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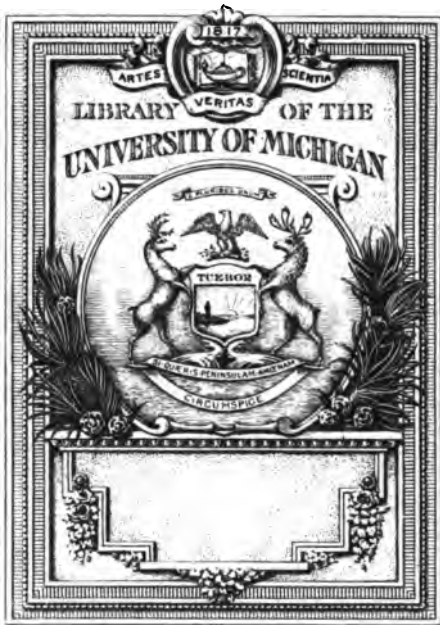
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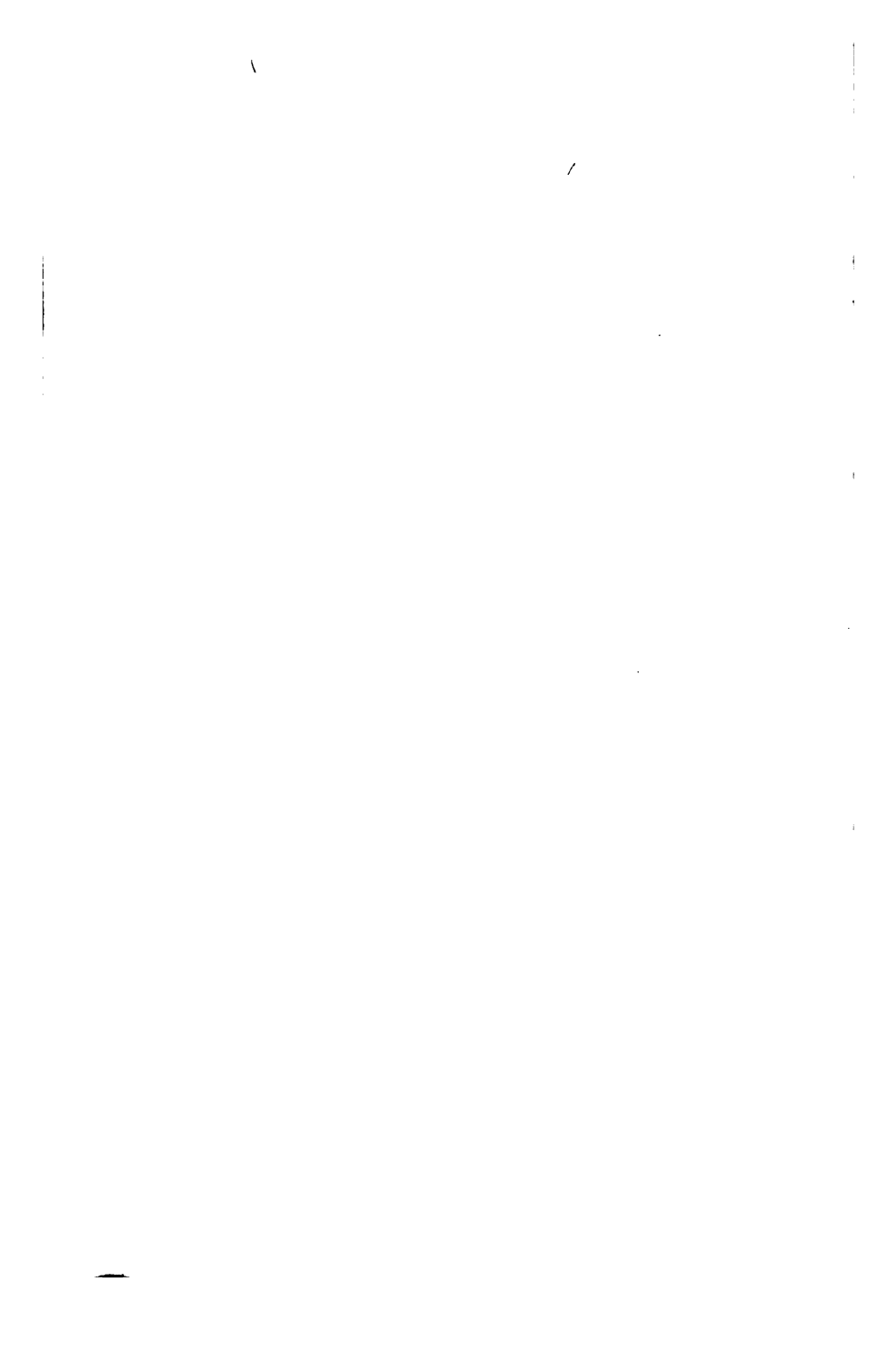
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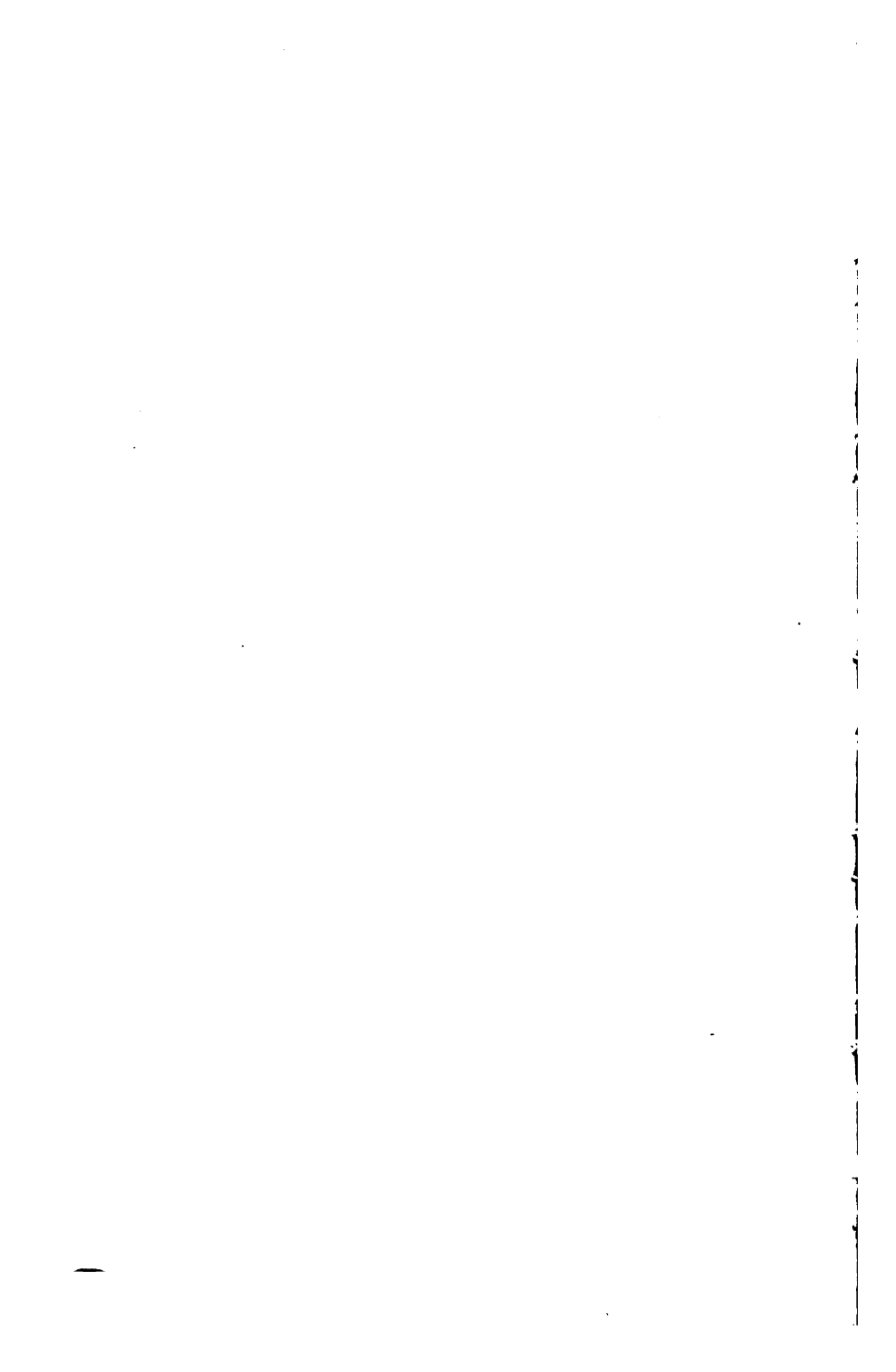
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THE BRITISH EMPIRE

WITH ESSAYS ON PRINCE ALBERT, LORD PALMERSTON,
LORD BEACONSFIELD, MR. GLADSTONE,
AND REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

BY
Friedrich Heffcken
DR. GEFCKEN

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH THE SANCTION AND
CO-OPERATION OF THE AUTHOR

BY

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

IN introducing these Essays in a somewhat enlarged form to the English public, I will make only a few remarks on the subject of each.

The first and longest—that on The British Empire—was suggested by the Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886, the finest and most interesting of shows, and one which I examined with great care in all its parts. No better means could possibly have been devised to give a comprehensive yet compact view of the Empire. But while wandering through the magnificent galleries of the Exhibition, I could not help reflecting how inadequate are the present military resources of this unprecedented Empire to meet its necessities, should it become involved in a great war—and, above all, a war against a coalition. To say nothing of the Colonies and the difficulties attending their defence, England depends for food largely, and for many materials essential to her industry entirely, upon her maritime imports. In 1815, her import of corn was 3 per cent of the consumption; it is now 55 per cent! The quantity of wool she raises herself is trifling compared with what she receives from Australia and the Cape. The American Civil War has shown what a cotton famine

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signifies for the mills of Lancashire and Nottingham. Yet the possibility of continuing to draw all these supplies, without which her population would perish, depends upon her keeping open for them a passage by sea: as soon as this is stopped, her people must surrender from sheer starvation.

It is my firm conviction, strengthened by the judgment of some of the first military and naval authorities of Germany (whom I have consulted), that by the first decisive defeat at sea, the British Empire would be shaken to its foundations; and that if such an event took place, it would not be a mere passing eclipse of England's power, as at former periods—(in, for instance, the war of American Independence), but the first irretrievable step downwards. I have expressed my belief that by following the pressing advice of men like the Duke of Cambridge, Lord Wolseley, and Admiral Hornby, there may still be time for increasing the fighting defensive force; but I have also shown that the governments, Liberal as well as Conservative, have been slack in following such advice, because hitherto they have not had the courage to ask Parliament for funds, which certainly would not be grudged by the taxpayers, if the situation as it is, and as it has been proved to be, e.g. by the last Naval Review, were frankly put before them.

In the Essay on Prince Albert, I have not spoken of the Prince as a political paragon; I have admitted that his advice in German affairs was sometimes at fault, because he had become too much a stranger to his native land. But I have maintained that he was the first British statesman of his age; he was highly gifted, he worked hard, and he was untrammelled by party prejudice; even his former opponents, among whom was Lord Palmerston, finally acknowledged him to be a great man.

In Lord Palmerston I have drawn the outlines

of a statesman who was thoroughly English and thoroughly popular. In internal affairs he became, after the passing of the Reform Bill, conservative in his tendencies. In foreign affairs, he felt that England's force being materially small, it ought to be constantly exercised; and, by exercising it, he remained popular till his death.

His qualities show to particular advantage if we compare him with his successors, Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone. Both *their* careers show that their aims were, above all, personal. Mr. Disraeli's career was a striking proof of the saying, *Fortes fortuna adjuvat*. Beginning as a novel-writer and a Radical, he gradually forced his way to the position of undoubted chief of the proudest aristocracy in the world. He never lost his predilections for the Jews and for the Radicals; the first he defended in his works (e.g., *Coningsby*) as the most gifted of races; he was their advocate also at the Berlin Congress in 1878, at which he concurred in imposing on Roumania the equality of the Jews as a condition of her independence. His Radical tendencies he showed in his Reform Bill of 1867.—I often had occasion to observe in the House of Commons how utterly he was out of sympathy with his followers. Once when a stout Orangeman indignantly denounced Cardinal Cullen for having dared to walk openly in violet stockings through the streets of Dublin, I saw a fugitive smile passing over Mr. Disraeli's face,—after which he stood up and assured his worthy friend with great earnestness, that he would always resist any encroachments of the Catholic hierarchy, but that in the Cardinal walking in violet stockings, he saw only a tendency to mix with society at large! There is, however, a feature in Disraeli's career which does him great honour,—he always showed a strong feeling for England's position in foreign politics; and he never,

when in opposition, tried to embarrass the action of Government.

I am unable to discover such a patriotism in Mr. Gladstone's career; but I find him quite as selfish and ambitious. He began, as Macaulay said at the time,—the hope of the stern and unbending Tories, and he has become at the end of his life the associate of men of the Labouchere and Parnell type, whose real object is the destruction of the Union. He said in October, 1862, "There is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and the leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; they have made, what is more than either,—they have made a nation." Yet eight years afterwards he sent High Commissioners to Washington, to yield to the preposterous demand of the Americans, that in deciding the questions between the two countries arising out of the *Alabama* claims, the Arbitrators should *assume* that H.M.'s Government had undertaken to act upon principles, which, as they explicitly said at the outset, they could not recognize as principles of international law. Thus his Commissioners made a solemn farce of the whole arbitration, and rendered England's condemnation inevitable. But the climax of his foreign policy is to be found in his action regarding Egypt: he has delivered the Soudan to the Arab slave-holders and to anarchy. So far as his home policy is concerned, he has in Ireland committed a *fatal* blunder. I am convinced that his Irish policy will be so regarded by the future historian of England.

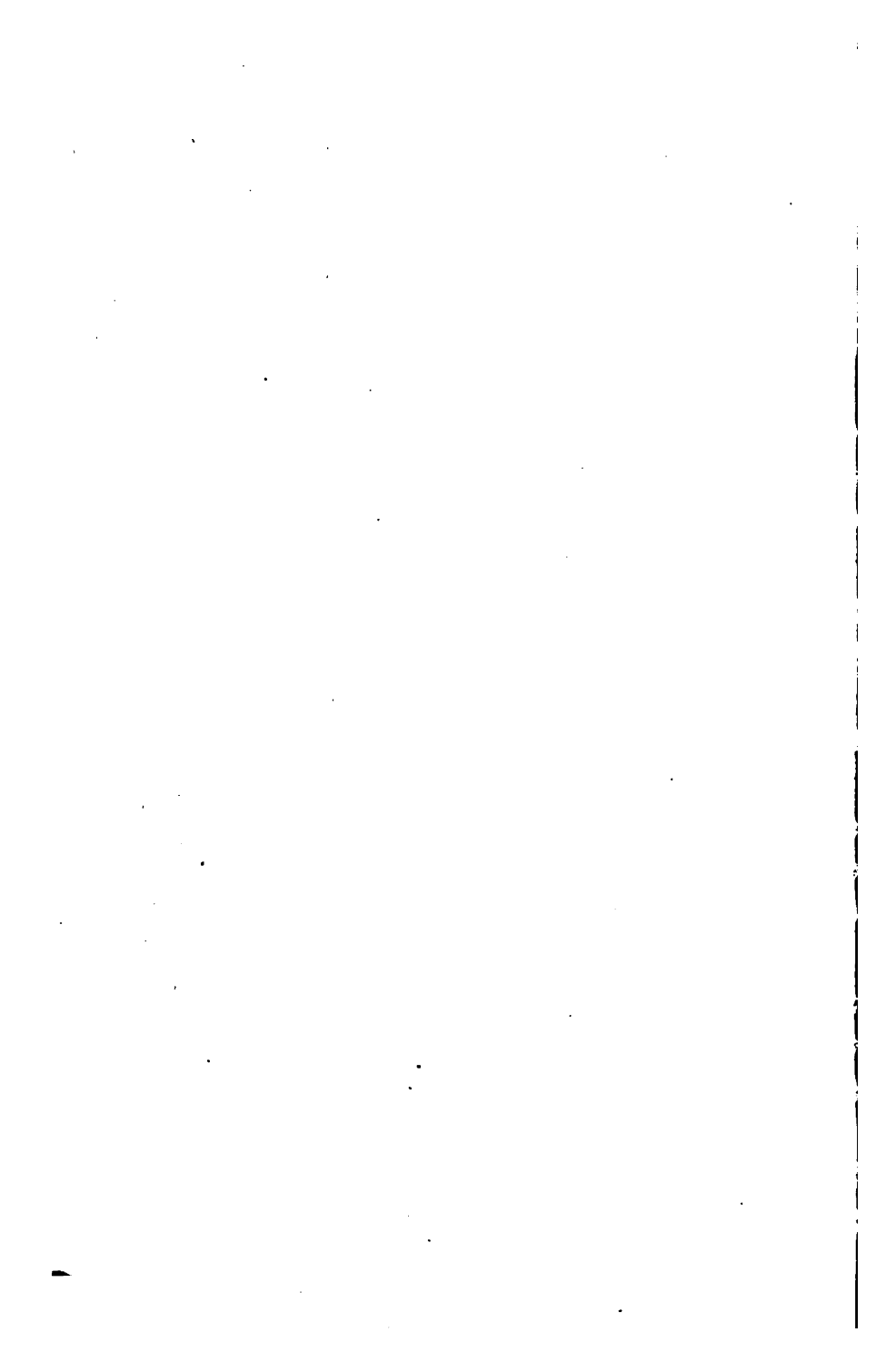
In the Essay on the Reform of the House of Lords, I have tried to show that this Institution is indeed not perfect, and might be rendered more efficient by some minor reforms, such as expelling the "black sheep," and raising the age for entering the House; but that the real reason for which Radicals wish to destroy

the present House and turn it into an imitation of the Continental Senates or First Chambers, is their hostility to the hereditary principle. Now this principle is most important for England,—the Crown having little power, and it being necessary to have in the Constitution some counterpoise to the House of Commons, which has become more and more democratic. Drastic reform would be unwise; because the House has done its work efficiently—while, on the other hand, those Continental Chambers have no real authority; moreover, a thorough-going reform, of which I have criticized the different plans, is advocated only on theoretic grounds.

April, 1889.

F. H. GEFFCKEN.



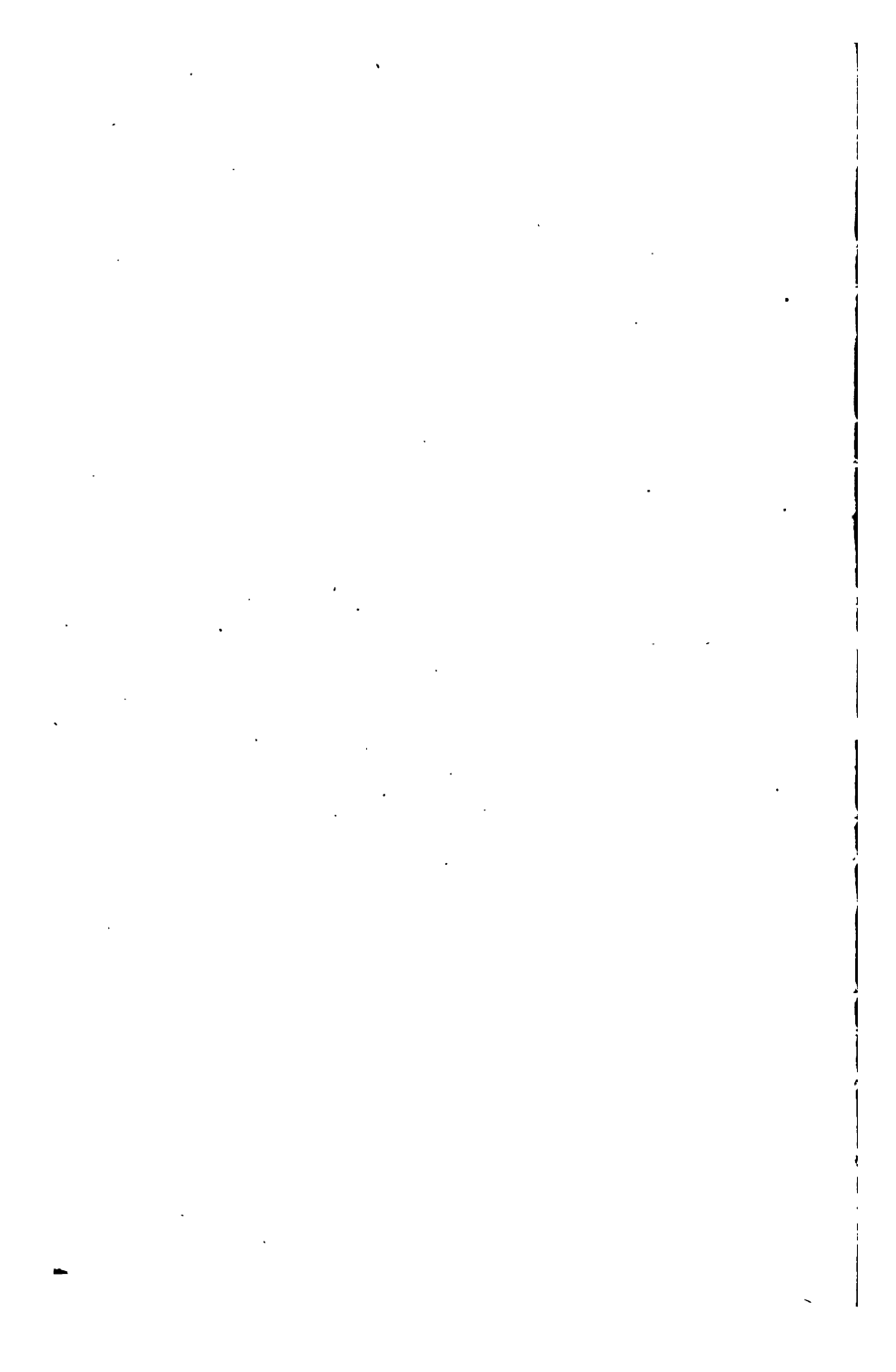




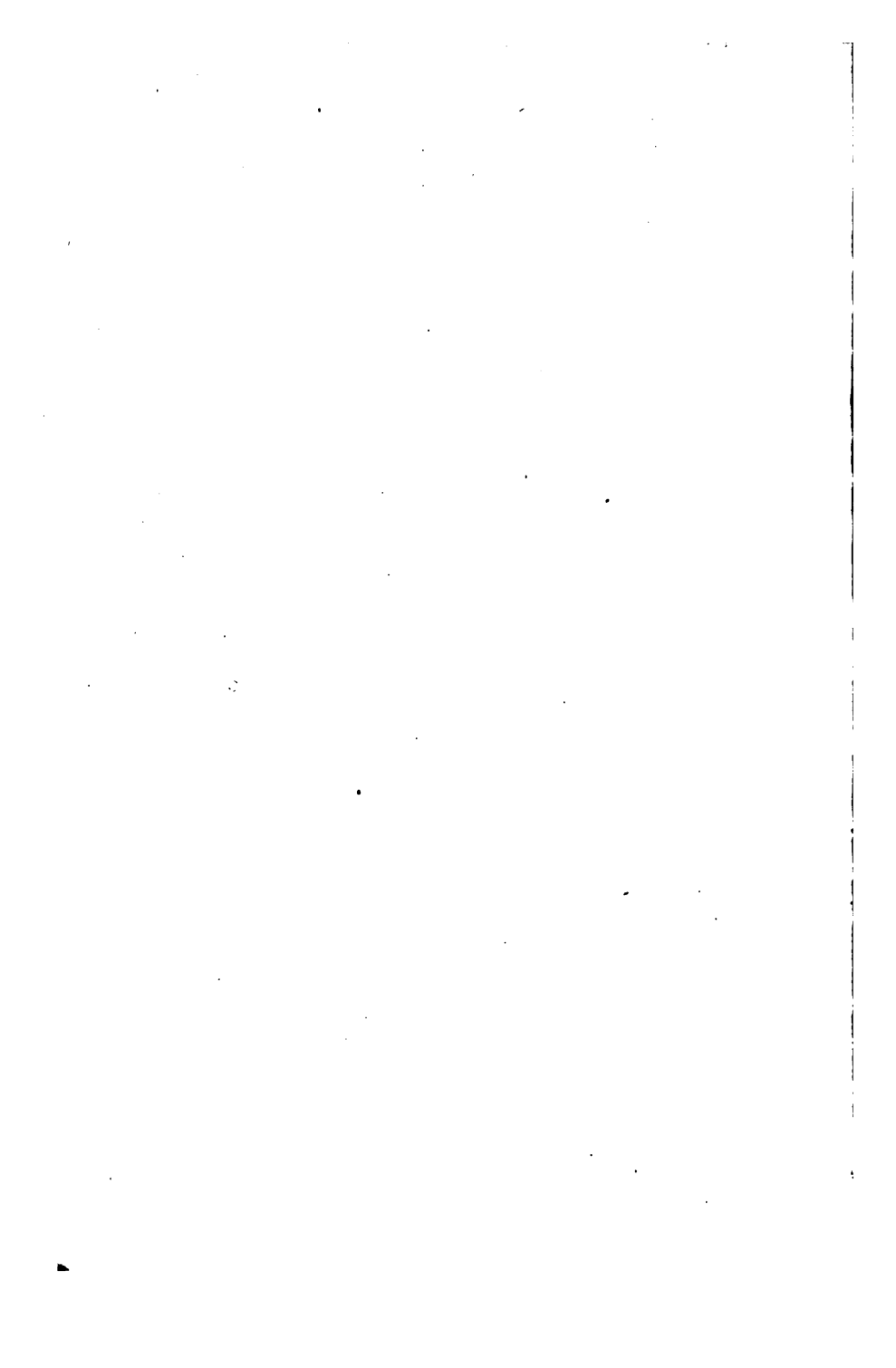
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THE BRITISH EMPIRE.





I.¹

THE first—the overpowering impression produced upon the visitor who wanders through the endless courts and halls of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, is an impression of the vast magnitude of the British Empire. It may be freely admitted that the super-scription over the entrance: “British Empire—area, 9,126,999 square miles; population, 305,337,929,” is not to be understood in literal exactness; for who has measured by the square mile the ice-deserts of the far north of America, or numbered the Kaffirs and other savage tribes? It must also be acknowledged that there are represented in the Exhibition certain territories that do not belong to England. Cyprus is not a British colony: it is merely administered for the Sultan, to whom the surplus revenue is paid. Nepaul is an independent state; and the dependence of Cashmere is confined to a yearly tribute—paid by its Prince to the Empress of India—of one horse, twelve she-goats, and six shawls. However, such considerations do not alter in the slightest degree the stupendous *fact* of the magnitude of this Empire, beside which the Empire of ancient Rome appears insignificant—a fact which accompanies us at every step we take in the Exhibition. Why, the Dominion of Canada alone exceeds in extent the entire continent of Europe! And how insignificant, by comparison, appear the foreign possessions of the other European States! Holland holds 688,000 square miles, with 26,841,600 inhabitants; France, 382,700 square miles,

¹ This paper was written *à propos* of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886.

with 8,723,000 inhabitants; Spain, 165,730 square miles, with 8,175,470 inhabitants. In fact, it is only when one explores the labyrinth of this Exhibition that one perceives clearly the truth that London, that gigantic city of near five million inhabitants, is simply not *possible* as the capital of the British Isles; but *is* possible only as the capital of an Empire embracing numberless states. The mother-country, indeed, comprises not more than one-sixty-sixth of the total area, and reckons somewhere about one-eighth of the total population. And this Empire is spread well-nigh over the entire globe,—insomuch, that a traveller who journeys from London to Yokohama, thence across the Pacific Ocean to Vancouver's Island, thence to Halifax, and so back to London, finds (with a few trifling breaks) the British flag along his whole course. In the first half of his journey he stops at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, India, Singapore, Hong-kong; in the second he passes by rail from Port Moody over the entire breadth of North America to Newfoundland; and from Newfoundland, Queens-town is reached by steamer in eight days. And yet there remain untouched the Cape, the African islands and coast settlements, all the Australian Colonies, the West Indies, Honduras, Guiana, and a whole series of less important points, from Borneo to Heligoland. The British Empire comprehends all zones, from the fur-hunting tracts of Hudson's Bay to the tropical jungles of India and the mahogany forests of Honduras: hardly a product of the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom can be named which is not supplied in rich abundance and of finest quality in one province or another of the Empire. If India and Canada are, so to speak, great granaries, Australia and the Cape command the wool-markets of the world; Canada exports cheese to the value of 1,600,000*l.* sterling; the West India Islands yield sugar in the greatest abundance; the tea of Ceylon is now

accounted the finest ; Indian cotton and jute, Australian and Canadian timber are everywhere objects of commerce. Victoria alone has during the last thirty years yielded gold to the value of 216,000,000*l.* sterling ; the Cape sends its diamonds, Ceylon its precious stones, the Bahamas their pearls. Coal, iron, copper and all the other metals are found in various colonies in inexhaustible abundance. Nor is it easy to name one object of human industry which has not its representative of highest quality in the British Empire—from Indian carpets, muslins, ivory carvings, to the nails of Canadian manufacture, of which a pyramid is exhibited containing many hundred kinds. In short, though a *zollverein* or commercial union, embracing the British Empire, is, from politico-financial considerations, an impossibility, yet, from an abstract politico-economical point of view, it could be realized ; for hardly a single product would be required from without, which is not also produced within its bounds.

Not less various are the stages in human progress comprised in the Empire—from the black aborigines of India, the wandering tribes of Canada, the more advanced Maoris of New Zealand, and the Kaffirs of South Africa, to the inhabitants of Toronto and of Sydney, who, in respect of culture, yield to no European. Alongside the Christians of all shades of belief stand 150,000,000 Hindus, 50,000,000 Mohammedans, the Buddhists of Ceylon, the heathen Kaffirs, and blacks of Australia, the fetish-worshippers of Western Africa. India and the Crown Colonies are under absolute government ; Canada and Australia enjoy democratic constitutions. These latter are virtually new Englands beyond the sea ; again, in India a mere handful of Europeans rule over 259,000,000 of natives. Quebec is a French-speaking province ; at the Cape the Dutch element prevails ; the Bible is printed in 130 languages and dialects, spoken in India and the Colonies.

Notwithstanding all these various and checkered elements, there reigns throughout the Empire—Peace. Whatever the nationality, religion, stage of progress, form of government—law and order are everywhere maintained. The Indian outbreak of 1857 was of a purely military character, and arose from causes which cannot operate in the future. The Cape, indeed, is an exception; but the condition of the Cape, on the whole, shows English capacity for the government of colonies, at its very worst.

This Empire, of such magnitude, and comprising all these elements—an Empire of which it can with truth be said (and it has been often said) that upon it the sun never sets—is so much the more remarkable, as it has been built up in a time comparatively short. During the period of the great discoveries, England did not, like Spain and Portugal, effect great conquests in distant lands. Holland stepped forward as their rival before her. In the time of Elizabeth, she possessed scarcely a foot's breadth beyond the sea. Milton, indeed, speaks of his country as "surrounded by all her daughter-states," but this was a prophetic vision, not a reality; for, the only foreign settlements of England in Cromwell's time were those of the Puritans (or "Pilgrim Fathers"), driven out of their country by Charles I., and Jamaica, which the Protector captured from the Spaniards. Harrington, in his *Oceana* foretold the greatness of England beyond the sea, on the ground that it was better adapted by position to be the foundress of such an Empire, than Venice, which lacked the advantage of insular situation; but he certainly never dreamt that in two hundred years whole continents would be inhabited by English-speaking citizens (50,000,000 in number), and that the Parliament at Westminster was destined to pass laws which would be operative in Africa, and in the Empire of the Great Mogul, where, at that time, Englishmen were hardly tolerated as traders.

In fact, it was only after the long civil wars that England was sufficiently united in herself to be able to turn to account the peculiar advantages which her geographical position and her population offered for entering upon a contest for dominion abroad, and prosecuting it to a successful issue.

The colonial system of those old days was based on the principle that foreign possessions existed purely in the interest, and for the gain of the mother-country. The colonies were to yield up to her those products which she herself did not possess, and to furnish an outlet and market for her industries; *her* ships exclusively were to be engaged in trading with the colony. Holland and England acted according to these principles quite as steadily as Spain and Portugal; the colonies were to confine themselves to the production of the raw material, which the mother-country either made use of herself, or disposed of to other countries at a great profit. Lord Chatham declared that not a nail should be made in America. Even sugar-refining was reserved to herself by England; and when Virginia begged permission to found an institution for the higher education, on the plea that her young people had immortal souls, the State-Governor answered, "*Damn* your souls; grow tobacco!"—And yet, a system which in itself is hard and narrow, may be carried out in a very different spirit. Spain sought in her vast empire beyond sea only dominion, gold, and places for her nobility; on commerce the Castilian looked with contempt, and it was confined to two regular Government convoys,—while intercourse with the Philippine Islands was restricted to one galleon-trip,—every year. "The maintenance of a great Empire," says Alexander von Humboldt, "was carried on like the provisioning of a blockaded fortress;" indeed, it was through foreigners that the Spanish Government often received the earliest intelligence of most important

events that had taken place in America. While in this way Spain was starving in the midst of her treasures, the colonial monopolies were becoming for Holland and England the basis of a mighty development. Those countries conferred on great commercial companies the exclusive privilege of trading to certain of their territories beyond the sea. These traders, who at first bore the official title of "Adventurers," were allowed a free hand, the mother-country reserving to herself only the right of stepping in when it was necessary to safeguard her interests by force of arms. Hundreds of enterprising young men went out from England every year to make their fortunes in the service of these companies and to return with great wealth, while the directors and shareholders in London drew their dividends. The riches which, during the eighteenth century, flowed into England through the Hudson's Bay, the East and West India Companies were—for those times and circumstances—enormous. The duty on colonial sugar alone was estimated at 1,200,000*l.* per annum; the tobacco-trade amounted to 24,000 tons, and all products of the colonies were paid for with English goods.

Yet another element in the colonial development of England was peculiar. The Philips of Spain, in their inflexible orthodoxy, would have regarded it as a crime to tolerate even one heretic within the bounds of their colonial dominions. The Inquisition carried on its work in Mexico and Peru, as it did in Madrid and Seville. The plan of Coligny to found a Huguenot community on the other side of the ocean came to nothing. In England, the Government, which at home oppressed alternately Dissenters and Catholics, gave them at least leave to emigrate. Nay, there was accorded to them in the charters of the American plantations, that religious liberty which was denied to them at home. Now these emigrants who left their country, not on account of over-population, but on

compulsion—to escape, in fact, political and religious oppression—had not, like Cortez and Pizarro, troops at their disposal to make conquests ; their object was to seek lands in a temperate climate, which would afford them space for settlements, and in which they could live by the labour of their hands. These they found in sparsely-populated North America, which soon became the most important colony of England, and of which, when the greater part was lost, Canada still remained. Thus there grew up a second England beyond the ocean, which, in our own time, has been doubled through the addition of Australia, and has remained united to the mother-country by community of race, language, and civilization.

But apart from these considerations, there lay in the old system of colonial policy the necessity of its extension. When the mother-country was on the lookout for territories which it could turn to its advantage, it naturally tried to gain possession of those colonies which were best fitted for its purpose, and, when these belonged to other Powers,—seized them by force. Thus it came to pass that England, as soon as she began to gain a foothold beyond sea, got into war with Holland, which, on her part, had conquered the most valuable Asiatic possessions of Portugal ; Holland was vanquished ; then began the great contest with Spain and France for the dominion of the New World, which, with one break, lasted near a hundred years. France, when the greatness of Spain began to dwindle, had, under the intelligent leadership of Colbert, become one of the colonial powers, and at first seemed likely to beat England in the race. If the latter possessed the northern shore of what are now the United States, France dominated the great river-basins of the St. Lawrence, the Ohio, and the Mississippi. If the English emigrants went forth in order to escape the oppression exercised by the home Government, France (which as yet knew not the compulsory division of the

inheritance introduced by the Code Napoleon, and the practice of limiting the family) had, in prolific Normandy and Brittany, a superfluity of population which colonized Canada and Louisiana. Her colony of St. Domingo was in 1789 the greatest sugar-producing country in the world, exporting in that year sugar to the value of 193,000,000 francs; whilst her entire colonial trade amounted to 300,000,000 francs, and employed 30,000 sailors. Even in India, France took the lead. It was Dupleix, a man of great ability, who first conceived the idea of rendering a native army led by Europeans an instrument of conquest. In 1741 he put his idea into practice, and after a few years was the ruler of thirty-five millions. Labourdonnais captured Madras from the English; Bussy conquered the territory of the Mah-rattas, measuring 17,000 square miles. If these bold pioneers succumbed to the young adventurer Clive, if France lost in succession her possessions in North America, the cause is to be sought—on the one hand, in the wretched Government of Louis XV. (while the Government of England united in the highest possible degree the elements of stability and freedom, and under the guidance of Chatham's genius pursued only grand, national objects and interests)—on the other, in England's insular position, through which, herself unassailable, she was able to turn all Continental complications to her advantage in the increase of her colonial power. With the Peace concluded at Paris in 1763, the preponderance of England was permanently established.

The next period brought, it is true, a terrible reverse in the loss of the greater part of North America; but the three-and-twenty years' struggle against the French Revolution and the French Empire more than compensated that loss. England frustrated the designs of Napoleon against her Indian Empire,

and established her exclusive dominion in the peninsula of the Ganges; she annihilated the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar, and by that exploit became mistress of the ocean; she took from Holland Ceylon and the Cape, from France Mauritius and several of the Antilles, and won in Malta a stronghold in the Mediterranean, which brought to an end the project of making that sea a "French lake." At the close of the great struggle, England stood forth as the all but sole naval and colonial power; France retained only miserable remnants of what was once her empire beyond the sea; Holland was confined to Java and Guiana; and Spain soon lost her ascendancy in South and Central America through the rebellion of her colonies in those quarters,—a rebellion which proved most advantageous to English commerce.

Now it is manifest that, with the development of commerce and navigation, which has taken place in the nineteenth century,—with, moreover, the rise of the United States into the position of a Great Power, the old "colonial system" could not be any longer maintained. The colonies, with their increasing population and their rising industries, would not have put up with it. Besides, emigration now began to play an important rôle: in 1815, 2000 persons emigrated, but in 1819 the figures rose to 35,000, and the flow of emigration directed itself specially to the United States. The New World, which had been chiefly a place of trading resort for the Old, now became the refuge of those who were crowded out at home. If the emigrants found themselves, in the United States, in full possession of all political rights, and of the amplest social liberty, the claim to rule Canada and Australia from London, and in the interest of the mother-country, became simply untenable. But the old English system had in it the capacity for reform; the Spanish, on the other hand, fell to pieces the moment

one stone was removed from the artificial structure. Thus, in the case of England, the old fetters fell off,—the monopolies of the companies, the corn laws, and the navigation acts were abolished; the colonies with a European population were granted free constitutions, which secured to them the most complete self-government. On the other hand, English ascendancy advanced in India by leaps and bounds, and gained a footing even in China. In the new state of things, commerce developed in a most extraordinary manner. Between 1815 and 1843 the value of English exports rose 63 per cent.; the tonnage of the commercial marine, 55 per cent. The import of tea, which in the last year of the monopoly of the East India Company (1833-34) amounted to only 29½ million pounds, reached in 1853, 70½, and in 1879, 145 million pounds. But the most startling progress was shown by Canada and the Australian Colonies, which had never experienced the worst evil of the old system—namely, slavery. On all sides enterprising communities sprang up, with populous cities, railways, steamboats, great commercial activity, a comprehensive system of education, and independent legislatures. When white men first came to Victoria in 1834, they found only encampments of a people who hunted the kangaroo and opossum with boomerangs, and crossed the rivers in canoes made from the hollowed trunks of trees. *Now*, Melbourne, which was at that time founded with a few wooden shanties, numbers its 325,000 inhabitants, and possesses splendid churches, theatres, picture-galleries, wharves, aqueducts, parks, and a university. The oldest colony in the Australian continent, New South Wales, with 36,598 inhabitants in 1828, numbered, in 1886, 992,875; Victoria (founded in 1834), almost 1,000,000. In 1792 New South Wales, at that time the only Australian colony, possessed 23 head of cattle, 11 horses, 105 sheep, 43 swine. In 1881, the Australian colonies together

possessed 9,000,000 head of cattle, 80,000,000 sheep, 1,500,000 swine; their total trade amounted to 40*l.* per head of the population, while that of Great Britain amounted to a little over 20*l.* The population of Canada advanced between 1871 and 1881 from 3,687,024 to 4,324,810, or 17·3 per cent. Behind this increase stands an abundance of natural resources which must for long remain practically inexhaustible. Of the two million square miles of agricultural and forest land in Canada, only about 70,000 are under cultivation, and of these only the half is actual corn-land, pasture, and garden; so that more than 1,800,000 square miles are still virgin soil, and of these, one million, or more than eight times the area of the British Isles, is regarded as capable of producing wheat. In a space of 8,822,000 square kilometres in the Dominion of Canada, there are only 0·5 inhabitants to the kilometre, against 87 in British India. In New South Wales 852,000 acres are under cultivation, and 28,000,000 stand ready for occupation; while the working of the collieries has scarcely begun. Surely these young daughter-communities have before them a magnificent future. Macaulay's New Zealander, sitting upon an arch of London Bridge, and sketching the ruins of St. Paul's, may be a figure of the coming time in regard to which the imagination has had too free play; but it is indisputable that the Colonies form that portion of the Empire as a whole, which is advancing the most rapidly. Their population of European descent, amounted in 1837 to 4,204,700; in 1886, to 15,763,172. There is therefore no reason to doubt that Canada, Victoria, and New Zealand will one day play each as important a part as France or Italy; they will be increasing more and more, when the mother-country, through the exhaustion of her coal-fields, is declining—as she must decline—in importance. In each of these states

England will live again in renewed youth and vigour.

It is this Empire in all its parts, and with all its products, which the Exhibition at South Kensington brings before us—and that with a completeness and system which cannot be sufficiently commended. For not only are the objects from each colony and province exhibited in due order according to class, but at every turn we find excellent maps, drawings, photographs, paintings, which throw light on the country, its geology, meteorology, &c.; complete tables of statistics; models of natives (life-size),—of buildings, from the Indian temple to the Malay hut, with reproductions of carvings; agricultural and manufacturing appliances—from the two stones between which the Indian women grind the corn, to the mowing and threshing machines of Canada; the mill, for crushing the auriferous quartz, of Australia; and the diamond-polishing machine of the Cape, which enables us to follow the processes whereby the rough stone is got out, prepared, and set. The animal world is represented in splendid groups of stuffed specimens. In the Australian Courts we find modelled groups illustrating the life of the natives; in the Indian, models of a village and a bazaar. We see the way the fields are irrigated, the method of ploughing and sowing, reaping and threshing—with absolutely primitive wooden instruments. In different booths sit the sellers of corn, vegetables, fruits, sweetmeats.

In the same manner, the political and religious life of these dependent races is brought home to our minds by a series of excellent models. We find the huts of the aborigines of Australia, of India, of Central America; Mohammedan mosques,—Hindoo, and Buddhist temples; the houses of simple artisans, as well as of rich merchants; splendid palaces of Indian princes with spacious courts and galleries. Over the entrance of the Exhibition we see represented a

concert in the vestibule of one of these potentates, —himself brought before our view in all the grandeur and glory of a *Durbar*. All the leading types of soldiers, priests, postmen—officials of all kinds, are shown in accurate copies; all weapons, tools, ornaments of the house, are here represented. The forests are brought under our view in single gigantic blocks of timber and trunks of trees, as also in complete collections of sections of the various kinds of wood. Besides these, hot-houses, specially laid out, present to us the whole vegetation of certain colonies—palm trees, ferns, orchids. Corn and wool, fruits and cotton, indigo, opium, sugar-cane, all kinds of sugar, tea, coffee, spice, pit-coal and ores, are everywhere arranged in complete collections of specimens, and in a manner which enables one to take in the whole at a glance.

Let us, then, proceed to study the Colonies and Dependencies in their leading features.

II.

WHEN we pass from the main entrance through the general hall, the south gallery comes into view. This contains in three sections or departments, the Indian Exhibition, and presents such a picture of the enormous Empire ruled over by the Queen in her character of *Kaisar-i-Hind*, as, in its wonderful variety, has never been seen before. This *coup-d'œil* corresponds with the present significance and importance of India in relation to England; for the nature of British rule in India is such that the relations subsisting between England and her great dependency are, in certain respects, much closer than those between the mother-country and the Colonies which govern themselves. The number of Englishmen in India does not amount to quite 200,000; yet they form the ruling element in a population which is exceeded by that of China alone,

and is more than twice as large as the population which Gibbon assigned to the Roman Empire at the period of its greatest prosperity. In this land of castes, the English are the ruling caste, which, through its superior intelligence and organization, enjoys such absolute respect that everywhere a willing obedience is rendered to it. Over and above the army, England appoints all the higher officials in India. She has around nearly all the money for the Indian debt of £31,000,000*l.*, the entire capital for the 12,376 miles of railway and the 25,307 miles of telegraph. The sum in salaries, pensions, rents, and dividends, which England draws from India, amounts certainly to more than 20,000,000*l.* sterling per annum. The "India Council Bills," through which this debt is chiefly paid, amounted in five years to 100,000,000*l.* Nowhere in history do we find an example of a state which on the map of the world occupies so small a space, ruling, at a distance so great, an empire so large. This empire, distant thousands of miles from the ruling country, numbers 259 millions of people, and presents as many diversities in race and religion as do the nations of the entire continent of Europe. Ethnographically considered "India" is only a geographical expression, to denote all the tribes who occupy the peninsula as far as the chains of lofty mountains on the west and north; politically, it denotes the rule of England over that ocean of human beings—a rule which forms the sole general bond that unites them all. Rome drew auxiliary troops from conquered territories,—but her dominion over the ancient world depended, after all, upon her own legions; on the other hand, the English troops do not form half the total strength of the Indian army. We may find a single resident official, living thousands of miles from Calcutta, ruling with absolute authority over a district containing more than 2,000,000 persons, of whom not one ventures to oppose him.

And this population consists, for the greater part, not of rude savages; on the contrary, it possesses a highly developed civilization—a civilization far more ancient than any of which Europe can boast. The Vedas were completed long before Greece gave to the world the poems of Homer. Indian laws were committed to writing long before Lycurgus and Solon were born. The Dravidian temples, in grandeur of design, are nowise inferior to those of Egypt, and excel them in artistic finish. Indian textile fabrics, and works in metal, were considered, even in the ancient world, as unapproached models of art-industry; and this industry stands in our time so high that we have much to learn from it.—Yet the rule of England is cheerfully borne by these 259 millions of people; and the secret of this lies absolutely (as I have before observed) in superior organization. At a very remote period the peninsula split up into a number of states, the population of which was for the greater part unwarlike, so that their wealth offered special attractions to foreign conquerors. Hence, Indian history presents a series of invasions, from the days of the irruption of the Aryan races who subjugated the aboriginal population, to those of the Empire of the Great Mogul, of Nadir, and of Ahmet Shah. As the last of this series, England appears; but after she established her dominion by military force, she completed and carried it on by a method of administration of which the earlier conquerors had no idea; and which, as compared with theirs, offers a very different and a much more solid guarantee of permanence. The acts of Clive and Warren Hastings are not to be palliated; but from the beginning of the present century the English Government of India has been so good that India has never before known the like of it. It secures order, is tender towards the religious prejudices attaching to all creeds, and yet has, with great address, done away with the worst

excesses of superstition, such as the *suttee*, or burning of widows, suicide as a sacrifice, &c. With perfect truth, therefore, did the pundits of Bengal, in a congratulatory address to the Queen on the occasion of her Jubilee, use language to the following purport:—“Never during the reign of your Majesty has the performance of a single one of our prescribed religious ceremonies been curtailed in any particular; on the contrary, various measures have been adopted by your Government in order to avert the dangers threatening us in our pilgrimages; and, in respect of our worship, the restoration of ancient shrines has been of signal service to us—temples, as well as mosques, have been erected.” The Government does not confine itself, like the Dutch Government in Java, to material improvement, to the construction of railways, &c.—(though through the agency of these, the famines of old times have disappeared, the export of corn has been made possible, and that of costly wares facilitated); but it has done great things for education, by the erection of schools and industrial institutions. Many of the finest specimens of art-industry in the Exhibition have been wrought by the pupils of these institutions. And not only are these educational establishments attended by the natives, but Indians of the higher castes repair to England in ever-increasing numbers for the purpose of studying there. Rajahs, in their gold-embroidered silk and cashmere robes, are frequent guests in social gatherings in London. At a garden-party of the Princess Louise, I once met whole families of Indians; nay, I have seen an Indian gentleman, with his daughter on his arm, pass, in deep thought, through one of the Gothic porches of Westminster Abbey.

The Exhibition which presents this Indian Empire to us, comprises, besides the above-mentioned court (containing native workers and an Indian palace, showing, in its original size, the residence of a native

prince) three sections: the first, or "economical," presents the products of nature, the animal world, the inhabitants and their modes of life; the second contains, in two galleries, the products of art and manufacture; the third, or "administrative," shows us how India is governed. The most attractive to the eye is the exhibition of those Indian art-industries, which, as I have already said, passed in ancient times as models of unapproached excellence, and in our own time are of such merit that we have more to learn from the workers than we can teach them. Yet we must never lose sight of the fact that India is, first and foremost, an agricultural country. Ninety per cent. of the rural population live by agricultural labour; and it would require a volume to describe in outline the great variety of agricultural products raised in the various provinces. In these there are altogether more than 189,000,000 acres under cultivation, yielding, among other produce, one million tons of wheat and one million and a half tons of rice yearly. The entrance to the first gallery is formed by the "forest trophy," a massive structure with two doors,—fifteen feet high, forty-six feet wide, and containing 3000 specimens of Indian timber—from teak, of iron-like hardness, to the fragrant sandal-wood. Here we find enormous blocks of wood, which show the girth attained by certain trees. Farther on, a massive bridge is erected—made out of thirty different kinds of bamboo, which plays so important a part in the economy of the tribes of southern Asia, and from which are formed the most elegant little baskets, as well as the loftiest scaffolding. The nut-family has numerous representatives,—among them, and of the highest importance, the cocoa-nut and the *singa*—on which the poorer classes live for months together; the well-known revalenta, a species of lentil, is said to cover 48,000,000 acres. The chief food of a great part of the peninsula is rice, with which nearly 60,000,000 acres are sown. Wheat, on

the other hand, which now forms so important an export, appears with only 27,000,000 to 28,000,000 acres; in 1885-6 the ground under wheat fell off 585,675 acres,—for, in spite of the working of the silver standard, the farmers no longer made money: of the 8,000,000 tons reaped, 7,000,000 are used for home consumption. No attention was paid to cotton-growing till the American supply of cotton was intercepted or failed altogether during the Civil War; cotton now occupies 14,000,000 acres, with a return valued at over 13,000,000*l.* After cotton, jute is the most important fibre-product; it is exported, raw and in the manufactured state, to the value of 6,241,568*l.* Altogether, India numbers 300 kinds of fibrous products, of which about a third is worked up into one material or another. The yield from oil-seeds represents a yearly value of close upon 11,000,000*l.* The manufacture of indigo (which, with spices, was the first Indian product imported by Europeans) keeps 197 factories going in Bengal. The Government draws nearly 9,000,000*l.* from the pernicious opium monopoly, of which 8,000,000*l.* is derived from the export trade. A comparatively new plant in India is tea, which in 1830 was cultivated in Assam, where it grew wild. In 1838 the first consignment—twelve chests—arrived in England; in 1884 the amount was 60,000,000 pounds. Among the resins, or products of exudation, are to be mentioned caoutchouc (india-rubber), gutta-percha, and camphor; at the head of the hundred and odd medicinal drugs stands Peruvian bark. The remarkable and valuable lacquer which plays so important a part in objects of Asiatic art-industry is a hardened resin, which exudes from the branches of certain trees when punctured by an insect: dissolved in spirit, it is used as varnish; mixed with sulphur, as sealing-wax, and also as a polish for articles of wooden manufacture.

Indian art-industry we find represented in two long

galleries, divided into a series of courts formed by partition-walls of wrought stone, and richly carved or varnished wood. These present to us in the clearest manner—in copies executed by native workers—the highly developed decorative art of the Indians, who, from the earliest times, have devoted themselves to the beautifying of their temples and dwelling-houses, with carvings in wood and stone. (Even in our own day, all opulent persons expend part of their superfluous wealth on acquiring specimens of art-work as a luxury.) The originals of these partition-walls are to be found in temples and palaces, and are here presented to us in elegant models in gypsum, wood, brass, and ivory. They exhibit in material, style, and workmanship, the richest variety; in some places the material is carved sandstone or inlaid marble; in others, teak, ebony, cedar, birch, or bamboo. Here we find the wall of a mosque ornamented in the Saracen style; there the wall of a Hindoo or Buddhist temple. Though carving preponderates, there are walls quite covered with variegated mosaic of lac-varnish and glass, or papier-maché. The courts themselves and their contents are arranged in geographical order,—not according to subjects, since the buildings, as well as the art-work of one district, may be totally different from those of another; and many articles are wrought by only one or two families in a whole territory. The smallness of intercourse in earlier times among the different peoples of this vast country,—the fact that, in consequence of the caste system, each handicraft passes down from father to son, and that many branches of art were introduced by particular princes, explains this separation among many who are, nevertheless, closely related. Thus we perceive very decidedly in the exhibits of the Punjab, the influence of Persia; in the territories which were subject to the Great Mogul we find traces of the European Renaissance,—

that dynasty (as Lord Lytton once told me) having brought over Italian artists. In other cases, the decay of art is explained by the fact that the courts of opulent princes, which in former days gave excellent employment to art-workers, in process of time disappeared.

Of Indian art-work as a whole, in so far as it is concerned with *outline*, one may say that it is absolutely noble in form and motive, when it keeps to the inexhaustible world of geometrical figures and arabesques; but that it sinks into the stiff, grotesque, ridiculous, the moment it seeks to represent the forms of men or animals. All its representations of gods are dreadful abortions; only the figures in papier-maché—of life-size and true to nature, which represent the various types of the Indian population, and the chief military weapons—form an exception; and these, as might be surmised, have been executed under the direction of Europeans.

In gold and silver work, prominent positions are taken by the Punjab, Mysore, Dacca in Bengal, Rangoon, Gujerat and Kutch in the Bombay Presidency, the last-named especially in heavy embossed vessels. All Indian wrought-metal work bears a religious-symbolical character; the ornament is added not merely as ornament—it is held to be a protection against this or that evil. The Mohammedans wear no talisman; on the other hand, they keep in medallions a small compass which indicates the direction of Mecca, and use by preference silver, which in heathen times was sacred to the moon-god, as gold was to Baal; and in connection with this tradition, silver (which in Arabia, in former times, was the rarer metal) became the standard money of the East. Ornaments, too, serve the purpose of a savings' bank, since they can be easily turned into money. Travancore and Kuttack distinguish themselves in their exhibits of filagree work, which was probably introduced into

the West by the Phœnicians and Arabians, and into the North by the Normans; we find it in Arabia and Malta, as also in Etruria and Scandinavia. The best specimens are the work of boys, whose sharp eyes and sensitive fingers can join the fine silver threads with the requisite accuracy and speed. The enamel work here is of great beauty—especially the so-called “green” enamel, which is produced by first etching the pattern on a plate of glass; this plate is then powdered over with fine gold-dust, which is made to adhere by exposure to strong heat; then a thin plate of silver is placed on the other side of the glass, which gives to the whole a peculiar brilliancy and depth of colour.

Hyderabad maintains its high reputation for weapons ornamented in the damascene style. Shields of steel and inlaid rhinoceros-hide with gold studs, daggers of superb workmanship, are exhibited by Jeypore; coats of chain-mail, breast-plates in gold Damascus work, which recall the Italian Sgraffiti, by the Punjab.

The general use of vessels of brass, copper, and other metals, for religious and household purposes, spreads abroad the production of these articles, the most important of which are works in perforated brass and vessels in embossed copper. Quite peculiar to India is Bidri-ware (so called from the town of Bidra, where it was first made). The material is a mixture of copper and tin, on which the design is inlaid in gold, silver, or brass; the ground is light and the pattern is executed in black, or else the ground is dark, and the pattern in silver or bright yellow.

The Indian art-works in lacquer differ entirely from those of China and Japan, for while the latter present us with designs in gold upon a uniformly black or red ground, the Indian show only arabesques worked in bright colours upon (for the greater part) a brilliant red or blue ground. The articles in wood or bamboo are turned on a wheel, and one or more

coats of weak lacquer are laid on; the design is then scratched in or laid on, as the case may be. In Hyderabad some specially fine examples are wrought; these are produced by laying on, a mixture of lime made from mussel-shells and a particular sort of gum, and then richly gilding the whole. The ivory carvings are full of artistic merit, but are inferior in delicacy to those of China; on the other hand, the inlaid work in ivory, ebony, and sandal-wood, silver, and minute stones from which the finest mosaic is formed, are unsurpassed, as are also articles of furniture and picture-frames carved in ebony.

Cotton-weaving holds its own for articles of household use, in spite of the enormous import of machine-made goods from Manchester, which, in this respect, has a rival in Bombay. The calicoes are of one colour, striped, or printed on a white or coloured ground—the latter usually by hand. The worker has a stamp, something like what our bookbinders use for gilding; with this he draws the pattern along on the web with never-failing regularity. We find imitations of Persian goods in the chintzes powdered with gold-dust; these have previously been moistened with glue-water. The fine muslins are unrivalled in excellence; and yet they are hardly produced any longer in their former unapproachable perfection. In former times there were webs of such gossamer-like texture, that a piece, fifteen yards long and one wide, weighed only 300 grammes; now the finest of equal size has a weight of 1600 grammes. The older sorts bore names recalling the phraseology of Eastern poetry (“running water,” “evening dew,” “woven air”), and indicating the delicacy of the tissue. The best qualities now produced, called “Royal muslins,” are woven only in the cool of the morning or evening, when the fingers of the weavers do not become moist through the heat. In the embroidered kinds, gold and silver threads, for the most part, and the glittering wings of beetles are

used. They often display, also, embroidered verses from the Vedas or the Koran. The workers are little girls, whose delicate fingers are best suited for such work. Silk-weaving was from an early period a flourishing industry, and is so still. Here again we find those rich textures bearing names that lead us to expect much: "silver ripples," "doves' eyes," "nightingales' eyes," "peacock's neck," &c. Fabrics composed of cotton and silk are made specially for the Mohammedans, who are forbidden to wear clothing composed exclusively of silk. Specially beautiful are the silk fabrics stitched with gold, called *kinkhabs*; they go excellently with the dark olive colour of high-caste Indian women (who are frequently to be seen in good society in London), and wave like flowing gold round their lithe figures. Embroidery is very common: even the peasant women embroider their chemises (which are often their only garment, as is also the case in Roumania) with cotton or silk of various colours; costly garments for wedding couples and for female dancers are embroidered with gold and silver thread. But richest of all are the fabrics in velvet or cloth for state ceremonials, elephant trappings, palanquins and thrones; the gold and silver lace displays an extraordinary delicacy, as may be inferred from the fact that from one rupee of silver, near 800 yards of thread can be drawn.

The Indian shawls are well known for the delicacy of their texture as well as for the brilliancy of their patterns; French imitations, however, have driven them out of many European markets. The same is true of the carpets, in which, to the serious detriment of the industry, the old harmony of colour has, to a great extent, been abandoned, and that especially through the action of the Government, in making carpet-weaving a prison labour, and introducing the brilliant but not durable aniline dyes. The art schools of Bombay, Lahore and Madras have of late been

exerting themselves to restore the pure old Oriental patterns. The original Indian carpets are of cotton, striped blue or chocolate on various grounds; they are manufactured principally in Bengal and Northern India. The woollen varieties were introduced by the Mohammedan conquerors, and the chief manufactories of these are in the great Mussulman centres.

The third or "administrative" court, is intended to give an idea of the government of India; but nothing of the kind, of course, could explain the particular methods by which the administration is carried on. The following are the rough outlines of this remarkable organization.

England has permitted the government of a number of native princes to continue; though these rule their states under the direction of a Resident appointed by the Viceroy. Such states comprise one-third of the Indian Empire, and 55,000,000 of its inhabitants. The rights exercised by the princes vary in different states, and are settled by treaty; but they are not permitted to make war on one another, or form alliances with foreign powers; moreover, England steps in if any of them oppress their subjects. As they know that this is the case, and that on the other hand, their charter rights will be respected, they now give little trouble. The sole drawback is the excessive number of soldiers maintained by them; these necessitate the employment of English troops to act as a watch upon them, and hamper the movements of a portion of those troops. The remaining territory, comprising two-thirds of the Empire and four-fifths of the population (or 200,000,000), has been ruled, since the abolition of the East India Company, in the following manner. At the head of the Government, stands—in England, the Secretary of State for India, with a council, the members of which are appointed for ten years; in India, the Viceroy, who has his residence at Calcutta, and, like the Governors of Bombay and

Madras, is appointed by the Queen for five years. He, too, has a Council to assist him, of which he is independent only in certain relations and exigencies. The executive department of the Council is formed by six of its members, who act as a ministry. For purposes of legislation there are added to the Council, the Governors of the ten Provinces (exclusive of Bombay and Madras) who are appointed by the Viceroy,—with representatives from Bombay and Madras, and a number of European and native members formally summoned. To each provincial Governor is assigned a Council constituted in like manner. Under these there are about 240 Districts, or units of administration, with responsible officials at the head of each; these with their subordinates carry on the entire administrative government, and act, moreover, as judges.—The density of population reaches its highest point in the part of the country immediately subject to England—that is to say, 243 persons to the English square mile, while in France it amounts to 180, and in England to not quite 200. Hence many districts are afflicted with over-population,—a result to a large extent due to the dogged tenacity with which the Indian clings to his rural or industrial pursuits; it is only in quite recent times that attempts have been made to check this evil, through migration to more thinly inhabited parts, such as Assam and Burmah. The census of 1881 shows an all-round increase of 12,750,000, or 6½ per cent. in ten years. This increase is, however, distributed very unequally.—According to race, the population divides itself into:—(1) dark aborigines, 18,000,000; (2) descendants of the Aryan conquerors, Brahmins and Rajpoots, 16,000,000; (3) Hindoos, a mixture of these two last, 116,000,000; (4) Mohammedans (chiefly of Arabic and Persian descent), 41,000,000. A like division obtains in the territories of the native princes. In respect of religion, the vast majority—187,000,000—belong to Brahminism. Buddhism,

which prevails over such vast tracts of Asia, has never been able to take firm root in India, and numbers there only about 3,500,000 adherents. There are, over and above these, 6,500,000 aborigines.—As regards revenue, the land-tax produces the largest amount—22,000,000*l.*; then follows the excise duty on opium, which is paid almost exclusively by the foreign consumer, for opium is smoked only in the Punjab, Assam, and Burma. The salt-tax yields 6,000,000*l.*; stamp duty, 3,500,000*l.*; other items under the head of excise, 3,830,000*l.*; customs, 1,180,000*l.*; forests, 1,050,000*l.*: total revenue, 71,727,000*l.* The expenditure amounted in 1883-4 to 79,340,000*l.* Enormous sums have of late been devoted to public works. In 1873, 95,500,000*l.* sterling had been already expended on railway construction by private companies under government guarantee, and 19,000,000*l.* on state railways; 19,000,000*l.* had been laid out on irrigation.

The government must, from its very nature, be an autocracy; but it is an autocracy intelligent and benevolent, which, by means of appellate jurisdiction, sets limits to the caprice of governors, and which (as I have before observed), allows the authority of a number of native princes still to continue, these governing their States under the guidance of British Residents. On this subject,¹ Hübner says:—

“India is governed by a bureaucracy, but this bureaucracy is very different from ours. I have by intimate intercourse become acquainted with officials of all ranks; everywhere I have found men who devoted themselves absolutely to their duties, working from morning to night, and who yet,—notwithstanding their multifarious activity, found leisure for literature and grave studies. In Europe, officials are the slaves of routine; their days pass one as like another as possible; it requires great revolutions or European wars to break the comfortable monotony of their lives. Not so here.

¹ “A travers l’Empire Britannique,” vol. ii. p. 174.

The variety of the duties the Anglo-Indian official has to perform serves to enlarge and cultivate his mind; while the dangers which he may at any moment have to face, harden and strengthen his character. He acquires wonderful breadth of view, and learns to work quietly in his office, while the ground may be trembling beneath his feet. I believe I do not go too far when I affirm that there is not in the whole world a bureaucracy better-informed, more capable, possessed of higher statesmanlike qualities and—(nobody will question this) more distinguished for probity—than that which administers the government of the Ganges-peninsula.”

India has three ² Universities—one in Calcutta, one in Madras, and one in Bombay. In these, however, there is no teaching; they are examining bodies—in Jurisprudence, Medicine, Arts and Engineering; they thus virtually prescribe the whole higher education carried on in the colleges. These latter, eighty-two in number, are divided according to the subjects taught in them, and number close upon 9000 students. For entrance to these colleges, boys are prepared at higher schools, of which there is one in each district, and in which the instruction is given in English. In the primary schools, the vernacular is used; in the secondary schools,—those in the smaller cities and larger villages,—one or the other language is employed, according to circumstances. Much has been done, especially in quite recent times, for the primary or lower-class schools, which, however, on account of the differences of race and religion, cannot be reduced to a uniform standard. In Burma, for example, they are still, to all intents and purposes, in the hands of Buddhist monks; in many localities, in those of Christian missionaries; while the Moham-medans have special schools for themselves. The Government exercises a supervision over all private schools, aids them by grants, and, where schools do

² There are now five;—the Punjáb University (Lahore) was incorporated in 1882, and the University of Allahabad in 1887. —T.R.

not exist, erects them itself. The girls' schools are, in consequence of native prejudices, still very far behind; in the North-West Provinces, with their 50,000,000 inhabitants, ten schools number only 6550 pupils; in Bengal, with 30,000,000, scarcely 12,000; things are better in Madras, Bombay, and the Punjab, where boys and girls have been with success taught together in one and the same school; here there is a total of 112,237 schools and 2,750,161 scholars. Christian missions have done much for India. Whereas, at the beginning of the present century, the Directors of the East India Company regarded the attempt to convert the Hindoos as absolutely hopeless, a recent official report of the Indian Government contains the following:—"The gain in converts is only a small part of the beneficial results of missionary effort. No mere statistical statement can give a correct idea of all that the missionaries have accomplished. The moral value of what they preach is acknowledged by hundreds who do not join them. Their doctrinal system has given the people new ideas,—not only on purely religious questions, but upon the existence and nature of evil, the obligatory character of the law, and the motives which should direct and govern human life. The Indian Government cannot avoid expressing how much it owes to the benevolent exertions of those six hundred missionaries, whose blameless lives and self-denying labours have inspired with a new vital force the great communities living under British rule." The native press has, since 1818, when the first newspaper was printed in Hindustani, made wonderful progress: in 1880, there were 230 journals, in eighteen different vernaculars, issuing 130,000 copies. The number of readers is infinitely more numerous, because in the bazaars each copy of a newspaper is passed from hand to hand.—In connection with the spread of culture the demand for local self-govern-

ment has come to the front; but this demand has been pressed much less violently by native Indians than by certain English *dilettanti* theorists, who have found in Lord Ripon, the last Viceroy—and a feeble one—a fitting mouth-piece. The native Indian, says Hübner,³ does not want to be elected by his own class, but by those above him, in other words, by the English officials. In the North-West Provinces, the Government was forced, much against its will, to confer on the Governor, absolute power in municipal affairs. Lord Ripon, in telling the Indians that the remedy for all their troubles lay in self-government, suggested to them the thought that England looked forward to the time when she must leave India to itself. Whilst the native invariably prefers to take his law from an English magistrate, in whose impartiality he implicitly relies, his Lordship would, in the teeth of all practical experience, place the Europeans in rural districts under native magistrates. The radical-sentimental school of politicians, which wants to place Englishmen on the same footing with men of heterogeneous, mutually hostile races, undermines English rule in those quarters; and yet there is not the shadow of a doubt that, after the fall of English authority, the ancient anarchy would assert itself once more. In India, there are only religious, social, and local institutions; political institutions there are none. From time immemorial, the population has been ruled by strangers; and English rule has been cheerfully borne, because that great country has never been so well governed before.

“From a material point of view” (says Hübner, p. 267) “India has never been so prosperous as it is at present. The look of the natives—who, for the greater part, are well clothed—their villages, their houses and fields, give proof of this. In their bearing there is nothing servile,—on the contrary, they meet

³ Vol. ii. p. 157.

their English masters with a certain air of freedom, very far removed from that abject submissiveness so offensive in other countries of the East. I am not in a position to compare the native of to-day with the native of former times; but I have been able to compare the communities under the direct rule of the Queen with the subjects of the native princes. You cross, for example, the frontier of Hyderabad: sky, sun, and race are identical; but the difference between the territories is most striking, and altogether in favour of the Presidency of Madras or Bombay which you have just left. However pessimistic one may be, one must admit that British India affords an example of government without parallel in the history of the world. Instead of endless quarrels, peace has been securely established over the whole empire; instead of the cruel extortions of earlier times, moderate taxes are raised—much more moderate than those levied by the native princes. Caprice has been replaced by even-handed justice,—the same for all. The native tribunals, whose venality was proverbial, have given place to incorruptible magistrates, whose example has already begun to tell upon the natives. Finally, the manners of the people are becoming more civilized. Now, who or what has worked all these wonders? I answer,—the wisdom and intrepidity of a few governing statesmen; the bravery and discipline of an army composed of some Englishmen and a great number of Natives, and led by heroes; lastly, —and I might almost say *chiefly*,—the devotion, the intelligence, the courage, the perseverance, the address, and the integrity—absolutely proof against temptation—of that handful of officials and magistrates who govern and administer the Indian Empire.”

In recognition of these facts, and as a proof of the contentment with the Government which prevails all over India, the Queen's Jubilee was celebrated by the population with the liveliest and most spontaneous enthusiasm.

CEYLON,—called by old geographers the remotest island of India,—though separated from it only by Palk's Strait, is a very different country. The surrounding ocean moderates the heat; there are vast mountain-ranges and forests, filled with the most varied *fauna*. There is a universal fruitfulness and all nature, in this favoured island, is full of charm. It shows in the ruins of temples and palaces the remains

of aboriginal civilization. The natives, unlike those of India, are almost exclusively Buddhists. It is clear that Ceylon, "the pendent jewel of India," as the poets have called it, has from the remotest times attracted adventurers and conquerors. The earliest European settlers were the Portuguese; they were in turn dislodged by the Dutch, who bore sway on the coast for one hundred and sixty years, while the interior remained under native rulers. It was only so late as 1795-98 that the English conquered Ceylon and subjugated the whole island. It is now divided into seven provinces, and governed as a Crown Colony. The population is purely and simply agricultural, as is shown by great irrigation works (begun as early as 500 B.C.), whereby the rainfall is collected in great reservoirs. Commerce is wholly in the hands of immigrant Mohammedans. Up to a recent period the chief article of cultivation was coffee, which was introduced by the Arabs. Ceylon coffee fetched the highest price in the London market. In 1874 the coffee export reached the value of 5,000,000*l.*; but quite recently the coffee plantations have been attacked by a fungoid growth on the leaves, causing a loss of 15,000,000*l.* sterling. This loss has been compensated by the establishment of tea-gardens (—not to mention the cultivation of cocoa and Peruvian bark; these gardens already yield close on four million pounds of tea *per annum*; the quality runs to 1*s.* 3½*d.* per lb., while China tea does not average more than 10½*d.*; so that Ceylon will certainly become in the future one of the chief tea-producing countries of the world. Along with numerous other products are precious stones, for which the island has here fully maintained its ancient reputation. The pearl-fishery yielded in 1881 half a million sterling. In that year the total exports amounted to 3,161,252*l.*

The trading stations which collectively bear the name

of the STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, situated on or near the Malay peninsula (—and separated in 1865 from the Indian administration), are amongst the most flourishing of British Colonies. Their total export amounts to 17,500,000*l.* sterling *per annum*. The importance of this group of colonies is purely commercial; the chief of them is Singapore, acquired in 1819 through the acuteness of Sir Stamford Raffles, who had been Governor of Java. Their free ports are centres of an enormous trade,—amounting, for Singapore (not counting sailing-vessels), to 2,288,118 tons in 1884; for Penang, to 1,164,982 tons; for Malacca, to 181,074 tons. The population is composed, in almost equal proportion, of Malays (mostly Mohammedans) and immigrant Chinese. Among the commercial products must be specially named, tin, timber, spices, coffee, caoutchouc, and gutta-percha.

The large rock-island of HONG-KONG, thirty square miles in extent, was acquired in 1842. It commands the Chinese waters, but is specially important, from a commercial point of view, on account of its situation and its excellent harbour. Its trade had risen, owing to the Suez Canal, in 1884, to 5,500,000 tons.—In the Malay Archipelago, the Settlements of Borneo are the principal. SARAWAK was acquired by Sir James Brooke in the thirties of the present century, and is now a colony of 300,000 inhabitants. NORTH BORNEO, again, seems to have a prosperous future before it; its founders (the North Borneo Company) received in 1881 a charter, which confers on them most extensive rights and privileges. Situated in the centre of Malay commerce, with a coast-line of 600 miles, excellent harbours, and a fruitful soil, which produces coffee, tobacco, spices, and fibre,—and possessing great forests of mahogany and iron-wood, and rich deposits of guano—this territory is sure to attain speedy and great development.⁴

⁴ The commercial newspaper in Batavia drawing lately, in

III.

IF we now turn to the west, leaving ADEN and PERIM far away to the north (for they are not colonies, but rather—the latter, a strategical point, the former, a coaling-station), we meet on the course towards Africa, a group of islands of which MAURITIUS is the most important. Down to the time of the French Empire, this *stella clavisque maris Indici*—(or, as Thiers calls it, the “Malta of the Indian Ocean,”) was in the hands of the French, and formed the headquarters of cruisers which wrought great damage to the English East India trade. Taken by the English, it remained at the Peace of Paris a British possession; and has retained the high state of cultivation which it owed to the French. Nearly all the commodities required by its 370,000 inhabitants are imported; on the other hand, it exports almost the entire produce of its soil—sugar, rum, drugs, timber, and fibre stuffs. Of these, sugar—the cultivation of which was introduced one hundred and forty years ago by Labourdonnais—is so much the most important, that of a total export value of 3,941,373*l.*, only 370,000*l.* represents other products. It is from Mauritius, that India, South Africa and Australia receive their chief supplies of sugar; but the export to the last-mentioned, which now raises sugar for itself, has in recent years very sensibly declined.

THE CAPE was first occupied by the Dutch in a long article, a parallel between the English and the Dutch colonial system, refers to the situation in North Borneo. Waste lands fit for cultivation, are distributed liberally, we are told, and without regard to nationality. Restrictions on property, such as those arising from sovereign rights, &c., do not exist here; nay, the Government seeks in every way to attract and encourage foreign capital and foreign intelligence. Accordingly, a degree of prosperity prevails here which presents a striking contrast to the condition of the Dutch *Buitenbezittigen*, or possessions lying outside Java.

1652, and the trade with it was handed over as a monopoly to the Dutch East India Company. It was not till the end of the seventeenth century that Dutch and Germans, with French and Italian refugees, went out as colonists; and these, in order to escape the narrow and selfish government of the Company, betook themselves to the interior. In 1793 the English conquered the colony, restoring it to Holland at the Peace of Amiens; but occupying it again in 1806, kept possession. The Dutch element, however, has none the less held its own, both in Cape Town and among the settlers of the interior. Hübner found inland villages still existing, exactly like those of Ruysdael, and houses such as those of Zealand and Friesland in the great days of the Dutch Republic. Now, in the treatment of this population (which, we must remember, has made the country what it is), England has not shown the address which distinguishes her colonial policy in other quarters. The Dutch reduced to a sort of domestic-slavery certain of the natives, whom, however, in other respects they treated very kindly. The Dutch insisted that without compulsion the natives, as a rule, would not work. At the general abolition of slavery in the British Empire, these Dutch were offered what was—as compared with the amount granted to other colonists—a very trifling compensation,—and this they refused. Then the Government abolished the laws against squatting; and squatting became a perfect plague among the settlers. These measures drove the Boers, who were very indifferent in regard to politics in general, into opposition; they packed up in 1835, and “trecked” further inland, where they gradually founded Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange State. But the Foreign Office discovered that they were still English subjects, and pursued them there. Then followed a series of wars with the Africanders and the Kaffirs, till, in 1852, the Orange State and the Transvaal were

acknowledged independent; and an engagement was entered into that there should be no more interference in regard to the relations subsisting between the colonists and the natives. Peace lasted for seventeen years, and both those states prospered. But when the diamond-fields were discovered in the Orange territory, they were, under the pretext that they belonged to a certain chief of Griqualand, taken from the Boers; the Kaffirs were incited against the Boers; next, an attempt was made to unite these mutually embittered elements in a South African Confederation; and when this arrangement fell to pieces, as it, of necessity, did, the Transvaal was annexed to the Empire. Then war broke out with the Kaffirs and Zulus, and, to make the confusion complete, a constitution was granted to the colony. This constitution rested on two main principles:—self-government (including self-defence); and perfect equality of races. The first of these principles has constantly led to complications when the forces of the colony were insufficient; and this in the long run has compelled England to interfere. On the other hand, the assertion of the equality of races contradicted the most notorious facts. Experience has shown that it is impossible to govern constitutionally a colony of mixed population, in which the coloured natives form the vast majority. Jamaica and Natal, which also have had the blessing of a constitution conferred upon them, have themselves requested to be again made Crown Colonies. At the Cape was added the rivalry of the Dutch and English, who were bitterly opposed to each other in the Parliament. All these confusions led to a general war, which ended with a decisive defeat of the English troops at Majuba Hill. After that event, surrender on the part of the Government was inevitable, but the surrender was carried out clumsily, with reserves and conditions; English *prestige* in the whole of South Africa was

vitaly affected, and yet peace was not attained. The English Government was forced to acknowledge once more the independence of the Transvaal; then it engaged in the foolish quarrel with Germany about Angra-Pequena, in which it came off second best. But England was bound to show that she had still a will of her own; and hostilities were commenced—in opposition to the views of the Cape Government and the majority of the Cape Parliament—against Bechuanaland; and now that Bechuanaland is conquered, nobody knows what to do with it. In short, the entire English policy in South Africa is a chain of contradictions, of unjust advance and of pusillanimous retreat; indeed, M. Krüger, the President of the Transvaal, had good grounds for affirming, as he did to Mr. Froude, that with few exceptions, all political steps taken of late in those parts suggested the idea that their end was the undermining of English ascendancy. In the Cape Parliament the Dutch have the majority, and the Governor and his ministry depend on the Parliament; yet the Governor is at the same time the High Commissioner for all South Africa, and is supposed to carry out the orders of the English Colonial Office. Amid this confusion of jurisdiction, the officials have lost all confidence: they are afraid either of being disavowed in London, or of being attacked in the local parliament. England has surrendered her right to govern the colony, and yet has made it impossible for the colonists to govern themselves with the necessary independence. Thus the country has become the prey of well-meaning philanthropists, ever-changing colonial ministries, and internal parties, each of which by turns solicits English assistance. After disobliging every party, there remains to the Government only one alternative: Either to do away with the Constitution, and rule the Colony through a steady and able Governor; or, since this course is, perhaps, not now possible, to leave the colony to itself,

and govern it according to the will of the Dutch majority.

That the elements of prosperity are not wanting, is shown by the material development that has been going on in the midst of these confusions. The value of imports increased from 2,065,592*l.* in 1860, to 5,240,000*l.* in 1884; shipping, from 665,292 tons to 5,322,147 tons in the same period. Ostrich-rearing yielded feathers to the value of 10,000*l.* in 1857; it now yields about 966,900*l.* a year. In 1830 the export of wool was valued at 10,000*l.*; in 1872 49,000,000 pounds of wool were exported. The celebrated Cape wine is the produce of 70,000,000 vines. The diamonds and other precious stones exported between 1868 and 1884 represent a value of nearly 32,000,000*l.* The copper-mines also yield a very large return.—The products of the north-eastern Crown Colony of Natal are similar to those of the Cape, but of a more tropical character; sugar and tea are the chief articles of export.—**ST. HELENA** and **ASCENSION** have lost much of their importance through the construction of the Suez Canal; but the West African Settlements, the oldest European colonial territories (—the Portuguese visited the Gold Coast as early as 1380, giving it the name it bears from the precious metal they found on it)—these are increasing in importance through their very considerable export of cocoa and palm-oil, palm-nuts, ivory and gold. The most promising territory is that of the Niger, which in 1885 was placed under a protectorate, and from the commerce of which the English (since the Congo Act established only free navigation of the river) seek to debar other nations, especially the Germans, by vexatious duties.—**CYPRUS**, as I have already said, does not belong to England, but has advanced rapidly under English administration; the exports and imports together rose from 334,775*l.* in 1878, to 634,393*l.* in 1883-4. Malta is a place chiefly of strategical im-

portance; but it is admirably cultivated, and it retains its old reputation for point-lace and filagree work.

In South and Central America, England possesses—besides the Falkland Islands, which were occupied in 1833 as a whaling-station, but now carry on only cattle-rearing and fishing—*GUIANA* and *HONDURAS*. The chief exports of both these territories are timber—especially mahogany and logwood—and sugar, which latter thrives wonderfully in the fertile marshes on the coast. The question of obtaining labourers to work in that hot, moist climate, presents the chief difficulty. Of the Antilles, England possesses Jamaica, Trinidad, the Windward Islands, Barbadoes, St. Vincent, Granada, Tobago, St. Lucia, the Leeward Islands, Antigua, Montserrat, St. Christopher, Dominica, the Virgin Islands, and the Bahamas. Irrespective of these last, the population of the West Indian islands numbers one million and a half; the export value amounts to 6,711,243*l.*; the shipping is reckoned at 5,398,869 tons. All these are islands of the utmost fertility; they possess, for the greater part, a good climate, and yield all tropical products. They have gone back greatly through the abolition of slavery, because the freed negroes worked no more than was absolutely necessary in order to live; they have improved recently, however, through the introduction of coolies and the creation of small holdings for negroes. Sugar continues to be the chief article of cultivation, notwithstanding the crushing competition of bounty-protected beet-sugar of European production; sugar-growing is persisted in because the cane suits all kinds and conditions of soil, and yields a reliable crop; it now promises through the employment of more powerful pressing machines to yield a larger crop than ever. On the other hand, the creoles of Cuba, with indolent resignation, allow their sugar plantations to decay and die. Coffee, tobacco, and espe-

cially tropical fruits, are the articles of export next in importance to sugar. Pine-apples, oranges, and lemons are shipped in great quantities to the United States. The Bahamas yield products like the above, but are remarkable chiefly for those derived from the sea,—such as sponges, coral, and a kind of mussel-shell, from which beautiful cameos are cut; then there are sea-ferns, which furnish the material for elegant baskets and ladies' hats; and finally, the precious rosa pearls, which can scarcely be distinguished, save by the connoisseur, from pale coral.

NEWFOUNDLAND, the oldest English colony beyond sea, is well known, especially on account of its fisheries, which even Lord Bacon declared to be more valuable than the mines of Peru, and which have remained, even to the present time, a subject of constantly recurring disputes with France and the United States. The cod fishery is the principal; the fish, when dried, are shipped to Catholic countries, where they form a fasting dish. From 1872 to 1876 the average export value was nearly 8,000,000 dollars a year. The livers yield fine train-oil; the air-bladders, isinglass; the refuse is dried by steam, and converted into manure.

CANADA, successfully colonized by the French, was, after a severe struggle, conquered by England in 1760, and ceded to her in 1763. It was on this occasion that Voltaire, with the pride of ignorance, consoled his countrymen for the loss of what he called "a few acres of snow" (*quelques arpents de neige*). It has now grown to be a flourishing confederation with 5,000,000 inhabitants, whose vast territory is capable of literally boundless development. Yet England, after the American War of Independence, was very near giving it up voluntarily, and retiring from the American continent altogether. Nothing but regard for the loyalists of the United States, who had betaken themselves to Canada, and

who, on the score of honour, deserved protection, prevented this step. In contrast to its policy at the Cape, the Government has, with one slight exception, understood how to treat justly the two leading nationalities of the colony. Canada at the time of its cession by France, was occupied by a population almost purely French,—which, however, so quickly became loyal that, in the War of Independence, and again in 1812, it fought bravely on the side of England against the United States. The 60,000 French-speaking Canadians of that time are represented now by 1,260,000, and have almost completely crowded out the English from the province of Quebec; these now retain a footing only in the commercial quarter of Montreal; the French encroach even upon Ontario. Moreover, they show great power of assimilation: Scotch regiments which were disbanded at Quebec have become merged in this community of Frenchmen. Yet there exists no longer any intimate intercourse between them and France, the mother-country. Under free institutions, French Canada has remained a portion of pre-revolutionary France; the peasants have retained their *patois* and their customs; the clergy, rich and powerful, hate all revolutionary movements—and detest the United States; and have passed over from Gallicanism to Ultramontaniam. English and French in Canada were originally strongly conservative; it was a large immigration of Puritan Scots (now numbering 695,863) that introduced a “liberal” element. This new body rose against the oligarchical Government, so that when the latter strove to oppress the French, a civil war was the result. The wise administration of Lord Elgin restored peace; the colony received a representative constitution; and in 1868, under Lord Dufferin, the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Prince Edward’s Island were united into one Confederation, the *Dominion of Canada*. It enjoys, under a Governor-General

appointed by the Crown, complete self-government, with a responsible ministry. Each province has, in addition, its own legislative body under a Lieutenant-Governor. The Senate, or Upper House, appointed by the home Government, is of little account; the suffrage for the House of Representatives is absolutely democratic. As a balance to this arrangement, the Government retains the command of the entire military force, the appointment of the judges (for life), and of the officials; it also has the right of vetoing all resolutions of the Parliament if the right be exercised within two years. Controversies between the central Government and the provinces, or between one province and another, are referred for decision to the Privy Council in London. The sea-board provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as those of the North-West and Columbia, are separated from the original province by vast tracts of unoccupied territory. The construction of a direct line of railway between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific was made by these provinces a condition of their entering into the Canadian Confederation; but the line was not commenced till 1881. In a length of over 3000 miles, it had to cross three ranges of mountains, which, in part, had never been explored,—among them, the Rocky Mountains, at a height of 5000 feet. On dynamite alone, for blasting purposes, the sum of a million and a half sterling was expended; one river had to be bridged no less than nine times; even the tracts of prairie were by no means level country, but required occasionally very heavy banks,—as, in order to resist snowdrifts, the line had to be laid high and strong. On the 5th November, 1885, the work was completed; on the 18th July, 1886, the regular traffic was opened. Even before this date the importance of the line had been demonstrated, for it enabled the Government to put down instantly the Indian insurrection led by Riel, whereas during the rising of

1870, Wolseley took 95 days to reach Fort George from Toronto. But it will contribute still more towards strengthening the bonds of union, and promoting intercourse among the Canadians. American progress rushes through the wilderness like a storm; it makes cities to spring up in rapid succession in the prairies, among the Rocky Mountains, and on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Certain places show already a marvellously rapid increase: Winnipeg was, down to 1870, only a fortified trading-station of the Hudson Bay Company, numbering 253 persons; it now contains 30,000 inhabitants; it has its tram-lines, telephones, a Parliament House, and comfortable hotels; and the fantastically-dressed families of Indians who now loiter about its streets, and bewail the turning of their hunting-grounds into wheat-fields, will very soon disappear. A similar development is seen in Seattle on Puget Sound, also in Victoria on Vancouver Island, with its Chinese and Indian quarters and its heterogeneous white population. But the railway will also form the quickest means of communication between Europe and Eastern Asia. The distance from Montreal to Vancouver is 2905 miles; the distance from New York to San Francisco is 3271 miles. The eastern extremity, Halifax, is 600 miles nearer Europe than New York. The Canadian Government intends to put on fast steamers from Queenstown to Halifax, and from Port Moody to Hong-Kong and Yokohama. By Brindisi and the Suez Canal the journey from England occupies, according to recent time-tables, from 32 to 35, and from 40 to 42 days respectively; by the Canada Railway it is hoped that the journey will be completed in 25, and in 31 days.

Canadian products are chiefly those of nature. The forests which in 1884, were estimated to cover a space of 280,000 square miles, or five times the superficial area of England and Wales, yield an annual value

in timber of nearly 27,000,000 dollars, of which about 21,000,000 dollars' worth was exported in that year. Moreover, these forests, with the rivers and sea-coast, form the hunting-grounds for those animals—sought for their furs and skins—which we here see stuffed and collected in a splendid trophy—from the elk and polar bear to the sable. Next come the fishery products, representing a total of 17,700,000 dols., with an export of 7,500,000 dols. Grain is exported to the value of 11,000,000 dols.; the export of cattle reaches 90,684 head; of sheep, 304,434. The magnificent fruit of Canada has been long celebrated in Europe,—especially her apples and pears, which for size and flavour are equalled only by the very finest growths of France. The great coal and other mines are only beginning to be worked. Every visitor to the Canadian section of the Exhibition will be astonished to find alongside the products named above, a highly developed industry in furniture, pianofortes, organs, woollen goods, &c. To be sure, this industry, as I once heard Lord Lorne remark, has been called into being really by the high protective duties that exist, and is carried on far too expensively for successful competition in foreign markets. The export value of such goods amounts, in a total of 76,000,000 dols., to only 3,000,000 dols., and even this sum is derived principally from articles like those ingenious agricultural machines which we see here in active work,—and from products of which nature furnishes the material in rich abundance, as leather and candied fruits.

The climate of Canada presents greater contrasts than European countries in the same latitude. The winter is colder and longer, the summer hotter. But the temperature is favourably affected by the ocean, and, in the interior, by the great lakes; the air is pure and dry; fogs are rare; the cold can be borne because there is little wind. The heavy snowfall protects the seeds,

facilitates communication by sledge, and gives opportunity for various pastimes.

Particular attention is paid to the work of instruction, the statistics of which are presented to us in accurate tables with the motto, EDUCATION THE GLORY OF CANADA. This education is, from the nature of the case, of a decidedly practical character.

Considering the boundless resources of Canada, the population—some 5,000,000—is small; but, on this account, the country is well fitted for immigrants; these in recent years have varied in number from 103,000 to 138,000 persons. The long trade depression in Europe will within the next few years increase this movement, and so much the more as, through the acquisition by the Government, a short time ago, of the extensive territories of the Hudson Bay Company in Manitoba, wide and fertile tracts of land are opened up. The immigrants find an intelligent, settled administration, free from party strife,—impartial justice, law and order without Lynch or revolver, complete political and religious freedom, and good schools. The Germans number 282,906; they keep well together, and have in the large cities clubs, over which waves the black-white-and-red flag of Germany. The finances are well arranged; the colony raises with ease a budget of 36,500,000 dollars; and the public debt of 264,500,000 dollars has been expended almost exclusively on productive objects. If, therefore, Lord Lorne, on his return, could say that it was astonishing what the comparatively small population living between the sea and the interior had accomplished,—we may with certainty prophesy for the Dominion a yet greater and more glorious future.⁵

⁵ The Canadian budget for the current year (1889) is based on an estimated income of 38,500,000 dollars, and an expenditure of 36,000,000 dollars. There remains therefore a surplus of 1,900,000 dollars. For the next financial year the income is estimated at 39,179,000 dollars. The Canadian debt amounts at present to 234,531,358 dollars.

IV.

OF all the British Colonies the youngest are those of Australia; they also show the most rapid increase, although the greater part of the interior of the continent is a desert, and through lack of rain will, to all appearance, remain so. The first settlement was, as is well known, the penal colony of Botany Bay—formed in 1787,—the Government, on the loss of the American Colonies, requiring another place to which convicts could be sent. Down to 1800, 5000 persons had been transported. The character of a penal colony gradually disappeared; yet it is only forty-five years since Mr. Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales, wrote (on his arrival) thus: “I find the colony hardly free from the swaddling-clothes of infancy, suffering from the want of all sorts of necessaries, the country beyond forty miles of Sydney impenetrable, agriculture yet undeveloped, commerce in its first beginnings, no settled revenue, the colony threatened with famine, torn in pieces by faction, the public buildings in decay, the few roads and bridges that exist—impassable, the population oppressed with poverty, neither public nor private credit, the morals of the great mass of the people sunk to the lowest ebb, while religion has almost disappeared.” Now—the colony numbers nearly a million inhabitants, although one part of it, Victoria, became a separate colony in 1851, and another, Queensland, in 1855. Sydney, the capital, numbers 240,000 persons, and possesses shipping of over 4,000,000 tons, or more than that of London in the year 1838. In the colony 852,000 acres are under cultivation, and 28,000,000 acres are yet to be disposed of. The number of sheep rose from 7,000,000 in 1863 to 34,000,000 in 1883, when wool to the value of 9,500,000*l.* sterling was exported. The Education budget amounted to 700,000*l.*—Still more astonishing was the progress of Victoria, which, founded as Port Philip in 1834 and made indepen-

dent in 1851, has now a million of inhabitants, and an export amounting to 20,200,000*l.* sterling. Thirty years ago the streets of Melbourne were full of stumps of trees, and formed during several months of the year a swamp, in which waggons sank deep; the city is now the fourth in extent in the British Empire—an advance perhaps unparalleled in history. At one end of the Victoria Court of the Exhibition we see an encampment of natives in hovels made of the bark of trees, such as the first settlers found in 1834; at the other end, an arch which shows the mass of gold—worth 216,000,000*l.* sterling, obtained in the colony down to the year 1875. The population of Queensland increased by 117,300 persons between 1881 and 1886. As late as the thirties of the present century, the Maoris of New Zealand⁶ performed their war-dances, at which they ate their prisoners; now the colony has 600,000 inhabitants, 14,000,000 sheep, an export of 7,000,000*l.*; the output of gold reached in 1885 the value of 41,000,000*l.* sterling; in the same year eighty-three steamers had been built in local dockyards. Victoria alone has eleven large banks with 340 branches, a share-capital of 8,500,000*l.* and 24,000,000*l.* in deposits; the savings' banks held, in 1884, 2,818,022*l.* The discovery of the gold-fields in the fifties, which caused immigrants to rush from all quarters, has naturally contributed very much to this mighty advance. But gold-seeking has declined: the great nuggets we see exhibited are now very seldom found, the gold-bearing sand must be carefully washed, the quartz must be crushed in a mill; meantime, cattle-rearing, agriculture and coal-mining have become far more important. The Australian wool, of

⁶ For official purposes, New Zealand is not reckoned as part of Australia; and, being an island, stands in circumstances very different from those of the colonies on the continent; but, from the nature of the case, its interests are essentially similar.

which sixty different samples from the various colonies are shown in the Exhibition, has exercised very great influence on European farming. Coal is now shipped in considerable quantity to India, Manilla, Japan and San Francisco. So recently as twenty-five years ago corn was imported from Chili and California; now it forms a large export, especially from South Australia. Vine-culture has assumed considerable proportions; a trophy here shows no fewer than 105 varieties of wine. Adelaide sends the model of a bunch of grapes, which would not have been unworthy the notice of the Israelitish spies in Canaan; and the Château Tablik proudly shows the first prize for "Emperor William," obtained at the Melbourne Exhibition. The saccharine quality of the grape may, perhaps, be thought too strong; but this can probably be diminished through cultivation; in the decline of French wine-growing, a great future seems to open for the Australian wines. For the production of silk, too, there is much promise in the rich growth attained in Australia by the mulberry-tree. The fruits which are on sale in the Exhibition, especially the apples, pears, peaches, grapes and bananas, are of the very first quality. Of wood, there are shown no fewer than 114 kinds: the richest forests are those of the eucalyptus; then comes the gigantic kauri pine, which requires eight hundred years for its full growth, attaining a height of three hundred feet, and a girth of sixty—the pokutukama, whose scarcely less gigantic trunks stand up, as Mr. Froude says, like the pillars of a temple, while its roots resemble a nest of coiled pythons,—cedars, gum-trees, cypresses and palms, which, with great ferns and creeping plants, form the richest vegetation. Of quadrupeds only the kangaroo, the opossum and the rat are native; but all the domestic animals, and also game, have been introduced from Europe. The rabbit, indeed, has become, through its power of rapid increase, a perfect pest,

A larger number of native birds are peculiar to the country,—casuars, parrots, and an abundance of sea-birds, from the feathers of which most beautiful wares are made. As to the climate, it is certainly hot, especially in Queensland: but the European can work everywhere; except in the Fiji Islands, very few coolies are to be found in those latitudes. For want of rivers the continent suffers from drought; but much could be done to counteract this by a system of irrigation like that practised in India. The climate of the volcanic island of New Zealand, with its great rivers, waterfalls, hot springs, and alpine mountains, is described as marvellously fine.

The natives are dying out; even the most intelligent and the most powerful race, the Maoris, now numbering 40,000, who migrated to New Zealand in the fifteenth century, can hardly maintain themselves much longer. Apart from these, the population of 3,350,000 is almost purely English. Mr. Froude states that more provincialisms are to be heard in Exeter or York than in Australia; so that these colonies in the South, are far more truly a New England than Canada is in the West. Although thoroughly democratic in its institutions, the population is thoroughly loyal in sentiment, and takes the most lively interest in English politics. In 1885 Mr. Froude found everywhere the utmost amazement that England put up with the humiliations brought upon her by the Gladstone régime; and, in spite of the procrastinating lukewarmness of Lord Derby, New South Wales sent her volunteers to the Soudan. Australian democracy has nothing in common with European radicalism. In a country in which everybody has a competency who will work, socialistic visions are not likely to find great acceptance. The higher classes, indeed, who have much to lose, are in their way conservative, and are extremely fond of distinctions conferred by the mother country. The picture has, of course, its dark

side. New Zealand, for example, has accumulated a debt much beyond her means; the working classes, because they fear a fall in their high wages, oppose bitterly that immigration which is absolutely necessary. For the purposes of parliamentary government, again, there are wanting those party distinctions which over-ride material interests. The colonies have no foreign policy, no diplomacy and no history. All the elements of aristocracy are wanting. The society of Melbourne or Sydney resembles that of Manchester or Birmingham. The higher classes are rich business people, and the *jeunesse dorée* of rich fathers show a total absence of effort after an ideal. On the other hand, a good deal is done for education. The study of Botany and of Astronomy is especially cultivated. The great cities possess excellent libraries, and the best English periodicals are to be seen everywhere. The traveller from Europe meets on all hands a magnificent hospitality; Government House (though, politically, the Governors possess very little power) affords to society a valuable centre of intercourse. Even the beginnings of a landed gentry are seen in the fact that business men who have made their fortune follow the English custom and establish themselves in beautiful country seats.

With resources, for a long time to come, practically inexhaustible,—with an active, rapidly increasing population, and with communication, internal and external, becoming every day easier, these rising communities have unquestionably a great future before them. The advance may not be so rapid as in the gold-seeking days; but with increasing immigration, it will be all the healthier. The plan of a Confederation of the various colonies will hardly be found practicable: though there is perceptible a certain community of feeling among all the Australians. It approaches, indeed, a sort of Monroe doctrine, and may be expressed in the formula, "Australia for the Australians." This feeling

was perfectly justified in regard to the French penal settlements; but in regard to the German occupation of North Guinea, unjust and, therefore, transient. For any closer connection the interests of the several colonies are too various. Between the protective tariff of Victoria and the free-trade system of New South Wales, a union is scarcely possible; and no colony will readily renounce its independence as to revenue. Besides, an Australian Confederation would rather hinder than help the completion of a closer union with the mother country,—that “Imperial Federation” so popular in the colonies.

V.

THIS leads us to consider the future of the British Colonial Empire. Twenty years ago one heard repeated in various forms, even in England, the statement that colonies were a thing of the past. In earlier times (it was admitted) they had certainly been of great advantage; but from the time the monopoly system and the system of deriving direct and exclusive profit from the colonies had become untenable, circumstances totally changed. Self-government was the solution of all colonial difficulties, and complete independence was only a question of time. Why, therefore, retain any longer the ties that bound the colonies to England, seeing that such ties only forced her to come forward at great expense for their defence, and involved her continually in little wars, which might at any moment become great ones? The independence of the colonies would set England free from this burden, and would cost her only a set of official posts with which the aristocracy provided for their younger sons.—The Manchester school was in its prime in those days, and these were the notions put forward by its leaders. Their ideal was,—not to keep the nation strong, and to raise it step by step in civilized development, but to produce the biggest possible amount of trading

commodities. England was to develop more and more her industries, and was to supply with her products the whole world,—which, of course, stood open to receive them. With her capital, cheap food and high wages, she was fit to cope with all competitors. The success of Free Trade in England was gradually to put aside all tariff barriers, and so go on opening up new markets for English products. Accordingly, the colonies, for which in earlier days so great sacrifices had been made, and which paid nothing to the mother country, were necessarily regarded as a burden on the tax-payer, of which he was to be relieved as far as possible. Cobden wrote (7th October, 1836): "The colonies, the army, the navy, and the Church, are only appendages of our aristocratical government. John Bull has for the next fifty years the task set him of cleansing his house from this stuff." And in June, 1853, he declared in the House of Commons, that the Indian Empire was a burden which must be shaken off, and the sooner the better, since India was not worth what it cost. Mr. Bright, too, was never weary of declaiming against "the increasing burden of our ever-growing Empire." Trollope again, who really knew the colonies, wrote, only twelve years ago, thus: "The colonies are children who have grown up, daughters whom we wish to marry off; they have been educated, dowered,—and we shall separate from them, not without a certain feeling of sorrow, but in a manner perfectly friendly." Even a man like Lord Palmerston, who had a strong feeling for England's position in the world, troubled himself so little about the colonies that, on one occasion, when he was forming a ministry, and could find no Colonial Secretary, he said to Sir Arthur Helps (who relates the story); "I believe I must undertake the business myself; come up after the sitting, we will look at the maps, and you shall show me *where those places are.*"

These views have their origin in the assertion of Turgot (who formed the opinion, the defection of North America still fresh in his mind) that colonies, when they attain the years of maturity, *inevitably* break away from the mother country. But this view of the case requires modification: the fact rather is, that developed colonies break off only when they are treated unfairly. Had the principle, "No taxation without representation," been recognized as towards America, Franklin and Washington would have been content. This notion, that the colonies are only a burden on the mother country (which moreover was even at the time opposed by most decided Liberals,—among them, J. S. Mill,) rested on a strange over-estimate of the importance of that Free Trade which Cobden regarded as the remedy for all ills. The truth is, mankind is something more than a collection of producers, consumers and tax-payers; it is, through the dispensation of the Almighty, divided into nations, whose business it is to develop each its abilities, and rivalling one another in power and in progress, mental and moral, so to grow. That the colonies weigh heavily on the state-treasury is indisputable. It is likewise certain that they cause manifold dangers to England, and render her vulnerable, especially in India; but the dangers are in reality the consequences of a false policy,—above all, of the Gladstonian policy, which has contributed so much towards shattering England's *prestige* abroad. *Prestige* is for England's power what credit is to a merchant. On the other hand, there is no position of power that does not involve danger, expense and responsibility. Let England lose her empire beyond the sea, and especially the following naval and commercial stations: Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Aden, Perim, Mauritius, Ceylon, Singapore, Hong-Kong, Vancouver,—through which she takes the lead in all quarters,—and she sinks to the position of a third-rate power, even though her fleet were still,

numerically, the strongest in the world. But then, over against the expense and the burden, stand preponderating advantages. The Manchester school overlooks the fact that if England at that time was able to enter into free competition with all other states, she entered upon this course with the start given her by her great capital and her long-assured connections with her colonies; and these advantages she owed to her old colonial policy, through which she became relatively as rich in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as Holland in the seventeenth. But England has not reared her commercial superiority and her riches on her colonies alone: both these, in reality, depend now-a-days on her mighty empire of 300,000,000 souls. Cobden pointed out to his contemporaries that British commerce with India amounted to only 9 per cent. of the total commerce. How different the proportion in recent times! The great period of Free-Trade policy has been succeeded by a backward movement, which may be considered as deceptive and transient; but undoubtedly it causes great obstacles to the sale of English goods in Continental markets. In contrast to this, English trade with the colonies has steadily risen, as the following figures show.

Between 1869 and 1873 the value of British exports to all foreign countries was 218,131,000*l.*,—to the colonies, 59,820,000*l.*; in 1881, to the former 154,658,000*l.*,—to the latter, 79,365,000*l.*; in 1885 the proportions were: 135,115,000*l.*; 77,930,000*l.* The exports to the colonies therefore amount to more than half the exports to the rest of the world. In 1885 the total imports into India, were in value 68,156,654*l.*, and of this sum, 25,167,000*l.* fell to Great Britain; into the Cape, total value, 5,260,697*l.*, to Great Britain, 4,023,819*l.*; the Australian Colonies, value, 64,157,000*l.*—25,167,000*l.*; into Hong-Kong 4,000,000*l.*, 3,218,940*l.* Again, while the sale of British goods in 1884 was, in the United States, at

the rate of 13s. 6d., in France 8s., in Germany 9s. per head of the population, it amounted, in spite of the protective duties of Canada and Australia, to 2l. 3s. in the former country, and to 8l. 6s. in the latter; in Cape Colony, to 2l. 15s. Within the last thirty years, British exports to these colonies, taken together, have gone up in value from 11,000,000l. to 41,000,000l., or 270 per cent. So true are the words of the New Zealand statesman, Sir Julius Vogel, that "Trade follows the flag." The manners, wants, ideas of the home-country, retained as they are by the colonists, attract her products. Moreover, the mere amount of the commerce is not everything—one must consider the actual profit that accrues; now, it is certain that the profit is greatest when the commerce is between a country far advanced in civilization and industrial activity, and a country undeveloped industrially, but rich in natural resources. True, within the last two years, the value of exports to the colonies has somewhat receded—a fact which is explained by the general depression in trade and the fall in prices; but the importance of the colonial market in relation to the sum total of goods sold, has not decreased. During the first eleven months of 1885, Australia, India, Canada and the Cape bought from England 7,000,000l. worth of iron; the United States only 3,779,359l. worth. If England lost India through rebellion or conquest, so that its ports were closed against her, this would mean a loss of from sixty to seventy millions sterling a year in the sum total of her income. Then, apart from what she gains by her direct trade with the colonies, England draws considerable profit from them, through the carrying trade, which is in her hands, between them and other countries. She can in this way select for herself the best goods; she settles the price for many articles, and gains in freight, commission, insurance, exchange,—and these in the case of wares neither produced nor improved in her territory, but simply

passing through her hands. The jealousy with which people in London regard the growing emancipation of Germany through her acquiring steamship lines of her own, and through having adopted a gold standard of currency, shows the importance of this carrying trade.

With commercial profits, however, the advantages conferred by the colonies on England are by no means exhausted. They offer to English capital means of safe and profitable investment. The loans to them made in England amount to over 250,000,000*l.* In 1885, 200,000,000*l.* had been already invested in Indian and Colonial railways; 25,000,000*l.*, in banks. To these are to be added the yet larger sums which are working in land companies, mines, and industrial undertakings,⁷ the salaries of officials when abroad, and the pensions which they draw on their return. Through its enormous possessions beyond the sea, English society is in a position to turn to the best account its superfluous energies: hardly a family can be found of which members are not engaged in the colonies.

But the chief value of the colonies lies in the fact that they offer the best field for emigration. From 1853 to 1884 1,500,000 emigrants went to Australia, and nearly 2,000,000 to the other colonies. England naturally allows free scope to emigration; but she by no means disdains to make sacrifices in order to direct it to her own dominions. On the 31st July, 1883, Lord Derby made a communication to the Upper House, to the effect that the Government were prepared to grant to the Canadian Executive an advance of 1,000,000*l.* sterling, for the purpose of settling 10,000 families in Manitoba. The Colonial governments, again, do their part to attract emigrants. Some of the immigrant elements belonging to other European nationalities, as in North America, give at first to many places a

⁷ According to the *Economist* (11th of June, 1887), the total British capital then invested in the Colonies amounted to 744,000,000*l.*, and the interest *per annum*, to 34,709,000*l.*

cosmopolitan look, but they are quickly absorbed into the surrounding English population, and take on the stolid English character. Thus, everywhere, English-speaking communities grow up and develop,—communities in which the emigrant finds again his language, manners, institutions,—and which, as respects civilization, are directly in touch with England. In Seattle on Puget Sound, in Driar's House Hotel in Victoria, one finds the genuine qualities of the best English society. British Columbia can show quite a number of family names which are to be found in *Burke's Peerage*. Every English author writes for millions of readers beyond the sea; every artist finds a public in the colonies,—a state of things towards which, in the present stagnation of trade, the Exhibition has contributed not a little. England is over-populated; farther increase in this direction will not strengthen, but weaken her; in her colonies she finds space and air. Finally, in a new emigration movement on a large scale, the solution of the Irish Question will be found to lie; for the Irish difficulty is, in essence, this: that a people with small disposition to turn to account the few advantages which nature offers, has been for a long period fruitlessly endeavouring to maintain on indifferent soil more human beings than that soil can support in comfort.

It may, therefore, be easily conceived that the sorbid and fallacious mercantile view that this relation of colonies to the mother-country made them at once a burden and a weakness, finds now-a-days in England very few advocates; and the concern with which people in England regard the enterprises of France and Germany beyond the sea, bears witness to the value attached to colonies. "The nations of Europe," said Mr. Forster in the spring of 1885, "begin to find out how important it is for England to have great possessions in different parts of the world,—and try to have their share in such possessions."

So strong is the tendency, that even a Gladstone, who believes that the sources of English power lie in the British Isles alone, cannot escape from it. Under him, the North Borneo Company, and lately the National African Company for the territory of the Niger, have received their charters; the Fiji Islands and Burma have been annexed. The colonial empire expands not only through the action of the Government, but also through the enterprise of individuals, which creates interests to which protection must be extended from London. The influence of the English missions, works in the same direction; outside the British territory they constantly keep in view not only the conversion, but the government, of the heathen; at first they gain influence over individuals, then over chiefs and communities,—finally they direct the whole tribe, and in no long time we find a new colony.

As the English now regard their relations with the colonies, so do the colonies regard their relations with the mother country. When it was the fashion to speak slightingly of colonies, and leading statesmen troubled themselves very little about them, the colonists naturally complained of this indifference, protested against mistimed meddling in matters which people at home knew nothing about, and maintained, not without reason, that England abandoned their interests, and saw in the colonies only places by which to provide for persons who were of no use elsewhere. But with the revolution in public opinion, all this has changed. If the colonies offer great advantages to English commerce, these advantages depend no longer on one-sided profit, as in old days. On the contrary, not a word was said in London against Canada and several of the Australian colonies, when these surrounded themselves with protective tariffs that in themselves were very unpleasant to England. If England finds an opening in the colo-

nies for her capital, the colonies, on their part, require that capital for the development of their resources; in all questions relating to other countries, they depend for the defence of their entire commerce on English diplomacy and the English fleet. How would Canada like to defend herself single-handed in her constantly recurring fishery disputes with the United States? The self-governing colonies enjoy complete freedom. England sends them only their governors as representatives of the Crown,—most of these being thoroughly accomplished statesmen; thus the highest position in each colony is removed from that strife of parties which every four years agitates the United States. On the other hand, in the Crown colonies,—in those, namely, in which England has entire control over the legislation, and in which the administration is carried on by officials under the Colonial Office, there is a decided minority of Englishmen against a great majority of natives or immigrant labourers; and the latter derive support and protection from the home Government alone. Civil war is not possible in the colonies as long as the present relations with the mother country subsist. All internal disputes are settled in the last resort by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (constituted under the 3 and 4 Will. IV. c. 41, and 8 Vict. c. 69). In it the affairs of Quebec and Mauritius are decided according to old French law; those of Guiana, by Dutch law; Malay affairs, according to the Koran; ecclesiastical, according to the Canon law. The Committee is, in the variety of its duties, a living image of the British colonial empire; and its decisions enjoy everywhere the most unbounded respect and confidence, because they are arrived at free from all local or official influence. Thus, a short time ago, in a dispute between the two chambers of Queensland, the Committee decided that the Upper House—or Legislative Council—had not, in money questions, equal rights with the

House of elected representatives,—resting the decision on the ground that all colonial legislatures are formed on the model of the British Parliament.

Nowhere can we discern any endeavour to break the connection with the mother country: it is felt everywhere that nothing would be gained, but very much lost by such a step. Mr. Froude says that in any public meeting in Australia, the man who should advocate separation from England, would be hissed out; he found the colonists everywhere *ipsis Anglis Angliciores*. Nobody in Canada thinks of union with the States; the French know that they could not preserve their nationality; the English cling to the mother country, and are content with their lot, because in the confederation of the Dominion they form the majority; even the German nationality is better off in Canada than in the United States.

Certainly, colonies like those of Australia and Canada could defend themselves, even although cut off from the mother country. But they do not wish to separate, and they will separate only in case they are unjustly treated. George III. and the Parliament of Lord North alone drove the American Colonies into rebellion. At present the tendency is all the other way—towards a closer union. The plan of an “Imperial Federation,” indeed, appears to be for the most part an imagination of theorists. To give to the colonies representatives in the House of Commons is impracticable; they would always be in the minority there, would be always out-voted, and would therefore not submit to the decisions of the House. As little would it work to call colonial representatives to the House of Lords. The appointment of these by the Crown would not give satisfaction in the colonies; while the selection of them by the colonial legislatures would become a subject of party strife; and every new ministry in Ottawa or Melbourne would send over a fresh representative. Completely impracticable is the

idea of a Delegation formed from the British and the Colonial Parliaments. A parliament can govern a country ; it cannot rule over various parliaments. If the empire had one common government and constitution, each colony would exercise a certain joint control over all the others ; and yet Australia and South Africa have no more in common with each other than either has with any foreign State ; though they agree, for example, in this, that neither wishes to have anything to do with the fishery dispute between Canada and the United States. It is just this parliamentary meddling in their affairs that the colonists object to ; because such meddling, in most cases, only does harm,—as is shown by the condition of the Cape. Finally, a practical Federation, a state union, is impossible without a commercial union ; now there is wanting that continuity of territory which is absolutely essential to such a union ; and none of the self-governing colonies would give up its independence in matters of trade, and renounce its revenues ; the diversity of interests is too great for that ; even a differential system of tariffs would not work.

But it is nevertheless possible, perhaps, to strengthen in another way the bond between the colonies and the mother country. The principal proposal has been to establish a defensive union. The colonies can defend themselves against invasion ; but, having no navy, they cannot protect their commerce,—for that they have to fall back on the help of England. The question therefore arises—What forces has England at her disposal for the defence of herself and her widely scattered possessions in case of attack ?

VI.

As shown above, the magnificent Empire of England beyond the sea, is by no means the result of peaceful colonization, but has been created (chiefly since the

middle of the seventeenth century), by an almost un-interrupted series of wars and conquests. Every war which England has waged since Cromwell's time, with Holland and France,—especially the latter,—has had, as its guiding motive, colonial policy. Her ascendancy at sea forced her into Continental wars, and determined her alliances, and her position in regard to international questions. The continued extension of colonial territory, and, along with that, of commerce, furnished means towards carrying on those wars, and towards ever fresh expansions of the empire,—with which, of course, the national wealth rapidly increased. The result of this development was that, in 1815, England was the dominant maritime and colonial power.

Since that time circumstances have decidedly changed. England is, indeed, more than ever a colonial power; not only have the territories which then belonged to her attained a great internal development, but the empire, as a whole, has, through a continuous series of peaceful colonizations, as also through violent annexations, steadily increased. West Australia was declared a British colony in 1829; Victoria, in 1834; South Australia, in 1836; Queensland, in 1859; the Falkland Islands, in 1837; the Fiji Islands, in 1879; Rotumah, in 1880. At the Cape, Caffraria was annexed in 1866; Basutoland, in 1868; Griqualand, in 1876; Walfisch Bay, in 1879. Portugal ceded Delagoa Bay in 1881. Besides these, the following places in Africa were acquired:—Lagos in 1861; the Dutch portion of the Gold Coast, in 1872; Berbera, on the Red Sea, in 1884; the protectorate over the Niger territory was declared in 1886. In Asia, over and above the enlargement of the Indian Empire, there were added:—The Straits Settlements from 1819 onwards; in 1839, Aden; in 1843, Hong-Kong; in 1846, Labuan; in 1855, Perim; in 1874, Ladesch in Arabia; in 1875, Moham-mereh, at the mouth of the Euphrates; in 1877, Quetta; in 1878, Cyprus; in 1883, North Borneo.

Besides, the development of the Dominion of Canada as far as the Pacific Ocean, and the delimitation of its territory on the side of the United States—are events of the most recent times. But vastly as the trans-oceanic Empire of England has increased during this period, she is no longer the sole colonial Power in the sense in which this was the case in 1815. In America, the United States have, with wonderful rapidity, taken their place beside her, on equal terms, as a Great Power. France has founded in Algiers an empire already stretching on towards Tunis; and she would like to have something to say in Egypt. She has also conquered Cochin China, has forced a protectorate on Annam and Madagascar, and has gained a footing in New Caledonia, Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands. The Dutch colonies in the Malay Archipelago have been very greatly extended. Finally, Germany has become one of the colonial powers, and has promptly proved to England that the time when she could assume that *she* had a claim to every unoccupied spot beyond the sea is at an end. Nor has the British navy been able to maintain its former position. If it is still, in an absolute sense, stronger than the navy of any other country, that of France comes very near it; and it would be no match for a combination of the French, with one or more of the fleets of even the second rank. But the fighting force of England by land has actually declined; and now, in this respect, she must be accounted only a second-rate Power. It is true that she has carried a series of little wars to a successful issue; but these were waged against tribes ignorant of the methods of European warfare. Whilst formerly no great war was carried on in Europe, in which Great Britain did not sooner or later take part, she has, since 1815, only once (—in the Crimean war, and in alliance with France) interfered, in a military sense, in European complications,—and then not with parti-

cular success. On the other hand, during the great changes in the map of Europe brought about by the wars of 1859, 1864, 1866, 1870-1, she has looked on inactive. In 1878, when the Russian successes threatened her position in the East, she was forced to be content with a dubious compromise; in 1883, she prosecuted her Egyptian enterprise in no very brilliant manner, and in 1885 gave way before Russia in Afghanistan. If, therefore, a French writer in former years called England "a polype with a dwarf body, and gigantic tentacles clutching the globe," it must now be said that the elasticity of those tentacles is decidedly not what it formerly was; whilst, on the other hand, all over the world English interests are at stake, and no great Continental or transoceanic struggle leaves England untouched.

Unquestionably the material resources of England are infinitely greater now than at the beginning of the century; she could without difficulty raise hundreds of millions for war purposes, and she possesses the largest dockyards in the world. But two questions suggest themselves here: first, will England, in a great struggle, have *time* to draw out her resources? Fleets and armies do not start into existence at the word of command. The art of war, totally revolutionized by railways, telegraphs, breech-loaders, torpedoes, and big armies, has made it possible to decide the fate of a nation in a few weeks. What resources France possesses, her rapid recovery after the Peace of Frankfort has shown; yet in 1871 she was compelled to acknowledge herself beaten after a struggle of seven months. And what is the small army of England compared with the armies of the great Powers of the Continent? The second question is this: Has not the vulnerability of England become infinitely greater with the extension of her Empire and her commerce? The fleet of England is in no condition to defend her mercantile

marine, scattered as this is over all seas. That marine in 1818, when England exercised unquestioned dominion at sea, comprised 2,426,000 tons, whilst now the British flag flies over 28,326,000 tons, and the total value has risen from 60,000,000*l.* to 966,000,000*l.* sterling. Of the foreign possessions, Canada and Australia are, very likely, in a position to defend themselves against hostile attack; India alone possesses an independent field army; all the other colonies would have to fall back upon their inconsiderable garrisons; and the English fleet would be compelled, partly to oppose the leading armament of the enemy, partly to guard the coast of Great Britain. We need not in such circumstances even think of a successful landing after defeat in an action at sea; we take into consideration only the fact that the population of England now depends essentially, for its means of subsistence, on supplies from abroad. In 1810, the import of wheat was reckoned at about 3 per cent. of the total consumption; it now amounts to 55 per cent.; the total import of food in 1883 amounted in value to 194,000,000*l.* sterling, or close upon half the total imports of the country. Of this, 102,782,000*l.* represented vegetable, and 51,217,000*l.* animal food,—or, taken together, about 54 per cent. of the total estimated cost of the necessaries of life for the whole nation. There is scarcely a form of nutriment which England is not compelled to draw to some extent from foreign countries. The same statement holds good of raw material used in the various branches of industry. Thus the cotton manufacture averaged between 1881 and 1885, 1,440,000,000 lbs.; that of jute, 440,000,000 lbs.; and of these the raw material was imported absolutely. In the woollen manufactures, which amounted to 341,000,000 lbs., and in those of flax and hemp, which amounted to 380,000,000 lbs., the raw material in great part came from abroad. What the consequences would be, were these supplies

cut off for ever so short a time, is a subject well worth consideration.

At any rate, the position of England is such, that at the present moment, when complications threaten which must affect her at more than one point, it is of the highest importance to inquire what, from a military and political point of view, is the position, in respect of fighting power, of the British Empire.⁸

VII.

THERE can be no doubt that India forms the most vital point in the British Empire beyond the sea; consequently, the whole energy of British statesmen ought to be directed, on the one hand, to securing the north-west frontier threatened by Russia,—on the other, to keeping the way clear from England to the peninsula of the Ganges. In former times, England grasped in a masterly way the necessity of obtaining solid pillars on which this road is built—and that in two directions. Down to the cutting of the Isthmus of Suez the only road to India was that round the

⁸ On this subject, see some valuable remarks by Otto Wachs (formerly major in the Prussian service), in his work: "*Die Weltstellung Englands, militärisch-politisch beleuchtet, namentlich mit Bezug auf Russland.*" *Mit 7 Karten: Cassel, Th. Fischer.* Wachs, though here and there a little bold in his statements, shows an accuracy of judgment that is the outcome of conscientious study. Hübner, in his otherwise excellent work, "*Durch das Britische Reich,*" 2 Bde, 1886, passes over these questions almost in silence. Some points are touched upon in four papers on "The Present Position of European Politics," in the *Fortnightly Review* (January—April, 1887), attributed to Sir Charles Dilke. [See also "*The Balance of Military Power in Europe; an Examination of the War Resources of Great Britain and the Continental States,*" by Colonel J. F. Maurice, R.E.; also an article entitled "*The Fortifications of England,*" by Colonel E. Mitchell, R.E., in the *Universal Review*, vol. i. p. 210.—TB.]

Cape. The Cape had been occupied by the Dutch from the year 1652, while the French possessed, on the East coast of Africa, Isle de France and Réunion—the headquarters of those cruisers which did so much damage to English commerce. In the war against the French Empire, England captured both positions,—taking the Cape from the Dutch, and Isle de France, or Mauritius, from the French. The latter is even yet of military importance, being a coaling-station of the first rank, and having the fortified harbour of Port Louis and its docks; the importance of the island, too, has increased since the French, in quite recent times, gained a footing in Madagascar. To be sure, the Cape has, in the meantime, lost much of its value in regard to India, whilst it forms of itself a point open to attack. Only Simon's Bay (not Table Bay) has any fortifications; moreover, England through her impolitic action, already referred to, has severely shaken her position in the Colony. Nevertheless, the Cape, in a war with France, would become, from a military point of view, a place of great consequence; for France can easily destroy England's communications with India by way of the Mediterranean, but she cannot cut her off from the old road by sea round the Cape, along which she still possesses as military and victualing depots, St. Helena and Ascension.—Of course, under ordinary circumstances, the road to India by the Mediterranean is, since the opening of the Suez Canal, by far the more important of the two,—were it only that, in comparison with the Cape route, it is shorter by 1710 geographical miles. The entrance of the Mediterranean is commanded by Gibraltar,—a fortress in three tiers, cut out of the solid rock, and affording safe shelter to a garrison of 6000 men. Its drawback—from the naval point of view—is its want of docks. Malta, the next position, is almost as strong; it is situated at the most important crossing-point of the Mediterranean. In 1800 England wrested both the

rocky islands of this important stronghold from France, into whose hands it had fallen, from those of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. At the Peace of Amiens England promised to evacuate it, but put off her departure so long that this actually was made a ground for the renewal of hostilities.

Since that time the art of fortification has done its best to render these rock-islands, inaccessible as they are by nature,—impregnable. The south and west sides are formed by steep walls of rock, whilst on the north side the harbours of Marza Musietto and Porto Grande, defended by the forts of San Elmo and Vittoria, afford safe anchorage for a large fleet. Headquarters of the English Mediterranean squadron, furnished with great dockyards and arsenals, as well as a garrison of 6000 sailors and marines, the calling place for all steamship liners trading with the East,—Malta commands both sections of the Mediterranean, and could hardly be taken save after a decided defeat at sea, and then only through famine and a blockade maintained by powerful fleets. Besides, the peaceful population of these splendidly cultivated islands—a peculiar mixture of Italian and Saracenic blood—though zealously Catholic, is very devoted to England, a large measure of local self-government having been granted to it. Down to 1863 England occupied a much stronger position in the eastern portion of the Mediterranean,—while she had under her protection the republic of the Ionian Islands. In that year, Lord Russell, inspired by philhellenic enthusiasm, abandoned them in favour of Greece—an act which called forth Prince Bismarck's well-known sarcasm about the downfall of states that begin to give away territory. At any rate, it was a piece of unpardonable shortsightedness that England, in this surrender, did not maintain her hold on a strategical point in Corfu to serve as a naval station. Lord Beaconsfield, indeed, more than made up for this carelessness by taking

possession of Cyprus through the treaty of the 6th June, 1878. England thus gained a solid footing in the Levant, which assures to her rapid communication with Rhodes, with Crete and Suda Bay in that island, with Besica Bay, the Dardanelles and the ports of Asia Minor; and which, above all, enables her to cover Alexandria and the Suez Canal. But it is an astonishing fact that with all that the Government has done through intelligent and able administration to increase the prosperity of the island, it has done next to nothing for the defence of the valuable harbour of Famagusta.—Yet more important than the occupation of Cyprus has been the occupation of Egypt, for England thereby completely commands the Suez Canal. Palmerston, with that obstinate blindness which, with all his penetration in other things, he often showed, opposed to the uttermost the magnificent undertaking of Lesseps. But the perseverance of the great Frenchman, supported by the influence of Napoleon III., overcame all obstacles, and on the opening of the Canal, it was instantly manifest that no power had a greater interest in it than England. Of the vessels which passed through in 1886, no fewer than seventy-seven per cent. carried the British flag. With admirable judgment, Disraeli, in 1876, availed himself of the financial embarrassments of the Khedive, —purchased the shares held by him, and thus secured for England a decided influence over the Canal; the interest in Egyptian affairs, increased in this way, forced Mr. Gladstone into the campaign of 1882. This campaign, from the military point of view, was entered upon without any plan,—witness the bombardment of Alexandria, when there was no force present to throw on shore, followed by the destruction of the city. Wolseley's lucky hit at Tel-el-Kebir, however, put a sudden end to the ascendancy of Arabi Pasha. Then followed, in truth, a piece of governing which for military and political incapacity stands without a

parallel. Aimless advances resulting in butcheries, undertaken from points that were tactically valueless (as, for example, the sandy waste of Suakim) alternated with still less rational retreats. The Soudan was abandoned, Gordon sent to his destruction and miserably left to perish. Of Lord Dufferin's plans for the reconstruction of the Government, not one was carried out; the administration fell into chaos, and the English Government, through its weakness and caprice, became an object of bitter hatred. Under Lord Salisbury matters have somewhat improved, yet France is trying to hold the present ministry to the promise of Mr. Gladstone, and presses for the evacuation of Egypt. England concluded a treaty on this point with the Porte; but the question of the evacuation was placed under such conditions that in fact the carrying out of the treaty could be indefinitely postponed. France and Russia therefore compelled the Sultan to refuse to ratify it; and so the matter stands. But considering the political, military, and commercial importance of the country, England cannot, without sustaining a severe defeat, yield to the French demand; and the neutralization of Egyptian territory is impossible, as long as one essential preliminary is wanting—namely, a settled national government, strong enough to maintain its neutrality. Unless the neutralization of the country were secured, the neutralization of the Canal [as it is now secured by the international treaty of October, 1888], would be very precarious; for the Power which holds Egypt is not very likely, in time of war, to withstand the temptation to lay its hand on the Canal. In any case, England has so managed the neutralization, that while no hostilities shall be permitted *in* the Canal and its approaches, she will constantly have a clear passage for her vessels of war. Even though she has bound herself never to close the mouths of the Canal, she commands the outlets, one by Malta and

Cyprus, and the other,—that is to say, the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb—by the fortress of Aden-Perim.—The bare, waterless, volcanic peninsula of Aden was occupied so long ago as 1839; it has since that time grown to be a considerable fortress. It was increased by the purchase of land on the west side of the bay, and now forms the second great coast-station on the road to India. The place was yet further strengthened by the occupation of:—the island of Perim, which lies to the west, at the entrance of the Strait, and possesses a deep and spacious harbour (1855); of Muscha on Tadshurra Bay, Saila, Berbera on the Somali coast, and the island of Socotra, lying to the east of Cape Gardafui. From that point the important port of Kurachee on the Indus is quickly reached. Kurachee, in General Roberts's opinion, is to be the base of England's defensive operations in Central Asia; yet, in spite of its importance, it is very inadequately fortified. On the other hand, Bombay, the headquarters of the fleet on the East India station, and furnished with large docks, is well defended, as also Point de Galle and Trincomalee, which latter joins hands, on the one side, with Mauritius, and on the other, with Singapore. For the defence of these positions much has been done in late years, but not by any means enough. In all India there is not a single dock fit to receive an armour-clad ship.—On the whole, the straight road to India is marked out by a series of strong places which furnish England with secure points of defence. It is true that the posture of affairs has very much changed since 1815: France has at her disposal a strong Mediterranean fleet; she possesses a large part of the North African coast, with the important port of Biserta, and has acquired in the Red Sea the station of Obock, which neutralizes Perim. If England considers as a counterpoise to this the new navy of Italy (which, after the occupation of Tunis by the French, would in

all probability fall into the scale against rather than for France)—on the other hand, it is acknowledged by English authorities that in the event of a war with France, the Suez Canal would be useless as a means of communication with India. It would be impossible for England to transport troops, munitions of war, and stores between France and Corsica on the one side, and Algiers and Tunis on the other; and to command the Mediterranean,—if at the same time she had to maintain her hold on the Channel, and defend her colonies.

England has unquestionably been guilty of gross negligence in omitting to construct the Tigris railway through Syria to the head of the Persian Gulf, although the first engineers, among them Colonel Chesney, and a Royal Commission appointed in 1865, have urgently recommended it; this railway would shorten the journey from London to Bombay by 1600 kilometres (1000 miles), and would permit of troops being transported to India in fourteen days. England (not to mention the advantage of more rapid trade communication) would then have, besides the Suez Canal, a route by land, and a new and important strategical line. This would of course be, in case of war with France, as unserviceable as the road through the Mediterranean, and, apart from that, not absolutely secure, since it would run through tracts inhabited by Bedouin robbers; and these, in case of war with Russia, for example, could be easily induced to render the railway unsafe. Nevertheless, in ordinary circumstances, the line would be most valuable in furnishing communication with India. That it has not been made, is one of the many blunders in the Eastern policy of England. The history of that policy cannot be pursued in detail in this place: let it suffice to mention that England has not been able to prevent the continual weakening of the Turkish Empire through the aggressive policy of Russia. Only in the Crimean War did she make a move in that direction; but she

allowed herself to be forced by Napoleon III. into a premature Peace, which left the power of Russia in the East virtually unimpaired, while its most decisive result—the neutralization of the Black Sea—Prince Gortschakoff got rid of on the first favourable opportunity. Besides, after the Peace of Paris in 1856, Russia carried out a series of successful campaigns, by which she subdued the Caucasus and the Khanates of Central Asia. British statesmen looked on at these events in absolute inactivity, or only tried to restrain Russia by representations and aimless negotiations; but they accepted every *fait accompli*, and dismissed all apprehension of Russia's ever threatening India, on the ground that it would be utterly impossible for her to penetrate the hundreds of miles of inhospitable desert and inaccessible ranges of mountains lying in her way. The tenacity and perseverance of Russian policy, however, have been able to overcome all obstacles; step by step Russia has advanced from the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea,—has brought the Turcoman tribes, one after another, under the sway of the Czar, and united their territories by railway with her base of operations in the Caucasus. To put a stop to all this, people in England knew nothing better than—to propose a joint commission for the delimitation of the Afghan frontier towards the west. Russia, after much delay, agreed; but meantime pushed on still farther, and in April, 1885, brought about a collision with the Afghans, in which the latter suffered a defeat under the very eyes of the Commission. Thereupon Mr. Gladstone assumed a defiant attitude, but ended by simply running away, and left Penjdeh, thus wrested from the Afghans, in Russian hands.

Through this weak policy England's *prestige* in Asia fell, and in the same proportion that of Russia rose, and with it belief in her invincibility. But over and above this, England's military position in those regions has

undergone a decided change. Afghanistan has been regarded from the earliest times as the bulwark of India: now, by Russia's advance to the frontier of Afghanistan, England has lost, so to speak, the insular position which, by reason of the wide tracts of territory lying between India and Russia, she formerly enjoyed. This state of things is absolutely new in her history. At home England, protected by her fleet, was able to throw her forces on that point of the enemy's territory which she deemed most vulnerable: *now* for the first time she has, as her neighbour, a great military Power occupying territory which virtually touches hers. She must be prepared to defend herself against that Power,—and it can choose its own time for delivering the attack. She could not afford to see any further advance of Russia without taking action. Lord Napier of Magdala has some striking remarks on this subject in a minute which he drew up in 1878. It is often maintained, he says, by persons who claim to deliver a decisive judgment, that we shall be safer if we remain within our own mountain frontier. But a long chain of mountains which can be forced in many places, affords no security to those who remain behind it. India has often been attacked through her mountain defiles; these have never been successfully defended. She has waited in order to begin the struggle in her own plains, and she has been beaten every time (Correspondence respecting Central Asia, 1878). England must therefore secure the important outposts; and with this view she has occupied Quetta, and strengthened her military position in that quarter by a railway over the Bolan Pass to Candahar.

Meantime affairs in Afghanistan have assumed a threatening aspect. England bound herself by Art. 3 of the Treaty of Gundamak (May 26, 1879) to support the Ameer Abdurrhaman against all attack from without. Now, quite recently, the tyrannical government of this prince has brought about a rebellion, which he has

succeeded in putting down—but only for the moment. The situation is rendered more critical by the fact that Russian troops occupy the frontier of Afghanistan. Russia fans the flame of rebellion by emissaries and pretenders, and can, when she deems things ripe, bring on at any moment a frontier conflict, which will give her a pretext for intervention. She has already occupied Kerki, whereby she commands the left bank of the Oxus as far as the upper waters of that river. If she marches into Afghan Turkestan, which has a very slight connection with the other parts of the Ameer's dominions, and is occupied by a different race, —England is not in a position to come to the aid of the Ameer in that distant northern province. It is even doubtful whether she could, at the right time and with effect, assist Herat against a Russian attack; and Herat is the key of the position westward, corresponding with Candahar.⁹ Yet England's *prestige* in Asia would once more suffer a rude shock if she looked on at a Russian intervention in Afghanistan without assuming the offensive.—Thus the moment visibly approaches when the two great antagonists will stand face to face. The struggle seems, considering the character of Russian policy, inevitable. Nobody can believe that Russia has made these enormous sacrifices of blood and treasure in order to rule over countries which for a long time to come will cost more than they are worth. In Skobelev's phrase, the skin would not have been worth the tanning. England's power in Asia is to be broken, and at the same time pressure applied, which will prevent her from opposing Russia's designs on Constantinople. Thus the Central Asia question is but a part of that Eastern question which forms the fermenting element of trouble in European politics; in the struggle, therefore, of which I have spoken, so many other interests

⁹ The delimitation arrangement now at last completed has brought Russia twelve miles nearer Herat, and has not defined the northern frontier, where Russia is particularly active.

of Russia and of England will be involved, so many forces and circumstances—impossible to calculate upon beforehand—will come into play, that it would be idle to hazard any conjectures as to the course of it. Only this can be said: the issue will be decisive in regard to England's position as a Power in the world.

VIII.

LET us now cast one more glance at the other parts of the Colonial Empire. In Eastern Asia, the Indian Empire has been enlarged by the annexation of Upper Burma; thus the French advance southward from the side of Cochin China has been checked. In China, England possesses in Hong-Kong (acquired in 1842) a position strong by nature; its defences, however, are imperfect, and are only now being improved. Besides Hong-Kong, there are coaling-stations, on Chinese territory, at Amoy and Shanghai; on Japanese territory, at Hiogo and Yokohama. Port Hamilton was occupied as a counterpoise to the Russian fortresses of the Amour region, Nikolajevsk and Vladivostock; but it was abandoned, the climate being intolerable (for soldiers), and all means of subsistence wanting; besides, the anchorage is not specially good, and the erection of the necessary buildings would involve enormous expense. Moreover, China has bound herself by treaty not to permit any other Power to construct a harbour in the Nauhan group of islands, or in Corea. If we now cross the Pacific Ocean, we touch English ground again at Vancouver Island, which lies off the continental territory of British Columbia, and possesses in Esquimault an excellent harbour. This possession is valuable on account of its situation, its coal and iron mines, and its wealth of wood; yet Vancouver, as well as Port Moody,—

the extremity of the Pacific railway,—is still almost destitute of defence. The railway is of great importance not only from a commercial, but from a military point of view. By the aid of a direct service of steamers from Queenstown to Halifax, and from Port Moody to Hong-Kong, it forms the most rapid means of communication with Eastern Asia—shortening the journey by 1013 kilometres; and it will admit of troops and war material being carried to Esquimaux in two or three weeks, while the connection by steamer hitherto existing, required several months. Halifax, the eastern extremity of the line, and the most important harbour in British America, is a coaling-station of the first class, and is well defended by forts, but it has no docks. In the interior of the great Dominion of Canada there is not a single fortified place, except Quebec; the frontier towards the United States is absolutely defenceless. Towards the south of the States, is Hamilton in Bermuda, possessing the one solitary dock in America; it is strongly fortified. The works at Port Royal in Jamaica and in the island of St. Lucia approach completion. Antigua and Barbadoes are coaling-stations of the second class.

The Australian colonies (great as has been their development), New Zealand, and the Fiji Islands, are almost defenceless; we can therefore easily understand that when, in 1885, a rupture between England and Russia was imminent, people in Melbourne and Sydney feared that the Russian Amour Squadron might make its appearance any day. The Australians are at the greatest distance, and in war are the most exposed to danger. They are a community living on coasts or on islands, and therefore specially liable to attack, save in so far as the English fleet protects them. It is natural, therefore; that these colonies, in which a very warm patriotic English feeling prevails, should enter very heartily into the scheme of an Imperial Federation,

—for the promotion of which a league was founded in London in 1884.

In the course of the Colonial Exhibition of 1886, which attracted to England an unprecedented number of colonists, and brought them into contact with England and with each other,—a deputation, acting on the principle of confining itself to what was then practically attainable, waited on Lord Salisbury. It advocated the holding of a Conference composed of representatives of the mother country and the colonies, and authorized to discuss such questions as—the establishment of a system of Imperial defence, the improvement of the postal communication, and, in general, the working out of a stronger bond of union among the various parts of the British Empire. The Queen's Speech at the end of the Session, accordingly stated that a growing endeavour was manifest, to draw closer in every practical way the bonds which unite the different parts of the Empire; and this was followed up in December, 1886, by a circular from the Colonial Minister, containing an invitation to such a Conference. This circular laid it down that all political questions should be excluded from the discussion; that the meeting should occupy itself principally with the organization of defence, and next with the improvement of the post and telegraph service; finally, that the Conference should be purely deliberative, and that it should not be bound by any resolutions, arrived at by the majority of votes. On the 4th of April, 1887, the Conference was opened; it consisted of representatives of all the Australian Colonies, of New Zealand, Newfoundland, the Dominion of Canada, the Cape, and Natal.

The importance of its task corresponded, as Lord Salisbury said, with the greatness and the extent of the Empire. Separated from one another by broad oceans, as its different parts were, the question was, how far they were able to find themselves at one in

matters affecting all, and to counterbalance distance by a common understanding, and by organization.

The Conference attained remarkable results. In the first place, the fortification of the coaling-stations was decided upon. England has at her disposal, on her own territory, a network of these stations, such as no other nation possesses; and she would have, therefore, in a naval war, which now depends wholly upon coal, a priceless advantage over the other nations, since, in time of war, the collieries of neutrals would be closed against her enemies. These stations have, till now, been very inadequately protected; but they must be capable of actual defence, if they are to remain constantly accessible to English vessels, and not fall into the hands of the enemy. This business, the Conference decided, is to be set about at once,—the Government furnishing the defensive equipment, and the colony concerned bearing the cost of construction. Moreover, the connection of the colonies with the mother country is not to be of such a nature that each individual colony shall be involved in all the complications of European politics, and be an active ally in every war in which England may engage; their co-operation is to be limited to their own defence, the mother country undertaking the duty of protecting their interests on the high seas, and of maintaining their communications with other countries. Carrying out this principle, it was next agreed, as respects the Australian colonies, that the Admiralty, in consideration of an annual contribution of 122,000*l.*, to be drawn from those colonies in common, would undertake to add permanently to the squadron on the Australian station five fast cruisers and five torpedo-boats, which should not leave Australian waters without the consent of the colonial governments. In regard to the coasts and harbours of the colonies, it is clear that all cannot be fortified; the greater number of coast towns will be sufficiently protected if they can repel

the attack of a single hostile cruiser. The positions which are of greatest strategical importance are to be selected and fortified; they will serve at the same time as store depots for the navy, and places of refuge for merchant-vessels. Port Philip and Port Jackson are already strongly fortified. As respects Torres Straits, it is arranged that the Colonies shall provide the defence works and the garrison, and that the Government shall find the artillery. In regard to the Cape, the Government has declared itself prepared to give a contribution towards fortifying Table Bay. To promote intercourse with the Colonies, the postage between England and Australia is to be reduced from 6*d.* to 3*d.* The Colonies offer an annual grant of 170,000*l.* for a line of steamers that will make the voyage from London to Adelaide in a little over four weeks. A line of steamers and a telegraph cable from Port Moody to Australia have been arranged for.

On the whole, what has been obtained by the Conference is certainly, for the present, very satisfactory. The deliberations, under the able direction of the President, Sir Henry Holland, have united the representatives of the different colonies,—who were hitherto unacquainted with the home authorities, and with each other,—into an organized body of acknowledged weight and influence. The understanding thus established will, in all probability, develop itself still further; and even though nothing very great has been achieved at the outset, yet the course of the Conference has fully borne out the words of Lord Salisbury at the opening:—The feeling is universal that this Assembly will begin a new order of things, which may lead to results of the greatest importance; and far-distant deliberative Assemblies of the Empire may one day look back upon this Conference as the origin of their greatness and prosperity.

IX.

BUT it is not enough to fortify the coaling-stations only; the same necessity exists in regard to the docks, arsenals and commercial ports. Positions which have to be defended by a naval squadron are only a burden. For if the naval force is to guard and defend them, it is not available for active service against the enemy, and is powerless to protect the merchant fleet. The effective fortification of these positions on land will therefore very much increase the value of the naval forces, and permit of their being turned exclusively against the enemy. Besides, when the enemy knows that he is as good as powerless against these fortifications, he will not venture to attack them. People in England clearly perceive all this: the only mistake seems to be that the Government has not the courage to take example from Lord Palmerston's "defence loan," and boldly ask Parliament for powers—to make instantly available, by means of a loan, the sum of from 7,000,000*l.* to 8,000,000*l.* required, or to postpone the repayment of the National Debt for ten years, by which the entire amount (according to General Hamley's estimate, about 6,250,020*l.*) could be raised.¹ The ordinary method of raising money would put too heavy a charge on the naval estimates, and besides, it would not secure rapid progress in the work. The English ports and arsenals are not sufficiently fortified. The fleet may be strong enough to defend them against hostile attack, as long as it has not suffered a great defeat in the Channel, but it is necessary to be prepared for all emergencies. In this age of telegraphs it would be very possible through false intelligence to draw away the fleet for a short time from the place selected as the objective point of attack. The British islands possess

¹ See page 92, note.

in abundance good harbours and estuaries in which it would be easy to effect a landing; and one may imagine the consequences of a descent on Newcastle, Glasgow, Bristol, Dundee,—or even of a repetition of Hoche's Expedition to the south-west coast of Ireland, where England's enemies would be received by the "Nationalists" with open arms. An effective defence against the modern artillery of armour-clad vessels cannot be made at a moment's notice. And not even the great naval harbours can be considered as in a position of absolute security. In Ireland the only fortified place is Cork; it has two forts, but is totally destitute of protection on the land side against an enemy disembarking in the neighbourhood. The enemy, once in possession of the forts, can pass over to England, on the west coast of which, only Milford Haven possesses a fort—one of sixteen guns; the Mersey is defended by the Seaforth battery of seven pieces of heavy artillery. The whole of Scotland and the east coast of England down as far as Harwich, which has a fort mounted with five guns, are, in a military sense, unprotected. It is somewhat better with the defences of the Thames, which protect Sheerness—(one of the four great naval stations), Chatham, Woolwich, Purfleet and Deptford, with their arsenals, dockyards, manufactories of arms and munitions of war,—and above all, London. Yet these defences are regarded by professional judges as insufficient, Chatham, in particular, being unprotected towards the west. As London is not only the heart of England (in the sense that Paris is the heart of France), but also the heart of the entire colonial empire, and at the same time the greatest commercial city in the world, it ought to be surrounded, like Paris, by a ring of strong forts armed with long-range guns; and this, in the opinion of competent military judges, could be effected for 5,000,000*l.* sterling. Hitherto attention has been paid chiefly to the defence of the South coast. Here we find the great, strongly fortified harbours of

Plymouth and Portsmouth, the latter of which, protected by the peninsula of Gosport and the Isle of Wight, can receive the whole English fleet. Portsmouth will be the headquarters in any naval war. Besides these, Falmouth, Portland and other points, are well defended. In these harbours the maritime power of England centres; here stand her largest arsenals, docks, shipbuilding yards, and magazines containing everything that is necessary for the building, equipping, repairing and victualling of ships of war.

Yet certain English authorities maintain that even the harbour of Portsmouth is not absolutely secure against a sudden attack; and Wachs lays stress on the fact that the opposite coast of France, in respect of naval defence and of the strength of fortifications, is more than a match for the south coast of England. First in importance is Cherbourg, with its powerful works, blasted out of the solid rock, and its capacious naval basins, all which were completed by Napoleon III. In fact, so strong are the defences of Cherbourg (commanding a large sweep of both land and sea), that this fortress may be regarded as simply impregnable, and as the strongest possible base for a really effective naval offensive. Joining hands with it from the north are Calais and Dunkirk,—likewise fortresses of the first rank, and Gravelines and Havre, of the second. Behind them lies the line of land-fortresses of St. Omer, Lille, Douay, Arras, connected with Calais and with each other by double-lined railways; and in rear of these, though more distant, lies Paris, the centre of defence, with all its resources. Whilst, therefore, the English coasts show many weak points, the north coast of France may be considered unassailable. And as regards the offensive, it is scarcely necessary to observe that since the time of Napoleon I. the situation has completely changed,—insomuch that the distance from Calais to

Dover is now traversed in an hour and a half, whilst railways enable troops and artillery to be embarked in a very short time. France will, indeed, hardly think of an attack on the south coast of England; Wachs seems to overlook the fact that the latter is better fitted for defence than the coast of France. It rises sheer and high out of the water, so that every gun is protected against the attack of ships, whilst, on the other hand, every shot hitting a ship from above, places her in imminent danger. The inconsiderable defences of Dover are, on this account, stronger than those of Calais on the opposite coast.² Thus the English, if they possess sufficient artillery, will be able to defend the South coast; but the enemy who knows this will throw himself on some other points that are really weak. Even in regard to such weak points we must consider that, with England's network of railways and telegraph communication to all parts, troops could be rapidly conveyed to any spot, to oppose a landing; and a landing is, of necessity, a business that is executed slowly. To be sure, troops and artillery must be in existence, and in sufficient force. Lastly, in so far as the defence does not depend on pitched battles, the militia would be very serviceable.

X.

THOUGH coast defence is a matter of the highest importance to England, yet the fleet still remains the principal instrument of her power. By it she has won her place in the world. Its victories, from La Hogue and Trafalgar, have more than anything else established her Empire and raised her to the

² Wachs, therefore, does not seem to be correct when he expresses his belief that a landing could be easily effected at Dover.

position of first naval power. It forms the bond, which unites the various members of the Empire, scattered as they are over the globe. Its business is to ward off the attack of the enemy, to beat him, and to protect the British merchant fleet on all seas. Whether it can do this, and what it can do, nobody can tell; it is an unknown quantity, for, since the time when it attained the greatest comparative strength, a complete revolution has taken place in everything connected with warfare. What gave the British fleet victory was, above all, the incomparable aptness of the English sailors and seafaring people; on this depended their superiority in manœuvring their three-masted, full-rigged ships. In the days of sailing vessels the sailor was, first and foremost, a skilled workman: he set the sails and looked after everything connected with the motion of the ship. As soon as the ship went into action, motion, as far as possible, ceased, and the sailor was a soldier pure and simple. But now these two functions are divided. The work of moving the ship is attended to by a small number of engineers, all the rest of the crew being turned to account in the fighting. Here, of course, the experienced seaman will have the advantage, because he alone will use his arms with accuracy and coolness; and he has a special opportunity of showing his qualities in the smaller class of vessels. As regards the officers, the steady handling of a ship in action is now a much nicer and more difficult business than it formerly was; and officers are more frequently called on to command a vessel. Each ship and engine form a single fighting machine, and with it the commander must have an accurate acquaintance, if he wishes to carry it, in action, exactly within range for his own object, yet out of range of any crushing fire from the enemy; at the same time he must avoid collision with friend or foe. Momentum, the product of mass and velocity, is here so important an element, that every impact

puts the vessel in jeopardy; to this must be added the danger arising from the enemy's heavy shot and torpedoes. The management of a sailing ship in action was much easier than that of a modern armour-clad; the more artificial the instrument, the better and more adroit the worker it requires. If, then, England possesses a great initial advantage in her experienced seafaring people, the circumstances have, it must be said, radically changed; and it remains to be seen how her navy will answer the new condition of things, and the new demands made upon it.

But farther,—the efficiency of a fleet depends in a totally different degree from what it did formerly, on the floating machine. A weak, slow vessel can, even with the choicest crew, effect nothing against a quick, powerful vessel. The commander is now-a-days the driver of a great engine; and this must answer its purpose, or else the ablest captain is of no avail. Finally, it is in the nature of modern ships of war that they require to be built on special lines; and their construction costs much time and money. On the other hand, the modern iron ship, with all its engines, can be constructed much more rapidly than was the wooden ship of old days. The division of labour and accuracy in all details are helps that were formerly unknown. In the civil war in America, the North, in the course of a single year, brought their weak navy to a condition which enabled them to establish an effective blockade on the ports and the long coast-line of the Southern States. But their opponents had no fleet either—only single cruisers, which went out not to fight, but to destroy merchantmen. In a great war with England the blows would fall rapidly. Vessels of war cannot be improvised, and merchant ships can no longer be turned into fighting ships as in former times. Everything that has been tried in this regard has led to the conclusion that, even after large expenditure of money, the best fast-sailing steamers

can be transformed into only very defective cruisers ; for purposes of actual fighting, they are perfectly useless : the German volunteer fleet in 1870 remained a paper one. According to English experience, even those ships which, with a view to their being possibly turned to account as fighting ships, have been strengthened in their build according to the directions and at the expense of the Admiralty, are not strong enough to bear the strain of modern artillery in action. Needless to add that all the steamers built with the express purpose of making fast passages, are so weak in build, that their employment in war is out of the question. Ships, therefore, not specially built as men-of-war are to be considered simply as transports. Hence the late arrangements which the Government have concluded with the American lines, have merely provided that their vessels may be taken up and employed as armed troopers.

Another circumstance which has completely changed the position of England is, that whereas, after her victory over the combined French and Spanish fleets in 1805 she exercised undisputed sway in all seas, so that no coalition of the other Powers dared to oppose her,—at the present time a number of other states are possessed of formidable navies. Of these the navy of France appears to be a match for that of England. This rapid advance of the French marine (as well as the fortification of Cherbourg) is due specially to Napoleon III. As lately as 1852 the superiority of England was so undisputed that nobody thought of its being in danger. At that time France had only twenty-seven ships of the line, of which the half were unfit for service, and only two were screw vessels ; in 1858 she possessed forty steamships of the line and forty-six steam frigates. According to the list issued in April, 1887, by Admiral Aube, Minister of Marine, the French fleet in active service consists of 360 vessels, viz. 22 armoured corvettes, 10 armoured cruisers, 11 armoured

coast-defence ships, 4 armoured gun-boats, 10 floating batteries, 9 cruisers of the first class, 15 of the second, 18 of the third, 3 torpedo-cruisers, 16 fast boats (*avisos*) of the first class, 26 of the second, 5 of the third, 14 fast transports, 8 fast torpedo-boats, 20 gun-boats, 42 gun-sloops, 1 gun-pontoon, 9 sea-going torpedo-boats, 68 torpedo-boats, 26 transports, 16 sailing-vessels, 3 training-ships.³ To these 360 fighting ships (though, strictly speaking, the training-ships ought not to be reckoned among them,) must be added 60 vessels, of which some are still on the stocks, and some have been already launched, viz. 2 armoured gun-boats, 1 torpedo-cruiser, 2 fast boats (*avisos*), 2 fast transports, and 53 torpedo-boats; so that the fleet numbers in all 420 vessels. Of this total, 67 are condemned, and 18 of them passed out of the service in the year 1887. Therefore, though all the remaining vessels cannot be pronounced battle-worthy, the strength of the French navy may be set down at 353 ships.⁴ The English fleet

³ In 1888, the French navy consisted of 388 steam ships of war, of which 41 were ironclads, 10 building,—29 large cruisers, and 140 steam-vessels and torpedo-boats.—*Tr.*

⁴ The French torpedo-boats, lately constructed, seem to be very faulty. A short time ago, No. 102 upset within sight of Toulon, and six of her crew were drowned. On Thursday, March 21st of the present year, torpedo-boat No. 110 left Havre for Cherbourg, and when off Barfleur, went down in a gale of wind, with her crew of fourteen hands. Of the torpedo-boats lately constructed for the French Government, no fewer than fifty have proved so unseaworthy, that they will have to be overhauled at a cost of 600*l.* each. And when the money is expended, it is by no means certain that they will be efficient. So much is admitted by Admiral Krantz, Minister of Marine. The late Minister, Admiral Aube, did not believe in large ironclads. He recommended light, fast-sailing cruisers, attended by a cloud of torpedo-boats, as the fighting fleet of the future; accordingly, he had these torpedo-boats built. It is very doubtful whether we manage these things better than they do in France. Our torpedo-boats, and even larger vessels, leave much to be desired. The performance of the *Sandfly* during the naval manœuvres of last summer does not tend

on January 1st, 1887, numbered 533 vessels, made up as follows:—62 armour-clad ships, 34 iron corvettes, 28 gun-sloops, 40 cruisers, 134 gunboats, 11 transports, 74 guardships, 150 torpedo-boats. Of these ships, however, a large number are, in the opinion of Admiral Symonds, no longer seaworthy; of the 62 armour-clads, only 15 can be driven at full speed; all French ships are armed with breech-loading guns, of English ships only 9. The English navy estimates for 1884-85 amounted to 8,600,000*l.*,⁵ the French to 7,400,000*l.*, of which sums there were expended on building and equipping ships: in France, 1,819,360*l.*; in England, 912,445*l.* France had, in course of building, 15 armour-clads and 8 armoured gun-boats; England, 12.⁶ In France 6 armour-clads were made ready for sea, in England 2. In shipbuilding France employed 22,852 workmen, England 18,441. Besides this, two points worthy of consideration are favourable to France. In England the crews of the vessels are raised by the Government exactly as if they were the ships of private

to inspire much confidence in her or in the class of vessel to which she belongs.—Tr.

⁵ The navy estimates for the year ending March 31st, 1889, provide for the expenditure of 13,082,800*l.*, and the services of 62,400 seamen and marines. In the official list of vessels, issued last January, there appeared the names of 400 vessels of all classes "in commission," besides 105 engaged in harbour service.—Tr.

⁶ In 1888, 28 vessels were in process of construction for the English navy, viz. 7 screw cruisers, 2 screw sloops, 13 screw gun-boats, 1 screw torpedo depôt (*Vulcan*, 8, 6,620 tons, 12,000 h.p.), 1 sailing brig (*Mayflower*), 1 composite vessel (*Research*, 320 tons, 450 h.p.), 1 torpedo gun-boat, 2 composite gun-boats. The largest vessel building was the *Blake*, of the "Admiral" class,—12 guns, 12,000 tons, 20,000 h.p. Six of the new gun-boats, each of 735 tons, and carrying two heavy guns, are engaged up to 2,500 h.p., with natural draught, and 4,500 h.p., with forced draught, which ought, other things being equal, to give these boats a high rate of speed. The *Sheldrake*, of this class, was launched on March 30th of the present year. She is expected to develop a speed of twenty-one knots.—Tr.

persons; and it requires a considerable time to get a sufficient number of men. During the Crimean War even the finest ships had to wait five or six months before getting together their complements; indeed, it was with very great trouble that the crews of the Baltic fleet were raised to their full number; and these same crews were, according to the emphatic avowal of Admiral Napier, "most miserable." In France, on the contrary, there exists the system of the *inscription maritime*, somewhat similar to the German *wehrverfassung*. Every seaman fit for service, coasting sailors and fishermen included, belongs either actively or as a reserve man to the navy, and if not already in service, may be summoned at any moment; so that each ship is within a few weeks manned with blue-jackets and marines, all of whom have gone through a course of training for service. It is true, the greater part of the naval reinforcements is drawn from the inland population. This system is highly prejudicial to the merchant-service, and in time of war leaves merchantmen and coasters idle; but it is very well adapted for naval warfare, and especially for a rapid offensive. But further: England, on account of her extended colonial empire, and the wide ramifications of her commercial interests, is compelled to keep almost the half of her fleet on distant stations. In October, 1886, of a total of 256 ships, 131 were stationed in or near the United Kingdom, 125 in foreign waters. Of course, these latter, in case of war would, as far as possible, be called home; but only the 24 ships of the Mediterranean squadron could be quickly on the spot; besides, the colonies could not be left without protection. The French fleet, on the other hand, always has its principal force concentrated in Toulon, Brest, and the Channel ports; and it has to defend comparatively unimportant interests of a commercial and colonial kind. France can, therefore, on the one hand, direct her heaviest blow against the

Channel fleet and England itself; on the other, she can block the way to India, and seize Egypt. Finally, if we consider, as I have already remarked, that the north coast of France is unassailable, while that of England offers a number of weak points, we may affirm that, for the time being, not England, but France, dominates the Channel.

But once more, how would things go if England were opposed not only to France, but to a coalition of enemies? Let us leave out of account even the two navies next in efficiency to that of France, namely, those of Italy and Germany; since it is, from political reasons, highly improbable that these states would, for the present, at any rate, ally themselves with France against England. The addition of the Russian or the American fleet would turn the scale against the English. Mr. Gladstone's statement, therefore, made in 1878, was quite inaccurate: namely, that the English fleet was as powerful as all the fleets of Europe put together; it may in fact be maintained that the British fleet at present is by no means fit to discharge the duties which would devolve upon it in a great war. In the Egyptian enterprise of 1883,—when England had no enemy at sea,—after Admiral Seymour had brought together thirty-four ships from the Mediterranean station, the East India station, and the Channel fleet,—there remained only one ironclad of the first-class (*Hercules*), six smaller vessels, and a number of old ships, for the defence of the English coasts; while the forces left in charge of the Asiatic stations were quite inadequate.⁷

⁷ The Government has at last yielded to the representations of experts, speaking through the press, and notably in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, *St. James's Gazette*, and *Pall Mall Gazette*. On March 7th, Lord George Hamilton laid before the House of Commons the following proposal: "That it is expedient to authorize (a) the expenditure of a sum not exceeding 21,500,000*l.* for the purpose of building, arming,

Of the internal efficiency of the English fleet only professional men can judge, and the trial of it can be made only in war. Nevertheless, there are a few points which seem to justify serious reflection ; these are dealt with in the well-known paper by Lord Charles Beresford, Junior Lord of the Admiralty, drawn up in the summer of 1886. He declares plainly that, as was shown on the occasion of the threatened rupture with Russia in 1885, England was nowise prepared to wage a war by sea, and that the difference between what existed and what was required was very great. There was not, as in other Admiralties, a regular headquarters staff, for drawing up well-digested plans of war with the countries coming specially under consideration from time to time. And yet, owing to the extent of her foreign possessions, no country provoked the attack of an enemy more, or at more various points, than England ; and in this age of steam and electricity, the loss of a position or of a battle at the very outset, might be decisive. With regard to the *personnel* of the navy, Lord Charles considers the number of commanding officers sufficient, but says that of officers of the rank of lieutenant, 300 are required, and sub-lieutenants in still larger numbers. The number of engineers and stokers is quite inadequate, and cannot be increased rapidly, because only trained men are of any use. The transport is satisfactorily organized. In the Egyptian expedition the Government had, within

equipping, and completing for sea vessels for her Majesty's navy ; of this expenditure a sum not exceeding 10,000,000*l.* to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund in the seven years ending on March 31st, 1896, and a sum not exceeding 11,500,000*l.* to be issued out of the moneys provided by Parliament for naval services during the five financial years ending on March 31st, 1894." The Government intends to add seventy vessels to the navy. Sir E. J. Reed and Lord Charles Beresford hold that the Government proposals will add only from two to four vessels to the real fighting strength of the country.—*Ta.*

a very short time, 116 vessels placed at its disposal. The paper passes a severe censure on the want of sufficient depots for munitions of war, food supplies, coal, &c., and calls attention to the absence of any organization for placing in active service the seamen of the reserve. The entire forty-eight ships of the first French reserve could be made ready for service in forty-eight hours; in England, twenty, at the most, would be ready for sea, but not ready for action, in five days. The same difficulty occurs in completing the crews of coast-defence ships. The coaling-stations abroad are not sufficiently provided for, and ships have repeatedly had the greatest difficulty to get victualled. But the worst part of the business is that connected with guns and ammunition. The bursting cannon and defective small arms need not be mentioned: the fact is, guns even of small calibre do not exist in sufficient number to arm the fortresses; and the best powder comes from Germany. It is certain that the English fleet possesses artillery of but very moderate power; and many of the hastily-built ships have not answered the expectations of their builders and the public, as witness the sudden loss of the *Captain*, *Vanguard*, &c. The best crews in the world will not make a dogged fight in defective ships which prove unfit in action. With reference to the administration of the navy, the grossest abuses have lately been brought to light. Moreover, there seems to be an incontestable necessity that a professional sailor should be placed at the head of the Admiralty—not a civilian selected with an eye to Parliamentary duties, and changed with every change of ministry, so that each First Lord stops the reforms begun by his predecessor and begins new ones of his own. On the whole, England lies under a pressing necessity to strain every nerve to make good these defects, and to increase the hitting

power of her fleet,—a duty she has neglected out of a spirit of false economy.^s Only by reforms rapidly carried through, and by the establishment of colonial fleets, can the British navy be raised again to the level of its great mission.

We now come to consider a question relating to international law. Lord Palmerston committed an unpardonable blunder in rejecting, in 1857, the proposal of the United States, to which all the other Governments were ready to agree, viz. that private property at sea should, in time of war, be regarded as privileged, and allowed to go free. People in England do not even yet seem to perceive that this freedom is a British interest of the first order. The Paris Declaration on maritime law of March 30th, 1856, was a great step in advance, but, after all, only a half-measure: it protects only neutrals, and all the advantages during war-time fall to them. When, in 1859, the bare possibility presented itself that England might be involved in the Franco-Austrian war, the insurance premium on English ships rose so high that only neutrals were selected to carry freights; and bad American ships in Canton or Calcutta received fifty per cent. freightage more than good English ones. And yet England, irrespective of the fact that she is legally bound by the Declaration, save as towards the United States and Spain, which did not agree to it, cannot draw back from its provisions. For, as she was compelled, in 1854, to abandon the principles of her old Navigation law simply because the neutrals would not have put up with it any longer, so she cannot

^s The naval review in the summer of 1887 has served to confirm the opinions summarized above. Admiral Symonds bestows the highest praise on the officers and men, but subjects the material to a very severe criticism. Eighteen armour-clads he declares to be worthless; and the torpedoes proved quite unserviceable.

now, and for the same reason, go back to those principles. Nothing, in fact, remains for her but to take the second step, and give to English bottoms the same security which the Paris Declaration conferred on neutrals. The English fleet *cannot* protect effectually the enormous merchant navy of England scattered over all seas. The days of convoys are past. If, now commerce were under cover of the law relating to the freedom of private property at sea, the whole naval force would be available for real action. The usual objection advanced against this view, that England's most effective weapon is her power to destroy by her cruisers the commerce of her enemies, has no force: for the moment war broke out, the telegraph would convey orders to all vessels that had anything to fear, to make for neutral harbours. How trifling, for example, was the damage which France, with all her superiority at sea, was able to inflict on Germany during the war of '70-'71! The real and only hardship is the necessity of keeping the vessels lying idle. But it is a very different affair for England. The Continental states, in time of war, procure, by railway, those necessaries which come from abroad; and they are only a little dearer. But England, as an island, with her large population, requires (as I said at the outset) constant supplies by sea, and would be forced to capitulate instantly, if the enemy succeeded in cutting these off. "If our commerce by sea is stopped now, we perish by starvation," is the admission of Mr. H. Boyd Kinnear in a letter to the *St. James's Gazette* of October 28th, 1886. The corn which England produces is enough to supply her wants for only four months, or thereabouts, after the harvest. If the supply were cut off in the spring, England would suffer famine; and this supply could all the more easily be cut off, as it no longer comes principally, as it did in former times, from the Baltic, but from the Black Sea, America, and India. On this account, England's

enemies, because they do not live under a like pressure, would throw themselves by preference into a war of cruisers, especially as, in such a war, less depends on superiority in numbers and quality than on adroitness and speed; and they could carry on such a war against England much more effectively than she against them. If a cruiser, armed with the big guns of the present time, did not wish to capture a merchant-ship, and take her into the nearest of its own harbours, for fear of being caught by the enemy's fleet,—it could send her to the bottom with one shot, and make off before men-of-war could come up. The confederate cruiser, *Alabama*, alone inflicted on the comparatively small merchant marine of the Northern States a loss of more than 3,000,000*l.* sterling. In Admiral Aube's opinion, twenty cruisers of the first class could annihilate British commerce.

XI.

If the condition of the fleet is at present so far below the duties required of it, that of the British land forces is simply pitiable. England alone has persevered in the system of voluntary enlistment for her army, and will probably be obliged to do so also in the future, for the largest part of her army will have to serve in the colonies, to which soldiers raised by conscription cannot be sent. That mode, therefore, seems to be restricted to the militia. Such an army will always, notwithstanding its cost, be small; and the English army has, by comparison, always been small. But in former times it was raised to a high pitch of efficiency by the long service of the men, their complete separation from the civilian and his interests; and, through the consequent development of a strong professional and caste feeling; it was a short, but an excellently tempered and sharpened weapon. Beangeaud said: "*L'infanterie anglaise est*

la première du monde ; heureusement il n'y en a pas beaucoup." All that has now been changed. The greatest drawback in an army recruited by enlistment, consists in its incapacity to be very considerably increased in case of war ; it competes for its supply of men with all the other departments of the labour market, and is dependent on the condition of the market. With all her exertions, England, in the Crimean War, placed only 50,000 men in the field. It is still more difficult, during a war, to fill up the gaps that occur. Now, in order to make possible a considerable accession of strength in case of war breaking out, it was sought after 1871 (since conscription was not ventured upon,—not to mention the adoption of universal compulsory service) to form a numerous Reserve, by shortening the period of active service. Lord Cardwell, the War Secretary at the time, after abolishing purchase among the officers, introduced two periods of service for the men. His arrangements, though a good deal modified by his successors, are substantially these : the men remain either seven years with the colours, and five years in the reserve (short service), or twelve years with the colours (long service). (Down to 1871, the men remained with the colours, soldiers by profession, as long as they were physically capable.) Now, inasmuch as, after the expiration of the period of service, no pension is paid,—and as twelve years with the colours renders the men unfit to take up any other calling, it is only those who are really useless for civil life that enter themselves for the longer period. Those who join for the short service are placed for the remainder of their time in the Army Reserve ; they receive 6*l.* per annum, and are liable to be called up on the outbreak of war. The Reserve of the second class consists of the men who, after doing the full term of service, are, for a period of nine years, bound to rejoin the army in case of war ; they receive ninepence per day ; they are not to leave the country, and their

number is limited to 10,000. A third Reserve has been recently formed of the men who have completed their service in the other two; these engage for four years more, and are called out only after the other Reserves. During the last four years the number of those presenting themselves for the short service has increased, on account of the unfavourable condition of the labour market, but the quality has deteriorated.⁹ In 1881 the minimum age, on joining, was nineteen; the result was great gaps in the contingent of new recruits; the standard of age had, therefore, to be lowered to eighteen. This is all the more serious, as the defence of the colonies frequently requires service in hot climates, for which the European is unfit, till he has attained the age of at least twenty-one years. But to obtain such men in the labour market is, notwithstanding the great expense incurred, too difficult a matter. Moreover, in spite of all measures that have been adopted to prevent desertion, the number of deserters has increased; in 1885 it amounted to 5147 men, or three per cent. of the total strength. Many men make it a business to desert after receiving the bounty, and to enlist in some other regiment. The official "Annual Return" (1885) states that of 38,209 recruits sworn, only 35,000 were passed, that in three months 4000 of these were discharged as unfit, and that of the remaining 31,000, 20,000 were under twenty years of age. The recruiting contingents for the last three years have suffered, in all, a diminution of forty-five per cent. This explains why, in spite of the large amount of money expended, the actual army reserve during the last five years numbers only 39,000 men; that in all the more important foreign expeditions, nearly half the soldiers have turned out unfit for service; and that, as a regular occurrence, all tactical combinations have to be broken up in order to get together a corps

⁹ The standard of height has lately been lowered for the Infantry and Foot Guards.—TR.

of from 10,000 to 12,000 men. When, in 1882, four regiments of cavalry were to leave for Egypt, it was with the greatest difficulty that they were brought up to 650 men and 530 horses each ; whilst the fifteen regiments remaining in England were thus reduced to such a condition that they could not within three months have furnished a single complete brigade. The " Annual Return " states that the cavalry and artillery horses in England are not numerous enough to enable the cavalry and artillery of two army corps to be mobilized. Not much importance is to be attached to Lord Wolseley's declaration on the other side (April 24th, 1887), that England has now at her disposal two strong army-corps and a division of cavalry,—that is, more than she has put into the field since the days of Marlborough,—more than Wellington ever commanded, and double as large as the force she sent to the Crimea. He might as well have said, when he was about it, that the English army is superior to those that won the battles of Cressy and Poitiers. A comparison between past and present is pointless ; the relation to the armies of other states is the main thing ; for the strength of an army depends on the duties laid upon it. In comparison with the continental armies, the English army stands far below those which Marlborough and Wellington commanded, even if it were,—as Marshal Lebœuf pretended of the French army in 1870,—"*archiprêtre, jusqu'au dernier bouton de gilet.*"

The Militia exists only in the *cadres*. The men assemble annually for a short training ; they are recruited, up to a number settled by law, for six years, and are from eighteen to thirty-five years of age. They can further re-engage themselves every four years till forty-five. In a pressing emergency, levy by lot of all men capable of bearing arms may be resorted to. The Militia Reserve consists of a limited number of men, who, in consideration of annual extra pay

amounting to 11., hold themselves in readiness to pass into the regular army. When danger threatens, the Militia is by the Queen's authority called to arms; but it can be employed out of the country only in exceptional cases, and when battalions or individual militiamen come forward of their own free will. The military value of the Militia cannot be reckoned very high. It stands, in respect of drill, pretty much on a level with the German *Ersatz-Reservisten*; it has neither military train nor *cadres* for batteries, and would therefore be hard to bring into a state in which it could seriously undertake military operations. Of even less value are the Volunteers of all classes, who engage to go through a course of training as soldiers; the State furnishes the equipment, maintains the permanent staff, and makes a grant of 30s. to each volunteer who has gone through the prescribed number of drills per year. The number of volunteers looks imposing enough on paper; but they would be no match for efficient line troops; they lack training, discipline, and arms of modern type. Even Lord Palmerston,—who greatly promoted the volunteer movement, in order to make an impression abroad,—admitted in private that the entire body of English volunteers could not hold its own against two regiments of Zouaves.

The supreme direction of the army is in even a worse plight than that of the navy. Here too we have at the head of the Ministry of War a civilian, chosen with a view to parliamentary duties, and liable to be changed at any moment. The War Department is divided into three sections: the Ordnance Department, which transacts all affairs relating to arms, equipment, supplies, munitions of war, and engineering; the Financial Department, which takes charge of the expenditure; and the Military department called the Horse Guards, in which is centred everything that relates to the command of the army.

The head of this last Department is the Commander-in-Chief (for these many years the Duke of Cambridge), who is indeed a subordinate of the Ministry, but who practically has the charge of all military affairs that do not involve finance. On the whole, the administration of the army is exceedingly clumsy. A general staff according to German notions, does not exist; the military academies of Woolwich and Sandhurst do not satisfy, in respect either of quantity or quality, the demands which are at once laid on the officers, as a body, in service abroad. Manœuvres in the Continental sense, can have no place, because the troops dare not occupy any ground without the permission of the owners, and must confine themselves to twenty-three square kilometres' space at Aldershot. The artillery looks clumsy and hard to move; the infantry is not thoroughly drilled in single shooting or in fighting in open order; the cavalry, of whose attack at Balaclava the French general said: "*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre,*" receives no proper instruction in out post duty. A permanent connection between the smaller divisions of the army and large tactical units or mixed bodies of troops, finds no place in the system. For requirements abroad the troops are got together anyhow—as circumstances permit; and invariably the military authorities become involved in difficulties, the moment they have to deal with extraordinary exigencies. The arms leave much to be desired; it is well known that the Department, on account of the bad quality of the swords and bayonets produced by English makers, was compelled to order these weapons from Germany.¹

¹ On the 10th February, 1887, Lord Harris, Under-Secretary for War, denied in the House of Lords, that the weapons were unserviceable. They had, he said, been previously subjected to the usual test; the demands now made upon them were unduly severe (!) Lord Elphinstone affirmed that the cutlasses and sword-bayonets served out to four ships—*Active*, *Volage*, *Rover* and *Devastation*.—had turned out completely

The powder, too, for the greater part, comes from Germany. The artillery is insufficient, and even now consists, in part, of muzzle-loaders. For the infantry, a rifle was introduced some time ago with so strong a recoil that it made firing exercises very difficult, and spoiled the aim; this, in fact, contributed largely to the defeat at Majuba Hill: but it is said that the rifle in question is going to be done away with. Defective weapons paralyze beforehand the courage of the best soldiers, and expose troops to well-nigh inevitable defeat.—The discipline, notwithstanding its severity, is very ineffectual; which is explained by the circumstance that the army is recruited from the very lowest classes. There is a large amount of drunkenness. Every detachment told off for embarkation for foreign service is, for some days before its departure, confined to barracks, and guarded by strong patrols of other regiments.

The whole question may be summed up as follows: (1) The army has been experimented upon with the view of bringing it up to the requirements of the time. Purchase has been abolished, and with purchase, the aristocratic character of the officers, as a body, has ceased. The ultimate effect of these measures has not yet developed itself; and it remains doubtful whether the changing fortunes of parties in Parliament will not react on the officers. The party in power appoints to the higher posts as they fall vacant, and the duty of doing so in regard to each post recurs—by law at least—every five years. (2) The period of service for the men has been diminished, and the pay has not been proportionately increased; therefore the recruits are drawn from the offscourings of the working classes. (3) The unfavourable results in the matter of arms arise from the fact that it is never asked—who furnishes the best article? but—useless. The responsibility, he declared, must rest with the Ministry of War which issued them.

with whom in our party shall we place the order? (4) The natural bravery of British soldiers need not be called in question; but the army on which Beaugeaud bestowed the encomium quoted above, exists no longer: the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny saw the last of it. The youth of the men and their defective training, leave it doubtful whether they would be a match for even an equal number of soldiers of one of the Great Powers of the Continent. It is quite true that, with few exceptions, every English officer has often faced the enemy,—and, in nearly every case, with a small number against great odds: he thus gains firmness and readiness in action. But though, for this reason, the English army has hitherto been in a position to perform even difficult enterprises—as for example the Abyssinian campaign,—these, after all, were comparatively trifling affairs, and the objects lay at hand, so that there needed no far-reaching combinations to attain them. The army, in fact, lacks the practical and theoretical training necessary for waging war on the larger scale of our time. Its successes in Afghanistan, against Arabi Pasha, and in Burma, prove nothing in regard to a great war: the French gained no real superiority by their successes in Algeria. To be sure, the victories of the Russians in Asia were also won over tribes ignorant of the European art of war; and in regard to the force which they could oppose in Afghanistan to the Anglo-Indian army, the calculations of experts differ widely. The latest Indian Army Estimates show a standing army of 218,717 men, of whom 73,552 are Europeans, and 145,165 natives.² All these, however, would be by no

² In 1886-7 the sanctioned strength of the Indian army was 212,612 officers and men: 72,002 British, and 140,610 Natives. But the actual strength did not reach these figures till 1887-8. There are 97 batteries of artillery, of which 9 are natives, 53 British infantry battalions, and 9 regiments of cavalry; 48 regiments of native cavalry, and 148 battalions

means available against Russia,—a considerable number being required for the occupation of India. The Russians have, up to the present,—by their Transcaspiian railway, which runs eastward as far as Tschardjui, and will be extended northwards in the direction of Bokhara,—the more effective communication for the transport of troops. England is the richer country; but the Russian troops have fewer needs, and are not impeded by the huge amount of baggage which the Indian army has hitherto required. According to the peculiar nature of the theatre of war, the number of troops would probably not be so important an element as the timely occupation, in force, of the chief strategical points.

A military intervention on the part of England in Continental wars need scarcely be discussed. Calculations on paper prove nothing after the experiences of the Crimean War and of the Egyptian Expedition. The protection of India and the Colonies being the first necessity, all the remaining forces, in a great war against an enemy who had a powerful fleet at his disposal, would be pressingly needed to defend England herself. And in this connection we must remember that a strong body of troops is required, in the present circumstances, for the occupation of Ireland. An English Admiral has lately proved that France, if we consider its present means of transport and the defective coast defences of England, would be in a position, after five days' preparation, to throw on the English coast five army corps of 40,000 men each, if the English fleet were not strong enough to prevent this. Three of these army corps would be able to beat down all resistance which England could offer.—Now, the consequences which would ensue to Great Britain from such an invasion were described in a

and corps of infantry. In police duty and frontier service, the military force is supplemented by 163,000 native police, officered mainly by Europeans.—T.B.

letter addressed to the Defence Commission of 1859 by Lord Overstone, a member of the great banking house of Jones Loyd. In this report the following passages occur :—

“The calamities attendant on foreign invasion must be serious; but upon a country circumstanced as Great Britain is they would fall with peculiar and overwhelming severity. The limited extent of the country would seriously restrict our means of protracted defence. The immense amount of our accumulated capital would afford to the enemy the ready means for levying his heavy exactions. The complicated and very delicate network of credit which overlies all the multitudinous transactions of the country would vibrate throughout upon the first touch of our soil by a foreign invader, and would, in all probability, be subject to a sudden and fearful collapse, whilst the confusion and distress produced amongst the labouring classes would be truly fearful. Millions of our labouring population depend for their daily maintenance upon trading and manufacturing enterprise, the vital principle of which is the undisturbed state of public order, confidence, and credit. It cannot be necessary to enlarge upon these considerations; they would follow as the immediate consequence of the *landing* of an invading army, without reference to ulterior operations; and the serious import of them cannot be overstated.

“Further, I am asked my opinion of the probable effect of the occupation of London by an invading army, books, securities, and public property having been previously removed, and private property being respected by the invader. I cannot contemplate or trace to its consequences such a supposition. My only answer is,—it must never be. . . . An invading army occupying London will be in possession of the centre of our governmental system, the centre of internal communication, the centre in which a large proportion of the transactions of the whole country are daily adjusted, the centre of our financial system; and as Woolwich must of course be included in the fate of London, the enemy will hold the chief depot of our military resources. Can any doubt exist as to the effect of this? But suppose the enemy respect private property, and endeavour to allay alarm, to restore confidence, to obviate confusion, and to give to his presence the character of a military occupation. I believe that in the case supposed there would exist a prevalent feeling that the blow had been struck, that the deep humiliation had been sustained; that the means of satisfying his exactions are under the command of the

enemy; that the means of further and effectual resistance are doubtful, whilst the calamities attending it are certain and overwhelming. Under these circumstances, many, no doubt with a noble spirit would counsel determined and persevering resistance at all hazards and under any sacrifice; but many would deem such courage to be recklessness, and would think the time come for bending under the blow, and that no rational alternative remains but that of purchasing the withdrawal of the enemy. Which of these conflicting views would prevail, I cannot undertake to determine.

"The efforts, however, of a country thus humiliated, paralyzed, dispirited, and divided in opinion, would not, I fear, lead to any satisfactory result.

"A serious apprehension of invasion, still more the actual landing of an invading army in force, would, I apprehend, necessitate the immediate suspension of specie payments by the Bank of England; this would be followed by the prevalence of monetary alarm, partaking more or less of the character of panic. Money would be withdrawn from savings banks, from all parties holding money at call. To meet these demands, Government securities must be brought to market in unusual quantities at a time when the credit of the Government would be shaken, and the disposition to invest in Government securities would, from the same cause, be seriously checked. The consequence is obvious; a heavy fall in the price of public securities, a prostration of public credit, and grievous inconvenience, amounting not improbably to the absolute suspension of the usual course of monetary operations."

After showing that England can count upon no help from abroad to ward off these dangers, Lord Overstone concludes thus:—

"With ourselves alone must rest the defence of the country. . . . We have means for defence of every kind; national wealth, engineering skill, personal courage, amply sufficient to ensure our safety. We have warning enough to awake our vigilance. If we prove too apathetic to take the necessary precautions or make the requisite efforts, or too short-sighted and selfish to submit to the necessary sacrifice, we must bow to the fate which the whole world will declare that we have deserved."

Notwithstanding all this, comparatively little has been done since to increase the powers of defence possessed by England. On the contrary, it is precisely

the army and navy which, under the short-sighted Manchester economy of her modern statesmen, have suffered most. When Lord R. Churchill complained that since 1884 the Army and Navy Estimates had increased from 25,000,000*l.* to 30,000,000*l.*, he overlooked the fact—which Lord G. Hamilton pointed out—that this increase was the consequence of years of neglect while Mr. Gladstone was in power, and that it was not sufficient to enable the most necessary measures of improvement to be carried out. Much can be done, where sufficient means are at hand, to strengthen the fleet and protect the Empire, but another element is necessary—namely, time. England will never be able to create a respectable army, no matter how great her expenditure be, as long as she sticks to her recruiting system. Even her victories in former times were won really by the help of foreign auxiliary troops, and these, thank Heaven, she can get no longer—in Germany, at any rate. Even if she adopted conscription (and such a measure would revolutionize the whole commercial life of the country), the process would require so much time, that conscription cannot be taken into account as a means of meeting *present* exigencies. If she wishes to intervene effectually in those Continental complications in the east of Europe which touch her so nearly, she must revert to the system of subsidies, by which, down to 1815, she made up for her military deficiencies. Unquestionably she could throw a heavy weight into the scale, if, for example, she took into her pay the brave army of the Turks, and placed it for fighting purposes, under British officers. Means for doing so lie at her disposal in far greater measure than at the beginning of the century. But such an idea would seem to modern British statesmen monstrous; the majority of them would prefer, with Mr. Gladstone and Lord R. Churchill, to adopt the policy of absolute non-intervention,—which, to be sure, would

enable them to reduce the income-tax by a few pence. Even on the Tory side attempts are made to draw out of existing international engagements, in order that England may by no conceivable possibility be involved in war. It is enough merely to refer to the ignominious wresting of the provisions of the Treaty of Luxembourg in 1867, by Lord Derby; and now so recently as the 4th of February, 1887, one "Diplomaticus" in the *Standard*, explained that the guarantee of the neutrality of Belgium (the breach of which neutrality was made even by the Gladstone Ministry in 1870, by the treaties with Germany and France, a *casus belli*) did not bind England to oppose the mere march of French or German troops through the country, provided both Powers would promise not to interfere with the possessory right of Belgium!

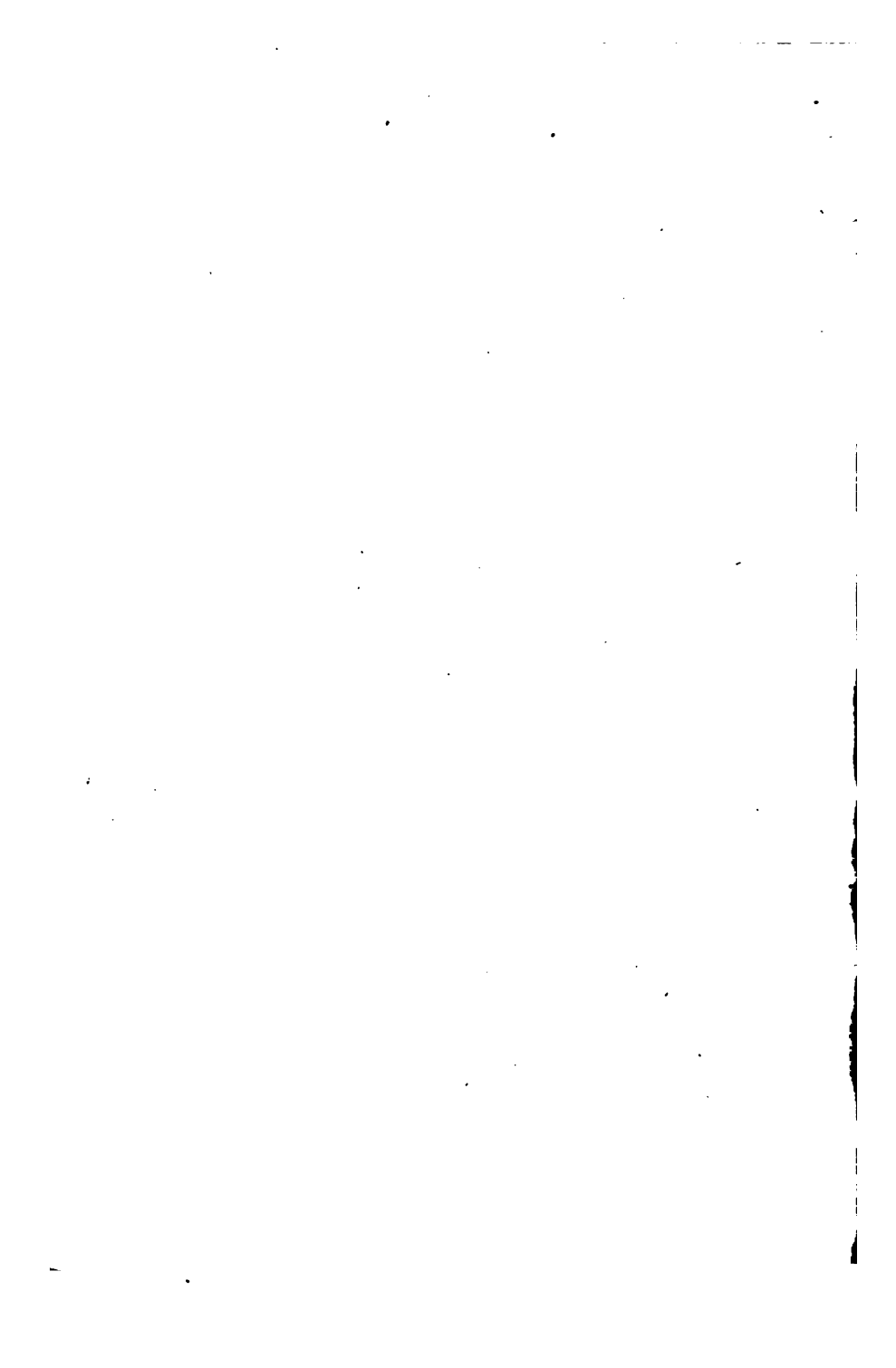
This policy appears singularly short-sighted. It overlooks the fact that England in this way makes the world believe she cannot or will not go to war; but in that case, other states will not scruple to attack the most vital English interests; and Great Britain will have the alternative placed before her, either to put up with such attacks, or to defend herself under most unfavourable conditions. England has lately received slights at the hands not only of Russia, but of France, which in earlier days would have been followed by war. One has only to think of the perfidious occupation of the New Hebrides; and compare the controversy about the insult offered to the missionary, Pritchard, in 1845, with the way in which people in London recently took the ill-usage of Mr. Shaw, in Madagascar. Lord Palmerston, in such matters, saw more clearly. He gave himself up to no delusions regarding the military capabilities of England, but he knew that her *prestige* as a great nation could be preserved only by the constant exercise of her power. True, he often abused that power against the weak; but he

did not hesitate, when he could do so with success, to oppose powerful governments, and he understood how by his policy to play one foreign Power against another.

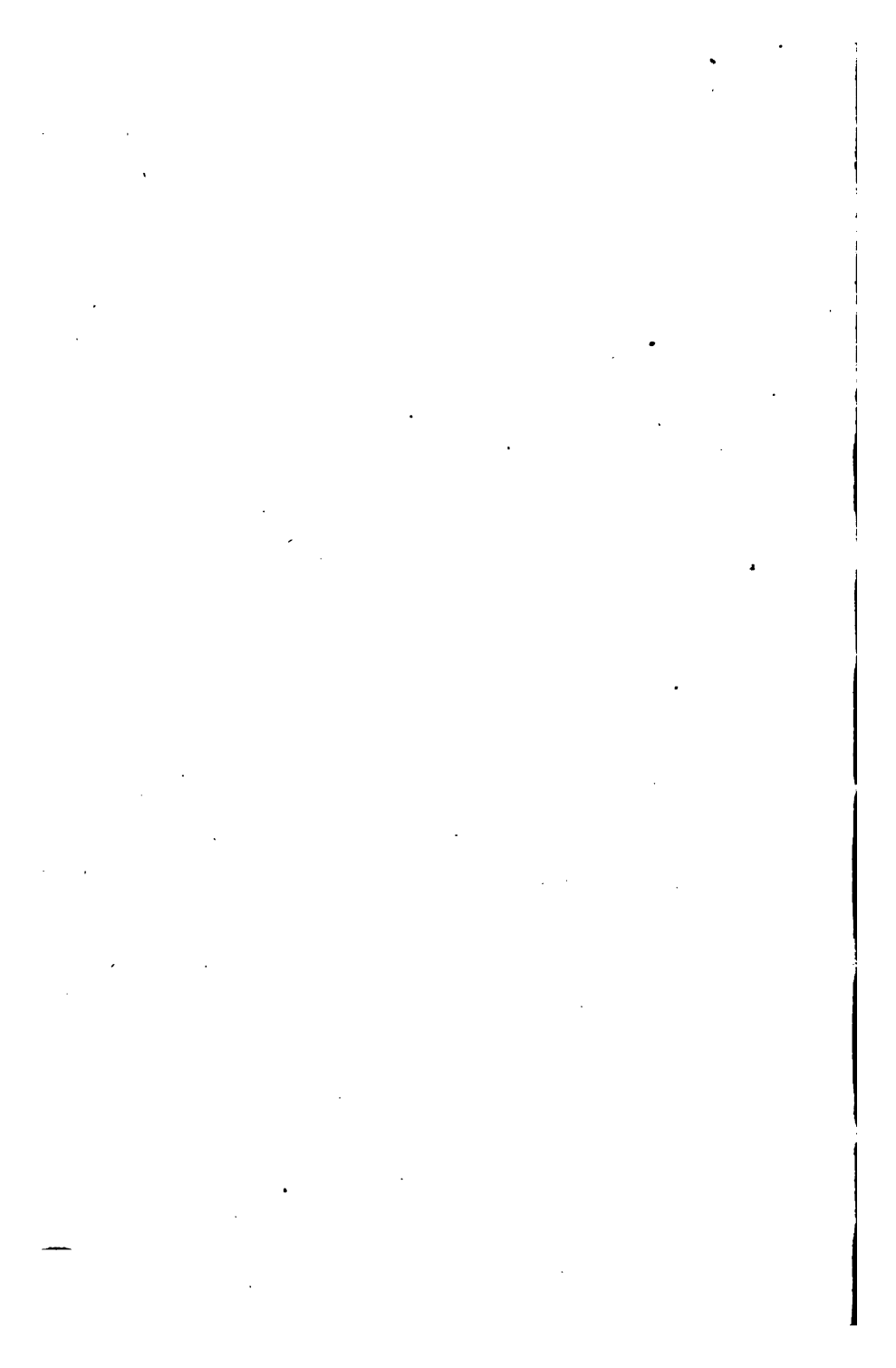
They have changed all that. Lord Russell tried to make his voice everywhere heard in Continental affairs, but invariably drew back when it came to action; while respect for England on the Continent has been fatally shaken by the weak and radically vicious policy of Gladstone. As for the policy of Lord Salisbury,—he emphatically rejects absolute non-intervention as impracticable, but shows himself wonderfully anxious to prove to other states, that it is *their* special interest to oppose Russian aggression in the East; whereas he ought to reflect that England's voice will have weight only when she is determined to intervene eventually, not merely with "moral sympathy" but with action,—and that those other states will take very good care not to play cat's-paw and pull the chestnuts out of the fire for England. It is still open to her to join the great alliance of Central Europe which has inscribed on its banner the maintenance of the *status quo*. Had Russia to reckon with a firm understanding between England on the one hand, and Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Italy on the other,—she would be compelled, in the face of such a coalition, to collect her whole strength, and could not afford to think of precipitating a collision with England in Afghanistan. France would not venture to embarrass England in Egypt, if she had those three states in her rear. At sea, too, the fleets of her allies would give the English fleet a decided preponderance over the combined fleets of Russia and France. But England, if she desires the advantage of having her position thus strengthened, must be ready to pay the price. If she will stake her power only when she is attacked directly in her most vital inte-

rests, then she will have to fight it out with Russia or France, or with both together—*alone*; and she is not strong enough for that.—It is frequently maintained in England that Lord Salisbury is prevented from pursuing an energetic policy, because, if he did, he would lose the support of the Liberal Unionists; I am of the opposite opinion—I think he would, by such a policy, very much strengthen his position. The policy of “peace at any price” prevails among the middle classes, who fear nothing so much as any derangement of trade or manufactures. In the lower strata of society, on the other hand,—those that have just been admitted to the franchise,—there still lives the old “John Bull” fighting spirit; and its influence on the Parliament would be, I submit, in the direction of an active defence of England’s position among the nations, just as would be the case in Australia and Canada. But—should Englishmen shrink from going forward in this spirit, should the supposition I have hazarded prove a deception, and the English democracy show itself incapable of understanding that this is an affair of life or death to the British Empire;—should a dissolution eventually occur on what is virtually the question whether England shall maintain her place among the Great Powers or sink to the condition of a larger Holland,—and should a Ministry warmly sharing the view stated above and prepared to carry it out in action, fail to obtain a majority,—then the day will have come when the saying of Lord Salisbury’s great ancestor, Lord Burleigh, will receive its fulfilment: “England will never fall—but by her Parliament.”





PRINCE ALBERT.





I.¹

THE task of writing the Life of Prince Albert presents peculiar difficulties. It is not enough to depict the personal development of a Prince who, richly endowed by nature, attained with astonishing rapidity the conspicuous station for which he was destined: the circle of interests in which the husband of the Queen of England moves, must, in fact, comprise all the events which make up the history of the time. The Royal Widow, some years after the death of her husband, caused a collection of his most important Speeches to be published: these the Editor, Sir Arthur Helps, accompanied with a prefatory sketch of his character; the volume also contained a memoir of the Prince, setting forth his personality in a clearer light. A few years afterwards General Grey's account of the early years of the Prince Consort appeared; it was drawn up by the direction and with the co-operation of the Queen herself. The later *Leaves from a Journal*, by the Queen, contains descriptions of the private life of the Royal Family; but the *Memoirs* of Baron Stockmar, a work which throws a clearer light than any other on the history of our time, first enabled us to understand with deeper insight the position occupied by Prince Albert. Still, there remained the necessity for a complete account of that rich life; and this Sir Theodore Martin supplied in his magnificent work. Like General

¹ Based on several works relating to the life of the Prince Consort, and on more recent publications (*Greville Memoirs*, 2nd and 3rd series, 1887, *St. Petersburg und London, von Graf Vitzthum*, 1887, &c.).

Grey's, it was written at the suggestion and with the collaboration of the Queen, who also added many notes with her own hand. On this account it may be thought that the work cannot be absolutely impartial. And yet we may even now affirm that history will preserve this portrait in all its essential features: for seldom has a prince in so important a station tested every step he took, as Prince Albert did; his course of action invariably followed the general principles by which he was directed. Now, the information communicated by Sir Theodore Martin explains the origin of every decision, of every step,—and we thus obtain a mental image of the man which not only agrees with that which we have derived from other sources, but is such as can hardly suffer essential modification by farther researches into the history of our time. Prince Albert's life, therefore, as a whole, stands out clearly before us.

ALBERT, second son of Ernest I.; Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and the Princess Louise of Mecklenburg, was born on the 26th of August, 1819, at the Rosenau, a summer palace near Coburg. The marriage of his parents was an unhappy one, and was dissolved in 1824. The Duchess died in 1831; and the children were brought up under the guardianship of their step-grandmother, the Dowager-Duchess of Gotha. United in the closest bonds of affection with his elder brother, the present Duke, Albert showed himself from a very early age to be a sweet, thoughtful boy. He was fond of chess, but at the same time delighted in nature, and enjoyed all bodily exercises. The quiet course of instruction under the Councillor Florschütz, was interrupted for the first time when—in the summer of 1832—the young Princes accompanied their father to Brussels on a visit to their uncle Leopold, who had ascended the Belgian throne in the previous year. Their stay in the grand old city, with its art-treasures and its active political life, made

a lively impression on the Prince, then a lad of thirteen. Next followed, between 1835 and 1837, visits to Mecklenburg, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, and London. In London, in the year 1836, he saw for the first time the Princess Victoria, who was of the same age as himself. She lived at that time with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, and a few months afterwards ascended the throne of England. The brothers then went to the University of Bonn. After a year's study, they were separated for the first time: the elder entered the Saxon army; Prince Albert visited Italy. He was accompanied by Freiherr von Stockmar; and this journey marks the beginning of a relationship so beautiful and so fruitful, that the like of it has very rarely existed between a mature and experienced man and a young prince. Stockmar was a devoted German patriot. He had followed Prince Leopold of Coburg to England on the occasion of his marriage with the Princess Charlotte; he was that Prince's physician-in-ordinary, and became his friend and adviser. During the negotiations respecting the thrones of Greece and Belgium, he became initiated in international politics, and succeeded in winning the complete confidence of English statesmen; while his relations with them enabled him to understand thoroughly the nature and working of the English Constitution. On the accession of the young Princess Victoria, he was selected by her uncle, King Leopold, with the consent of Ministers, to attend her as a confidential adviser. His position was not openly defined, and could not well be, since English custom does not recognize the post of Cabinet-councillor. He carefully avoided mixing himself up in English state affairs; and, being as free from vanity as he was discreet, he kept himself quite in the background, so that he never became an object of suspicion to the Ministers, although they knew that the Queen consulted him on all affairs of moment. He ever remained a paternal friend of

the Queen, and, in a special sense, of her husband. Stockmar had from the outset recognized the rare gifts of the Prince, and his pure nobility of mind; but he was by no means dazzled in regard to his pupil. King Leopold, who, had Princess Charlotte lived, would have been consort of an English queen, and who, though he never filled the office, yet well knew how to estimate, through his long residence in England, the difficulties attaching to it,—asked Stockmar if he thought his nephew a suitable husband for the Queen. Stockmar answered that he was not yet sufficiently acquainted with the Prince to express a judgment on the question. “He is said to be circumspect, discreet, and even now cautious. But all this is not enough. He ought to have not merely great ability, but also a *right* ambition and great force of will as well. To pursue for a lifetime a political career so arduous, demands more than energy and inclination; it demands also that earnest frame of mind which is ready of its own accord to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent what he has undertaken! If he does not from the very outset accept it as a vocation of grave responsibility, on the efficient fulfilment of which his honour and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding.” With the express purpose of becoming better acquainted with the Prince, Stockmar accompanied him to Italy. He doubted at first whether the Prince possessed sufficient energy to cope with the difficulties of such a station, and lamented his disinclination to mental exertion, and his indifference to political questions. But he had the satisfaction of seeing the young man’s noble will and sense of duty overcome all external and internal obstacles. Stockmar did not fail to make joyful acknowledgment of the change; he had an ideal, and

each step which the Prince took on the right path was for Stockmar only a new occasion to fire him with the desire to come nearer to that ideal. "I counsel you," he writes at a later time, "never to relax in putting your magnanimity to the proof, never to relax in logical separation of what is great and essential from what is trivial and of no moment; never to relax in keeping yourself up to a high standard,—in the determination daily renewed to be consistent, patient, courageous, and worthy." (Martin, i. p. 91.) . . . "Avoid going into details of administration, which will only bewilder you." . . . "To the pure in soul lay your heart open, and give trust for trust. The impure keep at arm's length, and that with dignity and firmness. Let that which decides your course be firm *conviction*, based on clear perception and love of truth. . . . Only through intellectual attrition (and that you can have only by intercourse with able men) are those sparks produced which make it possible for you at once to recognize a new truth. . . . One must spare one's self in little things in order to handle great ones worthily. . . . A man ought always to call the sum-total of his actions up into his full consciousness. A man acting from the purest motives, and guided by reason and truth, must make up his mind to see his acts misunderstood and his meaning distorted. Such a man, therefore, must never lose belief in his own worth, nor in the fruits which will assuredly spring from it. The stupidity and ingratitude of those to whom you have given proofs of a trusting and friendly disposition, cannot change the consequences of your acts into their opposites. They will remain for ever true acts of friendship, and continue to operate when the mist in which stupidity and ingratitude try to envelop them shall have been long dispelled. Therefore my counsel is summed up in two words: Great thoughts and a pure heart!"

II.

Soon after the journey to Italy, of the advantages of which the Prince availed himself to the full, the idea of his marrying the Queen of England,—an idea warmly cherished by his grandmother, and actively supported by King Leopold,—now took a more definite shape. Prince Albert and his elder brother arrived at Windsor on the 8th of October, 1839, on a visit; and on the 15th, the Queen told him that her choice for life had fallen on him.² He responded with all the warmth of youth, and no one can read without emotion the letters in which he announced his young happiness. They were married on the 10th of February, 1840.

The conviction which the Queen expressed in announcing her engagement to the Privy Council—that her decision would, under the blessing of Almighty God, establish her domestic happiness, and advance the interests of her country—was fully borne out by the marriage. This formed, in fact, a blessed turning-point in English history. George III. was, whatever we may think of his policy, every inch a king. His firmness of character and his private virtues won for the throne dignity, respect, and love. At the end of the eighteenth century the monarchy was as popular in England as it had been under Elizabeth. But the reigns of George IV. and William IV. did much to weaken this influence, and to shake the loyalty which in the Englishman is so natural a quality. Instead of the union of political firmness with domestic happiness to which the people had be-

² When the Duchess of Gloucester asked the Queen whether she did not feel very nervous in communicating the intelligence of her engagement to the Privy Council, she replied, "Yes, but I did a much more nervous thing a little while ago."—"What was that?"—"I proposed to Prince Albert." (Greville, 23rd Nov.)

come accustomed, they saw a throne occupied by political weakness united with an immoral private life, without being, as it was in the reign of Charles II., the centre of literature and wit; indeed the Court had little or no sympathy with the intellect of the country. But loyalty, rapidly on the decline, was waked up to a new life when a girl ascended the throne,—one who united ingenuous amiability with a dignity far beyond her years.³ In the period before the marriage, some incidents connected with the Court had

³ On this point Greville has the following remarks :—"1837, 30th August: All that I hear of the young Queen leads to the conclusion that she will some day play a conspicuous part, and that she has a great deal of character. It is clear enough that she had long been silently preparing herself . . . for the situation to which she was destined. Melbourne, who is not a man to be easily captivated or dazzled, . . . thinks highly of her sense, discretion, and good feeling; but what seem to distinguish her above everything are caution and prudence, the former to a degree which is almost unnatural in one so young."—3rd November: "She conducts herself with surprising dignity, the dignity which proceeds from self-possession and deliberation. The smallness of her stature is quite forgotten in the majesty and gracefulness of her demeanour."—1838, 25th March: "From the moment she learned that she was Queen, . . . as if inspired with the genius and spirit of Sixtus V., she asserted her dignity and her will."—29th June: "It is, in fact, the remarkable union of naïveté, kindness, nature, good-nature, with propriety and dignity, which makes her so admirable and so endearing to those about her, as she certainly is. I have been repeatedly told that they are all warmly attached to her, but that all feel the impossibility of for a moment losing sight of the respect which they owe her. She never ceases to be a Queen, but is always the most charming, cheerful, obliging, unaffected Queen in the world."—1839, 27th November: "The Queen settled everything about her marriage herself, and without at all consulting Melbourne on the subject, not even communicating to him her intentions. And when he asked, she said she had nothing to tell him. . . . If she has already shaken off her dependence on Melbourne, and begins to fly with her own wings, what will she not do when she is older and has to deal with ministers whom she does not care for?"

led to party dissensions, which found expression in the debates of the Lower House on the naturalization of the Prince, and on his annuity. Among these was the "bed-chamber question," as it was called, which arose from the Queen having refused, on the formation of a new ministry by Sir Robert Peel, to part with her Whig ladies of honour. Such causes of discord ceased the moment Prince Albert was settled in his position. For that position he was by his natural gifts singularly well fitted. Had he been a prince like one of the great Hohenzollerns, who would have striven to promote personal government in the interest of the people, he would have brought kingship in England into a very critical situation: a prince of the Savoy type, on the other hand,—brave, energetic, affable, fond of sport,—might have been a favourite with the aristocracy, but not with the people at large.

Prince Albert brought to the throne precisely what the throne required. By a married life which might serve as a model for that of every private citizen, he restored its moral dignity. The nation saw a royal household in which vice not only was not the fashion, but in which it did not venture to show itself. "*La Reine a rendu le mariage populaire en Angleterre,*" was the observation of Persigny. At the same time the Prince established a connection between the Court and all intellectual interests, to which, ever since the Stuart times, it had been a stranger; and everybody was forced to admit that the husband of the Queen was one of the ablest men in the kingdom.

It is very doubtful whether England would, without serious commotion, have weathered the year 1848, if the Crown had not in this way been established in the affections of the nation. Although this fact was manifest to everybody at the time, it is only quite recently that the nature and significance of this royal marriage have come fully into view.

Stockmar's *Memoirs* are in this and in many other particulars supplemented by the work of Sir Theodore Martin. For example, it is touching to observe how the Queen, in so far as the Prince is concerned, completely sinks the sovereign in the wife. The beloved husband is the pride and crown of her life; every recognition which his merits receive from public opinion, or from important personages, fills her with a joy which finds the warmest expression in her letters; every slight or humiliation which he has to endure is felt by her far more keenly than by himself. "I write to you," she says in a letter to Stockmar of the 1st of February, 1854, after a debate in Parliament on the status of the Prince,—“I write to you in the fulness of joy at the triumphant refutation of all the calumnies in the two Houses of Parliament last night. The position of my beloved lord and master has been defined for *once and all*, and his merits have been acknowledged on all sides most duly.” And shortly afterwards, on the anniversary of her wedding-day, she continues: “This blessed day is full of joyful and tender emotions. Fourteen happy and blessed years have passed, and I confidently trust many more will, and find us in old age, as we are now, happily and devotedly united! Trials we must have, but what are they if we are together?”

This love of a noble woman was indeed richly deserved by such a man. We know of no example of a prince who, possessing the highest intellectual powers, has devoted himself so absolutely and so unselfishly to a task so onerous. His conception of his duty he himself clearly expounded in a letter to the Duke of Wellington, in which he explains why he could not fall in with the Duke's proposal that he should accept the office of Commander-in-chief: “My position is a most peculiar and delicate one. Whilst a female sovereign has a great many disadvantages in comparison with a king, yet, if she is

married, and her husband understands and does his duty, her position, on the other hand, has many compensating advantages, and, in the long run, will be found even to be stronger than that of a male sovereign. But this requires that the husband should entirely *sink his own individual existence* in that of his wife—that he should aim at no power by himself or for himself—should shun all contention, assume no separate responsibility before the public, but make his position entirely a part of hers—fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment in any of the multifarious and difficult questions or duties brought before her, sometimes international, sometimes political, or social, or personal. As the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, sole *confidential* adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the Government, he is, besides the husband of the Queen, the tutor of the Royal children, the private secretary of the Sovereign, and her permanent minister.”

That the Prince was qualified to carry out this programme to the letter, is proved in every page of Sir Theodore Martin's work.

III.

CERTAINLY the Prince, and also the Queen, had in Stockmar the inestimable advantage of a confidential adviser such as has very rarely stood beside a royal pair to help them in the discharge of royal duties. And Stockmar did not stop at mere advice: like faithful Eckart, of the German legend, when the Prince needs to be told the truth, he tells it in the most unreserved manner. When, for example, the Prince writes that

he had drawn up for the King of Prussia a memorandum on the reform of the German *Bund*, Stockmar declares plainly that he regards the Prince as wholly unqualified for such a task, on the ground that his long absence from Germany had rendered it impossible for him to judge accurately of the forces which were working among the people in the direction of reform, and which were of an anti-dynastic character. Again, when the Prince, towards the end of the year 1853, writes in a rather desponding tone of the unmeasured slanders with which he was assailed in society and in the press, Stockmar replies: "I cannot wish, hard as you may have been hit, that you should have been spared this experience. You could not marry the Queen of England without meaning, and without being bound, to become a political soldier. A mere garrison life, however, never makes a soldier, and, some household disagreeables apart, you have led hitherto nothing but a peaceful, comfortable, pampering, and enervating garrison life."

To be sure, Stockmar, on his part, had the advantage of writing to a prince who not only could bear to hear the truth, but who was himself an earnest truth-seeker;⁴ nevertheless Stockmar's merits are undoubtedly great, in that he unremittently strengthened the Prince in doing the right, and steadily pointed out the rocks which it behoved him to avoid. His merits, too, are all the greater, that he submitted to hold in perfect self-abnegation a position of high influence—always remaining in the background, always leaving the honour of having seen what was right, to those who stood on the official platform, and sacrificing his personal wishes to the duty of caring for others. M. van de Weyer, formerly Belgian ambassador in London,

⁴ Mr. Gladstone, in discussing Sir Theodore Martin's book, says finely: "Prince Albert was fortunate in his wife, uncle, and tutor, but how completely did the material answer to every touch it received!"

reports some remarks of Stockmar's which, in this connection, are very striking: "If you are consulted by princes to whom you are attached, give your opinion truthfully, boldly, without reserve or reticence. Should your opinion not be palatable, do not, to please them, deviate for a moment from what you think the truth. You may in consequence be some time out of favour, treated with neglect or coldness; and when they come back (for back they will come, if you remain honest and firm), never complain of the treatment you have received, never try to make them own how right you were, and how wrong they have been. It must be enough for you that you should, for their good and the good of the country, act according to the principles, the soundness of which is thus acknowledged." (Martin, i. 77, 78.)

This determined self-effacement explains why it was that English statesmen, without distinction of party, bore without jealousy Stockmar's occupying a position really so important, though to the outer world so undefined. "They trusted him absolutely," says Van de Weyer, "not merely because they recognized his political gifts and his disinterestedness, but because they all felt that with him they were in safe hands, that he would never betray them, never expose their weaknesses, their mistakes, their faults,—never play one of them against the other, never enter into any secret intrigue and use his position to injure them in the good opinion of the Sovereign or of the public." Palmerston said of him that he was the only perfectly disinterested politician he had ever known, and Lord Aberdeen bore this testimony to him: "I have known men as clever, as discreet, as good, and with as much judgment; I never knew any one who united all these qualities as he did." And his royal friends handed his memory down in the words inscribed on his monument, erected at Coburg (after a design by the Crown Princess of Prussia, now the Empress Victoria):

"A faithful friend loveth more and sticketh closer than a brother."

IV.

BUT Prince Albert did credit to such an instructor. The position which he took up when yet a very young and, therefore, an inexperienced man, presented uncommon difficulties. If his splendid and attractive personality, and the circumstance that the Queen, from pure inclination, had chosen him for her husband, spoke in his favour from his very entrance on public life,—on the other hand, he had many prejudices to meet and overcome in the Court, in society, and among the public generally.⁵ The aristocracy, especially the Tories, despised the small German Courts as poor and uncivilized; in larger circles the "foreigner" was regarded as a representative of Continental absolutism. On the question of the Prince's naturalization and of his allowance, he was subjected to humiliations which, with a little more prudence on the part of the Minister, might have been avoided. It was a blunder in Lord John Russell to stand out for 50,000*l.*; for surely he might have known that the proposal would not pass. The question of precedence could have been settled without difficulty; for, since the Queen had power to confer precedence on the Prince everywhere except in Parliament and in the Privy Council,—and since the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, who were alone concerned, made no objection,—those painful discussions in Parliament might have been avoided—especially as, in the long run, the question was left undecided. The Prince overcame all these obstacles by his tact, prudence, and firmness: he avoided all coming forward as a politician, carefully felt his way, drew information from all

⁵ "There is not much sympathy for the lucky Coburgs in this country" (Greville, Feb. 1840).

sides, and rapidly attained a position which was absolutely unassailable, and which those who were ill-disposed towards him had to take into account. So rapid, indeed, was the reaction in his favour, that, when in July, 1840, a Bill was introduced, conferring on him the regency in case the Queen should die, leaving a child, only a single voice was raised against it in the Upper House. Lord Melbourne was of opinion that this would not have happened three months before: "we owe it," he said, "exclusively to the character of the Prince." He devoted himself with zeal to everything affecting the welfare of the working classes, or that concerned science and art; and in connection with these subjects he delivered speeches in which his opponents, with the best will in the world, could have found nothing to object to. And yet even in this sphere of activity he never placed himself prominently before the public. "I cannot bear," he said, "to be praised at meetings; it looks as if I were made use of as an advertisement, and as a means of drawing a full house." As little did he allow himself to be cast down by opposition. We see, for example, in Sir Theodore Martin's book, how great were the obstacles he had to overcome in connection with the Great Exhibition—which was his idea, and which was crowned with so much success. He also gained great credit for the manner in which he ordered the Royal household. According to the traditional arrangement, no fewer than three dignitaries divided among them the management of it; and of course the greatest confusion and wastefulness prevailed. To do away with this state of things required the labour of years, and the vanquishing of much personal opposition; but the Prince gradually established proper order; and when at a later time the Government informed the House of Commons that the expenses incurred in connection with the numerous visits of crowned heads, were defrayed from the

resources of the Royal household without burden to the State, Sir Robert Peel expressly added an acknowledgment of the excellent order which prevailed there. The Prince was able to bring about such order only through his being master in the house, however little he allowed the outer world to see that he was. When, in 1858, Count Vitzthum inquired of him whether and when Prince George of Saxony might pay a visit to the Queen, Prince Albert took the almanac and immediately answered, "On the 2nd of April we have the confirmation of the Prince of Wales; no occasion for the visit of a Catholic prince at *that*: telegraph that the Prince will be welcome at Windsor, from the 5th to the 9th of April."

His chief interest naturally was, and continued to be—politics; and it is surprising to see how soon he grew into a true statesman. On questions of internal policy he stood firmly by the principles of the English Constitution; but held that if the power of the Crown was limited to a very narrow area, it was its duty to preserve intact what it still possessed; and he declared that it was a gross error to suppose that the English Constitution reduced the Sovereign to a nullity, or demanded from him only inactivity and indifference. He rejected the shallow formula: "*Le roi règne mais ne gouverne pas.*"⁶ "Cousin," he said, on reading the *Introduction Politique* of that philosopher, "underrates the mental and moral qualities which are requisite in a constitutional sovereign. In truth the greatest mental and moral power is requisite to attain self-abnegation and self-repression; and these are more essential qualities in a constitutional than in an absolute sovereign." "Why," he writes, on another

⁶ On this subject an excellent remark was made by the witty Grand Duchess Helena. She asked Thiers if the saying was his; and when he, with some self-complacency, said that it was, replied: "*J'y consens, pourvu que je sois le ministre et vous le roi.*"

occasion, "are princes alone denied the privilege of having political opinions, based on concern for the national interests, the honour of their country, and the welfare of mankind? Are they not placed in a more independent position than any other politician in the state? Are not their interests most intimately united with those of their country? Is not the sovereign the natural protector of its honour? Is not he of necessity a politician? Ministers change, and lose, when they retire,—what they have before possessed,—the best means of becoming informed. The sovereign still remains in power, and these means are still at his disposal. The most patriotic of ministers has to think of his party; and therefore, of necessity, his judgment is often influenced by party considerations. Not so the constitutional sovereign,—he is exposed to no such disturbing forces. As permanent head of the nation, he has only to consider what is necessary for its well-being and honour. His accumulated knowledge and experience, his calm and practised judgment stand at the service of the ministry for the time being, without distinction of party."

It was therefore a cardinal principle with the Prince that the Crown should stand above parties. Even before his marriage he had requested the Queen to choose the personages of her household not according to party views, but on account of character, cultivation, and merit. The Queen had ascended the throne when the Whigs were in power, and she had a warm feeling of attachment to Lord Melbourne, who instructed her in affairs; but when that ministry became weak, Prince Albert brought about a *rapprochement* between the Court on the one hand, and the Tories, in the person of Sir Robert Peel, on the other. With him the Prince was very soon united in a friendship based on mutual esteem. The Prince held the view that the Crown should honestly support any ministry which had a majority, and did not

actually prejudice the interests or the honour of the country. But since the ministry in England, at any given time, is a committee of the dominant party in the House of Commons, he would not give up the control of ministers by the Sovereign in the actual executive proper; and in that particular he saw in himself the natural and effectual support of the Sovereign. With all his modesty and reserve towards the outer world, he contended for this, as a right and a duty, against stubborn ministers; he had to contend, too, against the calumnies and accusations of the public, which, as he once very strikingly said, believed it had been betrayed because it deceived itself; and he ultimately extorted the acknowledgment in both Houses of Parliament that he exerted only that influence to which he had a right. But with all his tact and his purity of motive, he could not have used it without his remarkable political endowments. I will, in regard to home questions, adduce only one example, which shows that he, the "foreigner," judged more accurately than English statesmen. In September, 1850, the Pope had issued a brief whereby the Catholic hierarchy of England was restored; as an immediate consequence, many Englishmen went over to the Catholic Church. This raised a general storm. Lord John Russell, the Prime Minister, in a public letter, called the brief "an insolent and wily attack of the Pope on our Protestantism," and declared it contained "an assumption of supremacy which, even in Catholic times, would have been incompatible with the spiritual independence of the nation." At the same time he denounced the traitors in the English Church (the Ritualists) who "had led their flocks step by step to the abyss." But when the time came to pass from words to deeds, it appeared that it was by no means so easy to repel the attack with effect. The Bill introduced by the

Government satisfied nobody; then the Government wavered, and at last passed a weak measure, which remained a dead letter, and the whole thing was ultimately abandoned. The Queen and Prince Albert looked upon the matter in a quite different light. The Queen did, indeed, take the trouble to receive and answer the addresses and deputations which were sent up on this occasion; but she declared she would never consent to utter one word which breathed the spirit of intolerance. Sincere Protestant as she was (she said), and strongly as she condemned those who, calling themselves Protestants, were not Protestants at all, yet she lamented the unchristian and intolerant spirit which showed itself in many meetings; and she could not bear to hear the violent abuse of the Catholic religion—abuse so cruel and so painful to many good and innocent Roman Catholics. Prince Albert drew up a memorandum in which he states the gist of the whole question in a single sentence: “The common cause of discontent . . . appears to be the introduction of Romish doctrines and practices by the clergy of England, contrary to the will and feelings of the Protestant congregations, under the assumption that the clergy alone had any authority in Church matters.” . . . “The remedial principle is—that the laity have an equal share of authority in the Church with the clergy; that no alteration be made without the formal consent of the laity; nor any interpretation given of articles of faith without their concurrence. This principle once recognized as law, a whole living Church constitution will spring from it.” Could the weakness of the English Church—a constitution, ever tending towards Catholicism, coupled with doctrines of the Reformation—be more strikingly indicated? Would Ritualism have grown to its present consequence, threatening as it does to shatter the Church, if new life had been given to Convocation by the introduction of the lay element?

The Prince's striking ability is still more clearly shown in the region of foreign politics. As respects his plans of reform for Germany, Stockmar was quite right in describing them as impracticable; but how masterly is the following character-sketch of Frederick William IV.—written *à propos* of a speech delivered by the King at the opening of the United Diet in 1847.⁷ “Those who know and love the King recognize him and his views and feelings in every word, and will be grateful to him for the frankness with which he expresses them; but if we put ourselves into the position of a cold critical public, our heart sinks. What confusion of ideas! And what boldness in a king to speak extempore; and at such a moment, and at such length, not only to touch all the most terrible and difficult topics, but to plunge into them slap-dash, to call God to witness, to promise, threaten, protest, &c. . . The King lets himself be misled by similes which captivate his fancy, which he carries out only so far as they suit his purpose, and which frequently by no means reflect the true state of things, but satisfy because they are clever and suggestive. This makes close discussion with him impossible. . . Then the King runs another risk in this, that he adopts *subjective feelings* and opinions as the motive principle of his actions, and then not only acts upon them, but also desires that, as these feelings and opinions are dear and sacred to him, they should be the same to everybody else, no matter whether they are even affected by them in the slightest degree or not. . . . To this class belong those feelings of piety towards the late King (Frederick William III.) which only the son can feel, and those favourite maxims which have a special truth for *him*, springing as they do out of certain favourite

⁷ “A remarkable display of the eloquence which stirs the heart, but leaves the intellect unsatisfied,” says Martin (i. p. 406).

studies and lines of thought [Martin, i., 408]. Pius IX. is the counterpart of Frederick William IV.—great impulse, half-digested political notions, little acuteness of understanding, with much feeling and sensitiveness to outward influences. He makes shipwreck on the belief that he can set peoples in motion, and yet hold in his hand the direction and the spread of the movement.”

The frank and unprejudiced views of things taken by the Prince, and also by the Queen, are everywhere apparent. Of the Emperor of Russia the Queen writes: “He is a harsh and stern-looking man. . . . The expression of his eyes is severe, and unlike anything I ever saw before. He gives the impression of a man who is not happy, and on whom the burden of his immense power and position weighs heavily and painfully. . . . Very clever I do not think him, and his mind is not a cultivated one. His education has been neglected. Politics and military affairs are the only things he takes great interest in. . . . He is sincere, I am certain—sincere even in his most despotic acts—from a sense that it is the only way to govern, . . . and he is kept in utter ignorance of many things which his people carry out in corrupt ways.”

The remarkable affair known as the question of the “Spanish Marriages” is now completely cleared up; and, so far as I know, the correspondence of royal personages on the question is given in Sir Theodore Martin’s work for the first time. On a visit which the Queen and the Prince paid to the King of France at the Château d’Eu (the first meeting between an English and a French Sovereign since that of Francis I. and Henry VIII.), the understanding between the Governments regarding this question seemed to be established; but even thus early an acute observer remarked: “*On joue bien la comédie à Paris, et je ne suppose pas qu’on la*

joue moins bien au Château d'Eu." Louis Philippe was ashamed to inform the Queen of the solution arrived at, which would of necessity have demonstrated that he had not kept his word; he therefore employed his wife to tell her. The dignified reply of the Queen, on receiving intelligence of the double marriage, is very characteristic; and the ample statement in which she proves to the Queen of the Belgians that the King of France did not fulfil his promise, is absolutely conclusive. The words of Metternich on this occasion are remarkable: "Tell M. Guizot from me," he wrote to the Austrian Ambassador at Paris, "that one does not with impunity play little tricks with great countries. He knows that I do not think much of public opinion; it is not one of my instruments, but it has its effect. The English Government have done their best to establish Louis Philippe in public opinion. They can withdraw what they gave, and I have always said, the moment he loses that, he is on the very verge of a war, and his is not a dynasty that can stand a war" (Martin, i. 376). How soon was this prophecy to be fulfilled! The Emperor Nicholas very naturally rejoiced that his apprehensions in regard to the understanding of the Western Powers were removed; it was thus evident that *that* had been the cause of his assumed indifference to the policy of France, and his contempt for the French nation. A breach of public law in the annexation of Cracow was the first consequence of the alienation of England, whose protest against it was as ineffectual as that of France. But as for Louis Philippe, his diplomatic triumph at Madrid proved only a step towards destruction: having succeeded in making his ministers subservient to his personal wishes, he allowed himself to be lulled into a false security, boasted of the harmony of his "*pays légal*"; and forgot that pliant servants and factitious majorities drag down a constitutional sovereign with them in their fall.

Bunsen, again—whom in many respects the Prince esteemed highly—was a man he thoroughly understood. When Bunsen went in 1848 to Frankfort,—in order, as he expected, to assume the direction of foreign affairs,—the Prince wrote to Stockmar: “May he be fortunate in those about him, for he is impressionable, and the readiness with which he assimilates other men’s ideas exposes him to this danger, that he examines and advocates both sides of the question in succession, before drawing the deduction that finally determines his views. This once done, these are generally very correct, and by reason of the preliminary process are based upon a principle. But if he is forced to act before he has worked out his conclusions, it is often a mere toss-up which side he will adopt. It will always be difficult for a Prussian official to stand between the Archduke, the Paulus Church, Berlin, and Potsdam, and not to run his head against the whole four” (Martin, ii. p. 98). In these words is clearly set forth the reason why during those years all Bunsen’s endeavours of necessity came to nothing.

But even in questions affecting specially British interests, the Prince judged with more acuteness than the leading English statesmen. When, in 1847, the reforms of the Pope produced general excitement in Italy, Palmerston came forward with the proposal to send Lord Minto, Lord Privy Seal, to Rome, in order to encourage the movement. Prince Albert was decidedly opposed to the project. People in England (he held) were far too much inclined to plunge into constitutional reforms, states which no-wise desired them, or were not ripe for them; whereas no nation ought to be pressed in development beyond its natural pace, or have thrust upon it anything alien to its character. We ought simply, he maintained, to adhere to the principle of non-intervention as towards Austria, and explain to her that England would not tolerate violent interference with reforms

which the Italian Governments intended to introduce. So frank a course might, perhaps, appear rash; but, if taken in time, it would forestall complications, and win for England the approval of all independent states. Lord Minto, on the other hand, if the step contemplated were taken, would occupy a totally false position; Austria would at once place herself in a hostile attitude, and would be secretly supported by France; he would possess very little real influence, and yet he would be held responsible for everything that went amiss. Lord Russell said that, in case Lord Minto went to Rome, we must have "settled intentions;" but, on the contrary, it was absolutely necessary to have these settled intentions before our minds, in order to decide whether the despatch of Lord Minto were, on the whole, advisable.—So argued the Prince, but the wise counsel was not listened to; and the consequences were exactly those which he had predicted. The autocratic Governments charged England once more with promoting disorder for selfish objects; the Progressist party believed they would find in Lord Minto a support for their advanced views; and when they were disappointed, they rewarded with hatred the zeal which Palmerston had shown on their behalf. The Prince's counsel in 1848, in the affair of the mediation between Austria and Sardinia, was as fruitless: he advised that our efforts should be limited to what was attainable; and that we should assume, as a basis of peace, that Lombardy should be joined to Sardinia, and that Austria should retain Venice. This arrangement had been proposed by the Cabinet of Vienna through Herr von Hummelauer, who had been expressly sent to London for the purpose; but Palmerston rejected the proposal: he held Italy as lost to Austria because he wished it; and only after Radetzky's victory did he come forward with a proposal of mediation, when there was no longer anything to mediate about. "We are

too foolishly Charles-Albertish," said the Prince,—quite truly; and the result was simply the subjugation anew of both provinces. It is manifest that, in spite of all natural endowments, and all the advantages which the position of the Prince conferred upon him, so profoundly just a judgment in political questions could be attained only through great and systematic labour. There is no royal road in the study of politics any more than in the study of mathematics. Personal converse with statesmen, a careful study of despatches, parliamentary debates, and the press, with solid historical acquirements—these laid the foundation for his political discernment. Ministers found him perfectly familiar with the facts relating to their departments; ambassadors were astonished to see how much at home he was in the sphere of their activity; diplomatists who went to a new post, acknowledged that they had received from him the most valuable information regarding the relations on which they were about to enter. Yet he did not stand stubbornly by any opinion which he held. "Prince Albert," says Count Vitzthum, "is one of those candid princes who can tolerate the expression of an opinion different from their own." Among his other labours, he carried on an extensive correspondence; and his reading, as is shown by his memoranda of studies, ranged over the most diverse subjects. He often allowed himself too little sleep, and was already seated at his green lamp by seven o'clock on a winter's morning. Recreation he meted out to himself usually in too small quantity. He not seldom felt exhausted under the manifold claims upon his energies: but in the air of Balmoral and Osborne he always recovered, in a short time, his old freshness and vigour; there he devoted himself to sport, gardening, music—(he was an excellent performer on the organ)—and, above all, to his family.

V.

OF special interest is the copious information we now possess in regard to Palmerston's personality and policy, and his relations with the Queen and to his colleagues.⁸ This information is all the more important, as it enables us to study the man in his outward acts, and to do full justice to his merits as a minister. With all his brilliant gifts and astonishing energy, he appears to have been frivolous, quarrelsome, and dogmatic; and was therefore constantly involved in angry political and personal broils. He was always mixing himself up in the internal affairs of foreign states, by giving advice which nobody asked for; in this way he, very naturally, irritated the sensibilities of the governments concerned, and brought defeat either upon England or upon his protégés. Sometimes he tried to gain his point through sheer brutality. The latter course he adopted in the *Pacifico* question; the former, when he first promised to help the Sicilian insurgents, and then left them in the lurch. Now, the Queen had no idea of putting up with such conduct. In a long conversation (February, 1850), Prince Albert explained the humiliating position in which Palmerston placed the Queen in the eyes of all the world. Everybody, he said (in effect), knew that she disapproved of what he did in her name. The other sovereigns made strong and repeated complaints; and yet she was unable to prevent what she felt to be inexpressibly distressing and humiliating. The Prince added, that he understood perfectly the constitutional position of the Sovereign, and was aware that it was the duty of the Government to carry out the policy which the nation desired and approved; but the nation, he insisted, did *not* approve of Palmerston's conduct,—nor did his colleagues,—but yet, through *their* weak compliance, he

⁸ Cf. III., Lord Palmerston.

was permitted to bid defiance to the Sovereign, the Government, and public opinion. The Queen found in Russell no support or relief: remonstrances addressed to himself had availed nothing. Personally the Prince found Palmerston affable and friendly, but it was impossible to induce him to adopt a different course, nor could one depend on what he said, or what he promised.—After the Queen saw that mere complaints were useless, she sent, on the 12th August, 1850, to Lord John Russell, the Premier, a Memorandum in which she laid down clearly the course she desired the Foreign Minister to pursue. And the Prince told Palmerston by word of mouth that the Queen knew her duty as a Constitutional Sovereign too well, not to subordinate her personal views to those of her Government; she knew that she entered the battle along with her ministers, and had to bear the blows which were directed against them. For that reason she had a right to expect that, before any policy had been finally decided upon, or sent up for her sanction, she should be put in complete possession of all facts and reasonings bearing on the question; whereas she, as matters stood, hardly ever found any business which had not been already touched, hardly a question on which the Government was not already bound by pledges, while the facts were in a very meagre form communicated to her. She desired further that, when she had given her consent to a measure, the policy in regard to it should not be arbitrarily changed, that no steps should be concealed from her, and that her name should not be used without her sanction. Palmerston promised to comply with these demands—but did not keep his word. On the visit of Kossuth, towards the end of 1851, he had yielded to the decision of the Cabinet not to give him a public reception; yet he accepted an address from the English Radicals, in which he was thanked for his efforts to restore the illustrious patriot and exile to liberty; while the Emperors of Austria

and Russia were called "detestable and abominable murderers, merciless despots and tyrants." He did indeed observe that he could not be expected to agree with all the expressions used; but for the rest, declared himself highly flattered and exceedingly pleased by the address! This reckless conduct towards two sovereigns with whom England stood in most friendly relations naturally produced a very great commotion; the Queen was deeply grieved, and expressed her mortification in strong terms. Palmerston got out of the difficulty by a subterfuge: he might, he said, very possibly have lost, through his unreserved outspokenness, the good-will of the Emperor of Austria, but not that of the English people; whereupon he received the appropriate rejoinder: "It is no question with the Queen whether she pleases the Emperor of Austria or not, but whether she gives him just ground of complaint or not. And if she does so, she can never believe that this will add to her popularity with her own people."

Immediately on this incident followed the transaction which led to Palmerston's fall. On the first intelligence of the *coup-d'état* in Paris, it was agreed between the Queen and her ministers that, in regard to that event, the Government should take up an attitude entirely passive and expectant; in opposition to this, the Minister expressed to the French ambassador his full approval of what had been done! His dismissal followed as a matter of course. He was not dismissed at the instance of the Queen; she, following Stockmar's wise advice, acted with great circumspection. Stockmar argued that this would be too much even for Russell. And so, indeed, it was; Russell's patience was exhausted, and he proposed the dismissal. The Queen's Memorandum was read aloud in the House of Commons, and was regarded on all sides as so unimpeachably in the right, that Palmerston had to submit in silence to his condemnation.

VI.

THE Eastern Question was now once more presenting itself, as it does periodically, for solution; and the Prince saw with great uneasiness the approach of its inevitable complications. Public opinion demanded war with Russia, and unfortunately the English statesmen treated the question with by no means the requisite consistency and breadth of view. "Aberdeen," wrote the Prince to Stockmar, "is quite right in thinking that we should treat our enemies as honourable men; but that is no reason for assuming that they *really are* honourable men; yet that is what he does, and he maintains that he is right." In a "Memorandum for the consideration of the Cabinet" of the 21st October, 1853, he explains with admirable clearness the nature of the difficulty, and England's position in relation to it. After briefly recapitulating the several stages of it, he says: "Throughout the transaction, then, we have taken distinctly the part of Turkey as against Russia. The motives which have guided us have been mainly three:—(1) We considered Turkey in the right, and Russia in the wrong; and could not see without indignation the unprovoked attempt of a strong Power to oppress a weak one. (2) We felt the paramount importance of not allowing Russia to obtain in an underhand way, or by a legal form, a hold over Turkey, which she would not have ventured to seek in open conquest. (3) We were most anxious for the preservation of the peace of Europe, which could not fail to be endangered by open hostilities between Turkey and Russia. These motives must be pronounced just and laudable, and ought still to guide our conduct. By the order to our fleet, however, to protect the Turkish territory, and by the declaration of war, now issued by the Turks, the third and perhaps most important object of our policy has been decidedly placed in jeopardy. In acting as auxiliaries to the

Turks, we ought to be quite sure that *they* have no object in view *foreign* to our duty and interests: that they do not drive at war, whilst we aim at peace; that they do not, instead of merely resisting the attempt of Russia to obtain a protectorate over the Greek population incompatible with their own independence, seek to obtain for themselves the power of imposing a more oppressive rule of two millions of fanatic Mussulmans over twelve millions of Christians. . . . If our forces are to be employed for any purpose, however defensive, as an auxiliary to Turkey, we *must insist* upon keeping not only the conduct of the negotiations, but also the power of peace and war, in our own hands. . . . It will be said that England and Europe have a strong interest, setting all Turkish considerations aside, that Constantinople and the Turkish territory should not fall into the hands of Russia, and that they should in the last extremity even go to war to prevent such an overthrow of the balance of power. This must be admitted, and such a war may be right and wise. But this would be a war, not for the maintenance of the *integrity of the Ottoman Empire*, but merely for the interests of the European powers of civilization. It ought to be carried on unshackled by obligations to the Porte, and will probably lead, in the peace which must be the object of this war, to the obtaining of arrangements more consonant with the well-understood interests of Europe, of Christianity, liberty, and civilization, than the reimposition of the ignorant, barbarian, and despotic yoke of the Mussulmans over the most fertile and favoured portion of Europe."

Lord Aberdeen quite agreed with this, but did not act accordingly; in fact, he contrived to hold language to the Russian Ambassador which the latter construed as evidence of an unconquerable repugnance to an active policy on the part of England. Even Lord Clarendon's trust in the good faith of the Czar was

still unshaken, in spite of the results (which he knew) of the interviews that Sir Hamilton Seymour had with the Emperor Nicholas, and in spite of Menschikoff's appearance at Constantinople and his bearing there. Lord Clarendon's trust arose simply from his desire for peace. Even when Russia occupied the Danubian Principalities there were those who still clung to the belief that the crisis would be tided over by diplomatic means. But, guided by Lord Stratford, the only statesman who pursued a consistent policy (—he was supported in London by Palmerston), the Porte rejected certain vague proposals for mediation, and Count Nesselrode, to whom Prince Albert applied the phrase, "*S'il parle, il est perdu,*" justified this step by writing a note, couched in ambiguous language, but which, in fact, maintained Russia's claims in all their integrity. Therefore the attempt of the Emperor Nicholas, who addressed the Queen in an autograph letter, and asked her "*de juger entre lui et le gouvernement anglais,*" failed of success. The situation was now such that Lord Clarendon was forced to make the confession—not very flattering to the abilities of English statesmen—"We are drifting into war;" but, on the arrival of the news that the Turkish fleet had been destroyed at Sinope, this warlike tendency carried all before it. Lord John Russell immediately charged the Russian Government with breach of faith; and, by way of reply, the Russian Government hinted at the existence of a secret understanding with England. To disprove the insinuations of Russia, the Foreign Office published the despatches of Sir Hamilton Seymour. This rendered the breach irremediable; the alliance with France was concluded, and war was declared on the 27th of March, 1854.

VII.

To this period belongs an attack on Prince Albert,

which, though maliciously designed, served only to strengthen his position. Lord Palmerston knew that it was the Prince who had chiefly objected to his arbitrary dealings, and believed that he owed to the Prince his dismissal from office after the *coup-d'état*. When, therefore, during the vacillations of the latter end of 1853, he, for a short time, left the Ministry, under a pretext, in order to protest against its want of energy,—he availed himself of his freedom to start a newspaper campaign against the Prince. The latter was charged with unjustifiable interference in the business of the Government, and with carrying on anti-English intrigues with the German courts. The weakness of Aberdeen, which was so lively a cause of concern to the Prince, was laid at *his* door; and thus public opinion, embittered by the dilatory ways of the Ministry, was roused against him; in fact, matters went so far that the Queen had to consider the propriety of opening Parliament alone, the Prince, it was hinted, not being secure against insults from the populace. The Prince behaved admirably under the circumstances: he took a ride on horseback, unattended, on the morning before the opening of Parliament, to show that he was not afraid. This had its effect: when he drove in the afternoon to Westminster by the side of the Queen, both received a very enthusiastic reception from the crowd. Lord Aberdeen and Lord John Russell in both Houses of Parliament denounced in strong language the slanders of the Radical newspapers. Lord John claimed on principle the right of the Prince to act as first political adviser of the Queen; the Opposition, through Lord Derby and Mr. Walpole, agreed with all that had been said in praise of the Prince. Thus the issue of the affair was very favourable to him; it also strengthened the position of the Crown. The Queen, who, it may well be supposed, had been deeply pained at finding that this was the sort of

gratitude her husband received for his incessant labour, and who felt the arrows aimed at him to be intended for herself, wrote to Stockmar on the 15th of April, 1854: "That black time when foul calumny strove to blind our deluded people, vanished from the hour Parliament spoke of it; and this serves to show how it was got up, and how little it had taken root." Aberdeen was right when, in a letter to the Prince, he affirmed that after the destruction of the edifice of lies and misrepresentation, a great reaction was certain to follow—a reaction great in proportion to the injustice of the attack. The status and the acts of the Prince were never again called in question,—except, indeed that so late as December, 1854, the silly jealousy of "foreign influence" burst into a temporary flame in the Roebuck Committee for inquiring into the conduct of the war. Even Palmerston gave him ample satisfaction when he became Prime Minister, and was brought into constant personal contact with him. Returning from a visit to Paris in 1855, he said to a friend: "We have a far greater and more extraordinary man at home (than the Emperor Napoleon); the Prince Consort would not consider it right to have obtained a throne as the Emperor has done; but in regard to the possession of the soundest judgment, the highest intellect, and the most exalted qualities of mind, he is far superior to the Emperor. Till my present position gave me so many opportunities of seeing his Royal Highness, I had no idea of his possessing such eminent qualities as he has, and how fortunate it has been for the country that the Queen married such a Prince."

VIII.

WHEN England and France had become allies, Napoleon wished to come into personal relations with the Prince, and invited the latter to pay him a visit in the camp at Boulogne. The visit passed off very satis-

factorily. Prince Albert found the Emperor affable, modest,—but not well instructed in history or politics, except in so far as these related to the Napoleons. Striking remarks alternated with very superficial ones. He admired the English Constitution without knowing much about it; and was astonished to hear that the Queen read all despatches. He contented himself, he said, with extracts, but he kept in important places trustworthy persons who sent reports direct to him. Nor was he less ignorant of the English finances; and he was very much surprised to learn that the Government had undertaken to increase the taxes by fifteen millions sterling in order to defray the expenses of the war, without having recourse to a loan. The bread tariff he declared to be necessary for France, because the people became ungovernable when bread was dear,—though this arrangement had cost the city of Paris sixteen million francs during the previous year. The remarks of the Prince on the silly endeavours of the French after “equality” (which he held to be incompatible with true liberty) and on the pernicious doctrines involved in Rousseau’s “Social Contract,” seemed to impress him; but he thought authors exerted, on the whole, very little influence in France: the only thing the people knew was the name—Napoleon. Former governments had tried to govern by relying upon the support of the one million of educated people; he sought to do so by the aid of the other nine-and-twenty millions. As regarded the army, he admitted that the war had found him “*impourvu*,” and the entire war material had to be renewed. He intended to harden the troops by making them live in camps; he attached a good deal of importance to the alterations introduced by him into the artillery,—but modestly admitted that he had no experience in the practical duties of a commander. With respect to Germany, he shared with all Frenchmen the fear of her attaining unity, and spoke in favour of the “trias”

(or tripartite division of power), which Prince Albert proved to his satisfaction to be an impossible arrangement,—as Prussia could never be detached from the rest of Germany. He frankly acknowledged that it was his ardent wish to see Lombardy freed from Austrian misgovernment, and Poland restored to her position as a nation. The Schleswig-Holstein question he considered too complicated for him to give himself much trouble about it; and he was very much astonished to hear from the Prince that by the London treaty of 1852, England and France had only played Russia's game.

The meeting was of great political importance, for it strengthened the alliance of the Western Powers. It also led the Emperor to entertain the highest opinion of the Prince, whom he called "*une des intelligences les plus supérieures de l'époque*;" he blamed his Ambassador in London for not having given him sufficient information about the Prince, and thus put him in a position to estimate rightly the influence such a man exercised in the counsels of England. Later on he wrote to the Queen: "*Lorsqu'on a su apprécier les connaissances variées et le jugement élevé du Prince, on revient d'auprès de lui plus instruit et plus apte à faire le bien.*"

While the two Governments were thus closely united in policy, events at the theatre of war were anything but satisfactory. The Emperor Napoleon had, in the spring, communicated to the Cabinet a project for an attack on Sebastopol; this step was popular in England, and Prince Albert approved of it, because, as he told Count Vitzthum, the Russians in that fortress were a standing menace to Constantinople, and their power in the East depended upon Sebastopol: therefore it must be destroyed. The event showed that this was an error: the whole course of the war was hampered by the siege of the fortress; and in the long run, when it was taken, very little advantage was gained, not-

withstanding the large sacrifices that had been made. Then, again, the really vulnerable point of Russia in the South was the Caucasus, the tribes of which only waited for the signal to revolt.⁹ The operations, too, before Sebastopol dispelled great illusions, especially some that were cherished in England. At the instance of the Prince a camp was formed, in the summer of 1853, at Chobham, in order to mass troops from the different garrisons; from this the camp at Aldershot was developed at a later time. But the English army was in truth not fit for what was required of it in the war. The gallant but ill-advised charge under Lord Cardigan at Balaclava, cost the best part of the cavalry; the infantry fought heroically against huge odds at Inkermann, but their ranks were fearfully thinned. General Canrobert, an eye-witness, said at a later time to Count Vitzthum, "*L'infanterie anglaise est la première du monde.*" But every day fresh masses of Russians, set free by the occupation of the Principalities by Austria, poured into Sebastopol. England was, as she was soon forced to see, face to face with a tedious siege; and to carry on a siege, it was necessary to hurry up reinforcements as fast as possible. The Prince, in a letter to Lord Aberdeen, urged that energetic steps should be immediately taken to send them, and sketched a plan of the necessary measures; but the Cabinet could come to no decision, and it was not till the end of the year that his proposals were accepted. Militia regiments were despatched to the Mediterranean stations in order to set free, and render available for the war in the Crimea, the garrisons of line troops that held them; and a Foreign Legion was formed. To the dismal tale

⁹ This was indeed urged upon the Government by the late Mr. Laurence Oliphant, who knew the country. Cf. his work: *The Trans-Caucasian Campaign of the Turkish Army under Omer Pasha*, 1856; and Lady Grant-Duff's Essay on Oliphant in the *Contemporary Review* for February, 1889.

of losses in action, which reduced the English army to 10,000 men, was soon added intelligence of the distress which the troops were suffering from a defective commissariat, and the total absence of organization.¹

Prince Albert was indefatigable in his endeavours to remedy these evils ; but once more he found himself baffled by the obstacles raised by a dilatory, cumbrous routine. At last a storm of public indignation broke loose, and under stress of this, after the opening of Parliament,—which faithfully reflected the opinion of the country,—the Aberdeen Ministry fell, and Lord Palmerston returned to power as head of a new Administration. Prince Albert, though disliking him, was too patriotic not to recognize that Palmerston, especially as he was in high favour with Napoleon, was the man for the crisis,—and gave him ungrudging support. A sudden change was wrought in the miserable condition of affairs; the Commissariat was efficiently organized ; and in the next spring Lord Raglan had once more under his command an army of 30,000 men. The French alliance was considerably strengthened by a visit of the Emperor and Empress of the French to the Queen in April, 1855. But in the meantime the siege of Sebastopol made very unsatisfactory progress : and the negotiations carried

¹ Count Vitzthum relates the following, to show the confusion which reigned in the War Department: "It is reported that the troops require gloves. The Secretary for War, the Duke of Newcastle, immediately orders 40,000 pairs to be forwarded. The Secretary at War, Mr. Sidney Herbert, does not hear of this order, and orders 50,000 pairs to be forwarded. The 90,000 pairs of gloves reach their destination all right, are served out—and are found to be utterly useless. Lord Raglan, in the strongest terms, begs that winter clothing for his troops and also medicines and lint may be sent out. Accordingly, a ship-load of these is despatched. The vessel actually arrives at Balaclava, but returns to England without breaking bulk, because there was nobody to receive the cargo! Thus hundreds of thousands are squandered, and the army perishes of cold and hunger." (Vol. i. p. 160—German Edition.)

on at the Vienna Conference remained without result. The attack on the Redan (June 18th) failed; the Parliament exhausted itself in fruitless squabbles; Lord Russell's feeble action in Vienna was so violently condemned that only by his resignation was a ministerial crisis averted. At last (September), the Malákoff was captured by the French; but the English general, Simpson, had to report that "the English attack on the Redan had not succeeded." Towards the end of November, Kars fell, though defended with great gallantry by General Williams. In September, Napoleon had broached to the London Cabinet the question of the restoration of Poland; Clarendon did not fall in with his views. On the 22nd of November, the Emperor addressed a letter to the Queen, in which he put the choice between a total rearrangement of the map of Europe and a Peace negotiated on conditions in regard to which he had already come to an understanding with Austria. The English Government found itself in a very difficult predicament, which the Queen explained, as did the Prince, in a letter in answer to the King of the Belgians, who all along was urgent in favour of peace. In England the war was more popular than ever, and the national *amour-propre* was not satisfied with the part played by the army before Sebastopol, and with the trifling success attained by the fleet in the Baltic. There was now an efficient army; enormous preparations were made for the campaign of the following year, and hopes were entertained that even Cronstadt would be destroyed. The Crown and the Ministry could not act in deference to personal predilections and dynastic interests, as Napoleon did; but, inasmuch as they could not afford to come to a downright breach with the Emperor, they were forced to be content with enlarging, and at the same time making more stringent, proposals for an ultimatum to be addressed to Russia. It was supposed that the ultimatum, so

modified, would not be accepted at St. Petersburg. When it *was* accepted, England found herself in a very difficult position at the Paris Conference. For the Emperor of the French, covered with flattery by Russia, and won by Count Orloff's frank admission of former blunders, was only too desirous to yield, in so far as he himself was concerned. But yet he was very loyal to the alliance,—and, in fact, furnished the sole support that England possessed. She was, for the rest, completely isolated. Therefore the Queen and the Prince insisted—and they were the first to do so—that the peace negotiations should be carried on in Paris. Prince Albert was very decidedly opposed to allowing Prussia to take part in these negotiations; and it was only when all the essential points were settled, that her plenipotentiaries were invited to join in the proceedings. As matters stood, England had to be satisfied with what she could get; and, in matter of fact, the peace was pretty much what the Prince described it to be, in a letter written in the spring to King Leopold: “At any rate, the object which we set before us has not yet been fully attained, and to the present moment I have not seen, and am not now able to discover, the slightest indication that Russia has abandoned her intention to be paramount in the East.” Lord Clarendon, who was one of the signatories of the peace, had the same feeling, for his words were: “*Nous avons fait une paix, mais pas la paix.*”

IX.

THOUGH politics and questions relating to the War made the largest demands on the energies of the Prince, he did not neglect other interests. This is shown by a series of speeches delivered during these and the following years, at the laying of foundation-stones, or the inauguration of institutions devoted to art, to

charity, and to the well-being of the people. In the course of his life in England, a period of twenty years, he was actively connected with the erection of a number of remarkable buildings. Osborne, in the Isle of Wight, is his work; so is Balmoral, the beautiful Highland residence of the Queen, completed and occupied in 1855. In 1856 were opened the great ball and concert-rooms in Buckingham Palace, the space hitherto available being altogether insufficient for the number of guests. The art treasures of Windsor were arranged and increased. The Prince caused photographs to be taken of all the drawings of Raphael, wherever they were to be found; he made a large collection of copper-plate engravings and etchings, and brought together several hundreds of miniatures. But he laboured for the People as well as for the Court. The Crystal Palace at Sydenham, Victoria Park, the great Military Hospital at Chelsea, the South Kensington Museum, which has done so much to advance art-industry in England, and which is now so flourishing,—and the Royal Albert Hall,—not opened till several years after his death,—these are all creations of his artistic taste and his watchful care. His correspondence was so heavy that he was often at a loss how to find time for it. Among his correspondents was Don Pedro, the young King of Portugal, who, during a visit, took such a liking to the Prince, that he did nothing without consulting him, and wrote to him almost every day.—The masterly speech which the Prince made in 1860, in opening the International Statistical Congress, made a profound impression on that assembly.

The Prince found his chief pleasure in his family, which had now considerably increased. The children were growing up. As in the earlier years, so to the end of his life, nothing broke the harmony of that happy home. Sincere affection bound together the parents themselves, and parents and

children. Every success achieved by the Prince, every recognition of his merits, the Queen celebrates as an honour done to herself. How happy she is when (in 1857) she can give her beloved his due official position, by conferring on him the title of Prince Consort! And how truly is this devotion returned by the Prince, who cannot be separated a single day from his wife without giving her the most accurate account of everything that happens!

The most important event in the widening family circle was the betrothal and marriage of the Princess Victoria to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, afterwards Emperor of Germany. The parents were well satisfied with the union (which, notwithstanding a virulent article in the *Times*, soon became very popular); yet the parting with their daughter, now in the first bloom of womanhood, was naturally a very bitter trial. "My heart was very full," writes the Prince the day after her departure, "when yesterday you leaned your forehead on my breast to give free vent to your tears. I am not of a demonstrative nature, and therefore you can hardly know how dear you have always been to me, and what a void you have left behind in my heart: yet not in my heart, for there assuredly you will abide henceforth, as till now you have done,—but in my daily life, which is evermore reminding my heart of your absence."

The parents accompanied the farther movements of the young couple with the liveliest interest and satisfaction,—receiving from them letters containing accounts of everything that happened to them. The letters of the Prince showed how assiduously he endeavoured to give the young wife good counsel. "You have now entered upon your new house," he writes on February 11th [1858], "and been received and welcomed on all sides with the greatest friendship and cordiality. This kindly and truthful advance of a whole nation to an entire stranger must have

kindled and confirmed within you the determination to show yourself in every way worthy of such feelings, and to reciprocate and requite them by the steadfast resolution to dedicate the whole energies of your life to your new home." (Martin, iv. 172.) A letter of February 17th strikes a more serious note:—"Your festival time, if not your honeymoon, comes to an end to-day; and on this I take leave to congratulate you, unfeeling though it may sound, for I wish for you the necessary time and tranquillity to digest the many impressions you have received, and which otherwise, like a wild revel, first inflame, and then stupefy, leaving a dull nerveless lassitude behind. Your exertions, and the demands which have been made on you, have been quite immense; you have done your best, and have won the hearts, or what is called the hearts, of all. In the nature of things we may now expect a little reaction. The public, just because it was rapturous and enthusiastic, will now become minutely critical, and take you to pieces anatomically. This must be kept in view, although it need cause you no uneasiness, for you have only followed your natural bent, and have made no external demonstration (*nichts äusserlich* 'affichirt') which did not answer to the truth of your inner nature. It is only the man who presents an artificial demeanour (*Wesen*) to the world who has to dread being unmasked." (Martin, iv. 175, 176.)

Any one who reads between the lines of Sir Theodore Martin's book will see that the young Princess, in spite of her domestic happiness, had to contend with many difficulties in her new sphere, and that these very probably made her sigh for the old home. The following letter of the Prince (April 28th, 1858) seems to refer to some manifestation of despondency on her part:—"What you are now living through, observing, and doing, are the most important experiences, impressions, and acts of your life, for they are

the fruit of a life independent and responsible to itself. That outside of and in close proximity to your true and tranquillizing happiness with dear Fritz your path of life is not wholly smooth, I regard as a most fortunate circumstance for you, inasmuch as it forces you to exercise and to strengthen the powers of your mind. Only keep a constant guard upon yourself, and be not seduced by familiarity into approval of that which, while it was unfamiliar, the reason could not recognize as either good or fitting (*zweckmässig*). This it is which makes the difference between a feeble soul and a strong one, that while the former suffers itself to be the slave of circumstances, the latter accommodates itself to them on rational grounds and keeps its judgment unfettered.—I am delighted to see by your letter of the 24th, that you deliberate gravely upon your budget, and I will be most happy to look through it, if you send it to me; this is the only way to have a clear idea to one's-self of what one has, spends, and ought to spend. As this is a business of which I have had long and frequent experience, I will give you one rule for your guidance in it, viz. to set apart a considerable balance *pour l'imprévu*. This gentleman is the costliest of guests in life, and we shall look very blank if we have nothing to set before him." (Martin, iv. 217, 218, 315.)

Besides this constant interchange of thoughts and feelings, plans for seeing one another were soon formed and carried out. In Potsdam and in Coburg the parents met daughter and son-in-law. Between the two latter the first shoots of new family happiness had already appeared. These visits enabled the Queen and Prince to see once more their good old friend Stockmar, who, from the year 1857, dared not any more venture on the journey to England. But the noble and sagacious old man continued to communicate confidential advice by letter as long as the Prince

lived, and the latter gave him accurate intelligence on all the events—great and small—of his life.

X.]

THE period between the conclusion of peace, March, 1856, and the middle of 1857, passed quietly. The war with Persia about the occupation of Herat, begun on very absurd grounds by Palmerston, was ended by the Peace of Paris; the Prince was in consequence able, undisturbed, to devote all his efforts to the improvement of the condition of the working-classes. Working-men's dwellings were built, places of recreation established, which afforded healthy and innocent amusement; the porters and dock labourers of the port of London were delivered by the Prince from the misery of the truck-system which then prevailed: his warm heart and clear head were at the service of all sufferers. He was specially interested in the Art Treasures Exhibition in Manchester, which was opened in the spring of 1857, and in an improved arrangement of the galleries and museums of London. But in the early summer came the first gloomy tidings of the threatened rising in India. The Prince and the Queen had, to the very utmost of their power, opposed the demand, which had found expression in Parliament, for a large reduction in the military forces created with such exertions during the Crimean war. They were apprehensive that England would find herself without resources in case some unforeseen emergency should occur. Lord Palmerston felt that they were justified in their opposition, and warned Parliament that the worst course a great and rich country could take for preserving peace, was to deprive itself of the means of defence. But he had not the courage to face manfully the current of opinion: a reduction in the expenditure and the lowering of the income-tax

were demanded; Palmerston agreed to a reduction which he was destined to repent in the course of a very few months. "If," wrote the Queen to the Minister, when the first evil tidings came, "we had not reduced in such a hurry this spring, we should now have all the men wanted." But even then the Ministry could not gather its energies and take the course demanded by the situation; it denied the magnitude of the danger, and contented itself with slowly sending small detachments of troops to India. The Prince, who immediately saw the danger, could by no means put up with this dilatory procedure. His energy roused up the Ministers from their unpardonable apathy; all the available troops were flung on Indian soil with the utmost despatch, and two able generals, Sir Colin Campbell and Havelock, were entrusted with the command. Under them the British troops, by stubborn bravery, won victories in spite of huge disparity of numbers—victories that covered them with glory; only then was India conquered.² But the Prince saw that it was not enough merely to avert the danger for the moment. The system of governing such an empire through the East India Company with concurrent, imperfectly defined authority lodged in the Ministry, had outlived its time; an army and government acting in unison must be created. The Queen addressed to the Ministry a vigorous communication, in which she required: (1) That India should never again be left without a European army of adequate strength; and (2) that the European army of India should be placed directly under control of the Crown. Both measures were carried, but only after stubborn opposition.

² Very beautiful is the letter written by the Queen to Sir Colin Campbell after the capture of Lucknow. She commends his gallant deeds (which she rewarded with a peerage), and gently blames him for being too careless in exposing his valuable life. (Martin, iv. 128.)

Already in the autumn of 1857, Palmerston had proposed a new order of things, by which the government of India should be lodged, not in the Company—a body of traders—but in the Crown. His fall, in the beginning of 1858, prevented the execution of his plans, and the Derby Ministry had to carry out the project. That Ministry, indeed, seemed, in a manner, specially called to the work; for Mr. Disraeli, the leader of the Lower House, had, at the outbreak of the Mutiny, insisted that the Crown and the people of India must be drawn into closer relations. But the blundering of the Indian Minister, Lord Ellenborough, spoiled all. Palmerston's Bill very properly lodged the Government of India in a Council, freely appointed by the Crown, and consisting of men of at least ten years' experience in the Indian Service. Ellenborough, on the other hand, made the unfortunate proposal that four members of the Council should be elected by the holders of Indian stock, and by civil and military officials who had been at least ten years in the Indian service; and that five other members should be elected by the ten-pound householders of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast. The Queen expressed the most decided objections to the whole elective idea, especially to the capricious favouring of those five cities; but Lord Ellenborough persisted in his view of the case, and so brought on the Government a decided defeat in Parliament; for the whole idea of election was rejected. Not content with this, Lord Ellenborough shortly afterwards placed the Government in a very awkward predicament, by criticizing severely in a despatch, published without the knowledge of his colleagues, a proclamation of the Governor-General of India, Lord Canning, who throughout the Mutiny had acted with the greatest prudence and vigour. This brought matters to a crisis, and the blundering minister was forced to resign. The Opposition, in order to ruin

the Cabinet, wished to fasten upon it the responsibility for this blundering; but in this, owing to divisions in the Opposition itself, it did not succeed, and the measure was now passed—in the form of a series of Resolutions of the House. In June, Disraeli was able to report to the Queen that the success of the Bill was assured: “But it is only the antechamber of an imperial palace; and your Majesty would do well to deign to consider the steps which are now necessary to influence the opinions and affect the imaginations of the Indian populations. The name of your Majesty ought to be impressed upon their native life.” The spirit in which the Queen assumed her new dignity is shown in her instructions to Lord Derby, when she was about to be proclaimed. He was to draw up the Proclamation, keeping before his mind the thought that a woman was addressing, as ruler, more than 200,000,000 Asiatics, in assuming direct sovereignty over them, after a bloody civil war; and he was to announce to them the principles on which her Government would be founded. “Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization.—Her Majesty wishes expression to be given to her feelings of horror and regret at the result of this bloody civil war, and of pleasure and gratitude to God at its approaching end, and her Majesty thinks the Proclamation should terminate by an invocation to Providence for its blessing on a great work for a great and good end.”

XI.

DURING these years, strained relations existed with France. The alliance had always rested more upon

the personal predilections and interests of Napoleon III., than upon any real understanding between the two nations.³ The alliance, moreover, became of necessity weaker, when the restless imagination of the Emperor pursued new alliances, and aimed at changes, of a radical character, in the map of Europe; and when, too, Russia was trying with all the arts of flattery to ensnare him. The visit of the Grand Duke Constantine did not quite answer the expectations that were entertained of it: it was counterbalanced by the invitation which the Duke received from Osborne, where he had a most polite reception. A more significant circumstance was the appointment of Gortchakoff as foreign minister of Russia. At an earlier period he had been sent as ambassador to Stuttgart, in order to draw France from the alliance with England which was then impending; and there, on one occasion, he observed to his French colleague: "*Vous savez, la ligne du Rhin s'obtient à St. Pétersbourg.*" Walewski had been drawn into the current of Russian influence. Morny had represented France with unparalleled splendour at the coronation in Moscow, and had returned with a Russian wife and a most decided leaning towards a Russian alliance. All these things could not but exercise an influence on Napoleon; only Persigny, ambassador in London since 1855, stood by the English alliance, and on that account came into unfriendly relations with Walewski. The first appearance of discord between the two nations arose in connection with the settlement of the Danubian Principalities. The Emperor had now become quite indifferent to the independence

³ The Emperor said to Count Vitzthum, when the Count paid him a visit in 1858, "*La nation que je suis appelé à gouverner ne connaît pas l'Angleterre, ignore ses institutions et n'apprécie pas comme moi les intérêts réciproques que protège notre alliance. Les deux peuples ne se connaissent pas et ne s'aiment guère.*" (Vitzthum, ii. p. 238.)

of Turkey, for which he had formerly drawn the sword.⁴ On the frustration of his plan of handing over the Principalities to Austria as a compensation for the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, he became convinced (under Roumanian influence) that the best arrangement would be—to unite the Principalities under a foreign prince, who should recognize the suzerainty of Turkey. Russia was also for the union, but under a *native* prince, because she hoped to keep a native prince dependent on herself. Sardinia and Prussia also agreed to the union arrangement; but Austria and the Porte offered determined opposition. England was at first inclined to it, but afterwards became convinced that it must issue in the weakening of Turkey. Then followed the elections for the Moldavian Divan, which were held in terms of the Peace of Paris, in order to ascertain the will of the people in regard to the constitution. The majority of members returned in these elections the French agents found to be averse to the union of the two provinces under one head. Thereupon France, charging the Porte with influencing the elections and with other dishonourable acts, demanded that the returns should be quashed and new elections held. This demand met with a flat refusal at Constantinople, —purely, Napoleon maintained, at the instigation of Lord Stratford. France, Russia and Sardinia threatened to break off diplomatic relations.

The tension was now so great that Persigny rushed

⁴ At Osborne the Prince asked him whether he was still inclined to maintain the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, which England was determined by all means to preserve. The Emperor replied that, personally, the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was a matter of indifference to him, and that he could have no sympathy for a miserable people like the Turks. If, however, the question was put to him as a politician, it was a very different affair; and naturally he was not disposed to give up the original object of the alliance, for which France had made so many sacrifices.

off to Paris,—“*pour sauver mon Empereur des mains des imbéciles.*” He represented so strongly the dangers attending a breach with England, that Napoleon determined to beg of the Queen a meeting at Osborne. The Queen (although she does not care to receive foreign guests in the Isle of Wight) complied very willingly, because the visit would give an opportunity for the frankest interchange of views; especially for the reason expressed by Palmerston:—“Prince Albert can say to the Emperor many things that we cannot say.” This the Prince did, and in the most unreserved manner. He pointed out to Napoleon that the latter, in his policy regarding the Principalities, was playing Russia’s game, since the object she persistently aimed at was the dismemberment of Turkey, and that she beheld with great satisfaction his dispute with England. The Emperor denied this,—contending that if the two Danubian states were pacified and united under a foreign prince, they would form an actual barrier against Russia,—whereas their existing condition constantly gave her opportunity for interference. He reproached England for her connection with Austria, of whose duplicity Russia had lately produced fresh proof: while she was protesting to the Western Powers that she occupied the Principalities in order to keep the Russians out of them, she was assuring Russia that she took this course simply to set the Russian army free to act against the allies (Martin, iv. p. 107). Prince Albert replied that this did not at all astonish him; but if Austria was insincere, Russia was ten times more so; farther, that England had formed no alliance with Austria,—having merely agreed with her as to the course of action to be pursued on this particular question. Then, with the co-operation of the statesmen on each side, namely, Palmerston and Clarendon, Walewski and Persigny,—an agreement was arrived at: the Moldavian elections were to be cancelled, and new election

writs issued under the superintendence of a European Commission : on the other hand, the plan of uniting the Principalities was to be abandoned. Palmerston, at the suggestion of the Prince, threw the substance of the discussions into the form of a memorandum, and laid this before Walewski. The latter, though acknowledging its correctness, refused to sign it, or to regard it as an official document. His Government, he explained, desired to keep the satisfaction which the Sultan was to offer, distinct from the arrangement in regard to the Principalities; and it must not appear as if France had purchased the one by yielding on the other. Walewski's action later on showed that his refusal had been due to other considerations; for the next year, Napoleon returned to the policy of uniting the Principalities, maintaining that he had changed his attitude, not on this point, but on that of setting a foreign prince at the head of affairs,—whereas the English policy, as manifested at Osborne, contemplated only identity in form of government, not a political connection. The whole question was settled by the Paris Conference of August, 1858: the form of government in the two Principalities was to be the same—like institutions existing in the two; but by the appointment of a ministry and legislature for each, the political separation was maintained. Meantime, both provinces frustrated the arrangement, by electing the same person, Major Couza, as Hospodar; and from that moment the movement towards unity advanced apace. It is very much to be doubted whether England and Prince Albert were right in their policy on this question. The main point was, to remove the Principalities from under the influence of Russia; and, since the most effectual means of securing this—namely, incorporation with Austria,—had broken down, clearly the best course was to secure to the states the greatest possible independence; it was, of

course, to combat this that Russia opposed the appointment of a foreign prince.—Only under the Hohenzollern dynasty has the independence of Roumania been achieved. The statement that it has been achieved is nowise contradicted by the forced alliance of 1877; for surely it is manifest that a small state, left in the lurch by the great Powers, is in no condition to prevent a conflict between two powerful neighbours.

Of more importance than the interchange of views on this question were the conversations on political affairs generally, which the Prince had with the Emperor. He did not conceal from Napoleon that Russia's efforts to win the favour of France were regarded with distrust in England, and that this distrust would find new support in Napoleon's projected meeting with the Emperor Alexander at Stuttgart. The Emperor affirmed that this distrust was unfounded; he had, he said, responded to the many advances of Russia with so much coldness, that she might well be hurt at the reception accorded to her. "*bons procédés*;" then, in contrast to his action, the Emperor Alexander, in answer to a proposal for reconciliation made to him by Austria, had said he felt no bitterness, but that any understanding he might come to with Austria must not be used against France, which he considered as his friend: "*C'était, il faut le dire, très bien de la part de l'Empereur.*" The Prince merely replied that, in his interviews with the Emperor Alexander, he would do well to reflect of how long standing the connection between the Northern Courts had been, and that everything he said in Stuttgart would certainly be known to them. Further, that Austria, if she saw her interests in jeopardy, could in three days conclude a peace with Russia, and that therefore Napoleon had every reason to conciliate Austria. This danger, of the renewal of the alliance of the Northern Powers against France,

brought the French Emperor to a special project of his own. This was nothing less than the revision (asserted by him to be, in his view, absolutely necessary) of the treaties of 1815,—which, he said, stood as a monument of the European coalition against France. The Prince expressed the most decided objection to this. The treaties, he said, were the result of a war which had devastated Europe for five-and-twenty years. They were not inviolable, as the example of Belgium, Neuenburg, and Napoleon's own elevation to the imperial throne clearly proved; but the general revision of them would certainly let loose all bad passions, and could lead only to war; for all the Powers would come forward with mutually opposing claims. Moreover, none of the European Powers would run the risk of meddling with the *status quo* on the Continent, unless by so doing some material advantage was to be gained; and if all of them desired advantages, how could they hope to win them, save by a general war? The Emperor acknowledged the difficulties of the case, but remarked that the Emperor Alexander, who, at his suggestion, had been sounded by Count Morny, had (*à propos* of the conversations between his father and Sir Hamilton Seymour) declined to enter upon the subject, but had yet thought that a good deal could be done. For example: The Duke of Brunswick had no heirs, the Northern nations desired a Scandinavian union; again, if Denmark were united with Sweden, and England did not become jealous over the acquisition of Kiel, Holstein might fall to Prussia. The Prince replied that Brunswick would fall by right to Hanover; that against any strengthening of Prussia, England felt no jealousy, but that the Holsteiners did not wish to become Prussian; they were a German people, and demanded that their connection with Schleswig should be maintained. The Emperor observed that this was a very complicated question;

also that he believed there were to be found outside of Europe, better means "*pour rendre de grands bienfaits au monde.*" He would like to make the Mediterranean Sea, not into a French, but into a European lake. Spain might have Morocco; Sardinia, a portion of Tripoli; England, Egypt; Austria, a part of Syria,— "*et que sais-je?*" All these were magnificent countries, though, owing to their abominable governments, they had ceased to be productive for purposes of civilization; besides, France wanted an outlet for her restless spirits.—The Prince felt relieved when the Emperor got upon comparatively chimerical projects, and only remarked that the possession of Algeria did not tell in favour of such outlets: Algeria had hardly absorbed all the restless spirits of Paris. He added that the French had no talent for colonization, but this the Emperor would by no means admit. On the whole, the visit served to re-establish relations; but, from a political point of view, the alliance was at an end; and although, when the Emperors met shortly afterwards at Stuttgart, no settled policy was agreed upon, yet they mutually promised to aim at an understanding in all European questions. Napoleon, in visiting the Prince, had hoped to win him over to support his designs; but the Prince declined to bind himself in regard to unforeseen events, which the Emperor could bring to pass at his pleasure. The sting of this refusal remained, although they parted, to all appearance, good friends. A year and a half later the Prince expressed his opinion of the Emperor as follows:—"I should not like to call the Emperor inscrutable (*unberechenbar*). I see in him no enigma. The events we have yet to expect will, upon the whole, not surprise me. He is, as he himself may sometimes think, the creature of a fatal destiny. His actions are the logical consequences of given premises. He *wills* far less often than he *must*. He is more to be pitied than blamed. His whole power is based upon false-

hood. His system rests upon unsolved and insoluble contradictions, which assert themselves in mutual antagonism, and which must bring his system, if not himself, to a tragic end. To reconcile these contradictions is impossible. Napoleon would like to be Emperor by the grace of God, and at the same time *par la volonté nationale*. He can be either one or the other, but never both together. In France his power, if not derived from, at least rests upon, the Catholic priesthood. In Italy he is compelled, in order to escape the daggers of Orsini's confederates, and to redeem the promises made to the Carbonari, to threaten and attack the Romish Church. In like manner, '*l'Empire c'est la paix*,' stands in direct contradiction to the need of giving employment to his army. Eventually he will not be able to live without the halo of a campaign on the Rhine. Even in apparently minor matters, the Nemesis of these insoluble contradictions pursues him. Take merely the architectural embellishment of Paris. Enormous sums were lavished to stop the mouths of hungry workmen; whole quarters of the town were pulled down and built up again. But when the work is finished, there will be no one in the most beautiful metropolis of Europe rich enough to enjoy its beauty. The most extraordinary thing is that the Emperor is really sincere in both directions. He honestly believes what he says, and just as honestly in what he will say to the contrary to-morrow. That things have gone tolerably hitherto is owing to his undeniable cleverness and to a certain exercise of prudence. But with all his gifts he is unable to appreciate that irreconcilable conflict of ideas of which he is sure in time to be the victim. He is no philosopher. You will not be surprised to hear that I have vainly endeavoured to make this clear to honest Persigny." (Vitzthum, Engl. Trans. vol. ii. 18—20.)

The most decided effect was produced on the policy

of Napoleon by the criminal attempt of Orsini; for a time, indeed, it shook the Emperor's powers of judgment and self-control,—causing him to give ear to pernicious counsels. Demands, accompanied by threats, were addressed to Sardinia, Switzerland, and Belgium. It was not attempted to treat England in a like fashion, but Walewski sent a despatch to Persigny, the French ambassador in London, complaining in strong language that the English right of asylum favoured the designs of murderers, and expressing in so many words the expectation that the British Government would give guarantees that there should be no repetition of such criminal undertakings—guarantees which could not be refused by any state to a friendly neighbour. This complaint was all the more unjustifiable, as the English police had informed the French, fourteen days before, that Orsini was leaving England to commit a murderous outrage on the Emperor, and had, at the same time, communicated all particulars necessary for the arrest of the criminal. However, Lord Palmerston complied with the request, and introduced a Bill which made conspiracy to murder a crime punishable with from three to five years' penal servitude. The Bill passed the first reading,—299 voting for it, against it 99; but the publication in the *Moniteur* of the addresses of certain French colonels, treating England openly as an enemy,—and of Walewski's despatch, caused a complete revolution in public opinion. It was supposed the Government had yielded to threats; and although the Emperor gave expression to his regret at the publication, the supporters of the Bill were in a minority on the second reading. Lord Derby undertook the formation of a new ministry; he allowed the Conspiracy Bill to drop, and dismissed, in the proper way, the complaints in the Walewski despatch. However deeply the Emperor was mortified, he was forced, nevertheless, to the conviction that no ministry could carry out the measures demanded; he therefore strove

to make the best of a bad business; and when Persigny, who had been especially active in pressing Palmerston to introduce the Bill, and was deeply chagrined at his fall, resigned his post, the Emperor sent in his place the Duke of Malakoff. The latter openly expressed his disapproval of the provocation offered by the military men; and, on the release of Bernard, the accomplice of Orsini, observed to the Prince: "*Il faut rester impassible pour ces sortes de choses et laisser couler l'eau sous le pont.*"

XII.

BUT the attempt on the Emperor's life produced a profound impression upon him. Orsini's adjuration that he would become the liberator of Italy had affected him deeply, and gladly would he have pardoned the conspirator. Thenceforth he stood, as the Prince Regent of Prussia strikingly expressed it later on, under stress of "*la guerre ou le poignard.*" This state of affairs Cavour very cleverly availed himself of, and in a secret meeting with the Emperor at Plombières it was arranged (without a suspicion on the part of the French ministers of what was going on) that, in certain contingencies, France would support the erection of Northern Italy into a kingdom, and with this object would come to the help of Sardinia in a war against Austria. Savoy and Nice were offered to the Emperor as compensation; a marriage between Prince Napoleon and the daughter of Victor Emmanuel was to seal the alliance. To this alliance the Emperor attached the greatest importance, the Czar having told him in Stuttgart that he might do what he pleased in regard to Italy; that he, for his part, would, under no circumstances, interfere. Of this meeting with Cavour, so important in its consequences, nothing was divulged at the time; but when, shortly after, the Queen and

the Prince, in response to a pressing invitation from Napoleon, went over to Cherbourg, they found a certain constraint in his manner, notwithstanding all his politeness and his assurances that he would stand by the English alliance. The compact which he had just made, and which he well knew would meet with the disapproval of the Queen and the Prince, was a bar to the frankness of former times. Napoleon tried once more to gain the Prince over to his proposals for rearranging the map of Europe; but these the Prince rejected for the reasons he had before advanced, namely, that in English opinion there were no surer means of causing the complications that were dreaded than to enter into engagements in regard to contingencies,—since, in that case, one party, whose interest it was to bring about changes, could exert moral pressure on another, so as to force it into action. Such a part no British statesman—and least of all himself—would ever consent to play. This view of the case Napoleon regretted, as but an English theory, and in his judgment completely erroneous. Of what had taken place at Plombières the Prince had an inkling, but he knew nothing for certain, the secret having been well kept; and he supposed the Emperor had promised to help Sardinia only in case of an attack. The first indication the Emperor gave of his views was in a conversation with the English ambassador, Lord Cowley, *à propos* of certain violent articles in the London press on his war preparations. He remarked that this attack, in face of his friendly attitude towards England, might make the continuance of the alliance impossible. He affirmed that he had no ambitious intentions, but that if other countries were aggrandized, France could not remain in the background. During the war with Russia he became convinced no Peace could be satisfactory without the restoration of Poland; he had approached Austria in the hope that she would help him in this great work. “She left me,” he said,

"in the lurch; and, therefore, after the Peace I engaged in the improvement of the position of Italy; and, on this account, Russia made advances to me." In answer to a question of Lord Cowley, he admitted that Russia had not promised him positive assistance;⁵ and, as events soon showed, Russia was determined to look quietly on, enjoy Austria's embarrassments, and make her feel how much she had lost in forfeiting the friendship of Russia. But the Czar's government all the while took good care not to lend its support to any policy having for its object the establishment of an Italian kingdom. The Foreign Minister, Lord Malmesbury, was not inclined to take these symptoms seriously; but the Prince was convinced that the Emperor contemplated war,—especially when he heard that Napoleon, when Palmerston paid a visit to him, had talked about driving the Austrians out of Italy. There followed, in the new year's letter to the Queen, the announcement of the approaching marriage of Prince Napoleon; immediately after that, the strange greeting of Baron Hübner, and Victor Emmanuel's speech from the throne.—One cannot help thinking that the policy of England, and also of the Prince, at this stage of the Italian question, was not particularly happy; what undoubtedly influenced it was the fact that, as a counterbalance to the Franco-Russian *rapprochement*, England and Austria in Eastern affairs, especially in the question of the Danubian Principalities, had acted in close accord.

⁵ Later on (January 20th, 1859) he told Lord Cowley that Russia had promised, in case of war, to place on her frontier an army which would keep Austria and Prussia in check. The Russian ambassador in Berlin, Baron Budberg, confirmed this statement in answer to a question of Schleinitz,—asserting that Russia could never allow Austria to come victorious out of a war with France, *because she could never come to an understanding with Austria in regard to Turkish affairs* (Martin, iv. 426). Russia's attempts at a subsequent period to gain the support of France in return for her aid to France in the then existing situation, were unsuccessful (v. 14).

The aim was, to deprive the Emperor of every pretext for violent measures, in order eventually to put him completely in the wrong; but in this course no account was taken of the exasperation prevailing in Austria, and the haughty attitude assumed by the Imperial Cabinet, by which the susceptibilities of Prussia were wounded, she being treated almost as a vassal. At Vienna during that time the design was entertained of placing Henri V. on the French throne, after the anticipated defeat of Napoleon! That the situation in Italy was permanently untenable seemed clear. "Austria," wrote Stockmar, "is, in my eyes, only a geographico-political necessity of the treaties of 1814-15. Amid the changes to which all human affairs are subject, can this necessity last for ever?" But it was also clear that Napoleon was determined to force the pace.⁶ England had now the alternative: either to allow him a free hand, though within certain bounds, and under prescribed conditions; or, in face of the dangers which such a war might entail, offer him a determined opposition: in which latter case the support of Prussia was assured. England did neither the one thing nor the other. She wearied herself in exhorting Napoleon to abandon his mischievous designs; spoke strongly of the sacredness of treaties—which yet she had not the determination to maintain by force of arms. She tried mediation, and sent Lord Cowley to Vienna, where his exertions were, of course, utterly futile, since the real question at issue was left untouched;⁷ for the rest, these exertions only served to embarrass

⁶ The French ambassador at Turin, Prince Latour d'Auvergne, declared in February: "*Non seulement nous prendrons la première occasion de faire la guerre, mais nous chercherons un prétexte.*" (Sir J. Hudson to Lord Malmesbury, February 28th.)

⁷ "*Ne vous offensez pas, ceci n'aboutira à rien,*" said Napoleon to the Sardinian ambassador. During Cowley's mission Napoleon signed the secret treaty with Cavour, after which the latter uttered the memorable exclamation, "*Je le tiens!*"

Austria, and to put Napoleon into very bad humour. In his suspicious mood he hit upon the idea that the Prince, with the King of the Belgians and the Duke of Coburg, was working for an offensive alliance of England, Austria, and Prussia, against him. He complained that England, ever devoted to her own selfish interests, slandered and wronged him in every possible way. In answer to a letter on the subject from the Queen, he referred, as if hurt and irritated, to those hostile elements in England which, under cover of appeal to treaties, really aimed at depriving France of her legitimate influence in Europe.—Nor does Prince Albert seem to have been more happy in his advice to Prussia. The latter being pressed by France to declare herself neutral, the Prince Regent (afterwards the Emperor William) had despatched Count Perponcher to London, in order to come to an understanding with England in view of certain eventualities, and to ascertain what course, if they arose, she would take. The Prince replied that to support France was out of the question; for the rest, that England never involved herself in such binding declarations in regard to possible contingencies. Prussia ought to arm; to hurry forward the organization of the forces of the *Bund*, and thus, sword in hand, to await events,—which usually fell out otherwise than expected. The true strength and safety of governments in these days lay in public opinion, formed and enlightened by free discussion. In public opinion were to be sought the guiding star and also the warrant for the actions of governments. That Prussia's voice should be loud and firm was the main condition of her safety and strength. "My advice to you would therefore be: call this power into play; this it is which will keep France and Russia in check, unite Germany, and place the ultimate decision in your hands."

These counsels proved themselves, in the progress

of events, to be of very little value. Of what profit was it that, as the Prince wished, Freiherr von Schleinitz explained to the English Government, in the manner specified, Prussia's position in regard to the coming conflict, and strongly emphasized the duty of Germany? The Government had not made up its mind to act. When once Napoleon's determination to push on in Italy was manifest, all that Prussia could do was, either to oppose him boldly, or to let him have his own way, and with his permission take in hand the question of the Duchies. But she decided on neither the one course nor the other: she exasperated Austria and her adherents by leaving the former in the lurch; while by her obscure policy and armed interposition, she contributed to the inconclusive Peace of Villafranca. The Prince acknowledged in the autumn that Prussia was thoroughly discredited; yet this was the result of his own counsels. Manifestly he trusted too much in the affair to the mere force of Liberal principles; for these, in foreign politics, are powerless, unless accompanied by determined action. The continued attempts at mediation on the part of England—thwarted, as they were, by the proposal of Russia, then in complete agreement with Napoleon, for a Conference, designed to throw everything into confusion⁸—only served to give the Emperor time and make his game the easier. This was, to render the situation so intolerable for Austria, that she must resort to an ultimatum. In such a posture of affairs, what effect could be expected from the Queen's imploring the Empress Regent to urge the Emperor not to push the war beyond the frontiers of Sardinia, but to rest content with repelling the Austrian invasion from Sardinian territory? The position of England became still more critical from the circum-

⁸ "The result," said Napoleon, "must be war, or else a full satisfaction for me."

s'ance that the leaders of the Opposition, Russell and Palmerston, now turned out the Derby Ministry, and adopted a totally new line of action. Both were devoted friends of Italy, though Russell by no means shared Palmerston's trust in Napoleon. To obviate the danger of a Franco-Russian alliance, and to take the wind out of the sails of Prince Gortchakoff in Paris, they laid down as their programme the complete evacuation of Italy by Austria; and they were greatly provoked by the Villafranca arrangements, which so deceived the hopes of the Italians. The discord was heightened on the appearance of the pamphlet, *Le Pape et le Congrès*, and the annexation of Nice and Savoy. The Emperor was so incensed against England on account of her opposition to the annexation, that, at a reception, he made an attack on Lord Cowley,—reproaching him, in the presence of the Russian ambassador, with the conduct of his Government. But the ambassador would not put up with this, —remarking that he was prepared for any discussion, but that it was not consistent with his dignity to suffer the Emperor to criticize his Government to the Russian ambassador in his hearing, nor even to himself, in the hearing of the Russian Ambassador. But since, in regard to Savoy also, England was not determined to act, her ill-humour availed nothing. The Emperor, by threatening to occupy Bologna and Florence, compelled Cavour to yield: and four months elapsed after the cession of Savoy and Nice before the farce of taking the votes began,—that is, a period during which the French agents had time to get round the voters.⁹ Cavour, after being forced to swallow the bitter pill, said, with truth, to Benedetti, after the signing of the treaty, "*Et maintenant vous*

⁹ For the history of the annexation, cf. the *Souvenirs Politiques* (Ch. xi.) of Dr. Kern, at that time Swiss Minister at Paris.

voilà nos complices." France could never afterwards oppose the Italians. For England and for Germany the precedent set in the Savoy affair was ominous, as the first practical application of the theory of natural boundaries,—“*sur le versant des Alpes* ;” and people in France spoke openly of carrying out the principle on the Rhine frontier. But the Prince could hardly have expected success when, to promote German unity, he advised Russell to inspire, as far as possible, the smaller Courts of Germany with confidence in Prussia, which alone, as he explained, could afford them protection. The words, excellent enough in themselves, used by the Prince to Count Vitzthum, fell therefore on no very genial soil. His opinion was that only by allowing Prussia to take the lead in all military and diplomatic affairs could Germany secure welfare and happiness. Those same Courts knew, too well, that the Unity spoken of could be achieved only at the expense of their sovereign rights, and therefore was possible only through blood and iron.

On the 1st of June the *Moniteur* contained a manifesto of Napoleon, the object of which was to re-establish confidence—now shattered—in the pacific disposition of France. But, as Prince Albert said, it is not given to every one to recover what has once been lost. Under pretence of wishing to dispel the apprehensions of Germany, the Emperor invited the Prince Regent of Prussia to a meeting at Baden-Baden. It was surmised at the time that his real intention was to induce the Regent to look favourably on the Rhine frontier, in consideration of an increase to Prussia in Germany ; but, at a later time, Prince Albert learned on good authority that the Emperor based his plans for the aggrandizement of France on territorial changes in the East of Europe, through the cession of the Danubian Principalities to Austria. He did not take into account the certain opposition of Russia ; of

course, Russia put a decided veto on the project. The Prince Regent, with a true appreciation of the situation, removed all distrust on the part of the German princes as to the nature of the meeting, by bringing about their participation in it; thus the Emperor could do nothing but give the most emphatic assurances of the peacefulness of his intentions; for (as he said), nothing was farther from his desire than the annexation of German territory to France. He denied all participation in the pamphlet entitled *L'Empereur et la Prusse*, which demanded the Rhine frontier, and he regretted its publication(—yet it was known to have appeared under permission of the Government); public opinion in Germany (he continued) was so much excited by the spirit of faction, that he did not know what to do in order to calm it. “Nothing easier,” was the answer of the Prince Regent; he had only to make the same peaceful declarations to all the princes then present in Baden, and his views would be known widely enough.

This wise and dignified policy on the part of Prussia naturally met with the warmest approval in England. It was perceived that the Emperor felt himself compelled to keep the peace at least for that year, but confidence in him was not restored. On the contrary, the works for the defence of England were zealously pushed forward. Parliament voted 9,000,000*l.* (of which 2,000,000*l.* were for the current year), to place the fortifications and other means of defence on a footing commensurate with the dignity and the safety of the country. The enthusiasm of the nation in the undertaking was so great, that, as early as June, 1860, 130,000 volunteers went up to London in detachments, at their own expense, in order to give proof, in the presence of the Queen, of their readiness for war. The Prince encouraged this movement to the utmost of his power, for he had long seen how defective was the organization of the English army

and navy. Several important proposals of reform, especially in regard to the navy, emanated from him, and were produced in memoranda drawn up with his own hand, and displaying an astonishing acquaintance with the subjects discussed. The Manchester leaders, Bright and Cobden, wished to base the security of England on the commercial treaty concluded with France, and attacked expensive establishments as holding out a challenge; but Palmerston, amid loud applause, replied that these defence works formed the sole basis of really friendly relations with France: "So long as we are vulnerable, we offer temptation for attack. If we render an attack not only dangerous but hopeless, it will never be tried."

The progress of the Italian movement, which occupies an important place in vol. v. of Sir Theodore Martin's book, need not be farther discussed at present. Lord Russell wavered between his Italian sympathies, which moved him to go much further than Napoleon, and distrust of Napoleon himself. When, in consequence of the rapid growth of the young Apennine Power, France demanded, as it was reported, a fresh equivalent in the island of Sardinia, the English ambassador at Turin declared that his government would regard such a surrender (though indeed it was never contemplated) as a *casus belli*. On the other hand, the idea which Napoleon, in the beginning of 1861, broached to Lord Cowley,—namely, that Austria might sell Venice to Italy, and for the half of the sum received, acquire Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Porte—mightily pleased the two Italian enthusiasts in the English Cabinet ("our two old Italian masters," as Lady William Russell called them), who expressed, in naïve fashion, their deep regret, when the Austrian Government rejected the plan as quite inadmissible!

XIII.

AFTER an Irish trip, the Prince returned from Balmoral to Windsor in October, 1861, to all appearance, in good health. The death of the Duchess of Kent had deeply affected him, as well as the Queen; but, on the other hand, the beautiful life of his family circle was developing as he would have wished. The Princess Alice was the affianced of Prince Louis of Hesse; the Prince of Wales had returned from a tour in Canada and the United States, where he had received an enthusiastic welcome; and he had now gone into residence at Cambridge. Prince Alfred, after an examination, in which he acquitted himself well, had started on his training trips. But the health of Prince Albert himself had been for a long time shaken: he had often to complain of feverishness, and the feverish attacks exhausted his strength, especially as he was not accustomed to take care of his health, but, to go on, come what might, with his daily work: he discharged his social duties as usual, though he often felt it very fatiguing to do so. The sudden death of King Pedro moved him deeply. "The frightful event in Portugal stands in strong outline before our eyes," he wrote to his daughter in Germany, on the occasion of her twenty-first birthday. "Without the basis of health it is impossible to rear anything stable. Therefore see that you spare yourself now." This was the last letter which the Princess received from her father's hand. A thorough wetting which he got while paying a visit to Sandhurst, brought on violent rheumatic pains; from a visit to Cambridge to see his son, he returned still worse. Yet he bore up with all his might against the attacking enemy. The *Trent* difficulty with the United States he comprehended in all its importance, and devoted to it his last, striking memorandum, which contributed powerfully towards the settlement of that difficult and dangerous question.

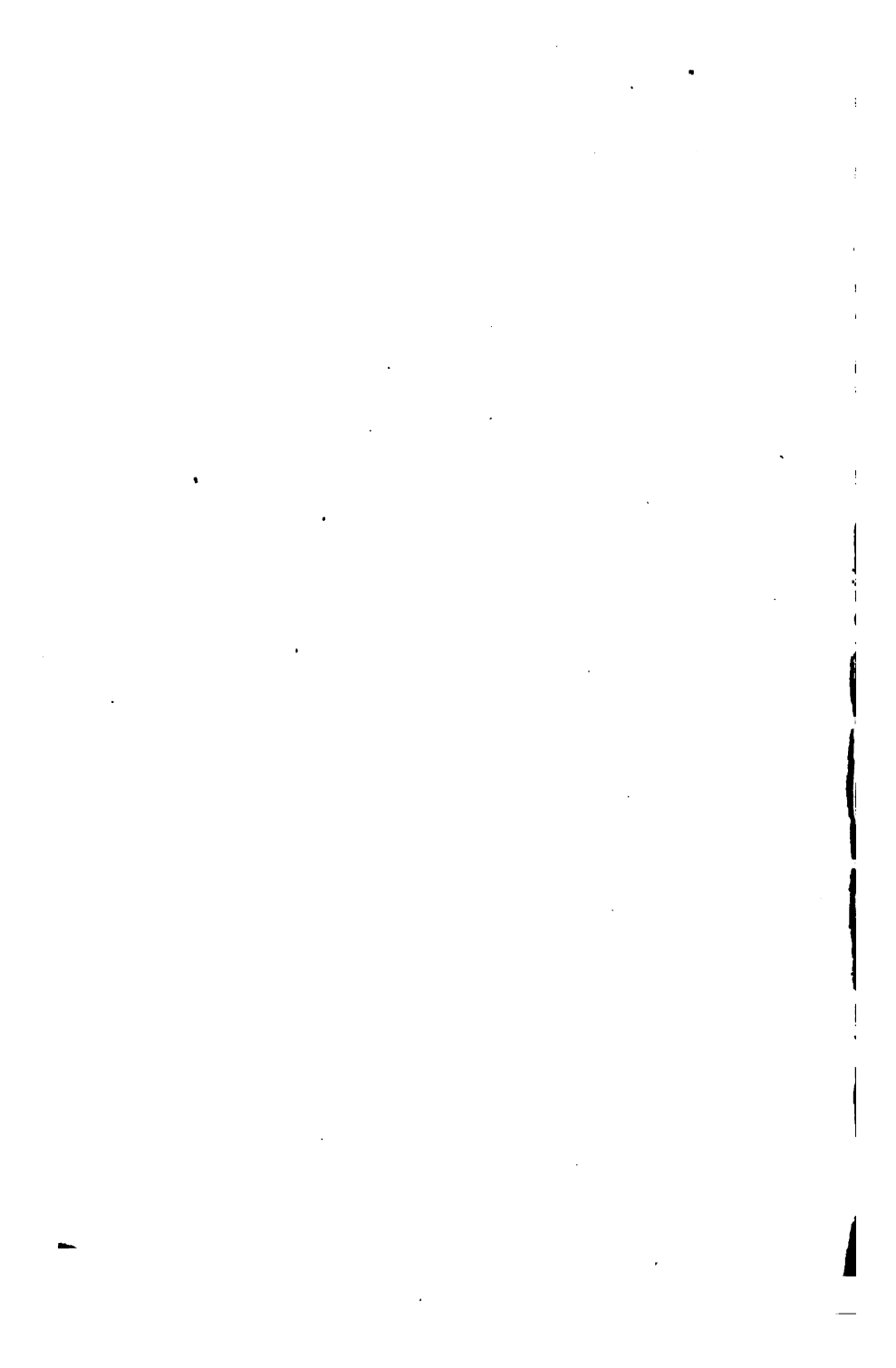
Lord Palmerston, who saw him on the 3rd December, was shocked at his appearance, and requested that other physicians should be called in. There came better days, when the Prince had Scott read to him, but on the 11th came a decided change for the worse: the lungs became affected, and the patient began to wander. In a lucid moment he recognized the Queen, and called her his "good little wife" (*gutes Frauchen*). On the evening of the 14th the end came. The Queen, kneeling by the bedside, held his left hand, which was already growing cold; on the other side was the Princess Alice; at the foot knelt the Prince of Wales and the Princess Helena. About eleven o'clock he passed peacefully away.

Inscrutable are the ways of Providence. In a short space, two men were called hence, who, according to human calculation, seemed almost indispensable to their country and to Europe—Cavour and Prince Albert. A rich life here came to an early close: the children to whom guidance was so important were fatherless; the exalted Lady to whom, for more than twenty years, the Prince had been husband, friend, counsellor and guide, was utterly broken-hearted. All the statesmen who had enjoyed close intercourse with him acknowledged that England, in whose service he had consumed his strength, was infinitely his debtor, that the gap caused by his death was not to be filled,—that the loss was irreparable. Subsequent events have shown that, with Prince Albert, there disappeared from European politics and English public life a guiding hand, whose influence was all the greater as it never came prominently before the eyes of men. What he was to his wife, what he did for England, few, during his lifetime, ever knew. The ministers were bound, according to his wish, to keep the secret; but, when he died, "the past," as Count Vitzthum well says, "suddenly revealed itself in concern about the future." The voice of envy was silent. With its

Queen, the whole nation mourned for Albert the Good. We can now estimate Prince Albert in his private and public character. Many a monument in stone and bronze has been raised to his memory, but the worthiest memorial is that which the Queen has raised to her husband, now at rest. She has caused his life to be written; she has herself diligently laboured at the work; and she has produced a grand and attractive figure of that imperial statesman whom England and Germany will for ever proudly call their own.



LORD PALMERSTON.





I.

Among the statesmen who have directed the policy of England during the present century, Lord Palmerston occupies a prominent position—so prominent that when, on October 18th, 1865, he closed his eyes in death, the feeling was universal that with him ended an epoch in English public life—an epoch during which England had truly held her place in the council of the nations, and had attained a mighty internal development; and it was felt that after him began the time of democratic innovations at home, and of unsteady guidance abroad,—the era, in short, of the *Epigoni*. We can understand this feeling, if we remember that, with comparatively short intervals, Lord Palmerston was, from 1830 to 1841, and again from 1846 to 1852, Foreign Minister; and from 1855 to 1865, Premier. Naturally, too, he occupied in Parliament the first place, during the few years in which he was not actually at the head of affairs. In a word, no man, save Sir Robert Peel, has, in recent times, exercised such a controlling influence on the destinies of England.

HENRY JOHN TEMPLE, Viscount Palmerston, though an Irish peer, was descended from an old Anglo-Saxon family, and counted among his ancestors Sir William Temple, the well-known statesman of the Restoration. He was born on October 20th, 1784, and passed with his parents a considerable part of his youth in Italy, a country in whose fortunes he ever after took the liveliest interest. He studied at Edinburgh and

Cambridge, and at twenty-three was elected member for the borough of Newport. Soon afterwards he was appointed a lord of the Admiralty. The office was a sinecure, and allowed him full leisure to devote himself to politics. At that time it was not the custom as it now is, to make long speeches on every item in the orders of the day. Ordinary business was despatched in few words; and only great questions were debated at any length, and that by the leading members. In such circumstances the younger men of ability made trial of their powers; their future depended upon their success—and was often decided by their maiden speech. Palmerston, in his first address, defended the enterprise against Copenhagen, and made a very favourable impression. After a splendid speech of Canning's, he started to his feet to oppose the production of the diplomatic correspondence on the Danish difficulty, for which Ponsonby had moved. He contended that by such untimely revelations a successful foreign policy would be made impossible; and that England had only exercised the right of self-preservation in preventing Denmark from becoming a tool of France—a contention which was completely vindicated by the publication of the Napoleon correspondence.¹ The consequence was, that at the next change of Ministry, in 1809, Perceval offered Palmerston the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. But Palmerston wisely declined the dazzling offer, not feeling himself qualified for so difficult a post,—believing, as he said, that it was an unfortunate thing, especially for a young man, to have aspirations beyond his abilities, and so to rise only to suffer a deeper

¹ “*Au Maréchal Bernadotte, gouverneur des Villes Anstättiques. St. Cloud, 2 Août, 1807. ‘Si l’Angleterre n’accepte pas la médiation de la Russie, il faut que le Danemark lui déclare la guerre, ou que je la déclare au Danemark. Vous serez destiné, dans ce dernier cas, à vous emparer de tout le continent danois.’ Napoléon.*”

fall. But he accepted the Secretaryship at War,² as an office more suitable to a tyro in politics, and one in which he was not so likely to incur defeat in the attempt to discharge his duties. In this post he remained till 1828, administering it with great ability, especially during the eventful years immediately following. He worked hard, spoke well, when he had to speak at all, but joined very seldom in debates that did not touch on his department; he strove to please, yet did not expect admiration; he was an excellent companion, a keen sportsman,—and had no enemies. There is perhaps no other example of a man so young taking up a position so important in the public eye. He occupied for nearly twenty years a post which at the very outset fell to him without any exertion on his part, and which he retained under five ministries—discharging the duties of it admirably, but not aspiring to go beyond them. The Irish Secretaryship was offered to him after the death of Perceval, as also, later on, the office of Postmaster-General, with a seat in the House of Lords; he declined both. He could point with pride to the fact that in no period of its history had the nation occupied so proud and so glorious a position,—that England, after a struggle of twenty-two years against a foe whose powers were continually increasing, was yet in a position to carry on the war with unabated vigour. But though events of the greatest magnitude were shaking Europe, and though, after the Peace, the most important questions of home and foreign policy were subjects of Parliamentary discussion, Palmerston sat silent amid the war of words,

² The Secretary at War was not the War Minister, whose title was Secretary *for* War, and whose duties, in those days, were united with those now discharged by the Colonial Minister. He directed generally the war policy of the country, especially the great military operations. The Secretary *at* War took charge of the financial administration in connection with military affairs.

and contented himself, year after year, with moving the Army Estimates, never touching the higher politics, or even those measures by which the Government was seeking to suppress the discontent fermenting at home. When, in 1816, Brougham, in a brilliant speech, demanded the reduction of the military expenditure, and alluded by a side-wind to the customary and persistent silence of the Secretary at War, Palmerston answered that the honourable and learned member had made an accusation which he certainly could not retort upon that honourable gentleman himself, namely, that he very seldom troubled the House with his observations. He (Palmerston), at all events, would abstain from all declamation, and from any dissertations on the Constitution, and confine himself to the business at present on hand—the Army Estimates of the current year. He then went on to give convincing proof of the impossibility of yielding to the proposal, without shaking England's power abroad and exposing her to insurrectionary enterprises at home. "I venture to lay it down as a general principle that there is no better way of securing the continuance of peace than to show that we are in a position to repel every foreign attack. I am fully convinced that, among nations, weakness can never be the basis of security." On the same grounds he defended the Army Estimates against Joseph Hume's continual proposals to reduce military expenditure, observing that only *that* army could be called really effective which could, in case of war, be rapidly increased, and that the honourable gentleman who believed himself capable of effecting with ease projects of retrenchment, seemed to have power over two things, in regard to which (according to an ancient sage) the immortal gods themselves were powerless,—namely, past events and arithmetic. To Sir Francis Burdett, who maintained that the standing army formed a danger to the Constitution, he

replied that it was infinitely more dangerous to have no army at all. If the army was not to be raised to the position of a fourth estate, it must be placed under *some* control. The honourable Baronet did not wish the Crown to be invested with that control. Perhaps the Parliament was to direct the army? If so, he could tell the honourable gentleman, that when a popular Assembly had attempted to command an armed force, the matter had usually ended by the armed force commanding the Assembly. That Palmerston's reserve on other political questions did not arise from want of interest, is shown by the remarks in his journal of two trips to France—one in 1815, the other in 1818. But it was not till after Castlereagh's death, and till Canning became leader of the House, that Palmerston took a more prominent position. When the strict Tories abandoned Canning, Palmerston stood by him, and defended, not only his foreign policy, but his endeavours to remove Catholic disabilities, and enable Catholics to enter public life. The Catholic question was one of the few on which he had early taken up a definite position. As early as 1813 he supported the proposal which Grattan made at that time—not on the ground that the State had no right to exclude Catholics, but because it endangered its own welfare by so doing; therefore Emancipation, in his view, was not to be granted as a natural right of Catholics, but to be conceded as a claim of wise policy. England, he said, in effect, contained a great number of Catholics, and must put up with them as she best could. It was foolish to think that by pressuré of the human hand the spring bubbling out of the ground could be stopped; the main consideration was, whether its power should serve to soak through and pervade the soil of our country, or whether it could be directed into a visible channel, where it could become an essential means of a national prosperity. "Is it wise to say to men of rank and property, who, from old lineage or present

possessions, have a deep interest in the commonweal, that they live in a country where, by the blessings of a free Constitution, it is possible for any man, themselves only excepted, by the honest exertions of talents and industry in the avocations of political life, to make himself honoured and respected by his countrymen, and to render good service to the State;—that they alone can never be permitted to enter this career: that they may, indeed, usefully employ themselves in the humbler avocations of private life, but that public service they never can perform, public honour they never shall attain? What we have lost by the continuance of this system it is not for man to know; what we might have lost can be more easily imagined. If it had unfortunately happened that by the circumstances of birth and education, a Nelson, a Wellington, a Burke, a Fox, or a Pitt, had belonged to this class of the community, of what honours and what glory, might not the page of British history have been deprived? To what perils and calamities might not this country have been exposed?" On these principles Palmerston contended for the Emancipation of Catholics and Dissenters, till Emancipation was attained, and he did not shrink from running the risk of losing, by his action, his seat for Cambridge.

As regards foreign politics, he was a warm supporter of Canning's policy in the dispute between France and Spain. He insisted that England had only the choice of armed intervention in favour of Spain, or of remaining neutral. The first course (he held) was excluded, through the gross defects in the actual Spanish Government, which carried within itself the germ of its own destruction and the elements of perpetual discord. A change of government, indeed (of which there was no likelihood whatever), would have been no loss, but an advantage to Spain; and England, therefore, after the most careful consideration, had advised this step,—choosing as intermediary the Duke of Wel-

lington, to whom all Spaniards owed a debt of gratitude for the liberation of their country. This advice (he pointed out) was rejected, although Spain was notoriously divided; England could not, therefore, defend this Government by force of arms. On the other hand, she had left no peaceful means untried to keep France from an attack, which she regarded as an unjust interference with the internal affairs of another country, and against which she had entered her protest,—but with as little success. There was no middle course, between this state of things and war; it was foolish to read to governments which were complained of as despotic, lectures on abstract political principles which they did not acknowledge; threats were unworthy of a great Power, if it had not made up its mind to act; the despatch of a fleet to Spain, or the blockade of French ports, could not prevent an invasion; cutting off French commerce would be regarded as a hypocritical pretence for selfish gain; therefore, since neither the honour nor the interests of England were affected by the war, and since the nation was in pressing need of peace, principle as well as policy forbade England taking part any farther in the quarrel.

When, after the death of Lord Liverpool, who had formed the bond that kept the Ministry together, Canning became the head of a new Cabinet, and the Tories left him in a body, Palmerston still remained faithful. With the same wisdom and prudence which in earlier times had led him to refuse tempting offers of place, he declined not only the Governor-Generalship of India,—not wishing to give up his parliamentary career,—but also the leadership of the House of Commons, because he did not consider himself fit for the post. The king did not wish him to be Chancellor of the Exchequer; he therefore retained his old office with a seat in the Cabinet. After Canning's death, he remained in the same position under Lord

Goderich, and then under the Duke of Wellington; and defended the policy of the Government in regard to Greece. But when, in 1828, his friend Huskisson, on account of a trifling difference of opinion, somewhat hastily sent in his resignation, and Wellington immediately accepted it, Palmerston and the rest of those who had been followers of Canning, left the Ministry, because, as he declared, his faith in Mr. Huskisson's economical principles had been the motive that induced him to serve under the Duke. But after his friend's withdrawal, and when he saw how he was treated, he (Palmerston) had come to the conclusion that views opposed to those entertained by himself preponderated in the Ministry; and he did not believe he possessed sufficient weight to obtain any attention for *his* views.³

Lord Palmerston now found himself for the first time in opposition, and occupied exclusively with parliamentary duties. He took up his new position totally free from any mean spirit of party; and warmly supported the Ministry when it proposed the emancipation of the Catholics. After expressing his satisfaction that the Government had become convinced of the necessity of the measure, which had been advocated by his friends for years and under unfavourable circumstances, he specially defended Peel with great eloquence against the attacks of those who in name were friends of the Government, but could not forgive him for his change of opinion on this question. Such a reproach, he said, was exceedingly strange. To what purpose were all

³ "We joined the new Government not as individuals, but as a party representing the principles, and consisting of the friends of Mr. Canning—as a party we retired" (Bulwer, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, i. 216). As early as March he declared, "If Huskisson went out I must do so too, because if his influence were withdrawn from the Cabinet, the arbitrary party would soon predominate, and I could no longer co-operate with my colleagues" (*ibid.* 243).

the intellectual combats in a legislative assembly, if they did not serve to convince others as to what was just? If Peel believed that the distant dangers attending resistance were greater than those connected with present surrender, and had come to the determination to bring this great question to an end,—then *that* was the greatest and most glorious step in his career.

The Ministry felt all the more acutely Palmerston's criticism of their foreign policy in the Greek, and still more in the Portuguese, question. In the debate on the latter, he attacked the Government for their lukewarmness in the face of the treasonable attempt of Don Miguel to deprive his niece of the crown; and his attack was all the more effective, as he had public opinion on his side. From an international point of view, indeed, Wellington, in refusing to allow the adherents of the queen to fit out in English waters an expedition against Miguel, was absolutely in the right. But popular feeling saw in this act only favour shown to a tyrant against a constitutional sovereign; and agreed with Palmerston, who contrasted the alacrity with which the Government had interposed in this case with its refusal to act when occasion offered—to the detriment of Don Miguel. On the whole, foreign politics thenceforth occupied more and more of Palmerston's attention; and he lamented that so few in Parliament studied them. His two speeches on the Portuguese troubles were the most important delivered on foreign policy since the death of Canning; they were loudly echoed by the country, and they marked out Palmerston as the coming foreign minister. He went frequently to Paris, established connections with the statesmen there, and studied the condition of French affairs, which were then hastening to a crisis. It is a proof of the acuteness of his judgment that on December 4th, 1829, he wrote:—
“ If the king were, for the first time in his life, to carry

his obstinacy up to the very hour of trial instead of dropping it, as he had always done before, at the last moment,—and if he was backed by a courageous and desperate ministry who were mad enough to bear the storm, not of public, but of national feeling,—then, and in that case the result would probably be a change of name in the inhabitant of the Tuileries, and the Duke of Orleans might be invited to step over the way from the Palais Royal; and that the army would not support the Government in any violent proceedings.”

When the storm came, when the throne of the Bourbons fell, when Belgium revolted from Holland, when these events everywhere found an echo in revolutionary convulsions, and when in England (preserved though England was from these), the Tory Ministry was compelled to retreat before the universal demand for Parliamentary Reform,—Palmerston was the man to take charge of foreign affairs. This he did in the Grey Ministry,⁴ and with this began his career in European politics.

II.

THE most difficult business which he had to transact, and which he brought to a successful issue, was the Belgian complication. Holland, in opposing the triumphant rebellion of its southern province, was certain of the support of Austria, Russia and Prussia; and had also in England powerful friends in the Tories,—who, with Wellington at their head, had created the united kingdom of the Netherlands as a bulwark against France. They saw, in the Belgian insurrection, only a copy of the Paris revolution, started with the approval of France, the country

⁴ Wellington fully appreciated his importance, and tried, in 1830, to induce him to return, but failed, as Palmerston declared himself in favour of Parliamentary Reform.

which once more threatened the peace of Europe. Moreover, Protestant feeling took part against a movement headed by the clergy. Palmerston, on the other hand, immediately recognized the impossibility of maintaining any longer the union of the two mutually hostile portions of the monarchy, and was therefore compelled, with France, to oppose every attempt to subject Belgium to Holland by force. But he was as fully determined to oppose all encroachment on the part of France, and to prevent Belgium from falling under French influence. His idea was, to maintain still, with means necessarily modified by changed conditions, the object for which the kingdom of the Netherlands had been created. The designs of the leading politicians in Paris were, after his earlier visits to the French capital, perfectly clear to him. Sebastiani had told him in 1829 that France desired nothing so much as a complete understanding with England; but that this was impossible as long as England was opposed to the Rhine frontier, which was indispensable to France.⁵ Therefore he ought not to be surprised that even in the negotiation regarding Belgium, Talleyrand constantly tried to obtain extension of territory. He also asked Palmerston whether it was not possible to give Luxembourg to France? When that was refused, he asked for the cession of Philippeville and Marienburg, and finally, of Bouillon. In opposition to this, Palmerston rigidly maintained that any change in the territorial arrangements made in favour of France must be excluded, if it was desired to arrive at a peaceful and satisfactory solution of the difficulty; and he clearly intimated at Paris that a good understanding between the countries depended on France (which had non-intervention and peace as her policy), resting content with the territory she already possessed. He maintained the same firm attitude

⁵ Bulwer's *Life*, i. 322.

in the dynastic question, and gave it to be clearly understood at Paris that the acceptance of the Crown for the Duc de Nemours, which he considered as simply the incorporation of Belgium with France, would be regarded by England as a *casus belli*. In the end, he compelled the French troops to evacuate Belgium by distinctly declaring that a refusal would mean war; and he opposed successfully the claim of France to decide which Belgian fortresses should be demolished. Difficulties quite as great were caused by the greediness of the Belgians on the one hand, and the obstinacy of the King of Holland on the other. If at last success was attained; if obstacles were overcome, if Belgium came into existence as an independent, constitutional and permanently neutral state, ruled by a king who saw in England his chief support,—this result is in the main to be attributed to the self-restraint, firmness and prudence of Palmerston. On the other hand, in spite of violent parliamentary attacks, he did not see his way to discontinuing payments of the Russo-Dutch loan, guaranteed by England in 1815, although this guarantee existed only as long as the *status quo* in the Netherlands monarchy continued. Palmerston gave as his reason that the principle remained untouched,—which was, to maintain by means commensurate with the object in view, the balance of power in Europe. England (he held) had entered upon the engagement because she believed the union of the Netherlands to be for her interest; but now, when this union, through no fault of hers, had become impossible, her interest was to make Belgium into an independent neutral state; and Russia had promised to direct her policy on the same lines. Therefore the spirit of the treaty remained, though the letter had disappeared: and England ought not to avail herself of this fact in order to evade her engagements. This attitude of Palmerston's was all the more remarkable, as

Russia at the time was most unpopular in England on account of the overthrow of Poland. If, again, Palmerston was not very fortunate in his attempt to interpose in favour of maintaining the Polish Constitution, he is open to no reproach on that account: the Poles had, by their insurrection, put themselves formally in the wrong. The Vienna treaties had, indeed, given England the right to interpose in the Polish question; but they laid on her no obligation to interfere in an active sense. Moreover, it was out of the question that a great war should be precipitated for the sake of Poland. All that Palmerston could do, therefore, was to enter a protest against the assertion of the Czar Nicholas that Poland had, by her insurrection, forfeited the Constitution guaranteed to her by the treaties of 1815.

On the other hand, Palmerston did not show any great breadth of view in the solution of the Greek question. He was favourably inclined to the Greeks; and though at that time he discerned clearly enough the dangers arising from the Russian policy, he looked with equanimity on the Russo-Turkish war, and even wished the Russians all success, since this yielded the only prospect of establishing the Greek state on a firm basis.⁶ Russia, he thought, had bound herself by so many declarations and engagements not to make any conquests, that she must be regarded as sincere. But Palmerston uttered not a word of censure when the Peace of Adrianople gave to these engagements the lie direct: nay, he maintained (27th of August, 1832) that Turkey was the attacking party, and that Russia by the Peace had made no acquisition worthy of the name. He had even, in an earlier speech (1st of June, 1829), combated the idea of creating a Greece which should include neither Athens nor Thebes, nor

⁶ Bulwer's *Life*, i. p. 329.

other places rendered glorious through historic associations. He declared (5th of February, 1830) it was for England a matter of the utmost importance, that the new state should be perfectly able to maintain itself, and not be thrown by any political scheming into the arms of a Power which, when the war with the Porte was concluded, might possibly direct ambitious glances upon Greece. It was, he insisted with truth, of small account to Turkey, situated as she then was, whether she had to cede a larger or smaller amount of territory; whilst it was of cardinal importance that the new state should not become the battleground on which conflicting foreign interests could struggle for ascendancy. And yet, when he became Minister, he failed to bring these important views to bear; he failed to attain the object of giving to the young state the amount of territory which Prince Leopold laid down as absolutely essential to the prosperous development of Greece, and as a *conditio sine quâ non* to his acceptance of the crown. Instead of him came Prince Otho of Bavaria, a minor,—guided by a Regency, which in turn became the shuttlecock of intriguers. Russia alone gained her object (which Palmerston had before seen clearly enough, but he now gave up the attempt to oppose her), which was, to weaken the Porte, and yet not allow Greece to become a really independent state, capable of separate existence, and strong enough to thwart her plans. Palmerston met the opposition to his policy in the House of Commons, by remarking that King Otho belonged to one of the leading dynasties of the second rank, and to a country in which free institutions existed.—But he is open to the far more serious reproach of not having opposed with determination the attempts made in Parliament to weaken the defensive power of Great Britain. Economy was at that time the watchword of the Reform party; and, of course, their first demand was that

the expenditure on the army and navy should be reduced. The Reform Ministry, which did not wish to risk its popularity, was unable to make headway against the stream of opinion; ships were dismantled, sailors and soldiers sent about their business. Palmerston had been Secretary at War for a long time, and that when the power of England had been at its greatest; and after the Peace, as before mentioned, he had strongly opposed the reduction of the military and naval expenditure. Surely he could not have argued himself into the belief that so short-sighted a policy would have any other result than to lower the influence of England in the councils of the nations, and make it insuperably difficult for him, as Foreign Minister, to represent British interests with effect. Yet we do not see that he opposed this policy energetically. The unfortunate consequence of it soon appeared. Mehemet Ali revolted against the Sultan; and his son, Ibrahim, inflicted a decisive defeat on the Turkish army at Konieh (21st of December, 1832). In its straits the Divan applied to England for assistance, and begged for the protection of the British fleet; but the greatest naval Power in the world had no available ships! Nothing remained to the Sultan but to throw himself into the arms of Russia; and Russia, in February, 1833, despatched a squadron to Constantinople; in April, when Ibrahim advanced nearer, she landed 12,000 of her troops on the heights of Scutari. In the end, the Porte was compelled to conclude with the rebel Pasha the humiliating Peace of Kutajeh, which left Syria and Adana in his hands. But Russia, in consideration of having saved the Sultan in his extremity, indemnified herself by the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, by which Turkey was brought into complete dependence on the Czar. What availed it, then, for Palmerston, concurrently with France, to declare that England, in face of the armed intervention of Russia in the internal affairs of Turkey, reserved to herself

the right of acting as if that treaty did not exist? Count Nesselrode could appeal to the fact that, before Russia brought help to Turkey, he had informed the English Cabinet that he could sincerely wish the Porte all success and have done with it, if it received effectual aid from England,—a declaration which was made all the more safely, as he knew England could render no such aid. So now, in reply to the protest of the Western Powers, he stated that their view rested on ignorance of the circumstances; he affirmed that the relations subsisting between Russia and the Porte were relations of mutual confidence; and that Russia would therefore act as if the declaration of the Western Powers had never been made.

Palmerston's policy in this affair was a grievous sin of omission,—by no means to be excused by the defence that he did not possess sufficient influence in the Cabinet to carry out his views,—but his policy of action was no less unfortunate when he set himself to work in Asia, in order to preserve England's influence there. In the year 1814, England had concluded a treaty with Persia, by which she promised to protect the latter against the unprovoked attack of any European Power. Canning, in 1825, permitted this treaty to be violated with impunity, when Russia, under frivolous pretexts, attacked Persia; and Palmerston's assertion, made in 1832, that Russia was not the aggressor, was absolutely groundless. The Shah, abandoned to the overwhelming power of his enemy, was forced, at the Peace of Turcomantchāi in 1827, to cede the provinces of Erivan and Nakitchevan. Ten years later, to indemnify herself for this loss, Persia tried to recover Herat, which was at an earlier time a Persian possession, and was now specially required because it gave Persia a sure defence against the incursions of robber Turcomans into her territory. Palmerston caused the Shah to be informed that England regarded the besieging of Herat as a declaration

of war against India ; and, despatching a squadron into the Persian Gulf, compelled him to raise the siege,—thus completely alienating Persia, which by nature formed the most effectual bulwark of India. If Palmerston regarded Afghanistan as a more effectual bulwark, he was all the more bound to support its ruler. Dost Mohammed, after long civil wars, had been left undisputed master of those heterogeneous tracts comprehended down to the present time, in the name Afghanistan,—and desired nothing so much as to become the ally of England. But Palmerston was alarmed at the enterprise of General Peroffski against Khiva (the object of that officer being, as he said in his manifesto, “to strengthen Russia’s influence in those regions over which she claimed a right),”—as well as at the despatch of a Russian agent to Cabul. He wished to restore the influence of England in Asia at a stroke, and hit upon the unfortunate idea of raising Shah Sooja, the incapable rival of Dost Mohammed, then a fugitive in India, to be Ameer of Afghanistan. The campaign of Sir J. Keane, undertaken with this object, and at first crowned with success, ended in the annihilation of the Indian army ; in a second enterprise, better planned, an attempt was made to wipe out this humiliation, but by the first overthrow England’s influence in Asia suffered a severe check ; and the ultimate result was,—an alliance with Dost Mohammed, which could have been obtained at the first without striking a blow. Palmerston sought to protect himself from Parliament behind a blue-book, in which the documents were so mutilated that his own agent, Sir A. Burnes, declared the whole thing to be a piece of “pure trickery and fraud.”

III.

It may be easily inferred that the admirers of the noble lord pass over these matters in silence. With all the

more fervour, therefore, do they emphasize his services as champion of Liberal principles in Europe against those of absolutism. If, however, we examine more narrowly the special cases, his right to interfere for this object, is as doubtful as its political wisdom. Palmerston had, at an earlier time, espoused Canning's principle, that any interference in the internal affairs of a foreign state was inadmissible, so long as the interests of England or of her allies were not endangered. Now, on April 22nd, 1834, Palmerston concluded, in conjunction with France, a treaty with the Regents of Spain and Portugal, by which the two Powers pledged themselves to aid the Regents in expelling Don Carlos and Don Miguel, and thus to restore peace in the Spanish peninsula. France prevented the transport of arms and provisions to Don Carlos. England afforded aid to the Spanish Government by supplies of arms, and by means of her fleet; she also permitted the equipment of a body of volunteers under a British officer. Surely it was irrelevant, so far as Portugal was concerned, to appeal to the old and frequently-renewed alliance, in virtue of which England promised to aid that country. Canning had expressly limited such assistance to the case of external attack; it was therefore not England's affair to decide whether Donna Maria da Gloria was lawful queen, and Don Miguel a perjured pretender. In regard to Spain, there was not even this excuse. The legality of the order of succession as settled by Ferdinand VII. was exceedingly doubtful; and the assertion of it was due to the intrigues of Queen Christina. The Spanish nation was divided into two camps, of which that of Don Carlos showed at any rate the greater capability of resistance; while the adherents of Isabella were divided among themselves. That Don Carlos represented the cause of absolute monarchy, gave England as little right to interfere in the dispute as it did to maintain that her interests were compromised in such a manner as to

justify intervention. But in truth Palmerston's main object in connection with the treaty was to deal a blow at the Northern Courts, which had recalled their representatives accredited to the court of the queen. Later on he declared plainly that the English Government considered the question as involving the choice not merely between one sovereign and another, but,—as in reality it was,—between absolute government on the one hand, and constitutional government on the other; and after affirming that it was England's interest to strengthen constitutional government in Spain and Portugal, he took credit to himself for having risen superior to all narrow prejudices, and for having decided on an act of vigorous intervention in order to confer on those nations the blessings of constitutional government. This policy may have been applauded by the current opinion of the time; but it was as little warranted as it was little successful. Palmerston was not the man to concern himself with political problems. He believed in the excellence of the English Constitution; saw that most of the Continental states were suffering grievously under absolute government; and he believed that the one effectual remedy for all these ills was the introduction of a moderate-liberal Constitution. But as no man has a right to force his principles of action on another, merely because he believes they will be good for him,—so the assumption that England was right in compelling other countries to accept a particular constitution or mode of government, was incompatible with the spontaneous action of the states concerned. With good reason the Duke of Wellington, on July 9th, 1834, spoke to the following effect in the House of Lords: "I say that this country has no right to interfere in the affairs of Spain and Portugal. The aim of the Quadruple Alliance is directly opposed to the political methods according to which this country has acted. I regret that England has lost the position she formerly occupied in the councils of Europe,—the

great influence and the benevolent position which enabled her, through her advice, to preserve not only peace, but also the good understanding among the Powers." Again, Palmerston's proceeding was not, in any true sense, successful, although it got rid of the two pretenders. It brought no real peace to Spain; the intestine confusions rather increased; the British corps of volunteers, which Don Carlos treated as an unlawful body in arms, suffered a miserable fate; and the few survivors, by way of addition to their misfortunes, were to learn that the Government was not responsible for what it had not itself done, but had only encouraged others to do.

Nor had Palmerston, in his second period of ministerial work (1846-51), very much success in meddling with the internal affairs of other states. His interference in the Portuguese civil war—in which he forced the Junta of Oporto into submission by employing against it a British squadron,—was surely not justified, seeing that no English interest was endangered by that rising. In the case of the Spanish marriages, it must be admitted that the principal negotiations had been carried on under Lord Aberdeen, before Palmerston went back to the Foreign Office, and that then he was overreached by Louis Philippe and Guizot in a manner which he could not have foreseen; but this was possible only because he had not adopted right principles on the question. France had proceeded on the assumption that Queen Isabella could marry only a prince of the House of Bourbon. England could have offered successful opposition to France, only by declaring that the queen of an independent state ought not to be restricted in her choice of a husband,—and by demanding, in the interest of the European balance of power, observance of the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht, whereby the crowns of Spain and France were not to be united on the same head. This the weak Aberdeen had not

had the courage to do. He had only stated that he did not recognize the right of France to limit the choice of the queen to a particular family; but added that the English Government would feel at ease if her Majesty chose a Bourbon prince who could not be regarded as a possible heir to the French throne. ✓

And yet this would have been the very time to revert to the principle mentioned above—the only true principle. The Whigs came into office in 1846; and it might have been thought that Palmerston was just the man to insist upon its adoption. At that time a Conservative ministry of the “Moderados” governed at Madrid; this ministry had come into power through the influence of France, but yet it bitterly resented the French claims to lay down the law to Spain on this question. Court, Government, and nation would have attached themselves with joy to any English minister who was ready to oppose openly the French demand. England, had she opposed it, would have taken up an unassailable position, would have won for herself the gratitude of Spain,—and the intrigue of Louis Philippe would have collapsed. But Palmerston conceived the matter differently. In his first period of office the party of the Progressists had been the ruling party in Madrid. On that party Palmerston had relied; and after its fall, he had kept up relations with its banished leaders in London, so that he saw only through their spectacles. ✓

When he became Minister, he immediately wrote a despatch to the ambassador at Madrid, in which he expressed himself in the strongest terms in regard to the party of the Moderados, and placed at the head of the candidates for the queen’s hand, Prince Leopold of Coburg, but recommended strongly the Infant Don Enrique, the banished leader of the Progressists. This despatch he also communicated—an unusual proceeding—to the French envoy in London; because, as he said, “this was the most polite way of letting Louis

Philippe know his dissent from him on Spanish affairs." He believed that the king, alarmed at the prospect of a Coburg candidature, would accept Don Enrique as a Bourbon, and that then the queen-mother and the Government would, under the joint pressure of England and France, do the same. This assumption was very short-sighted. Guizot naturally hastened to make known at Madrid the contents of this despatch, and thus to show the Ministry that Palmerston was their foe, and wished by every possible means to ruin them; on the other hand, the queen-mother saw herself in extreme peril by the candidature of her enemy, Don Enrique, and thus fell in with the French advice, to cut the knot by marrying the queen to her cousin, Don Francisco of Assisi, and, at the same time, the queen's sister to the Duc de Montpensier. That this was a piece of perfidy on the part of Louis Philippe and Guizot is unquestionable; for, a short time before, the king had given his pledge to Queen Victoria, that a marriage between his son and the Infanta should not be so much as mentioned, until the queen married and had children. But the success of the trick was rendered possible only through the wrong policy of Palmerston.

His interference also during the revolutionary disturbances had but little success. In 1847, he sent Lord Minto to Italy to recommend the Governments of that country to make liberal concessions—a step which was of very doubtful wisdom, but yet did not go beyond the bounds of what is allowable. Now, in the beginning of 1848, an insurrection broke out in Sicily; this Palmerston supported by all means in his power, although on December 16th, 1847, he had assured King Ferdinand, through Lord Minto, that it was the sincere wish of the British Government to maintain intact the old bonds of friendship with the crown of the two Sicilies,—and, if possible, to draw them closer. Nay, he declared to the Sardinian Government that if the Duke of Genoa were chosen as

King of Sicily and ascended the throne, England would recognize him. But after the insurgents were beaten, and still rejected the conditions offered by the king, Palmerston did not venture to intercede for them, but left them to their fate.—It went particularly ill with the minister when he offered his unsolicited advice to Spain. On March 16th, 1848, the English ambassador at Madrid, Sir Henry Bulwer, presented the copy of a letter of Palmerston's, in which he advised that a legal and constitutional system should be adopted, and that the ministry should be strengthened by appointing men in whom the Liberal party had confidence. The Government replied by requesting the ambassador to quit Spain forthwith. Palmerston took the opposite course when he refused Austria's request to mediate in North Italy, because he held her cause there to be lost; but he complied when Radetzky had restored Austrian rule in Lombardy, and had informed the English ambassador there was no longer anything to mediate about. In consequence of his constant interference, he could not with any consistency oppose Russia when, in 1849, she intervened in Hungary at the call of Austria, in order to maintain the cause of absolutism; he could not protest, as Canning had done, when the French marched their troops into Spain. To a question in the House put by Mr. Bernal Osborne (July 21st), he answered, merely, that the Government had found no opportunity to express their opinion officially with advantage.

Yet, while he did nothing to give real support to the cause of freedom, he spoke with all the more bitterness of the crowned heads who were his special aversions. On February 24th, 1849, he delivered a speech in which he charged the King of Naples with the greatest crimes; but he exercised his power *in deeds* only on small states. He had accepted a diplomatic court of arbitration to assess damages for losses

sustained by Englishmen in Naples and Sicily during 1848; but when the court had given its award for a certain sum in Neapolitan *rentes*, he declared the amount to be unsatisfactory, arbitrarily fixed upon a higher sum, and insisted that it should be paid in hard cash. Yet more outrageous was his conduct in the *Pacifico* affair, in which, as Count Nesselrode said, he grossly misused England's power, in compelling the Greek Government to pay a huge indemnity in order to satisfy the absurd claims of an adventurer from Gibraltar. He thereby brought England to the verge of a war with France. This he tried to deny by stating, on May 16th, in the House of Commons, that the French ambassador went to Paris merely to give certain explanations to his Government; whereas, on the very same day, the French minister declared that M. Drouyn de l'Huys had been recalled from London because his remaining was not consistent with the dignity of the Republic. The blue-book presented by Palmerston, like his earlier books on similar questions, was very complete in giving particulars of no moment, while leaving out the essential reports and instructions. In the House of Lords his conduct was very sharply attacked by Lord Stanley, who described it as unbecoming, unjust, brutal, and calculated to destroy needlessly the good understanding which ought to prevail among the Powers of Europe; and the vote of censure which had been introduced was passed by a majority of thirty-seven. On June 24th, Mr. Roebuck, in the House of Commons, introduced a Resolution to the effect that the general policy of the Ministry merited the approval of the House; this enabled the numerous Liberals who disapproved of Palmerston's action in the *Pacifico* question, but did not want to turn out the Ministry, to vote for his motion. It is absurd for Mr. Ashley to maintain that the attack emanated from English protectionists and foreign adherents of absolutism; it was equally absurd

for the Minister to call it a shot fired by conspiracy abroad and supported by intrigues at home. There were very many Liberals whose conscience allowed them to screen Palmerston's masterful ways in this matter under a vague Resolution, but who disapproved of his continual meddlings as unjust and unnecessary. Among those who supported the vote of censure were not only Cobden and Gladstone, but Sir Robert Peel, Molesworth, Sidney Herbert,—and, in the House of Lords, Brougham, Canning, and Aberdeen. Palmerston defended himself in a magnificent speech, in which he expounded his whole foreign policy; in doing so, he touched the most sensitive fibre of an English assembly: for he spoke of the protection which even the meanest British subject ought everywhere to enjoy through the power of his country; every such subject, he maintained, in every spot on the earth's surface, should have the proud consciousness,—“*Civis Romanus sum.*” The speech occupied five hours in delivery, and was a masterpiece of parliamentary eloquence. When he concluded, amid general cheers, his victory was certain. Even Sir Robert Peel, in his reply, declared that the speech had made them all proud of him. Roebuck's resolution was passed by forty-six of a majority; but this circumstance ought not to blind us to the inherent weakness of the cause which had so ridiculous an issue: the commission of plenipotentiaries of England, Greece, and France, to which was committed the assessment of the compensation, awarded Pacifico only 3750 francs of the 750,000 which he claimed. It showed levity and rashness to risk the peace of Europe for so paltry a matter.

The arbitrary and reckless manner in which Palmerston acted in foreign affairs, and in which especially he everywhere sided with the cause of foreign Radicalism, could not but grieve the Queen deeply. She, as well as Prince Albert, repeatedly told the other ministers that, through Palmerston's course

of action, she was brought into a very humiliating position,—that she was exposed to the complaints of foreign sovereigns, who knew that she disapproved of what was done in her name,—while she was powerless to prevent it. She knew her constitutional position, being well aware that the Government must follow the policy desired and approved by the nation;—but the nation did *not* approve of such proceedings, nor did Lord Palmerston's colleagues; it was only the *weakness* of these that permitted him to bid defiance to them, to the Sovereign and to public opinion. The Queen had, in fact, told Lord Palmerston in 1849, that he was subordinate to Lord John Russell, and that the despatches which were laid before her must pass through his hands. The Premier had recognized this as right, and had asked only that business should be accelerated as much as possible,—Palmerston having complained that delays often occurred in the case of very pressing questions. Palmerston took all this in a friendly way, but afterwards, as before, did what he pleased. He decided in foreign affairs as he thought best, so that the Queen and the Minister's colleagues were often made aware of the existence of important despatches and instructions only when these had been sent off and could not be cancelled or recalled. Prince Albert strongly complained of this in a letter to Lord John Russell, and stated emphatically that Palmerston violated his duty to the Queen, not from inadvertence or negligence, but of set purpose, and with astonishing obstinacy. He forwarded, therefore, a Memorandum drawn up by the Queen (August 12th, 1850)⁷ in which, as Palmerston denied the above statement, she formulated her demands, viz. that (1) the Foreign Minister should clearly state what course he intended to take in any given case, so that the Queen might know exactly to what she gave her consent; (2) that her consent

⁷ Compare p. 140.

once given, the measure in question should not be arbitrarily changed by the Minister; such an act she must consider as showing a lack of sincerity, and would be justly resented, if, exercising her constitutional right, she dismissed the Minister. She expected to hear what had passed between him and foreign ambassadors before important despatches, based on such interviews, were sent off,—to receive intelligence from abroad, at the very earliest moment, and, in the case of documents she was to approve of, to have these in her hands so long, that she could make herself acquainted with their contents before they were despatched.

In these remarks there was nothing which was not defensible on strict constitutional grounds; but they contained at the same time a sharp criticism and a telling rebuke; and one can easily imagine that a proud man like Palmerston, especially so soon after his victory on the *Pacifico* question,—which, doubtless, greatly flattered his self-esteem,—felt this rebuff keenly. But he made no remark, merely answering Russell that he had taken a copy of this Memorandum, and would not fail to act according to its directions. When, at a later time, he took occasion to explain why he had not answered this rebuke by sending in his resignation, he made the following remarks:—The paper, he said, was written by a lady as well as by a Sovereign, and the difference between a lady and a man could not be forgotten even in the case of the occupant of a throne. He had lately been the object of violent political attack, and had gained a great and signal victory in the House of Commons and in public opinion. To have resigned then, would have been to give the fruits of victory to the adversaries whom he had defeated, and to abandon his political supporters at the very moment when by their means he had triumphed. But beyond all that, if he had brought for decision at the bar of public opinion

a personal quarrel between himself and his Sovereign, a step which no subject ought to take, if he could possibly avoid it,—if he should prove to be in the wrong, he would be irretrievably condemned; if the Sovereign should be proved to be in the wrong, the Monarchy would suffer.

In opposition to this, nothing could be said; and as Palmerston had desired not to appear offended, it was undoubtedly the wise and dignified course to let no pique be visible in his answer. He even went to Prince Albert, and assured him that the charge brought against him of deliberately failing in respect to the Queen was totally unfounded; if, he said, it had any foundation, he ought not to be any longer tolerated in society. He could only give his assurance that he would in future act according to the terms of the Memorandum.

When Kossuth came to England, he was received with great jubilation. Palmerston, it is true, who had been asked to see him, declined, at the pressing instance of his colleagues, to do so. But he accepted addresses from the Kossuth Committee of London, in which the Austrian Government was referred to in the strongest terms of reprobation. He observed, indeed, in his reply, that he could not be expected to agree with such language, but he freely expressed his sympathy with the cause to the furtherance of which the Committee had devoted itself. This course of action naturally displeased the Queen, as well as his own colleagues. They had fully approved of Palmerston's giving effectual support to the Porte when, in spite of the threatening language of Austria and Russia, it had refused to deliver up the Hungarian and Polish refugees; but it was in the teeth of all international courtesy, that a minister should even listen to such language in regard to a friendly Government,—much more that he should show sympathy with a revolutionary movement directed against it. Russell

brought the matter before a Cabinet Council, which decided that Palmerston had shown great want of prudence in the course he took; Russell informed the Queen that this would produce the desired effect,—especially as he had by letter pointed out to Palmerston the necessity of acting with reserve in the then critical condition of Europe.

But a question of more importance soon arose, which showed that the hope of amendment was vain, and brought the protracted tension to a crisis. Louis Napoleon had effected the *coup d'état*, which public opinion in England unreservedly condemned. The Ministry, complying with the wish of the Queen, decided that Lord Normanby, the English ambassador in Paris, should continue his relations with the French Government, but should in no way countenance formally what had been done. Upon the proper instructions being issued, the ambassador replied that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Marquis Turgot, had informed him that Lord Palmerston had expressed to the French ambassador, Count Walewski, his full approval of the *coup-d'état*, and his conviction that the President could not have acted otherwise! The Queen was very indignant at this, but forebore taking immediate action in the matter. In this she followed the prudent advice of Stockmar, who rightly judged that this arbitrary proceeding would be too much even for Russell. The latter believed at first it could not be true that Palmerston had so acted; he asked for an explanation; no answer was returned, and only after he had written again, and at the end of four days, did Palmerston vouchsafe a reply. His answer showed that the matter had occurred exactly as reported; for all that he put forward by way of excuse was, that a private conversation with an ambassador could not be regarded as a public communication; but he by no means denied that he had expressed himself in the sense imputed, and went on, by a long explanation, to justify the *coup-d'état*. At

this point the patience of long-suffering Russell was exhausted. He replied, that the question was not whether Louis Napoleon's line of action could or could not be justified, but whether an English minister had any right to approve of it without the knowledge, and against the wishes, of his colleagues and of the Queen. He had (he said) agreed with Palmerston's foreign policy, and had admired the energy and talent with which he had carried it out; but he must observe that these ever-recurring misunderstandings, and too often repeated breaches of prudence and decorum, had weakened the efforts which should have flowed from wise policy and good administration. "I am, therefore," the letter went on, "very unwillingly compelled to come to the conclusion that the conduct of foreign affairs can no longer, with advantage to the country, be left in your hands." The breach was now complete,—for surely Russell could not believe that, after such language, Palmerston would accept the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which he offered him. His retirement, as may be easily imagined, caused a tremendous sensation in England and in Europe generally. He had fallen—so it was said—through monarchical and reactionary influence; and in England's policy would soon appear a decided change in those directions. This view of the case was, of course, very pleasing to Palmerston; and, what is more remarkable, he seems to have shared it; for he wrote to his brother that the real cause of his dismissal was a weak yielding to the hostile intrigues of the House of Orleans, of Austria, Russia, Saxony, Bavaria, and, to a certain extent, of Prussia. "All these parties found their respective views and systems of policy thwarted by the course pursued by the British Government, and they thought that if they could remove the minister, they would change the policy. They had for a long time past effectually poisoned the mind of the Queen and

the Prince against me, and John Russell, giving way, rather encouraged than discountenanced the desire of the Queen to remove me from the Foreign Office." This idea was so baseless that Prince Albert, when Russell informed him of it, expressed his astonishment; the customary ending of such dissensions being (as he said), that Palmerston had his own way, his defence being left to his colleagues, and the discredit to the Queen. The public out of doors were, of course, ignorant of the circumstances of the case, and a storm of indignation broke loose on the downfall of the people's Minister. Prince Albert, as—of course—the representative of Continental absolutism, was specially singled out for attack; and there can be no doubt that Palmerston fanned the flame, though he prudently kept in the background, so that nothing could be brought home to him. At the opening of Parliament, however, on February 3rd, all these calumnies were blown to the winds, and the truth was made manifest: Lord Russell explained the whole affair, gave the history of Palmerston's outrageous conduct, and read to the House the Queen's Memorandum. Russell's speech struck home, and Palmerston's defence was weak in the extreme. He could not dispute the facts brought forward by Russell, and did not wish to speak of the Memorandum,—probably because he felt that, if he criticized it (which, besides, was by no means an easy matter), he would have forfeited for ever the favour of the Queen: a momentary defeat was to be preferred to *that*. Then, again, he knew that the nation would easily condone the faults with which he was charged; and, on the whole, he thought it the wisest course to receive the fire without returning it; he actually showed so little pique that he placed himself at the service of his successor, Lord Granville,—offering to give him all necessary information in regard to his duties. But he very soon showed that he had not dismissed the idea of revenge; for he

availed himself of the earliest weakness which Russell showed—a very badly conceived Militia Bill,—proposed an amendment (February 20th), and turned out the Ministry.

He refused to join the next Cabinet, formed by Lord Derby, on the ground that the Premier would not abandon the cause of Protection. Besides, he had no confidence that the Derby Government would last: it consisted, he said, of two able men and a string of nobodies. He desired places for several of his friends, which Derby would not grant; yet Palmerston remained friendly, and, in the most obliging manner, assisted, with his knowledge of affairs, the new Foreign Minister, Lord Malmesbury. The latter writes:—

“ Lord Palmerston, knowing that I was inexperienced in official life, and that I must have considerable difficulty in managing so high and important a charge as that of the Foreign Office, kindly offered to call upon me and give me some advice upon the main principles of our policy with other countries. Of course, I gratefully accepted his offer, and he came to my house in Whitehall Gardens, giving me a masterly sketch of the *status quo* in Europe, and some general hints as to my procedure. The pith of them was ‘to keep well with France:’ but adding, ‘that she was ambitious to have the principal influence in the East, and that in this respect we were like two men in love with the same woman.’ He said that the advent to power of Louis Napoleon was a good thing for France, and, from the extraordinary figures of the *plébiscite*, proved she was weary both of Bourbons and lawyers; but that, as it was quite possible that his tendencies might be to avenge his uncle’s fate, we must turn all our attention to strengthening our defences. ‘You have no idea,’ he said, ‘till you know more of your office, what a power of *prestige* England possesses abroad, and it will be your first

duty to see that it does not wane. All the Foreign Ministers will try to get objects which they have been refused by successive Governments; so take care you yield nothing until you have well looked into every side of the question. When the *diplomates* call, do not be too reserved, but preface your observations by stating that what you say is *officious*.”⁸

IV.

THE Derby Ministry was defeated in December, 1852; and Lord Palmerston, who had declared he would never again serve *under* Russell, but might, likely enough, serve *with* him, joined the Aberdeen Ministry as Home Secretary,—Russell going to the Foreign Office. A curious interchange of parts. Russell, the father of the Reform Bill, who had always given his undivided attention to Home questions, now entered upon an office of whose duties he was totally ignorant, and in which he very soon committed the grossest blunders; Palmerston, on the other hand, had hitherto identified himself exclusively with foreign affairs, and never showed the smallest interest in the ordinary duties of the Home administration. He wrote, indeed, to his brother that he had chosen this post in order to gain information in a department which would bring him more in contact with the people, and also to devote himself to the question of national defence, in so far as this depended upon the militia and fortifications; but he may have looked farther ahead, and foreseen that events would soon give him the lead in affairs. The Eastern Question was at that time coming slowly to the front. Napoleon, after the Czar had declined his advances, desired to assert the position of France in the East, and to gain the support of the French clergy at the elections. The Emperor Nicholas believed that when the Aberdeen Ministry were in power, the time

⁸ *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, 2nd Ed., vol. i., pp. 317, 318.

had come to bring to bear certain projects which, so far back as 1844, he had opened to Aberdeen and Peel. He had at that time found them disposed to support his claim to a Protectorate over the Greek Christians; indeed, as Lord Malmesbury informs us for the first time, a memorandum in this sense was drawn up by both parties. On the downfall of the Derby Ministry, therefore, the Emperor made his disclosures to Sir Hamilton Seymour; and these met with a reception at London which left no doubt in his mind but that England would remain neutral. Russell even went so far as to acknowledge this Protectorate as existing of right. Aberdeen was against taking any energetic step; and thus the knot became tighter and tighter. Palmerston carefully studied events, and, notwithstanding the place he occupied in the Cabinet, exercised great influence on all foreign questions of moment.⁹ His experience had made him perfectly clear as to the aims of Russian policy; he was not, like Aberdeen, half bound by earlier engagements; he was convinced that only by energetic action could war be staved off, and therefore insisted on energetic action. "Russian policy," he wrote to Clarendon, "has always been to push its encroachments as far as the apathy or the irresolution of foreign governments permits, but always to retreat the moment it meets with determined opposition." At his suggestion, England and France sent their fleets to Besica Bay; and he would have wished, even at that stage, to enter the Dardanelles. He again urged this step upon the Government when the Russians occupied the Principalities. The Czar steadily advanced; but

⁹ How completely he had thrown himself into questions connected with foreign policy is shown by an anecdote of Greville. In November, 1853, the Queen asked if he had heard any news about the strikes in the north of England. Palmerston replied, "No, madam, I have learned nothing; but it seems certain that the Turks have crossed the Danube."

this was only on account of the apparent timidity of the English Government, and the reports, industriously spread abroad, that England desired peace at any price. But Aberdeen was unmoved; and so the country drifted into war. Palmerston was on the best of terms with Clarendon, and exercised decisive influence, not only through him, but through his great popularity in the country, and the favour he enjoyed among the Tories, who saw in him a bulwark against a new Reform Bill of very Radical character which Russell had at that time on the anvil. He fully justified the confidence reposed in him: for when Russell introduced his Bill, Palmerston opposed it; and, since it was on all hands acknowledged that, in the critical condition of affairs abroad, the Ministry could not do without him, it was practically he who secured the rejection of the measure. But, besides all this, the Cabinet was divided on the question of foreign policy; the Peelites hoped even yet that peace would be preserved; but Palmerston, now in complete accord with Napoleon, urged on the war, in order to turn to good account the French alliance, by weakening Russia in the East. With the same view he advocated the marriage of Prince Napoleon and the Princess Mary of Cambridge. The war broke out. Palmerston was still Home Secretary, and much occupied officially in regulating questions relating to the militia, factory-laws, and Church courts; but, although he did these things well, all eyes were in this crisis, fixed upon him, as a man who should be engaged in a very different sphere. He was like Pitt, who, from the back benches of the House of Commons, was the main support of the Addington Ministry. He was the soul of the war, as carried on by England. It was he who, during the June of 1854, urgently insisted, in conjunction with Napoleon, that an attack should be made on Sebastopol. Accordingly, when, at the end of the year, the miserable incapacity shown in the prosecution of the war had

roused general indignation, and, under stress of it, the Aberdeen Cabinet had broken up, Palmerston went to the head of affairs,—the right man in the right place. The country desired a minister who knew what he wanted,—and knew what to do, in order to get what he wanted. The Queen followed Clarendon's advice,—summoned Palmerston, and placed herself unreservedly in his hands. This she had no reason to regret; Clarendon, on his part, did all he could to remove the mutual misunderstandings of an earlier time. The task set before the new Premier was one of enormous difficulty. He failed in nothing which could be attained by energy and diplomatic ability; but the military forces at his disposal were totally inadequate to the object he aimed at, which was nothing less than the permanent weakening of Russia's power in the East. The fleet achieved little in the Baltic and the Black Sea; and though Palmerston succeeded in bringing his troops before Sebastopol up to 50,000 men, yet they were far inferior in numbers to the French. The capture of the fortress, at the last, was the victory of the latter, the English attack on the Redan being an utter failure. When this immediate object of military operations was attained, the divergence between the English and French views in regard to the war became evident. Napoleon's ambition was now satisfied, and he could have been induced to continue hostilities with energy, only in case he had got his eye on some other object popular in France. Towards procuring such an object, the Emperor himself lent a helping hand: on September 15th he proposed, through his ambassador in London, to demand, as a condition of peace, the restoration of Poland, according to the terms of the Congress of Vienna. But with inconceivable fatuity the English Government refused to entertain the proposal; nor did it give a more favourable reception to Pélissier's,—which was,

to stir up an insurrection in the Caucasus ; it wished to achieve something *in the Crimea* as a set-off against the reverse at the Redan,—without being in the least able to say what it would like to do there.

When Napoleon received England's reply, he at once determined to conclude a Peace, on conditions already concerted in secret between him and Austria. Palmerston, indeed, when he heard of this, energetically protested against any such negotiation being carried on without the knowledge of England ; and laid down very much harder conditions, in the certain hope that Russia would not accept them. But, on the one hand, the conditions, even as amended by Palmerston, were by no means commensurate with the sacrifices made by England, and the object she had in view in going to war ; on the other, Palmerston made an egregious mistake if he thought that he had effectually weakened Russia by making the neutralization of the Black Sea a thing to which she was "bound by treaty ;" as if she did not intend, on the first opportunity, to shake off her fetters. Then, again, the hope that she would refuse the conditions proved false ; and the Paris Conference met. At the Conference, Napoleon did his best to diminish, as far as possible, the sacrifices which Russia had to make ; and the additional demands put forward by England received no attention. Even after the Peace, Russia, in close accord with France, tried to escape from carrying out the provisions of the Treaty of Paris,—violating them in the most barefaced manner ; and Palmerston's strong remonstrances at St. Petersburg, and also at Paris, achieved but very indifferent success. On the other hand, England committed a palpable blunder in opposing the union of the Danubian Principalities, advocated by France, Russia, Prussia and Sardinia ; for the main point was to draw them away from the influence of Russia ; and therefore it was of primary importance to make them as strong and as independent as

possible. In such questions Palmerston showed no breadth of view. It is inconceivable, too, that after previous experiences, he should have placed any confidence in the promises of Reform made by the Porte ; and he overlooked the fact that the supreme legal authority of the Turks,—viz. the Koran,—makes any real equality between Christian and Mohammedan simply impossible ; and that the lay element of our latter-day world, which secures to all forms of religion absolute equality, rests upon a common civilization, which does not exist in the East.

V.

NOTWITHSTANDING the lame conclusion of the war, Palmerston retained his popularity. Neither the absurd, though fortunately short, war with Persia, nor that most unjust war with China in 1857, did him any harm. It is true that, in connection with the latter war, he sustained a defeat in the House of Commons ; but the dissolution, after all, told in his favour. In a powerful election harangue, he denounced his opponents as “partisans of the insolent barbarian who had insulted the British flag,” and thus touched a string which, in England, has been seldom, at least in former times, struck in vain. He obtained a majority which promised him a new lease of power greatly increased. But the Persian and Chinese wars brought in their train an outbreak of the long-brewing discontent in India. Hard on the celebration of the centenary of Plassy, followed the terrible Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, which shook to its foundation English supremacy on the Ganges. Meanwhile, Palmerston showed himself equal to the crisis, and had the good fortune to find in the Viceroy, Lord Canning, in Sir John Lawrence and Sir Henry Havelock, men who fear-

lessly looked the danger in the face, and had the ability to overcome it. Canning, on his own responsibility, summoned to his aid in India, troops that were on their way to China. Peace was hastily concluded with Persia. Thus the English were enabled to take Delhi, after a protracted siege,—then Lucknow; and so the Mutiny was got under. Palmerston now availed himself of the opportunity to put an end to the obsolete East India Company, and to place the great Empire of India under the direct government of the Crown.¹ But before this important change could be effected, a political crisis occurred which very unexpectedly turned out the Ministry.—After the attempt of Orsini, Palmerston, yielding to the violent complaints from the other side of the Channel as to the doings of certain refugees, introduced a Bill dealing with conspiracy to murder. In doing so, he committed the blunder of representing the Bill as merely an amendment of the criminal law, without making any reference to events in France. This, of course, deceived nobody. The Bill passed the first reading; but the threatening language used by certain French officers in addresses to the Emperor—addresses afterwards published in the *Moniteur*,—coupled with a despatch by Walewski, in which he asked whether the rights of hospitality were to be extended to murderers—roused public excitement to such a pitch, that on the second reading, the Bill was thrown out. Mr. Gibson proposed an amendment, which declared that the House was in sympathy with the principle of the Bill,—but that it regretted the Government had not, at the time, returned a proper answer. In spite of the strenuous opposition of Palmerston, the amendment was carried. This result was doubtless brought about in part by the general indignation at the appoint-

¹ See p. 159.

ment of Lord Clanricarde as Privy Seal. At any rate, the Ministry immediately resigned; but Palmerston had first the satisfaction of being able to announce the capture of Canton,—the war against China having been renewed in conjunction with France, after the suspension of it caused by the Indian Mutiny. Of course, Palmerston's separation from affairs could not long continue. If his friendship for Napoleon had on two occasions cost him his post, the Emperor esteemed him all the more highly; besides, he had always felt the liveliest sympathy with the cause of Italian freedom. Therefore, when the Emperor had struck his bargain with Cavour, he invited Palmerston, in the autumn, to Compiègne; informed him of his designs, and made sure of his support.—The Derby Ministry did all in its power to preserve peace; but Palmerston, who had now been reconciled to Russell, attacked it during the debate on the Address, in the course of a violent speech against Austria, and in favour of France,—and thus brought about its fall. Once more he became Premier, and was Premier till his death. Russell became Foreign Minister; and the “two old Italian Masters” now tried to take the wind out of Napoleon's sails, by going farther than he in favouring Italian unity—a movement which, indeed, very soon ran ahead of him. The cession of Nice and Savoy caused a very powerful anti-French reaction in public opinion; it was believed that another era of Napoleonic aggression had opened; and the commercial treaty which the Emperor at that time offered to conclude, was regarded as a mere mess of pottage for which England sold her freedom of action. In this affair of the treaty, Palmerston allowed Cobden to have his way, and the treaty was Cobden's doing. One good result was, that Palmerston availed himself of the fear of French aggression, to raise a large loan, and with it to place the coasts of England in a better state of defence, and also to organize the Volunteers. In the

summer of 1860, when he was unable, in the face of the massacres in Lebanon, to prevent a French occupation, he was yet able by the despatch of clever diplomatist, Lord Dufferin, to control it effectually, and, in the course of a year, to bring it to an end.

On the other hand, in the American Civil War, Palmerston did not show himself equal to what was demanded of him. In England there prevailed at the time great sympathy with the South; but it was the duty of the Government to maintain a strict neutrality. Palmerston acted, therefore, very unadvisedly, when, after the first trifling advantage gained by the South, at Bull's Run, over the raw recruits of the North, he spoke of the "painfully rapid movements" of the latter; and afterwards, almost down to the fall of Richmond, he insisted that the Union could not be restored—an expression of opinion which caused great irritation in America. Nor, again, was it wise to act with the rudeness he showed in the *Trent* affair: the illegality of the American captain's act was so glaring, that it was impossible his own Government should approve of it. Yet Palmerston demanded the release of the prisoners, and an apology, within seven days,—and then made use of this easy victory to increase his popularity. Again, he clearly committed an enormous blunder in allowing the neutrality of England to be violated with impunity, by suffering the Southern States to have cruisers built for them in English dockyards. The excuse that this could not, according to English law, be prevented, was simply not true; but even had it been true, the plea would not have been sound; for every state is bound so to frame its legal enactments as to be in a position to fulfil its international obligations. It certainly sounded strange when Palmerston, who, in 1858, had introduced the Conspiracy Bill, in order to please Napoleon, now proudly declared that England was not accustomed to alter her laws to

please a foreign state. This policy in regard to the *Alabama* (though Palmerston would never listen to Napoleon's proposal, and recognize the South), cost England the lasting alienation of the North, the humiliating Treaty of Washington of 1871, and an indemnity of over 3,000,000*l.* sterling. Nor was the intervention of Palmerston's Government more successful in the Polish, and the Schleswig-Holstein questions. It yielded to the feeling of sympathy which the Polish insurrection awakened in England, and, in conjunction with France and Austria, made strong representations at St. Petersburg in favour of Poland; and Palmerston went so far as (February 4th, 1863) to write a letter to the Russian ambassador, in which he said plainly that he regarded the insurrection as a just vengeance of Heaven on Russia, for having so frequently favoured revolutionary movements within the territories of certain of her neighbours. Yet, when Napoleon proposed an identical note addressed to Prussia, on account of the convention she had concluded with Russia, Palmerston declared this to be a trap set for England,—as the Emperor wished to act against Prussia only with a view of acquiring possession of the Rhine Province; and, at last, Russell said plainly that England had no idea of going to war for the sake of Poland. Thus ended this piece of meddling and muddling—ended in an ignominious retreat and a coolness in the relations with France. The coolness increased when Napoleon, in order to find some way out of the dilemma, proposed a general Congress, and England alone absolutely refused to join it.

In the Schleswig-Holstein question the Emperor found an opportunity to pay England back in her own coin. Palmerston had been induced by Russia to sign the Treaty of London of 1852, which had for its object to maintain intact the Danish monarchy. In the later conflict between Germany and Denmark,

Palmerston took the side of Denmark, and on July 23rd, 1863, declared that, if her rights were infringed, the aggressors would find that it was not with Denmark alone that they had to reckon. Only on the ground of the confidence reposed in the help of England is it explicable that Denmark should have engaged in that unequal struggle with Austria and Prussia. As early as February, 1864, Napoleon's minister declared the Treaty of London to be an "*œuvre impuissante*;" and when England proposed a common intervention in favour of Denmark, the Emperor replied that a war with Germany on such grounds would be the most disastrous war in which he could engage. Palmerston, of course, did not venture, single-handed, to enter upon a contest with Austria and Prussia; and when, at the London Conference, he failed to induce Denmark to accept a compromise, her defeat was assured. But this was also a defeat of English policy. A vote of censure on the Ministry passed the House of Lords; and in the House of Commons, after a brilliant attack delivered by Disraeli, things looked so bad for the Government, that it avoided defeat only by accepting an amendment proposed by Mr. Kinglake, which expressed satisfaction that the Government, in the existing state of affairs, had abstained from armed intervention. This amendment passed, since even the Opposition was not in favour of war,—blaming the Ministry only because by its wrong policy it had placed England between war on the one hand, and a moral defeat on the other. Palmerston, then in his eightieth year, defended his Government in a brilliant speech: he passed rapidly over the actual situation of affairs, and, making a survey of his entire policy, pointed specially to the reforms in taxation, the advantages of the commercial treaty with France, and the social progress of the country under Free Trade; then, coming to the question in hand, he addressed the dissentients of

his own party, and asked them whether they would risk all these advantages, and allow the Tories, who had consistently opposed those measures, to take the helm of affairs? It was a somewhat doubtful victory: he won by only eighteen votes, and that too, rather by avoiding than by meeting the attack, and by basing his acquittal on merits which hardly anybody denied. At any rate, he attained his object. It was his last victory—and also his last great speech; only once again did he address the House at any length, and that was on April 3rd, 1865,—and the theme was the death of Cobden, to whose character and abilities Palmerston, though Cobden had been his determined opponent, now paid a tribute of ungrudging admiration. During this session it was clear that the days of the old man were numbered. Down to that time his intellect was no-wise impaired, and so late as 1864 he was able to take long rides on horseback. But now his eyesight failed, his elasticity of movement disappeared; delight in the Parliamentary strife—a prominent characteristic—departed; he sat listlessly at the debates, easily fell over asleep in the House or at the Council, and made his appearance more and more rarely. In the middle of October (1865) he fell ill, his powers rapidly failed, and on the 18th, that active life came to an end.

VI.

THE sorrow caused by Palmerston's death was universal among friends and foes alike; and well deserved were the public honours with which, on October 27th, he was laid in Westminster Abbey. During his long life, he was not only the most popular, but, after Wellington and Peel, the greatest English statesman of our time. The nation itself,—and foreign countries as well,—regarded him as the very embodiment of England. Then, again, he loved his country with complete devotion; at her service he placed his

great gifts and his marvellous industry. Sustained by a magnificent constitution, which had been strengthened by constant bodily exercise, he was, from morning till late at night, restlessly active. After breakfasting off a cup of tea, an egg, and a biscuit, he threw himself into his work,—took a ride on horseback in the afternoon, dined generously, allowing no course to pass by untouched, and then sat out the debate in Parliament. He went home alone; no servant was allowed to sit up for him; he let himself in, lighted his candle, and went to bed. No lingering excitement connected with the struggles from which he had just returned, broke his rest. He once said he did not remember ever lying in bed for five minutes awake,—save on a few occasions when he had the gout. Palmerston not only worked hard, but with great accuracy,—with great vigour and enthusiasm. In his work he was sustained by a magnificent memory. His great speeches were carefully prepared; he spoke for hours without the help of a note, but with full mastery of the material, and that material arranged in luminous order. His eloquence was not brilliant, in the sense that the eloquence of Chatham, Fox, Canning, or Derby was brilliant. All political questions of a speculative character he left alone. About the great problems of humanity he gave himself very little trouble; he addressed the sound common sense, and also the peculiar feelings, of his hearers; he argued, in a masterly way, on grounds which were sure to appeal to them; and he almost always knew the right tone to adopt, in order to make an impression,—though in doing this it must be admitted that truth often suffered a little. Nor was he less ready in the give and take of debate. None knew, as he did, the art, not only of repelling an attack, but also of paying an adversary back with interest,—of destroying the effect of a hostile speech—often by a word or two thrown in parenthetically,—of detecting

the weak points in his opponents, and with a witty sally bringing the laugh to his own side. That he often went too far,—that he not only wounded needlessly, but also tried to put aside serious matters with a flippant jest, arose from his haughty and autocratic nature. Palmerston did his best to master the questions lying right before him ; but as soon as he had formed his opinion, he allowed no other to have any value in comparison with it, and was ready to make concessions only when he had good reason to fear that he might lose his majority.

The Queen, his colleagues, and Parliament put up with many things from him ; but more than once he strained their patience too far. When, in 1851, he found that the forbearance of the Queen had its limits, he accepted his defeat, to all appearance very quietly, in order not to forfeit the favour of the Crown for good and all ; when he entered office again, his relations with it were unclouded ; and he frankly recognized the great gifts of Prince Albert, when, in 1855, he came into closer contact with him. For the rest, he had few enemies, and himself regarded as such only those persons who appeared to him un-English, or whom he did not consider to be gentlemen. This latter term he did not use in any sense as suggesting social privileges ; he was free from all airs of false superiority, and knew very well how to preserve his dignity without putting forward any snobbish pretensions. Apart from the question of power, he was good-natured, and never carried political hostility into personal relations. When the battle was over, he was ready to enter into the most friendly intercourse with his opponents. Nor did he bear any grudge for attacks made upon himself : the fact that Cobden had called him “the worst minister that ever governed England” did not prevent him from offering Cobden, at a later time, a seat in the Cabinet.

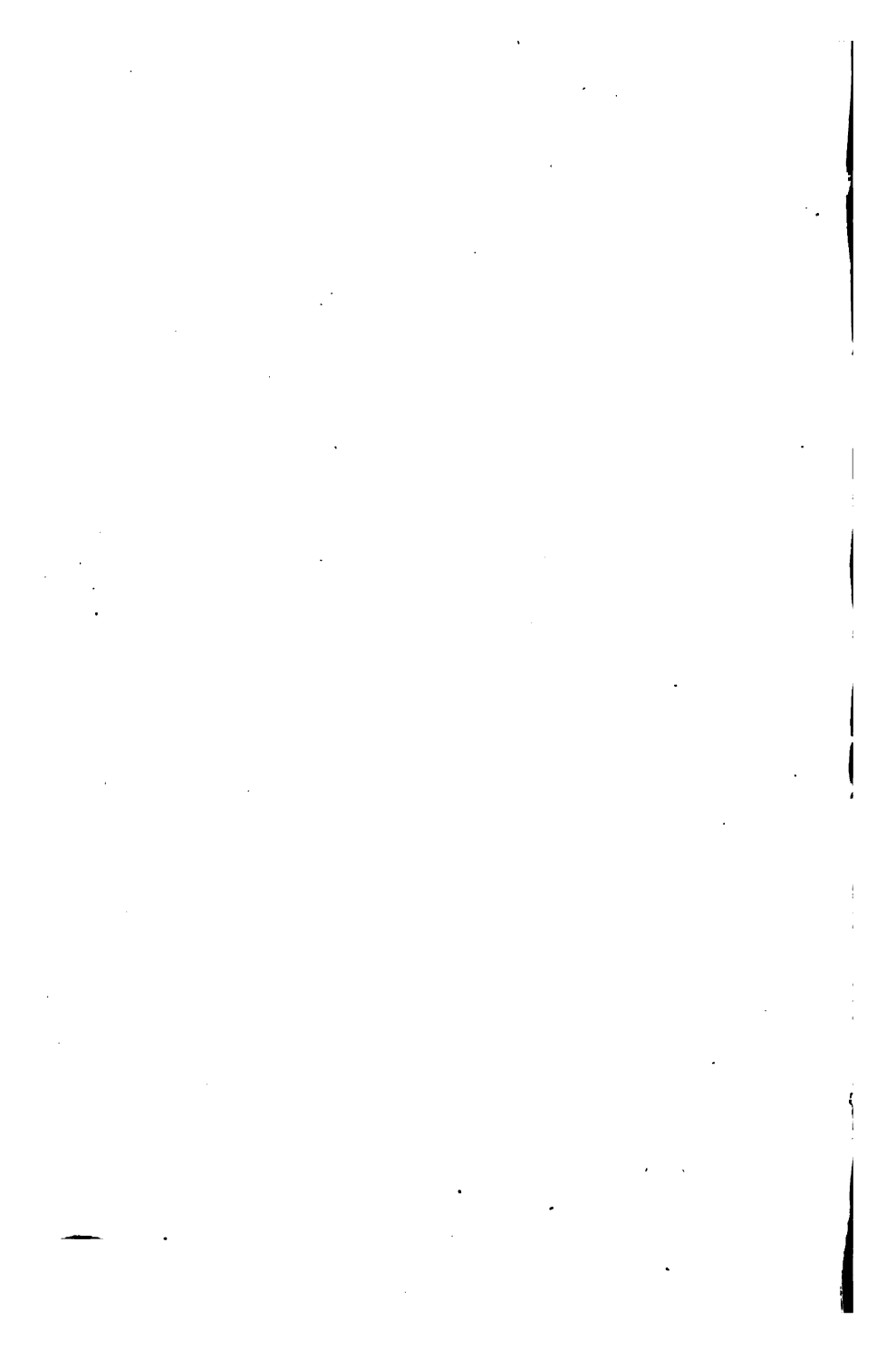
During the short time that Palmerston was Home Secretary, he administered the duties of his office well, because they were his official duties; but Home questions possessed little interest for him; he put his stamp on no great measure, but rather contented himself with attracting men of the greatest ability to him and giving them loyal support. According to his tendencies and traditions he was conservative; he was in favour of the Reform Bill, because he regarded it as necessary; and he placed himself unreservedly on the side of Free Trade. To a farther and more comprehensive enlargement of the franchise, which Russell pressed forward for the sake of popularity, Palmerston was opposed, because he believed—and justly—that it would not raise, but lower, the mental and moral status of Parliament; and he staved it off till his death. Again, being a zealous supporter of the Established Church, he had on his side the secret sympathy of the majority of the Tories. They knew that as long as he was at the helm, no rash innovations were to be feared, whilst, on this subject, they had a rooted distrust of their own leader, Disraeli; and often when they voted for the latter, wished the victory to fall to his opponent. Palmerston's entry into a Tory Cabinet was seriously discussed more than once; and if, in 1852, Lord Derby had not treated the question of Protection as an open question, Palmerston would, in all probability, have joined him.

Even his foreign policy the Tories, in the bottom of their hearts, approved. They might object to his constant meddling in the affairs of foreign states, and might make use of this against him, when his mistakes gave them some prospect of coming into power; but the proud, or rather defiant, manner in which this minister of England maintained the respect of foreign nations, flattered the national vanity; it was also the ground of that popularity by which, with a few interruptions, he was sustained to the very end. The great mistakes

he committed in his foreign policy stand out in a clear light. Disraeli justly cast on it the reproach that it tended to break the peace and encourage rebellion, in order that his government at home might be quiet and unmolested. He often misused England's superior power, by treating the weak with brutality, and thus, as also through his coquetting with foreign revolution in his character of "Lord Firebrand," he made himself the best-hated man in Europe. But over and above this, he frequently committed grievous mistakes as to England's true interests, and thereby caused her serious losses and deep humiliations. His opposition to the Suez Canal, and his refusal to admit the freedom of private property at sea, are standing proofs given in the evening of his life, of his astonishing shortsightedness. But all was forgiven, because the public, which troubles itself very little about the details of questions of foreign policy, knew that England's honour, power, and place among the nations, were safe in his hands. Palmerston saw that respect for England abroad could be maintained only by constant assertion of her power; and he asserted it with vigour, self-confidence, and, generally, with success,—by acting at the right moment, and, with rare exceptions, estimating aright the national feeling by which he knew himself to be supported. Thus it came to pass that he exercised perhaps greater power than any minister in England since the death of Pitt. In foreign affairs he held absolute sway. His colleagues dared scarcely say a word, partly because they did not know the questions at issue, partly out of sheer terror,—but also because they had perfect confidence that he could manage his own business. When, in 1840, he determined to humiliate Mehemet Ali, and to force France into compliance, all trembled, because they knew that the country was never worse prepared for a great European war. Palmerston alone, in spite of all the vapouring and threats of France,

remained immovable, because he did not for a moment doubt that Louis Philippe would, by all means, avoid a breach with England; and thus he carried his point. In this determination to *act*, lay his power and the secret of his success. He made England little beloved, and was not very nice in his choice of means,—for he placed England's interest above all questions of right and wrong; he troubled himself very little in order to appear consistent, and occasionally did not shrink from humouring bad passions. But England under him was always a State with which every other Government had to reckon. He was not a great creative, constructive statesman in the sense that a new epoch dated from his entering on the conduct of affairs; he was not far-seeing, like Burke,—who, according to Grattan, saw everything and foresaw everything; but he knew how to keep England at the summit of her power. With his death she began to decline; and the whole significance of his life and labours is rightly measured only when he is compared with the *Epigoni* who have entered upon the inheritance which he left behind.

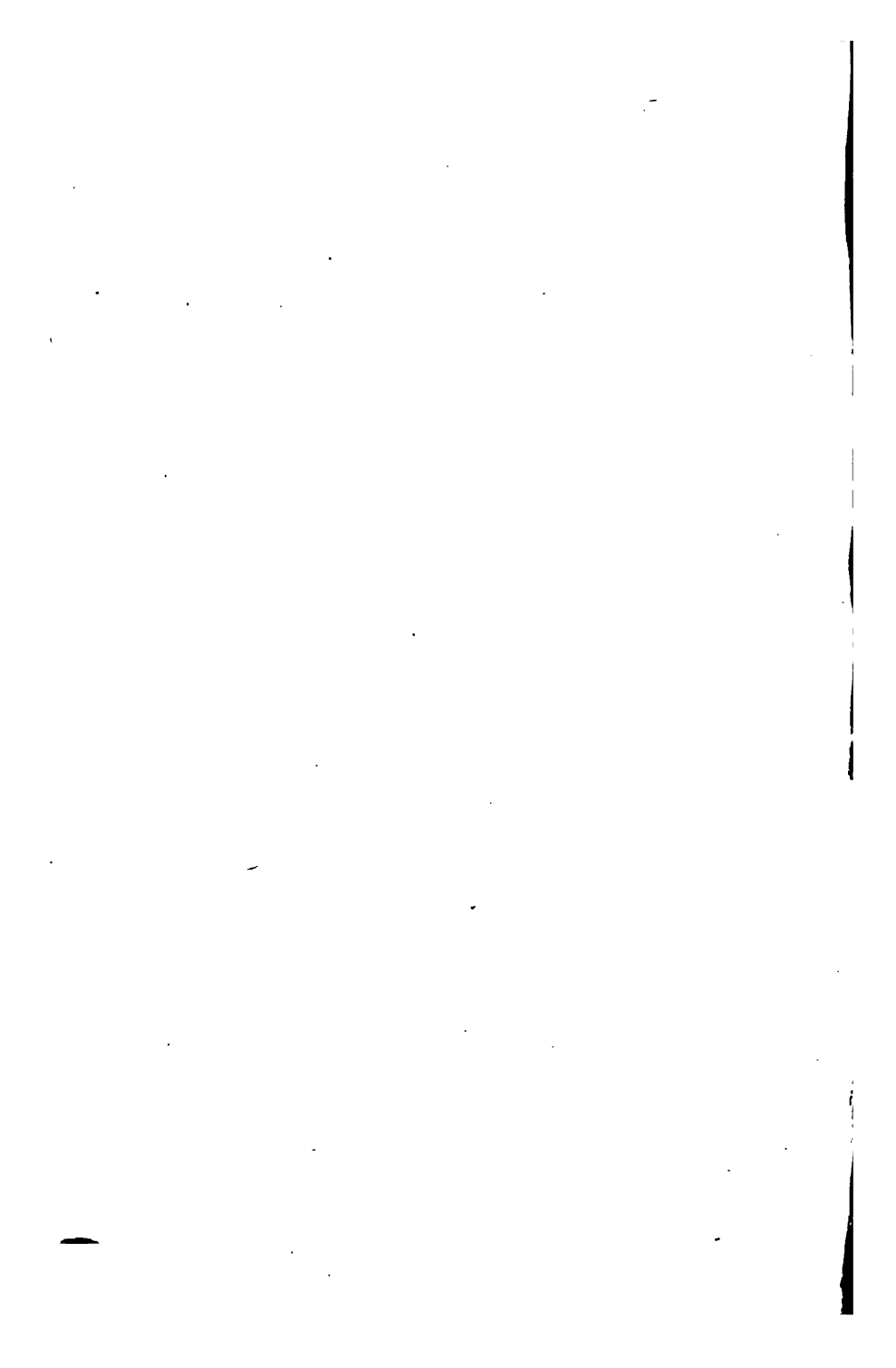




BEACONSFIELD

AND

GLADSTONE.





I.

THE figure of Lord Beaconsfield is, on more than one side of it, unique in English history. That the descendant of a despised race should become the leader of the proudest aristocracy of modern times ; that, when he was made an earl, the heirs of the two oldest families of the same order,—a Talbot and a Stanley,—should, as his sponsors (so to speak), introduce him to the House of Lords ; that, after his death, his name should form the uniting bond of that Conservative party which has even adopted as its symbol his favourite flower—these are facts which connect themselves with Lord Beaconsfield alone, and which fully justify the motto he chose in youth : *Forti nihil difficile*. And this Jewish upstart was no Rothschild, with millions at his back ; he owed his success exclusively to talent, belief in himself,¹ and the enormous strength of will with which he faced all obstacles. From the very beginning he kept in view the highest position to which the ambition of an Englishman can aspire ; and he at last attained it, because of his inflexible determination to shrink from no labour, no humiliation, no trial of patience, which would enable him to reach his object. Then, again, he did not begin life as a politician, or even as an historian, or as a journalist, like Guizot and Thiers,—but as a novelist. What is even more strange, he continued this mode of activity, which has surely very little in common with states-

¹ Before he entered Parliament, he wrote, in 1833, after a speech of Macaulay's : "Macaulay admirable, but between ourselves I could floor them all. I was never more confident of anything than that I could carry everything before me in that House. The time will come."—(Letters, p. 80.)

manship, down to the end of his life, and that without affecting in any way his success as a politician. His *Lothair* appeared after he had been Prime Minister. Such a phenomenon must be an attractive study alike to the student of politics and the student of psychology; and all the more, as he is one of those enigmatical characters that propound riddles to the world;—fortunately, he furnishes, in his writings, the means whereby those riddles may be solved.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI was descended from a family of Spanish Jews which, towards the close of the fifteenth century, was banished by the Inquisition. His ancestors betook themselves to Venice, and, in the eighteenth century, to England. His father, a critic and compiler of the school of Pope and Boileau, from whom his son inherited his vein of cynical acuteness of understanding, had, as a writer, a respectable name and many literary connections. One of his friends, Samuel Rogers, the banker and poet, induced the elder Disraeli to have his son, then twelve years old, baptized,—insisting that it was a pity the pretty, clever boy should, on account of his faith, be shut out from society, and prevented from exercising the most important rights of a citizen. He early showed the desire to educate himself: he read much, but without method, and only what interested him; his knowledge, therefore, lacked symmetry and continuity. He did not attend any of the Universities, and, for a short time, worked in an office. But soon he set out on a journey through France, Italy and Germany; and, on his return, he made his appearance in the drawing-room of Lady Blessington, where authors, artists, and politicians used to gather round that talented lady. Disraeli, now a handsome young man, caused some sensation by adopting a style of dress of the wild, melancholy, Byronic order; and superficial observers, seeing his lace, his chains and his rings, regarded him as a mere fop. But, though usually silent, he could, if

the subject of conversation roused him, speak with a fire and force of sarcasm that showed the powerful workings of his mind. His first attempt in literature, the novel *Vivian Grey*, which he published at two-and-twenty, immediately attained a complete success,—not, of course, that it showed pretensions to high qualities of imagination. The work presents us with nothing more than a series of incidents of the kind usual in novels,—the leading idea being that a young adventurer, without birth or means, is clever enough to turn to account the weaknesses and follies of high and low, and thus work his way to power. The originals of the characters introduced have been sought for in vain; and Disraeli would have decidedly objected to standing for *Vivian Grey*. What lent the book its greatest interest was the fact that it gave a highly-coloured, satirical picture of the society of the time: everybody thought he recognized his neighbour, whilst, in fact, only types are depicted. His next novel, *The Young Duke*, is free from satire, but lashes with invective the frivolous pursuits of young aristocrats. Soon after its appearance the author undertook a long journey to the South. First he repaired to the home of his ancestors: he admired the beautiful women, the Murillos, and the bull-fights of Andalusia; he passed, *viâ* Malta and Corfu, into Greece, and then gave himself up wholly to the “traditional splendour” of oriental life, visiting Turkey, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. His published letters—written to his family—describe his journeys in a lively and graphic manner; they are also depicted in even more interesting fashion in the novels, *Contarini Fleming*, *Alroy* and *Tancred*, which he published after his return. We see how happy he felt in the warm, bright sunshine of the East, reclining under the cedar or the palm-tree. He loved the ground on which everything reminded him of the greatness which once was Israel’s. He lingered, in worshipping awe, at Sinai,—at the ruins of

Solomon's temple,—on the Mount of Olives. The New Testament is, for him, but the completion of the Old : "Christianity is Judaism for the many." Christian dogma he does not dispute ; but Christ is to him, above all, a Hebrew prince, the offspring of David, in whom the Chosen People attains its last and richest development. "Race is everything," says one of his favourite characters ; the individual is great only as an embodiment of *that* ; nationality is only an intermediate idea. This view, which he puts forward in various shapes,—and often, it must be confessed, in bold violation of historical truth,—was specially serviceable in raising his position in his own eyes. The more his pride revolted at the pariah-condition to which the prevailing ideas condemned him, with so much the more hardihood did he maintain that the people from which he was descended formed the true aristocracy of mankind,—compared with which the posterity of Norse pirates,—the aristocracy that despised him,—were mere upstarts, who had attained their wealth by the plunder of the Church and of India. In his *Life of Bentinck*, he says, "Forty years ago the Greek and Hebrew races were the most despised in Europe ; yet these two had done the most for mankind." Quite characteristic were his views of the importance of the East to England. He puts into the mouth of a Syrian Sheik the following advice :—You English ought to carry out, on a large scale, the old plan of Portugal. You ought to leave a small and exhausted country for a great and extended empire. Let the Queen of England assemble her fleet and collect her treasures ; let her, accompanied by her whole Court and her leading men, transfer the seat of her Government from London to Delhi,—there she will find a great empire ready for her. I will answer for Syria and Asia Minor ; we will then recognize the Empress of India as our feudal Mistress, and secure for her the coast of the Levant. If she will, she shall have

Alexandria, as now she possesses Malta.—If we consider the later stages in Lord Beaconsfield's oriental policy, how strangely have these words been realized ! He did not, it is true, transfer the seat of Government to Delhi ; but the Queen was made by him Empress of India ; and he sent thither the Prince of Wales as her representative. He summoned Indian troops to Europe, brought Asia Minor under the protection of England, bought the Suez Canal shares, and took possession, not of Alexandria, but of Cyprus. He insisted that, England being a great Asiatic power, Asiatic prejudices should not be wounded, the ties that bound the Queen and the people of India should be drawn closer, and the imagination of the orientals be made use of to strengthen the British dominion. With him political imagination plays a great part from beginning to end. "It makes the great man," he says,—“the man who impresses himself upon his time.” On the other hand, he displays the most undisguised contempt for positive knowledge and accurate thinking. On this point he expresses himself thus : True investigators know how limited is human Reason. We owe Reason no great deeds,—deeds that are the milestones of human affairs and of human progress. It was not Reason that besieged Troy, that drove the Saracens into the desert, in order to conquer the world, or that inspired the Crusades, or established the Monkish orders, or produced the Jesuits ; above all, it was not Reason which created the French Revolution. Man is, in truth, great only when he acts straight from his emotions, and is never more irresistible than when he appeals to the imagination. Even Mormon numbers more adherents than Bentham.—Here there is unquestionably a truth, but it is only half the truth : he fails to see how much has been effected by physical forces, social forces,—and forces of an intellectual kind,—other than imagination,—in the great revolutions in human history.

Disraeli was right in thinking that it is not enough to show acuteness in managing actual, pressing affairs, but that the statesman must possess the gift of deriving from the past all the information it can give, of reckoning with the future, of anticipating it, and of preparing for it; but it was a mistake to consider, as a factor in this total result, no mental quality but political imagination. Of the importance of patient individual labour, which is absolutely essential to true greatness,—of that saying of Göthe, “Industry is genius,”—Disraeli knew nothing. He says truly, “Great spirits should put their trust in great truths and in great talents, and, through these alone, make their way;” but great truths are seldom won through the exercise of the imagination; and only *that* genius attains permanent greatness, which knows how to become absolute master of the material in which it works. With his defective knowledge, and this ascendancy of the imagination, is closely connected the fact that Disraeli, in spite of his descent, was never a political economist, never a financier. He spoke much on economic questions, and was repeatedly Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he never rendered any great service in that department, nor ever achieved even very decided success. He never understood the reasons for or against any particular tax. He recognized the fact clearly enough that a certain tax was oppressive; but he never was able to judge whether it ought to be taken off, and, with advantage, replaced by another. But indeed he had no idea of the value of money: all his heroes are fabulously rich, or become so in the end; even Walter, in *Sybil*, the representative of the disinherited, proves at last to be the heir of a great name and of great wealth;—he is also very much alive to the refined enjoyments of life,—loves to dive into the secrets of the higher culinary art and the vintages of wines, carefully collects receipts for peculiar dishes, is a connoisseur in

jewels, in horses, and in all kinds of sport, and attaches the greatest value to distinguished bearing and to society.

II.

Down to his return from his wanderings abroad, Disraeli seems to have wavered between a literary and a political career. During his journey, the production of a great revolutionary epic poem floated before his mind; and it was perhaps the poor success of some fragments of this, which he published, that decided him to devote himself to politics. He did not, however, renounce literature, but no longer pursued it for the sake of honour or power, or even wealth. In his absence, the battle of Reform was fought to the end, and there seemed a chance of his getting into Parliament. But, of course, even now this was a matter of no small difficulty to a candidate without political connections. Disraeli, however, threw himself into the election contest with a confidence that could not be shaken. He was not bound by his writings to any definite confession of political faith, and was determined, in so far as the means of attaining success were concerned, not to stick at a trifle. He had launched the work which represented the firstfruits of his mind, with the motto: "*The world's my oyster, which I with sword will open.*" "In order to rule men," he writes in 1830, "one must surpass them in their achievements, or despise them." "Men must be ruled according to one principle or another." "Peoples have their passions, and it is even the duty (!) of public men occasionally to express feelings which they do not themselves share, because the people must have leaders." How was Disraeli to become a leader? His father had acquired some property in Buckinghamshire; a seat was vacant in Wycombe, a borough in the neighbourhood; Disraeli

came forward as a candidate, independent of both parties,² and professing himself a Tory Radical. With the oligarchy of the Whigs and the middle-class, who had framed the Reform Bill in their own favour, and were now at the helm, he had no sympathy,—and as little hope of being taken up by them. The support of the Tories he gladly accepted, but wished them to remember that the true aristocracy must carry forward the cause of the people and rest upon the people; he, who had in his veins none of the blood of the Plantagenets and Tudors, but was sprung from the people, was, he said, “the man of the people.” The Reform Act, he insisted, was not a final measure, as the Whigs maintained, but only a half-way house, made to serve their oligarchical ends; it was only the *means* towards bringing about practical improvements in the condition of the people. Before the Reform Bill, the Government rested at least on a definite principle, namely, the aristocratic principle; now, it rested on no principle whatever; and the means whereby the democratic principle could be brought into operation, were—short Parliaments, a large extension of the franchise, and secret voting. Though the Tories supported him, he found no response to this programme,—and failed. But he did not lose heart. When the popularity of the Whig Ministry declined, and when, at last, it fell, he dropped his Radical demands, and with one bound cleared the space between himself and the Tory party. Only a short time before, he demanded that industry should be relieved of burdens which property in land ought in equity to bear; *now* he declared he had always been of opinion that, among certain classes in this country, there existed a conspiracy against that which might, in one word, be called the agricultural interest. He spoke on behalf of the Protestant Establishment in

² To the question, “On what he intended to stand?” he answered, “On my head.” (Letters, p. 82).

Ireland, in regard to which he had formerly said that twelve months ought not to elapse before even the word "tithes" was abolished in that country; and he reproached the Whigs with grasping the "bloody hand" of O'Connell in common hostility to the Irish Church.

On this new change of front, O'Connell took his revenge by remarking that Disraeli was clearly "the lineal descendant and heir-at-law of the impenitent thief,"—on which Disraeli promised an exemplary castigation when "they met at Philippi." Disraeli had two more bad falls without being in the slightest degree disheartened. He was, he said, accustomed to defeat. "I can almost say what the celebrated Spanish general said, who, when asked in his old age, how it came about that he always won, gave as a reason, that, in his youth, he had always lost." This self-confidence was, in the end, to turn to his advantage. In his *Vindication of the English Constitution*, a work as rich in brilliant thoughts as in untenable assertions, he placed himself absolutely on the Tory side, and tried to show that, since the Revolution, the Whigs had steadily pursued the design of reducing the king to the position of a doge of Venice; whilst, in opposition to this oligarchy, which led to only an apparent freedom, the Tories had desired to set on a firm basis the power of the king and the welfare of the masses. He extolled, as the greatest of English statesmen, Bolingbroke, who had opposed Walpole's system of corruption, and who had drawn an ideal monarch in the *Patriot King*. In his *Letters of Runnymede*, which appeared anonymously in the *Times*, he made a savage attack on the Melbourne Ministry.³ By these tactics he succeeded at last, in 1837, in being elected, by the aid of

³ In a letter of Jan. 1, 1836, Disraeli denied that he was the writer; but, before this, he says, in regard to the Letters, "I am the first individual who has silenced the press with its own weapons."

a rich member of the party, for the borough of Maidstone, and on the 15th of November took his seat in the House of Commons.

His failure on his first appearance as a speaker has been greatly exaggerated. He was not, as has been asserted, laughed down; but he had not strength sufficient, in face of the continued noisy interruptions, issuing chiefly from O'Connell's following, to finish the great speech he had prepared.⁴ The unfavourable reception he met with, having in it none of the kindly tolerance traditionally extended to new members on the occasion of their maiden speech, cast him down not a whit. "I am," he exclaimed, when he was compelled to leave off, "I am by no means astonished at the reception I have met with. I have begun many things, and in the end have succeeded in most. I will now sit down, but the day will come when you will hear me." And it came more quickly than could have been believed. He gave up his rhetorical style, which had brought him no success, spoke often, but briefly, and to the point, as Sheil advised him,—and with great applause,—on questions that he had mastered.⁵ It is a remarkable fact that his first important speech when he again addressed

⁴ He writes on the following day,—“I state at once that my *début* was a failure, so far that I could not succeed in gaining an opportunity of saying what I intended.” Peel's judgment, on the contrary, was: “I say anything but a failure; he must make his way.” His opponent, Sheil, foretold that nothing could prevent him from becoming the first orator in the House of Commons.

⁵ Sheil said to him, “Now get rid of your genius for a session. Speak often, for you must not show yourself cowed, but speak shortly. Be very quiet, try to be dull, only argue, and reason imperfectly; for if you reason with precision, they will think you are trying to be witty. Astonish them by speaking on subjects of detail. Quote figures, dates, calculations; and in a short time the House will sigh for the wit and eloquence which they all know are in you; they will encourage you to pour them forth, and then you will have the ear of the House and be a favourite” (p. 123).

the House, was directed against a Bill introduced by Russell for granting state-aid to primary schools. Gladstone opposed the Bill on the ground that it placed the various religious bodies on the same footing, and thus gave to error the same privileges as to truth; Disraeli, on the other hand, wisely avoided the question of religious belief,—and objected to state-meddling with the school, only on the ground that he held the school to be a thing connected with the family. China and Prussia (!) were, according to him, awful examples of the endeavour to introduce state-directed education. Not less indicative of character was his defence of the Chartists, which drew on him the reproach of favouring revolutionary movements. He repelled the charge, condemning the disorderly way in which the leaders of the movement acted, but showing how unjustifiable was that haughty indifference with which the middle classes, on whom the business of government chiefly rested, opposed the efforts of the working men. At that time there were no factory laws; the labour of women and children was carried on under pressure of free competition; unions and strikes were prohibited; Capital was the master. The new Poor Law, introduced by the Whigs, was harsh and unsympathetic; the condition of the lower classes was melancholy in the extreme. For these reasons Disraeli said he was not ashamed to confess that he sympathized with the Chartists, however much he disapproved of the Charter in which they formulated their demands. He thus recognized at the very first the seriousness of the social question, which, later on, he treated of in his novel, *Sybil; or, the Two Nations*. The mutually opposed nations which lived on the same ground, were the Poor and the Rich; the world of those who enjoyed, and of those who laboured in the sweat of their brow—and starved; who, at least in the towns, feared and hated each other, as do two hostile peoples even in the midst of all the influences of civilization.

Nothing is more unjust than to represent Disraeli as a flatterer of the great. It is quite true that everything *distingué* had a great attraction for him; but the vices and weaknesses of a heartless aristocracy have never been lashed with such severity as he has lashed them in his characters of the Marquis de Carabas, Lord Monmouth, and Lord Marney. He depicted the sorrows and the misery of the factory population, attacked sharply the cold economy of the Manchester School, and showed how, under such conditions, Chartism necessarily arose. There are passages in the book which remind us of Lassalle; but the author looks for a remedy, not in republican institutions, but in kingship, and in a renewed aristocracy,—such as would secure the welfare of the masses against an oligarchical Parliamentary system.

Disraeli had meantime, in 1839, married the widow of his friend Lewis; and although his wife was much older than himself, the marriage was a perfectly happy one; and at the same time, through the property his wife brought him, he was put in an independent social position. His political status he strengthened by becoming the head of Young England, a group of romantic young aristocrats who had dreams of restoring the Church to the position it held in the middle ages, and of bringing back the good old times, when the nobleman was the father of the poor, and the leader in the neighbourhood in which he dwelt. To these young enthusiasts Disraeli lent his experience and ability. In the novel of *Coningsby*, he gave their ideas poetical flesh and blood, without renouncing his own peculiar views. The leading heroic character is a Jew, yet has no passion for money. He is the head of an enormous banking business, on which kings and ministers depend; and he flies over the heads of all, as a paragon of political insight,—a quality, however, which hardly proved its existence in his prophecy that Louis Philippe, in whom he

sees a new Odysseus, would bring the Revolution to an end. This fanciful character apart, the novel is not only the most interesting, but also the most mature of Disraeli's works, and presents an excellent picture of the new time and the new generation.

The Tories had now, in 1841, come into power. Peel had separated from Melbourne, and stood just then at the summit of his reputation. Disraeli had called him the greatest statesman of the age; he had extolled him as the hope of the country,—assuredly not without expectation that on the formation of a new ministry he would be offered a post. But Peel was not the man to recognize rising talent; indeed, he treated his regular followers as subjects, whose business it was to obey. Disraeli, for his part, bore this treatment for a long time; but, finally, he felt by no means inclined to put up for ever with a steady ignoring of his claims. He began to ask short, sarcastic questions, which, though couched under the necessary forms, concealed a sharp sting; so that Peel, who at first repelled very carelessly those covert attacks, in the end fell back on Canning's saying, and prayed Heaven to save him from his candid friends. Thereupon Disraeli immediately reminded him of Canning's struggle with "sublime mediocrity,"—a reference to Peel's own character. Peel later on represented him as a "disappointed candidate for office," a remark which Disraeli indignantly resented. But that the charge was not wholly groundless (negotiations having been carried on, though indirectly, between them) is certain,—and, indeed, is shown by a passage in *Endymion*, which most certainly Disraeli did not write without an unconscious reference to himself:—"The minister made a personal enemy out of one who might have ripened into a devoted follower; and who, through his social influence as well as through his political talent, was no despicable enemy."

And now, after long opposition, Peel found himself compelled to admit that the cause of agricultural Protection could no longer be sustained,—that cause which Cobden attacked through his Anti-corn-law League, but which Peel had called a holy cause, without which the British aristocracy could not exist. Not only so : when he arrived at this conviction, he did not lay down his office, but undertook the carrying out of the opposite policy. Naturally this course roused the utmost indignation among the farming class, whose eyes were now opened. They formed an incensed, though silent phalanx, which wanted only a leader. Lord George Bentinck came forward nominally in this capacity,—but the chief of the staff was Disraeli. Here it may be noted as a remarkable fact, that, in his protracted struggle with Peel, he invariably avoided the real point at issue ; he had never defended the principle of Protection ; in 1842 he had even stood up for Free Trade, and had maintained that Free Trade was a traditional principle of the Conservative party long before it had been adopted by the Whigs. Even now, he attached no particular importance to the corn laws, and thought that the advance in the price of bread due to them was so trifling as not to be worth consideration. His whole force was directed against Peel, whose apostasy he attacked with the bitterest irony. “The very honourable gentleman had surprised the Whigs while bathing, and had run away with their clothes !” Peel was the political Petruccio, who had, by his peculiar tactics, tamed the Shrew, Liberalism. He called Peel an admiral who led the fleet of his sovereign into the harbour of the enemy,—a robber of other people’s ideas ; and maintained that no statesman had ever committed political larceny on such a scale ! That there was some truth in all this,—that Peel, in going over to the enemy, when he became convinced that he could no longer hold out against them, had shattered to its foundations the

old party organization, is not to be denied; but it is remarkable that Disraeli, in his bitterest attacks, kept absolutely to the political side of the question. As regarded the real point at issue,—the claim, namely, of the farmers to tax the rest of the population for their own advantage,—he, who boasted that he was the man of the people, had little or nothing to say. Peel carried his point, but his power was shaken. What Disraeli said, at a later time, in his *Life of Lord George Bentinck*, came to pass. "The battle was lost, but he who, through his treachery, had caused the defeat, had, at any rate, to expiate his treachery." By bold management he induced the Tories and also Lord John Russell, to vote against a Bill for the maintenance of the public safety in Ireland, to which both had, on the first reading, promised their "sincere and hearty support." Peel was in a minority, and was forced, in June, 1846, to resign. Soon afterwards Bentinck retired from the leadership, and in 1848 died. Disraeli now became leader of the country party, to which he had for a year belonged,—at least to the extent that he had himself become a landed proprietor, and represented agricultural Buckinghamshire. The first laborious stage on the way to power was now passed; and, although the dislike among the country gentry to being led by a Jew broke out from time to time, Disraeli not only maintained his position, but in no long time the official head of the party, Lord Derby, caught from him all his political inspirations. After Disraeli had attained a recognized position, a total change showed itself in his bearing. The importance and the responsible nature of the part he had now to play as a leader, imparted to him a seriousness and a dignity which were hitherto so wanting; the tendency to theatrical displays diminished; and he ceased to sacrifice permanent interests to momentary advantages.

III.

FOR the present, of course, Disraeli was only the leader of a party which found itself in a hopeless minority. Not for a moment did he share the illusions of his friends as to the possibility of bringing about a social revolution. He even declared that a re-imposition of the corn tariff was not to be thought of, public opinion having declared so decidedly against it. He also allowed the Protection tariff to drop out of sight; and addressed himself to other measures, in order to remove the distress of the landed interest arising from the excessive burden of local taxation, the high malt-tax, &c. It cannot be denied that, in this way he furthered materially, though not with *immediate* success, the interests of agriculture.—He became a far more dangerous enemy of the Government when he began to oppose that perpetual meddling in the affairs of other states, which Palmerston, in his character of admonisher and adviser of absolute governments, had made part of his regular policy. The weakness of this policy consisted not only in the unjustifiableness of such intervention, but in this, that “Lord Firebrand,” when his words had no success, invariably left his *protégés* miserably in the lurch,—exposing himself, at the same time, to deep humiliation.

In February, 1852, the Russell Ministry fell. Lord Derby undertook to form a Government, and Disraeli entered the cabinet as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He himself certainly did not desire this post, but had to accept it, because he was, at that time, anything but a favourite with the Queen; and, as Chancellor, he did not come into personal relations with her. The traditions of his party and the requirements of the time combined to make his place by no means a bed of roses. Lord Derby, by imprudent speeches, constantly caused fears to be entertained of a resuscitation of the Protectionist policy. Disraeli, on the other

hand, declared that policy to be dead and buried—a system that was completely exploded. The spirit of the age, he contended, was on the side of free competition; and no statesmen could, with impunity, regard lightly the general tendency of the epoch in which he lived. His budget, therefore, carried out what he had promised in his late speeches, namely, a relief of agriculture. But, although well devised, based on perfectly sound principles, and brilliantly defended with the courage of despair,—it did not pass, being rejected by a majority of fifteen votes. The Derby Ministry, therefore, after ten months of office, was forced to resign. In connection with this affair, Disraeli first met the man who was to be his life-long opponent, William Ewart Gladstone.

On the fall of the Derby Ministry, Disraeli saw himself once more, and for a long period, condemned to criticism—the business of the Opposition. Of the twenty-one years immediately following, he passed only four in office. But his experience during this period made him a party-leader of the first order. He learned how to keep his followers together, to encourage them, to win all to his views,—wounding the vanity of none. No one was listened to with greater attention, no one was more feared than he. Palmerston once called him “the Red Indian of debate, who, brandishing his tomahawk, opened a way to power, and hoped to keep it by a steady scalping of his enemies.” The following ministry, “The Ministry of all the Talents,” offered him many points for attack, and of these he availed himself with great effect. But when the war against Russia became, through the blundering of the Government, inevitable, he patriotically proffered his support. “This much I can promise, that no future Wellesley, on the banks of the Danube, will be pained by hearing that expressions were uttered by the English Opposition, showing ignorance of his efforts, and turning his abilities into ridicule.”

On the other hand, after the Paris Congress, he attacked violently, though very absurdly, the Declaration on Maritime Law, pretending that England had thus sacrificed her dominion of the sea.—It was characteristic that he, whose own instinctive perception had caught the significance and importance of the East, had the courage to oppose the passion which, during the Indian Mutiny, demanded a cruel vengeance; and he declared that if that spirit prevailed, the figure of Christ must give place to that of Moloch. To him, after the Mutiny, fell the task, during his second ministry (which was of short duration) of bringing the East Indian Empire immediately under the government of the Crown. Further, he had the satisfaction of accomplishing the emancipation of the Jews,—a measure to which the Tories had always given the most determined opposition. Conducted by him, the first Jew, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, crossed the threshold of the House of Commons, on the 26th of July, 1858. With his Reform Bill, on the other hand, he was by no means fortunate. The Cabinet, however, might perhaps have still held on, if it had not shown a very defective appreciation of the significance of the war in Italy. Disraeli's involved character had as little perceived, at the right time, the drift of Cavour's policy, as, later on, it perceived the drift of Bismarck's. By doing everything in his power to prevent the war, he incurred the suspicion of sympathizing with Austria. On the other hand, it is a proof of his acuteness that, in the American Civil War, which followed soon after, he always preserved the strictest neutrality, although not only his party, but also the Government, showed a decided predilection for the slave-holding South. Only on one or two occasions did he refer to the subject; and then it was to censure the wavering attitude of the Ministry, and condemn the impolitic expressions let fall by Gladstone, when that statesman openly extolled Jefferson

Davis for having made the Southern States into a nation. Against the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece he protested strongly and with justice; for the chain of Mediterranean garrisons in the hands of England was thereby broken; and he omitted no opportunity of attacking the undignified policy of Russell, who intervened in the affairs of Poland, Denmark, and other nations, and ended by invariably running away. After the Reform Bill had, for the second time, wrecked the Liberal Ministry, it became Disraeli's turn to try his hand at Reform; and he carried it through—of course, in a way which was possible only to *him*. In a House very well disposed to be pleased, he began by observing, that, in his view, the question of Reform, on which all who had hitherto attempted it had made shipwreck, should no longer be regarded as a question deciding the fate of a Ministry. He then felt his way by proposing a series of Resolutions,—containing several limitations and conditions, intended to reconcile the Conservatives to an enlargement of the franchise; he ended by abandoning these limiting clauses, one after another, on pressure from the Opposition. In fact, he carried household suffrage for the towns by the aid of the Radicals. This process he afterwards described as “educating his party,”—which, it seemed, required a certain pressure to be applied, to induce it to direct its attention to such questions. Disraeli's motive in this and in former cases, was his rooted dislike of the Liberal middle-class population of the towns, which had the Whig party as its political mouthpiece. He maintained, on the contrary, that the Tories were the true democrats,—that the great Tory, Pitt, was, in truth, the greatest of democratic ministers, and that any other view of the case was due to mere ignorance and dimness of political vision. Toryism, as truly representing the nation, had occasionally to represent the national passions and the national prejudices, as well as the

purser national aspirations; the Whigs, on the other hand, he contended, never crossed the bounds of their narrow clannishness. Modern progress, modern civilization, the modern spirit of enterprise,—of what use were they without a loyal devotion,—without the broad basis of popular tradition? And where was a firmer basis to be found than in the policy of that party which, possessing vast property in land derived by inheritance, had taken deep root in the life of the people? Only by the Tories making common cause with the masses,—only through their alliance with the democracy, could there be attained a universal and satisfactory deliverance from the confusions of the time. Such was Disraeli's view; and there is some truth in it. There is in Tory principles nothing opposed to moderate reform; indeed, Pitt was the first to modify the customs tariff in a Liberal sense, and the first to attempt electoral reform. But it is also certain that, from the French Revolution down to 1832, the Tories opposed every reform; and Disraeli was himself the most violent opponent of Peel's efforts in that direction. Henow maintained that the farther one went down in the strata of society, the conservative tendency was found to increase in force,—a view which, under certain circumstances, is tenable enough,—when, namely, the business in hand resolves itself into some broad issue, easily understood by the mass of the people; but such a view has its dangerous side, inasmuch as it must lead to the nation slipping down farther and farther into democracy, and ultimately into universal suffrage. It is a view which is so much the more serious in its results for England, as she possesses neither a strong Royal prerogative, nor a centralized administration. At any rate, this Reform measure of Disraeli's went directly in the teeth of all the principles hitherto professed by the Tories. So recently as the 5th of March, 1867, Lord Stanley had flatly denied that the Government had any thoughts of such a measure as

Mr. Bright advocated. Quite justly, therefore, did the *Quarterly Review* call the Bill, and the way in which it had been passed, "the Conservative surrender." The party gave a most unwilling assent to it; the three ablest men in the Government resigned; and even Lord Derby, now an old man, over whom Disraeli exercised complete influence, called it "a leap in the dark." Disraeli's action has only this in common with Peel's, that a Minister came at length to introduce the very measure which before he had strenuously opposed. Peel, in 1829, and again in 1846, risked his large majority and his firmly established power, in order to carry measures which he recognized as necessary. But in 1867, a minority undertook the same task, in order to remain in power. In 1829, and in 1846, Wellington and Peel carried out what the Opposition desired; Disraeli who, in 1866, entered office through the resistance offered by the Tories to a Liberal Reform measure which went too far for them, passed far beyond what the Liberals desired, and carried his measure by the help of the Radicals. Peel and Wellington produced perfectly worked-out legislative proposals, and stuck to them; Disraeli allowed his Bill to be altered past all recognition, because he did not venture to put his own views forward in opposition to those of his party. The trick which he attributed to Peel, of stealing the clothes of the Whigs, he himself performed in yet more startling fashion. At any rate, he gained his object—the object he had desired so long and so earnestly: on Lord Derby's death, he became Prime Minister. But his day of power was short. Very soon his own measure worked his ruin. Gladstone brought the question of Irish Disestablishment within the region of practical politics; and Disraeli, who had so far strained the loyalty of his followers in the matter of the Reform Bill, did not venture so soon again to put their patience to the proof. In the elections which followed, the Opposition gained a brilliant victory,

and the Ministry immediately resigned. Disraeli then betook himself to Literature, although at the same time he discharged the duties of leader of the Opposition. In 1869 appeared his last important novel, *Lothair*—(*Endymion*, which followed, is one of his weakest). This tale, it may be said, in passing, is exceedingly interesting, containing many sketches of contemporaries that one recognizes at a glance; but it is, in many of its scenes, somewhat fantastic. The main idea is that at the present time there are two dominating forces in European life,—the Catholic Church and the Secret Societies; and that the statesman who stands outside both, has to reckon with their influence, to regulate them, and to set bounds to them. The hero, Lothair, wavers between these two forces, which are represented by Cardinal Grandison and an Italian lady, Theodora. But he is enabled to escape from both through the influence exerted by Corisande, who displays all the sweet reasonableness of a high-born English girl. With her sound common sense, she protests against the national leaders of the people going over to Catholicism.—Gladstone's undignified policy abroad, and his perpetual innovations in the government at home, gradually caused a complete revolution in public opinion; and the elections of 1874 gave the Tories a larger majority than they had possessed for fifty years. At the head of the new Government, Disraeli stood as unquestioned chief; two years afterwards he passed into the Upper House as Lord Beaconsfield. The dream of his youth was fulfilled; the object of his ambition was attained; and now, in his old age, he had perfect freedom to translate his ideas into facts.

Everything looked as favourable as possible; the majority followed him with absolute, unquestioning fidelity; his rival, Gladstone, had withdrawn from parliamentary life; he enjoyed the absolute confidence of the Queen. That he succeeded in using

his vantage-ground to work out any great policy will hardly be maintained. But, at any rate, he had from the first a strong feeling for the position and greatness of England; whereas Gladstone had caused her to be everywhere despised. Disraeli's object, therefore, was to restore her to the respect which she had formerly enjoyed. The first measure taken with this view,—the purchase of the Suez Canal shares,—was a happy hit, and won Prince Bismarck's enthusiastic approval,—as the right thing done at the right time. The idea was originally suggested by Mr. Greenwood, editor of the *St. James's Gazette*. Disraeli caught it up, and carried it out with alacrity, amid loud applause. In this affair, and also in the assumption of the title "Empress of India," by the Queen, in 1876, it was perceived that a new era was dawning in Oriental policy. But if the Premier wished to indicate that he retained in his own hand the supreme direction in foreign affairs, it was a very unhappy inspiration which led him to entrust once more, for party reasons, the Secretaryship to Lord Derby. The latter might have made a very good Minister of Commerce; but so long ago as 1867 he had, in foreign affairs, forfeited all respect by his management of the Luxemburg question, and had only one idea,—to keep out of war, cost what it might to do so. Disraeli was certainly not of this way of thinking: when the Russo-Turkish war was approaching, he declared that the Government would maintain the British Empire in all its power, and would not be induced, through the bribe of peace and a false security, to consent to any step which would be likely to put it in jeopardy. In his speech at the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 9th, 1876, he spoke to the following effect:—There is no country to which the maintenance of peace is so important as to England. Peace is a special English policy. England is not an aggressive Power, for there is nothing which she covets; she lays claim to no cities, no provinces. But

although the policy of England is peace, no country is so well prepared for war. If she enters upon a struggle for a just cause,—and I shall not easily believe that she will ever carry on war for any other than a just cause,—and if the struggle is such that her liberty, her independence, her sovereignty, are in question,—her resources are, I believe, inexhaustible. England is not a country which, when she begins a campaign, must ask whether she can stand a second or third; on the contrary, she will not rest content *till right be done*.—His attitude during the war which followed hardly justified these brave words. After the Berlin Conference, he said he had become convinced that if England had, at the beginning, spoken firmly, there would have been no war. Why, then, did he not speak the word? Why did he prefer to send Lord Salisbury to Constantinople, who, to the astonishment of everybody, went hand in hand with Ignatieff, “the father of lies,”—and, by supporting his demands, made unavoidable the war which he wished to avoid? Why did he permit Lord Derby to continue in office, seeing that he was completely under the influence of Count Shouvaloff? ⁶ Is it true that Russia retired before the English fleet and the English troops? Rather, was she not compelled to give way, when Ignatieff and Gortchakoff, by the peace of San Stefano,

⁶ Count Peter Shouvaloff died on the 22nd March of the present year. During the last ten years of his life, he was unpopular among a section of his countrymen, who believed that he had not sufficiently pressed Russia's claims at the Berlin Conference of 1878. The Panславists called him “the traitor of Berlin.” But the Czar always placed the utmost confidence in his ability, judgment, and patriotism. On his death, the Russian journals spoke of him in very high terms; the *Grashdanin*, in particular, which had formerly assailed him with great bitterness, now made an apology—to his memory.—Count Shouvaloff was aide-de-camp to Prince Gortchakoff at Sebastopol; and was appointed to maintain order at the floating bridge on the terrible night the Russians retreated from the south to the north side of the harbour.—Tz.

violated the principles laid down in the Reichstadt agreement with Austria of January, 1876,—and when Bismarck declared that any deviations from the provisions of the Treaty of Paris could be effected only by the consent of all the great Powers? That Beaconsfield's attitude at the Conference compelled Russia to give way on many important points,—that he was determined to come to blows if she had not done so, is quite true; but was the result of the Berlin Treaty as favourable to England as the Ministers on their return represented it to be? Did his success in restoring to the Sultan "East Roumelia, that beautiful province,"—a success for which he took the credit,—spring from sound policy, seeing that Bulgaria was split into two parts, which could be all the more easily dominated by Russian influence, and were therefore compelled to reunite? Did not Beaconsfield's action rather lay the train for confusion later on? Do Cyprus, and the prospect of reforms in Asiatic Turkey—which will never be realized—furnish a satisfactory equivalent for the annexation of Batoum, Kars, and Bessarabian Roumania? One thing is certain: the acclamations which greeted the two Ministers on their return from Berlin, bringing "Peace with Honour," had hardly died away when they saw themselves compelled to begin a war against Afghanistan, involving enormous sacrifices.

The necessity of this war is enough to prove that Disraeli did not accurately estimate the danger with which England is threatened by Russia. When, on May 5th, 1876, Mr. Baillie Cochrane called the attention of the House to the threatened advance of that Power, Disraeli replied: "I am not of that school who view the advances of Russia into Asia with those deep misgivings some do. I think that Asia is large enough for the destinies of both Russia and England. I believe that at no time has there been a better understanding between the Courts of St. James' and St.

Petersburg than at the present moment. Now, far from looking forward with alarm to the development of Russia in Central Asia, I see no reason why she should not conquer Tartary any more than why England should have conquered India.”⁷

It will be admitted that Russia could not desire a more favourable attitude of mind in an English Minister ; but what the advance of Russia really meant was shown in less than two years afterwards, when a Russian envoy appeared at Cabul,—a move which forced Lord Salisbury to withdraw his circular of April 1st, and to conclude with Shouvaloff the arrangement which was, with perfect truth, described as a “surrender.”

It may be that, as some say, the reason why Beaconsfield made such poor use of his great power during his last term of office is to be sought in his declining physical strength. Be that as it may, he sank rapidly, after the elections of April 1880 compelled him to resign, and on April 19th, 1881, he died. But one cannot help thinking that in this failure to attain solid success, and indeed in his whole activity, Beaconsfield was dominated by that imaginative element in his character which, with all its brilliant workings, yet always left the root of the matter untouched. So with his eloquence: though irresistibly captivating, it was more dazzling than convincing. Still, he must be reckoned among the first debaters. Taking to all appearance, no interest in the proceedings,—his head sunk on his breast, his arms folded,—there he sat ; not a twitch of a muscle betrayed the impression made by the speech of his opponent. Then he rose, and in a slightly stooping attitude, and in rich, sonorous tones, began his reply. At first he spoke simply, half carelessly, but soon warmed to his work. Striking images, light jibes, pungent jests,

fiery appeals to principle, bursts of patriotic fervour, followed one another—while he pitilessly tore to shreds the speech of his adversary, if he did not destroy it outright by one sarcastic thrust! But though he was a great orator, he can hardly be called a great statesman. With the exception of his Reform Bill—a doubtful blessing—and the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, his name is connected with no measure which constituted a new departure in English statesmanship. Compared with the two Pitts, Canning, or even Palmerston, beside whom he rests in Westminster Abbey, he, too, was but one of the *Epigoni*. He was certainly, in his way, patriotic; and he honourably aimed at realizing in fact that *Imperium et libertas*, which he chose as his motto. But it will hardly be denied that he desired to gain power and honour, first and foremost, for himself; and only afterwards, and in a secondary degree, did he think of using his abilities and the position they had won him, for the good of his country. In particular, whoever observed his action long and carefully, could not avoid doubting whether he believed in the principles which he professed. It was remarked that, when he was listening to speeches of honest, but not very enlightened members of his party, a mocking smile played for a moment round his mouth, betraying his scepticism in regard to what was to them a matter in which were enlisted all their passions—all their convictions. His defects and his excellencies of character equally prevented his acting in harmony with that party which, by a curious stroke of destiny, he was called upon to lead. With perfect truth, therefore, was it said that in the House he sat apart like a lonely gladiator. His subtlety, his rooted love of secrecy and intrigue, his deliberately purposed and misleading frankness, his unscrupulousness in the choice of means,⁸ were precisely

⁸ In 1853, without consulting his colleagues, he made a

those qualities with which the English country gentlemen had least sympathy. With Lord Derby he had serious differences; many of his own party heartily detested him, and would have shaken him off if they had been able.⁹ They stuck firmly to their principles; Disraeli was a mere opportunist; waiting to see how the cat would jump. (When called to task for his inconsistency, he replied: "A statesman is the child of circumstances, a creature of his time; a statesman is, essentially, a practical character, and when called to the helm of affairs, he has not to inquire what may, in the past, have been his views on this or that subject. He has only to ascertain what is necessary, and to discover the most salutary and complete method in which affairs can be conducted. I laugh at the objection brought against any one, that at some earlier period in his career he urged a policy different from that which he advocates at present. All I ask is that his present policy be calculated to achieve its end, and that he at the present moment be determined to serve his country in her present circumstances.")—In this there is a certain amount of truth: no real statesman will insist on trying to carry into practice impracticable theories even when he considers them sound; and he ought not to shrink from changing his course, when he is convinced by experience and reflection that he cannot pursue it to the national advantage. But there is expressed in the words just quoted, something more,—viz. the most absolute, the

bargain with the Irish members, to induce them to vote for his budget. Greville writes *à propos* of this: "He never seems to have given a thought to any consideration of political morality, honesty or truth." (3rd Series, i. p. 34)

⁹ Even his friend Tomline said, "He dislikes and despises Derby, and has a great contempt for his party." Baring asked Greville, in 1853, whether he (Disraeli) could not have a place in the Coalition Ministry; and to the question, "Why, will you give him to us?" answered, "Oh yes, you shall have him with pleasure." (i. p. 43.)

most cynical contempt for all political *principle*; and in them are only too evident the causes of his frequent shiftings of opinion. We have here in fact the unintentional, naïve confession that the first business of a statesman is, not to be a good, but a *popular* ruler; that he is not merely to deal tenderly with national prejudices and passions, but, by all means, to *use* them, and thus to maintain his position at the helm of affairs. "We must," he writes in one place, "mingle with the crowd; we must shape our policy according to their weaknesses, we must sympathize with their sorrows—sorrows which we do not feel,—and we must participate in the joy of fools." In such views of things originated the contradictions and the Janus-like build of the character of this man, who often appeared to his contemporaries a sort of modern sphinx; they account, too, for the amalgamation in him of Toryism and Radicalism, of High-Churchism, Jewish traditions and free-thinking, mysticism and cunning. The bond which united these opposites consisted in this, that they were all means to an end,—and that end—the gratification of his thirst for power.

What most distinguishes his remarkable career, is the confirmation it offers of the truth of the saying, "*Le génie, c'est l'art de persévérer.*" When he started on his course, he had everything against him; with indomitable tenacity he overcame all obstacles; from every defeat he derived new power, till at last he found himself in undisputed possession of the highest position of authority. In this respect he resembles his contemporary, Napoleon III. Both worked themselves up from obscurity to the first place in their country, by allowing no failure to deter them from the endeavour to attain the object they had set before them. Both in their inner selves stood apart, as, in a manner, aliens in their own country; and at one time both passed, to the world at large, as crack-brained adventurers. Both based their authority on the igao-

rance, passions, and prejudices of the masses, in order to establish, on the foundation of democracy, their own personal sway. Both succeeded in attaining their object. They differed only in the method of their exit. "At last," we read in *Sybil*, "the end was gained, as always happens when men are resolute and calm,"—and, we may add, perfectly unscrupulous.

IV.

IN remarkable contrast to Disraeli, who began as outcast and Radical, and ultimately became leader of the Tories, stands his rival Gladstone, who entered Parliament as a stern Conservative, and ends as an associate of Radicals and Parnellites.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, the son of a prosperous merchant of Liverpool, was born on the 23rd of December, 1809. From his father he inherited not only the gifts of fortune, but a valuable connection with the heads of the Tory party,—and also Conservative and High Church principles. To these he owed his election, at three and twenty, for a pocket borough of the Duke of Newcastle.

Not long afterwards, Macaulay could describe him, in his celebrated article on Gladstone's book, *The State in its Relations with the Church*, as "a young man of unblemished character, and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories, who follow, reluctantly and mutinously, a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor." He represented, in fact, the extreme views of his party on ecclesiastical and educational questions. He also represented the interests of the planters at the time the slaves received their freedom. He showed such decided talents in debate that Peel, when he came into power in 1834,

made him a Junior Lord of the Treasury. That Ministry lasted only a short time; but when Peel, in 1841, took Melbourne's place, and initiated his great Customs reforms, Gladstone gave him most effectual support. He diminished the number of dutiable articles from 1200 to 450; he assisted at the introduction of the income-tax, and showed, in mastering the most complicated questions in economics, an ability which marked him out as the coming Chancellor of the Exchequer. He resigned, because he could not consent to the increase of the State grants to the schools of Dissenting bodies; but he returned to office as Colonial Secretary when Peel proposed the abolition of the Corn Laws. He completed the breach with the old Protectionist system, by helping, in 1849, to bring about the abolition of the Navigation Acts. His brilliant speech on Disraeli's budget, which greatly contributed to turn Disraeli out of office, placed him in the first rank of Parliamentary speakers; and, in 1853, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the so-called "Ministry of all the Talents," Lord Aberdeen being Premier.

As Chancellor, he was the creator of the present system of tariffs, under which there are only some twenty dutiable articles. At the same time, a complete change took place in his views on religious policy,—for he supported the emancipation of the Jews, and spoke against Russell's Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. He also showed himself, in a series of letters which he wrote on Neapolitan misrule, a warm friend of the Italian cause; and, later on, he was an enthusiastic admirer of Garibaldi. When the Crimean War was approaching, he offered determined opposition to the energetic policy adopted by Palmerston against Russia, and indeed contributed by his action to make the breach inevitable. In 1855 he resigned with Lord Aberdeen when Palmerston refused to oppose the motion to inquire by a Commission into the state of the army, which

in October, 1853, the latter had pronounced to be better than ever prepared for war. Gladstone then attacked the war, which he had himself helped to bring about, as "immoral, inhuman, and unchristian;" and declared that if it were continued, men would begin to call in question the justice of Him in whose hand lies the fate of armies. He remained in the background as long as Palmerston—who highly esteemed his financial talent, but loved him little, as being politically unreliable,—remained at the head of affairs. In 1859, however, after the fall of Lord Derby, he entered Palmerston's Cabinet once more as Chancellor of the Exchequer. While in this office, he contributed to bring about the commercial treaty of January, 1866, with France; and he established the Post Office Savings Banks. Later on, he attacked Palmerston very effectively on the Chinese war, as he had already done in 1850 on the *Pacifico* question,—denouncing the "*civis Romanus sum*" principle as a pagan thing, totally at variance with the international law of modern times,—the Romans belonging to a privileged class and a conquering nation. He was appointed by Russell to negotiate the surrender of the Ionian Islands to Greece. After Palmerston's death, he became, as leader of the House of Commons, the most important member of Russell's Ministry. In 1866, through the secession of the Conservative Whigs,—the so-called Adullamites,—he once more suffered shipwreck in the cause of electoral reform. As leader of the Opposition to the Derby Ministry, he had now to face his rival, Disraeli. The latter, with the help of the Radicals, carried his measure for electoral reform. Gladstone, however, succeeded in passing his Resolutions for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. He thus reunited his party, and at the elections of December, 1868, won a complete victory.

He now became the head of the new Ministry.

As Premier, he carried Irish Disestablishment, and the Irish Land Bill,—by which the tenant farmer obtained security in his holding, and compensation for improvements. In 1871 he abolished purchase in the army; in 1872 he introduced the ballot in Parliamentary elections. But he was less fortunate in his foreign policy. Unlike most of his political friends, he had, during the American Civil War, declared himself in favour of the South, and, in 1862, had said that Jefferson Davis, who had already created an army and a government, was about to make the Southern States into an independent nation. “We can,” he said in a speech (7th of October, 1862), “with certainty foretell the success of the Southern States, in so far as separation from the North is concerned. I can only believe that the event is as certain as any future event can be.” Later on, he was compelled to admit that this was an error; and, when Premier, to agree to the demand of the United States for an indemnity for the damage done by Southern cruisers built in English ports. This he did in very unstatesmanlike fashion: a mixed Commission met at Washington, and concluded an agreement for the establishment of a Court of Arbitration; but this was so composed that England’s condemnation was a foregone conclusion; and indeed, in the end, she was sentenced to pay 3,000,000*l.* sterling. Gladstone looked on passively during the Franco-German war, which England, by a timely intervention at Paris, could probably have prevented. He wrote an essay in the *Edinburgh Review*, in which he gloried in the situation of England—“set in the silver sea,”—and took occasion to speak in offensive terms of King William of Prussia. About the same time he brought on England a great humiliation. Russia, availing herself of favourable circumstances, renounced her obligations in regard to the neutralization of the Black Sea, and carried her point in the London

Conference of 1871. So, too, he allowed Russia,—in contradiction of her solemn assurances given a short time before,—to annex (1873) a portion of Khiva, and to bring the remainder of the khanate under her dominion. These discomfitures had weakened the Government considerably; it was, in 1873, beaten on the Irish University Bill; and when Gladstone, in January, 1874, dissolved Parliament, and sought, by promising the abolition of the income-tax, to win back the popularity he had lost, he was beaten in the elections by forty-six votes. This defeat was well merited, on account of both his foreign and his finance policy, which latter had been hitherto his strong point.—He had reformed the customs' tariffs, had abolished the paper duty, had done away with the unjust immunity of landed property from succession duty, and had been active in establishing the income-tax, which has proved the most profitable and equitable tax in the English financial system. But *now* he called this tax an inquisitorial and demoralizing impost, adding that it carried with it the danger of being abused by revolutionary financiers for the confiscation of property; and pointed out the greediness of ignorance—all with the view of rewarding the electors for keeping him in office. Rothschild publicly declared that the carrying out of Gladstone's design must throw the finances into hopeless confusion; and the sound sense of the country agreed with him.

A year afterwards he retired from the leadership of the Liberal party, and now busied himself with great zeal in ecclesiastical questions. He wrote on Ritualism, for which he always showed a certain weakness,—and against the Infallibility, which he violently attacked in his pamphlet entitled *Vaticanism*, and other writings. The Eastern Question recalled him to politics. In 1853, on the eve of the Crimean War, he had, at Manchester, declared, in regard to Russia and Turkey, that it would be necessary to regulate the

balance of power in Europe, if, through aggrandizement consequent on the fall of the Ottoman Power, any of the great empires were likely to become dangerous to the peace of the world. Moreover, it was the duty of England to prevent such aggrandizement at any cost. Now he not only complained in passionate speech and writing of the atrocities committed by the Turks in Bulgaria, but he demanded that the "unspeakable" nation should clear out, "bag and baggage," from the country it had made desolate. Against the Government, whose foreign policy was in the weak hands of Lord Derby, he hurled the charge of violating the Constitution, when it brought Indian troops to Malta; and he described the treaty with the Porte of June, 1878, by which Cyprus was placed under English administration, as "an insane covenant." However, these attacks in Parliament were as ineffectual as his attack on the Egyptian policy of the Government, on the Afghan War and the "scientific frontier" of India, which Lord Beaconsfield had declared to be the object of that war. He therefore determined to open, in the autumn of 1879, a great electoral campaign in Scotland, in order to win the County of Midlothian. The intellectual and oratorical exertions which he now made were, for a man of seventy, extraordinary: in fourteen days he spoke, in a series of meetings, with unabated force, to not less than 75,000 persons in all. Of course, the value of what he said is a very different thing. His speeches were pervaded with bitter hatred against Beaconsfield, whom he called an alien "without one drop of English blood in his veins." On the other hand, they promised all sorts of blessings, provided only the Liberal party obtained a majority. As regarded foreign affairs, he did not observe even the prescribed, external forms of courtesy, in speaking of Austria and Turkey. He attacked both Powers with unmeasured vituperation; maintained

that you could not lay your finger on that spot on the map in which Austria had ever done anything good,—and insisted that she had been the implacable enemy of freedom in every country in Europe. He claimed the Balkan peninsula for the independent Slaves, and hurled at Austria his menacing order—"Hands off!"

Strange to say, this agitation succeeded. Parliament was dissolved in March, 1880; and, contrary to all expectations, the elections gave the Liberals a greater majority than the Conservatives had in 1874. Lord Beaconsfield resigned; and Lord Hartington, having declined to form a new Ministry, Gladstone once more came to the front. He could not be left out in the cold; for, as an independent member, he had it in his power, at any moment, to thwart the policy of the Government; and of course a man of his eminence would no longer submit to discharge the duties of minister of a department. The Queen had, therefore, no alternative but to place him at the head of affairs. Thus, for the second time, he became Premier, and remained in office till June 8th, 1885.

V.

If we cast our thoughts back to the five years during which Gladstone ruled with all but absolute power, we can hardly assert that it was a prosperous time for England.

Whigs and Radicals had, Lord Hartington admitted, united in 1880, to sink differences of opinion for the time being, in order to turn out the Tories. Gladstone was the head of this combination; but the party had to accept him, Midlothian programme and all,—and this soon enabled the Radical and the Irish party to take him in tow; the opposition of the Whigs only served to act as a check on the power of the Ministry,

and to involve it in inconsistencies. This was soon shown in connection with the Irish question.

In the removal of Irish grievances, Gladstone had never, till 1868, shown the smallest interest. He had never given the slightest support to the endeavours of Lord Hartington, when the latter was Irish Secretary, to improve the Irish administration,—so his Lordship declared at a later time. He had spoken in favour of maintaining the Irish Establishment. So late, indeed, as 1865 he had declined to entertain the question of its abolition, on the ground that it was not within the domain of “practical politics,”—that is to say (as he explained the matter in 1879), the politics to be discussed at the approaching elections. So far as he was concerned,—he said in a letter of June 5th of the same year (1865),—he hardly thought he would ever be called upon to take part in any measure of disestablishment. But in 1868 he found that the wind was gradually setting in that direction; he then called the Irish Church a branch of a Upas tree, and introduced his Resolutions for its disestablishment; these, when Premier, he carried through. His hope that by this measure, by his Land Bill, and by his reform of University education, Ireland would be reconciled,—was not fulfilled. On the contrary, the agitation, fed by the American Fenians, was carried farther than ever; there was, moreover, a series of bad harvests, and with these prosperity departed. But, far from trying whether the road he had entered upon was the right one, Gladstone pledged himself in Midlothian to introduce new reforms—reforms which he expressly rejected in 1870. At that time he had declared himself opposed to any judicial lowering of rents, as tending to promote indolence, the disowning of debts, general demoralization,—and as calculated to throw everything into confusion. Ireland, he insisted, had now nothing further to demand. But in 1880, when he once more attained to power—really through the

Irish vote—he devised and (1881) carried his Second Land Bill, whereby all rents, save those paid for leaseholds, and for grazing farms of over 50*l.* valuation, were to be fixed by a special tribunal, for fifteen years.¹ Now, what Parnell and his party wanted was,—not fixity of tenure, but the virtual abolition of rents,—their object being to get rid of the landlords. Upon this, Gladstone described Parnell and his associates as “marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire.” The law of 1881 was a very serious step in the direction of socialism; for if the tenant-farmer can demand that a fair rent be fixed, then the agricultural labourer, who has no land, can with equal justice demand a fair wage; and what is right for the labourer in the country is right for the artisan in the town. The lowering of rents grievously injured the land-owners, and yet did not satisfy the tenants: 40 per cent. of the decisions of the new Land courts were appealed against. The people now began to refuse payment of rent; moreover, the number of agrarian crimes increased; and Gladstone was forced to introduce the Crimes Act, to enable him to cope with fearful criminal excesses in Ireland. This measure, on the absolute necessity for which both the English parties were agreed, did not for weeks come to the vote. This was due to the obstruction, by means of long and unnecessary speeches, motions of adjournments, &c., organized by the Irish members. At last the parliamentary usage

¹ The provisions of the Act of 1881 do not apply to the following:—(1) Any holding which is not agricultural or pastoral in its character; (2) Demeasne land; (3) Any holding let wholly or mainly for the purpose of pasture, and valued at over 50*l.*, or on which the tenant does not reside; (4) Labourers' holdings; (5) Any letting in “conacre;” (6) Any holding let for temporary convenience; (7); Any cottage allotment not exceeding half an acre; (8) “Glebe” lands. See Cherry and Wakely: *The Irish Land Law and Land Purchase Acts, 1881, 1885, and 1887*, pp. 126, 127.—Tr.

of centuries which protected the freedom of minorities, had to be thrown to the winds, and the *clôture* was introduced.

Gladstone's efforts to induce the Curia—which he had so bitterly attacked—to declare itself expressly as opposed to the Irish agitation, were not very successful; and when at last Leo XIII. was unable any longer to avoid censuring the illegal acts of the Nationalist party, clergy and people answered him with scarcely veiled defiance. But negotiations were continually going on with Parnell and his friends; and when Parnell was in prison, the celebrated Kilmainham Treaty was concluded with him. The Premier had now made the Irish question well-nigh insoluble.

Not less mischievous has the Gladstone *régime* shown itself to be in the region of foreign politics. At the Berlin Conference an intimate understanding had been arrived at among the leading statesmen of Germany, Austria and England. Prince Bismarck had come into close relations with Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury; and these latter were brought for the first time into personal contact with Count Andrassy and Baron Haymerle. This understanding by no means contemplated opposition to France—which, indeed, in all essential points, was in accord with the three Powers—but to Russia, which saw herself forced to make considerable concessions. The announcement of the Austro-German alliance, with which the German Chancellor answered the unconcealed hostility of Russia, was hailed by Lord Salisbury as “good tidings of great joy.”

The unexpected result of the English elections produced a painful impression at Berlin and Vienna, and was regarded with great satisfaction at St. Petersburg and Rome. Of course Gladstone, to make diplomatic relations possible, had to submit to a humiliating withdrawal of his insulting language towards Austria; but his violent attacks on the policy of his hated

predecessor left no room for doubt that he would adopt a diametrically opposite course. The Porte he injured and humiliated as much as he could: he caused the demonstration in favour of Montenegro; he planned the blockade of Smyrna; he intrigued against the union of the Austrian railways; he commissioned Goschen, in despatching him to Constantinople, to hold to the Sultan language such that the latter refused to listen to it; he violently set aside the rights of the Porte in Egypt, and caused England's influence at the Golden Horn to fall to zero.

He succeeded in alienating Germany and Austria; but this stroke of policy brought him only discomfiture,—whilst the alliance with France and the good understanding with Russia, which were to form the basis of his policy, were by no means realized. Ferry, on the contrary, availed himself of the existing state of affairs to extort new concessions, to trample recklessly on England's interests in Eastern Asia and in Madagascar, and to offer to England slights which Palmerston would not have suffered to pass with impunity. Gladstone treated such things as only "slight misunderstandings." Russia again hastened to make hay while the Gladstonian sun shone; he had already extolled, in the *Nineteenth Century*, her civilizing mission in Asia, maintaining that the charge brought so often against her, of pressing through the deserts in order to attack India, was "a set of old wives' fables." He even went the length of thinking that England could with more equanimity than other nations view a Russian occupation of Constantinople! Nothing could be more welcome at St. Petersburg than the evacuation of Kandahar and the abandonment of the railway to Quetta—acts which in the eyes of the Asiatics seemed proofs of England's weakness. M. de Giers fed Lord Granville with assurances that Russia entertained no designs against Merv. Meantime the Russians subdued the Achal-Turkomans; the construction of the

Trans-Caspian railway proceeded rapidly; and on February 14th, 1884, the official organ of the Russian Government astonished the world with the announcement that the Khans and elders of Merv had voluntarily submitted to the Czar. The Russian ambassador in London of course gave assurances that the event had taken his Government quite by surprise; and that, had it been able, it would have prevented this step, in order to avoid the appearance of having taken advantage of England's embarrassments in the Soudan! Russian diplomacy knows what it may venture to offer to its opponents.

But not even yet was the cup of humiliation drunk to the dregs: the Russians advanced further still; and Lord Granville was able to oppose their advance by nothing more effectual than a proposal for a joint Commission to settle the Afghan boundary. Russia allowed the English Commission to wait for months, and then, under its very eyes, inflicted a defeat on the Afghans. This seemed, even to Gladstone, too much. He declared that England could not suffer such an attack to be made on her allies,—asked Parliament for a vote of credit of 11,000,000*l.*, and began with feverish haste to make warlike preparations,—to give way, at last, all along the line, and to leave Penjdeh, the place in dispute, in Russian hands. What he had formerly ridiculed as an old wife's fable, had now become a fact. Thanks to his policy, the troops of the Czar stood within a few days' march of Herat; and the time seemed actually to have come, which a Russian statesman looked forward to, when a few years before he said to Lord Napier: "Resistance, my lord, is a word that has no longer a place in the political vocabulary of England."³

Gladstone had violently opposed the annexation of the Transvaal. When he became minister, he wished to put down the insurrection which had broken out there, and to restore the authority of the Queen; but after

the decisive defeat sustained by the English at Majuba Hill, he telegraphed to the Governor of the Cape, "We have done wrong to the Boers : make peace!"—a decision which called forth the warmest indignation in the colony.—But the most melancholy scenes of his policy have been enacted in Egypt. In August, 1877, he had expressed himself in the strongest terms (*Nineteenth Century* : "Aggression in Egypt,") against intervention on the Nile,—had pronounced the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by Disraeli to be an ill-conceived and useless measure, and maintained that England's interest in the Canal was of the smallest. But when Arabi Pasha broke out in rebellion, the excitement in the country rose to such a pitch, that the Premier was forced into an armed intervention. What a chain of blunders connects itself with that intervention! Alexandria was laid in ashes ; and when it was in ashes, there were no troops to land, to preserve order. The victory of Tel-el-Kebir was not turned to account. Lord Dufferin's plans for the reorganization of the Government reposed in the pigeon-holes of Downing Street. On the other hand, everything was done to cripple the authority of the Khedive. The administration fell into complete chaos ; commercial and other intercourse came to a standstill ; crimes against life and property increased to a terrible extent ; the finances, which, after the passing of the law of liquidation, were well arranged, threatened a deficit of 8,000,000*l.* sterling,—and this sum could be made up only by aid from without. The expedition of Hicks Pasha was allowed to go to certain annihilation. Gladstone arbitrarily abandoned the Soudan, which from 1878 had been an integral portion of Egypt. He declared the hordes of the Mahdi to be men "rightly struggling to be free," yet caused 30,000 of them to be uselessly slaughtered ; and he abandoned the faithful occupants of the garrisons to certain destruction. He sent Gordon to

Khartoum, but left him for months without aid, and determined to send it only when it was too late. After Khartoum fell and Gordon was murdered, the the object of the campaign, it seemed, was the annihilation of the power of the Mahdi. A few months after, the whole enterprise was abandoned,—an enterprise on which millions had been squandered, and for which thousands of human lives were sacrificed. In the end Gladstone was able to escape most pressing financial embarrassments only by a very bold stroke : in his speech of April 27th, 1885, he took great credit for the warlike preparations against Russia, and lumped the Soudan affair with the war in Afghanistan,—thus obtaining means to pay the expenses of his Egyptian *fiasco*. The financial difficulty compelled him to have recourse to the other Powers ; and in order to gain over France, he promised to withdraw from Egypt within a given time. But the Conference of the summer of 1885 was abruptly broken off. The other Powers protested against the attempted violation of the law of liquidation ; and England had ultimately to arrange with them a Finance Convention, whereby the right was formally conceded to them of having a voice in Egyptian affairs. The agreement with Lesseps in regard to the Suez Canal had, in the face of the opposition of the Chambers of Commerce, to be abandoned,—as also, on the protest of France and Germany,—the Congo Treaty with Portugal. Too late Gladstone perceived that, ever since 1871, the centre of gravity of European politics has been situated at Berlin ; and he sent Lord Rosebery thither to call in the help of the Chancellor—the man whom Gladstone himself, Granville and Derby had systematically sought to alienate.

In October, 1884, Gladstone made a speech, in which he said,—I have seen the capabilities, the riches, and the might of this country develop beyond all expectation, almost beyond imagination. If you

ever hear desponding people speak of actual or possible decay of the British Empire, do not believe such dreams. Its power is increasing, and will, according to all human foresight, continue to increase. If the power of other European countries has risen, so has that of England,—and in a greater degree. The day when you must begin to fear has not yet come, and will not come so very soon. If you carefully consider the present position of affairs, you will admit that you need fear no other Power, and no other nation of the world.

These are brave words ; but they remind one too much of boys who whistle in the dark to keep up their courage. In spite of all Gladstone's assurances, the net result of his foreign policy was, that England, after a series of severe defeats, stood isolated in the world, and that her power was shaken to its foundations. Besides, the opposing elements, already referred to, within the Ministry, naturally had their effect on the policy ultimately adopted. If the Whigs, under pressure of public opinion, carried their point in regard to any measure, the Radicals prevented the natural results of the measure. Thus the policy of the Government was one chain of contradictions. Then, again, the defeats mentioned above were the real causes of electoral reform. The Cabinet felt that, notwithstanding all the dust raised by the Radical caucus, it was done for, if it faced the existing electorate. That was the reason why, in its conflict with the Upper House, it made such a determined resistance against even the suggestion of dissolution. New electoral bodies had got to be created, in which the incoming voters who owed their franchise to the Ministry, could outvote the former electors. In fact, the merit of having made the franchise democratic was to cover the multitude of ill-successes in the Ministerial policy. The extension of household suffrage to the counties was, as

respects both parties, on the cards before the elections, but it was not till 1885 that Gladstone introduced his Bill. That Bill was, as Mr. Childers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, admitted, the most momentous on which any Parliament has had to decide since 1688, for it increased the actual electorate of three millions, by a million and a half. Gladstone had once declared that no Parliament would attempt to give the working classes the majority in the constituencies, —yet this is exactly what was now done. The franchise was conferred on the agricultural labourers, before they had acquired, in local affairs, the smallest experience of the responsibility attaching to the exercise of political rights, and without having manifested any particular desire to exercise this privilege. If the minority—the propertied classes—was to retain any influence, it could only be by an equitable re-distribution of seats, which Mr. Bright had before declared to be of the essence of every future Reform Bill. Such a measure would have to be carried through concurrently with the Bill for the extension of the franchise. But Gladstone wished to take the measures separately, for no reason in the world but to win over the Irish members, to whom he had given a pledge that their number should in no case be diminished. English boroughs were to be deprived of the franchise, in order to render the loyal population of Ireland politically dead, and to increase the strength of the Irish faction. This little arrangement came to grief through the opposition of the Upper House, —an opposition cleverly led by Lord Salisbury. In spite of all the noisy agitation and bluster raised against the House of Lords, Gladstone was forced to yield, and to allow both measures to become law at the same time.

It was notorious that the Cabinet held on simply because nobody wanted to enter upon the fatal heritage it had to leave behind it, and also because the

independent Whigs, such as Goschen, Forster, the Duke of Argyll, and Lord Lansdowne, did not wish to let the Tories come into power. The difference of opinion within the Ministry declared itself when some decision had to be arrived at in regard to the renewal of the Irish Crimes Act. Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Chamberlain would not hear of renewal; while Lord Spencer, Viceroy of Ireland,—for whom no successor could be found,—declared that without the renewal of the Act, he would not remain in office a single hour. In order not to have to admit the total break-up of the Ministry, Gladstone, on the 8th of June, allowed himself to be beaten on one of the items of his budget, which he quite suddenly made a question of life or death for the Cabinet. That this was the case, in spite of all asseverations to the contrary, was clearly shown in the speeches, made out of doors by Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Chamberlain immediately after. The Government courted defeat,—in fact “rode for a fall,” because in its embarrassments it was at its wits’ end; and the Tories were bound to liquidate its bankruptcy.

In the elections which followed, Gladstone’s course of action can be described only by saying that he tried to get a majority. Notwithstanding all that he had already conceded to the Irish party, Parnell declared against him, and ordered his followers to vote against the Liberals. Gladstone replied by calling on the country to give him a majority against the united Conservatives and Parnellites. But it did not so fall out; the Irish vote now, as formerly, turned the scale. Salisbury declared in the speech from the throne that he meant to restore law and order in Ireland; whereupon the Liberals united with the Irish party to turn him out; and Gladstone again became Premier. But what now happened was unprecedented. The man who cried out for a majority against Parnell, passed over to him with flying

{ colours, and accepted Home Rule, with an Irish Parliament and Executive—the very thing which he had hitherto denounced in the strongest terms;—and he proposed to buy out the Irish landowners. This was too much for many who had, up to this time, blindly followed him. Lord Hartington, with the Moderate Whigs, Chamberlain and Bright and their friends,—separated from him, and the Home Rule Bill fell dead. Gladstone dissolved, but the result was that his following of 333 decreased to 190, and he had to resign. Since that time he has incessantly thwarted the Salisbury Ministry in its endeavours to restore order in Ireland. He has attacked the Union,—which formerly he declared to be one of the few beneficent measures of Pitt's legislation,—as a piece of knavery and corruption,—he has insisted that Ireland's being under foreign (i.e. *English*) dominion is the root of the whole evil; and he has tried to rouse Scotland and Wales against England,—though his predilection for those countries is of very recent date. He has maintained that with him are the "masses," against him the "classes," i.e. the higher ranks of society; he has opposed to the uttermost the Crimes Bill, although in 1881 he passed a similar measure, and suppressed the Land League as an unlawful and criminal organization. At that time he said the question, was whether Ireland was to be governed by laws made by a free and legally elected Parliament, or by laws which nobody knew, which were written nowhere save in the brain of a few individuals, and were carried out by an illegal, arbitrary and self-constituted combination. It was a question between law and chaos. *Now*, when the situation is exactly the same, he charges the Government with intolerable tyranny, because it has obtained powers to proclaim the National League,—approves the systematic refusal to pay rent in obedience to the Plan of Campaign, and suffers himself to be acclaimed as

“our venerable leader,” by the very men whom he formerly described as “steeped in crime.” His hope now is, to bring about a general election; but should he succeed, his party will, to all appearance, come out of that ordeal much weaker even than it now is.

VI.

It is manifest that a man who has played so conspicuous a part in the current history of England, must be possessed of gifts of the first order. These consist in the power of mastering economic, and, especially, financial questions,—in proficiency in the art of parliamentary tactics,—and in eloquence. As regards the first-mentioned quality, Gladstone has, through the reforms already referred to, and through his budgets, won lasting renown. In tactics he is a master. No one knows so well as he how to turn to account the mistakes of opponents,—how to conceal his own,—how to win by “rushing” his enemy. His eloquence shows, as its prominent quality, the acuteness of intelligent, methodical thought, and a readiness which, united with the most complete mastery of the matter, seems to require no preparation. He is, beyond all cavil, the first speaker of his time on subjects connected with public *business*, and is unsurpassed in power of luminous presentation of complicated economic questions. Relying on a memory that never fails, he knows how to impart life to the driest array of figures, to group them in attractive forms, and to expound them so that his hearers may have them completely in their grasp. Nor is he less able in mastering the most involved question of law.²—His imagination is

² In 1853 Greville writes on his budget-speech: “He spoke for five hours, and by universal consent it was one of the grandest displays and most able financial statements that ever was heard in the House; a great scheme, boldly, skilfully and

short-winded, dry, and apt to lose itself in speculation ; his pathos is without warmth ; his diction lacks charm—in spite of his copious command of language, his clear periods, and the inexhaustible staying power of his voice. The most unfavourable side of him as a speaker is seen when he begins to argue. No Escobar ever understood so well as he how to use language against the usage of language,—to involve his thoughts in cloud, to explain away inconvenient facts, to leave for himself a back-door open for escape, and to father upon his opponents assertions which they would nowise acknowledge. He involves the truth so hopelessly that it is impossible to disentangle it. When attacked on account of the Kilmainham treaty, he denied that the smallest communication had ever passed between the Government and Parnell. The latter had, it seemed, asked for nothing, and had got nothing, nor the Government either. Yet it was proved in the House of Commons that Mr. O'Shea had been employed as a go-between by the two parties ; and on the 15th of May, 1882, a letter was read to the House, in which Parnell pledged himself, certain conditions being granted, to support the Liberal party.—He denied that England was engaged in a war in Egypt : she was only carrying on certain "military operations." On the 13th of March, 1885, he affirmed that an agreement had been come to with Russia, in virtue of which her troops on the Afghan frontier were not to advance farther ; he was afterwards compelled to admit that this promise on the part of Russia was only made *conditionally*. He denied that Sir Peter Lumsden was "recalled ;" he had only been requested "to

honestly devised, and the execution of it absolute perfection." (i. p. 39.) In 1860, speaking of Gladstone's defence of the commercial treaty with France, which was very unpopular, he says, "It was a magnificent display, not to be surpassed in ability of execution, and he led the House completely with him." (ii. p. 291.)

repair to the metropolis." He emphatically contradicted the statement that Gordon was besieged in Khartoum: but some of the enemy's troops were in the neighbourhood—and these, to a greater or less extent, formed a connected chain round the town. Gordon was, in fact, not "surrounded"—he was only "hemmed in." Boycotting in Ireland he has called "exclusive dealing," although it is manifest that it does not bear the slightest resemblance to exclusive dealing;—the essence of boycotting being,—not the abstention from trading with certain people, but the forcible prevention of others from doing so. According to the whole bent of his mind, Gladstone is a political rationalist: there is not a particle of the idealist in him. As in his youth he spoke in favour of the West Indian slave-owners, and in riper years of the slave-owners of America,—so he voted against the Ten Hours' Bill, and supported none of the philanthropic factory-laws of Lord Shaftesbury, designed to benefit the working-classes. Even his high-church, ritualistic theology, which, as Principal Tulloch said, he always drags after him in State affairs,—is saturated with scholasticism. He is the first *doctrinaire* Premier of England. Although he did not, like Guizot, pass from a professor's chair to the management of public business, and although he is, by environment, a parliamentarian, brought up under the traditions of party-government,—yet, in all his remarkable transformations, the original ingrained *doctrinaire* quality in him has been developing. The organic principles of the English Constitution, as they have grown by legal enactment all through English history, are to him things of no moment. He, who in his earliest speeches defended the small boroughs,—who, even so late as 1857, and notwithstanding his opposition to Palmerston, expressed his admiration of that statesman in resisting electoral reform of a democratic character, and hoped that the independent members of the House

would support him,—he, the same man, has lived to carry the most radical electoral reform measure—a measure which wears the appearance of abstract human rights, and logically leads straight to universal suffrage.³ He, the pupil of the Manchester School, has introduced State socialism into Ireland. He, who owed everything to Parliamentarism—to the constitution, traditions, influence of Parliament, and who, in an article in the *Quarterly Review*, loudly lamented its decline, he—the same man—has done everything in his power to undermine the healthiness of Parliamentary life. So far as the mere form goes, the power of Parliament is not lessened; but Parliament no longer knows how to exercise its power; it grows under our eyes, poorer and poorer in talent every day; and its democratic composition makes Parliamentary Government well-nigh impossible.

Only in one particular has Gladstone not changed: he is still the narrow-minded Englishman; beyond the circle of view open to such a person, he has never grown. Nay, as years have gone by, he has all the more exclusively and doggedly confined himself to it. All foreign countries are, for him, merely markets,—esteemed according as they can receive and dispose of English goods. All the strivings and all the fermentings in the modern life of peoples outside England, are to him simply unintelligible. Germany, in particular, he has always regarded with unconcealed dislike. Against the reproach that he has no feeling for national greatness, he has striven to defend himself by saying that in 1863 he had agreed with France to address to the German Powers an ultimatum, in order to protect Denmark from their machinations. (*Nineteenth Century*, September, 1878.) Bismarck, he said in the *Fortnightly Review*, had played with the honour of England, in order to

³ He has lately gone farther in the same direction, and spoken in favour of the principle of "one man, one vote."

make her his cat's-paw; and when the Chancellor approved of his Egyptian enterprise, his Colonial Minister, Lord Derby, said that a Protectorate over Egypt was recommended by politicians who desired to separate England and France; and that it would be a veritable triumph to the absolutist and reactionary party in Europe, if the two freest nations "could be set together by the ears." Gladstone's Ministry opposed German colonization in a most unfriendly manner,—to beat ultimately an undignified retreat. Even the Colonies are to Gladstone objects of comparative indifference. For their closer connection with the Mother Country he has no feeling; and he has constantly neglected their interests. In India, through the agency of Lord Ripon and his Ilbert Bill, a very dangerous agitation has been called into existence. War he hates of all things,—because it spoils trade and the balancing of his budget; but the blood which he shed in Egypt like water, does not seem to weigh upon his conscience. On the evening when the news of Gordon's death sent a thrill of horror through the country, he could go to the theatre and enjoy a comedy. From this essential narrowness of sympathy arises his incapacity in foreign affairs, whereby he has so vitally injured the respect and influence of England. Every one of his ministries is distinguished by a series of defeats in foreign policy,—insomuch that Bismarck is credited with saying: "If I had brought so much mischief on my country as Gladstone has on his, I should have shot myself long ago."⁴ Whatever may have been the faults of Beaconsfield and his party, they have—out of office—in every great crisis in foreign affairs, upheld the cause of their country; Gladstone, on the other hand, has used such crises only as affording a basis for passionate attacks, when opponents were in office. As respects his change of opinion, what was said of Disraeli

⁴ Theodore Bunsen, *Nineteenth Century*, Sept., 1887.

is true of him : nobody will reproach *him* with having followed Peel and deserted the Tories. For a long time he entertained Conservative views. In 1857 he defended the Conservative party against the charge of placing obstacles in the way of Reform, and ascribed to it the merit of having upheld the Constitution and maintained the rights of the several orders of society. At that time, and indeed before that time—in 1855, Lord Derby thought of inviting him to join his Ministry ; and he appeared nowise disinclined to do so. So late as 1859 he wrote in the *Conservative Quarterly Review*.

Not till 1865 did he begin to entertain advanced Liberal ideas. Change of opinion is in itself no fair ground of reproach ; but it is only too evident that the transformations through which his views have gone from that time onward with such astonishing rapidity, have the closest connection with his personal objects. To become Prime Minister and to remain Prime Minister, was his paramount thought ; to attain that object all means were just. Only when he was so hopelessly aground that not even all *his* art could get him off, did he give up ; and then he left to others the task of settling the inheritance of confusion he had created. In January, 1875, after his great defeat at the polls, he wrote to Lord Granville that after forty-two years of arduous labour, he believed himself entitled to pass the evening of his life in retirement. At the end of 1879 he began his Midlothian campaign ; and from that hour nothing has been heard of his desire for rest. In all his changes of opinion and of policy, his belief in his own righteousness and infallibility, has never received the slightest shock. He has never been wrong. His defeats are always due to the stupidity and the wickedness of his adversaries. Against such persons he does not scruple to use means which, when employed against himself, he cannot loudly enough condemn. An unimpeachable

witness, and a Radical too, Mr. Goldwin Smith, writes (*Times*, July 9th, 1886): "I have seen the American demagogue in his worst shape, when party-passions were inflamed by the fury of the Civil War; but I have never seen so deliberate an attempt made to set class against class, and to poison the heart of society for party-purposes, as has been made by the Prime Minister in the present campaign." Nor does he hesitate to use at the same time means that are inconsistent with each other. While Ministers could not stir out of doors without police protection,—while the Fenians were trying to intimidate by murder and burning, and he was appealing to the "resources of civilization," he—the same man—threatened the Upper House, when it defended the liberty of Parliament against the coercion of an arbitrary Minister.

If we cannot call Beaconsfield a great statesman, we must, on the whole, deny to Gladstone the name of statesman in the higher sense of that term. With the exception of his earlier financial reforms, all his measures have been of a negative or destructive character. His name will always be inseparably connected with the decline of England as a great Power in the world, and with the break-up of the organic basis of her Constitution. Palmerston said of him, "This man will ruin his country." And Carlyle, according to Mr. Froude, expressed himself in yet stronger terms. Gladstone, he said, was one of those fateful figures which the evil genius of England creates, in order to produce irretrievable mischief,—such mischief as none but that evil genius could have accomplished.—The days which are now in course of nature granted to him, will hardly serve to reverse these severe judgments. The sun of his life will not set in calm splendour, now that he has descended to become the associate of Irish conspirators, and employs all his remaining strength in inflaming the worst passions of mankind.

REFORM OF THE HOUSE
OF LORDS.





I.

WHEN people used to say that England was the country in which political wisdom formed a sort of inheritance, what they meant was, in substance, this: that Englishmen never strove to attain theoretical perfection, but were able to bring their institutions into harmony with the necessities and the demands of the changing or, so to speak, fluid elements in the nation. The old tree was not, as in France, cut down, in order that new saplings might be planted: it was pruned and manured, so that it constantly sent forth fresh shoots.¹ England has never known the distinction, existing on the Continent, between Charter rights and rights based on the Common Law. Her Constitutional law is not digested in a single Act consisting of a certain number of Articles. Her Constitution is of a miscellaneous character,—it is a collection of laws and customs, consolidated from time to time by great Acts—Acts to the passing of which the Reform tendency has specially directed itself, from Magna Charta to the latest Reform Bill.² The English Constitution has always

¹ Compare Macaulay's remarks (*History of England*, vol. i. p. 25, 12 Ed., 1856). Burke thought that the bare idea of a new Constitution was enough to fill a true Briton with disgust and horror. He regarded the Constitution as a great property in trust, which Englishmen received from their fathers, and were bound to hand on intact to their posterity.

² "By far the greatest portions of the written or statute laws of England consist of the declaration, the re-assertion, repetition, or re-enactment of some older law or laws, either cus-

been full of theoretical defects ; it contains provisions which, to all appearance, would make government impossible ; but this want of method and of exactitude has not prevented England from becoming a great world-Power ; and notwithstanding all drawbacks, she has, under her institutions, enjoyed more real freedom than any other country in the world.

This hereditary aptitude in political affairs seems in our time to be departing. Since Lord Palmerston's death,—when that personality vanished which had, by its sheer weight, kept back democratic reforms,—the two parties have sought to outbid each other in proposing them,—not because they were necessary, but in order to attain party ends. The object of all education in other departments is to prepare *the pupil* to discharge the duties of his station ; but Disraeli, in introducing his household suffrage for the towns, first hit on the additional idea that the important point was, in Mr. Lowe's phrase—"to educate our *masters* ;" and whilst the "note" of a statesman is—that he leads, Lord Derby wished to learn what "*our employers*" wanted. Therefore, when the Tories by their Reform Bill of 1867 trumped the Liberals' trick, the extension of household suffrage to the counties was only a question of time ; and Gladstone extended it in 1885 with a special eye to his own party objects, namely, by leaving an unfairly large representation to Ireland. Then, again, the last session of Parliament brought to maturity another measure, which, introduced and carried by a Conservative Ministry, is absolutely Radical in character. The Local Government Bill does not mean reform,—it means revolution ; for, by extend-

tomary or written, with additions or modifications. The new building has been raised on the old groundwork : the institutions of one age have always been modelled and formed from those of the preceding, and their lineal descent has never been interrupted or disturbed."—Palgrave, *English Commonwealth*, i. 6.

ing the already enlarged franchise to elections for County Councils, it places English self-government on a totally new basis, and makes it dependent on the will of the masses. But this measure likewise marks a fundamentally new departure in legislation. Hitherto, reformers, whatever might be the value of their proposals, have always asserted that reforms were necessary, and were demanded by public opinion. In urging the present reform measure, even Mr. Ritchie, the father of it, did not assert that the system hitherto in operation was no longer possible on account of the abuses arising from it; nor yet that it did not fulfil its object. The simple fact is, that a method of government, weighed and not found wanting,—against which no valid objection could lie,—is overthrown to satisfy a theory. Self-government, up to the present, has been an aristocratic institution; it has opposed the stream of democratic tendency, which, as Mr. Labouchere thinks, rolls onward its resistless, majestic wave; therefore this self-government must go. It cannot be said that the shoe pinches; but the shoe is not made on proper scientific principles, or by the proper shoemaker,—therefore, away with it! The Government decided on this step, because the Liberal Unionists and the Radicals, on whose support it relies in its Irish policy, demanded it. The Opposition greeted the Bill with loud cheers; the Conservative party, in silent discontent, allowed it to pass, because it dared not oppose its own Ministry. So the startling fact remains, that a Conservative Government has wrought a radical transformation in the entire foundations of the parliamentary edifice. How the measure will work in the region of local self-government remains to be seen; it seems certain that it will call into life on the political arena a host of petty demagogues, and give to the democratic movement a fresh impulse in a field which has hitherto been closed against it,—and all this at a moment when it was

imperatively necessary to *moderate* the movement. In judging of such revolutionary changes, not merely the nature of the changes themselves, but also the time and the circumstances in which they are accomplished, must be taken into consideration. It makes a great difference whether the political atmosphere is calm or stormy, and by what hands and in what spirit the new institutions shall be directed. Everybody knows that the French National Assembly of 1790 committed a fatal error when it introduced universal suffrage—at a moment when the whole air was charged with revolutionary electricity. That Assembly might, perhaps, have put forward its ignorance as an excuse: British politicians, who have become great in the traditions of the past, can hardly plead any such mitigating circumstance.

After Radicalism had scored such a success, it need occasion no surprise, if, in the self-same session, attacks were made on the House of Lords; for, said Mr. Labouchere, the extension of the electoral principle to local government showed that a general movement against all privilege was in progress,—a movement adverse to the principle on which the Upper House rested. He therefore moved a Resolution which declared, in effect, that it was opposed to the true principles of representative government, and injuriously affected its usefulness, that any person should be a member of a house of legislature by right of birth; that therefore it was desirable to put an end to such existing rights. The resolution was supported by 166 members. Even in the House of Lords itself efforts were made towards its reform. Several peers, Lord Dunraven, Lord Rosebery, and others, made proposals with that object; nay, even Lord Salisbury, so far from professing himself disinclined to the idea of change, actually introduced a Reform Bill—necessarily of a less sweeping character. The Bill has not as yet led to any practical result; and therefore this is, perhaps, the time to inquire a

little more nearly into the position of the House, and the propriety of introducing a Reform.

II.

THE importance of the *bi-cameral* or two-chamber arrangement, as a condition of the efficient working of representative institutions, is shown in this, that it runs through all the constitutions of the civilized world, and has held its ground in the face of the fleeting appearances of a single Assembly, such as the Cromwellian Parliament, the French Assemblies of 1791, 1848, 1871, and the Spanish Cortes of 1812. Even the English self-governing Colonies, all of them democratic in constitution, have adopted a first chamber, and nobody thinks of abolishing it. The single legislative chamber, elected by popular suffrage, must, if it have any power at all, become the absolute sovereign power in the State, and for that reason tend to despotism or anarchy. Now, irresponsible power lodged in an Assembly is much more intolerable than irresponsible power lodged in an individual; the Assembly cannot itself govern, but it can paralyze government,—and, at the same time, oppress the people.

The original purpose of so prevalent an institution can only be: to secure the representation of the various interests which go to make up the national life. The Lower House—called by whatever name—Second Chamber, Reichstag, House of Commons,—represents the people in their entirety; the Upper House,—First Chamber, Senate, House of Lords—is intended to unite in itself those elements which, though of great and profound importance to society and to the State,—are yet, in number, comparatively small, and therefore unable to assert themselves through a general election. The more happily these elements, working naturally, are blended in national

and social life, the more efficiently will the Assembly fulfil its purpose. It will constitute a standing barrier against encroachments of the Crown, and also of the popular chamber,—and serve as a court of revision in regard to the decisions of that popular chamber, and an authority protecting minorities from oppression. From the difference in the nature of the functions discharged by the two representative bodies arises the necessity that their composition should rest on different principles. The Popular Chamber is the product of popular election: therefore for the Upper House,—the Senate,—another basis must be found. In Confederations, such as Switzerland, and the United States, a basis is found in the principle of sending up representatives from the individual States; but for homogeneous communities a different plan has been tried. Mere nomination by the Head of the State, as was the case in the first and second French Empire, deprives the Senate of all independence. The limitation of the appointments, again, to certain categories of officials and men of high position, or to persons of a certain income,—as was the case under the monarchy of July, and even now in Italy,—diminishes this dependence, but creates what is, in fact, an Assembly of the higher officials, not—the thing aimed at—an aristocracy of political merit. There are two objections to such an Assembly: the individuals composing it cannot be classified; and among men who have devoted their lives to official duties, very few of political sagacity are, as a rule, to be found. The July peerage led a very insignificant life, and did not even try to prevent the downfall of the dynasty. The Italian Senate has given few proofs of being of any political value. As the independence of the Assembly is the first condition of its usefulness, the aim in other countries has been to base the First Chamber on election, of course,—but according to a plan specifically different from that

employed in the case of elections to the Lower House. The Belgian senators are elected from among the citizens who are forty years of age, and pay 2000 francs in direct taxation. To membership of the first Swedish Chamber is attached, as a condition, possession of landed property of the value of 35,000 crowns, or an income of 4500 crowns. In other states, again, the selection for the First Chamber is made from representatives of the professional classes. In Prussia, the *Grafenverbände* and the *Verbände* of the old and settled proprietors, send representatives to the Upper House. In the French Senate of to-day, 75 members are elected by the National Assembly for life, and 225 for nine years, by specially-constituted elective "colleges" of the Departments and the Colonies. Hence Gambetta called the Assembly "*Le grand conseil des communes de France.*"

All these methods of forming the First Chamber confirm the theory advanced above as to its sphere of duty; but except the Senates of the above-named Confederations, which are based on the federal principle, hardly one of these Assemblies forms an independent element in state life,—an element that has grown, and not been created; and none of them is a hundred years old. England alone possesses, in her House of Lords, such an institution: her House of Lords is at once a pure outcome of her historical development, and the oldest representative assembly in the world.

The Norman feudal state, as established by William the Conqueror, differs from all others in this, that its institutions were not concessions, wrung by vassals from the weakness of a feudal lord,—but that it formed the settled governmental system of a king, powerful in will, and of the greatest wisdom in state affairs. William I., by two measures, prevented in England that splitting up of the State produced by Feudalism on the Continent: he assigned to his vassals their fiefs in various parts of the kingdom in such manner

that the greatest feudal possession could never grow into a territorial principality, nor its possessor exercise sovereign rights; secondly, he compelled all the sub-tenants or mesne lords to swear an oath of fidelity to himself as king. This arrangement, which made it impossible for the tenants holding directly from the Crown, to make themselves independent by means of their vassals, was completed by the statute *Quia Emptores*, passed in the reign of Edward I., whereby, in case of alienation of feudal lands, the new tenant was to be regarded as having received the property, not from the vendor or grantor, but directly from the Lord Paramount,—and under the same conditions as existed in the case of his predecessors.³ The tenants-in-chief, among whom were reckoned the bishops and mitred abbots, formed the *Magnum Concilium*, a State Council founded on the possession of landed property; this Council the king summoned when he required advice on important affairs. At first it depended on the good pleasure of the Crown to decide who was, and who was not, to be summoned; but by the end of the thirteenth century we find it regarded as a settled thing that a baron, whose father had been summoned to the Council and sat in it, had a claim to be likewise summoned. As a result of the law of primogeniture strictly enforced, whereby the eldest son inherited the fief, while the other sons, bearing a family name of their own, fell back among the number of commoners,—the Assembly acquired the distinctly hereditary character; at the same time the representation of an Order, such as we find among the Continental *noblesse*, whose title

³ "By the Statute of *Quia Emptores* (18 Edw. I. c. i.) subinfeudation was forbidden, and every freeman was allowed to aliene his land at pleasure (except by will), to be held not of the alienor, but of the lord of whom the alienor had immediately held. All tenants-in-chief, however, still required a licence from the king before they could aliene, for which, of course, a fine was demanded."—Taswell-Langmead, *English Constitutional History*, 2nd Ed. p. 62.

passes to *all* the sons, was from the outset made impossible. On the other hand, the power of issuing new summonses was unlimited, so that the Aristocracy did not become a closed oligarchy, but recruited itself from time to time by drawing new blood from the people. The consequence was, that, when Simon de Montfort founded the House of Commons, the representative knights of the shire sat in it with those of the cities and boroughs; in England alone the nobility corresponded with the peerage—the Aristocracy. This hereditary character of the Upper House was strengthened when, at the Reformation, the mitred abbots were removed, so that now the six-and-twenty bishops formed the sole non-hereditary element in it: this non-hereditary element increased, to be sure, when, in consequence of the Union with Scotland, an elected committee of sixteen Scottish lords was admitted; and again when, at the legislative Union with Ireland, twenty-eight Irish peers were added. But the insignificant number of the additions in these cases (many of them being also British peers) nowise affected the strictly hereditary character of the Upper House. Nor must it be forgotten that the House of Lords is the highest legal tribunal in the kingdom; and that the peers, as Lord-Lieutenants, usually stand at the head of the county administration, and command the Militia.

In this position the Upper House has maintained itself to the present time. If now the question be asked, Ought it to maintain this position any longer, or ought its composition and its functions to be changed?—it is clearly no answer, when political rationalism says it is absurd that any person should be a member of a legislative body by right of birth. As well might one say of the sovereign, “The King ought to be the best man; or else let the man better than he be King.” But it is absurd for people to solve questions in practical politics by inferences based on political maxims which they represented as of uni-

versal application,—thus avoiding the trouble of proving their validity. In this respect, the English Radicals are true disciples of Rousseau. If a House of Commons existed that realized the ideal of representation, there would, of course, be no need of an Upper House; but since this is not the case,—nay, since the democratic development of the Lower House has brought with it manifest dangers, it is of cardinal importance not to strengthen this tendency by placing the Upper House on a like basis with the Lower, but to maintain some counterpoise to it. The real and only question, therefore, is: Does the House of Lords in its present condition discharge its proper functions efficiently, or would an Assembly, constituted in a different manner, discharge them better? The former query we affirm; the latter we deny.

First, then, what is the position of the House of Lords at the present time, and what purpose does it serve?

In *theory* it is a factor in the Legislature co-ordinate with the House of Commons,—an Estate of the Realm. In *reality*, it is nothing of the kind. Not merely has it only a second voice in financial matters, and, as regards the budget, only the trifling privilege of accepting or rejecting it *en bloc*, without modifying it in any way,—but, above all, it has no power, like the Lower House, to turn out ministries. The most express condemnation of a minister by the Lords,—as for example, the condemnation of Lord Palmerston in the *Pacifico* question, in 1851,—does not compel him to resign. Down to the first Reform Bill, the House did, indeed, exercise indirectly very great power, because the members of it, as individuals, by their influence on the elections to the House of Commons, contributed to a considerable extent in deciding those elections; so that in the Lower House aristocratic influences prevailed. But this is no longer the case. The usage has at length

been established by prescription, that when the Lower House has by a decisive majority finally determined to pass a measure, the Lords do not resist it, even when the majority in their House do not agree with it. They may, indeed, throw out the Bill embodying such a measure; but if the House of Commons dissolves upon it, and, after the elections, persists in its opinion, and presents the Bill again,—the Upper House gives way. Thus it happened in 1832, in the case of the first Reform Bill; and nobody now contests the principle. This position of secondary political importance occupied by the Lords, is a decided advantage: if both branches of the Legislature had equal power, there would be the danger that, in case of a radical difference of opinion, neither would give way. We know that deadlocks have actually occurred in the Legislatures of Australia, and in the Legislature of the United States. In its more modest political position, the House of Lords discharges a very useful function. The majority of the House of Commons—like the public they represent—concern themselves, for the greater part, only with broad questions; in the details of measures, and in matters of less importance, the majority follows the Minister in charge of the particular measure. But, again, on certain questions members have a tendency to form themselves into groups or cliques,—such groups or cliques representing purely private interests. This tendency we should expect to find occasionally,—for example,—among the two hundred directors, and other high officials connected with railways, waterworks, gasworks, who, it is said, are members of the House of Commons. Now, in regard to all these matters—where, namely, changing influences come a good deal into play—the House of Lords, as a court of revision, discharges a most beneficent function.

Further, the Lower House has little leisure for calm

deliberation. Besides the great measures of the session, and the debates on the budget, it is occupied with the most varied questions, affecting the British Empire and its interests—from a street row in London, and the unlawful arrest of a milliner, to the affairs of the most distant colonies, and the course of European politics. Then the private bills require a good deal of time; and to this must be added the time wasted by the Irish members in obstructing business. In a word, the House works almost always in a hurry—vainly struggling with the mass of business thrown upon it. The House of Lords has leisure, and can therefore revise efficiently. In great questions it can at least prevent precipitate legislation; in less important matters it can reject pernicious proposals that have passed the House of Commons; and it can improve any measure in technical details. Moreover, it possesses an independence which is necessarily wanting in the elected members of the Lower House. The Lords have not, like members of the House of Commons, to think whether their vote will turn to their disadvantage, and perhaps lose them their seat. They are not to be bribed, because nothing can be offered to them which they do not already possess. Lastly, the House of Lords numbers more men of high political capacity, and shining oratorical talents, than the Lower House. In the twenties of the present century, when the Commons could show Canning, Peel, Palmerston, Brougham, Stanley, Russell, and others,—the American minister, Mr. Rush, an unimpeachable witness, said that the House of Lords was the superior in “debating power,”—a judgment which applies in perhaps a greater degree to our time, when, in truth, very few really great statesmen and orators are to be found in the House of Commons.

But, again, it is well worthy of consideration that, if the political rôle played by the Upper House is a modest one, the social influence of that House is

enormous. This influence is founded on the possession of vast property, especially of landed property. Moreover, this property is, for the greater part, unencumbered with debt, because by the law of succession—the younger sons having no claim—the estate is not saddled with mortgages in their favour, as is the case among the Continental *noblesse*. Thus the lords, as landed proprietors, are the representatives of the interests of landed property in general. If the Upper House often abused its power in former times, the reason of this was, that through its influence, the landed interest had the preponderance in the Lower House also; but as this is no longer the case, the reproach that the Lords abuse their privilege has no force. They accepted the abolition of the Corn Laws, and the enactment of Gladstone's Irish Land Laws. The importance of landed property, from the point of view of income, has, of course, considerably decreased of late. In 1810, the income from land, as compared with that derived from commerce and manufacture, stood in the proportion of fifty-six to forty-four; it is now as twenty-four to seventy-six. The Lords, as great landed proprietors, were formerly the representatives of three-fourths of the propertied classes; now they stand in this relation to only one-third. Yet the social *prestige* attaching to the possession of land has nowise diminished; every manufacturer and merchant who has made a fortune strives to establish for himself a country seat. For this reason, land still fetches a comparatively high price,—although, through the competition of foreign-grown produce—grain and cattle—it yields but a trifling return. Now, the Lords, as the greatest landed proprietors, represent this whole class. The same fact also explains why England bears the present agricultural crisis better than other countries, though she has been quite as badly hit. The land-owners are compelled to give large reduction of rent; but this burden falls on the shoulders best able to bear it; and

nobody thinks seriously of introducing agricultural protective tariffs,—because the mass of the population would not stand them. But the social position of the Lords does not depend exclusively on wealth ; it depends also, and in a great degree, on the *prestige* they inherit in virtue of their rank. The simple country labourer has more respect for the squire of the parish who, time out of mind, has occupied his country seat, than for a merchant or manufacturer, though the latter may be twice as rich. And the influence of a lord is proportionally greater, notwithstanding the democratic development of the franchise ; the sons of peers are, in the country, preferred, as parliamentary candidates, to their unprivileged neighbours. Traditions, centuries old, are not easily set aside even by strong tendencies working in an opposite direction ; and so long as this state of things lasts, the influence of the Lords as individuals, and also in their corporate capacity as members of the Upper House, will remain. Of course, this respect could not exist apart from popularity ; but the English aristocracy, unlike every other, is a popular aristocracy,—popular, because it has grown up in the closest connection with the people. The younger sons, who neither share the real property with the eldest brother, nor bear the burden of a distinguished name, take to some calling befitting a commoner, but generally bring with them their aristocratic sentiments. Their descent furnishes them with an incitement to distinguish themselves in the service of the State or in Parliament ; and the number is not small of younger sons who have founded new families in the peerage. On the whole, therefore, the Lords can scarcely be called an Order ; for a body of men cannot be so regarded, which admits only one member of a family and excludes his nearest relatives. Then, again, the peers enjoy the most absolute liberty in marrying. Among at least the higher orders of the Continental nobility, marriage with a commoner's

daughter would taint the family blood. On the other hand, an English duke, if he marries the daughter of a plain citizen, raises his wife to the position of a duchess in her own right. His family may regard the alliance as unfortunate; but the eldest son of such a marriage is as truly a duke as if his mother had been a princess. This liberty has been constantly adding to the wealth of the English aristocracy, marriages with rich heiresses from among commoners being of frequent occurrence.

The same result has followed the increase of the peerage by new creations. The dearest wish of the English citizen who has arrived at wealth is to "found a family;" accordingly, he is only too ready to acquire the sentiments of the aristocracy. These new families gradually unite with the old; the heads become knights, baronets, and finally, lords. On the other hand, peers who have become poor, quietly disappear from the ranks of their fellows. Besides all this, the House of Lords has very readily opened its doors to men of distinguished intellectual power,—not merely to lawyers, who rise to be Lord Chancellors, but to bankers, like Overstone and Rothschild; poets, like Bulwer and Tennyson; and historians, like Macaulay. As the substance of the human body is always in process of change, so the English aristocracy is constantly throwing off portions which it can no longer make use of, and, as it were, grafting on itself fresh additions from the people. It is this accession of new forces which gives the peerage much of its influence; for the strength of an aristocracy is better shown in the confidence with which it receives fresh blood (knowing that this unites with, and gives youth to, the old) than by jealously excluding such addition. The English aristocracy possesses all the advantages which are calculated to make men wish to belong to it, without any of those invidious privileges, the corners and edges of which irritate and

wound the classes beneath. The power which its ancestors wielded in virtue of feudal laws, this aristocracy still possesses in the shape of influence. Another point: it is not too numerous. If this is contested by its adversaries, because, in the reign of William III., there were only 166 peers, whereas their number now is 560,—the reply is, that in proportion to population, it is not more numerous than it was at the beginning of the last or of the present century. It is quite true that the House of Lords would be too numerous for successful deliberation, if all its members attended. In matter of fact, only a small proportion does so; but the rest, who do not take sufficient interest in politics, or do not care to live in London, are not on that account mere drones in matters connected with public life. They direct the local administration, the benevolent institutions, and the sports, of their counties. In the House of Lords men of legal abilities often play a more conspicuous part than all the dukes together; but in the country the case is quite otherwise.

By occupying this position in relation to politics and society, the Peerage has preserved England from despotism, under which all men stand in a like subjection,—from the rule of a bureaucracy, like the French prefect system,—and from a plutocracy, such as we see in the United States,—distinguished for nothing but ignorance, luxury, and swagger. The *nouveau riche*, with all his millions, finds no access to London society, if he is not distinguished in some other way. Even of officials, only the highest enjoy any social consideration. A clerk in a Government department—although he may have a salary of 1000*l.* a year, and transact very important business—is a “nobody,” because he is not independent.

III.

SUCH, in rough outline, is the position of the English Peerage; now, if its value to the country in such and so great, we have already gone half-way in answering the question, whether anything of equal value can be invented to take its place.

Three proposals have been made. Lord Dunraven's is that, out of the entire body of peers, 180 representative peers be elected,—that, besides this, representatives be sent up by the County Councils, and that, along with four members representing the Established Church, representatives of other communities, as well as representatives of Art, Science, and the Colonies, should be admitted.

Against this scheme it has to be stated, that the present character of the House would remain essentially unaltered; that the elections could not be carried on impartially; and that all those peers who were not elected—that is, the great majority—would form a sort of sinecure *noblesse*, retaining nothing but title, rank, and riches,—or would seek to gain, in the House of Commons, a field for their activity. The county members, again, would introduce into the Assembly a totally alien element, which could never unite with the peers.—A somewhat similar criticism applies to Lord Rosebery's plan, which, in essentials, is the same,—but with a smaller number of representative peers and a larger number of members elected by the County Councils, and of members appointed for life. Lastly, Mr. Curzon, in an essay in the *National Review* for April, 1888, proposes that, in the Upper House, only those peers should sit who have been (1) members of the House of Commons during at least one legislative period; (2) ministers, privy councillors, judges, ambassadors, or governors; or have been (3) from fifteen to twenty years in the army or navy, the diplomatic, or colonial service. In this way he be-

lieves the House could be brought to consist only of men of ability. Now, apart from the fact that according to this plan, also, the peers would in future break up into two sections—members of the Upper House, and a mere hereditary *noblesse*;—there is the same objection as that advanced in a former page against the peerage of the July monarchy and the Italian senate: that an Upper House, so constituted, would be merely an assembly of retired officials of the higher grades,—possessed, indeed, of more experience in affairs than the present House, but never able to secure the same political weight. Moreover, as such a body would believe it understood its business better than the Commons, it would be very little inclined to work in accordance with the views of the Lower House.

All such proposals for reform only show how impracticable it is to replace old institutions—the products of slow growth,—by new, artificial inventions, which lie open to criticism, and, from innate weakness, are unable to resist it. Institutions, on the other hand, which have taken root by long tradition have this power,—when they can suit themselves to circumstances. This the House of Lords should do,—and very probably *will* do, by accepting Lord Salisbury's proposals of reform.

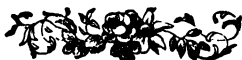
The first proposal is, that the House shall have the right, possessed by every club, of excluding notoriously unworthy members, the so-called "black sheep." There are far fewer of these than is generally supposed; but they do great harm; for it is indeed a scandal that a lord who is known to be a swindler, a bankrupt, a cheat on the race-course, or an adulterer, should have a seat in the Senate of the nation. Lord Salisbury's second proposal is, that the Crown should have the right to appoint a certain number of life peers. Only a limited number of these would be called to the Upper House at one time,—so as to make it impossible for the

Government to create a majority in their favour by promoting their followers; but they would, being chosen from among the number of meritorious officials, bring to the House, *without altering its character*, the advantage of the experience and intelligence of men not likely to seek for a seat in the Lower House, and yet not in circumstances to accept an hereditary peerage. By this arrangement, too, the representation of the self-governing colonies could be effected; and the interests of the colonies, which are too often neglected, could be attended to,—the representatives being chosen by the Crown from among candidates presented by the Legislative Assemblies of the several colonies. Finally, if it be decided that a lord shall not take his seat in the Upper House till he is thirty years of age,—an age before which the average man does not attain the necessary ripeness of judgment,—all the reforms that are at once *possible* and *useful* will have been effected.

The determined enemies of the House will, of course, not be satisfied with these reforms. But John Stuart Mill has said that these could be satisfied only by a Chamber ready to approve of the most Radical measures of the most Radical House of Commons.

What the Radicals call the Toryism of the Upper House is of very recent date. In former times the Whigs had great influence in it,—and Wellington exerted himself to moderate that influence. It is only since the Liberal party has tended more and more towards Radicalism, that the Conservative majority in the Upper House has so largely increased. Gladstone has made a large number of Liberal peers; but all these are opposed to his revolutionary measures, because these measures have alienated from him the sympathies of the classes that have anything to lose. Nor would the case be different with life members,—nor with a Chamber elected according to any moderately high property-qualification. But neither such

an Assembly, nor yet a House completely transformed according to the proposals of Dunraven, Rosebery, or Curzon, would secure the advantages possessed by the present House. To adopt their proposals would, in fact, be to transfer the process tried in the magic cauldron of Medea to the region of practical politics. The English Constitution is a complicated organism; it has shown great elasticity; but this must not be strained too far. Above all, as Lord Salisbury has said, "it is, in a rough way, a reflex of the English social system." Were the Upper House abolished or completely transformed, the ancient aristocratic traditions would still remain among the English people; a class, too, would remain which, through its riches and its *prestige*, would continue to exert great influence, without having scope for its energies within the Constitution. It would, in all probability, make great exertions to find in the Lower House a field for its activity; and the Radicals in that House would probably be very disagreeably surprised, if they were beaten at the polls by this new element in Parliamentary life.—But all these would be but experiments, as useless as they are dangerous; and they would deprive England of an Institution which has hitherto been the envy of the profoundest statesmen of foreign nations. Lord Burleigh said that England will never fall, save through her Parliament: now, to that Parliament belongs the House of Lords not less than the House of Commons.



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