak it is that towers above its fellows."

I venture to doubt whether even Macaulay at the

present moment could faithfully pourtray or adequately describe the social changes which are imperceptibly occurring every day before our eyes, and which have taken place in the last sixty years.

Society, which, at the beginning of the Queen's reign, was strict, formal, and circumscribed, has followed the trend of other things, and taken a hint from commercial legislation. It has entered into an enormous syndicate, under the rules of strictly limited liability. Individualism is stamped out; Collectivism has come in. The rush and rapidity of thought and action, supplemented by all the appliances of modern science, have largely increased. The tearing race for power, notoriety, and wealth has utterly obliterated with his earnest and unceasing restlessness the peaks and mountains of the social fabric, and reduced everything to a democratised dead level. This, of course, cannot apply to art in an age where Watts, Burne-Jones, Leighton, Millais, and many other distinguished painters stand out in bold relief. Of music I am profoundly ignorant, and can only subscribe to Baron Dowse's opinion, who, when he was taken by an enthusiastic musician to hear Bach's Passion music, confessed that he would rather hear Offenbach than Bach often.

Repose for man or woman, in country or in town, has been swallowed up in the whirling maelstrom of fashionable unrest. Visits in the country, which

used to serve as a relief from the stress and strain of the overworked Londoner, have become an additional anxiety to hosts and guests alike. The guests arrive on Saturdays as shortly before the dinner-hour as possible, and at once ask for a "Bradshaw," to find what is the first train that will convey them back to London on Monday morning. In London the morning hours used to be held apart from visitors or intrusions of any kind. They were, let us hope, devoted to domestic affairs, to study, or even rest. The amusements of the day, even among the most fashionable votaries of a London season, were reserved for the evening or late afternoon. At the beginning of the reign long weary hours of midday banquets and luxurious dishes did not exist, and half-past six or seven o'clock were the chosen hours for driving or riding. Now the whirl commences with the day and ends the next morning. Bicycling, skating on artificial ice, golf, and riding now occupy the early hours, and I am credibly informed by those who have opportunities that are denied to me, that women come down at breakfast-time in their hats so that not a moment may be lost in the pursuit of exercise or pleasure.

When, under the Presidency of Mr. George Peel at the Oxford Union, Mr. Gladstone had delivered an Homeric address, he was asked by Mr. Speaker Peel, on his return to the House of Commons, whether he had noticed any change in the growth

of to-day from those of his academical time. "An enormous change struck me," said the veteran Statesman; "the young members of the Union, instead of, in my day, being dressed in careful and scrupulous neatness, were attired in shooting, lounging, or smoking suits. I could have dressed any one of them for £5." The keen observation of Mr. Gladstone detected the change of dress at Oxford which he might have noticed elsewhere. The stiff cravats and scarves, the tightened waists, the padded coats, the strapped trousers, the Wellington boots, have likewise disappeared from London society. At balls the solemn and even stately quadrilles have, I am informed, been superseded by kitchen lancers, and young ladies smoke, cycle, play tennis and golf, and go to plays that their mothers would have shrunk from with surprise, if not horror, and lounge in the Empire, in spite of Mrs. Chant, and, I hope, see no harm in it.

Walking home a short time ago with an observant contemporary, and watching as we walked the strings of carriages conveying the gilded youth from the opera to parties or balls, in all their pride of dazzling jewels and bewitching beauty, we remarked that either the present generation must be ever so much better or ever so much worse than we were in our youth—for we had been young once. Their temptations, their luxuries, their opportunities were so much greater; but we agreed that it was the

constant familiarities with such things that made them the less dangerous. The French lady who, drinking a glass of fresh water, says, "If it was only forbidden, how delicious it would be," gives the key to many of the riddles that puzzle older people.

But in all these changes "this good is in them whatsoe'er of ill." The splendid untiring physique of the young women of to-day is owing to their liberty and outdoor exercise, and the fashionable and effeminate idler is out of date in our *fin de siècle*. We all remember the story of the young lord saying to Mrs. Adams at Boston: "The chief difference I see in England and in the United States is that here there appears to be a total absence of the leisured classes." "I hardly know what you mean by that expression," she said. "Well, people, don't you know, like me who have got nothing to do, and travel about from place to place." "Oh," replied Mrs. Adams, "we have plenty of them, but we call them tramps here."

People are more natural, and therefore less affected, than they were. The monologist has ceased to exist, and the conversation at the dinner-table is gayer and brighter, and the ball is tossed backwards and forwards with a lighter touch. I have been told that at a party of Lord Lansdowne's at Bowood, Macaulay went into the library after breakfast and talked to a listening and admiring

circle of friends till dinner-time. Carlyle, another monologist, was invited to meet him on his return from India at Rogers' famous breakfast-table in St. James's Place. Lord Houghton tells us that Macaulay never allowed him or Carlyle to open their lips. Studied raconteurs like Abraham Hayward, notorious wits like Sydney Smith and Lord Alvanley, have disappeared. Even Ireland has lost her Father Healey and her Baron Dowse. There is no journalist like Delane, no *arbiter elegantiarum* like D'Orsay, no diarist like Charles Greville, no *custus morum* like Poodle Byng. Historians we have, but no Macaulay or Carlyle. Novelists in shoals, but no Thackeray or Dickens. Poets like Swinburne or Miss Rossetti, but no Tennyson or Browning. When I think and talk of these men, whom I have known, and who in their time have filled a great space in the world, and recognise that by the present generation they are scarcely remembered, I feel the force of the old philosopher's words: "See how soon everything is forgotten, and look at the chaos of infinite time on each side and the emptiness of applause." Thiers, who had in most eventful times occupied a prominent position in French politics, who had been a Minister and a President of the Republic, met an old schoolfellow, who asked him what he had been doing since they were at school together. "J'ai été Ministre," he replied. "Protestant?" said his friend.

Oratory is not as common in the House of Lords as it was when a lady across the dinner-table asked Lord Brougham who was the first orator in that assembly, and he replied, "I consider Stanley the second." Oratory in the House of Commons ceased to exist when Mr. Gladstone departed from the scene, and it has been superseded by practical good speaking.

The salons of Grandes Dames have gone, and the dinners of a number between the graces and muses are gradually being replaced by more ostentatious banquets. There are more beautiful and cleverer women than ever, but there is no Almack's, no recognised leaders of fashion, and no house exists a proscription from which would argue anybody as out of society. Ladies go in omnibuses, and stockbrokers' wives compete with duchesses in the magnificence of their tiaras and their dress. Cooking has improved a hundredfold, but there is no prominent chef, like Soyer or Francatelli. There are many gourmands, but there is no gourmet like Edward Mills. Some one asked him if a certain dinner was not wonderful. "Good," he said, "but not wonderful. There were no points in it." "What do you mean?" said his friend. "Well," he replied, "Thames perch are in season from the 1st to the 12th of December. If there had been perch, that would have been a point." On another occasion, as a maraschino jelly was being handed round,

he kindly said to his neighbour, "Take the nobs; the liqueur always runs into the nobs." When at his moor in Scotland, it was always said that he had his grouse packed and sent to London and returned, as he thought the journey gave them a better flavour. One day in Lombard Street a paralytic customer was wheeled in. Turning to his partner, Lord Wolverton, he said, "George, if ever I get like that, rabbit me." Within a few weeks he himself was stricken by paralysis.

Professor Jowett, the Master of Balliol, in his letters recently published, gives a splendid lesson of patience and even hope to old men in their declining years, and I think they remain younger in mind and body, and are more tolerant to modern thought and action than they were. The late Duke of Wellington, at the time his father's statue was being removed from the arch at Constitution Hill, said to a complaining friend, "I am old, I am blind, I am deaf, I have no children, and now they are going to melt down my father, and yet I am quite happy." What a far finer view of life than the story told of Mr. Baring Wall, who mourned to a friend that nothing ever gave him pleasure. "Why," said the friend, "don't you try giving away some of your riches?" "I have tried that," said he, "but it gave me no pleasure whatever."

Lord Granville once, at a dinner of the Royal Society of Physicians, asked whether, in all their

varied experience, they had ever known of a case in which cause followed effect. Of course they had had no such an experience. "Not even," said he, "when one of your distinguished society follows his patient to the grave?" Mr. Gladstone, in his speech at the opening of the Dee Bridge, attributed much to the means of rapid inter-communication; and if people move rapidly, ideas move even faster, and we are apt to take from the example of other countries all those customs which are in themselves pleasing or luxurious. It seems a paradox to say that the very conveniences of modern science add materially to the wear and tear of life. People can travel rapidly, but they are always travelling. They can communicate by post, by telegraph, by telephone; and they are always and in all seasons writing, telegraphing, or telephoning to their friends. The persistent prosperity and ever-increasing growth of wealth in England throughout all classes, except, alas! the very poor, have tended to equality. Mr. Goschen, if I recollect right, delivered an address before the Statistical Society on the distribution and equalisation of wealth. I wish he would give a lecture on the distribution and equalisation of everything.

If I have unduly dwelt on the disappearance of prominence in society, it is not because I think equalisation means poverty; on the contrary, as Mr. Goschen argued that the distribution of wealth

meant the prosperity of the country, so I would maintain that it is only among the blind that the one-eyed man can be king; and though no doubt the emancipation from the conventionalities of the earlier part of the reign has been taken advantage of by the pushing improprieties of ridiculous vulgarians as emphasised in Ouida's "Massarenes," yet I maintain that everything is progress, and that greater freedom has and will tend to greater self-control. Eton has been famous among public schools, because the greater liberty given to her boys has fitted them more than any others for the struggle and battle of life; so I trust and believe that at this close of a glorious reign, England and English society are, with ever-increasing liberty and freedom, progressing in that path of righteousness which exalteth a nation.

II

SOME CHANGES IN SOCIAL LIFE DURING THE QUEEN'S REIGN

I DO not contemplate touching on the scientific progress, the literary achievements, or other higher matters of the Victorian epoch; but the recollections of one who saw the Coronation procession from Lord Carrington's house in Whitehall, which exists no more, and who, when six years old, ran a race with the great Duke of Wellington from Walmer Church to the Castle, may afford amusement to those of a younger generation, who may be interested in noting the changes that have crept almost imperceptibly into our social life.

On one occasion, when present with a contemporary at a pretty little play at the Princess's Theatre, called "Sweethearts," I remarked to my friend on the out-of-date costume of the hero, and wondered why he was so dressed. "Cast your mind back," he said, "only to 1850, or thereabouts, and you will find that that was the way you and I used to dress at that time." And it was true. A pair of dove-coloured trousers with two fluted stripes down the

sides, and buttoned under the foot with broad straps of the same material; the boots, of course, were Wellingtons, which were *sine quâ non* with a man of fashion in those days; a coat so high in the collar that the back of the hat rested on it. Indeed, every hat had a crescent of cloth on the back of the brim to prevent the rubbing of the beaver, or imitation beaver, of which the hat was made, for silk hats were not then invented. The scarf, never folded less than twice round the neck, like a waterfall, bulged out from a double-breasted waistcoat, cut very low, and was ornamented with two pins joined with a gold chain. In the evening we wore a blue coat with tight sleeves and brass buttons, and a waistcoat of flowered or brocaded silk. Black trousers, fastened by straps under patent leather pumps, had just then achieved a final victory over light-coloured kerseymeres or nankin pantaloons. As lately as 1862 Lord Derby insisted upon his sons dining with him in pantaloons and black silk stockings. A folding *chapeau bras*, for opera hats had not been invented, was always carried under the arm; for nobody but an apothecary or a solicitor would have dreamt of leaving his hat in the hall of the house where he was calling or dining.

White gloves were always worn by men at a party, but those who dined, of course, took them off, and Dicky Doyle used to say that it endowed

them with a conscious superiority, which prevented the desired amalgamation between those who had dined and those who had come in in the evening to form a tail to a dinner. Men wore their hair much longer in those days than now, falling over their collars, and their whiskers drooped, or were bostrakised, according to the fancy of the wearer. But no man, unless an officer in H.M. cavalry, ever ventured in pre-Crimean days to wear a beard or moustache. The Duke of Newcastle was the first man of any note who wore a beard ; and Lady Morley used to say the advantage of it was that you could tell all the courses he had eaten at dinner in consequence.

I will not attempt to deal with the ever-changing fashions of female attire, which in the Queen's reign have varied from the poke bonnet and the spoon bonnet, the white cotton stockings and the sandalled shoes, through the cage period to the pretty fashions of the present day. A vision arises before me of what we considered the seductive beauty of ringlets, the side-combs and plaits, then the hair parted in the middle and plastered tightly over the forehead and ears, then the hateful chignons, then the hair torn rudely from the forehead, then the fringes "by hot irons falsely curled or plaited very tight at night."

In the early days of her Majesty's reign Peers drove down to the House of Lords in full dress,

with their orders and ribbons, and bishops wore episcopal wigs; Bishop Blomfield, who died in 1857, being the last to do so. Lord Strafford recollected seeing his uncle, the famous George Byng, M.P. for Middlesex, going down to the House of Commons dressed in tights and black silk stockings; and Disraeli tells us how Lord George Bentinck on one occasion attended in boots and breeches, his red coat partially hidden under what was called a surtout. Hessian boots were common: the last man to wear them was Mr. Stephenson, a commissioner of Excise, well known in London society, who wore them to the day of his death in 1858. It was not till 1867 that members came down, to the horror of Mr. Speaker Denison, in pot hats and shooting-coats. And now, in 1908, Cabinet Ministers ride to their parliamentary duties on bicycles in anything but full dress. In a charming sporting book published in 1837 I find all the sportsmen dressed in blue or brown frock-coats and high hats.

As all the pictures of the Coronation show, the Life Guards wore bearskins on their heads, till these were superseded by the Roman helmet, with red horsehair tails over their necks. At a dinner-party once an argument arose as to whether the Blues did or did not wear pigtails at the Battle of Waterloo. One elderly gentleman said they did, and quoted himself as a good authority, because as an Eton boy he had seen that famous regiment

reviewed at Windsor by the King on their departure for Dover. Another of the guests said he ought to know, because he was a midshipman on board the transport which conveyed them across the Channel, and he was positive that they did not wear them. The argument grew so warm that the host wisely turned the conversation; but, being interested in the question, he went the following day to an old friend of his who had served in the Blues at Waterloo, and told him of the dispute that had arisen the previous evening at his table. "Both your friends were right," he said. "We were reviewed at Windsor by the King on our departure with our pigtails on, and at Dover we had them cut off before our embarkation."

The Foot Guards wore swallow-tailed red coats with white facings, white pipe-clayed cross-belts, large white woollen epaulettes, and in summer white duck trousers. A black boy in scarlet pantaloons with a gold kicking-strap, playing the cymbals, accompanied the Guards' bands. They were, of course, armed with the old musket called "Brown Bess," and were cleanly shaved. Then the tunic was adopted as the infantry uniform. The Metropolitan Police, with their tall hats and swallow-tail coats, had been organised before the Queen's accession, but it was for many years after the old watchmen, with their rattles and drab great-coats, existed in provincial towns, and made night hideous by screaming out the hour and the state of the weather.

Parish beadles, as depicted in "Oliver Twist," still flourished in their large cocked hats, their gold embroidered coats, and plush breeches.

Orders, decorations, and medals were very few. The Peninsular medal was issued in the year 1849, and then only to officers, thirty-five years after the campaign had closed. When medals were first issued to private soldiers, this innovation was denounced in the House of Lords as a prostitution of public honours. Queen Victoria has in her reign enlarged or instituted no less than fourteen orders. Of course the old Orders of the Garter, the Thistle, and the St. Patrick have existed from early times. The former was beloved by Lord Melbourne, because, he said, "There was no damned merit connected with it." The Order of the Bath has been changed from one grade to three, and the Statutes were extended, and Volunteers are now eligible for the honour. The Order of St. Michael and St. George, originally a Maltese Order, has been enlarged during the present reign.

1. The Victoria Cross,
2. The Star of India,
3. The Victoria and Albert,
4. The Empire of India,
5. The Albert Medal,
6. The Nurses' Medal,
7. The Distinguished Service Order,
8. The Jubilee Medal,
9. The Victorian Order,

are all the creations of the late reign. Our King has since instituted the Order of Merit, and one of bravery for miners. Decorations and stars and medals have become very common, and the value set on them has naturally decreased. There are now twenty-seven medals. There is one for every campaign. Our Commander-in-Chief is a Knight of St. Patrick, a G.C.B., a G.C.M.G., has the Legion of Honour, the Medjidieh, the Turkish medal, the Osmanlieh, the bronze Star of Egypt, and seven medals, and, according to the present fashion, wears them at official parties. On such occasions I do not remember the Duke of Wellington wearing any order but that of the Garter or the Golden Fleece.

The late Lord Clanwilliam was one day struck by seeing a civilian decorated with a ribbon and star, and asked who he was. No one could tell him, until at last he ascertained the wearer was our ambassador at Paris. "Then," said Lord Clanwilliam, "if all a man gains in diplomacy is that nobody should know him on his return, I shall resign my diplomatic career"—and he did.

Before the Queen came to the throne macaronis and bucks had vanished, and dapper men had made way for dandies.

> "Dandies, to make a greater show,
> Wore coats stuffed out with pads and puffing.
> But is not this quite *à propos?*
> For what's a goose without its stuffing?"

Grantley Berkeley till his death boasted of his pugilism, and in the fifties he delighted in wearing two or three different-coloured satin waistcoats and three or four gaudy silk neckcloths round his throat. And as late as 1842, Lord Malmesbury tells us, Mr. Everett wore a green coat at a dinner-party at Lord Stanley's. At this time Lord Cantalupe, Count D'Orsay, Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence, and Sir George Wombwell were essentially dandies and arbitrators of dress and fashion; Charles Greville and Frederick Byng, who was always called the "Poodle," were the police and the terror of the young men and the fashionable clubs. Now the reign of the dandies has succumbed to the aggressive inroads of swells and mashers. But, ah! those dear dandies of my boyhood, with their triple waistcoats, their tightened waists, their many-folded neckcloths, and their wristbands turned back over their coat sleeves—all have departed; the most beautiful, genial, and witty of them all, Alfred Montgomery, who was in the Queen's household at the time of her accession, was the last to pass away. How fresh seems to me the memory of his kindness, from the time when I first saw him as Secretary to Lord Wellesley at Kingston House, seated at breakfast at 11 o'clock in a brocaded dressing-gown and slippers of marvellous work and design, to the last days of his life! How often he and Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence took me to the

play, and gave me oyster suppers after it! How often he drove me through the Park in his cabriolet with its high-stepping horse, the tiny tiger hanging on by his arms behind! All are gone now, and it does not do to look back too earnestly on the past; the sunlight on it is apt to make one's eyes water. In those days, and down until the fifties, the Italian Opera House, which at the Queen's accession was called "Her Majesty's," was in its glory. The pit, which occupied the floor of the house, gave access to the boxes, and was appropriately called "The Fops' Alley." Here Rubini, Mario and Grisi, Lablache, and later on Cruvelli, Sontag, Alboni and Jenny Lind delighted audiences as fashionable as those which now again fill the grand tier of Covent Garden; and the ballet, with Cerito, Taglioni, Fanny Ellsler and Rosati, adorned an art which, alas! has now degenerated into a taste for vulgar breakdowns and tarara-boom-de-ayes. The theatres were at this time few and the prices low; impecunious young men of fashion in my early days used to take advantage of half-price and the dress circle, for stalls had not then destroyed the pit, to hear the Keans, the Keeleys, and Buckstone, while Rachel and Ristori satisfied the lovers of tragedy. Vauxhall, with its thousands of little oil-lamps, was at its zenith, to be succeeded by Cremorne, and then by various reputable and dull entertainments at South Kensington. At this

time there was no public place or club where a lady could dine, and I recollect a most respectable peer of the realm who, on expressing a wish to dine in the coffee-room of the hotel in which he was staying with his wife, was told by his landlord that he must get a third person to join their party!

The glory of Crockford's had departed before I came to London in 1851, and a restaurant doomed to failure had taken its place. But St. James's was full of fashionable "Hells," the Cocoa Tree Club being the best known. It was here that one Sunday morning the witty Lord Alvanley saw two mutes standing at the door. "Is it true," he said to them, "that the devil is dead? because, if so, I need not go to church this morning." For in those, and even later days, pageantry pursued even the dead—mutes standing at the dead man's door for a week, hearses with black plumes of feathers, black cloaks and gloves, and long hat-streamers of silk or crape, according to the relation of the mourner to the deceased, and hatchments—properly spelled, achievements—hung over the door for a year.

Mr. Banderet, the old proprietor of Brooks's Club, recollected when the packs of cards used there were reckoned by scores a night. Now cards are rarely called for, except sometimes on the occasion of a rubber at the meetings of the Fox Club which are held there. In the early forties, long

whist with ten points to a game was still played; and now I am told that even short whist is being supplanted at the Portland and Turf Clubs by bridge whist, écarté, and bézique.

Early in the reign, people at large country house-parties used to go into breakfast arm-in-arm, and no lady ever walked with her husband except *bras dessus bras dessous*. Friends always walked arm-in-arm, and the country neighbour always made his entry into a party arm-in-arm with his wife and daughter. Now the fashion has disappeared, except at dinner, and there has sprung up an odious habit of indiscriminate handshaking morning and evening, in season and out of season, and another fashion, worthy of a *table d'hôte*, of assigning to each guest the place where he is to sit at dinner. I wonder why the bolder spirits of the younger and impecunious generation have not risen in revolt against this interference with individual liberty of choice which used to be theirs.

Lady Granville once remarked that, in her younger days, nobody in polite society ever mentioned their poverty or their digestion, and now they had become the principal topics of conversation; and if society was then vigilant in ignoring all allusion to money and commerce, we have now gone far in the contrary direction. Everybody quotes the prices of stocks and shares, and I have lived to see the day when a youthful scion of a

noble and distinguished house produced from his pocket at dinner a sample bundle of silks to show how cheaply they could be bought at his establishment.

Wine circulars with peers' coronets pursue me weekly; and I can buy my coal at 25s. a ton from waggons ornamented with a marquis's coronet.

Almack's flourished, where it was said that fashion, not rank or money, gave the *entrée*. Society was so small that Lady Palmerston used to write in her own hand all invitations to her parties, and Lord Anglesey used to have in his house in Burlington Gardens a slate, where anybody who wished to dine might write down his name; and so circumscribed was the fashionable world that there was always in each season one lady who was recognised by society as *par excellence* the beauty of the year. The polka had just been introduced, about 1843, and Augustus Lumley and William Blackburn arranged the days of all the fashionable parties and balls in London, and provided lists of all the eligible young men in that small and exclusive ring. Lady Blessington's salon at Gore House, where D'Orsay, the "Cupidon déchaîné," as he was called by Byron, Disraeil, Bulwer, Charles Dickens, and Napoleon the Third all met, came to an abrupt close, in 1848, by her leaving the country. The famous salon of the Miss Berrys in Curzon Street, to which as a boy of

nineteen I had the honour of being invited, came to an end in 1851, and in the following year Miss Berry died. The salon she and her sister had established had been extraordinarily famous.

It still seems strange to me that I should have known a lady whom Thackeray says had been asked in marriage by Horace Walpole, who himself had been patted on the head by George the First. This lady had knocked at Dr. Johnson's door; had been intimate with Fox, the beautiful Georgina Duchess of Devonshire, and that brilliant Whig Society of the reign of George the Third; had known the Duchess of Queensberry, the patroness of Gay and Prior, the admired young beauty of the court of Queen Anne—Lady Ashburton, "a commanding woman, before whom we all knelt," entertained Carlyle, Hallam, and Thackeray at Bath House. Lady Jersey still held a salon for the Tories in Berkeley Square, and Lady Grey, the beautiful widow of Charles Earl Grey, entertained the Whigs in Eaton Square till 1857. Lady Granville in Bruton Street, Lady William Russell in South Audley Square, and Madame de Flahault in the house which was the Coventry Club, and is now the St. James's, held salons to the end of the eighties. I know that I should differ from all the memoirs I have read if I were to say that Lady Palmerston's parties owed their especial charm to the fact that they formed

the certain rendezvous of all the people who made her "world"—more than to her position and her charms, or Lord Palmerston's ready *bonhomie*. It was told of him that he used to greet all those whom he did not know with a "How d'ye do?" and "How is the old complaint?" which fitted all sorts and conditions of men. Lady Molesworth in Eaton Place, and Lady Waldegrave in Carlton Gardens and Strawberry Hill, were introducing more cosmopolitan gatherings, with Abraham Hayward and Bernal Osborne as standing dishes—the first a studied *raconteur*, the latter always requiring a butt for his wit and his sarcasm. Society was now becoming democratised, and the days of the *grands seigneurs* and the *grandes dames* were rapidly disappearing.

Hayward died in his lodgings at St. James's at the same time as Panizzi, the famous librarian of the British Museum, was dying within the walls of that building where he had immortalised himself by creating the splendid reading-room we all know so well. Mr. Gladstone used to say that Hayward's death-bed was happy and Panizzi's miserable, because one lived where all his friends could drop in for a few minutes' daily talk, and the other required a pilgrimage which few were at the trouble to take. What a reflection on the friendship of the world!

Notorious wits like Sydney Smith, Jekyll, Luttrell,

Bernal Osborne have disappeared from the scene, the last survivor having been Dr. Quin, the advocate of homœopathy. I met him one night at Lady Craven's, where he and I were constant guests; I had a bad headache, and Lady Craven, much against my will, asked him what I should take. "Advice," he answered promptly.

Great changes in dinners occurred during the forties. Formerly a large turbot with red festoons of lobster was an inevitable dish at a London dinner-party; a saddle of mutton at the head of the table, which was carved by the host; and a couple of chickens, with white sauce and tongue in the middle, was a necessity, and led to various conventional compliments as to whether the hostess or her neighbour should carve them. Sir David Dundas used to tell of a chicken being launched on his lap, and the lady with a sweet smile saying: "Would you kindly give me back that chicken?" With six side-dishes and two bottles of champagne in silver coolers the table was complete. The champagne was only handed round after the second course, and was drunk in homœopathic doses out of small tubes of glass, which contained little but froth. Lord Alvanley was the first who had courage to protest, saying, "You might as well expect us to drink our wine out of thermometers." After dinner the cloth was removed, and the wine and dessert put on a shining mahogany table. The Bishop of

Oxford at Cuddesdon used to drink the health of each candidate for holy orders; but as he did not like drinking so much himself, he always kept by him a bottle of toast and water. On one occasion a bumptious young man, on being asked what wine he would have, replied, "A little of your Lordship's bottle, if you please," thinking to get something of superior excellence. "Take my bottle to him," said the Bishop to his butler. But now the good old habit of the master of the house asking his guests to drink wine with him has passed away; yet in the early days of the reign it was so much the fashion that when the change began, on a host asking a lady if she drank no wine, she replied, "Do you expect me to drink it with the butler?"

It was at Lady Sydney's hospitable table in Cleveland Square that I gained my first experience of what was then called *dîner à la russe*, when the viands were carved off the table, and the fruit, and probably flowers, were on the cloth which was not removed after dinner—tea always following coffee.

In country houses luncheons consisted of cold meat or the children's dinner; and the men who were going to shoot made themselves sandwiches from the cold meat which, with perhaps an egg, constituted the ordinary breakfast. Battues and hot luncheons were an innovation introduced by the Prince Consort.

Breakfasts used to be given by Rogers the banker

and poet, who, in addition to the literary charm of his company, would delight his guests with the musical notes of an artificial nightingale, which sat in a cage outside his window. His poems of Italy were beautifully illustrated by Stothard, Turner, and Calcott—a novelty in those days. Luttrell said that his poems "would have been dished but for their plates."

Visitors to Holland House still may see on a seat in the garden that lovely tribute to his "Pleasures of Memory":—

> "Here Rogers sat, and here for ever dwell,
> With me those pleasures which he sang so well."

He died at the age of ninety-three in 1858, having seen in his youth the heads of rebels on Temple Bar, and cartloads of young girls who had taken part in the Gordon riots, in dresses of various colours, on their way to be executed at Tyburn.

Notwithstanding Disraeli's assertion that to breakfast out was a plebeian amusement, Mr. Gladstone continued his breakfasts on Thursdays till he left Harley Street in 1880.

Smoking existed from the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, but only on sufferance, and many were the evenings in winter when the smoking brigade was sent across a sloppy yard to smoke in the harness-room; or, when there were less bigoted hosts, we were allowed to remain in the servants'

hall. No gentleman ever smoked in the streets till after the Crimean peace; and ladies never sullied their lips with tobacco, or even allowed men to smoke in their presence. It was not till the year of '45 that a smoking-room was first established in the Holy of Holies, of Dandydom, White's Club; and it was 1881 before smoking was allowed below the attics in Brooks's.

Thanks to the introduction by the Prince of Wales, who has since become King Edward VII., of smoking after dinner, wine drinking is now over. What it was in old days appears almost incredible. The late Lord Clanwilliam told me of one occasion when he had dined at a friend's villa near Putney. The dinner was extraordinarily late for those days —at eight o'clock. When they at last rose from the table and went up to their rooms, Lord Clanwilliam flung open his window, and saw the haymakers coming into the field. "I wonder," he thought, "what hour they begin work," and on consulting his watch he found it was 8.30. The haymakers were returning to work from their breakfasts! Mr. Gladstone recollected that on one occasion when a host put to a bishop, who was dining with him, the ordinary formula, "Will your lordship have any more wine?" the Bishop replied in a solemn voice, "Thank you, not till we have drunk what we have before us."

When I first entered the Admiralty as a boy,

about every three weeks the chief clerk used to come into the room where I sat with a "jabot frill" and entirely dressed for the evening, and say, "Mr. Jesse, I shall not be here to-morrow, for I am going to dine out to-night." And this was not meant as a joke, but was considered quite a natural thing. At other times J. H. Jesse, who was my immediate chief, used to tell us stories too well known to repeat, of the wild freaks of Lord Waterford and Charles and Frank Sheridan, which would now be impossible. Imagine such an occurrence as this: A mad party were on their way back from dinner "bear-fighting" in Pall Mall. One of the party threw Frank Sheridan's hat over the area rails. At that inauspicious moment a bishop issued from the classical portico of the Athenæum, and in an instant his hat was transferred to Frank Sheridan's head, and the others, making common cause with the bishop, vainly pursued the thief down the street. The next morning Frank Sheridan calmly went down to his clerical duties at the Admiralty in the ecclesiastical hat!

I once asked Mr. Charles Villiers how he compared the morals of his early days with those of our time. He answered with a touch of cynicism that he supposed human nature was human nature at all times, but one difference was manifest. In his golden days every young man, even if he was busy, pretended to be idle; now every young man,

if he was idle, pretended to be busy; and that meant a good deal. The stricter Sabbatarianism of the early years of the reign existed side by side with a lamentable laxity, and perhaps the looser morals of those times were a reaction against the too Puritanic restraints of the dreary Sundays. I think of the weary services of my youth, when, with a properly pomatumed head, I was taken to the high pews, where I had to listen to the fatuous and lengthy sermons of a curate in a black gown and bands, and the refined music of Tate and Brady. What a debt we who live now owe to the movement which has emancipated us from that melancholy view of our religious duties; though there may be danger of going too far in the opposite extreme, of paying too little regard to the scruples of others, and letting our Sunday amusements rob some of needed rest. Cock-fighting, which was illegal, flourished at a farm near Harrow till the fifties. Prize-fights were still fashionable, and there was a great fight, which excited the sporting world, between Tom Sayers and an American, J. Heenan, called the "Benicia Boy," at Farnborough in 1860. A subscription for the English champion was started by Napier Sturt, to which the House of Commons, headed by Lord Palmerston, contributed. Early in the reign oaths were an ordinary ingredient in polite conversation. The Queen's favourite Prime Minister was more than an ordinary sinner in this

way. Archdeacon Denison once complained to him that on going to his brother, Lord Beauvale, on the subject of some Ecclesiastical Bill, he had damned him, and damned the Bill, and damned everything. "But, damn it, what could he do?" said Lord Melbourne. Count D'Orsay once called on the publishers, Messrs. Saunders & Otley, on Lady Blessington's behalf, and used very strong language. A beautiful gentleman in a white neck-cloth said he would rather sacrifice Lady Blessington's patronage than stand such personal abuse. "I was not personal," said D'Orsay. "If you are Saunders, then damn Otley; if you are Otley, then damn Saunders."

At regimental messes coarse acts and coarse language were common, and at private dinner-tables the departure of the ladies from the room was the signal for every sort of loose and indecent conversation. That is rarely the case now.

Sir Frederic Rogers in 1842 tried hard in the columns of the *Times* to kill duels by ridicule, and they were forbidden in the army in 1844, but they still existed. I well recollect Lord Cardigan's trial in the House of Lords, where, in consequence of a legal technicality, he was acquitted of the murder of Captain Tucker in a duel. Ridicule, however, gave the *coup de grâce* to duels. In 1852 George Smythe, the representative of the Young England party, and Colonel Romilly were going to fight in

consequence of an electioneering quarrel. When they got to the Weybridge Station there was only one fly to be had, so both combatants, thirsting for each other's blood, and their seconds had to drive over in it to the chosen spot, George Smythe sitting on the box, and Colonel Romilly, with both the seconds, inside. At the fateful moment a pheasant rose out of a copse, as in Leech's famous caricature, and a pistol went off. The combatants exchanged shots, and the foes returned as they came. The incident was dealt with in a witty article in the *Times*, and so ridicule did more than morality to kill duelling. *Solvuntur risu tabulæ.*

One of the most remarkable changes of manners has been that familiarities have taken the place of formalities. In my early days few elderly ladies addressed their husbands by their Christian names in public. I never heard my mother call my father by his Christian name. I recollect that Lady ——'s fame was imperilled because, after some great man's death, a letter from her to him was discovered beginning with his Christian name. I think I am right in saying that at Eton we never recognised the existence of such a thing. Even boys who "knew each other at home" never divulged them. Letters between friends often began "My dear Sir," and many boys in my time addressed their fathers always as "Sir." A friend of mine, Gerald Ponsonby, dining with Lady Jersey, heard her say

that she never recollected her father, Lord Westmorland, though specially attached to his sister, Lady Lonsdale, call her anything but Lady Lonsdale; and Henry Greville, who was present at the same dinner, said he remembered his mother, Lady Charlotte, and her brother, the Duke of Portland, meeting in the morning at Welbeck and saying, "How is your Ladyship this morning?" and her replying with all solemnity, "I am quite well, I am obliged to your Grace."

All shopkeepers are now "young gentlemen" and "young ladies." The Duchess of Somerset, on making inquiry about something she had purchased at Swan & Edgar's, was asked if she had been served by a young gentleman with fair hair. "No," she said meditatively, "I think it was by an elderly nobleman with a bald head."

Photography was in its infancy early in the fifties, and had just begun to be common in the hideous daguerreotypes and talbotypes of that time. The witty Lady Morley used to say in reply to any complaint of the dulness of the weather, "What can you expect when the sun is busy all day taking likenesses in Regent Street?"

Before 1860 there were games but no crazes. Tennis, cricket, and rowing existed, but created no enthusiasm. The boat races were watched by rowing men and the friends of the crews, and that was all. I well recollect the great public school

matches at Lord's, where the Winchester men, as they always called themselves, wore tall white hats. They were attended only by some schoolboys, their relations, and those who were really interested in cricket. In all athletic sports there has been a marked development. Men row better, run faster, leap higher, gain larger scores at cricket than the men of the days gone by. In 1860 women first entered the field as competitors with men in out-door games. Croquet could be played by men and women; and in 1870 women, leaving *les grâces* and embroidery-frames, found they could compete with men in lawn tennis, as they do now in bicycling, golf, fishing, and hunting. The present generation of splendidly developed girls shows how useful these athletic exercises have become; but we must all recognise that the age in which we live is an age of emancipation. The swaddling-clothes of child-hood have been cast aside, and the limbs are unfettered.

This is the case in art, in music, which has come in the light of a new mode of expression for all the subtle and innermost experiences of modern thought, in dress, in furniture, and essentially in ideas and conversation.

Conventionalities and commonplaces have been supplanted by daring and originality, and who shall venture to say that the change is for the worse?

Following this movement a certain number of

ambitious young women, whom envious people called the "Souls," some clever by education, some by intuition, some from a sublime audacity, appeared some years ago on the stage of London society. By the brilliancy of their conversation, by their attractiveness and their personal charm, —and, may it be said, from a divine instinct which taught them how dear flattery is to the race of men ?—they gradually drew into their society much that was distinguished, clever, and agreeable in social and political life. They soon succeeded in completely breaking down the barriers that had heretofore existed between men of opposite political parties, and included in their ranks everybody who, in their opinion, added anything to the gaiety of nations. Never having myself been admitted into the heart of this society, I have sometimes been allowed to feel its throbbings, and to be drawn into sufficient proximity to estimate the real effect its existence has produced in social life ; and when I have compared the sparkle, dash, and vitality of its conversation with the stereotyped conventionalities of the ordinary "Have you been to the Academy ? " sort of talk of my earlier days, I think that under whatever name they live on the lips of men we must take off our hats and make our bow to them with courtesy and admiration. No doubt women, by becoming the companions and competitors of men in all their amusements

and pursuits, have lost somewhat the old-fashioned respect and deference they received in earlier days. But "la femme est toujours la femme, et jamais ne sera qu'une femme tant que le monde entier durera."

It cannot be denied that with the growth of education far greater latitude in conversation is now allowed in the presence of ladies; but we live in a time of introspection and self-analysis unknown to former generations, and the realistic tendencies of our modern novels have been imported into our modern talk; but we should bear in mind the wise words of Lord Bowen, who tells us that it is not the absence of costume, but the presence of innocence, which made the happiness of the Garden of Eden.

I cannot venture to describe the modern young lady, but shall take refuge in what Lucas Malet says, "that, compared with even a superficial comprehension of the intricacies of her thought and conduct, the mastery of the Chinese language would supply an airy pastime, the study of the higher mathematics a gentle sedative."

Taking the morals of 1837 and the morals of to-day, and making allowance for Charles Villiers's dictum that "human nature is human nature," I believe that, notwithstanding the enforced absence of the restraining influence of a Court and its society, morals in the main have improved. I am

amazed by the marvellous strides in the manners and education of young children; instead of the shy self-consciousness of my youth, we see everywhere well-mannered, well-educated little folk, who can speak intelligently and answer when they are spoken to. When I think of the rough times of dear Eton, the sanded floor, the horrid food, the six o'clock school without greatcoats, the complete absence of any attempt at educating stupid boys like myself, I tremble at the pitch men and women have reached. Now there has come a very Capua of luxury, which indeed has not yet, but may later produce effeminacy—the early cup of tea in bed, the heavy luncheons with their liqueurs and cigarettes, the profusion of flowers, the blaze of diamonds, the costly dinners and champagne, the soft and luxurious furniture, the warmth and the comfort in travelling; but we may believe that men will not in consequence "lose the wrestling thews that throw the world"—and every day we are reminded by some noble deeds of gallantry that this is not the case.

People's tongues have had their changes of fashion too. There were many old-fashioned folk who in my young days still pronounced gold as "goold," china as "chaney," Rome as "Room," James as "Jeames," cucumber as "cowcumber," yellow as "yaller," lilac as "lalock," Grosvenor as "Grasvenor," and Lady Jersey as "Lady Jarsey."

My father told me that Byron when at Harrow was always called "Bŷron."

Fully to describe the changes in London during her late Majesty's reign would be impossible. The new Houses of Parliament were just begun to be built when the Queen came to the throne; the Thames Embankment had not been begun. Nearly all the fashionable part of London has been rebuilt. The Marble Arch was removed to where it now stands in 1851, to make way for the new façade of Buckingham Palace; the bridge over the ornamental water was not built until 1857. In 1886 the Duke of Wellington's statue was taken down, and the position of the archway at the top of Constitution Hill was altered. Before this the drive used to be reserved for those having the *entrée*, and was only thrown open to the public then. Green Park was in my childhood surrounded by a high brick wall, inside of which was a house belonging to Lady William Gordon. A bit of water was by it. The mound on which a great sycamore now flourishes was Lady W. Gordon's ice-house, and the stags which were at the entrance were removed to Albert Gate, where they now remain. At the north-east corner was a large reservoir, which existed till 1856; and I can see now in my mind's eye the marks of women's pattens in the muddy tracks which did duty for paths in those days. It is only thirty years ago since one of the gatekeepers

at the top of Portland Place used to tell of the days when he was a keeper, preserving game in the fields and coverts which are now the beautifully laid out grounds of Regent's Park. I do not recollect a turnpike at Hyde Park Corner, but it was 1865 before the tolls were abolished in Kensington and Bayswater, and tolls were exacted at the metropolitan bridges up to 1879. Tattersall's stood till 1865 at the top of Grosvenor Place, all of which has been rebuilt. Belgravia was in process of building when the Queen came to the throne—Belgravia where, as Lady Morley said, "all the women were brave and all the men modest," alluding to the new habit, which sprang up in the fifties, of women being allowed to walk alone in that district. Formerly no lady ever went out unaccompanied by a servant; young married ladies scarcely ever received men visitors or danced except on rare occasions. Late in the forties five o'clock teas were just coming into vogue, the old Duchess of Bedford's being, as I considered, very dreary festivities.

Swiss peasant girls with little brooms of wood shavings attracted the children in the streets with their song of "Who'll buy a Broom?" These have been replaced by shrill-voiced urchins yelling "Winner! Winner!" and by the obnoxious whistle summoning a cab.

Up till the end of the forties the old hackney

coaches, with straw in the bottom for the passengers' feet, with drivers clad in seven-caped coats, and with their miserable jades, still crawled about the London streets. It was told of a certain beau that he arrived at dinner with a straw hanging to his shoe: he apologised for this, saying his carriage had not returned from his wife's funeral, and he had been compelled to come in a hackney coach. The cabs were painted yellow, and the drivers were perched on little boxes at the side, instead of, as now, at the back. These were not of long duration, and were soon superseded by the four-wheeler and the hansom cab. Mail coaches of course were still running to all places to which the railroads had not yet penetrated. In 1837, a year of great severity, the mails were carried from Canterbury to Dover in sleighs. Omnibuses were few, with straw in the bottom. The lowest fare was sixpence, and in them never was a lady seen. Ladies of fashion went out for a solemn drive round the Park on Sundays; but no lady went in a single-horse carriage till Lord Brougham invented the carriage which still bears his name. The Victoria, the barouche or landau, appeared later on. No lady would willingly have driven down St. James's Street, or have dreamt of stopping at a club door. No lady of fashion went out to dinner except in a chariot, which was pronounced "charrot," with a coachman in a wig, and with one or two men-

servants in silk stockings. Indeed, the yellow chariot and the tall footmen with long staves behind the old Duchess of Cleveland's chariot are fresh in the memory of even young people, and must still have been seen by the present generation, who can recollect Lady Mildred Beresford Hope's pony carriage with two outriders.

It is impossible, even in an article as frivolous as this, to pass by in absolute silence the glorious progress of the Queen's reign. In 1836 there were 52,000 convicts living in foreign lands in a state of bestial immorality. Now, notwithstanding the increase of population, there are only 4000 undergoing penal servitude, and in this country. In 1837 4000 debtors were lying in common cells, with damp brick walls, with no bedding, and herded with murderers and common malefactors. Now transportation and imprisonment for debt have been abolished. Just before the Queen's accession a little boy was condemned to death for breaking a confectioner's window and stealing sweets. Now no one can be hanged for a less crime than murder. Executions are not in public; the terrible scenes of witnessing them are done away with, and I hope the sensational hoisting of the black flag will soon be a thing of the past. A friend of mine told me how in his youth he used to witness the executions at Tyburn. And there still exists on the top of the house near the Marble Arch, which,

when I was young, belonged to the Dowager Duchess of Somerset, a bench from which the frivolous and fashionable world used to witness with indifference, if not amusement, these terrible executions. Reduction of sentences has been followed by diminution of criminals, the young are protected from the shame and cruelty of becoming gaol-birds, and the whole system of prison discipline is now laid on wise and merciful lines.

Lunatics are treated with careful kindness, instead of being chained together on beds of straw, naked, handcuffed, and shown at twopence a head for each visitor. Factory Acts have been passed by which children of four, five, and six have been saved from being harnessed to trucks in coal mines and being forced to climb chimneys. Women have been protected in dangerous trades. We have public baths for health and cleanliness. Free trade has made food cheap, to the enormous advantage of the consumer. There is free education for the children of the poor, at a cost of £10,000,000 per annum to the nation; cheap postage, cheap newspapers, cheap books, and free libraries are all aiding to fit the democracy for their duties.

In 1837 80,000 letters were posted; now there are 200,000,000 posted yearly. In 1837 hospitals were in a horrid state, and no nurses of a higher type than Dickens's Mrs. Gamp and Betsy Prigg existed. Children's hospitals there were none. Now

the health of the people is cared for as it never was before, and it may almost be said the dumb speak and the blind receive their sight. Mortality has been lessened; pain has been mitigated by anæsthetics; surgical operations, once perilous or impossible, are now safely performed; and hospitals abound and are nobly endowed. The old man of my early recollections, crippled by gout and disease, is no longer to be seen; and men of an age advanced beyond the experience of those days are overtaken by kindly Death on the bicycle track or on the golf links.

Picture galleries have been instituted, parks and museums and gardens thrown open, and the old pharisaical sabbatarianism, which closed them on the only days when artisans and workmen could enjoy them, has been banished to a certain degree. As lately as 1845 nobody could carry a bundle, sleep, or walk in a working-dress in St. James's Park; and the Royal Parks, as compared with the present time, were a howling wilderness, without a flower-bed or a shrubbery. The lovely park in Battersea, the scene of modern cycling, consisted of damp market gardens, where asparagus, which was called "Battersea grass," was cultivated.

I am aware that "the wind that blows upon an older head blows no longer from a happy shore," but, looking back over the long vista of fifty years, I see improvements everywhere, with few excep-

tions. Men's morals, and certainly their language, have improved, excessive drinking has become unfashionable and almost unknown in the society of gentlemen, cigars and cigarettes have replaced the filthy habit of taking snuff, night-caps and stuffy four-posters and sweltering feather-beds have been replaced by fresh air and tubs, and electricity has snuffed out cotton-wicked candles and rid us of tinder-boxes; and may ere long rid us of gas. Everybody is clean, and it would be difficult to find a man or a woman in society who is not engaged in some good and useful work, or some endeavour to help others in the sorrows and struggles of life.

Finally, in the language of Lord Brougham, the late Queen could boast that "she found law dear, and she left it cheap; she found it a sealed book, she left it a living letter; found it the patrimony of the rich, and left it the inheritance of the poor; found it the two-edged sword of craft and oppression, and left it the staff of honesty and the shield of innocence."

And now I have done. I know that it is for the old only to dream dreams and the young to see visions; but having dreamt my dream, I indulge for a moment in the privilege of the young; and while humbly acknowledging that there are many social problems to be solved, and that, as Machiavelli said, "a free government, in order to

maintain itself free, has need every day of some new provision in favour of liberty," I think I see a vision of the glories to be accomplished in succeeding generations, and cherish a faith "which is large in time, and that which shapes it to some perfect end."

> "This fine old world of ours is but a child
> Yet in its go-cart—Patience give it time
> To learn its limbs—there is a hand that guides."

III

QUEEN VICTORIA'S LETTERS

ONCE more, under the authority and with the sanction of the King, is the country taken into the confidence of Queen Victoria. Surely no sovereign has ever courted more fully or more willingly the fierce light of publicity on a reign which calls for no concealment or disguise. Mr. A. C. Benson and Lord Esher, to whom the King entrusted the selection now published from the letters of her late Majesty, tell us that it is made from 500 to 600 volumes, and therefore the three volumes now published can only be considered as a valuable *précis* of the whole. To this *précis* it is not possible in the space of an article to do justice, or indeed to do more than touch superficially on the chief events recorded in the late Queen's correspondence.

Probably more has been written in the lives of contemporary statesmen of this period of English history than of any other, and little will be found in the record of events which is new.

Few now remain on life's stage who can recollect the early days of Princess Victoria and her corona-

tion in 1838. To those few the letters now published will come as a great and interesting addition to their knowledge of contemporary history, while those of a more recent period will welcome an introduction to the intimate and inner life of the great constitutional monarch who ruled over this country for more than half a century. There are thousands of enthusiastic motorists who are whirled from place to place in their cars who have never had the opportunity or taken the trouble to examine into the mechanism which supplies the motive power of their machines; and so there exist many thousands of people who have been content to accept their knowledge of history from text-books, who now will be able to understand the inner machinery of the State and of the vast constitutional influences exercised by the reigning sovereign.

The early pages of Queen Victoria's letters will show how capable the young Princess was of deep and strong affections. Having lost her father, the Duke of Kent, when she was but a baby, she concentrated her childish affections on her uncle, a brother of her mother, Prince Leopold, who after his refusal of the Greek throne had undertaken to be King of Belgium, and had left this country when the Princess was still a child. In 1834 she writes: "I had so hoped and wished to have seen you again, my beloved uncle." And the uncle,

whom she frequently says she longed to call her father, deserved to be beloved, for his copious letters clearly show his deep affection for the little Princess, whom he wished to see educated in a way that would fit her for the throne she was then likely to occupy. Under the direction of this uncle and the personal guidance of her governess, Fräulein Lehzen, at fourteen years old she was able to write to King Leopold and tell him she would like to read Sully's "Memoirs," and was studying Rollin's "Ancient History," Russell's "Modern Europe," and "Clarendon's Rebellion," and out of her lesson-time she was reading accounts of the wars in Spain, Portugal, and the South of France, and the history of her own country, "as of course," she added, "that is one of my first duties." This while other young ladies of her age were only going through the ordinary schoolroom curriculum, and playing the harp and working samplers for the benefit of posterity. The relations between King William IV. and the Duchess of Kent were far from amicable, and the poor Princess was not allowed, to her intense sorrow, to be present at his coronation. Before she came to the throne she had won universal admiration from all sorts and conditions of men, and the oft-told tale of her coronation and her feelings, taken from her own journal, bears another repetition.

Lord Palmerston, surely no mean judge of char-

acter, said that any Minister who had to deal with her would soon find that she was no ordinary person. Creevey was a cynic and no flatterer, and describes a dinner to which he was invited, where he sat opposite to her Majesty and could not take his eyes off her. "I never saw," he says, "a more pretty and natural devotion than she shows her mother; a more homely little being you cannot imagine when she is at her ease, and she is evidently always wishing to be more so."

With all her natural good qualities the Princess was fortunate, in addition to King Leopold, in having so good an adviser as her Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne. A great and immediate confidence sprang up between them which ripened as time went on. Each letter shows how deep this friendship and how constant these communications had become, and when his defeat came about and Sir Robert Peel insisted upon the change of the ladies of the Queen's household, it was easy to see how real was the sorrow with which she contemplated the change of Government. During her after-discussions with Sir Robert Peel, she exclaims, in a letter to Lord Melbourne, "All that happened in that eventful day came back most forcibly to my mind, and brought with it my grief."

The poor Queen could hardly bear Sir Robert Peel's cold manner. "Oh," she says, "how different, how dreadfully different to that frank, open,

natural, most kind, warm manner of Lord Melbourne!" Then the Queen describes in embittered language Peel's conduct in wishing that she should give up her ladies of the household on the change of Ministry, a course which she successfully resisted. And then she tells Lord Melbourne how she wishes he could have been present at her interview with Sir Robert, as he would have been pleased with her composure and great firmness. It is interesting to notice how before the end of the Queen's reign this *causa teterrima belli* had ceased to exist. On Peel's declining to form a Government, there is no concealment of the Queen's pleasure at the return of her old Minister to office. Her anxiety about Lord Melbourne's health and her almost daily inquiries afford a wonderful picture of the relationships that can exist between a sovereign and a subject. Charles Gore tells of one night when the Queen after dinner put her finger up to her lips and said "hush," and the guests looking round saw Lord Melbourne fast asleep in his chair. It is said that Lord Melbourne never swore in her presence, which, as we know what a proficient he was in the art, shows a watchfulness and respect which upsets the old theory that familiarity breeds contempt.

But beyond the help that Lord Melbourne was always ready to give, King Leopold had provided her Majesty with a confidential and prudent adviser

in Baron Stockmar, who had been his own private secretary. According to the King's estimate, he must have been a man of extraordinary knowledge, ability and wisdom, and few men ever so completely justified all that was said of him. When Sir Robert Peel obtained his enormous majority and became Prime Minister in 1841, Baron Stockmar saw the danger of the private communications which still continued between the Queen and her old friend, Lord Melbourne. This correspondence, he wisely considered, would be productive of the greatest possible danger, especially to Lord Melbourne as the head of the Opposition. Its continuance could not be kept a secret, and he had heard it talked of openly at a dinner-table by Mrs. Norton. Everything that went wrong, he said, would be attributed by Peel to the influence of Lord Melbourne. So serious did the Baron consider the position that, in consultation with Prince Albert, he prepared a memorandum which, it was settled, was to be presented in a personal interview between Lord Melbourne and Mr. Anson, the Prince's private secretary. The account of the meeting had best be told in Mr. Anson's own words: "Melbourne read the memorandum attentively twice through with an occasional change of countenance and compression of lips. He said on concluding it, 'This is a most decided opinion indeed.' Anson told him that the Prince felt that

if the Queen's confidence in Peel was in a way to be established, it would be extremely shaken by Lord Melbourne's visit to the Queen at such a moment. He felt it would be better that Lord Melbourne's appearance should be in London, where he would meet the Queen only on terms of general society. At the same time the Prince was extremely reluctant to give an opinion upon a case which Lord Melbourne's own sense of right ought to decide. Anson added how he feared his speech of yesterday in the House of Lords had added another impediment to his coming at this moment, as it had identified him with and established him as the head of the Opposition party, which Anson had hoped Melbourne would have been able to avoid. Melbourne, who was then sitting on the sofa, rushed up on this and went up and down in a violent frenzy, exclaiming, 'God eternally damn it. Flesh and blood cannot stand this. I only spoke upon the defensive, which Ripon's speech at the beginning of the session rendered quite necessary. I cannot be expected to give up my position in the country, neither do I think it is to the Queen's interest that I should.' After a long pause Lord Melbourne said, 'I certainly cannot think it right,' though he felt sure that some means of communication of this sort was no new precedent. He took care never to say anything which could bring his opinion in opposition to Sir Robert's, and

he should distinctly advise the Queen to adhere to her Ministers in everything, unless he saw the time had arrived at which it might be resisted. The principal evil, replied Anson, to be dreaded from the continuance of Lord Melbourne's influence was, according to the Baron's opinion, that so long as the Queen felt she could resort to Lord Melbourne in her difficulties, she never would be disposed (from not feeling the necessity) to place any real confidence in the advice she received from Peel."

But we are forestalling matters of paramount and overwhelming importance to the happiness of the Queen, who, on the 15th October 1839, wrote to her uncle announcing her engagement to Prince Albert, telling him that "he seems perfection." Charles Gore, who was much about the Court in the early days of the reign, tells us of Prince Albert's visit to Windsor, and how he was kept waiting in the corridor with the household before starting for a ride in the Park. The Queen, as we have all seen in engravings, wore a habit almost touching the ground and a schoolboy's cap with a tassel on her head. Soon the Ministers and household fell back, and the Prince was allowed to ride at her Majesty's side, and on their return to the Castle he was no longer made to wait with the household in the corridor, but had been accepted as the Queen's husband. But the time of their engagement was not free from the troubles which beset

poorer people in the course of their true love when settlements have to be considered. It was proposed that £50,000 a year should be granted to the Prince, but after a long discussion, and with Sir Robert Peel's concurrence, it was reduced to £30,000 a year. No doubt the hardness of the times contributed to the reduction that was effected. Lord Brougham, in a cruel vein of sarcasm, presented a petition from a poor man to the House of Lords begging to be given enough money to drink Prince Albert's health in a mug of beer.

The marriage ceremony was all that could be desired—inside St. James' Chapel. Outside there was rain, and I well recollect the sea of umbrellas in the Mall in front of the Palace covering the multitude of sightseers.

It was in 1845 that Sir Robert Peel's announcement of dissensions in the Cabinet was made to the Queen at Osborne, and her Majesty, though much annoyed at her Ministers leaving her in such a crisis, had recourse to her old friend and adviser, Lord Melbourne, but told him that she would not feel justified in asking him to return to his former position. Lord John Russell was sent for, but, after some time for consideration, declined to form a Government, and Sir Robert Peel returned, having succeeded in persuading Mr. Gladstone to join him as Secretary of State for the Colonies. This vacated the seat for Newark, which Mr. Gladstone held

under the nomination of the Duke of Newcastle, who was a Protectionist, and in these circumstances he declined to be nominated, but held office without a seat in the House of Commons as Secretary of State.

It is curious to note how extraordinary a thing the Queen considered it that Lord Grey should have wished at this time, when Free Trade was to the front, that Mr. Cobden should be offered a seat in the Cabinet.

Among these letters is a curious memorandum by Prince Albert giving an account of a Council, where he says Sir Robert has an immense scheme in view—"he will remove all Protection and abolish all monopoly." "The experiments he had made in 1842 and 1845 with boldness and with caution had borne out the correctness of the principle. The wool duty was taken off, and wool sold higher than it had ever done before. Foreign cattle were let in, and the cattle of England stood better in the market than they ever had done before." As a compensation to the landed interest, he would take over and put on the Consolidated Fund the rural police, and establish a Public Prosecutor. The great struggle of Protection and Free Trade was going on, and, partly owing to the Irish famine, the Tory Party, with its huge majority of ninety, elected to support the Corn Laws, was shattered, and for the time broken up. The Queen was delighted

with Sir Robert Peel's speech on the opening of the Session of 1846, and it is evident that at this time her dislike to him was rapidly disappearing; but having, in spite of all the bitter attacks from Disraeli, carried the Repeal of the Corn Laws, he was beaten in the House of Lords on an Irish Coercion Bill and resigned his office. Sir Robert Peel writes to the Queen after his defeat saying that "he firmly believed that the recent attack made upon him was the result of a foul conspiracy concocted by Disraeli and Lord George Bentinck." To Cobden "the manufacturer," whose entrance into the Cabinet, advocated by Lord Grey, had been the subject of such astonishment a short time before, Sir Robert Peel in noble language attributed the success of his measures, and after this Lord John Russell said he must be offered Cabinet office.

There was a false and malicious story that the news of the Repeal of the Corn Laws was extracted from Sidney Herbert and given to the *Times* by Mrs. Norton; but I had it on the authority of Sir William Stephenson, who was then private secretary to Sir Robert Peel, that it was deliberately given to the *Times* by Lord Aberdeen, in order to catch the American mail, with the object of conciliating the United States and to obtain the settlement of the Oregon Treaty.

At this time especially the Queen's letters show

her extraordinary knowledge of the position of foreign questions throughout Europe, in which her interest never for a moment flagged, and she was always ready to take a leading part in the deliberations of her Ministers. Well might the philosopher exclaim: "Happy is he who does not grow weary of his work," for there can be no doubt that this happiness was hers. *Labor ipse voluptas!*

To many idlers in the world it must come as a surprise how she found time to perform her numerous duties—her interviews with statesmen, her correspondence with her uncle King Leopold, the care and education of her children. Her Majesty was immersed in politics; she was, as we all know, a severe critic of Lord Palmerston's despatches, whenever he allowed her to see them. She was very watchful and tenacious of anything connected with appointments, about all of which she required full information. She had strong opinions about affairs in Portugal—whose Queen (Donna Maria Pia) had been an early friend of hers—and Spain, and was much concerned about a quarrel which had sprung up in the Cantons of Switzerland called the War of the Sonderbund, a religious war in which Lord Palmerston, with great astuteness, postponed arbitration till the necessity for it ceased. With all these conflicting occupations she did not forget her old friend, Lord Melbourne, to whom she graciously offered the Garter, which he did not feel justified

in accepting on account of the expense attendant on the bestowal of the order.

In addition to all these anxieties came the news of Louis Philippe's ignominious flight as Mr. Smith, with his whiskers shaved off, a casquette on his head, a rough overcoat, and immense goggles. The news of his arrival was at once communicated to the Queen by Lord Palmerston, and immediately arrangements were made to place Claremont at the disposal of the ex-King and Queen of France. Amid all these revolutionary surroundings, in a letter to her uncle she explains that she was able to cope with these troubles :—

" Thank God," she says, " I am particularly well and strong in every respect, which is a blessing in these awful, sad, heart-breaking times. From the first I heard all that passed, and my only thoughts and talk were politics, but I never was calmer and quieter or less nervous. Great events make me quiet and calm, and little trifles fidget me and irritate my nerves. But I feel grown old and serious, and the future is very dark. God, however, will come to help and protect us, and we must keep up our spirits."

Ucalegon was very near in 1848 to the other thrones on the Continent, and the Queen was soon the centre of those who were alarmed at the revolution in Paris. The King of Prussia considered the *émeute* in Paris as an attempt to spread the principles

of revolution by every means throughout the whole of Europe, and urged the power of united speech, not arms, and appealed to the Queen "whose powerful word might alone carry out the task of telling France that any breach of the peace with reference to Italy, Belgium and Germany would undoubtedly be a breach 'with all of us,' so that we should with all the power that God has given us let France feel by sea and by land, as in the years '13, '14, and '15, what our union may mean!" Then, after blessing Providence for Lord Palmerston being at the Foreign Office, on both knees he adjures the Queen to act for the welfare of Europe.

Palmerston's insubordination at that time is familiar to us all, and the relations between the Queen and her Minister were daily becoming more strained. Lord John Russell remonstrated with him in vain, and felt that things could not long continue as they were. On the 23rd of November Lord Palmerston writes to the Queen that he is at Brocket engaged in the melancholy occupation of watching the gradual extinction of the lamp of life of one who was "not more distinguished by his brilliant talents, his warm affections and his first-rate understanding, than by those sentiments of attachment to your Majesty which rendered him the most devoted subject who ever had the honour to serve a Sovereign." The Queen tells King Leopold: "Our poor old friend died on the 24th.

I sincerely regret him, for he was truly attached to me, and though not a firm Minister, he was a noble, kind-hearted, generous being."

At the end of 1848 the Queen received an autograph letter from Pio Nono, beginning: "To the Most Serene and Potent Sovereign Victoria, the illustrious Queen of England, Pius Papa Nono," announcing his flight from the Holy City, and adding "that in conformity with your exalted magnanimity, your justice and known desire to maintain order in public affairs, you will by no means suffer the same to be wanting to us at this most lamentable time," which, being interpreted, meant a request for help. There was some discussion as to how this appeal should be answered, but finally it was settled that the Queen's letter should commence: "Most Eminent Sir," and should regret that he was obliged to leave Rome, and nothing more.

Before arrangements could be made to meet the Queen's desire to remove Lord Palmerston from the Foreign Office, there occurred one of those unforeseen coincidences which often disturb political calculations.

A Portuguese Jew, Don Pacifico, had his house pillaged by a mob at Athens. He made an extravagant claim on the Greek Government, which was not allowed, and he made an appeal to the Home Government. Lord Palmerston took a high

line and despatched a fleet to the Piræus demanding compensation for Don Pacifico. This high-handed action was condemned in the House of Lords, but a vote of want of confidence in the House of Commons gave an opportunity to Lord Palmerston, of which he was prompt to avail himself. He obtained a magnificent triumph which made him at once the most popular man in the country. This was followed by Lord Palmerston's approval of an assault on the cruel Austrian woman-flogger Haynau by the employés in a great London brewery he had gone to visit. This assault Lord Palmerston justified, which shocked the Queen. At this moment, though personally he had lost her confidence, he was far too great a man to be summarily dismissed from the Foreign Office. All sorts of arrangements were discussed by her Majesty and Lord John Russell for effecting his removal in a way satisfactory to him. But all the negotiations failed; he was offered the Irish Lord Lieutenancy and a British peerage, and not unnaturally declined them both. Again, Lord Palmerston was attacked, and again he added to his growing popularity by a speech lasting from dusk to dawn on the foreign policy of the Government, and by this, which was known as the "*Civis Romanus sum* Speech," he became for the moment the most prominent figure in the country. The division found the Ministry in a majority of forty-

six, which made the Queen consider the House of Commons as "becoming very unmanageable and troublesome." "There is no question," her Majesty says, "of delicacy and danger in which Lord Palmerston will not arbitrarily and without reference to his colleagues or Sovereign engage this country."

In the meantime Sir Robert Peel had fallen from his horse and received injuries from which he died. The troubles of the Government over the Ecclesiastical Tithes Bill were great, and they were beaten on Mr. Locke King's extension of the Franchise Bill by a majority of forty-eight. It was impossible for the Government to remain, and the Queen sent for Lord Stanley. After many negotiations and attempts to form a coalition Government, Lord John Russell resumed office. The whole of the ensuing correspondence is full of the Queen's earnest desire to remove Lord Palmerston from the Foreign Office, which Lord John Russell conceived would again destroy the Government. At last, at the end of the year, the *coup d'état* in Paris occurred, and Lord Palmerston told M. Walewski that he entirely approved of it. This was too great a strain, and Lord John Russell called upon him to give up the seals of office, which Lord Palmerston agreed to, holding them only till Lord Granville, to the Queen's great delight, was appointed in his stead. Early in 1852, however, Lord Palmerston had his re-

venge, and defeated Lord John Russell's Militia Bill. Lord Stanley in a minority undertook to form a Government, with Mr. Disraeli as Leader of the House of Commons. Many negotiations took place, and Disraeli offered to serve under Graham. Lord Derby offered office to Gladstone, with a proviso that he was to have the right of proposing a fixed duty on corn. Some people thought that this proviso was inserted by Disraeli, who knew that it would secure Gladstone's refusal; but ultimately Lord Derby formed a Government, with Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Derby, no doubt, would at that time have restored Protection if he could; but Disraeli knew that it was impossible. His old friend, Mr. James Clay, the Radical Member for Hull, talking of Protection said, "It is as dead as Lazarus." "Yes, and already stinketh," said Disraeli. The Government was defeated after a short tenure of office, and a second Coalition Ministry was formed with Lord Aberdeen as Prime Minister. "England," said Mr. Disraeli, "does not love coalitions."

Curiously enough, while surrounded by all these great events, the Queen entered into smaller matters and was opposed to the plan proposed by Mr. Gladstone for open competition for the Civil Service; but her opposition was withdrawn on his explanation and arguments. The controversy about the Holy Places was becoming serious. Grumblings

were coming up from the East, and it was determined to make a demonstration by despatching a force to the Principalities. The Scots Fusiliers were the first to leave England. The Queen stood on the balcony at Buckingham Palace to see them on their way to the station, little thinking how few of those splendid fellows she would ever see again. It seems strange how little politicians look ahead, and how lightly they constantly embark on expeditions fraught with awful consequences. The Queen made a strong appeal to the King of Prussia. "The great and incalculable consequences of a war weigh upon my heart," she wrote, and deprecated his isolation at such a critical time. The King's answer provoked another appeal from the Queen, but it was of no avail, and Prussia determined to keep aloof from the war.

The Queen's correspondence throughout the terrible Crimean campaign, and the mutiny in India that followed, goes to show how calm and wise her judgment was, undisturbed through all the disasters of those terrible years. A war fever had taken possession of the English people, and Aberdeen, who was anxious for peace, was the object of bitter abuse and denunciation, as also was Prince Albert, to whom gossip of a more than usual venom and stupidity attributed every sort of ridiculous story of his carelessness of British interests and of his entrance into a conspiracy

with the Prime Minister to further the designs of the Russian Emperor Nicholas. On the meeting of Parliament it was even set abroad that he had been committed to the Tower. These foolish stories were soon blown into the air, and the people laid all the blame on the shoulders of Lord Aberdeen. Their feelings were graphically portrayed by a fine cartoon showing him as being against his will dragged forward to war by the British Lion. Lord Aberdeen had not only to bear these attacks, but also the intrigues of his colleagues, Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston, who were both anxious to be Prime Minister. When Parliament met in December of 1854 Mr. Roebuck, "the dog Tear 'em," as I think he called himself, gave notice that he would move for a Committee of Enquiry into the conduct of the war. Here was Lord John Russell's opportunity, and he resigned his office; as Mr. Gladstone said, "to escape punishment, he ran away from duty." The Queen not unnaturally expressed her surprise and concern at hearing so abruptly of his desertion.

The Ministers were beaten by a majority of 157, and at once resigned, and thus the Queen was again left without a Government. As a modern historian has said, "Thus fell the British Aristides, of whose inconvenient rectitude and unseasonable virtue an impatient generation was weary." On Lord Aberdeen's advice, it was decided that the

Queen should send for Lord Derby; but Lord Aberdeen foresaw the difficulties that would await him in any attempt at that moment to form a Government without the help of Lord Palmerston. Would he get that help? The Queen with enormous industry wrote a long memorandum, after her interview with Lord Derby, who thought, as Lord Aberdeen did, that Lord Palmerston was a necessity, but that he was "quite unfit for the task; he had become very deaf as well as very blind, and was seventy-one years old. He still kept up his sprightly manners of youth, but it was evident that his day had gone by." After many heart searchings and many disappointments, Lord Derby offended Disraeli and his party by refusing to take office. Then the Queen, disgusted with all these intrigues, said "that every one here took pains to prove that we had no army, and to bring about that the Queen should have no Government." In these trying circumstances she had recourse to the advice of Lord Lansdowne, who was aware that Lord John Russell was under the impression that he could form a Government, even without the support of the Peelites. He offered himself temporarily to accept the formation of a Government, but had neither strength nor youth to carry it on for any length of time. Although he was the person who had contributed to the vote of the House of Commons which had displaced her late

Government, he soon had to confess that he was unsuccessful, and the Queen summoned Lord Palmerston, notwithstanding Lord Derby's opinion of him and Disraeli's saying that there *was* a Palmerston, to form a Government. By the Queen's wishes Lord Aberdeen, though himself declining office, persuaded his Peelite colleagues, Gladstone, Graham, Cardwell and Sidney Herbert, to retain their offices under Lord Palmerston, putting Lord Panmure at the War Office. The Queen expressed her deep obligations to Lord Aberdeen for the help he had rendered her in persuading his followers to remain in office. Her anxieties had been very great throughout these troublesome and complicated arrangements which had at last ended satisfactorily. After a whole fortnight's anxiety and worry, Lord Lansdowne consented to lead the House of Lords without portfolio, and with the help of Lord Granville as President of the Council. Lord John Russell would act as negotiator at the conference to be held at Vienna. "Princes," as Lord Bacon said, "are like to heavenly bodies which cause good or evil times and have much veneration, but no rest."

After 1855 came the failure of peace negotiations, the death of Lord Canning, and the resignation of Lord John Russell. But, on the other hand, the visit of the Queen and Prince Albert to Paris gave the Queen the keenest delight, and her ad-

miration of Napoleon and her personal friendship for him were increased by this visit, which was soon followed by the fall of Sebastopol, and the announcement of the Princess Royal's engagement to Prince Frederick William of Prussia.

Lord Palmerston, in communicating the Duke of Newcastle's wish not to receive the Garter, thought the high fees which followed that honour deterred many on whom the Queen might wish to confer such a dignity from accepting it. The reform advocated by Lord Palmerston for so long was carried into effect in 1905—on King Edward's initiation.

In 1856 came a vote of censure on the Government in connection with the war in China. Lord Palmerston, trusting to his immense popularity in the country, recommended a dissolution, and the consequent election showed his anticipation correct. The peace party, including its most brilliant supporters, was defeated throughout the country, but Lord Palmerston's success was embittered by the outbreak of the Mutiny in India, which was followed by a panic in the money market necessitating the suspension of the Bank Charter Act.

In 1858 the Government was defeated in the House of Commons on the Conspiracy Bill, introduced after Orsini's attempt to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon. The Conservative Opposition supported the introduction of the Bill, but on the

second reading saw their opportunity and defeated the Government by a majority of nineteen. Lord Derby now accepted the task of forming a Ministry, which proved to be only an interregnum, for after the election of 1859 a vote of want of confidence, brought forward by Lord Hartington, was carried by a majority of thirteen in the new Parliament, and after an attempt by Lord Granville to form a Government Lord Palmerston was again installed as Prime Minister, with Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office and Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cobden again resisting all pressure to enter the Cabinet.

On the 18th October 1865, after sixty years of Parliamentary work, Lord Palmerston died in harness. "He was always," said Cobden, "a generous enemy."

Through all these political vicissitudes the Queen maintained undaunted courage and never shrank from her duties. She ever took a deep interest in every matter, great or small, affecting the prerogative of the Crown or the welfare of the country. Nothing could be more embarrassing for a Constitutional Sovereign than the constant change of advisers and Ministers. Between her accession in 1837 and 1861 the Queen had seen no less than ten changes of Government and six Prime Ministers. She had passed through times of war and times of peace. She had seen the crash of empires and

the fall of thrones throughout Europe, changes of dynasties and mutinies in our possessions beyond the sea. She had to overcome political intrigues, to adjust external and internal quarrels and differences, and to keep in the background as far as is possible for human nature her personal prejudices, likes and dislikes.

There are some people, whether they be great or small, whose minds are so framed that no touch of sympathy can ever exist between them. In the whole range of humanity it would be difficult to find two persons so antipathetic one to the other as Prince Albert and Lord Palmerston. The former was very unhappy about a correspondence between the Emperor Napoleon and Lord Palmerston. Prince Albert always thought Lord Palmerston wrong. Mr. Gladstone wisely put before the Queen the difficulty of obtaining anything absolutely good, the importance of retaining the services of an efficient Government, and the difficulty of obtaining any strong party of men working together, and so for the time he smoothed the troubled waters. For the moment the Queen's thoughts were occupied by the visit of the Emperor and Empress of France, both of whom produced an immense effect on her. She was struck by his "indomitable courage, unflinching firmness of purpose, self-reliance, perseverance and great secrecy"; indeed, she was astonished at all his good qualities, and considered

him as unlike a Frenchman as possible, and much more German than French. He told the Queen how much he appreciated German literature. After his visit he wrote to the Queen, beginning his letter, "Très chère et grande Amie," thanking her for her hospitality and hoping "réserver les liens qui unifient les Gouvernements et les peuples des deux pays." His personal powers must have been very great, for even the cruelties and horrors of his latest *coup d'état* seem to have been forgiven, and "his kindness and gratitude and his steady, straightforward conduct seem to have obliterated the past."

These letters, now given to the world, will be an everlasting monument to the industry and unflinching devotion to duty of Queen Victoria; but in the performance of those duties, sometimes painful and always arduous, she was supported by the love and affection of her people. Being human she naturally had her likes and dislikes, but she endeavoured never to allow personal prejudices to interfere with her duty to the nation. She began her reign by a strong dislike of Sir Robert Peel, but her later insight into the character of that great man convinced her of his uprightness and honour. She was for a far longer time antagonistic to Palmerston, yet on the conclusion of the peace of 1856 she expressed her satisfaction as to the manner in which the war had been brought to

a conclusion and the honour and interest of the country maintained by the Treaty under his zealous and able guidance. She was strongly opposed to Mr. Bright becoming a member of the Privy Council, said it would be impossible to allege any service Mr. Bright had rendered, and talked of his systematic attacks on the institutions of the country; yet later he was a welcome guest at Windsor, and the Queen became warmly attached to him. She was opposed to Disraeli's having an offer of high office. "She had not a very good opinion of him, on account of his conduct to poor Sir Robert Peel," and yet we know how this dislike culminated in warm regard and affection.

In 1861 arose the danger of a quarrel with the United States, and then, "commingled with the gloom of imminent war," came the appalling tragedy of the Prince Consort's death. Such sorrows are too sacred for the public gaze, and over them I, for one, prefer to draw the veil.

IV

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AS AN OFFICIAL

HAMLET, in his most cynical humour, hopes that a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year. It almost seems as if Shakespeare, in the person of his hero, foresaw the fickleness of those who live at the close of the present century, when popularity is attained and lost, when fortunes and reputations are made and marred, when men and questions alike fill the public imagination for an hour, it may be a day, and are then hurried off the scene to make way for new men and new ideas. Those who have held a great position, or who have been brilliantly successful in their lifetime, or even who have achieved some important work, are often soon forgotten; but not so the possessor of an individuality that is unique of its kind. Him the world does not willingly let die. So it seems to me unlikely that Lord Randolph Churchill will ever disappear from the memory of his countrymen; for rarely has English political biography furnished one gifted with a personality of such

dazzling brilliancy. For a time—alas, too short—he held a position in the world of politics second only to that of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli. He could draw together the largest audiences in London and the provinces, and he always inspired them with his own enthusiasm. Not a newspaper but was full of his speeches as he traversed the country from Woodstock to Belfast, or from London to Edinburgh; not a caricaturist but exercised his talents on his features, his mustachios, and his collars.

Is it possible that

> ". . . now the painful warrior famoused for fight,
> After a thousand victories once foiled,
> Is from the boke of honour razed quite,
> And all the rest forgot for which he toiled?"

To some other writer and to a remoter time it must be left to deal with that part of Lord Randolph Churchill's life when, in the face of the overwhelming majority opposed to him in 1881, in spite of the ill-concealed disapproval, and to the dismay of what he somewhat disrespectfully termed the old gang, he charged over the heads of a dejected and dispirited party into the serried and then unbroken ranks of the Liberal phalanx. Like the youth in the old classical story, he hurled his lance, before the awe-struck worshippers, into the side of the idol they knelt to and adored. My object in this short sketch is to show the impression

Lord Randolph Churchill produced on the minds of old and staid officials who had been educated in the school of Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir Stafford Northcote. At first they regarded him as an impossible man "whose breath was agitation and his life a storm on which he rode." He was to their eyes a visible genius, an intense and unquenchable personality, an embodied *tour de force;* but as a serious Minister of the Crown he was to them an impossibility. In his fierce assaults on Mr. Gladstone he had attacked the best friend the Civil Service ever had; and it was a moot point which was in greater dread—they of his entrance within the portals of a Government department, or he of having to associate in daily business with men whom he curtly described to a friend as "a knot of d——d Gladstonians." He was a man to whom the words of Hookham Frere in "Monks and Giants" might as suitably be applied as they were to that kindred spirit, the brave and fiery Peterborough.

> "His birth, it seems, by Merlin's calculation
> Was under Venus, Mercury, and Mars;
> His mind with all their attributes was mixed,
> And, like those planets, wandering and unfixed.
> His schemes of war were sudden, unforeseen,
> Inexplicable both to friend and foe.
> It seemed as if some momentary spleen
> Inspired the project and impelled the blow."

Such was the impression we had of him, not un-

natural and certainly not wholly wrong. But there were other aspects to his many-sided nature—the reckless knight-errant of debate proved at the same time a patient, strenuous, thorough, and far-sighted administrator.

The following is the character he won at the India Office from Sir A. Godley, the Under-Secretary of State for India :—

"He was, as every one knows, exceedingly able, quick, and clear-sighted. Besides this, he was very industrious, very energetic and decided when once his mind was made up, and remarkably skilful in the art of 'devolution,' by which I mean the art of getting the full amount of help out of his subordinates. He knew at once whether to take up a question or to leave it to others. If he took it up, he made himself completely master of it; if he left it alone, he put entire confidence in those to whom he left it, and endorsed their opinion without hesitation. I need not tell you how invaluable this quality was both to himself and to those who worked with him. It should be added that his perfect candour and straightforwardness were not only admirable in themselves, but were a great assistance to business. What he said he meant; and if he did not know a subject, he did not pretend to know it. The duties of the Secretary of State for India are, as you know, somewhat complicated by his relations with the Council, over whose deliberations he has to preside. In this part of his business he showed great skill. For

some time, and until he had learnt the methods of procedure, he took no part whatever in our debates. But as soon as he began to feel at home, his method was to decide beforehand which were the subjects as to which he wished to use his influence, and having done this, to send for the papers and master them thoroughly before the meeting of Council. Then, having his brief, and with the advantage of his parliamentary training and natural readiness, he interfered with decisive effect, and, I believe I may say, invariably carried his point. Few high officials can have been his superiors, or indeed his equals, in the art of *getting things done*. Those who worked under him felt that, if they had once convinced him that a certain step ought to be taken, it infallibly would be taken and 'put through.' . . . He was, as he freely said, extremely sorry to leave this office, and I believe that all who had worked with him, without exception, were sorry to lose him."

Lord Randolph's brief tenure of the India Office was marked by some achievements of first-class importance. The annexation of Burma, a country with an area of 83,473 square miles and a population of 3,000,000, was his policy for which he was responsible. The conquest of the country was effected with remarkable rapidity. In November 1885 Lord Randolph gave the order to advance; on the 1st of December Lord Dufferin announced that the conquest was completed; and on the 31st

of the same month Lord Randolph sent out his despatch detailing what had happened and authorising the annexation. Another important piece of work, the formation of the Indian Midland Railway, which has now a length of line of 700 miles and a capital of £7,000,000, was carried out by Lord Randolph against considerable opposition. It was he also who finally sanctioned the increase of the British (European) army in India by 10,000 men; and several other important measures were passed during his administration of the India Office.

Lord Randolph, between the fall of the Tory Government and his return to office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, made himself the mouthpiece of an attack with a venom not his own on the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue. "Those were," as he said, "my ignorant days." When he returned to office as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1886, notwithstanding the reputation he had made for himself at the India Office, he still appeared to the minds of Treasury officials as a Minister who would in all probability ride roughshod over cherished traditions and habits which were very dear to them. That such a man, with all his faults and glaring indiscretions, whose inclinations became passions, should have attached to himself a body of men like the Civil Service of this country, was little short of a miracle. A Frenchman, in a conversation with Pitt at the end

of the last century, expressed his surprise at the influence which Charles Fox, a man of pleasure ruined by the dice-box and the turf, had exercised over the English nation. "You have not," was the reply, "been under the wand of the magician." It was not long before those who were brought into close communication with Lord Randolph fell under his magic spell. I confess that I, at that time Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was as much dismayed as any man at the prospect of his becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. I was soon reconciled, and I well remember our first interview in the old historical Board Room at the Treasury, the stiff and formal cut of his frock-coat —the same that he always wore when he was leader of the House—and the somewhat old-world courtesy of manner with which he received me at the door. But it was not long before he produced the new-world cigarette-case and the long mouth-piece, which so soon became familiar. A very few meetings were enough to show me how sincerely anxious he was to learn all the little I had to teach; and from that first hour our acquaintance gradually ripened into a friendship which not all the vicissitudes of his stormy life, nor even his agonising illness, ever interrupted. The last letter he wrote before he left England on his sad journey was to me. In it he spoke of our long years of friendship, of his return, and of years to come; but the hand-

writing told how impossible that return and those future years were to be.

Our early official meetings at the Treasury were soon superseded by more intimate conversations at Connaught Place. On my first visit there I found him in a room bright with electric light, and the eternal cigarette in his mouth. He was seated in a large armchair, having a roomy sofa on one side, which I afterwards learnt was known in the family as the "Fourth Party sofa," and on the other, much to my surprise, a large photograph of Mr. Gladstone. Whether the photograph and the sofa were thus placed opposite each other for the convenience of the party in rehearsing their attacks, I do not take it upon me to say. Although Lord Randolph certainly had never made a study of finance, he was not, when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, so ignorant of it as Charles Fox, if the story be true which reports him to have said that he never could understand what Consols were—he knew they were things that went up and down in the City; and he was always pleased when they went down, because it so annoyed Pitt. A story is also told of Lord Randolph, that a Treasury clerk put some figures before him. "I wish you would put these figures plainly so that I can understand them," he said. The clerk said he had done his best, and he had, pointing them out, reduced them to decimals. "Oh!" said Lord

Randolph, "I never could understand what those d——d dots meant." But it soon became clear that besides a wonderful intuition, Lord Randolph possessed many of the qualities which had always won for Mr. Gladstone so high a reputation as a departmental chief—indefatigable assiduity, that energy which Dr. Arnold said is of more value than even cleverness, a vehement determination to learn his subject *ab ovo usque ad mala*, a strong intellectual force which, while it in no way interfered with his attention to the opinions of his subordinates, absolutely preserved his own independence of judgment and decision. He possessed the very rare gift of keeping his mind exclusively devoted to the subject in hand, and impressed on all those with whom he worked the idea that the business on which they were employed was the only one of interest to him. For a man of his rapid thought and excitable temperament he was scrupulously patient and quiet in discussion; and from frequent conversations with him on financial subjects I can safely affirm that no one ever ended an official interview with him without at any rate having arrived at a clear knowledge of his views and intentions. No time spent with him was ever wasted, nor would he suffer any interruption from whatever source it came.

In the autumn preceding the session of 1887 he knew that the duties of leadership would absorb all

his time and strength, and, like a wise and prudent statesman, he prepared himself for his financial statement by a performance such as was never equalled, in getting ready and passing through the Cabinet the Budget for the forthcoming year. On the evening of the day on which he carried his Budget through the Cabinet, after describing to me how he had done so, he said, "There in that box are all the materials of our Budget. They are unpolished gems; put the facets on them as well as you can, but do not speak to me on the subject till the end of the financial year." That Budget has been described in his son's brilliant biography of his father, and it may be fairly said that it far exceeded in importance any Budget since Mr. Gladstone's great performance in 1860. It was often said that Lord Randolph won his popularity among the permanent officials by his subservience to their views. Nothing could be further from the truth; now that his Budget has come to light, it will be seen how original were some of its provisions, and how unlike to any plans that would probably have emanated from the ordinary official brain.

He did not bear fools gladly, and was hardly capable of being even civil to people who bored him. On one occasion he went in to a formal luncheon, where the places were arranged. He looked to the right of him and he looked to the left of him—he gathered up his plate and napkin

and knife and fork and sat himself down at the other end of the table. This reminds me of a story of a very distinguished statesman, Lord John Russell, who took the Duchess of Inverness in to dinner. When he got to his place he looked behind him and walked round to the other side of the table, and sat down next to the Duchess of St. Albans. Lady John said to him afterwards, "What on earth made you leave the Duchess of Inverness and go across to the Duchess of St. Albans?" "Well," he replied, "I should have been sick if I had sat where I was put, with my back to the fire." "But I hope," said his wife, "you explained it to the Duchess of Inverness." "No, I didn't," he said, "but I did to the Duchess of St. Albans!"

His cynicism was delightful. When the dreadful subject of bimetallism cropped up, he turned to Sir A. Godley and said, "I forget, was I bimetallist when I was at the India Office?"

Lord Welby, who was Secretary to the Treasury, writing to me his impressions of Lord Randolph said :—

"One could not be otherwise than anxious as to our relations with our new chief. But that anxiety was soon dispelled. He met us from the outset with perfect frankness, which soon became cordiality, and I cannot recall a word or a line of his during his autumn office which I should have wished unspoken or unwritten. Not that he was an easy

or an unexacting chief. He expected subjects to be laid before him fully, clearly, and intelligently, and he was keen to mark default. This, however, was only as it should be. He was, in short, a Minister of the type that Civil Servants appreciate. He ruled as well as reigned. He had a mind and made it up, a policy and enforced it. He was quick in acquiring information, quick in seizing the real point, and quick in understanding what one wished to convey to him; impatient in small matters and details, and contemptuous if one troubled him with them. Above all he was accessible, ready and willing to hear what one had to say, whether it accorded with his own views or not. Doing business with him was most interesting; not being a respecter of persons he criticised freely and pointedly men and matters, and the consciousness that we were working under so keen a judgment did not lessen the interest of our intercourse. You and I know well that in 'chaff' he was unsurpassed, and that it was difficult to find his equal. From my recollection I should say that when he was at his best, in quickness, readiness, and versatility of reply he stood first; and this struck one the more since he had not the resource of a well-stored memory on which to rely. He was singularly free from affectation of knowledge he did not possess. Once, criticising a statesman, he said: 'So-and-so makes the mistake of conveying or implying to the House that his decisions are based on his own knowledge of the subject; whereas the House knows perfectly well that his own knowledge of technical subjects is not greater than that

of the majority of members around him. He should say that his skilled advisers have put the pros and cons before him, and that, applying his common-sense to the information then before him, he has arrived at the conclusion which he recommends to the House. If you are frank with the House in this fashion you get their confidence.' Could one fail to take interest in a chief 'who always showed us sport'? Alas, that this should all be a tale of the past."

From the very commencement of his career as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Randolph began his struggles for economy, his love for which was sincere and earnest. He determined that as long as he was responsible for the finances of the country he would enforce it. It has often been the subject of discussion whether a man who is careful in his domestic affairs would naturally be an economist in public affairs, and *vice versâ*. No one would ever have accused Lord Randolph of being a careful or even a prudent man in the management of his private concerns, but his ruling idea as Chancellor of the Exchequer was for economy. Lord Welby, in his letter to me, gave two good instances.

"Of old times sums were issued out of the Civil List to the Secretary of the Treasury for secret service. No public account, of course, was rendered of the money thus expended, and there was opportunity for abuse or worse. An important step was

taken in the right direction when Parliament in 1783, following the lead of Burke, limited the grant to £10,000 a year, and that amount was yearly issued to the Secretary of the Treasury from 1783 to 1886. It must be borne in mind that this branch of secret service was quite distinct from that which is ordinarily known as foreign secret service. This sum was used, according to general belief, for party purposes. There was no reason, indeed, to think that of late times it had been applied to other services than those of legitimate party organisation; but the principle of a grant of public money for party purposes was an anachronism under popular government. Yet such is the innate conservatism of English parties and English statesmen that the grant was never seriously questioned for over a century. A remark by the Comptroller and Auditor-General in one of his reports to Parliament drew attention to it, and Lord Randolph began his Chancellorship by abolishing it. By this act he showed how closely he watched the progress of public opinion, how much in this respect he was ahead of his contemporaries, and how instinctively he knew when a position or a policy was no longer tenable. In the other instance of administrative action to which I have referred he refused to ask Parliament to renew the octroi duty on coal coming into the Metropolis, the proceeds of which were divided between the City and the Metropolitan Board of Works. One would not have been surprised if he had answered the application of the Metropolitan Board of Works in the ambiguous terms which are dear to party leaders. He had

not been a student of economical subjects. The principle of the duty was not unpleasing to his party. The Metropolitan authorities were anxious to obtain money in a manner which would enable them to incur expenditure without being hauled over the coals. Powerful interests objected to a rise in the rates, while the abolition of a duty which affected the poor consumer did not elicit much enthusiastic support. Lord Randolph, to his credit, did not play with the question. He looked into the subject for himself, saw that an octroi duty was out of date, that it was a survival of a financial policy which had been emphatically condemned, and he returned a decided refusal to the application. His speech to the deputation was admirable, and it may be read with interest and advantage by any who care to see the arguments against such an octroi put tersely, forcibly, and without reserve."

Lord Welby adds :—

"On other points he was not so orthodox. He had doubts about the Sinking Fund, and a doubt as to the Sinking Fund will shock a man trained under Mr. Gladstone in the Treasury as much as a doubt about the Creed will shock an orthodox Churchman. I always had hopes, however, that on further reflection he would finally recognise the worth of a weapon so useful in peace, and of such priceless value in emergency of war."

I well recollect also his indignation on learning

that specie had to be conveyed in merchant ships because the cost for freight charged by naval officers was so great that H.M.'s gold could not be conveyed in H.M.'s vessels—a discreditable state of things, which he took immediate steps to remedy.

In a letter he wrote to me shortly after his resignation, Lord Randolph said: "The Budget scheme we had in contemplation will now be relegated to the catalogue of useless labour. The essential principle of any financial policy which I cared to be identified with was zeal for thrift and economic reform. This was wanting, and the scaffolding was bound to come down." It was the extravagance of the spending departments that induced him to write that fatal letter which could only bring about his absolute supremacy or his resignation. No new fancy it was that dictated it. In October 1886 he had said that "unless there was an effort to reduce the expenditure it was impossible that he could remain at the Exchequer." Again he said: "If the decision of the Cabinet as to the amount of the Estimates was against him, he should not remain in office." I recollect after his fall his appealing to me and saying that I knew that his resignation was not the consequence of a moment's irritation, but was from his deliberate determination that in matters financial he would be supreme. This I was able fully to endorse.

On the 20th of December, ever anxious to learn

all he could by personal study, he spent nearly three hours with me at Somerset House, seeing for himself all the working of that huge department. The following day he went to the Custom House, and that same afternoon to Windsor, where he wrote the letter to Lord Salisbury which has since become historical, threatening his resignation. On the evening of the 22nd he walked down to Printing House Square and communicated what he had done to the Editor of the *Times*. Then, on the 23rd, I got the sad and startling news of his resignation. In a note which followed close upon it, his secretary, Mr. A. Moore, who by his ability and devotion had contributed so much to Lord Randolph's fame, said: "I have really not the heart to write anything. Moreover, there is nothing to add to what was said in that terribly irregular and premature *communiqué* to the *Times*. I look upon the whole thing, from every point of view—patriotic, party, and personal—as an irreparable calamity."

It is strange that a man endowed by nature with quick perception should not have seen how gladly Lord Salisbury would dispense with his services, or should have forgotten Sir Stafford Northcote's prophecy and hope in 1880, that a Conservative cave would be formed on the Liberal side with Goschen in its centre.

So Lord Randolph became officially dead, and a

cruel fate has made him one of the great might-have-beens in the financial history of his country.

After leaving office, Lord Randolph went to work laboriously to master and unravel the complicated question of publicans' licences. He prepared a wise measure founded on a compromise between Tories and Radicals, publicans and the advocates of temperance. The Temperance party had recently suffered a great defeat, and he thought they would be amenable to reason. The Tories were in power, and could induce the publicans to accept reasonable terms. The Opposition would be glad to get this thorny subject out of the way; and the Government would have the credit of settling this difficult question. There were all the elements of compromise. County Councils in counties, and Town Councils in boroughs were to have power, without interfering with magisterial prerogative, to oppose the renewal of licences and then to purchase the houses, the value of which was to be settled by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue on the basis of the annual value of the house with or without a licence, and the difference of value between the premises as licensed and as unlicensed was to be taken as the annual value. The purchase money was to have been, in the year 1891, ten times the value of such difference, and the purchase value was thereafter to diminish annually by one tenth, so that a licence extinguished after ten

years would not represent any value for which any purchase money would be payable.

The Bill also provided for an increase of duty to be paid by the publicans in a county or a borough in proportion to the number of houses purchased; and it proposed to give to ratepayers a large control of the number of public houses, hours of opening, &c. It also dealt fully with clubs, a part of this complicated question which has long cried for solution. The Bill, however, did not find favour with the Government, and the Liberals objected on the score of compensation, that rock of offence on which all liquor measures have been, and I fear will be, wrecked. For I am perfectly convinced that no satisfactory drink bill will ever be passed without compensation in some shape or another.

A brilliant, but anonymous, writer in the *Saturday Review* of the 26th of January 1895, says that Lord Randolph was the greatest elemental force in English politics since Cromwell, and compares his tragic life to that of Byron. He tells of his epigrams that stuck like burrs, and of his confession that he ornamented his discourse with every variety of vituperation. He tells, too, how the Duke of Devonshire spoke of Lord Randolph as a man he had learned to respect as an opponent and to trust as an ally, and who led the House of Commons with genius, and was the greatest leader he had ever known.

Lord Randolph has been compared to Madame Sarah Bernhardt. A less sensational, but, I think, more appropriate comparison may be made between him and Charles James Fox in his early days. Lecky, speaking of Charles Fox and his loves, his play, his racing, his politics, says :—

"That a man of whom this can be said should have won for himself the perennial love of some of the best Englishmen of his time is not a little surprising; for a life such as he had led would have with most men destroyed every fibre of intellectual energy and moral worth. But in truth there are some characters which nature has so happily compounded that even vice is unable wholly to degrade them; and there is a charm of manner and temper which sometimes accompanies the excesses of a strong animal nature that wins more popularity in the world than the purest and the most self-denying virtue."

Fox certainly was not goaded by the curse of an irritable brain; yet while making due allowance for this, I think it is possible to show some interesting points of resemblance between the two statesmen. The merit of Fox's speeches, like Lord Randolph's, lay not in rhetorical adornments, but in the vigour and quickness of the thought. In his invective, Fox could be as severe as the leader of the Fourth Party. Lord G. Germaine he once described as "that inauspicious and ill-omened

character, whose arrogance and presumption, whose ignorance and inability, had destroyed the country." As Ministers, they both gave up the turf and play for real hard work; yet on neither did office exercise any restraint. Both were economical reformers. Both advocated a generously popular system of local government for Ireland. Both were opposed to coercion. Lord Randolph, indeed, was ready in his negotiations with Parnell to pledge himself to a no-coercion policy; and Charles Fox would rather have seen Ireland totally separated from England than allow her to be kept in obedience by mere force. Fox even approved of the Irish associations and their appeal to arms as a *dernier ressort:* and it was in the same spirit that Lord Randolph told the Belfast men, in words not yet forgotten, that in the event of Mr. Gladstone's Bill passing, "Ulster would fight, and Ulster would be right." Not that he objected so much to the principle of the Bill, but he was of opinion that it could never be passed into law. As he said: "If the wisest, cleverest, and most experienced parliamentarian that ever lived could not pass it, nobody could, not even if there were a Cabinet composed wholly of angels from heaven." Fox possessed a courage that knew no fear; but Lord Randolph once confessed to me that there was a limit to his courage, for he did fear two men—Bismarck and Gladstone.

It has been said of Fox by Sir George Trevelyan that there was nothing that he did not feel himself equal to accomplish. He succeeded because when once in the front all the world in arms could not have put him in the background, and because when once in the front he played his part with a prompt intrepidity and a commanding ease that were but the outward signs of the immense reserve of energy on which it was in his power to draw. He went into the House of Commons as into the hunting-field, glowing with anticipations of enjoyment, assured that nothing would stop him, and that however often he tumbled he would always be among the first—and first or among the first he always was. He was not a political adventurer, but a knight-errant roaming about in search of a tilt, or, still better, a *mêlée*, and not much caring whether his foes were robbers or true men, if only there were enough of them. This description of Fox in the days of Wilkes might, *mutato nomine*, have been written of Lord Randolph in the days of Bradlaugh.

Equally applicable to Lord Randolph is what Horace Walpole said of Fox, that—

"Fox displayed such facility in comprehending and executing all business as charmed all who approached him. No formal affectation delayed any service or screened ignorance. He seized at once the important events of any affair, and every

affair was then reduced within a small compass—not to save himself trouble, for he at once gave himself up to the duties of his office. His good humour, frankness, and sincerity pleased, and yet inspired a respect which he took no other pains to attract."

The great and indelible blot on the fame of Fox was his coalition with Lord North. No such blot besmirched the escutcheon of Lord Randolph. "Once or twice," he said, "as in the case of Pigott, I broke out against folly and ineptitude; but I never opposed my party as a policy." Abandoned by his colleagues on his resignation; thwarted by them at the time of the Birmingham election, a treatment he felt keenly; his advice as to the Parnell Commission wholly disregarded; snubbed on the occasion of his Licensing Bill—to the last he was loyal to the party whom he educated far more successfully than ever Disraeli did in the arts and moods of the Tory democracy, and thereby contributed largely to their triumph in 1895. Disraeli had idealised it long ago in "Sybil," but Lord Randolph hardened the idealised material into good practical concrete. At Dartford, Birmingham, and elsewhere he laid great stress on the power of the democracy, and at the Carlton Club at Cambridge he told his audience that we had an hereditary monarchy, an hereditary Chamber and a representative Chamber; but what, he asked, is the

foundation of this very ancient and curious structure ?

"The foundation is totally new, purely modern, absolutely untried ; you have changed the old and gone to a new foundation. Your new foundation is a great seething, swaying mass of some five million of electors, who have it in their power, if they should so please, by the mere heave of the shoulder, if they only act with moderate unanimity, to sweep away entirely the three ancient institutions which I have described, and put anything they like in their place ; and my state of mind when these problems come across me, which is very rarely, is one of wonder—or I should say, of admiration and hope, because the alternative state of mind would be one of terror and despair. . . . My especial safeguard against such a state of mental annihilation and mental despair is my firm belief in the ascertained and much-tried common-sense of the English people. That is the faith of the Tory democracy, in which I shall now abide. It is not many years since the most prominent man in the present Cabinet said he did not believe in a Tory working-man. He had challenged a meeting at Birmingham if they could produce such a thing. 'I am one,' said a man, and a shout went up—'Ah, he's the Parish Beadle!'"

But that triumph and the harvest of the seed he had sown he did not live to see. From his fall to his tragic end he bore with him to the grave

much affection, much admiration, and many regrets of true friends and political opponents. He might have used the words put into the mouth of the unfortunate Queen Mary by Schiller: "I have been much hated, but I have been much beloved."

Nothing, I am sure, is more curious in political biography than the fascination Lord Randolph Churchill possessed over his political opponents. Notwithstanding his exaggerated invective, Mr. Gladstone could not altogether resist the charm and sympathetic genius of his younger opponent. He frankly and fully admired Lord Randolph's short leadership of the House of Commons, his insight, and his dash and courage, and he sympathised with his not unsuccessful struggles over his loved economy. Modesty is not, perhaps, among the virtues attributed to Lord Randolph; but there was some far-off touch of it in a letter he wrote to me, in which he says: "I am not so conceited as to suppose that Mr. Gladstone could care for or even notice any speech of mine." But Mr. Gladstone did notice the rising man, and, turning to a colleague on the occasion of one of Lord Randolph's early speeches, he said prophetically: "That is a young man you will have to reckon with one of these days." They met several times, and Mr. Gladstone often spoke in warm terms about the power Lord Randolph possessed of making himself loved and respected by the

various heads of departments in which he worked, of his aptitude for learning, of his admirable and courageous work towards economy, of his personal courtesy and his pre-eminent qualities as a host, which could not be exaggerated. And Lord Randolph's admiration for Mr. Gladstone was unbounded and sincere. I recollect on one occasion when Mr. Gladstone had been talking after dinner, as the men were leaving the room, Lord Randolph said to a Unionist friend: "And that is the man you have left. How could you have done it?"

Dr. Johnson said: "When I was beginning the world and was nobody and nothing, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits, and then everybody loved to halloo me on." Disraeli followed the great Doctor's example in his attacks on Peel; and Lord Randolph, probably with similar motives, attacked Mr. Gladstone with an exaggeration we now all deplore. But if Lord Randolph was violent and even unscrupulous at times in his attacks, when a conviction came to him that he had been mistaken he was generous in acknowledging it. In language of real eloquence he had denounced the policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government in the Transvaal. But when years afterwards he was face to face with the facts on the spot, he wrote a letter to a London newspaper which attracted great attention at the time, and which contained a retractation of the rash judgment

he had pronounced, so complete and at the same time so judicious that in view of our subsequent relation with that Republic it is well worthy of being remembered.

"The surrender of the Transvaal" (he wrote) "and the peace concluded by Mr. Gladstone with the victors of Majuba Hill, were at the time, and still are, the object of sharp criticism and bitter denunciation from many politicians at home, *quorum pars parva fui*. Better and more precise information, combined with cool reflection, leads me to the conclusion that had the British Government of that day taken advantage of its strong military position and annihilated, as it could easily have done, the Boer forces, it would indeed have regained the Transvaal, but it would have lost Cape Colony. . . . The actual magnanimity of the peace with the Boers concluded by Mr. Gladstone's Ministry after two humiliating military reverses suffered by the arms under their control, became plainly apparent to the just and sensible mind of the Dutch Cape Colonist, atoned for much of past grievance, and demonstrated the total absence in the English mind of any hostility or unfriendliness to the Dutch race. Concord between Dutch and English in the Colony from that moment became possible."

A retractation so generous and hearty as this covers a multitude of rash vituperations.

In his strongest political animosities Lord Randolph ever retained his sense of humour. Shortly

after he had written a letter to the *Times* containing a violent attack on Lord Granville, he was crossing the Channel and was dreadfully sea-sick. "How Granville would like to see me now," he said. Indeed, I should have thought that no one could ever have doubted his sense of humour; yet in the obituary notice in one of the leading papers it was said he was totally devoid of it. Not only had he a sense of humour, but he is one of the few parliamentarians who have left sayings that have become proverbial. The elder of his colleagues were known as "the old gang." The Unionists as the "crutch of the Tory Party." His was the mint from which came "the mediocrities with double names," "the old man in a hurry," "the duty of an Opposition is to oppose," and many more.

It seems a paradox in God's providence that a man of genius, great talent, and splendid promise should in the prime of his life have been stricken down by a disease which appears cruel to us who see only through a glass darkly. "But as in a piece of tapestry, where on one side all is a confused and tangled mass of knots and on the other a beautiful picture, so from the everlasting hills will this earthly life appear not the vain and chanceful thing men deem it here, but a perfect plan guided by a divine hand unto a perfect end."

When present at his funeral service in the Abbey,

I could not but think sadly of what he many a time said humorously: "Mr. Gladstone will long outlive me; and I often tell my wife what a beautiful letter he will write on my death, proposing my burial in Westminster Abbey." I cannot better conclude this inadequate sketch than by quoting the words used by Mr. Gladstone in writing to his poor mother:—

"You followed your son at every step with, if possible, more than a mother's love; and on the other hand, in addition to his conspicuous talents, he had gifts which greatly tended to attach to him those with whom he was brought into contact. For my own share, I received many marks of his courtesy and kindness, and I have only agreeable recollections of him to cherish."

V

MR. GLADSTONE AS I KNEW HIM[1]

At the annual meeting of the Academy of Moral and Political Science in Paris, in 1898, a distinguished speaker said: "Mr. Gladstone might have sat here at his choice among our philosophers, our historians, our jurists, or our moralists. He summed up in his person all the moral sciences; better still, he carried out the doctrines he professed."

To this it may be added that he was a scholar, theologian, administrator, and financier of the highest order, and as an orator he was able at will to excite the enthusiasm, rouse the sympathies, call forth the love and the hatred, both alike passionate, of his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Gladstone once said to Sir Edward Hamilton: "I have made mistakes enough in my political career, God knows, but I can honestly assert that I have never said or done anything in politics in which I did not sincerely believe;" he might however have added, "It is the struggle and not the victory that constitutes the glory of noble hearts."

It is of none of these qualities that I am going

[1] The subject of an Address given at an Institution in Kensington.

to write ; neither am I going to dwell on his genealogical, his theological controversies, his Homeric studies ; all of these subjects have been dealt with in that splendid and wonderful book of Mr. John Morley's, which is now within reach of all of us. But if the reader will bear with me for a short time, I should like to have a little talk of Mr. Gladstone as I knew him, and, alas ! there are few now living who knew him as long as I did.

There will be some readers who are hostile in their political opinions, but time has probably softened, if it has not entirely obliterated, the acerbities of what is now past history ; and if I am obliged to allude to politics, I hope that I shall not be tempted to say one word that can offend the susceptibilities of the most susceptible. In talking of Mr. Gladstone, how can I avoid any reference to politics ? for his name runs like a golden thread through all the beneficent legislation of the latter part of the last century. You might as well talk of Nelson and avoid any reference to Trafalgar, or of Wellington and not allude to Waterloo.

Mr. Gladstone was a politician from his birth, for when he was only three years old he was, as he recollected, put on his father's table to lisp out a few words on the occasion of Mr. Canning's return for Liverpool in 1812. Fifty years afterwards he told the House of Commons, in the greatest of his many great speeches, how he had

been bred up under the shadow of the great name of Canning, and that every influence of that name governed the first political impressions of his childhood and his youth. Of his subsequent career at Eton and Oxford I will not speak, except to give one specimen of the industry and perseverance which followed him through life. The late Dean Stanley, his contemporary at Oxford, once said :—

"There were two men at the University in my time who could not do a common rule-of-three sum (there were no Board Schools in those days)—Gladstone and myself. Since that time I have acquired sufficient knowledge of sums to enable me to do the accounts of the abbey of which I am dean ; but Gladstone at once saw that he could not attain the highest honours of the University unless he mastered mathematics, and immediately set to work, with the result that in addition to gaining a first-class in Classics, he obtained a first-class in Mathematics, and lived to become the greatest exponent of figures that ever adorned the House of Commons."

In 1832 he entered Parliament as member for Newark, then a close borough belonging to the Duke of Newcastle. He soon entered official life in a subordinate office, but in 1841, in Sir Robert Peel's great Government, he became Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and there he learnt the blessings likely to accrue to the country by the abolition of the Corn Laws ; and I will tell how at

that early date his mind was drawn to the consideration of this great subject. At the Board of Trade some Chinese despatches came before him, in which the Prime Minister of that country said that the ships of foreign devils should not be admitted into their ports; "but," he added, "some of these ships were laden with corn, and it would be madness to exclude from their ports what would cheapen the food of the people." This Oriental wisdom led him to the study of this great problem, and he became, as he remained to the last day of his life, a staunch Free Trader.

He became Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Aberdeen's Government in December 1852, and it is curious to notice how many events in his life took place in that month. In December 1834 he entered Peel's Government. In December 1852 he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, in December 1868 Prime Minister.

When Chancellor of the Exchequer he followed the policy of his great master, Sir Robert Peel, the policy of economy and reduction of taxation on the necessaries of life, a policy which is now being attacked. As Sydney Smith said, alluding to the vexatious interference of the Customs on all articles of daily use :—

"The schoolboy whips his taxed top, the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed

bridle on a taxed road; and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, which has paid 7 per cent., into a spoon which has paid 15 per cent., flings himself back on his chintz-bed, which has paid 22 per cent., and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a licence of a hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death."

Mr. Gladstone reduced the number of articles taxed at the Customs from 1163 to 48.

In 1868 I became his private secretary, and from that day till the day of his death he honoured me with his confidence and friendship. Like a skilled artisan enamoured of his tools, Mr. Gladstone was apt to view, perhaps with an exaggerated indulgence, those like myself, who, fascinated by the personality of the man, gave all they had to give to his service. A biographer has said :—

"His manners towards his intellectual inferiors is almost ludicrously humble. He consults, defers, inquires, argues his point, where he would be justified in laying down the law, and eagerly seeks information from the mouths of babes and sucklings."

The chief joy of old age consists in retrospection, and I can see him now as on that morning when I began my work. The little details stand out in photographic clearness before me. I see him seated

at his table in Carlton House Terrace, the black frock-coat with a flower in his button-hole, brown trousers with a stripe down the side as was the fashion at that time ; a somewhat disordered neck-cloth, and the big collars which afforded such cause for merriment in contemporaneous caricature. An upward and almost annoyed look at the interruption gave way to a kind smile, as Mrs. Gladstone introduced me to him. He plunged into business at once, and gave me a huge box of correspondence connected with the formation of his Government, and I immediately understood what Sir Robert Peel, I think, once said, that the hardest task that could fall on a Minister was the business of forming a Government. That box contained the undue pretensions of many, the self-effacement of few, the modesty of some, and the ambitions of all. Where are those ambitions now ?

Mr. Gladstone explained to me his views of the relations that should exist between a Minister and his secretary—unbounded confidence, such as that which in a well-ordered household should exist between a husband and a wife, and then work began—work that had a beginning but never had an end. In a few days he showed me his scheme for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and on March 1st he introduced it to the House of Commons, which met in those days at 4.15 P.M. ; at 3.45 I found him reading Shakespeare. I asked him how

long his speech would be. He thought three hours —it was really three hours and ten minutes.

Never since Parliament was Parliament was such a sight seen. The floor was covered with chairs, and every available spot in the galleries was crowded to hear the great orator lay his scheme before the House, for, whatever his views were, whether right or wrong, there never existed a doubt as to what they were; he always took his countrymen into his confidence, and did not conceal them in philosophical pamphlets, or on a half-sheet of note-paper.

During those three hours of strained attention only one member had the courage to interrupt him. I shall never forget the interruption or the answer. "Had I wished," he said, "absolutely to confuse the subject I had in hand, I should have adopted the course suggested by the hon. member."

Let me give an instance of his marvellous memory. We were discussing in 1881 the conversion of the malt tax into a beer duty, which he called the greatest financial operation in his life, not even excepting the reimposition of the income tax. I had told him that the estimated profit of the maltster was 3 per cent. on each quarter of malt. I am now putting imaginary figures. The following day he said, "I understand that the maltster's profit is 4 per cent." "No, sir," I said, "3 per cent." "I certainly thought it was 4;" and

then turning to Mr. Young, a famous Inland Revenue official, he said, "Can you recollect as far back as 1832? Was not the profit then supposed to be 4 per cent.?" "It was then," he replied. "Ah," Mr. Gladstone said, "I see how 4 per cent. has got into my mind. I recollect studying the question when I became member for Newark in 1832, and it was that figure then"—a gap of nearly fifty years!

It has been said that Mr. Gladstone had not a keen sense of humour, and yet in Parliamentary badinage he was never surpassed. I have seen him as delighted as a child over simple stories, and particularly at American wit. Once some one was rash enough to repeat in his presence a questionable tale of a political opponent. "Do you call that amusing?" he said; "I call it devilish."

In his later years two men of singularly unprepossessing presence sat opposite to him, and he put to his colleagues on the bench beside him as to which was the ugliest. They gave their opinion. "No," said he, "you do not approach the question from the proper point. If you were to magnify your man, he would, on a colossal scale, become dignified and even imposing; but my man, the more you magnified him the meaner he would become."

Mr. Gladstone was often accused of being intolerant of those who differed from him, and of

brushing aside with an energy approaching to rudeness objections made to his own ideas. There may have been some semblance of truth in this accusation when his mind was once definitely made up, but I have never known a man, while a matter was being discussed, so patient and so modest in sifting matters to the bottom until he thought the truth was reached. He believed in his own thoughts, and, as Emerson said, "To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men, that is genius." Then he had a splendid boldness in brushing difficulties aside, following Lord Bacon's aphorism—that a statesman should doubt to the last and then act as if he had never doubted. In the hour of action he was like a great commander, who, having made his dispositions with care, engages his enemy, whom he means to annihilate, scornful of timid counsels and hesitating advisers.

My own belief is that Mr. Gladstone was an optimist, and early realised the fact that

"Life has nobler uses than regrets,"

and that there was no time in the short space allotted to us to waste in idle retrospections and useless self-reproaches. "With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak

what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradicts everything you said to-day."

His aim and his work were before and not behind him.

> "He saw his duty a straight sure thing,
> And went for it there and then."

He was one of those, as Browning said—

> "Who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

Mr. Lowe once cleverly said: "Gladstone possesses no ideas—his ideas possess him."

His genius was to raise everything to a higher level. He was infatuated with a devouring passion for liberty throughout the world, from the time when in opening the dungeon-doors to the Neapolitan prisoners, he struck the keynote of Italian independence, to the time when he raised his powerful voice in behalf of the oppressed Armenians.

When the great Napoleon was waiting anxiously for some despatches at Turin, his aide-de-camp said, "You are impatient, sire." "Yes," Napoleon replied. "I have lost many battles, but I have never lost any moments." So with Mr. Gladstone. His whole scheme of life was laid out so as never to waste a minute of it. There was never in his busy

day an idle dawdle by the fire; sauntering, as Lord Rosebery once said, was an impossibility to him, mentally or physically. I never knew him smoke but once—on the occasion of the Prince of Wales dining with him in Downing Street. With an old-fashioned courtliness, wishing to place his royal guest at his ease, he smoked a cigarette, which gave him more pain than pleasure; indeed, he hated the smell of tobacco, and once accused me of bringing the odious aroma of the "cursed weed" into his room. Meanly anxious to excuse myself, for I never smoked before going into his presence, I said I had been sitting for half-an-hour with Sir William Harcourt, who was an *acharné* smoker. Such was Mr. Gladstone's innocence that he said, "Does Harcourt smoke? I am sure if he does he always must change his clothes before he comes to me, for I have never perceived that he smokes."

A walk with him, as I have often experienced, meant four miles an hour, sharp, and I remember his regretting the day when he could only go up the Duke of York's steps at two steps at a time. When about to travel he would carefully pack his own despatch-box so that a book he was reading was ever ready to his hand. Perhaps this may be thought too trivial. In "The Small House at Allington," Anthony Trollope's heroine says:—

"I wonder if the Prime Minister ever orders his boots to be mended." I may, however, quote the

French philosopher Joubert : " To occupy ourselves with little things as with great, to be as fit and ready for the one as the other, is not weakness or littleness, but power and sufficiency."

Nothing demonstrated Mr. Gladstone's modesty more than the invariable kindness with which he would judge sermons, so unlike the flippant and easy criticisms of us smaller folk. He always attended church twice every Sunday, and would always laugh good-humouredly at me for being what he called a " once-er."

Mr. Gladstone told me that once after long nights in the House he used to be tempted to stay too long in bed in the mornings, so he made a rule which he never broke to get up the moment he was called. He was naturally a good sleeper, always reading a light book to distract his mind from the contests in the House ; but once he said, after a long debate, he could not help thinking of it. " If I did that often," he added, " I should go mad."

What a Government his Government of 1868 was ! The Irish grievance of a dominant Protestant Church in a Roman Catholic country was taken away. Free and national education first established. Purchase in the Army abolished. Ballot passed into law. Arbitration between all countries established ; and after paying off £26,000,000 of National Debt he left a surplus of £5,000,000 to his successor.

To form the truest idea of Mr. Gladstone's life it was necessary to see him at home. "There are some people who appear to the best advantage on the distant heights; some who keep others at a distance in the misty glamour of great station and great affairs," but Mr. Gladstone shone brightest in the close communion of his home. His life at Hawarden was simple and old-fashioned. On my last visit there I was greeted with more than usual affection, for he said he had been sorting old letters, and I was the only one of his secretaries who had used tape, not indiarubber rings, which soon rotted, to tie up the bundles. Every morning did he and Mrs. Gladstone, through wet and dry, heat and cold, walk to his parish church for prayer at eight o'clock; a simple breakfast on his return; a quarter of an hour's talk, and then he would retire to his private room, which he was fond of calling his "Temple of Peace," where he would be engrossed in his correspondence till luncheon-time, after which came generally a rapid walk through a beautiful park, unless he, with his great knowledge of forestry and his skill in woodcutting, was engaged in felling a tree. He has often told me that he would always have been able to earn full wages as a woodcutter. He knew the age, the circumference, and the height, I believe, of every important tree on the estate. Then a cup of tea and reading until dinner, which was a real time

for relaxation and infinite talk; but what always delighted me most was to hear him speak of old days and men that had passed away from the scene in which he was still the principal actor. He would talk of that wonderful knot of men, his contemporaries of earlier times, Lord Aberdeen, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Cardwell, Sir James Graham, and even of the famous head-master at Eton, Dr. Keate.

In 1892 Mr. Gladstone, in his eighty-third year, was for the fourth time called by the irresistible voice of the people to be Prime Minister, and I, having after forty years' service retired from the post of Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was able to devote myself entirely to his service.

It was a tragedy from the beginning; as we walked across the Park to the old familiar door of Downing Street he said, "This is unnatural to me at my time of life," and indeed it was; but there was no way out of it, and he fearlessly undertook his task. How he performed it we all know. But the end was not far off.

Lord Rosebery, in his "Life" of Pitt, tells us of a discussion which took place as to the quality most required in a statesman. One said, eloquence; one, knowledge; one, toil; but Pitt said, patience. Surely Mr. Gladstone possessed all four!

Mr. Bright once told me that he sat next to a lady at dinner who violently abused Mr. Gladstone. "May I ask, madam, if you have any sons? If

so, show Mr. Gladstone to them; if possible, get him to shake hands with them, and they will some day bless you for having known the greatest, the purest, and the noblest statesman that ever lived."

Shortly after his retirement from public life he underwent an operation by Dr. Nettleship for cataract. All was going well when by some imprudence on his part he rubbed his eye and the success of the operation was imperilled. When he realised it his first words were, "I am so sorry for Nettleship."

Some time before the end Mr. Gladstone was aware of his failing powers, and said: "My great wish now is to be out of all the strife. At my age I ought to be one of those whose faces are set towards Zion, and who go up thither; for this is only a probationary school—only a probationary school." And so, after much suffering, the end came. I saw him calm and patient—the great earthly reward of his pure and noble life.

There may be some of my readers who recollect seeing the coffin in Westminster Hall, with endless streams of people passing in contemplation all the earthly remains of him they had loved so well and so long. As Macaulay said of Warren Hastings:—

"Only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie

buried ; in the great Abbey which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall "

lies Mr. Gladstone ; and is it odd that I sometimes say aloud to myself: " When comes such another ? "

VI

TEMPORA MUTANTUR

"WHO is that red-faced man who said it was a fine morning, and nodded to our counsel?" whispered Mr. Pickwick.

"Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz," said Perker. "He's opposed to us; he leads on the other side."

Mr. Pickwick was on the point of inquiring, with great abhorrence of the man's cold-blooded villainy, how Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz, who was counsel for the opposite party, dared to presume to tell Mr. Serjeant Snubbin, who was counsel for him, that it was a fine morning when, &c., &c. To us the grotesque exaggeration of Mr. Pickwick's indignation is simply an amusing caricature, but it was at the time of its publication no doubt a skit on the party feeling which then existed to an absurd degree.

This feeling was very clearly defined and very acute. "Society," as Sir Erskine May tells us, "was separated into two opposite camps, the friends and foes of democracy." And the relations between the leaders of either side were limited to

"invectives hurled across the table of the House of Commons."

Lord Althorp, even in his boyish days at Harrow, was warned by his mother, who was a Tory, to have nothing to do with the Whigs; but, as I have heard of in other cases, the mother's advice was not taken, and Lord Althorp became the trusted leader of the advanced Whigs.

Sydney Smith has told us that, in the days of political differences over Reform, it was an awful period for those who had the misfortune to hold Liberal principles, when it was considered an impertinence if a man with less than two or three thousand a year ventured to express any opinion at all upon any important political question. If he had the courage of his opinions, he was assailed with all the Billingsgate of the French Revolution. He was called a "Jacobin Leveller, an Atheist, a Regicide."

The bitterness of political antagonism that existed in those days appears to us as impossible; but then it was likened to the "old division of families during the Civil Wars," and ladies entered keenly into the exclusiveness of opposing parties.

It was only in the salons of Lady Blessington, which few women ever entered, that men of all political shades of opinion met. Sir Bulwer Lytton relates how, at a dinner at her house in Kensington Gore, he found himself with "Fonblanque opposite

the forensic eloquence of Abinger and Lyndhurst, while Barnes and Strangford sat cheek by jowl in the middle of the table, and Disraeli amphibious and alone."

Lady Jersey's salon was the temple of Toryism; into that assembly, however, Lord Brougham was sometimes admitted in his literary rather than in his political character, and I doubt whether any leading Whig statesman would have ventured under her roof, neither can I gather that any Tory Minister ever found himself either at Holland House or Bowood; and even in church the political divisions existed: where the Whigs were in the ascendant, the obsequious clergyman always choosing the second collect in the Communion service, where the words "she (knowing whose minister she is)" were omitted as being thought to have a distant savour of the divine right of kings.

In the early days of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli in the House of Commons, no one would address a member sitting on the opposite side of the House as his "hon. friend" but as the "hon. member"—however intimate their private relations out of the House might be.

Mr. Gladstone has often told me how he regretted his never having known Lord Melbourne, and, as far as I know, he only once met Mr. Disraeli at dinner, when a young man, at Lord Lyndhurst's, but it made no impression on him; and Disraeli,

commenting on the dinner, said it was dull, and declared that a swan very white and tender and stuffed with truffles was the best company at the table.

Once, I think, the two statesmen met at tea at Lady Derby's; but nothing but "la pluie et le beau temps" passed between them.

In 1846 the great rift caused by Peel's conversion to Free Trade again stirred up political animosities as violent as those which existed at the time of the struggle for Reform. Peel was to the Tory imagination the very incarnation of treachery, and Disraeli denounced him with all his powers of sarcasm and vituperation.

"For forty years," he said, "Sir Robert Peel had traded on the ideas and intelligence of others; there was no statesman who had committed political larceny on so great a scale"—and the denunciations and hatred of the House of Commons found a responsive echo in society.[1]

Lady Dorothy Nevill, in her charming "Reminiscences," tells us how Lord Leicester and her father, two magnates in Norfolk, never had any dealings with each other on account of their political differences, and of a neighbour of hers in Sussex who would not allow a Radical or even a Free Trader within her doors, saying that she did not

[1] In the caricatures of that period Peel is represented as a rat-catcher, or with a rat-trap in his hand.

like such animals, and even refused to meet Mr. Cobden.

Mr. Sidney Herbert, in one of his finest speeches, pointing to Mr. Disraeli on the Treasury Bench, said, "It is not words that humiliate, but deeds; if a man wants to see humiliation, which, God knows, is always a painful sight, he need but look there;" and it was rumoured that Disraeli, turning to his neighbour, said, "That man has never forgiven me for calling him Peel's lackey." It would be difficult to imagine these antagonists leaving the House together for a friendly dinner or a game of Bridge.

Before Protection was finally defeated, and before the resignation of the Derby Government of 1852, Mr. Gladstone was in the Carlton Club, quietly reading his newspaper, when a band of excited roysterers, who had dined not wisely but too well, rushed into the room, and with insulting language said he ought to be hurled headlong out of window into the Reform Club.

The storm was too severe to last, and though the social barriers between political parties still existed, the exaggerations of controversy became less keen. Even in those days, when the fire and heat had cooled down, I was often at the house of my wife's grandmother, Lady Grey, but I can call to mind no prominent Tory who was ever present.

A lady who, from her brilliant social qualities, was much sought after in agreeable dinners, was seriously admonished by the leader of the party to whom she belonged against dining with the leaders of the Opposition. Lord John Russell remained an exclusive Whig till his death; and once, on Lady John expressing her regret at the defeat of a Tory friend at an election, he said he could only keep his sympathies for the wounded of his own side.

In later years, Lord John Russell was unhappy when the heir to the dukedom of Bedford married Lady Elizabeth West, the daughter of a man who had been Lord Chamberlain in a Tory Government, fearing it might make an inroad into the inviolability of family politics.

Lord Palmerston steered his boat on a more level keel, and Lady Palmerston, notwithstanding the exclusiveness of her social parties, did much by her personal charm to mitigate the polemical differences of her time. The opportunity of which she took advantage was there, and few acute differences arose in her husband's time. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, in "Lord Palmerston's Life," tells of a tribute paid by Mr. Disraeli to the charm of her salon: "The most accomplished diplomatist of the day you have in England said to me, 'I have not been on speaking terms with Palmerston for three weeks, and here I am; but you see, I am paying a visit to Lady Palmerston.'"

I recollect an ancient lady, who had been a friend of Lord Melbourne's and subsequently of Lady Palmerston's—Miss Cuyler—who, on taking a hackney carriage, used to put three questions to the driver :—

" Are you a Puseyite ? "

" Have you taken into your carriage anybody with an infectious disease ? "

" Are you a Whig or a Tory ? "

It is to be hoped that the questions were answered satisfactorily.

Lady Waldegrave as the wife of Mr. Chichester-Fortescue was wont to entertain in Carlton Gardens and Strawberry Hill, where she made a collection of the portraits of her friends, but I can recollect none of a political opponent's that hung on her walls.

I was with Sir Charles Wood when the news of Lord Palmerston's death arrived : " Ah," he said, " our quiet days are over." But some years elapsed before the huge conflict over Home Rule arose—in 1886—and the animosities of the Reform Bill and the bitterness over the Corn Laws were eclipsed. There were few houses of political opponents whose doors were open to Mr. Gladstone, grand seigneurs like Lord Spencer were ostracised, and people looked askance at Lord Granville.

A great lady, one of the few who still adhered to the Liberal party, related how a friend, being

asked to join a dinner to which Lord Granville was invited, made it a stipulation that she should not be placed next to him, and still less be taken in to dinner by him, as she declined in any way to be associated with a traitor to his country!

As Lord Fitzmaurice says, the rift broke up parties; it invaded clubs, it embittered social relations; old friends treated one another with frigid politeness. It was rumoured, I hope untruly, that at the house of a great aristocrat a gibbet was erected in the hall, with a figure of Mr. Gladstone hanging at the end of the rope. Appalling caricatures were glazed and hung up in the Tory smoking-rooms, and not resented as they should have been, as the unwholesome emanations of a gutter press. From one case of exaggerated party feeling the country has been the gainer, for the National Gallery, through the generosity of Sir Charles Tennant, contains Millais' fine portrait of Mr. Gladstone, which was sold to him by the Duke of Westminster, an old supporter, in consequence of his views on Home Rule. At the time that Mrs. Humphry Ward attained her fame as the authoress of "Robert Elsmere," in 1888, a friend of mine asked a Tory lady whether she had read it. How could she, was the answer, be expected to read a book praised by Mr. Gladstone!

Social clubs through all political phases have succeeded in ignoring party limitations, but awkward

moments sometimes arose, for shortly after Lord Salisbury's speech likening Lord Derby to Titus Oates some one entering Grillion's found the two silent and alone, but even the Olympian calm of Brooks's was disturbed by factious partisans. First a Home Ruler was blackballed, and then a Liberal Unionist—both in themselves desirable candidates. There was only one man who could stand, like the priest of old, between the living and the dead, and that was Lord Granville, who, one day before the ballot began, prayed that a truce might be allowed to the divisions and animosities of mankind, and the plague was stayed. This was the last speech he ever delivered. And surely no one who ever lived so richly deserved the blessing promised to peacemakers. The portraits of Charles James Fox now, with an apparently immortal calm, look down on high Tories, sitting at the tables where none but Whigs ever sat before.

In writing this little sketch, I had no intention of going back to the far-off days when Whigs and the Regent were in standing opposition to the Tories and the Court, when great county magnates ignored one another. My only wish is to show how the position of to-day is changed from the early part of the last century, when the country was ruled by certain governing families and very narrow cliques, and party spirit ran high.

Now, as far as society is concerned, the separating

lines have been almost obliterated. Although Parliamentary language has not been much softened, offensive caricatures have ceased to exist; the ablest caricaturist of his or any preceding age, Sir F. C. Gould, never produces an offensive sketch, or any that could give pain to the most sensitive politician.

Even the hopeless attempt to revive the old shibboleths of Protection failed to provoke personal animosities. I was glancing the other day at the fashionable intelligence of a daily newspaper, and I saw the list of those who dined at a great dinner of a Tory Cabinet Minister, at which politicians of all shades of opinion were gathered together.

There is, I think, no such thing as a Tory House or a Liberal House exclusively given up to devotees of either party, and at any dinner you may attend you are as likely to find a Whig as a Tory, or both. Lord Holland, as long ago as 1800, deplored what he thought the approach of intercourse of Tory and Whig, which was then far off, but had he lived till to-day he would have seen his fears and anticipations realised. One of the reasons of this change no doubt arises from the enormous increase of what is called London society, since the days even of Lady Palmerston; another, I hope, is that we have all become more educated, and therefore more broad-minded, and readier to

believe that even our opponents have sometimes reason on their side.

There is another cause, which is the growing familiarity of men and women. The late Prime Minister, I think, is undoubtedly the first who has ever been called, in his lifetime, by his Christian name. This breaking down of conventionalities was fostered by a small set of London people, whom in a preceding article I ventured to describe as a certain number of ambitious young women, whom envious people called the "Souls." They soon succeeded in breaking down the barriers that had heretofore existed between men of opposite political parties, and included in their ranks everybody who in their opinion added anything to the gaiety of nations.

There may sometimes arise a suspicion in the minds of those who have not been accustomed to the ways of society, that there must be something inconsistent with real sincerity in men who can go to all lengths and language in Parliamentary debate, and go out of the House to dine together in the close intimacy of family life. But whether there is any ground for this suspicion or not, the change on the whole must undoubtedly be for the general good, and it is only to be hoped that, in the various vicissitudes and chances of political life, toleration may increase, and that the bitter personal feeling of the past will never be revived.

VII

A WALK THROUGH DESERTED LONDON

When some grumbler met "that polished sin-worn fragment of the Court," the Duke of Queensberry, "old Q.," one September afternoon, and asked whether he was not bored with the emptiness of London—"Yes," he said; "but, at all events, there are more people here than there are in the country." This may be so, yet with its millions of living souls moments will come when the true Londoner discovers that a crowd is not company. His season is over, his Clubs are shut, his streets under repair, his friends fled, and their houses dismantled.

> "The baffled hopes have gone to Cowes, the broken hearts to Baden."

It is not pleasant, for we know that whoever delights in solitude is either a wild beast or a god. I am neither; but, as Rogers said, "to any one who has reached a very advanced age a walk through the streets of London is like a walk in a cemetery. How many houses do I pass, now inhabited by strangers, in which I used to spend such

happy hours with those who have been long dead and gone!"

To be alone in the autumn has often been my sad fate. I had been engaged in the City, and about four o'clock I found myself walking westwards along a noble embankment, which had not been commenced in my youth, and of which I had watched the construction and the planting; for in my early official days the Thames washed in under the arches of Somerset House, the finest building in England—a building in which, later on, I was destined to pass the best years of my life. My memory, from old habit of the mind, went dreamily back to those times when a graceful suspension bridge of immense span, now connecting Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, existed in the place of the hideous railway line which runs from Charing Cross to Waterloo. I well remember my father prophesying the fulfilment of Sir Frederick Trench's plans, of which he was an enthusiastic admirer. Hungerford Market then flourished. No underground railway, no gigantic hotels, no political clubs had been built, and the proud lion of the Northumberlands, turning his tail contemptuously towards the City I had just left, had not been banished to Sion. No Whitehall Court or Landseer's lions existed, and no miserable fountains, which, it was said at the time of their creation, were to rival the Grandes Eaux of Versailles.

Being in the humour to note changes that had taken place in my lifetime, I was relieved to find on crossing Whitehall that the dear old Admiralty still remained intact. Coming out of the gates, there is the great First Lord, Sir James Graham, to whom I owed my place in the office, and whom, not only for that reason, I look on with profound respect and admiration. His magnificent figure and height made even the tall sentry of pre-Crimean days at the door a small man. Mr. Gladstone has frequently told me he considered Sir James the greatest administrator of his time and the only statesman whose merits never received due recognition from the press.

When I was a clerk in the office we used constantly to observe an old gentleman who daily came into the courtyard and took off his hat to the fouled anchor which is carved over the door, through which so many brave men and palpitating hearts have passed. I feel as if I could play the part of that old gentleman now, who has doubtless long ago preceded me. Now the Salamanca mortar and the Egyptian guns have been pushed away from the parade and put in the corner, like naughty children, and the garden is desecrated with a horrible half-French, half-English nondescript building which is grotesquely commonplace. The Horse Guards still, happily, remain; and here are the Life Guards without the grim bearskins—the awe

and admiration of my childhood. Here, too, are the Foot Guards, but how changed from those of my early recollections! No white duck trousers, no swallow-tail coats faced with white; no worsted epaulettes, no cross-belts, no long muskets and pointed bayonets. In my mind's eye, I see the Guard turning out to salute the hero of a hundred fights, who lifts his two fingers to his hat in acknowledgment as he rides by. There is the house of the First Lord of the Treasury, so full of historical associations; and the little garden gate through which the Duke of Wellington escaped from a mob who had forgotten that his services as a soldier should have outweighed the shortcomings of a statesman. No cow-stand now remains to remind me of the happy moments in my childhood of curds and whey and soft biscuits. Walking up the Duke of York's steps, and forgetting that the column was said to be built so high to get him out of reach of his creditors, I wonder why so great a monument had been erected in honour of so small a man. It occurs to me how few people could tell whether at the top of the steps there are, or are not, gates. I remember putting the question at a dinner-party in Carlton Gardens, which for the main consisted of guests who either lived there or whose avocations took them down those steps every day of their lives, and only one person answered correctly.

Could you do so, oh, my reader? From the top of the steps I espy Maurice Drummond striding towards the Green Park with an occasional puff at the pipe concealed in his hand, for smoking in public was then a crime.

Tennyson said to the Editor of *The Nineteenth Century*, when revisiting Cambridge with him, that he saw the ghost of a man in every corner. Carlton House Terrace is to me indeed a very land of ghosts. I looked wistfully up at the shuttered windows of the room where, nearly thirty years ago, I had the honour and happiness of making my first acquaintance with Mr. Gladstone, and the darkened doors where I had enjoyed the friendship of George Glyn and his lovely wife; where I had known Lord and Lady Granville, with whom I had spent so many happy hours, and the house in which I had held such long official talks and friendly conversations with Freddy Cavendish, whose tragic fate had closed the brilliant political career which those who knew him best had prophesied. There, too, in my imagination, I saw Lord Grey riding his black cob, and Mr. Russell Sturgis, who gave us such sumptuous and constant hospitality, mounting his coach. As Thackeray says, savoury odours emanate from the kitchen borne across I don't know what streams and deserts, struggles, passions, poverties, hopes, hopeless loves, and useless loves of thirty years.

Towards the west I passed Count Bernstorff's house, and pictured myself entering the wide-open doors of Lady de Grey and Lady Palmerston, before she had migrated to Piccadilly, or struggling in a crowd to enter where Lady Waldegrave, with profuse hospitality, collected all the political and social society of her day.

I walk through a perfect *campo santo* of departed heroes who have lived and died since I was a boy, and pass the empty Athenæum, recently decorated by the artistic hands of Alma Tadema and Sir Edward Poynter—a comparatively modern club built on the ground of Carlton House, under the auspices of John Wilson Croker. The more luxurious of its members wished for an ice-house, but Croker insisted on decoration, and put up the frieze copied from the Parthenon. A wit of the day wrote :—

> "I am John Wilson Croker,
> I will do as I please;
> They ask for an ice-house,
> I'll give them a frieze."

Here in the porch I see Charles Bowen, George Dasent, and Rogers, the beloved rector of Bishopsgate, and I long to join them in the flesh and hear all the good things they are saying. It was not from Rogers that the name of Bishopsgate was given to the Club, but from the fact that it stands opposite the Senior United Service, which is irre-

verently called Cripplegate. In its hall the reconciliation of Thackeray and Dickens took place, and there poor Dicky Doyle, too early for us who loved him, breathed his last.

Turning into Pall Mall, I glance in imagination at the rooms where Sir Edward Walpole, son of the great minister, was about to entertain a party of musical men-friends at dinner when the lovely Mary Clements, with whom he had formed a great friendship, rushed in, saying her angered father had cast her out of his house on account of their intimacy, upon which Sir Edward, with an old-world courtesy, took her hand and led her to the bottom of the table, saying: "This, henceforth, is your proper place."

> "Three fair children first she bore him,
> Then before her time she died."

From one of these daughters—Lady Waldegrave, afterwards the Duchess of Gloucester—descended the three Ladies Waldegrave (Lady Hugh Seymour, Lady Euston, and Lady Waldegrave), whose faces and figures, bending over their embroidery frames, are familiar to us in the lovely picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds which, till Lady Waldegrave's death, adorned the walls of Strawberry Hill.

The Reform Club, built on the model of the Farnese Palace by Sir Charles Barry, reminds me

of Mr. Bright telling me that at the time of the Corn-Law agitation he took Mr. Rauston, the Secretary of the League, there, who put his hand on his arm and said, "John, John, how can we remain honest if we live in such palaces as this?"

Here, too, I see Lord Clarendon, and with him Charles Greville arm-in-arm, "hearing some secrets and inventing more," and a knot of eager politicians at the Carlton discussing whether the Peelites will join the Tories or the Whigs, and a few steps further on a brougham, which was then a novelty, with a very tall, well-drilled, powdered footman at the door, from which emerges a lady beloved by many generations of society, and familiarly called "Lady A." She possessed a low, deep voice, which was never used to say an unkind word of or to anybody, large curls on each side of a fine-featured face, and an appearance of everlasting youth.

Lord Sydney, with his hat well tilted over his eyes, rides from his house in Cleveland Square, now altered past recognition, while I am loitering at the corner of St. James's Street, to look into the window of Sams, the librarian, and study the last of Dighton's sketches; and while there, Lord Redesdale, Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords, in his swallow-tailed coat, his brass buttons, his buff waistcoat, white tie, and his low

shoes with white stockings, no gloves and no stick, passes me with a jerk of recognition; while on the other side of the road I see Mr. Stephenson, the last wearer of Hessian boots, on his way to Brooks's.

Sailing along, I see Beauchamp Seymour, not then ennobled, but with an established reputation as the bravest of brave sailors, and the most popular of popular men—"The swell of the Ocean," as we called him then—always wearing an extensive shirt-front and white gloves, never buttoned, on his unaccustomed hands. After the bombardment of Alexandria I asked him if he would mind telling me as an old friend whether he felt any fear. "None whatever," he said, "except a terrible fear that I might be afraid."

Walking by Marlborough House gate I see Andrew Cockerell, who took away with him in his early death a fund of kindly wit and humour. It was then the Vernon Gallery. For some time after the bequest of the pictures no place had been found for them, and a deputation of artists waited upon Lord Palmerston to remonstrate, saying they were stored away in what was little better than a cellar. "Ah!" said Lord Palmerston, "following the old precept, 'Ars est *celare* artem.'" Passing the shop of Mr. Harvey's with its priceless engravings, I think of it when it was a tailor's shop, where George Augustus Sala tells us he began life as an

apprentice. At Welch's, the printseller's, who occupied the house just opposite Brooks's, now in possession of Cutler, the tailor, are the famous caricatures of H.B., the father of Dicky Doyle. Walking out of St. James Place is the banker poet Rogers, whom Frederick Locker describes as an ugly little man, a wrinkled little Mæcenas in a brown coat; but he was more than that. The older he got the greater his position became. He had been a friend of Fox, of Sheridan, of Moore and Campbell, and Byron and Shelley, with whom he travelled in Italy. He was offered the Poet-Laureateship, which then was an office of honour. When a great robbery of his bank took place, he regretted the necessity of having to drive in a brougham—a carriage then almost unknown—but later on he was reconciled by finding it adopted by persons of fashion. Lafayette said that memory is the wit of fools. If it is, I am not ashamed of sharing in its pleasures with Rogers.

A sidelong view of Pratt's reminds me of many hours stolen from the night, and many matutinal chops consumed by me when, in my salad days, I had the honour of being a member of that institution. It had originally been a public billiard-room in Cork Street, patronised by old Lord Tenterden, Lord Dudley, and Lord Eglinton, and other famous players, under whose auspices it was removed to Park Place in 1841. But in 1847

an Act of Parliament was passed which would have had the effect of closing it at 12 o'clock. This did not at all suit its *habitués*, who changed it into a club, which exists to the present day, where mutton chops, kidneys, and "bottom crusts" are served to any hour of the morning to members after the theatres, or even after balls. Old Pratt, a real character, as much at home serving his guests at supper or sitting at table with them at dinner, died in 1861.

Here, too, I picture to myself the well-known form of "Bob" Grimston, the famous cricketer on his way to Harrow or his beloved Lord's, with Frederick Ponsonby, to coach the boys for the public school matches; or as I have seen him in the hunting-field, in his broad-brimmed hat with rosettes tied over his ears to keep them warm. These bosom friends, differing in their style of cricket, differed more absolutely in their political convictions—Frederick Ponsonby, a staunch Whig; and Grimston, a furious Tory. Hunting one day with Baron Rothschild's hounds, when he was chairman of Mr. W. H. Smith's committee in the Westminster election, he said, if he was beaten he would blow his brains out; and who knows whether the dogged old Tory would not have been as good as his word?

At the window of the Conservative Club I see John Heneage Jesse, the historian, talking over the

riotous days of old, passed in the company of Lord Waterford and the brothers Frank and Charles Sheridan with "Tommy Grant" of royal descent.

And now "still being in a good dream," as Peter Ibbetson says, I come to a Club the members of which were cruelly said to exemplify the three degrees of comparison—fools, d——d fools, and old Boodleites. I pass the famous gambling hell, still, I think, called the Cocoa-Tree, and Brooks's, peopled with the ghosts of Charles Fox and Lord Stanley, the Rupert of Debate, standing on the table and declaring that he would have the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill; or, in later days, Macaulay indulging in "rare and sudden flashes of silence;" the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Bedford, Lord Foley, Sir David Dundas, and Poodle Byng, and all the Whig world discussing the politics of the hour. On the steps of White's are the ghosts of a past generation: Sir George Wombwell, Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence, the two inseparables; Admiral Rous, Lord Cantelupe, Lord Chesterfield, the devoted admirer and companion of D'Orsay, and Lord Gardner mounting the smartest of smart hacks.

Nobody now rides in London as Lord Palmerston, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Charles Wood, Sir John Pakington, and many more used to do to pay visits or to attend the Houses of Parliament.

There are no rulers and gods of St. James's, no man whose fiat about dress is as powerful as the ukase of a Russian emperor. Each man is a law to himself; a freedom within certain limitations is given to all; the tailor, the railway, the omnibus, the cab, and the photographer have democratised the English Society of my youth.

I paused awhile, on what Disraeli called that celebrated eminence at the top of St. James's Street by the refuge, opposite the famous bay-window of White's, meditating on the uncertainty of human ambitions and human life; for on the pillar I spelt out the name of its founder, Mr. Pierrepont,[1] who was in the habit of frequenting White's and the Turf Club, which formerly was in Arlington Street. With advancing years and increasing traffic he became alive to the danger of the crossing, and begged the Vestry to erect a place of refuge in the middle of the street; this they declined, but expressed their readiness to meet his views provided he paid the cost, which he consented to do. One day, when the refuge was complete and his name embossed on it, he was proudly showing it off to a friend, and had stepped on one side to admire it the better, when he was knocked down by a passing coach and killed.

[1] Now almost obliterated by the lamp-post recently erected.

"We call these coincidences. I wonder what God calls them!"

Leaving the faded glories of Crockford's and the stand of hackney-coaches, I pass into Arlington Street, where Sheridan, sickened with his losses at play, kicked a man over who protested that he was only tying his shoe. "D——n you!" said Sheridan, "you are always tying your shoe." Horace Walpole calls it the ministerial street, where Pulteney and Lady Mary Montague lived, and on both sides of which Sir Robert Walpole had a house, where in my youth the Duke of Hamilton, with a beauty like a god's, was often to be seen.

Turning into Piccadilly there is the chariot of Lady Peel, who never missed her daily drive with her daughter in the park, and the yellow chariot of the Duchess of Cleveland, with her two tall footmen in breeches and silk stockings and their long canes. As Thackeray said: "That noble old race of footmen is well-nigh gone. A few thousand of them may still be left among us. Grand, tall, beautiful, melancholy, we still behold them on levée days with their nosegays and their buckles, their plush and their powder. So have I seen in America specimens—nay, camps and villages—of Red Indians, but the race is doomed—the fatal decree has gone forth, and Uncas with his tomahawk and eagle's plume, and Jeames with his cocked hat and long cane are passing out of the world where they

once walked in glory." The Duchess was a lady with a philosophic turn of mind, for when her husband died she asked a relation down to the funeral, and told him to bring his gun, adding, "We are old, we must die, but the pheasants must be shot."

Her sister, Lady Anne Beckett, called Flavia by her friends from the colour of her hair, is in her green chariot as a contrast; Lady Harrington, whose servants with brown livery coats down to their ankles stand proudly behind, while Lady Foley's carriage with bewigged coachman in white kid gloves, driving the finest brown pair of steppers in London, gives them the go-by. Here, too, is the Russian Ambassadress, Baroness Brunow, with her well-known *accroche-cœurs*, not yet banished from her beloved London by the diplomatic exigencies of the Crimean War; and the famous horsewoman, Mrs. Jack Villiers, who so fearlessly followed Jem Mason over the strongly fenced pastures of the Aylesbury Vale.

The *vis-à-vis* of Frances Anne, Lady Londonderry, passes in the street, Lady Jersey and Lady Cardigan being the only other ladies who owned carriages now so long out of date.

Bath House is there, where in my mind's eye I see Thackeray, Carlyle, Abraham Hayward, and Brookfield chatting after their visit to the agreeable but formidable Lady Ashburton.

The old wall still protects the reservoir in the Green Park from Piccadilly, and runs down to Hyde Park Corner.

I continue my ramble past the Coventry Club, where Comtesse de Flahault, the wife of Napoleon's aide-de-camp, Ambassador from France, used to hold her *salon ;* and Cambridge House, from which I saw the funeral *cortège* of the Duke of Cambridge emerge on an early summer morning in 1850, before it became the residence of Lady Palmerston. Here is Streleçki, with his iron-grey hair *en brosse*, his thumb erect as if he were condemning a hundred gladiators to death in the arena, while he was dividing his time between good works and society ; Lady Palmerston's adherent, H. Fleming, called the Flea, stands below, while the old minister who mounts his white hack for his evening ride in Rotten Row (which now is vulgarly called " The Row," and loses its meaning of *route du Roi*), although the best known of English politicians rides the whole length of the Park, recognising no one, so fearful was he of bores. Wrapped in affectionate conversation are two sisters, Lady Canning and Lady Waterford, already famous for their surpassing beauty, their personal charm, and their love of art. Their extraordinary artistic gifts would have, had they gone through a little of the drudgery of technical education, raised them to high positions as painters. As they drive along,

talking probably of the passing topics of the day, the thought never enters their imagination of how soon they will be parted, for ever as far as this world is concerned, nor how soon the eldest sister would be called on to fill a splendid position. Far less does their imagination show them the dangers and responsibilities she would have to meet, and how among timid counsels, the abuse of Anglo-Indian society, and the cries for vengeance, she would through them all nobly exhibit the highest type of English womanhood in the undaunted heart and splendid courage which lasted her to the end, until she lay at peace in the garden at Barrackpore which she had so loved and beautified.

Hyde Park Corner is altered past recognition. Lady Newburgh, whose eyes failed her in her old age, said when the changes in London were described to her :—

"I can understand most of them from description, but the changes at Hyde Park Corner pass my comprehension. The abolition of the Morpeth slope, which led from Constitution Hill to the level of Grosvenor Place, opposite Halkin Street, where Lord Carlisle's house was, is gone, and all seems to me a world of confusion."

Here see a knot of fashionable young men, Bury, Seymour Damer, Augustus Lumley, and William Blackburn, discussing the fashionable arrangements

of the week. While Napier Sturt, nearly the last man to wear a tie twice round his neck, and Henry Calcraft were speculating on the chances of the ring or the turf. At the corner was the well-turned-out yellow coach of Sir Henry Peyton, with his four greys, and the business-like team of Mr. George Lane-Fox of Bramham; and I see my youthful ideal of an old aristocrat in Lord Anglesey, driving his curricle, a form of carriage which Lord Tollemache kept alive till his death, a few years ago; Leicester Stanhope is seated in his four-wheeled carriage, which is now called a T-cart, which he invented and called after his name. Lord Cardigan, not alone, and Lord Wilton pass in their cabriolets, and Lady Pollington driving her pair of ponies, while the crowd which had assembled to see the Queen and Prince Albert drive up from Constitution Hill is diverted for a moment to see the Dowager Lady Foley, attired in white, sitting in her Venus shell lined with pale blue silk.

Turning by Apsley House, I instinctively put my hand up to feel whether my collar is stiff enough for the Park, and see in my imagination Rotten Row crowded with all the horsemen and horsewomen of London: Algernon Peyton, the greatest dandy of his age, and therefore called the sloven, on the principle of *Lucus a non lucendo;* Mackenzie Grieve, with his straight-brimmed hat and wide-spreading neckcloth, the fearless rider yet

representative in Rotten Row of the *haute école;* Delane, the bold horseman of early days, who afterwards became the social and genial editor of the *Times;* and towering over them Thackeray on his "little 'oss," and towering again over him Jacob Omnium of literary fame; the ladies in their ringlets, tall hats, and habits reaching to the ground, and the stately row of carriages along the north side of the Serpentine, occupied not only by ladies of fashion, but by frail ladies smarter and better known. Bending my steps through Stanhope Gate, I see it before its entrance was beautified by Dorchester House, or defaced by the florid vulgarity of a Barnato. Crossing from his house is Lord Fitzroy Somerset before he had embarked in his last campaign.

At the end of the street still stands Chesterfield House, which Lord Burton has done his best to preserve; but it is not the Chesterfield House of my youth, peopled by the Duke and Duchess of Abercorn and their beautiful daughters; the House, as Lord Chesterfield called it, of Canonical pillars, which were brought from Canons, the seat of the Duke of Buckingham, near Edgware, but now, in the miserable greed for money, shorn of its lovely garden and its ancestral rookery. I look in vain for a tablet to show the house where the great Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, breathed his last, and pass where Becky Sharp was found on

that unlucky night by poor Rawdon Crawley in the arms of Lord Steyne. Here, too, is what I have always rightly or wrongly imagined to be Thackeray's Lady Whittlesea's Chapel, where Charles Honeyman preached in the morning, and coughed in the afternoon, "for the women like a consumptive parson." At any rate, it has its historical reminiscences; for, if it is not the building, it is the spot on which the chapel stood when the Duke of Hamilton married the beautiful Miss Gunning at midnight. The historical Misses Berry's house, No. 8, is still as it was in the days when their *salon* was famous, and their drawing-rooms crowded with the most brilliant society of London. Chesterfield Street, where Beau Brummell lived, the famous dandy of the Regent's time; and later on another dandy, with none of the faults of his predecessor, Alfred Montgomery, who, unlike Brummell, accumulated friends as he advanced in years, and whose death was bitterly regretted by them all. I look up at the windows from which the lovely Mrs. Norton leant, her hair, as Motley said, raven black, eyes very large, with dark lashes as black as death, the nose straight, the mouth flexible and changing, with teeth that would in themselves make the fortune of an ordinary face. When you add to her extraordinary poetic genius descent from that famous Sheridan who has made talents hereditary in her family, a low

sweet voice which would have been the delight of King Lear, you can understand how she twisted men's heads off and hearts out. And there is the house of Lady Becher, who, as Miss O'Neal, had stolen tears from all who saw her "gushing passion" as Juliet and Jane Shore, who to the end of her life was ready to declaim Hohenlinden and the Burial Service, to the delight of her guests.

That inveterate gambler George Payne is on his way to White's. When Master of the Pytchley George Glyn had a bad fall, was picked up unconscious, and taken into a neighbouring house. Mr. Payne kindly watched over him, and when Glyn was recovering consciousness he found him laying the odds on each leech put on his forehead as to whether it would take or not. He it was that discovered the card-scandal of one of his gambling set. Lord Alvanley, feeling sorry for the culprit, called on him, for which he was reproached by his friends; he confessed that he had committed this enormity, but he said in extenuation, "I marked my card to show him it was an honour."

Then into Berkeley Square, which Sir Robert Walpole was astonished to find built during his administration. There I see Lord and Lady Brougham, in their yellow barouche, coming from Grafton Street from their house, which was after-

wards the Turf Club till it was moved into Piccadilly. How full it is of delicious memories, of which I am happy to say Arthur Dasent is soon to tell us. There is a bonfire of early fallen autumn leaves, and my fancies float through the smoke to the time when William Pitt received deputations at the house of his brother, the second Earl of Chatham, which is now rebuilt, where my mother was taken as a child to see the famous Horace Walpole, whose house, descending to his successors, was lost in payment of a gambling debt by Lord Orford to Colonel Henry Baring, who was introduced to the great Buonaparte as the "Napoleon de jeu." Here my mother looked on the young plane-trees planted by Mr. Edward Bouverie about 130 years ago. Next to it is where Admiral Rous lived and died, and where a greater and even more popular man than he once lived—Admiral Keppel, whose features we have so frequently seen on the signboard of old hostels. On the opposite side of the Square is the house which the Prime Minister, Lord Grey, dwelt in, and where Sydney Smith was a constant guest. Here lived and died Lord Clive, whose descendant is perhaps the only unprofessional gentleman who still keeps his name on a polished brass plate on his door; and I see coming out from the gates of Lansdowne House a venerable old man, who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet of all the Talents

in 1806, at the age of twenty-five; in whose house, after the death of Fox, all the disorganised Whig Party met; who had declined Premierships and Dukedoms, and while loving society and patronising art, possessed an influence unique among politicians since the death of the Duke of Wellington.

> "He fought with Pitt and served with Fox.
> He shared the struggles of a fiercer time than ours."

Here, too, is the house, now occupied by a younger Prime Minister, of the famous Lady Jersey (who was married in it) and her beautiful daughter, Lady Clementina Villiers. It was from this house that the well-known elopement of Lord Westmorland and Miss Child took place; and when Lady Jersey's daughter, Lady Adela Ibbetson, followed her example, Lady Londonderry wrote a letter of condolence to her mother deploring the event, but adding that it was the natural consequence of her bad bringing-up. A few years later Lady Londonderry's daughter eloped, and Lady Jersey, who had kept her friend's letter, copied and sent it to Lady Londonderry—a correspondence worthy of a place among Punch's best feline amenities.

At the north-east corner, near Thomas's Hotel, there is a new house built where once George Paget lived, that gallant Colonel of the 4th Light Dragoons

who had at Balaclava ridden through both the lines of the Russian artillery, and never used his sword, holding that it was the duty of an officer in command not to fight, but to look after his men.

Here, too, lived and died his lovely cousin and wife, and I am glad to think that, though not a stone of their house remains, their memory is fresh in the hearts of the few of their friends who still live. As Heine says :—

"All the world smells of dead violets."

I turn homewards into Mount Street, so long called Oliver Mount from the London fortifications built there by Parliament in 1643. There is that apostle of homœopathy, Quin, the incorrigible punster, with his asthmatic voice and wheezy laugh. His house, approached through a long passage, is as much a thing of the past as the parliamentary walls of 1643.

My dream is rudely broken by the syren of a motor-cab ; and I fear that in my reveries I have been casting too sad looks behind me, and perhaps unduly regretting other times, other manners, and other men. "The days that are no more." This is natural in dreams of the old, but, thank God, in my waking moments, I still can contemplate with intense pleasure the glorious joys and blessedness of youth, the noble ambitions and

splendid aspirations of many in this hive of working men; how day by day some ideal becomes a reality; how day by day some scandal is lived down, some grievance is redressed, and "not all good things are in the past."

VIII

THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB

On December 17, 1902, the Cosmopolitan Club, 30 Charles Street, Mayfair, surrounded by a few sorrowing friends, passed away from its old abode and migrated to new rooms in the Alpine Club in Savile Row, where it is hoped it may eternally flourish, but the sad event of its migration should not be allowed to occur without some notice.

Under the heading of "obituary" we who still remain are accustomed daily to find the names of some old friends or acquaintances who have crossed the dark river, and we ask ourselves what was their title to be included in the literary *campo santo* of the *Times*, and wonder whether some day our names will be inserted in the outer sheet at a cost to our executors of 7s. 6d., or whether we, too, shall be deemed worthy of a place in the gratuitous obituary, and, if so, what will be recorded of us and our doings. In this obituary the Cosmopolitan may well claim a place.

The idea of the club was originated by a few friends meeting on two evenings of each week at

Colonel Stirling's, who subsequently became Sir Anthony, and was appointed Adjutant-General of the Highland Brigade in the Crimea, where he was Chief of the Staff to Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde. The meetings were held in his house, called the White Cottage, which was approached through a narrow passage and garden out of Knightsbridge, but it has long since disappeared, and its place opposite the Cavalry Barracks has been absorbed, as far as I can gather, by the buildings around Kent House.

The young men collected there were evidently fond of theatrical impersonations, for at the time when England was ringing with the disclosures made by Mr. Gladstone of the horrors of the Neapolitan prisons, Sir William Stirling appeared as Poerio, with George Cavendish Bentinck chained to him as the "degraded being." And, again, on one evening in 1854, when the British public were becoming weary of the protracted negotiations with Russia about the Holy Places, and a generation of Englishmen who had never experienced the horrors of war were anxious for them to come to an end, Sir William Stirling Maxwell again amused the assembled company by coming into the room with a huge cloak and a carpet bag, burlesquing Baron Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador, on his departure from this country on the declaration of war.

The pleasures of this time were soon to be marred, however, by the departure of Colonel Stirling for the Crimea, and the evenings at the White Cottage were thus hurriedly brought to an end; but the spirits of the coterie were not to be daunted, the idea originated by Colonel Stirling was too good to be lost, and it was determined that the Sunday and Wednesday meetings should be continued in Robert Morier's rooms at 49 Bond Street, and the coterie became a Club.

Addison once said that "all celebrated clubs were founded upon eating and drinking, which are points wherein most men agree, and in which the learned and illiterate, the dull and the airy, the philosopher and the buffoon, can all of them bear a part." I believe that this axiom is true of nearly every club. But the food of the Cosmopolitan was intellectual food, and intellectual food only; still it was good and it sufficed.

The list of the original twenty-five members of the Club is before me :—

> "The few, the happy few,
> The band of brothers."

Only three of the original members who assisted at its birth remain to mourn its departure from its old habitation: Lord Ripon, Sir William Harcourt, and Lord Lingen.

Among the original members there was Robert

Lowe, who, recently returned from a high position in Australia, was only forty years of age. He was then member for Kidderminster, and already one of the leader writers in the *Times*, with every intention of carving out a career for himself in English political life. Success came rapidly, but, as is so often the case, it came too late for enjoyment.[1] As Chancellor of the Exchequer in Mr. Gladstone's Government of 1868 he wrote some pathetic lines not generally known :—

"Success has come—the thing that men admire,
The pomp of office and the care of State,
Ambition has nought left her to desire,
Success has come, but, ah ! has come too late.
Where is the bounding pulse of other days
That would have flashed enchantment thro' my frame,
The lips that would have loved to speak my praise,
The eyes that would have brightened at my name?
Oh ! vanity of vanities—For truth
And time dry up the spring while joy was rife,
Teach us we are but shadows of our youth,
And mock us with the emptiness of life."

Ralph Lingen, now Lord Lingen, having reaped to the full all the glories of a brilliant University career, was entering the Education Department. Henry Austen Layard, fresh from his excavations and discoveries at Nineveh and Babylon, was not yet in Parliament. George Venables, who had the reputation of having broken Thackeray's nose in

[1] He died as Lord Sherbrooke.

a fight when they were boys together at Charterhouse, was one of the brilliant writers who were increasing the influence of the *Saturday Review*.

Francis Palgrave, an art critic of that journal, who had begun his career as assistant Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone, was already Vice-President of Kneller Hall. A poet and friend of Tennyson, he had probably persuaded his Principal, the future Bishop of Exeter and Archbishop of Canterbury, to join their company, while James Spedding, not yet forty years old, the dearest friend of Edward FitzGerald, whom Tennyson called "The Pope among us young men," had already refused the position of Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, and was soon after to attain distinction as the biographer of Bacon. Watts and John Ruskin, already famous, were destined to far higher fame. Then there was the humorous and witty preacher at Berkeley Chapel, William Brookfield, whose name is so identified with Thackeray and Tennyson, and Monckton Milnes, the poet, or, as he was wittily called by Carlyle, "The President of the Heaven and Hell Amalgamation Society"—of whom it was said: "Whenever he comes into the room, everybody is in better humour with everybody else."

Robert Browning, the poet son of a poet, still with his fame to make, but even then with a fund of anecdote and devoted to society even more

than to poetry, full of ambition and eager for success, &c., had been an author since the age of nineteen, and had already written a tragedy, which was acted by Macready and Miss Helen Faucit. When he produced an early volume of poems he was delighted at receiving a letter from Mr. J. S. Mill, proposing to write a notice of them in the *Westminster Review*. A few days after, his expectations were dashed by hearing from Mr. J. S. Mill that he could not write the article as he had been forestalled by a notice which had appeared in the *Westminster Review* itself. With a palpitating heart Browning rushed to his club and searched the pages of the *Westminster Review*, to find, to his dismay, the article which had robbed him of J. S. Mill's notice ; it was to this effect :—

"A volume of poems by Browning—balderdash ! "

When he had become famous some one wanted very much to meet him. A kind friend arranged a meeting, and the guest besieged Browning with questions and conversation during dinner, and even after dinner he continued buttonholing his victim. "Come," said the poet, "this will never do ; they will say I am monopolising you."

Chichester Fortescue had achieved a high university reputation and was already a Member of Parliament for Louth. Henry Reeve, an accomplished French and German scholar, a writer in

the *Times* and subsequently editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, had successfully violated all the rules of the Civil Service, of which he was a member, by retaining this appointment—and was afterwards the editor of Charles Greville's famous Memoirs. Danby Seymour became the historian of the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Lord Goderich was a young and enthusiastic politician just entering into Parliamentary life. Robert Morier, nephew of "Hajji Baba," soon about to commence a diplomatic career as an unpaid *attaché* at Vienna, where Julian Fane had procured him an appointment in his father's Chancellery, was panting with an early ambition which was hereafter to be fully gratified.

Philip Hardwicke, the well-known architect, Vice-President of the Institute of British Architects; Henry Phillips, the artist; Lord Arthur Russell, and Sir William Stirling Maxwell were also among those who considered that the numbers who were anxious to belong to this brilliant society could no longer be accommodated in so small a space as Morier's rooms, and they determined to establish a club, with the object, as they said in their new rules, "of promoting social intercourse among its members, and to afford a place of occasional resort to gentlemen from the British Colonies, or in the service of the East India Company, or to such other persons not habitually living in

London, as the Committee may think it desirable to invite."

The election was conducted in a peculiar manner: the names of candidates were placed on a list which was circulated to all existing members, and they placed a mark against the candidate or candidates, as many as there were vacancies, and returned it to the secretary anonymously. On an evening of election the numbers attached to the candidates were counted, and the vacancies were filled; but should no candidate have attained twenty-five votes, their election was decided by a ballot in the room. In this way no question of blackballing ever occurred, but if any candidate failed to get three votes at any election he was struck off the list.

The custom at these annual meetings was for our president to be seated in the centre of a large ottoman in the middle of the room, with a poker in his hand as the emblem of authority. Those who can recollect the late Lord Derby can conjure up to themselves the comic solemnity of this function.

Mr. Watts, who had come back from Italy in 1847, and who for a time painted in Dorchester House, had brought with him a gigantic picture taken from a story of Boccaccio,[1] put into English verse by Dryden, and entitled "Theodore and

[1] Gior. 5ª, Novella 8ª. Nastagio and a daughter of the Traversari.

Honoria." He had painted it in an outhouse of Lord Holland's villa at Florence. The picture shows stripped of her clothes a dame distressed :—

> " Her face, her hands, her naked limbs were torn
> With passing through the brakes and prickly thorn.
> Two mastiffs gaunt and grim her flight pursued,
> And oft their fastened fangs in blood embrued. . . .
> Not far behind, a knight of swarthy face
> High on a coal-black steed pursued the chace."

This terrible apparition Theodore shows to the obstinate Honoria at a picnic. It cured her of her unwillingness to marry him. It was a standing joke of Sir William Stirling Maxwell's to any newcomer :—

" You have heard of Watts' hymns ? Well, this is one of his *hers*."

This huge picture could be accommodated only in a huge room, and Mr. Watts took the rooms of a Mr. Denew, an auctioneer, at 30 Charles Street, Mayfair. Here he painted, among other works, the " Good Samaritan " ; " Life's Illusions " ; Portrait of Henry Phillips, the Hon. Secretary of the Cosmopolitan Club, and a " Saxon Sentinel," which mysteriously disappeared and is now in the public gallery in York. When Mr. Watts migrated to Little Holland House, the Cosmopolitan Club rented his studio and established themselves there. They were thus enabled to enlarge their borders, and in 1862 there were 120 members.

The room wherein we met apparently was built for conspirators—no windows to the back or front or at the sides; it was lighted only from a high skylight, which in the daytime gave a melancholy gloom to the surrounding walls, and yet it had a charm of its own—associations and memories crowded around it. Once the club was well-nigh killed by a removal to smart rooms, in what used to be Crockford's and is now the Devonshire. Here it remained till about 1858, when the Club returned with a cat-like domesticity to its old home.

The furniture of the room was very simple. At the entrance there was a large screen portraying on each leaf some Chinese form of torture. Henry Loch used to say that when he was in captivity, and hourly expecting his death at the hands of the Chinese, his mind often wandered back to the old screen at the Cosmopolitan, and the scenes which he thought would so soon be realised in his own body.

I doubt whether the famous Literary Club, founded in 1764, with its prophetic motto of "Esto perpetua," contained a more brilliant list of members. If we regret the absence among them of a Boswell, we can rejoice that there was no Dr. Johnson to hector and to bully. Garrick, Gibbon, and Sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith must have been good company, but the author of the phrase "A Clubbable man" must have

ruined it all—that strange figure, says Macaulay, "the gigantic body, the huge massy face seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat, the black worsted stockings, the grey wig with the scorched foretop, the dirty nails bitten to the quick, the eyes and mouth moving with convulsive twitches, the heavy form rolling and puffing—and the 'Why, sir?' 'What then, sir?' and 'You don't see your way through the question, sir'"—with his odious habit of fastening nicknames on people who resented them: could such a Club even in those days be social or amusing? No wonder absence was penalised by a fine; attendance was compulsory, and dinners were held every week. The number of its members was increased because of its internal dissensions. It was not so with the Cosmopolitan, whose popularity made it impossible to restrain the appeals of those who thought it a high honour to be included in its ranks.

The Dilettanti Club was founded and maintained for the encouragement of a taste for the fine arts, and exists to-day, but they are obliged to feed their members at dinners.

In the Cosmopolitan the fine arts were bodily represented by the presence of Watts, Millais and Leighton. Of such men what numberless amusing tales could be told!

But what less exhilarating than the array of

witticisms with which too faithful chroniclers justify the reputation of accomplished members of society! Whence, we wonder, came the magic which gave phrases such as these their potency over the hearts and intellects of mankind? As well ask whence comes the magic of music or the charm of the landscape which fades from our view before we have drunk our fill of its delight.

The crowded candidates' book soon showed the growing popularity of the Club. It figures in all the memoirs of the time. John Blackwood tells of a "capital night at the Cosmopolitan with Larry (Laurence Oliphant), where he found no end of people: Speke, the discoverer of the sources of the Nile; Kinglake in a cordial vein"; young Lytton, fresh in 1864 from Copenhagen, then the centre of European interest, was quite a lion. The Club was full of celebrities of one sort and another, and "it is the best gathering in London."

Laurence Oliphant, hand in glove with half the potentates and conspirators in Europe, was a spasmodic visitor, appearing before his astonished and delighted friends from all parts of the world like a falling star, slipping into the old accustomed modes of life as easily as he resumed his London clothes; now from Paris, now from the Euphrates, and more lately from the States, where he had gone in search of the "real life." Colonel

Fuller, an American traveller, talks of the Cosmopolitans as men of talent, of genius, and of travel, who sink nationalities at least twice a week, and meet on the broad plain of universal ideas, as the disillusioned, disembodied spirits are supposed to meet in another and better world.

Time and space would fail me to tell of all the names of the distinguished men who have made England great, who now were elected members of the Club. There were Lord Dufferin, Kinglake, Leighton, Millais, Marochetti, Woolner, Sir John Lawrence, Sir James Outram, Lord Stanley, John Bright, Froude, and Henry Bruce, Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff, and Lord Herschell, to mention only a few.

One night, after the Crimean War, Count Montalembert, who was very hostile to the Napoleon III. dynasty, was denouncing our alliance with him: "There was a time," he said, "when Englishmen wore no hair on their faces and no decorations on their coats; now," he said, "every other man I meet wears a beard and a legion of honour in his buttonhole."

Swinburne one night was brought in as a visitor: "Who is that man," said a member, "who looks like the Duke of Argyll possessed of a devil?"

There were occasions on which the ascetic customs of the Club were put aside and they entertained illustrious members of their number.

Lord Aberdare says in 1868 :—

"Our Cosmopolitan dinner to Lord Clyde went off brilliantly; de Grey proposed his health in an excellent speech, which the veteran acknowledged in a few simple, hearty words; then came some pleasant speeches from Thackeray, Lord Wodehouse, Lord Stanley, Monckton Milnes, Layard, &c."

And at another time, Lord Wolseley, who was a member of the Club, on his return from Egypt after Tel-el-Kebir in 1882, was entertained at a Cosmopolitan dinner, at the Buckingham Palace Hotel, when the present King took the chair, and Lord Wolseley's health was proposed in a delightful speech by Lord Dufferin; he was seconded by Henry Grenfell, who strayed far from his subject, but, as old letters say, was vastly entertaining.

Later in its history the Club entertained Lord Sandhurst on his return from a successful Governorship at Bombay in very trying times.

It was in the seventies that, through the kindness of my friends, I was elected a member of this chosen body, and out of the original number of twenty-five a few had gone, but many remained, and new members had been added to the list.

It is always a misfortune to a Club of this kind,

where late hours were the order of the day, that year by year men arrive at a time of life when they are not as willing to "steal a few hours from the night" as they were in the consulship of Plancus.

But still the Club was in its zenith. Anthony Trollope's rather loud but genial laugh was constantly to be heard there. The strong modern current of thought was represented by Millais and Tom Hughes of Rugby fame, both blowing huge blasts of tobacco smoke from their short pipes. Here, too, might often be seen George Smith, the friend of the Brontës and Thackeray, who is famous as the publisher of "Jane Eyre" and "Vanity Fair." And modern society was represented by George Barrington and his dainty cigarette.

Sir William Harcourt, who in his early life at Cambridge had been one of "the Apostles," and had, as a young member, rivalled the fame of Junius in his pamphlet on "The Morality of Public Men," and Drummond Wolff with his racy stories gathered from various countries and haunts of men, were constant attendants. Drummond Wolff told us of a story against himself, of his saying he had to go to a State concert, and he was engaged to dine out that night—What should he do? "Dine in your uniform," said Knatchbull Hugessen. "Oh! every one will be saying—'Who

is that d——d fool?'" "They will say that anyhow," replied Hugessen. Lord Lytton was there, and Julian Fane, whose indescribable charms, inherited in later times by his daughter, fascinated not only women but men. I recollect on one occasion his lifelike delineation of Rachel in her part of Adrienne Lecouvreur—and Horace Wigan, not to be outdone, made us roar with laughter with his burlesques of the strong man or the Bounding Brick of Babylon. Tom Taylor, who thought it worth while to descend from his house on Lavender Hill, added to our amusement by telling us how on his journey in the omnibus the driver said: "It seems to me, Sir, that society's pretty well-nigh at an end in Paris. I was reading in the paper last night that they was a-making barricades of omnibuses, and I thinks to myself when they come to do that society's pretty well-nigh at a end."

Charles Bowen, with his inimitable wit, often came. I recollect on one occasion hearing how Professor Huxley had been rather aggressively talking about a future state; it was the time when Chinese Gordon was in men's minds and conversations. "I do not altogether deny," said the Professor, "that a man like Gordon might blow his brains out and feel that in another sphere he might find a field for future usefulness." "Would the absence of brains," said the childish voice of

Lord Bowen, "contribute, do you think, to that greater usefulness?"

There was a good story told once of Bowen's brother, whose horse went lame. The vet. was summoned, and the horse pronounced as afflicted with an incurable navicular disease: "What had I better do?" said Bowen. "Well, sir," said his groom, "conscientiously speaking, I should part with him to another gentleman."

Lord Granville and his brother were constant in their attendance, and Randolph Churchill paid us a visit which was not altogether felicitous, owing to his not being introduced, as was the custom, to the members who were present.

Evelyn Ashley, the distinguished editor of the *Owl*, since passed away, transferred his wit from its pages to the rooms of the Club.

One night, when a stranger who had been expressing his opinions rather dictatorially had left the room, Sir Charles Fremantle said to me: "How cocksure that man always is!—whereas you and I go creeping through the world thanking God we are not found out."

Frederick Locker, the author of charming *Vers de Société*, and Tennyson I have seen sitting on a sofa by the fireside; but the former could get little responsive conversation from the Poet Laureate, whom he admired so much.

Higgins, known by his *nom de plume*, "Jacob

Omnium," towered over us in his superiority of six feet seven, and inspired an awe which was described by Thackeray :—

> "His name is Jacob Homnium, Exquire,
> And if I'd committed crimes,
> Good Lord ! I wouldn't ave that man
> Attack me in the *Times*."

The genial humour and ever-ready wit of Godfrey Webb proved a valuable asset of the Club, which was regretfully parted with at his death.

The secretaryship was held by successive members, Mr. Cartwright, Dr. Hamilton, and latterly by Sir Nigel Kingscote, who brought to bear in the performance of his duties a charm of manner, a personal popularity, and a perennial youth which reflected themselves upon every member of the Club.

Lord Welby and Sir Redvers Buller ever and anon would discuss in amicable fury the Military and Treasury views of affairs, and sometimes would be more genially agreed in discussing the qualities of menus and the glory of 1874 champagne.

Dr. Quain, the eminent physician, full of Hibernian wit, would sometimes tell us unauthorised anecdotes of his professional experiences. Once he was attending a well-known man of miserly habits in Mayfair, who, when very ill, asked him to honestly tell him if he would ever again rise from his bed of sickness. The doctor thought he never

would. "Please ring the bell," said the patient; and when he had secured the attendance of his housekeeper, he said: "Have the strip of carpet by my bedside, which is a good one, wrapped up and put away. I shall not want it again, and if it is left here, those undertaker's men will be sure to spoil it with their dirty boots." Heaven defend us all, rich or poor, from such a squalid ending!

Hang Theology Rogers, as he was called—or rather as he called himself, the Rector of Costermongia—spared a few hours from his mission houses, his schools, and his library to delight us with his broad views and delightful conversation, and even after a serious accident he would limp up, at much inconvenience and some pain, to see his old companions and have a talk with Lord Rosebery, who was far too casual an attendant.

Sir George Dasent, the Scandinavian scholar, with a querulous voice and quaint humour, was always sarcastic and bright, and would vie with Lord Granville and his brother in their stories of social interest. Before his appointment to the Board of the Civil Service Commission he had been assistant-editor of the *Times*—but that great newspaper was not left unrepresented at his death, for Mr. Moberly Bell, its manager, became a great addition to our pleasant meetings. One evening, during the Rhodesian fever, he told us how at a

party at his house an enthusiastic lady had begged to be shown her hero. Bell pointed at his friend Lucy, of literary fame, upon whom the lady gazed with rapt observation. "Thank you," she said, "I am glad to have seen him, but he does not look to me to be a maker of Empires."

And now the walls that have witnessed so many brilliant meetings of brilliant men—which, had they ears, must have heard so many good stories that perish in the telling—are being torn down by the hands of the omnivorous builder; and quiet ghosts of departed time hover about the desecrated hearth of the old Club. And so familiar landmarks disappear, old memories fade away, all the busy actors in life's theatre vanish, and they who are left are the only ones to be pitied.

IX

MAYFAIR AND THACKERAY

THOSE who, like myself, agree with Dr. Johnson in thinking London the best place in summer and the only place in winter, and that the man who is tired of it must be tired of life, are apt to concentrate their interests and affections on some particular angle of the town which smiles to them above all others; and Mayfair, in which I have spent my life, contains hardly a square, street, or house in which there is not some delightful association with memories of the past.

Soho and Leicester Fields have long ceased to be fashionable quarters, and even lawyers have deserted the beautiful houses of Russell and Bedford Squares. Neither Harley Street, where, as Thackeray says, every other house has a hatchment, nor Wimpole Street, which is as cheerful as the Catacombs, nor Regent's Park, where the plaster is patching off the walls, nor Belgravia, that pale and polite district where all the inhabitants look prim and correct and the mansions are painted a faint whitey brown, can compare

with the zigzags of Mayfair, where Mrs. Kitty Lorrimer's brougham may be seen drawn up to old Lady Lollipop's belozenged family coach.

The very pavements of Mayfair have for centuries been trodden by distinguished men and beautiful women. Walter Scott, in the "Heart of Midlothian," portrays the travel-worn Jeanie Deans making intercession for her sister with John Duke of Argyll at No. 15 Bruton Street, and the Duke after the interview ushering her in her Scotch garb into the presence of Queen Caroline in Richmond Park, from whom she obtained the pardon she sought for her poor sister Effie. In later days No. 15 belonged to Lord Granville, whose political parties were none the less remarkable for the presence of the famous diarist, Charles Greville, whom Lady Granville talked of as "her lodger." It was subsequently sold to Lord Carnarvon, who was for a time Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Salisbury's Government.

George Canning, when Foreign Secretary, lived in Conduit Street in 1809. He had turned from the brilliant satires and verses of the "Anti-Jacobin," to which he was the greatest contributor—verses which Sydney Smith, with, I fear, some party spirit, called "schoolboy jokes and doggerel rhymes"—into the statesman who planned the capture of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen.

When "spring had set in with its usual severity,"

not all the attractions of Strawberry Hill could keep Horace Walpole away from his warm house in Berkeley Square, from the window of which he witnessed the planting of those magnificent plane-trees whose profuse foliage now gives shade to his descendants.

Lord Chatham lived at No. 6, and his illustrious son received there deputations from the City of London. Lord Shelburne bought what is now Lansdowne House, only partially built, with the garden in which it stands, for £22,000, and the plans, designed by Robert Adam, are still to be seen at the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

It was under Lord Sherburne's Administration that William Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord Henry Petty, afterwards Lord Lansdowne, filled the same office, at an age when men nowadays are but leaving college, in the Ministry of All the Talents. At the corner of the Square and Bruton Street lived Colley Cibber, who began his career while yet a boy as a soldier in the revolutionary army of 1688, became a prolific dramatist and actor, and ended by becoming Poet Laureate in 1730, and was the subject of a lampoon said to have been written by Pope :—

"In merry old England it once was a rule
The King had his poet as well as his fool;
But now we're so frugal, I'd like you to know it,
That Cibber can serve both for fool and for poet."

Lord Grey, when Prime Minister, lived near the house once occupied by Lord Bath of the "Short-lived Administration," and here Lady Grey entertained, as a constant guest, the witty Sydney Smith, who lived hard by in Green Street; while earlier in the century Richard Brinsley Sheridan, moving from house to house, pursued by bailiffs, resided for a time in Hertford Street. In Park Lane, too, lived the beautiful Mrs. Jordan, who intoxicated the town by the "Wildness of Delight" with which she fascinated all beholders in the part of the Country Girl, in which character she was immortalised by Romney, whose picture is now in the possession of Sir Charles Tennant. Later Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the novelist, lived here till, as Lord Lytton, he migrated to Grosvenor Square.

In 1771 the Duke of Cumberland married Miss Irnham in Hertford Street, and his marriage was the cause of the Royal Marriage Act of 1772; in spite of which the Prince of Wales married, in her house in Park Lane, Mrs. Fitzherbert, whose life has recently been so ably written by Mr. Wilkins.

In the house now owned by Lord Rosebery Lady Jersey entertained the Tory politicians of her day. She was the daughter of that Earl of Westmorland who had run away with and married the heiress, Miss Child, at Gretna Green. Another daughter, Lady Maria, was in this house married

to Viscount Duncannon; for in those days the marriages in the fashionable world, and the christenings, were generally solemnised in private houses. Gerald Ponsonby has told me that Lady Jersey, sitting in one of her windows on a warm evening in June 1815, was startled by a shouting crowd, following as best it could a carriage passing through the Square. On inquiry she found that it contained Colonel Henry Percy, who had brought the news of the battle and victory of Waterloo to this country. On his arrival he had hastened with dust-covered eagles, and in the uniform he had worn at the famous ball of the Duke of Richmond's at Brussels, to the Horse Guards, but finding the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of York, was out at dinner, he went on to a house in St. James's Square, where the Prince Regent was, communicated the news to him, and then begged to be allowed at once to go home to dress and rest. He was on his way from St. James's to Portman Square, where his father, Lord Beverley, lived, when he passed in front of Lady Jersey's windows.

Lord Clive, the great Pro-Consul, after his return from India, built there the house now belonging to Lord Powis. At the corner of the Square is the picturesque manor house called Bourdon House, formerly the residence of the heiress, Miss Davies, who married Sir Thomas Grosvenor, and

brought to that family the great London property now owned by his successor, the Duke of Westminster.

Charles James Fox lived in South Street, where close to him Lord and Lady Holland made their home during the winter months, thinking in those pre-motor days that their palace in Kensington was too remote from social intercourse. The side-window which she built to give her a view on to the Park can still be seen from Park Lane. At No. 14 Lord Melbourne, who bought it from Lord Holland, lived through the whole of his Administration from 1835 to 1841; and as it was said he never once gave or ate a dinner there—

> "His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot;
> Cool was his kitchen."

The beautiful Mrs. Norton passed many sad and some happy hours of her life in Chesterfield Street, as a neighbour of Lady Becher's, once Miss O'Neill, whose "beauty, grace, and simplicity was the theme of every tongue."

At the upper end of Charles Street was the once famous Cosmopolitan Club, too brilliant to last, where Watts painted the splendid picture from a tale of Boccaccio's which now adorns the walls of the Tate Gallery. Alas! it has now become what house agents call a unique residential

property, overlooking the garden of Wharncliffe House, where Lord Crewe lives.

In Seamore Place Lady Blessington commenced her *salon* of celebrities before she moved to Kensington Gore. "Everybody," it was said, "goes to Lady Blessington's." It was here that she began to write the "Book of Beauty" and other works which obtained a fleeting notoriety, not for any literary merit, but because Count D'Orsay was a fashionable and profligate dandy, and she, no doubt, a beautiful woman.

In Chesterfield Street lived that miserable dandy, Beau Brummell, and later George Payne—who lost a princely fortune by betting on every occasion and on everything—from the Derby and St. Leger down to which lump of sugar a fly would first settle on—which drop of rain on a storm-beaten window-pane would first reach the bottom, or which marble would first tumble into the gutter.

Not far from him in Berkeley Square was his friend Admiral Rous, the prince of handicappers, and a few doors off Lord Clarendon, before he migrated to Grosvenor Crescent.

From the portals of Devonshire House must have come forth the beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, conquering and to conquer, to espouse the cause of Charles James Fox at the famous election of Westminster.

In a house, now pulled down, in Piccadilly Lord

Byron wrote many of his poems, and there separated for ever from his wife; and next door to him lived Lord Queensberry—"Old Q." The house where Sir Francis Burdett lived still remains; while from Clarges Street the broken-hearted Lady Hamilton, in the time of her misery after the death of Nelson, wrote many of her pathetic and ill-spelt letters.

Boswell entertained Dr. Johnson in Half Moon Street. In Curzon Street lived Chantrey, the sculptor; talented, wealthy, and childless, he left a large bequest to the Royal Academy for the encouragement of contemporary art, the distribution of which has lately been much discussed. This generation perhaps knows him best by the brace of woodcock he shot at Holkham in one shot, and immortalised in carving :—

> "Their good and ill from the same source they drew,
> Here shrined in marble by the hand that slew."

In Curzon Street No. 8 still remains—the house made famous by the *salons* of the Miss Berrys. Round the corner Lord Chesterfield, in his "Canonical" home, must have composed his famous letters to his son.

In Chapel Street, which I have hardly yet accustomed myself to calling by its new name of Aldford Street, lived for a short time the poet Shelley, and from a coffee-house in Mount Street, close

by, he met and married his poor wife, whom he so soon deserted. The two exiled kings of France, Louis XVIII. and Charles X., lived at different periods in South Audley Street, and close by, in a house overlooking Hyde Park, lived the infamous Philip Egalité, Duke of Orleans. Under the hideous chapel lie buried Lord Chesterfield and the celebrated John Wilkes.

Hill Street recalls the memory of the tall, gaunt figure of Lord Crewe, about whose absence of mind many a story was told. When inquiring after Lord Lansdowne of Mr. James Howard, he called him back and said, "I mean the present Lord Lansdowne."

Lord Dudley, Foreign Secretary in Canning's Administration, was commonly called Eccentricity Ward, and had a habit of talking to himself. One day, walking home with an acquaintance, he muttered: "This confounded fellow will be expecting me to ask him to dinner, but I won't." His friend, seeing the humour of the position, said aloud: "This fellow will be asking me to dinner, but I'm d——d if I'll go." Lord Dudley quite appreciated the remark, and the two became great friends and often dined in each other's company.

For twenty years Lord Palmerston had a house in Great Stanhope Street, and when there first became Foreign Secretary, in Lord Grey's Ad-

ministration of 1831; and in a neighbouring drawing-room the great Sir Robert Peel was married to Miss Floyd.

From his house in this street Lord Raglan set forth for the Crimean campaign, and his daughter still lives in a house in Chesterfield Street, which she bought from Alfred Montgomery.

Mayfair has been rich in Lord Chancellors. Lord Hardwicke lived and died in Grosvenor Square, and Lord Eldon was born at No. 1 Hamilton Place. Here he lived as Lord Chancellor, and had for a neighbour Queen Caroline, who had recently removed from Alderman Wood's house in South Audley Street, and round whose house assembled noisy crowds, cheering, not so much for the Queen as to annoy Lord Eldon.

Lord Cottenham, Lord John Russell's Chancellor, lived, I think, for some time in Park Lane; and many a time I have seen in his yellow barouche Lord Brougham, the idol of contemporaneous caricaturists, come from his house in Grafton Street before he had invented the carriage which now bears his name, which, as Sydney Smith wittily remarked, "had a B. outside and a wasp inside."

In Grosvenor Street, in 1730, died "the frail, the beautiful, the warm-hearted Mrs. Oldfield." "Her ravishing perfections," as Fielding called them, inspired warm friendship and affection and

the worthy love of General Charles Churchill, by whom she had a son, who married Lady Mary Walpole, and so enables me to claim the lovely actress as an ancestress :—

> "Engaging Oldfield, who with grace and ease
> Could join the arts to ruin and to please."

Lord Rockingham, a staunch old Whig, the uncompromising advocate of American independence, and Lord Camden, described by Canning as "useless lumber," both lived in Grosvenor Square in days when no house was rented at a higher value than £200 a year. Lord Derby, on May 1, 1797, six weeks after his first wife's death, married Miss Farren in his house in Grosvenor Square. She had been the rival of Mrs. Abington, and Walpole spoke of her as the most perfect actress he had ever seen. We all know her portrait, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and do not wonder at Mrs. Siddons's description of her as the Comic Muse.

Clubland has absorbed some famous houses in Piccadilly. Cambridge House, the house of Lord and Lady Palmerston, has been turned into the Naval and Military Club, and the St. James's, after some changes in tenantry, occupies the rooms where Madame de Flahault, wife of Napoleon Bonaparte's aide-de-camp, held her *salons*. It was to this aide-de-camp, Count de Flahault, that Bonaparte, riding away from Waterloo, said, after a

long silence, "Depuis Crécy c'est impossible de vaincre les Anglais." It is difficult to believe that Count Flahault, who was in the Marengo campaign in 1800, should have lived to see the disastrous surrender of Sedan.

Mayfair, which has been for so long the centre of the intellect, the gaiety, and the fashion of London, has not altogether been exempt from the tragedies which fall to the lot of mankind. In Mayfair Lord Clive, whose mind was worn out and depressed after all his triumphs and achievements, died by his own hand.

In 1840, at the corner of Norfolk and Green Streets, where Lord Ribblesdale's beautiful Georgian house now stands, a ghastly tragedy was enacted when Lord William Russell was foully murdered by his valet, Courvoisier.

At Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square a tragedy was contemplated by which all the Ministers of the day were to have been blown up at a Cabinet dinner by a scoundrel called Thistlewood, who was betrayed by one of his fellow-conspirators, and the plan collapsed.

Lord Beaconsfield, after he had left Grosvenor Gate, passed his last days in Curzon Street; and close to him were his faithful friends—in Hertford Street, George Lord Barrington, and in Berkeley Square, Lord Rowton, whose memory, even in these days of rapid oblivion, still lives in many hearts.

It is no wonder that Thackeray, the greatest novelist of the age, laid many of his scenes in the midst of surroundings so attractive, a welcome guest himself at Bath House, where all the literary men would assemble to do homage to Lady Ashburton, who, Carlyle said, was "the greatest lady of rank I ever saw, with the soul of a princess and captainess, had there been any career possible for her but that of a fashionable one"; where came Carlyle and Froude, Tennyson and Browning, and Thackeray's great friend, Brookfield, the preacher at St. John's Chapel (already destroyed by the omnivorous builder)—Brookfield, who, as Lord Stanley of Alderley said, quoted Milton and Shakespeare and described the devil as a perfect gentleman; and where the *salon* of the Miss Berrys in Curzon Street made glad the heart of Thackeray, who says:—

"A very few years since I knew familiarly a lady who had been asked in marriage by Horace Walpole, who had been patted on the head by George I. This lady had knocked at Dr. Johnson's door; had been intimate with Fox, the beautiful Georgiana of Devonshire, and that brilliant Whig society of the reign of George III.; had known the Duchess of Queensberry, the patroness of Gay and Prior, the admired young beauty of the Court of Queen Anne."

In the undying works of "Vanity Fair" and "The Newcomes" the reader finds himself constantly in Mayfair. Sir Pitt Crawley proposed to Becky Sharp in the dining-room of his sister's house in Park Lane, where Mrs. Firkin and Miss Briggs happened, by a mere coincidence, to be standing at the door, and reported what they had seen to that "worldly, selfish, graceless, thankless, religionless old woman," Miss Crawley.

It was in Hamilton Gardens that we first made acquaintance with Ethel Newcome, as a little girl, receiving the announcement of her speedy departure from London.

"What," she exclaims, "will Lord Hercules O'Ryan say when he learns that I have gone into the country?" And the nurse ventures to hint that he will know nothing about it.

"Oh," says Ethel, "he is sure to see it in the newspapers."

It was in Park Lane that, on a summer morning, Clive was taken by Colonel Newcome to apologise to Barnes Newcome for having thrown a glass of wine in his face the previous evening.

At her father's house Ethel, fast growing into womanhood, lays her fair head on the old soldier's breast, while her younger brother asks him how many people he had killed with the sword that hung by his side.

These happy days before she "came out," and

was duly educated by her grandmother, Lady Kew, in the ways of this wicked world of fashion and heartlessness, were times of unalloyed happiness to the old Colonel, Clive, and Ethel.

Here that big Life Guardsman, Rawdon Crawley, was refused admittance to his aunt's house after his marriage, and before his departure for Waterloo, and was called a fool for his pains by the disappointed Becky.

It was in Curzon Street where the unhappy Raggles let his house and supplied vegetables to the Rawdon Crawleys, for which he was never paid, and where they triumphantly showed to a stupid world "how to live on nothing a year."

Lord Steyne at Gaunt House was conveniently near the little house in Curzon Street, outside which, on that terrible night, poor Rawdon, just escaped from the sponging-house, saw the windows lit, and, going in, surprised Lord Steyne and Becky.

It was of the chapel pulled down to make way for a huge house overshadowing lodgings and markets that Charles Honeyman, who lived hard by in Walpole Street—a name I cannot trace—wrote to Colonel Newcome: "That elegant and commodious chapel known as Whittlesea's being for sale, I have determined on venturing my all in its acquisition and in laying, I hope, the foundation of a competence for myself and excellent sister." There he preached those sermons which

drew such effusive admiration from the accomplished Miss Sherrick, whose father was the proprietor, so to speak, of Charles Honeyman in the Chapel, and his wines in the cellar under it. One can see in imagination the dandy parson as he stepped into his pulpit with grey kid gloves, leaving behind him a subtle odour of millefleurs. Sherrick did not allow him to preach more than once on a Sunday, and told him to sit in a pew (in the afternoon) and cough. "In a pecuniary point of view he was confident, nay," he said, "the calculations may be established as irresistibly as an algebraic equation, that I can realise as incumbent of Lady Whittlesea's Chapel the sum of not *less* than one thousand pounds per annum."

We all know how his hopes were never realised.

Lady Kew lived in Queen Street, where Barnes Newcome visited her, after he had told the Colonel that she was out of town; and it was at a party in Mayfair where she died, "called away from the giddy notes of a Mayfair fiddle," which made the occasion for Charles Honeyman's "Death at the Festival" sermon, and Thackeray's most pathetic and sarcastic account of the old worldling's funeral.

Mayfair was the thing to be desired by those who lived in the unfashionable precincts of Russell Square. Frederick Bullock, of the firm of Hulker, Bullock & Bullock, when he had married the fair

Miss Osborne at St. George's, Hanover Square, hastened to take a house near Berkeley Square.

Coming away from his daughter's banquet, old Osborne said, in his wrath: "Russell Square is not good enough for Mrs. Maria, so she invites her father and sister to a second day's dinner. If those sides or 'ontrys,' as Maria calls them, weren't served yesterday I am d——d."

The most noble the Marquis of Farintosh had his little bachelor's establishment in Mayfair, where he entertained his toadies, Messrs. Hench and Tod, and sundry ladies, who were to be given up, as he assured Ethel Newcome, if she would only marry him.

The old dandy, Major Pendennis, told his nephew that, having obtained the *entrée* into Lady Agnes Foker's house in Grosvenor Street, he must mind and never neglect to leave his card there when he came to town.

The Major's famous valet, Morgan, was not content unless he was a member of a club in Mayfair where he met other fashionable gentlemen's gentlemen.

The Gentleman's Club was held in the parlour of the "Wheel of Fortune" public-house, in a snug little by-lane leading out of one of the great streets of Mayfair, and frequented by some of the most select gentlemen about town. Their masters' affairs, debts, intrigues, adventures, their ladies'

good and bad qualities and quarrels with their husbands—all the family secrets were here discussed with perfect freedom and confidence; and here, when about to enter into a new situation, a gentleman was enabled to get every requisite information regarding the family of which he proposed to become a member. Liveries, it may be imagined, were excluded from this select precinct; and the powdered heads of the largest metropolitan footmen might bow down in vain entreating admission into the Gentleman's Club. These outcast giants in plush took their beer in an outer apartment of the Wheel of Fortune, and could no more get an entry into the clubroom than a Pall Mall tradesman or a Lincoln's Inn attorney could get admission into Bay's or Spratt's.

What a day it was when young Arthur Rowdy, of the firm of Stumpy, Rowdy & Co., of Lombard Street, married Lady Cleopatra Stonehenge, and to be in the fashion took a house in Mayfair.

As long as Thackeray's works are read Mayfair will last, though never, I fear, again to be immortalised by so great a novelist.

X

NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

I CAN conceive no angle of the earth more full of historical recollections than 10 Downing Street. "Here," says John Morley, "was woven the artful fabric of policy and of party in which all the crafty calculations, the fierce passions, the glowing hopes, and confident ambitions of so many busy, powerful minds, have been exercised." All the great men of the days of the Georges must in their time have passed before the door of No. 10. There must have stood Sir Robert Walpole's chariot and Chatham's sedan-chair; while Horace Walpole himself saw those men who, as Macaulay says, were Whigs when it must have been as dangerous to be a Whig as a highwayman; men who had been concealed in garrets and cellars after the battle of Sedgemoor, and who had put their name to the declaration that they would live and die with the Prince and Princess of Orange. Walpole's own Secretary to the Treasury, John Scrope, had fought for Monmouth at Sedgemoor and in the disguise of a woman carried despatches between the Prince

of Orange and the disaffected English peers. In 1724 he was appointed Secretary to the Treasury (at the age of sixty-two), and held the post till he died in harness at the age of ninety. His fidelity to Walpole brought him many enemies, and the Committee of Secrecy in 1742 threatened him with the Tower for refusing to give evidence as to his chief's disposal of Secret Service money. He replied that he did not care whether he spent the few months he had to live in the Tower or not, but that the last thing he would do was to betray the King, and next to the King the Earl of Orford.

I recollect in a witty speech at the Mansion House the American Minister described Downing Street as the greatest street in the world, because it lay at the hub of the gigantic wheel which encircles the globe, under the name of the British Empire; he laid claim to it as an American street, because it originally belonged to one Downing, a pupil educated in Scholâ Publicâ Primâ in the State of Massachusetts, as indeed it did. It is perhaps only a legend that Queen Anne presided over a meeting of the Cabinet in the house No. 10. But the real interest of the house began when it fell into the possession of the Crown, and George I. bestowed it on the Hanoverian Minister, Baron Bothmar, who died there in 1731. At his death, George II. offered it to the great minister, Sir

Robert Walpole, who, as we all know, with a public spirit perhaps rarer in those days than it is now, refused it as a private gift, but accepted it to serve as an official residence in perpetuity for succeeding First Lords of the Treasury. Here Sir Robert took up his residence in 1735, and three years later Lady Walpole died there, being buried in Westminster Abbey, where there is a beautiful statue erected to her memory close to Henry VII.'s Chapel, where her husband's banner, as a Knight of the Bath, hangs; the passer-by may read there a long list of her virtues inscribed by Horace Walpole, who, a little later, laments the delightful rooms in 10 Downing Street, which he was so soon to quit. Sir Robert Walpole for twenty years was Prime Minister, and when in 1742 he ceased to hold office, he removed, much to his son's regret, to Arlington Street, where he died in 1745.

He was succeeded by Lord Wilmington, who was celebrated in verse as :—

> "That old, dull, unimportant Lord
> Who at the longed-for Money Board
> Sits first, but does not lead.
> His younger brethren all things make,
> So that the Treasury's like a snake,
> And the tail moves the head;"

but he never resided there, having lent the house, as Horace Walpole says, to Mrs. Sandys. Then came what was called the "Broadbottom and short

administration" of Lords Granville and Bath—1746—which lasted, as the wits of the day said, for forty-eight hours seven minutes and eleven seconds.

Sir Robert Walpole was considered by historians to be the originator of Cabinet Councils, as we understand them now; for, before he was First Lord, Queen Anne presided over meetings of a Committee of the Privy Council, which were always held on a Sunday, and also attended debates in the House of Lords. She was the last of our Sovereigns who in person attended such councils; for it would have been impossible for the early Georges to preside over deliberations which were conducted in what to them was an unknown tongue.

These meetings were held in the Cock-pit, a part of Whitehall Palace, where the Treaty of Utrecht was disclosed to the Lords of the Council, and where communications from the Sovereign were made. Here the Treasury was first lodged by William III. in 1697, and for a century later letters were not infrequently dated from the Cock-pit. Of that building little trace remains, but in a dull and gloomy passage leading from Whitehall to the Treasury Chambers there are still two Tudor windows, the only remains of the old Whitehall Palace. The Cock-pit was partly in the present garden of 10 Downing Street and partly on the

site of the present Treasury Chambers. Underneath, in what is now a coal-cellar, the cocks are said to have been kept. There, to this day, is to be seen a leaden cistern bearing the cypher of Charles II.

I cannot trace accurately where Cabinets were held after the Cock-pit. No place could have been more interesting than this; for there Oliver Cromwell had lived before the death of King Charles, and after the Restoration it became the residence of General Monk, who was at the same time Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of all the Land Forces in the three kingdoms, First Commissioner of the Treasury, and Commander of the Fleet of England, probably the only subject who was addressed as Father by his Sovereign. Afterwards it became the residence of Princess Anne.

Sir Edward Hertslet, a great authority, says that Cabinets were held in Cleveland Row, afterwards in a private house leased in Downing Street till 1861, and then in Whitehall Gardens, pending the erection of the new Foreign Office; but this does not tally with my own recollection of Cabinets in the old Foreign Office, where they certainly met till the close of the Crimean War.

A friend who was then private secretary to Lord Panmure at the War Office told me how, when the news of the fall of Sevastopol arrived, he ran across to the Foreign Office, where he was told

by the messenger that he could not go up the old staircase, as it was forbidden: "I pushed by," he says, "went up and knocked at the door myself, which was opened by Lord Clarendon. Palmerston, on hearing the news, gave a view-holloa you might have heard across the park."

Lord Hammond was a great stickler for Cabinets being held in the Foreign Office, but in Lord Clarendon's absence at Vienna, after the close of the war, they were summoned to Downing Street, where they continued to be held, I believe, during the building of the new Foreign Office.

The first minister after Walpole who lived in No. 10 was Lord North, who never would allow himself to be called Prime Minister. When he assumed office he had little prospects of an enduring administration, for he had to face the opposition of Chatham, Rockingham, and Grenville —nevertheless he moved into the official residence, which he inhabited from 1770 to 1783. During the Gordon riots his house was attacked, and yet he was said to have become so attached to the room he inhabited that after he had ceased to be First Lord he wandered into it and sat down in his old accustomed seat, much to the astonishment of the Treasury officials.

It was to this house that Lord Chatham, after his dramatic fainting fit in the House of Lords, was carried on his way to Hayes Place where he

died. His son used the house as his residence, and counted all days lost that were not spent there. He and Lady Hester Stanhope, his eccentric niece, kept house together, and built what is now called the banqueting room and the fine kitchen under it: "I let her do as she pleases," said Pitt, "for if she were resolved to cheat the devil, she could do it." She became the dispenser of much patronage in 1804, and was practically the sole Secretary of State for the Department of Treasury banquets.

Lord Grey was the next First Lord who inhabited the house, and he lived there through all the stormy times of the Reform Bill. We all know the engraving of poor Haydon's picture of the aged statesman, sitting over the drawing-room fire with the under-written words: "Shall I resign?" But history cannot be written from pictures, which are very often the product of the artist's fertile imagination. I have seen a coloured engraving representing a Cabinet Council, at which the Lord Chancellor in his robes and wig was sitting beside William IV. discussing the Reform Bill.

Lord Goderich, during his short administration, moved into No. 10, and here was born his son, the present Lord Ripon. His mother was nervous previous to her confinement, and had all the doors taken off their hinges, lest any of them should slam during her illness.

Sir Robert Peel never moved from his house in Whitehall to take up his residence in Downing Street, though he transacted his official business there; it is not so very long ago—indeed I am told as lately as 1893–4—that a charge used to appear in the annual estimates presented to Parliament, for a small annuity for the sweeper who kept the crossing clean, so that the Prime Minister should not dirty his boots on his passage from Whitehall to the Treasury.

In Peel's day Cabinets were more frequent than they are now; Peers, as Mr. Gladstone once told me, were not summoned to Cabinets on Saturdays, on which days arrangements only for the business in the House of Commons in the coming week were discussed. Had this rule been in force in Sir Robert Walpole's days, he only and his First Lord of the Admiralty would have been summoned; while Pitt would only have summoned himself.

Cabinet dinners, which were in full force up to Lord Aberdeen's time, were discontinued by Lord Palmerston. I can well imagine how they offended his social instincts, for what can be duller or more tedious than, after the day's work is over, to fight all the old battles again with the same colleagues at dinner! Indeed, nine times out of ten, men-dinners are lugubrious ceremonies. If the company is clever, jealousies spring up, and men who are brilliant conversationalists where women are,

miss the charm and sparkle of their presence and the desire to please which is wanting among men alone. Disraeli wisely said, "There are many dismal things in middle life, and a dinner of only men is among them."

The discontinuance of these dinners, too, prevented the possibility of another Cato Street conspiracy, at the time when the whole Cabinet was to have been blown up at Lord Harrowby's in Grosvenor Square.

Lord Palmerston, riding down to Cabinets on his old grey horse to the little door in the Treasury Garden, rarely remained there, even for official purposes, preferring to transact all his business at his own house by means of papers sent to and fro in locked boxes.

In 1868 Mr. Disraeli held a meeting of his party there, and subsequently, as Lord Beaconsfield, lived there; but the humble surroundings which had been sufficient for Walpole, Pitt, and Grey were not considered worthy of the author of "Lothair," and in 1874 the cultured taste of Mr. Mitford, then Secretary of the Board of Works, was called in to redecorate the house throughout.

It was one day in 1872 that I was summoned to Downing Street, and on my arrival I was surprised to find Mr. Gladstone in the garden with Sir Henry Storks and Sir Frederick Abel, who had promised to demonstrate the art of felling trees

noiselessly by gun-cotton. A mast had been planted in the ground with a necklace of gun-cotton around it which at the proper time was to be exploded. Mr. Ayrton, then First Commissioner of Works, who was not a scientific believer, was protesting against the experiment, but on Sir Frederick's assurance that nobody would be "one penny the worse," the gun-cotton was exploded with a terrific report, which was heard in Hyde Park. I found myself under a shower of glass, which had fallen from the skylight of the First Lord's house, and all the adjoining windows were smashed.

There was one person who rejoiced, that was the triumphant Ayrton. Theories were exploded as well as gun-cotton.

On Saturday, June 15, 1872—a hot day, for we had hot days then—the Cabinet was summoned at eleven o'clock, to await the decision of the Alabama Court from Geneva. After they had been waiting for some hours, Lord Granville came to my room and said: "If we all sit together much longer, doing nothing, we shall, in the nature of things, quarrel. Can you get me a chess board?" This I did, and the Cabinet all went out on the "tarrass" and watched a chess tournament between Lord Granville and Mr. Forster—the only time, probably, when an accurate picture of a Cabinet was drawn from life: for the sharp eye

of Mr. Fairfield had seen and seized his opportunity of making an accurate drawing from his room in the Colonial Office.

Living in Carlton House Terrace, Mr. Gladstone did not consider that he would gain much in time or convenience by migrating to Downing Street, so he thought it better that I should live there, and 10 Downing Street became our home—a home possessing peculiar attractions to my wife and me, not only as having been originally given to my great-great-grandfather, Sir Robert Walpole, but because she was born there; Captain George Barrington, her father, who was a Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Grey's government, having married the daughter of Lord Grey. Curiously enough her brother, Charles Barrington, became Lord Palmerston's Secretary and was the next person who lived there, and then, in 1869, we occupied the house during Mr. Gladstone's great administration.

From 10 Downing Street, in 1879, Disraeli once wrote to Cardinal Manning: "I have held eight Cabinets in a week, a feat unprecedented in the annals of Downing Street. Sir Robert Peel once held four, but they were not so tranquil as ours."

Cabinets have no local habitation. I see them in old days meeting everywhere. In Bertram Currie's house in Combe Wood is a brass tablet recording how a Cabinet was held there during a visit of

Mr. Gladstone's. Another Cabinet which I recollect was adjourned from the room in Downing Street to the Garden terrace.

To all of us the Cabinet room was a sort of political temple; but to a famous old office-keeper, Appleton, who had lived to see so many administrations, it was a veritable holy of holies.

"Come in here, sir, if you please," he one day said to a high official in the Treasury, now Lord Welby, "the table had to be enlarged and see what the Board of Works has done; they have put a leaf made of deal in the middle of the mahogany table—is that respectful?" My economist friend suggested that the green cloth would cover it. All he could say was: "Is that respectful?"

When Mr. Gladstone returned in 1892, he found it difficult to hear at the long table in the accustomed room, and the Captain's biscuits and carafe of water, which are granted by a grateful country to its ministers, were taken upstairs into what was called the Deputation room, and I have in my possession a plan, drawn by Mr. Gladstone himself, showing the position of the table and how his Cabinet was to be arranged around it.

In 1894 he attended his Cabinet for the last time. He sat, as John Morley in his wonderful biography tells us, composed and still as marble; the emotion of his colleagues did not affect him as

them. He followed the words of acknowledgment and farewell in a little speech of four or five minutes, his voice unbroken and serene, the tone low, grave, and steady—and then he said: "God bless you all."

Lord Rosebery continued the arrangement until he made way for Lord Salisbury, who reverted to the old plan, which still exists, of holding his Cabinets in the new Foreign Office, while Mr. Balfour came as tenant of the old house. To those who have never seen the house I may perhaps quote a book which was published in the year of Waterloo. Nightingale in his "London and Middlesex" describes—

"Downing Street as a narrow mean-looking street, but opening at the top into a handsome though small square, in which is the residence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister. This house has nothing in its exterior or interior of peculiar merit, except it be the excellent taste and beauty manifested in the furniture, decorations, paintings, library, &c. Nothing, however, appears to be superfluous or unnecessarily expensive; a stranger who visits the houses of some of our very first public officers and political characters would not suppose that the resources of the country are at any time in a very flattering state, or he would conclude that a spirit of parsimony had seized the whole nation. One would have thought that the official residence of such a person

as the first minister and chief director in the affairs of the revenue would have had a commanding and conspicuous situation, and have been adorned with some emblems of our national greatness, or some intimations of our rank among the nations of Europe. Instead of this, it is hidden in a corner, and cannot be approached by the public except through one of the meanest-looking streets of the metropolis. Indeed, there seems to be a culpable neglect and want of laudable ambition in this respect, pervading even the government itself."

Perhaps Mr. Nightingale would now be satisfied, were he alive, if he were to see the building he despised ornamented as it was in the time of the flag mania, in defiance of all architectural rules, with a ridiculous flagstaff.

No sketch, however slight, should pass over in silence the pictures collected in the First Lord's house. They are few but very interesting—of men mainly distinguished in finance. Mr. Scharf, then the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, was the first, I believe, to identify and classify them. I fancy this was in Mr. Gladstone's last government. No connection with finance, however, can be traced in the portrait by Lely of Lord Maynard, who carries the staff of the Comptroller of the Household; how he came to an honoured place in Downing Street cannot be discovered. Then there is a portrait of Thomas, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh,

Lord High Treasurer and Treasurer of the Exchequer, whose name furnished the first letter of the famous Cabal. A fine full-length picture of Richard Weston, Earl of Portland, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1620, Treasurer of the Exchequer in 1624, and Lord High Treasurer in 1628, until he was created Earl of Portland in 1633, is the centre figure of the panel at the end of the room. He wears a black suit with a short mantle, with a white lace circular ruff. He holds in his hand a wand of office and wears the order of the Garter suspended by a blue ribbon. It is a fine picture, painted not by, but after, Vandyke. Burne-Jones considered it as an example of how a great artist influenced the painters of his day.

Then, over the chimney-piece, is a fine portrait, by Van Loo, of Sir Robert Walpole, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1721 to 1742, wearing the embroidered robe of his office. The broad blue ribbon of the Garter, so rarely bestowed on a commoner, crosses his dark-brown undercoat. His right hand holds erect the ceremonial embroidered purse of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think Sir Robert must have had a vain appreciation of the beauty of his hands, as in so many of his portraits they are placed in very prominent positions.

There is a bust portrait of Sir John Lowther, who was First Lord of the Treasury in 1691, painted

by a French artist, Hyacinthe François Rigaud, which was presented by the Earl of Lonsdale as late as 1826. Near it there is a portrait of Sidney Godolphin, Earl of Godolphin, who was Lord High Treasurer from 1702 to 1710—life-size to the waist, carrying his wand of office. This was painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and was presented by the Countess de Grey in 1827.

Then there is a portrait of Perceval, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1807 and Prime Minister in 1809, by George Francis Joseph. Mr. Perceval was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons in May 1812. Another portrait is of Henry Booth, afterwards Baron Delamere, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1689, and was created Earl of Warrington in 1690. The presentment is of a young man, with long flowing hair hanging below his shoulders, and wearing black and polished metal armour—I suppose a kind of fancy dress. This is also painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and has been engraved by John Smith. Thomas Osborne, the first Duke of Leeds, who was Lord High Treasurer from 1673 to 1679, is painted by John Greenhill, while Henry Pelham, who was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1743 to 1754, is painted by Van Loo, in his official robes, with the embroidered purse of the Seal of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone's portrait, a copy of Millais' picture

belonging to Lord Rosebery, hangs appropriately on the walls. It was presented to that historic house by his private secretaries on his retirement. It is to be regretted that more pictures of those who have held such high offices should not have a place in a building so appropriate to them; and it is to be hoped that in future, at any rate, such portraits may be forthcoming for the benefit of posterity.

It is impossible to think of the number of Prime Ministers and First Lords that have existed since the house became their property in Walpole's time, without being struck with the mutability of human ambitions, successes, and failures. Behold what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue! Since that time what changes have not convulsed and passed over Europe: the overthrow of thrones and dynasties; and we may be thankful that our constitution has been so firmly built on a rock as to be independent of the rise and fall of ministers and the ebb and flow of politics.

XI

WHILE WAITING IN A FRIEND'S ROOM

I HAVE many vices and few virtues, and I often think that through my life I have suffered more from the latter than the former. For example, I am a punctual man, and when I make an appointment for a certain day and hour, I keep it; but I never find that anybody else does. I am now sitting in a friend's house, wondering why he has made a mistake in the hour, if not in the day, of our settled meeting (though, to give the devil his due, when he did appear he gave a very good reason for his delay). Many people would lose their temper, but I am trying to keep mine by taking in all the objects of interest I see around me in a room singularly interesting.

The house was built by Adam—most people would call him Adams, which is always annoying to an accurate and somewhat pedantic mind. The brothers Adam, as is well known, worked towards the end of the last century, building that terrace on the Thames which, out of compliment to them, has since been called the Adelphi. Not only were

these brothers architects of the highest order in the Italian school, but they were the forerunners of the Universal Providers of the present day, for in addition to their architectural skill they decorated houses and designed furniture of all kinds, as can be seen by any one visiting the large collection of their designs preserved at the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn.

The room where I ought to be losing my temper and am not is a beautiful specimen of the Adam type: richly decorated ceiling, cornice and moulding; polished mahogany doors, and a lovely chimney-piece of carved white marble with inlaid plaques of verd-antique. In the beautiful cornice the criticising eye may discern cracks which have not been caused by time, but by the results of a never-ending civilisation which, in the shape of an underground railway, is burrowing its mole-like course under the house.

There are so many books on the shelves of a Chippendale bookcase that I am educating myself by reading the backs of them, and making believe I know what they contain; after all, it is only what we are doing every day with the men and women with whom we are brought in contact. What do we know of the inner thoughts and lives of half our friends? But we love to see them well and carefully dressed, as we do to see the books beautifully bound; and, having made

acquaintance with their titles, I turn to the pictures all round me and try to imagine myself living in the time when the people they represented strutted on the stage which I shall in my turn have so soon to leave—what space did they fill, and how did they fill it ?

Around me are rare and valuable mezzotints, which sadly bring to my mind the time when they were to be bought for a few shillings ; now they would fetch as many hundreds of pounds—in a day when all good things of a high class can command an enormous and inflated value. In the days of my youth I was in the shop of Madame Noseda, the well-known printseller in the Strand, and she reproached me for not buying some of her stock-in-trade :—

" Furnish and adorn your room with a hundred pounds' worth of them, and depend upon it in a few years you will find you have made an excellent pecuniary investment."

How true her words have proved !—but then I had not the hundred pounds.

Fashion, of course, plays the principal part in the game of values ; artists comparatively unknown have sprung into notoriety, and now their works command enormous prices. I am now looking at a beautiful mezzotint after Copley of William, second Earl of *Bessborough, Joint Postmaster-General* in 1785, for in those days the office was

always held by two Ministers. There is a picture of him in the House of Lords standing in the group of peers who surrounded the imaginary death-scene of Lord Chatham. How, were he to descend from his frame and walk into the Post Office at St. Martin's-le-Grand, would he comprehend the growth of that miraculous department since his day, when, as a daring and somewhat reckless reformer, he started the first mail-coach from London to Bristol, and one single letter was despatched from London to Edinburgh by the three-days-a-week mail—when franks of peers and M.P.'s carried free 7,000,000 out of 80,000,000 letters!—when the revenue of the Post Office was less than half a million! What would he think of a postal revenue of nearly £8,000,000 per annum, and a yearly delivery of nearly 3,262,800,000, to say nothing of telegraphic, telephonic and money order business? Would his soul faint within him if he attempted to grapple with figures almost beyond the conception of an ordinary man?

Then there is a charming print in stipple hanging from the wall called "Nice Supper"—a little girl sitting at table with a spoon in her hand and a basin of milk before her. This is Lady Sarah Spencer, afterwards Lady Lyttelton, Governess of the Royal children, drawn by her mother, Lavinia Countess Spencer. Immediately over this hangs one of the spirited sketches of another gifted

amateur, Louisa Lady Waterford, whose colouring always reminds one of the old Italian masters.

Before me is a charming little miniature by Cosway of the ill-starred Lady Caroline Lamb, in the opinion of many people more sinned against than sinning. Her album lies on the table, full of her poems. The young ladies of to-day are apt to astonish us of an earlier age with their advanced opinions, but I find Lady Caroline at the age of fourteen bursting out in the following stanzas :—

"To see but him she loved in each mad scene,
To fondly picture where he might have been;
In every spot to see his form arise,
In every face to meet her Henry's eyes;
Sadly to treasure up each moment past,
Tell how he looked when she beheld him last;
Count on his smiles—repeat his words—then sigh
That girls believe and men speak perjury.
The only joy in life that Laura knew,
Oh ! Henry, was to sigh and think of you."

But I cannot spend all my afternoon looking at pictures and dreaming of days that are gone for ever ; however, before I give up my appointment as hopeless, I use the privilege of an old friend and look into a book of unpublished autographs lying on the table.

I soon become so absorbed in their historical interest that I am tempted to transcribe a few of them. Here is the handwriting of the Countess d'Albany, the wife of the Young Pretender, who

afterwards married Alfieri the poet, and is reported to have held a sham Royal Court in London after the death of Prince Charles Edward. Here, too, I see an interesting epistle to the Prince Regent from Mrs. Fitzherbert, full of reproaches for his conduct to her, and threatening to appeal to public opinion. "Do not," she says, "compel me for my own justification to appeal to the opinions of impartial persons by showing them my letters to you on this occasion, that they may judge whether or not I have said anything in them to merit the treatment I have met with." A scribble follows from the Princess Charlotte to Lady Westmorland. A sad letter from Sheridan complains of the low condition of Covent Garden funds, there not being "a shilling in the treasury but what goes to bring out our famous piece. This infallibly comes out next week, and before it has been six times acted Mr. Landell may rely on it I will settle with him."

He is not alone in his impecuniosity, for here is what Madame Vestris says :—

"I have received £50 from Mr. Bunn, who says that if I wish it the other £50 shall be paid to-night. Most *decidedly* I do wish it, and more particularly as I have a payment to make in London, and I shall be much obliged to you to inform Mr. Bunn that I expect in future to receive my salary according to agreement, which arrangement will save much trouble to both of us."

Charles Kemble says :—

"I have neither seen nor heard from Mr. Bunn since I quitted you.

"Mr. Milliken is so good as to be the bearer of this to you, and I shall be obliged by your procuring a settlement of my claim of one hundred guineas from Mr. Bunn, which Mr. Milliken will now receive, as I have made the debt over to him."

A long letter from David Garrick is rare, so I read what he says with interest :—

"That Miss Younge is with you is a very agreeable circumstance, for without a woman the real and our mock world are nothing.

"Now to do your draught. I have got it safe, and wrote to Moody. I sent it to Wallis and desired him to pay your money, but he sent it me back again and said you—(*sic*)—gone to Ireland. Since that I wrote to Moody and paid him £70 for Johnson. I told him you wanted your money, and if he would send me another draught I would get it accepted by Sir Charles Argill and remit you the money directly, for you wanted it. He sent me word *he would sell his shirt* but you should have it. I have heard, to my surprise, nothing more from him. The moment I do I will let you know. I told him I was ready to give up the other draught to his order. I beg'd he would send you the money to Cork, but he told me he

knew nobody. In short, I am sorry that I can give you no better an account.

"You may be assur'd your draught which he gave you without your name in it, I will keep safe for your order.

"I am too weak to say more."

But it is not actors only who harp on that eternal want of pence which vexes public men; for there lies before me a letter from Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire bravely looking forward to a time of retrenchment. One wonders wherein the great charm of this captivating woman consisted. As in the case of the Gunnings her portraits give no idea of actual beauty of feature; indeed, it is said that, before she came out, she made sure she should be a failure, and described herself as having a wide mouth, a snub nose, and red hair; and yet all the world were at her feet. Here is what she says:—

"My Dearest Therese,—I have no excuse for not writing to you but the uncertainty I am in till something or other is settled or begun.

"Mr. Heaton's illness put us terribly back, and tho' the Duke is positively resolved to a reform—indeed too necessary—it hurts him to set about it.

"We are alone except Bess and Lord Fred, who comes to-day; but we are going to Hardwicke, and Bess and I hope we shall be there alone

with him, when I dare say we shall get him to settle on some beginning; till then, I confess, I shall have no peace.

"I am quite well and take a great deal of exercise, both walking and riding, for I find bodily fatigue is the way to rest my mind and makes me sleep better than all the opiates they gave me when my nerves were so bad.

"Bless you, dear love.

"Direct, Hardwicke, nr. Mansfield."

Then I came upon an unhappy letter from the elder Charles Mathews :—

"If you can pick up a likeness of Lord Norbury, an engraving, also Lord Morgan, do, for my autographs. They have been published in magazines. Buy book and all—Milligan, the bookseller, will help you.

"Mr. Edwin won't comply, and has affronted me smack about it. Another friend gone. I would as soon be a surgeon as a manager. I can see what it is now—enough to make one sigh for an entire private station. Friendship—feeling—won't do for this world. I should be sorry if it were to last long, but Sir Thomas Lawrence these. How anxious he was about a drawing on the 3rd Jany. It is *not* in his coffin.

"I am very hoarse and unfit for work and melancholy. If you wish to know what I think and believe, read Moore's Byron; I agree with all Byron says."

This letter of Charles Mathews' reminds one of the story of the doctor's advising a well-known comedian to rouse himself and go to the theatre and laugh at Quin. "I am Quin," he said in a melancholy voice.

Then there are letters which I have never seen published of Charlotte Brontë's and one from Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Gallenga, and an old-world epistle from Miss Maria Edgeworth to Lady Charleville.

From Charlotte Brontë.

"It is with extreme sorrow that I have to inform you of the death of my poor father. He died at a ripe age, full of ailments but surrounded by his daughters. The bereavement has so upset me that I am for the time incapable of pursuing my literary avocation. The pen has no charm, and the thing you speak of lies for the nonce neglected—to be resumed, I trust, in the future, with better heart. My brother was not present at father's death—I believe he is in Guernsey. The less I say of him the easier will be my heart.

"Dear friend, it would be a source of consolation to me if you could call and spend a few hours with me. I desire to consult you about some technicalities in the publishing and printing details of my forthcoming book; and if you would give me a little of the benefit of your ripe judgment of their sense, I am sure I should be the better

for it—besides saving considerably in a pecuniary point of view."[1]

Elizabeth Barrett Browning to M. Gallenga.

"They write to me from Florence that a pamphlet of M. Savagnole's has been sent to the English Consul's for me for safety (notwithstanding which precaution it has not arrived). The pamphlet seems to have had a wide publicity in Tuscany, and the desire is that you should consent to translate it into English. Will you signify by a simple 'yes' or 'no' whether you are inclined to undertake this, which must otherwise fall into other hands, at once?

"The patriots in Tuscany are absolutely agreed upon waiting the results of the situation without crossing the idea of the Independence of Italy by any opinions upon internal government. Such unity, it is said, among persons of every variety of view—republican, constitutional, &c.—was never before known in Italy. I had used your suggestion, and this is the reply, and I confess to you that I consider it adequate.

"May God help Italy!"

From Miss Maria Edgeworth to Lady Charleville.

"Are you disengaged this eve^{g}. and would you like that my sister, Wilson and I should do ourselves the pleasure of coming to your tea-table, or

[1] This letter, however, bought as an original, turned out to be a forgery.

to your tea without table or tablecloth? Fashion apart, I may own I have no fancy for the tablecloth. I do not see that it improves conversation or comfort in any way, but I think your conversation would carry off the tablecloth, if it be your fashion."

Here are some lines from Luttrell's pen on the Regent's illness, and a skit on waltzing by R. B. Sheridan :—

"Sad news! The Prince is taken ill—
All will depend on Halford's skill.
'Tell Sir Ben,'[1] says the physician :
'How comes he in this low condition?'
When Bloomfield ventured to announce
A small excess of cherry bounce,
The Regent, hearing what was said,
Raised from the couch his aching head
And cried in accents weak and low,
'Curaçoa—curaçoa—cure us, O doctor, cure us O!'"

"ON WALTZING, 1807

"While arts improve in this aspiring age,
Peers mount the coach-box, heroes tread the stage,
And waltzing females with unblushing face
Disdain to dance but in a man's embrace.
All arts improve, but modesty is dead,
And truth and virtue with our bullion fled."

An amusing little quatrain by Horace Smith and a breezy flowing little almanack illustrative of our English climate by Lady Morley, and I must shut up this fascinating book.

[1] First Lord Bloomfield, H.R.H.'s personal attendant.

By Horace Smith, one of the Authors of the "Rejected Addresses"

"Let this plain truth these ingrates strike
Who still, tho' bless'd, new blessings crave—
That we may all have what we like
Simply by liking what we have."

By Lady Morley

January	snowy	July	croppy
February	flowy	August	hoppy
March	blowy	September	poppy
April	showery	October	wheezy
May	flowery	November	sneezy
June	bowery	December	freezy

I can wait no longer. So, after having indulged in a kind of armchair communion with the past for an hour, I tried to shake myself into unison with the throbbing, thrusting, tearing crowd of fashion in the streets; but I found it difficult, even in old Tyburn Road, now called Oxford Street, whose very name suggested ancient English history—for it and all the streets around seem to have derived their names from the family of Veres and Harleys, Earls of Oxford—I could not have believed how extensive this derivation was till I discovered that in 1713 Edward Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, Baron Wigmore married Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles. Their only daughter and heiress, Lady Margaret, married William Duke of Portland; so from these families were christened in the neighbourhood, Vere, Oxford,

Harley, Mortimer, Welbeck, Wigmore, Henrietta, Cavendish, Holles, Margaret, Bentinck, Bulstrode, and Wimpole Streets, and Cavendish Square and Portland Place; Wimpole having been sold by Lord Oxford to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, while Bulstrode was one of the seats of the Portland family which passed into the family of the Duke of Somerset.

In the practical hurry of the present, however, all this grows difficult to realise and appreciate.

We are snobs every one of us, but we have little time to do homage to the ghosts of the great.

XII

SOME NOTES AS TO LONDON THEATRES PAST AND PRESENT

Lord Rosebery, in one of his delightful speeches at an annual dinner of the chairman of the London County Council, gave, as one of the proofs of the growing popularity of that body, the demands that were daily made by the public for endowing them with increased powers—great though those powers were at that time.

Personally, in the increasing mass of business undertaken gratuitously and successfully by men who devote their abilities, their energies, and time for the public good, I play an infinitesimal part. That part is in connection with the licensing and management of the theatres and places of amusement in the County of London.

This business has happily brought me into close and intimate relations not only with the daily increasing numbers of theatrical proprietors and managers, but with the professional and able advisers of the Council, from whom I have gathered much information connected with the history of

theatres, which I have found of great interest and which may afford some amusement to others.

Going back to times preceding those of Shakespeare I find that no theatres existed in any part of the country, and performances took place in barns or yards of inns, where the overhanging galleries, which some few of us remember and all of us have seen in old prints, afforded the only shelter to the spectators. Churches gave a temporary home to what were called "morality plays," and we of this generation have learnt how pathetic and touching these plays could be by seeing the simple story of "Everyman," which has been shown to us with an art probably eclipsing that of old days. Sometimes the plays were performed in amphitheatres, which had been used for bull and bear baiting, and were constructed in the form of an arena surrounded by galleries, which, when these were not required for more brutal sports, were occasionally devoted to the more refined uses of the histrionic art.

The first building appropriated solely for stage plays was known as "The Theatre," which was erected in 1575 in Shoreditch. In 1599 the Globe, where Shakespeare often appeared, was erected in Bankside. Between the first date and the Restoration a dozen other theatres sprang into existence; but how different from the present luxurious theatres, with their gorgeous scenic effects and furniture!

Although the French word *matinée*, to which we have become accustomed, had never been heard of, the plays began at three o'clock exactly, and the prices of admission ranged from 1d. to 1s. Think of that, ye managers of to-day!

These theatres, as they appear in old prints of London, before county councils were even dreamt of, were octagonal or circular, with tiers at different levels, the topmost row only being covered with a roof, while the enclosed ground in front corresponded to a space which in the theatres of to-day would be occupied by stalls and pit. These were open to the air, and it is to be hoped that the heavens were more propitious to outdoor amusements in those days than they are in the year of grace 1908.

The buildings being circular, it of necessity arose that the actors were obliged to turn their backs on some portion of the spectators, a habit which, curiously enough, seems now to be a growing fashion.

The position of actors in Queen Elizabeth's time well illustrated the feudal principles in force in those days, for by the Act of 1547 great noblemen and landowners gave their patronage and licences to companies of play-actors, who by their permission only were allowed to give performances in the neighbourhood. Queen Elizabeth, however, at the beginning of her reign appointed Justices,

Mayors, and Lieutenants of Shires to act as Censors of plays; but there evidently existed at that time in many quarters an antagonistic feeling against play-actors, who were driven in their own defence to appeal to a higher authority, with the result that a Master of the Revels was appointed by the Crown, who exercised his authority throughout the country until his office was merged in that of the Lord Chamberlain.

In 1642 all plays were forbidden by an Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, and many of the old theatres were pulled down by the Puritan soldiery, and the magistrates were enjoined to have apprehended all actors as rogues and vagabonds.

Up to the time of the Restoration no woman had ever ventured on the stage, but now great changes took place, and actresses were not only tolerated but were welcomed. The first English actress appeared in the character of Desdemona on the 8th of December 1660, at the Tennis Court Theatre, Vere Street, Clare Market. The patent to Killigrew, granted in 1662, runs :—

"We do likewise permit and give leave that all the women's parts to be acted in either of the said two companies, the King's and the Duke's, for the time to come may be performed by women."

We who have hung entranced with the acting of Rachel, Ristori, and Sarah Bernhardt, and have listened with rapture to the exquisite songs of

Grisi and Jenny Lind, have been moved to tears by the impersonations of Ellen Terry, and laughed till our sides ached over Mrs. Keeley and Mrs. John Wood, are beginning at last to realise that we owe some debt of gratitude to the more elastic times of the Restoration.

With the Restoration, the policy of the persecution of actors came to an end, Sir William D'Avenant and Killigrew each obtaining perpetual patents for the representation of stage plays, by which all the competing theatres were extinguished, and play-acting became a monopoly in their hands.

Killigrew was born in 1611–12, and at an early age began writing plays, which were acted at the "Cock-pit" in Drury Lane. After a stormy political youth, much of which was spent of necessity on the Continent, he returned to England at the Restoration, and after several minor Court appointments he was, with Sir W. D'Avenant, granted Royal patents to erect two new play-houses, much to the disgust of King Charles's Master of the Revels, whose authority was thus overruled.

Drury Lane was opened as the Theatre Royal in 1663. In 1672 it was burnt down, for there were no County Council inspectors in those days, and the company played, till it was rebuilt, in the abandoned Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where his Majesty's company of comedians were

advertised to play "The Lady's Last Stake, or The Wife's Resentment," to be followed by "The Devil of a Wife."

Killigrew himself subsequently became the King's Master of the Revels, and died in 1683.

Sir W. D'Avenant, the partner of Killigrew, was said by the scandal-mongers of his day to be an illegitimate son of Shakespeare. Meeting an old townsman on his way to Stratford and being asked where he was hurrying, he replied that he was going to see his god-father, Shakespeare, and was met by the retort: "Have a care that you do not take God's name in vain." The same Master of the Revels, Sir Henry Herbert, who had protested against the patent given to Killigrew, also accused Sir William of disloyalty and said he had been a Master of the Revels to Oliver the Tyrant—an office which I should have thought would have been a sinecure in those days. In spite of Sir Henry Herbert's opposition he not only obtained his licence, but was appointed Poet Laureate. The number of his plays was prodigious. He had lodgings in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he died in 1668, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, where on his grave is written in silly imitation of Ben Jonson's epitaph :—

"O rare Sir William D'Avenant."

Killigrew's company was named "The King's

Theatre," and D'Avenant's "The Duke's," in honour of the Duke of York. After many vicissitudes the lessees of Covent Garden and Drury Lane claim that these patents are in force to the present day.

Playbills of performances in 1753 contain footnotes which still appear strange to us. One runs: "As any obstruction in the movement of the machinery will prejudice the performance of the entertainment, it is to be hoped no person will be displeased at their being refused admittance behind the scenes." Another runs: "'The Provoked Husband' will be given at the particular desire of several persons of quality." I wonder if the husbands were anxious to provide a lesson to their wives and to teach them a moral. Another note says: "Ladies are desired to send their servants by 3 o'clock." I suppose that they were to preserve their seats. This was nothing to what happened at the opening of the Gaiety Theatre some time ago, when, I am informed, a *queue* was formed at 5 o'clock A.M.

Before permanently moving to Drury Lane and the Duke's Theatre, Killigrew and D'Avenant exercised their patents temporarily at other premises.

Christopher Rich purchased in 1688 a share in the management of Drury Lane, the patents of which had been combined in 1682 with that

granted to D'Avenant, and notwithstanding endless quarrels involving many lawsuits, he succeeded for a long time in holding undisputed sway over his Majesty's Theatre of Drury Lane, and on his ultimate expulsion from the theatre he took with him the patents and in 1714 established the Lincoln's Inn Theatre. Drury Lane, thus deprived of its privileges, was forced to depend upon temporary patents until the year 1837, when the owners produced the original patent granted to Killigrew, having previously purchased it of Covent Garden, where it had been secreted.

Although the patentees had the exclusive right of stage-playing, yet many theatres, by methods more or less legitimate, contrived to encroach on their vested interests.

Some of these minor theatres founded their claim to this right upon the Act relating to grants of licences for music, dancing, and other entertainments of a like nature. Others maintained that public stage plays were not being acted, the playbills inviting patrons to have tea, during the supposed service of which, performances took place.

A curious case of a like nature has recently occupied our Law Courts, where the Theatrical Managers' Association sued the Palace Theatre for producing a part of a stage play known as "La Toledad," and the magistrate decided against the Palace Company and fined them £10, the Palace

only being licensed by the County Council for music and dancing.

The exclusive privileges of the patent theatres were being brought, by the public demand for more places of amusement, to an end, with the result that the Theatres Act of 1843 was passed, by which the Lord Chamberlain was allowed to grant full stage play licences in London, and magistrates were given similar powers in the country.

This Act is still in force, but in such parts as are included in the County of London the County Council have taken the place of the justices, the Lord Chamberlain remaining the sole authority in Great Britain with respect to the censorship of plays, which are submitted to him before they are presented to the public; but the morals of theatrical performances have improved, and there would now be no need, as there appears to have been in old days, for one of the audience to complain at a benefit of Mrs. Gardner's that she will soon announce her intention of standing on her head, for the amusement of the *savoir vivre* and the Macaroni Club.

In the time when George the Second was king, however, places of entertainment were still the scenes of every kind of disorder, as is shown by the preamble to the Act 25 Geo. II., which says :—

"Whereas the multitude of places of entertainment for the lower sort of people is another great cause of thefts and robberies, as they are thereby tempted to spend their small substance in riotous pleasures, and in consequence are put on unlawful methods of supplying their wants and renewing their pleasures."

This Act made it incumbent on the lessees of such places to obtain a licence from the Justices, and is the source from which the jurisdiction of the County Council in respect of music and dancing is derived.

In 1855 the number of places licensed for music and dancing was 305, against 67 in 1845. Five-sixths of the licences were for music only, and three-fourths of them were granted to public-houses.

About the middle of the last century the Sacred Harmonic Society and Exeter Hall gave a taste for oratorio, and great singers, such as Sims Reeves and Santley, in the zenith of their careers, appeared on the scene, and these places became the home of very high-class entertainments. To a great extent these halls, which had been the outcome of small rooms connected with public-houses, have been supplanted by the modern theatres of varieties.

In 1878 there were in London at least 300 public-houses licensed for music, while at the present time there are only about twenty.

The restaurants where music is allowed during

meals, and the efforts of religious bodies in establishing mission-halls and institutes, have contributed to overwhelm the licensed victuallers in this direction.

For the first few years of the authority of the County Council the sale of intoxicating drinks was allowed in these places of entertainment; but the Council have since that time, while not interfering with existing licences, decided with regard to new establishments to prohibit the sale or consumption of intoxicating drinks on their premises; and this policy has resulted in a great success, for the places holding licences with this restriction have been among the most popular.

They have drawn a distinction at present between theatres and music-halls, and it appears to me with reason, for while in the former people would only seek refreshment in the limited time between the acts, in the other there would be constant opportunities of hanging about the bars, and thus causing a temptation to unnecessary drinking.

It is fair to say that few if any cases of misconduct arising from drink have ever been reported.

The Licensing Committee of the London County Council, in the past year, licensed 331 places for music, stage plays, and dancing, or music only, twenty-three of these being for stage plays.

The responsibility imposed on this Committee

is considerable as regards new places of entertainment, but the difficulties in cases of old theatres are still graver.

All these theatres are inspected from time to time by the officials of the departments of the superintending architect, chief officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, and other departments. And now, as the development of electric light increases, a new difficulty has arisen and great care is necessary in its application.

It is unnecessary to call attention to the fact of the enormous advance in fireproof materials which has tended so much to the safety of the public. Every theatre and music-hall in London has a fire-curtain separating the stage from the auditorium. Chemical science has now provided a substance which for some time has been used at bazaars, to render muslin and canvas uninflammable, and this has already been taken advantage of for scenery, and it is to be hoped that it will be soon adapted for use in the more inflammable dresses used by actresses.

In 1100 selected cases occurring between 1797 and 1897 at home and abroad, the number of fatalities, according to some authorities, is fixed at not fewer than 10,000, and the loss of valuable property has been enormous. In this generation there have been fires at Brooklyn in 1876, when 400 people lost their lives. In 1881 at

the Municipal Theatre at Nice 150 to 200 were killed, and in the same year 450 perished at the Ring Theatre, Vienna. In 1887 115 perished at the Opéra Comique, Paris, and in the same year at the Exeter Theatre 127 persons were burned. In 1891 thirteen lost their lives at the Theatre Royal, Gateshead; and the fire at the Paris Bazaar, which should not perhaps be classed in the same category as the buildings with which this article deals, is fresh in all minds, as is also the fire at the Comédie Française in 1900, which occasioned the death of the artist Mlle. Henriot. The fire in the Uruquois Theatre, Chicago, is fresh in our minds.

In London, in a properly licensed building, no life has been lost (except that of a fireman in the performance of his duty at the fire at the Alhambra in December 1882) since 1858, when at the Coburg Theatre, now Royal Victoria Coffee Music-Hall, sixteen persons were killed in a panic resulting from a *false alarm* of fire. Previous to that the fire at Covent Garden in 1808 was responsible for from fifteen to twenty victims, and they were not from among the audience, but persons who lost their lives by trying to get into the theatre to extinguish the fire. In 1807 twenty-three lives were lost through a *false* alarm of fire at Sadler's Wells Theatre.

One case has occurred, however, at premises

which were not licensed, in 1887 in the Hebrew Dramatic Club, Spitalfields, where seventeen lives were lost during the performance of a stage play. In 1892 five children were injured at the St. Pancras Liberal Unionist Club during a magic-lantern entertainment.

The importance of taking precautions to prevent and allay fire is further illustrated by the fact that since 1866 410 *incidents of fire* have been reported at places of public entertainment, including thirty-one cases where the building has been totally destroyed, and nineteen cases where persons have been injured. In this connection a question has been raised in the Press, which has never, so far as I am aware, been publicly answered. It is argued, and rightly, that the majority of fires in theatres originate on the stage, and that therefore it is unnecessary to take a great deal of care to make the auditorium fire-resisting. Perhaps those who raised this question will be interested in the following facts.

In London since 1866 eighteen fires have originated in the auditoria of theatres, of which ten occurred during performance; and seventeen fires have occurred in the same localities of large music-halls, four of which were during performance. In 1865 the Surrey Theatre, and in 1896 the Cambridge Music-hall, were destroyed by fires which commenced in the front of these houses,

while from 1811 to 1897 there are records of twenty-seven other theatres in the provinces and abroad at which fires have commenced in the auditoria, the most notable of which were :—

On the 26th of December 1811, Richmond, U.S.A., where 72 were killed and many were injured.

On the 28th of February 1847 at Carlsruhe, 63 killed and 203 injured.

On the 23rd of March 1881 at Nice, 200 killed and some injured.

On the 28th of December 1891 at Gateshead, 13 killed and many injured.

On the 27th of December 1895 at Baltimore, U.S.A., 24 killed.

In July 1901 regulations founded on twelve years' experience, and guided to some extent by the practice of other countries, were after long and careful consideration issued by the Council, and it is hoped that they will have the effect of bringing the various premises, as far as possible, up to the standard of safety justly demanded by the public, and will be of great use to the licensees themselves, as well as to architects engaged on new theatres.

Great progress has been made in this direction with the co-operation of architects, owners, and lessees, who are well aware that the greater the proved safety of the theatres is the larger will be their audiences.

The committee strive hard, with the skilful co-operation of their permanent officials, to mitigate the necessary inconvenience caused to licensees and proprietors by alterations which are deemed necessary for the protection of the public; and all their endeavours are responded to and assisted by the co-operation of the Lord Chamberlain, who declines to issue any licences to places not sanctioned by the London County Council.

At the present time the chief difference of opinion that has arisen between the committee and a minority of the Council has been on the application of temperance legislation.

We are all at one, of course, in our desire to do what is in our power to prevent excessive drinking, but I am always in fear that the extreme portion of teetotalers may damage the cause we all have at heart, by pushing too fast and too far their principles of total abstinence.

An old friend of mine, a witty and Liberal lady, passed a few days in a country house where Radical and teetotal views were pushed to extremes. On leaving it, she exclaimed: "It is only by God's mercy that I have not become a confirmed Tory and an habitual drunkard."

When I was Vice-Chairman of the Royal Commission on Licensing, I asked Lady Henry Somerset, who has done more for the cause of temperance than any woman living, whether, if there were no

such thing as excessive drinking, there would be any necessity for any of her societies or efforts. Her answer was, "None whatever."

It is in a spirit of moderation and reform, not giving occasion to our enemies to blaspheme, that I hope the Council will proceed, removing, where and when it is possible, temptation to drink, and, above all, setting their faces like flints against all excess.

Readers of the "Creevey Papers," which have been lately published, will see with pain how common, and almost universal, drunkenness was in the days when the Georges reigned. Such sights, familiar in the times of our ancestors, are unknown among gentlemen of the present generation. This should give us hope that education may step in and accomplish the good work, and remove the shame that still hangs over us of spending millions of our annual income on strong drink.

There is another point on which feeling runs high, and that is the question of the employment of women at bars where intoxicating liquors are sold. Miss Orme, whose experience is unrivalled, was appointed by the Labour Commission to inquire into the question. She gives many arguments from a moral and physical point of view against such employment, and many good women whose noble efforts on behalf of their sex appeal strongly to the sympathies of men agree with

her; on the other hand, it is said it would be cruel to circumscribe the already narrow field in which women can gain a livelihood. In the face of such conflicting opinions, and taking into consideration the comparatively small number of barmaids employed in the music-hall bars under the Council's control, I think that public opinion must be brought to bear on the hardships of their lot, with a view to their amelioration, and that the Council exercised a wise discretion in saying that they would lay down no law on the subject, but that they would view with satisfaction any diminution in the number of young women employed in bars where alcoholic drinks are sold.

XIII

THE GREAT UNPAID

THERE is no such fruitful source of discussion in an age painfully analytical as to whether things are better or worse than they were in the lives of our ancestors. I want to add a little to the material of that undecided controversy by proving that among the favourable signs of our time may be included the growing interest which is taken throughout the country in all questions affecting municipal life. Every year the roll of workers who, unostentatiously, give their services in the various stages of self-government increases.

Few people have ever fully considered, far less realised, the vast amount of gratuitous work performed by men who have no hope of any reward beyond that which is popularly supposed to follow virtue. From the category of these I purposely exclude the services of members of the Houses of Lords and Commons, because, although they have no direct payment, as in other countries, they have their reward in the attainment of position, and the possibilities of offices or titles. Spain

alone shares with us the honour of a wholly unpaid legislature, for though members of the Reichstag in Germany and members of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies in Italy receive no salaries, they are allowed to travel in their respective countries at the expense of the State.

In the same spirit I shall exclude Lord-Lieutenants and High-Sheriffs of counties, and for the same reasons.

My mind in the first outset of my inquiry not unnaturally carries me back to the time when, as Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, I learned from experience of the enormous services rendered in the assessment and collection of an Income Tax of over £17,000,000 by Local Commissioners, who are commonly known as the General or District Commissioners of Taxes. These Commissioners are appointed by the Land Tax Commissioners out of their own body, and are absolutely independent of the Government of the day, for they hold their appointment directly from Parliament—Justices of the Peace being *ex officio* commissioners.

The whole of the Land Tax, amounting to nearly £1,000,000, is also assessed and collected by the Commissioners, who are, of course, wholly unremunerated.

Grand Jurors, before 1888, when much of their business devolved on the county councils, had

under their control the administration of County Lunatic Asylums, bridges, and main roads, and were responsible for the county rate.

The Chairmen of Quarter Sessions still try all cases not necessarily going before a Judge of Assize, and hear appeals from decisions of Justices of the Peace at Sessions, while a grand jury of twenty-three have thrown upon them the decision of whether or not true Bills should be found. The appointment of a Commission of the Peace for each county dates from the fourteenth century, and Lord Coke says "that the whole Christian world hath not the like office as Justice of the Peace if duly executed." There may be a few Justices like the Shallows and the Silences of Shakespeare's time :—

> "In fair round belly with good capon lined,
> With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
> Full of wise saws and modern instances."

Some there may be who are satisfied with being able to write "J.P." after their name, who take no share in the duties properly devolving on them ; but this only throws additional labour on those who are willing to undertake it. The work done under the fierce light that Mr. Labouchere throws upon them every week in his legal pillory is very considerable.

A committee of visiting justices for convict

establishments and local prisons used annually to be appointed at Quarter Sessions, but under recent legislation Boards mainly but not wholly consisting of Justices have been instituted, on whom grave responsibilities as to management and discipline have been imposed.

The treasures of the nation at the British Museum, at the National and Portrait Galleries are under the direct supervision and management of unpaid trustees who hold their offices with a just and natural pride. Over a hundred hospitals in London and the country are, some well and some ill, administered by governors and committees, while the number of men who are trustees of various public and private charities is very great.

Notwithstanding the cheap sneers of Lord Salisbury on the result of Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees, it would be easy to point not only to years of arduous work, but to the good effects produced, and constantly produced, in consequence of their investigations and recommendations. Mr. Disraeli bore testimony to this when he said :—

" The government of this country is considerably carried on by the aid of Royal Commissions. So great is the increase of public business that it would be probably impossible for a Minister to carry on affairs without this assistance.

The Queen of England can command for these

objects the services of the most experienced statesmen and men in the highest position in society. If necessary, she can summon to them distinguished scholars or men most celebrated in science and art; and she receives from them services that are unpaid. They are only too proud to be described in the Commission as Her Majesty's Trusty Councillors."

In this long list of services rendered to the State I now come to that performed by Parish, Urban District, and County Councils, and Boards of Education and City Corporations.

My own experience began as a member of a District Council in Surrey, and I find it difficult adequately to describe the energy with which duties necessarily new were undertaken by that body. But the work of the Council, where, I am happy to say, we had the great advantage of the services of two elected ladies, was as nothing compared to the incessant sittings and work of the various committees dealing with public health, highways, asylums, buildings, and the proper administration of the Poor Law. But my greater experience of municipal work, what it was and how it was done, came to me when, in the spring of 1898, I had the great honour of being elected as an Alderman of the London County Council. The work is, of course, greater in volume but the same in character as that performed by sixty-one

Administrative Councils in England. The London County Council embraces in its ranks every phase of the complicated civilisation of modern municipal life. There are men who with all the temptations of wealth and position "scorn delights and live laborious days"; there are those who, like their distinguished chairman, having spent many years of their life in arduous official duties and justly entitled to some relaxation, are ready to devote in the service of their country all their remaining energies; there are professional men who rush from the Law Courts to attend committees; there are business men who are content to curtail their mercantile profits and gains for the public good. I know one instance of a member of the Council who daily reaches his office before any of his clerks, in order to be free for his afternoon committee meetings. There are also really working men who, at a great sacrifice, patiently attend the protracted and arduous deliberations of various committees.

I cannot help comparing the advantage to a young man of ambition beginning a career as a County Councillor or as a Member of Parliament with a vast balance in favour of the former. Sir Arthur Helps in one of his ablest essays, with an almost prophetic instinct, says :—

"Many a man is anxious to get into Parliament and do something useful there, who, having obtained

his seat, finds himself powerless in that assembly ; the same man, however, might have been a great light in a Municipal Council."

The position of a young Member of Parliament of ordinary abilities has been humorously described as being "to make a House, to keep a House, and to cheer his leader"—and that is all. If his party is in office he must be as dumb as a sheep before his shearers. He must not on pain of the displeasure of the whips even express an opinion adverse to the policy and conduct of his chiefs. He must vote as he is told ; he must attend as he is bidden ; and he is rarely put on any Committees more important than on a private Bill relating to the gas supply of Little Pedlington —what has he to show as the result to himself of a long Session ?

Now let us consider the lot of a young County Councillor. From his earliest moment he can choose the committees on which he would wish to serve ; and here, while getting an admirable insight into their modes of working, he can and does without any presumption not only learn the subjects before him, but may be absolutely independent of all party considerations and freely express the opinions he holds either in Committee or Council. Lord Rosebery has told us that there is as great a scope for energy and practical action

in the County Council as in the Imperial Parliament; in the first the young member will find food for the healthiest of intellectual appetites. If he is bent on studying the attempt to solve the most pressing problem of modern civilisation, he can grapple with the housing of the poor; if he wishes to learn the forces of selfish and interested monopolies, he can watch the history of the laws that insist on the limited supply of diluted sewage in the place of fresh water for the supply of a population of five million of thirsty souls in this metropolis. If he has an artistic turn of mind, a noble field of architectural and engineering skill in the improvement of streets and the building of bridges lies open before him. If he contemplates gaining distinction in the apparently lost art of economy and finance, he may qualify for a future Chancellorship of the Exchequer by studying the collection and expenditure of over £6,000,000 per annum. Electrical tramways and fire brigades, inspection of asylums, questions of parks and open spaces, the management of theatres and music halls, may occupy any spare time he has at his disposal; and then he may ascertain in a somewhat impatient and critical assembly what his oratorical powers really are. In a whole Session there would not be probably more than three or four occasions on which any purely party divisions would take

place. At the end of the time he can look back with proper pride to the knowledge he has gained of Municipal Government and the work he has done in the committees, whichever they may be that he has undertaken. If he has been industrious and capable, he may be sure that in a Council where industry and capability are the only considerations he has won a place which may fit him for higher duties. He can have taken part in debates in Council and shown of what material he is made.

It has been remarked that the world knows nothing of its greatest men; how much less does it know of the work done by those who have no ambition to be numbered among the greatest!

Let me take as an example the London County Council: a body to whom is entrusted, as I have said, a yearly expenditure of over £6,000,000. In its short career it has effected a purification of eighty per cent. of the Thames water, and the question of salmon returning to the river is seriously entertained; it has taken possession of important lines of tram communication, and already worked them to the great relief of the taxpayers and the improvement of the employees; it has cleared acres of insanitary dwellings.

Infant life has been protected under the Act which came into force on January 1, 1898, and

shops where young people are employed have been carefully inspected by men and women inspectors. Nearly 8000 premises have been visited, and infringements of the law in regard to illegal hours were discovered in more than half of the places inspected. The Council, too, has endeavoured with some success to cause an abatement of the smoke nuisance.

Communications over and under the river at Blackwall and Woolwich have been established; a colony for epileptics has been started; forty-one public-houses have been abolished; magnificent plans for a new street from Holborn to the Strand have received the sanction of Parliament and are being now built over.

In ten short years it has more than doubled the open spaces within its boundaries, and has added 1236 acres to the gardens and playgrounds of the Metropolis. It has provided aviaries for those who never saw any bird but the London sparrow; lakes; lovely and carefully tended gardens, with botanical classes of instruction; gymnasiums for the young; games of bowls, cricket, lawn-tennis, football, and hockey for a class of people who never knew what a healthy game was, and whose experience of amusement was bounded by a street fight and a drink at the nearest public-house. It has made the fire brigade the most magnificent in the world; it has created beautiful parks and

open spaces for the recreation of the poor, and has introduced the principle of equalisation of municipal rates in the Metropolis. It has done much to insist on a fair day's wage for a fair day's labour, which, as Carlyle says, is "the most unrefusable of demands." It has given happiness to thousands upon thousands of working people by its bands of music. It has protected the humblest from the robbery of short weights. It has organised, and with astonishing results, industrial schools, and turned thousands of criminal youths into wage-earning and law-abiding citizens. It has fostered technical education, and it is engaged in a hand-to-hand combat with water monopolies, from which it must eventually emerge victorious. It has galvanised hitherto somniferous vestries into active life. It has brought pressure to bear on railway companies to provide at reasonable fares proper accommodation for working men, and is grappling with the most urgent and stupendous problem of metropolitan reform, the question of the housing of the poor.

Of what has already been done let me take two examples: The Boundary Street area of Bethnal Green, consisting of fifteen acres, where ten years ago the death-rate was 40.13 per 1000, the total death-rate for London being 18.8 per 1000! The houses were of the worst and lowest description, the ground floor being below the level of the street,

with the boards laid on the damp earth. In this area, containing 730 houses, there were twelve public-houses, and the population was 5719 :—

2118 of whom occupied 752 houses of one room each.

2265 occupied 506 houses of two rooms.

1183 occupied 211 houses of three or more rooms.

153 in lodging-houses.

Now there are no public-houses ; the new houses are five-storied, light and roomy, surrounding a garden on which they look. All sanitary matters are carefully arranged ; sculleries and a central laundry are provided, and the inhabitants have already established clubs and reading-rooms.

30 people only will now occupy 15 tenements of one room.

2164 people only will now occupy 541 tenements of two rooms.

2400 people only will now occupy 400 tenements of three rooms.

930 people only will now occupy 113 tenements of four rooms or more.

77 workshops and 18 shops are provided for the convenience of tenants.

In Clare Market there existed 800 persons to the acre : six times the density of the population living in the crowded Strand district. The great portion of the people turned out of these foul

slums will be provided for in healthy, airy buildings on the Millbank site, and provision is made for those whose occupation forces them to live in the neighbourhood of the markets and theatres close by.

What the Council has done in the cases I have mentioned is but an earnest of the things they will do, and they will take to their comfort the words of Carlyle: "Oh! it is great, and there is no other greatness, to make some work of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God."

The Works Department, over which raged an unfortunate party conflict, is rapidly emerging from its difficulties, and is justifying itself under its new management, and its finances have been managed in a manner to excite the admiration of all who have studied the subject.

And it must not be forgotten that all this noble work has been done not only under a fierce and jealous criticism, but in spite of a carping opposition, proceeding from disappointed interests, and from ignorance of what the duties assigned to the Council really are; as Lord Rosebery so well remarked in his speech at a dinner given by the Chairman of the Council in 1898:—

"The Council is blamed for everything that happens amiss in London. And what does this mean? It means that every inhabitant of London

has a broader, a larger, a truer conception of what the functions of the Council should be, their universality and extent."

When St. Paul uttered his proud boast he was talking of Imperial Rome with its million of inhabitants. May not we, speaking of democratic London with its five millions of population, echo his words that we are the citizens of no mean city?

It would be well if somebody, far better informed on the subject than I can be, would show us the amount of gratuitous work performed in the interests of education throughout the country. In London the School Board alone consists of 57 members, of whom seven are women, elected by the ratepayers, who are responsible for the proper expenditure of over three and a half million pounds. Under their management about 750,000 children are being educated under about 10,000 School Masters and Mistresses; the Managers of these schools giving their services gratuitously. Besides these Day Schools, there are special schools for cookery, laundry work, manual training and gymnastics, swimming schools, ambulance, home nursing, dressmaking, asylums for the instruction of mentally and physically defective children, and blind industrial schools, truant schools, pupil-teachers' schools, and evening continuation schools,

which number an ever-increasing roll of 100,000 scholars.

No wonder that the Board is divided into 36 committees, whose duties must be almost overwhelming.

It is impossible that I should omit the important part played by women in the great unpaid service of the country, and I at any rate cannot but deplore the unfortunate decision of the enormous majority of the House of Lords in excluding them from office under the London Government Act. I agree with Lord Hobhouse's opinion when he says that in his judgment "we are by our refusal to employ women in public functions guilty of a waste of power almost incredibly stupid." I have had the advantage of serving on important public committees and boards and councils with women, and I was invariably struck by their extreme industry and keen attention to practical administration. Quite apart from the vexed question of female franchise I cannot but think it pitiful that any artificial limits should be created whereby an office is deprived of the service of the particular human being who would fill it with the greatest advantage to the office and to the public, and it is certain that in many cases the exclusion of suitable women from the offices they would otherwise have held will effect this undesirable result.

We must not forget that we have an army of Volunteers, efficient and unpaid, numbering with the Yeomanry nearly 300,000 men.

The fact that so much work is done gratuitously makes it possible for the country to pay salaries much higher than in other countries to the judicial and official ranks, and to preserve the unassailable purity and absence of temptation which besets those in other countries whose small salaries are wholly inadequate to keep the recipients free from pecuniary temptation.

The consideration of such a vast volume of work, involving considerable expenditure on the workers, should, when the question of payment of Members of Parliament next comes up for discussion, not be lost sight of; for if members are to be paid no logical reason could be adduced for not equally paying those who certainly are in many cases drawn from a poorer class of the community.

Even in these days, when the very word Economy stinks in the nostrils of our legislators, we should pause before we entered into a course of general payment to Members of Parliament out of the consolidated fund, which in itself would entail a large expenditure and be so destructive of what is best in the history of our country.

I could have wished to define in detail the duties gratuitously performed in other countries; but to attain accuracy in such details is no easy

matter. Curiously enough, in Spain, where, as I have said, members of the legislature are unpaid, other offices throughout the country are allotted on the principle of the spoils to the victors—and nearly all of them are paid for. France, I believe, is full of little officials with small salaries. In Russia, Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden there is a considerable amount of work gratuitously performed.

In the United States we have a great authority who tells us that misgovernment and corruption still exist in municipal life; but there is nothing approaching in any country of the world to the self-government of England, and we may in this country be sure that Abraham Lincoln's prophecy will be fulfilled: "that the government of the people by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

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