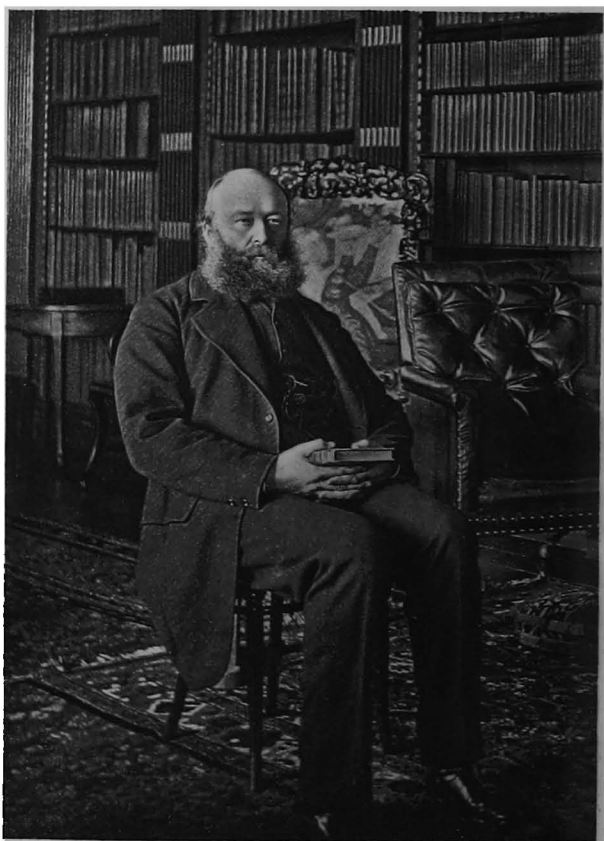


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THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G.

THE
LIFE AND SPEECHES
OF THE
MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G.

BY
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“ Sanctus haberi
Justitiæque tenax factis dictisque mereris,
Agnosco procerem.” *Juvenal.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO
SIR GEORGE RERESBY SITWELL, BART.,
WHO HAS TWICE FOUGHT
WITH GALLANTRY
THE BATTLE OF THE CONSTITUTION,
This Book is Dedicated.

OXFORD, *April*, 1885.

ADMINISTRATIONS FROM 1852 TO 1885.

Date of assuming office.	Premier.	Party Complexion.
Feb. 27, 1852.	Earl of Derby.	Conservative.
Dec. 28, 1852.	Earl of Aberdeen.	Whig and Peelite Coalition.
Feb. 10, 1855.	Viscount Palmerston.	Liberal.
Feb. 25, 1858.	Earl of Derby.	Conservative.
June 18, 1859.	Viscount Palmerston. Earl Russell.	Liberal.
July 6, 1866.	Earl of Derby. Mr. Disraeli.	Conservative.
Dec. 9, 1868.	Mr. Gladstone.	Liberal.
Feb. 21, 1874.	Mr. Disraeli. Earl of Beaconsfield.	Conservative.
April 28, 1880.	Mr. Gladstone.	Liberal and Rad- ical Coalition.

CHRONOLOGY.

- 1830. Lord Salisbury born.
- 1849. Takes his Degree at Oxford.
- 1853. M.P. for Stamford.
- 1854. Speech on University Reform.
- 1857. Re-elected for Stamford.
- 1857. Bill for Voting-papers.
- 1858. "Theories of Parliamentary Reform."
- 1859. Re-elected for Stamford.
- 1861. Speeches on the Paper Duties.
- 1864. Motion on the Education Department.
- 1865. Becomes Lord Cranborne.
- 1865. Re-elected for Stamford.
- 1866. Secretary of State for India.
- 1867. Resigns Office.
- 1868. Becomes Marquis of Salisbury.
- 1869. Parliamentary Proceedings Bill.
- 1869. Elected Chancellor of Oxford University.
- 1871. Arbitrator of the Chatham Railway.
- 1873. Speech at Hertford.
- 1874. Secretary of State for India.
- 1874. Speeches on the Public Worship Regulation Bill.
- 1875. Speech to the Middlesex Conservative Association.
- 1876. Plenipotentiary at the Constantinople Conference.
- 1877. Speeches at Bradford.
- 1878. Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

- 1878. Plenipotentiary at the Berlin Congress.
- 1878. Receives the Freedom of the City of London.
- 1879. Speeches on the Afghan War.
- 1880. Resigns Office.
- 1881. Leader of the Conservative Party in the Lords.
- 1881. Speech at Newcastle.
- 1882. Speeches at Edinburgh.
- 1883. Speeches at Birmingham.
- 1883. Article on the Dwellings of the Poor.
- 1884. Moves for a Commission on the Housing of the Poor.
- 1884. Speeches on the Franchise.
- 1884. Assists in Framing the Redistribution Bill.
- 1885. Speech on Egyptian Affairs.

LIFE AND SPEECHES
OF
LORD SALISBURY.

CHAPTER I.

1830—1854.

THE family of Cecil claims as its founder a certain Robert Sitsilt, who distinguished himself in the Welsh wars of the reign of William Rufus, and received grants of land in Herefordshire in reward for his services. A younger branch of this family is found at a later period settled at or near Stamford, and David Cyssell of Stamford held certain local offices of considerable importance during Henry VII.'s reign, was Sheriff of Northamptonshire, and thrice alderman of his native town. He obtained for his eldest son, Richard, a place at Court as one of the royal pages, in which capacity he was present at the famous Field of the

Cloth of Gold. After remaining for some years in attendance upon Henry VIII., he retired to his native county, and filled with credit the position of Sheriff of Rutland in 1539, when he is described as "of Burleigh, in the county of Northampton." He contrived by royal favour and careful management to increase his estates very considerably, and left a good property to his son and heir, the famous William Cecil, Lord Burleigh. This is not the place to write a life of the greatest of Elizabeth's Ministers, the statesman who guided the fortunes of England during forty years, and to whom more than to any other man was due the immunity of this country from disasters during one of the most critical periods of her history, and whose reputation as a wise and cautious statesman has never been exceeded. It is worth mentioning that it was at Hatfield, which at that time belonged to the Crown, that Elizabeth received the news of her sister's death, and her own accession to the crown, and that it was in the hall of Hatfield Palace that the new queen appointed Cecil her Secretary of State. Thus auspiciously began the connection of the family of Cecil with Hatfield. Burleigh left two sons, the eldest of whom

was created Earl of Exeter, and is the ancestor of the present Marquis of Exeter, who resides at "Burleigh House by Stamford Town," the palace built, if not actually designed, by the great Lord Treasurer himself. His second son, Robert Cecil, was almost as great a statesman as his father, though his lot was not cast in times of such great difficulty. Like Lord Burleigh he was Secretary of State, and like him became eventually Lord High Treasurer. He was chiefly instrumental in procuring the peaceful succession of James I., who continued him in office, and conferred several marks of royal favour upon him. In 1603, immediately after the king's accession, Sir Robert Cecil was created Lord Cecil of Essendine, in the next year he was advanced to the title of Viscount Cranborne, and in 1605 was made Earl of Salisbury. He died in 1612, the duties and cares of his high office having worn out a frame never very strong before he had reached the age of fifty. It was during his lifetime that the estate of Hatfield came into the hands of the family of Cecil. Lord Salisbury lived at Theobalds—a house which had been built by his father—near Cheshunt, but in 1604, James I., who had taken a great fancy to Theobalds, induced him to exchange

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it for Hatfield, which, as we have seen, belonged to the Crown. The present house at Hatfield was built by the earl, who appears to have been his own architect, clerk of the works, and contractor, and who has stamped his individuality upon the picturesque edifice, which now stands practically unaltered since his days.

The second Earl of Salisbury married a sister of the notorious Countess of Essex, but is chiefly remarkable for the readiness with which he accepted the various changes of government which took place during the period of the Great Rebellion, even going so far in his complacency towards Cromwell as to sit as a member of the Commons in more than one of the Protector's Parliaments. His grandson, who succeeded him, was a man of far more determined character, and did not hesitate to encounter the suspicion and dislike of Charles II. by supporting the Bill for the exclusion of the Duke of York from the crown. Curiously enough, his son, the fourth earl, was a strong Roman Catholic, and got into a certain amount of trouble by being supposed to be concerned in a plot for restoring James II. to the throne which he had forfeited by his own folly. Of the fifth and

sixth earls, the latter of whom died in 1780, there is little to be said. The seventh earl, however, was a man of considerable mark in his day. He sat for some years in the Lower House, and from 1783 to 1804 held the office of Lord Chamberlain. In addition to his political dignities, he was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and a patron of science and historical research. In 1789 he was raised to the rank of a marquis. His son James filled many important offices, and has some claim to be regarded as a statesman. He joined the first Derby Ministry in 1852 as Lord Privy Seal, and held the office of Lord President of the Council in 1858, when Lord Derby once more became Premier. The second marquis married Frances, daughter and heiress of Mr. Bamber Gascoyne, and assumed the name of Gascoyne in addition to his patronymic. By this lady he had three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Lord Cranborne, was a man of high culture and remarkably engaging disposition, but, in addition to suffering from very indifferent health, he had the great misfortune to be totally blind. He died unmarried in 1865, at the age of forty-four. The second son is the present Marquis of Salisbury, the third being

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Lord Eustace Cecil. Of the two daughters of the late marquis, the elder married Mr. Beresford Hope, the well-known and highly-respected member for the University of Cambridge; while the younger married Mr. J. Balfour, and is the mother of Mr. Arthur Balfour, M.P. for Hertford.

Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, third Marquis of Salisbury, was born at Hatfield on February 13th, 1830. He received his early education at Eton, and in 1847 proceeded to enter at Christ Church, Oxford. He took his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1849, having obtained an Honorary Fourth Class in Mathematics, a distinction which it was the custom at that time to confer on those who had specially distinguished themselves in the Pass Examination. During his residence in Oxford, Lord Robert Cecil (as he was then styled) took an active part in the debates of the Oxford Union Society, and held at one time the office of treasurer to the society, a post which at the present time is filled by his third son. The records of the Union show Lord Robert Cecil on one occasion supporting the drama with Professor Conington, against the late Professor Shirléy and the present Dean of Chichester; at

another time maintaining, after the repeal of the Corn Laws had become a *fait accompli*, the necessity of the Conservative party being united, and so providing England with a stronger Government than the Liberals were able to give her. In 1849 he moved a resolution deprecating the endowment of the Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland, and shortly afterwards spoke in strong condemnation of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., and emphatically protested against the disestablishment of the English Church, a question which has always been a favourite one for discussion in Oxford debating societies. As treasurer he appears to have shown signs of that business capacity and unwearying activity which have characterized his public career, and there can be no doubt that his connection with the Oxford Union helped to train him, as it has done so many others, to take part in the debates of Parliament, and the work of governing a nation.

After taking his degree, Lord Robert Cecil spent some time in travel, and did not confine himself to the "grand tour," but visited many of the British Colonies, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with their constitu-

tions and modes of government. He extended his journeys to Australia, and even to New Zealand, a country at that time far beyond the range of most travellers. On his return to England he was elected a Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, and shortly afterwards an opportunity was afforded to him of entering the House of Commons.

Mr. Herries, a gentleman who had held high office in more than one Ministry, was obliged, through ill-health and advancing years, to retire from Parliamentary life, and thus a vacancy was occasioned in the representation of the borough of Stamford. The electors not unnaturally considered that no one would be more worthy of their choice than a scion of the noble house of Cecil, with which their borough had been intimately connected for more than three centuries; and doubtless Lord Robert Cecil's reputation as a debater and a traveller was well known to them. The writ was issued just before the session of 1853 came to a conclusion, and on August 22nd Lord Robert Cecil was unanimously elected. In his address to the electors, after alluding to Mr. Herries' retirement, he stated that it was his desire to uphold the same great principles as his predecessor, "though, of course," he

added, "not objecting to make such cautious changes as lapse of time or improvements in science or the dispensations of Providence may render necessary." He then continues: "It will be my duty, and I shall, if I have the honour of being elected, direct my best endeavours to resist any such tampering with our representative system as shall disturb the balance of reciprocal powers on which the stability of our Constitution rests, and to obtain a due adjustment of general and local taxation under the new commercial system, so as to press fairly on all classes alike in a proportion measured by their just claims, and not by their relative strength. I am a sincere and warmly-attached member of the Church of England, and therefore I shall be ready at all times to support any measure which will increase her usefulness, and render the number of her bishops and clergy more nearly equal to her requirements." He proceeded to advocate a religious system of education, and concluded by saying, "I am anxious to give my best assistance in forwarding those numerous measures tending to social and sanitary improvement, and the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes, which are often passed by amid the din of

mere party politics, but on which the future prospects of the country so largely depend." The worthy burgesses had no reason to repent of the choice they had made, and by re-electing Lord Robert Cecil without opposition on four occasions, they showed that he continued to merit their confidence, and that he was a fitting representative for a town which has earned an honourable place in our history for the ability and reputation of the members it has sent to Parliament. The session of 1853 had come to an end before the election for Stamford took place, so it was not till 1854 that the new member was able to take his seat in that assembly of which he was destined to become one of the most brilliant ornaments.

CHAPTER II.

1854—1866.

TO comprehend the position of parties in the House of Commons at the beginning of the session of 1854, it will be necessary to glance briefly at the political history of England from the year 1841. The general election which was held in August 1841 had resulted in the return of a large Tory majority. The Conservative party had been led to victory by Sir Robert Peel, who had shown a wise acquiescence in the reforms which had been effected by the Whigs, and had saved the Tories from becoming a party of obsolete traditions and impossible reaction. Peel's Ministry was signalized by the passing of many most valuable measures, which, having been due to a Conservative Government, have been allowed to pass into oblivion for lack of one of those numerous *vates sacri* who are never tired of belauding the achieve-

ments of the great Liberal party, and of representing the Tories as mere obstructionists, who have never cared for the well-being of the people or the improvement of the nation. Powerful though the Prime Minister was, and skilful as he had shown himself in educating his party, he was unable to induce more than a small section to imitate the miraculous *volte-en-face* he made in 1846 on the subject of the Corn Laws. This is not the place to touch upon the vexed and often debated question, whether Peel was justified in the course of action he pursued at that crisis. It is a very delicate question of political morality, and one on which it seems possible to hold any and every opinion. There are some who would load the memory of Peel with the most savage objurgations, and would repeat in cold blood the scathing invectives which were levelled against him in the fiery debates of 1846 by Mr. Disraeli. Others are equally bitter against the Protectionists, who refused to join their great leader in giving a boon to the people that would have endeared the Conservative party to the nation, and ensured them a long and successful tenure of office. More moderate writers have endeavoured to show that Peel and his opponents were all

honourable men, while the literary assassin has not neglected the opportunity of stabbing the reputation of the whole of the Conservative party. Be this as it may, it is undeniable that Peel's action in 1846 ruined the fortunes of the Tory party for more than a quarter of a century. The immediate result was the cleavage of the party into the two sections of Protectionists and Peelites, and the determination of the former to be revenged on their lost leader at all hazards. Combining with the regular opposition, and reinforced by the Cobdenite party, they were able to oust Peel from office, but in so doing they were merely gratifying a passion for retaliation, and driving Peel and his followers more and more in the direction of Whiggism. On the fall of Peel a Liberal Ministry succeeded to office, but not to power. The attitude of the Whig leaders on the Free Trade question had been little to their credit, and Lord John Russell found himself confronted by a three-fold opposition, comprising Protectionists, Peelites, and Radicals. After maintaining a struggling existence for some sessions, the retirement or dismissal of Lord Palmerston, in December, 1851, deprived the Cabinet of the one name they had been able to conjure

with, and added to the ranks of the Opposition a most skilful and dexterous assailant, who was not slow to find an opportunity for revenge. The ill-judged Militia Bill which Lord John Russell introduced in February, 1852, united the various sections of the Opposition, and the Government proposals were rejected by a majority of eleven. Anxious to avoid further votes of censure which were impending, the Government resigned, and a new Ministry was formed by Lord Derby, with Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Despite the ability of its members, and the remarkable skill and success with which it conducted the affairs of the nation, the Conservative Ministry laboured under a fatal weakness—the taint of Protection clung to it still. The wiser members of the party perceived that the past was irrevocable, and, however much the events of 1846 might be regretted, the question of Free Trade had been settled once for all, and any attempt to return to the old fiscal system would only result in the prolonged exclusion of the Conservatives from office. Unfortunately, this statesmanlike view of the situation did not commend itself to the representatives

of the agricultural interest, who still hankered after the sliding scale, or at least a small fixed duty on foreign corn. The inevitable result followed. The Peelites, whose natural affinities should have led them, especially as the death of their leader had removed the bitter personal element from the controversy, to join the Conservative party, found themselves drifting further and further in the direction of Liberalism. The success which attended the dealings of the Conservative Ministers with finance and the thorny militia question, encouraged them to appeal to the country. But the general election which took place in August, 1852, though it materially increased the Conservative party in the House of Commons, left them still in a minority as compared with the various sections of the Opposition. An alliance was entered into between the Liberals and Peelites, and on a financial question the Government was placed in a minority of nineteen, and consequently resigned.

Having achieved their object, the coalition was called upon to form an Administration, and after protracted negotiations, this was effected in December, 1852. The Coalition Ministry, under the leadership of Lord

Aberdeen, may be said with justice to have included all the men of ability and experience in the House of Commons, except Mr. Disraeli; and if its members could only remain united, they could rely upon a sufficient, if not overwhelming majority. The first session of the Coalition Ministry passed by without any serious breach among its members. Mr. Gladstone made his *début* as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Palmerston showed the same industry and talent at the Home Office as he had exhibited for so long a period in the conduct of foreign affairs. It was at the close of the session of 1853 that Mr. Herries resigned his seat for Stamford, and in February, 1854, Lord Robert Cecil entered the House of Commons as a member of the Conservative Opposition. The time was not a favourable one for any great measure of legislation, the whole attention of the country being concentrated on Eastern affairs, which were soon destined to involve England in the most serious war she has waged since Waterloo, and to prove that, however powerful a coalition may be for purposes of opposition and attack, a Government founded on the principle of mutual forbearance, and presided

over by a Minister whose chief claim to high office is that he is unobjectionable to his colleagues, is not likely to conduct the affairs of the Empire at a critical juncture either with dignity or success. There was one measure which the Government was determined to pass, if only to relieve the session from the taunt of legislative sterility. In 1850 a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the condition of the Universities, and had presented a voluminous report in 1852, containing suggestions for important reforms in the constitution and duties of the Universities. Nothing came of the report till 1854, when Lord John Russell, who had appointed the Commission of 1850, determined to give legislative effect to the recommendations of the Commissioners. A Bill was accordingly introduced into the Commons which provided for the appointment of a new Commission, to have the power within certain limits of altering and amending the statutes of the University and colleges of Oxford. It was on the second reading of this measure, on the 7th of April, 1854, that Lord Robert Cecil delivered his maiden speech in the House of Commons. After having corrected some of the inaccur-

racies of former speakers, he proceeded to contend that Oxford ought to have the opportunity of reforming herself, and that the legislature ought not to interfere until the University had shown herself unwilling to act in the matter. He reproached the Government with not having consulted the University authorities, and with having dealt out the same measure to all the colleges without stopping to inquire how far it was deserved in each particular case. "It might be true that some colleges had broken their statutes, but that was by no means the case with all. Magdalen and Corpus might have violated their statutes, but was that a reason for punishing Worcester and All Souls' that had not? They might as well disfranchise Liverpool because Hull was corrupt." He concluded by showing that the measure was incomplete, and would only lead to further legislation and further restrictions on the liberty of the University of Oxford. The experience of time has proved the truth and wisdom of these remarks in more than one particular. A great deal of the work of the Commissioners of 1854 has been undone, and there are not a few respects in which all men are agreed that further change in the

direction of a return to the old state of things would be most desirable. The intensification of the examination system, the abolition of religious tests, and the multiplication of professors, have not tended to raise the position of Oxford as a seat of true learning, high culture, or profound research. Lord Robert Cecil's speech was listened to with attention, and was justly praised not only by Mr. Vernon, who followed him, but by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone has, it must be acknowledged, been always ready to welcome talent on whichever side of the House it manifests itself, and during the debate he took occasion to pay a graceful compliment to the young Conservative orator. "If in former times," he said, "Oxford has presented Parliament with the illustrious names of Mr. Fox, Mr. Canning, and Sir Robert Peel, it has been no common gratification to me to have listened to-night to the first efforts of two members of this House—the hon. member for Tavistock (Mr. Byng, now Lord Enfield) and the noble lord the member for Stamford, whose just efforts, rich with future promise, indicate that there still issue forth from the maternal bosom of that University men who, in the first days of

their career, give earnest of what they may afterwards accomplish for their country." The second reading of the Oxford University Bill was carried without a division, but in Committee many fiercely contested battles were fought, in which Lord Robert Cecil took an active part. The Opposition was strong enough to effect some important improvements in the measure, and render it somewhat less unpalatable to the University, and certainly more beneficial to the cause of education.

Meanwhile active operations had commenced against Russia. Sir Charles Napier had effected but little in the Baltic, while even the victories of Alma and Inkermann, and the glorious blunder of Balaclava, hardly reconciled the English people to the fact that Sebastopol was still untaken. As winter approached, rumours were rife of gross mismanagement and incompetence at headquarters, causing needless suffering and death to the troops, and indefinitely prolonging the miseries of the siege. At length the public was roused to the highest indignation by the revelations of the newspaper correspondents at the seat of war, and the deep and universal feeling of disgust at the

lethargy and incapacity of the Government found vent in a motion brought forward in the House of Commons by Mr. Roebuck, demanding the appointment of a Committee "to inquire into the state of the army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it was to minister to the wants of the army." Lord John Russell, who had in vain endeavoured to induce his colleagues to adopt a more resolute and vigorous policy, and replace the incapable Duke of Newcastle by Lord Palmerston, felt that it would be impossible to resist the motion for inquiry, and accordingly resigned his office. If anything had been needed to cast further discredit upon this ill-fated Ministry, it would have been this desertion at this critical juncture by one of their most prominent members; and not even the mild apologies of Mr. Sidney Herbert or the fervid denunciation of Mr. Gladstone against the unconstitutional and dangerous character of the motion, could save the Coalition Ministry—the Ministry of all the Talents and all the Virtues—from the most disgraceful and humiliating defeat that any Government has ever received at the hands of the House of Commons. The motion for

inquiry was carried by a majority of 157, and the Government, after a few more protests against what they were pleased to call the unconstitutional nature of the adverse vote, resigned (February 1st, 1855).

Lord Derby was requested by her Majesty to form an Administration, but, knowing that the advent of a Conservative Government would be the immediate signal for the formation of a new Coalition, he wisely declined; and Lord John Russell having found it equally impossible to undertake the formation of a Ministry, Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister. His Cabinet at first differed in very few of its elements from that which preceded it. It was true that "the transient and embarrassed phantom" of Lord Aberdeen had passed away, and that Lord Panmure had replaced the well-meaning but incapable Duke of Newcastle at the War Office; but it was not until the three Peelites, Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Herbert had resigned their offices that the nation could feel any confidence that its affairs would be conducted with vigour and success. A further improvement in the Ministry was effected in June by the retirement of Lord John Russell, whose conduct

at the Vienna Conference received and deserved the strongest condemnation.

It was on the question of the Vienna negotiations and the terms which ought to be exacted from Russia that Lord Robert Cecil made his first distinctly political speech in the Lower House. He reviewed with remarkable terseness and perspicuity the various solutions which had been suggested for curbing the power of Russia in the Black Sea, and concluded by advocating that the Sea should be closed to ships of war, but that the Sultan should have the power of introducing them *ad libitum* whenever he was in danger, he himself being the sole judge as to the fact whether he was in danger or not. It would probably be generally admitted now, in view of the action of the Russian Government in 1870, that it would have been far better if the Powers had insisted on these terms in 1856, instead of contenting themselves with neutralizing the Black Sea and thus irritating Russia, without providing any substantial means for the defence of the Porte.

In the meantime the Committee which had been appointed in consequence of the success of Mr. Roebuck's motion had been busily engaged in investigating the charges

of carelessness and incapacity which had been brought against the Aberdeen Administration, and so strong was the evidence they obtained of the scandalous mismanagement of public affairs by the late Ministry, that a motion was brought forward in the House of Commons to the effect that "This House, deeply lamenting the sufferings of our army during the winter campaign in the Crimea, and coinciding with the resolution of their Committee that the conduct of the Administration was the first and chief cause of the calamities that befell that army, do hereby visit with severe reprehension every member of that Cabinet, whose counsels led to such disastrous results." The evidence which was brought forward in support of this motion was irrefutable, the clearest proofs were given of fatal levity and gross maladministration on the part of Lord Aberdeen, and there can be little doubt that the motion would have been carried by an overwhelming majority but for the intervention of a section of the Tory party, who, while admitting that the conduct of the late Government was indefensible, objected to the passing of a motion which could produce no beneficial results and would only lead to intensify the divisions in the

counsels of the nation, and render the efficient prosecution of the war still more difficult. Actuated by these patriotic motives, and ready in the highest interests of the nation to forego a mere party triumph, General Peel, a stout old Tory, who held important offices in subsequent Conservative Governments, moved the previous question, which was seconded by Lord Robert Cecil in a brief speech, in which he strongly deprecated "historical and retrospective motions," and pointed out the dangers of establishing a precedent for attacking the policy of ex-Ministers. The accused Ministers were only too glad to shelter themselves from the richly-deserved censure by assenting to the previous question. Incapable of establishing their innocence, they readily and joyfully welcomed a verdict of "Not proven." General Peel's amendment was carried by 289 to 182; and thus by the intervention of Lord Robert Cecil and other Conservatives, Mr. Gladstone and the other members of the Aberdeen Cabinet were saved the indelible disgrace of receiving the severe reprehension of the House of Commons.

Peace was concluded with Russia early in 1856, and Parliament found leisure to devote

to questions of domestic reform. Foremost among these were the organization of a system of national education and the improvement of the reformatory system. In the debates on these subjects Lord Robert Cecil took an active part, and made a powerful appeal for the retention of the religious element in the primary education of the people. He also inveighed very strongly, in the course of a debate on the Civil Service, against the system of selection by examination, pointing out how very poor a test of real capacity was success in a purely literary examination.

The session of 1857 was destined to see the defeat of the Government in the House of Commons, and consequent upon that the dissolution of Parliament. It is not necessary in this place to go into any detail with regard to the seizure of the *Arrow*, or to attempt to decide how far Lord Palmerston's defence of the conduct of the Government in declaring war against China was satisfactory. Looking back with the experience of a quarter of a century to guide us, we should perhaps be inclined to admit that, while the wrongs of the *Arrow* may have been as imaginary as those of "Jenkins' Ear," war with China was as inevitable in 1856 as war with Spain in 1739,

and has been productive of scarcely less beneficial results to the commerce of England. The most interesting point for us to notice is, that in the debates which took place in Parliament on the subject in the spring of 1857, the House of Lords showed itself far better able to gauge the feelings of the nation than did the House of Commons. In the Upper House, Lord Derby's motion concerning the Government was rejected by a majority of 36, while in the Lower House a similar motion, brought forward by Mr. Cobden, was carried by 263 to 247. Lord Palmerston at once determined to appeal to the country. A general election took place at the close of March, resulting in the return of a large Ministerial majority, and the complete vindication of the vote of the Lords. This election is chiefly remarkable for the signal justice which the people of England meted out to the leading members of the peace party. Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, and other gentlemen who had denounced the Crimean War, had carried their principles so far as to refuse to subscribe to the Patriotic Fund, which was raised to relieve the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in defence of their country. All these individuals were

swept from their seats in the House of Commons by an outburst of popular feeling which they had little expected. Lord Robert Cecil's return was unopposed, and, together with his colleague, Sir F. Thesiger (afterwards Lord Chelmsford), he was again unanimously returned for Stamford on the 27th of March, 1857. In returning thanks to the electors he once more dwelt on the necessity for social reforms, legal, sanitary, and educational, and pronounced strongly in favour of the maintenance of a religious system of education.

The new Parliament met on the 6th of April, with Lord Palmerston's ascendancy in the House of Commons and the nation to all appearance more firmly established than ever. During this session Lord Robert Cecil for the first time tried his hand at constructive legislation. It was generally acknowledged that the system of voting then in practice was capable of great improvement. In the counties the polling-stations were few and far between, while in University elections it was necessary for every elector who wished to record his vote to travel, it might be, a couple of hundred miles to his own University. Radicals, as is their wont, had contented themselves with demanding a system of voting which nobody wanted,

and which was so distasteful to the majority of the House of Commons that it had been rejected session after session. Their advocacy of the ballot had blinded them to the fact that there were other methods of promoting electoral purity, or at all events of enabling electors to record their votes with less difficulty. The system advocated by Lord Robert Cecil was that of voting-papers distributed amongst the electors, to be filled up by them in the presence of a justice of the peace. By this means, to quote his own words, instead of the elector being brought to the poll, the poll would be brought to the elector. It is needless to say that this proposed reform met with no sympathy from the Liberal members of the House, and had, after a short debate, to be withdrawn; and yet if it had been carried in 1857 it would have saved the vast amount of intimidation, of corruption, and of rioting which has necessitated the enactment of those measures against corrupt practices, and has compelled the country to accept a system of secret voting which it distrusts and dislikes. In 1867 Lord Robert Cecil's plan was adopted, so far as it related to the Universities, and since that date University electors have been saved the trouble

and expense of long and tedious journeys at every contested election, and are able to register their votes with far greater ease than any of their fellow-countrymen. In this year Lord R. Cecil married Georgina, daughter of Sir E. H. Alderson, one of the most illustrious of English judges.

In the winter of 1857 it was found necessary to reassemble Parliament for the purpose of passing a Bill to indemnify Ministers for having suspended during a financial crisis the provisions of the Bank Charter Act, but in the debates during the December session Lord Robert Cecil took no part. Parliament was adjourned until February, 1858; and within a fortnight of its reassembling the Palmerston Government was defeated on the second reading of the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, and resigned. The measure which occasioned the defeat of a powerful Ministry, which had so recently received the emphatic approbation of the electors, had arisen out of the attempt of Orsini and his confederate against the Emperor of the French. The fact that the plot had been hatched in England was made the excuse for a request or demand on the part of the French Government for such an alteration in the English law relating to conspiracy as would prevent a similar unto-

ward event occurring again. It was with this intention that Lord Palmerston introduced the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, a measure harmless enough in itself, and designed to effect a salutary reform, but unfortunately tainted with the suspicion that it was brought forward at the dictation of a foreign power. The rejection of the measure by a majority of nineteen brought about the substitution of a Conservative for a Liberal Ministry. Lord Derby having been called upon by the sovereign to undertake the Government, complied, though against his personal inclination, with the Queen's command, and formed a Ministry powerful and able enough to have conducted public affairs with success and credit had it not been hampered at every step by the factious opposition of those who had just been driven from office, and of those, like Mr. Gladstone and Lord John Russell, whose chief *métier* during this period was to harass and obstruct any Government in which they were not themselves included.

During the latter part of the session of 1858, Lord Robert Cecil came prominently forward on two occasions. The question of church rates had been frequently before the House of Commons before, but in 1858 a determined attempt was made to force a

measure for their total abolition through Parliament. This scheme of confiscation was resolutely opposed by the Conservative party, and Lord Robert Cecil moved its rejection in a speech which from the logical point of view was completely unanswerable, but did not prevent the Bill being carried in the Lower House by a considerable majority. On the occasion of a motion by Mr. Gladstone regarding the Danubian principalities, he again took a leading part in debate. The Treaty of 1856 had endeavoured to restore the *status quo* in Moldavia and Wallachia, and, contrary to the wishes of the people, had tried to perpetuate the divisions between the two States. By 1858 it was obvious enough that the continuation of such a state of things was impossible. The people of both principalities had expressed a strong desire for union, and in the opinion of most competent persons such an union was both inevitable and desirable. Mr. Gladstone's motion was intended to further this object, and Lord Robert Cecil, in a speech of considerable length and marked ability, supported this view, contending that such an union would in no sense injure Turkey, for whose integrity and independence we had

just been fighting, but would rather tend to strengthen her by providing in some sense a bulwark against Russian aggression. Such arguments, however, found little response in the Whig official mind, though events have proved that the kingdom of Roumania, the outcome of the union of the two principalities, if not indeed powerful enough to ward off Russian attack, is likely to prove an insuperable barrier to the annexation of Constantinople by the great northern power. Be this as it may, the Whig Government showed itself absolutely incapable of resisting the march of events. Moldavia and Wallachia were united before many years were passed, and an able and energetic ruler was obtained for the new State in the person of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern.

The first session of the new Conservative Administration had been eminently successful. The unfortunate misunderstanding with France had been cleared up; a measure for the government of India, necessitated by the abolition of the East India Company, had been carried, and a variety of minor Acts of social and sanitary reform had taken their place on the statute-book. The Whig-Radical Opposition, in despair at the achieve-

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ments of the Derby Ministry, were resorting to their old tactics of agitation and misrepresentation. Mr. Bright and his associates stumped the country in the hope of being able to excite popular enthusiasm on the question of Parliamentary Reform, and various schemes were proposed for the alteration of our representative system. To the volume of "Oxford Essays" for 1838, Lord Robert Cecil contributed an interesting and valuable paper on "The Theories of Parliamentary Reform." After having laid down the general principle that each scheme of Reform must be judged on its practical merits, and not by some *a priori* argument which, however beautiful and perfect in theory, is completely outside the range of possibility, he proceeds to divide Reformers into three classes, Educational, Geographical, and Symmetrical. The first of these he dismisses very briefly. In seeking to give a preponderance to intellect, and laying down as a maxim that the Government should be in the hands of the wisest men, they are merely enunciating a truism without attempting to provide any practical means whereby their principles may be carried out. It is, he admits, the Utopia of representation, but for

that very reason is impossible. The next class, that of Geographical or Democratic Reformers, seek to give the preponderance to numbers. Their axiom is that every man should have a share, direct or indirect, in the government of his country, and that every Minister should legislate in exact obedience to every popular demand. The writer has no difficulty in showing the absurdity and the danger of such a proposition. A mere numerical system of representation he proves would place political power in the hands of the least educated and least responsible class in the country; but at the same time he has no objection even to universal suffrage, if accompanied by a system of proportional representation such as that which obtains in the Colony of Victoria, where the number of votes possessed by each elector is in proportion to his property. The third class of Reformers are those whose sole object is to destroy all anomalies, whose pure souls are vexed by such inconsistencies as are observable in all parts of our representative system, and whose passion is uniformity. He deals in a summary manner with these doctrinaires, and shows how full of apparent inconsistencies and anomalies the English Con-

stitution is, and yet how admirably it adapts itself to the wants of the nation. He is not unwilling to admit that there are many anomalies in the representative system which might well be removed, and he lays especial stress on the want of proportion between the members allotted to counties and to boroughs, but points out that any symmetrical scheme to justify its claim must provide for a complete representation not merely of numbers, but of property, and so avoid the dangers of an unrestrained democracy, which, under the influence of demagogues, may work incalculable and irreparable mischief. He concludes the essay thus :—

“ The result, then, to which a review of the Reformer’s arguments inevitably leads us, is that we must either change enormously or not at all. It is undoubtedly to be desired that every anomaly should be removed at which hostile critics can laugh or cavil ; still more that every person in the kingdom should have exactly his just share, and no more than his just share, in the government of the country. On the other hand, it is of vital importance that the Legislature should not be deteriorated, or the safety of property endangered. A system of representation

might doubtless be devised in which all these objects should be regularly and exactly attained; but most statesmen will hesitate before they prefer a paper constitution to the time-hardened, trusty machine whose working they have thoroughly tried. But to remove one evil without removing that which is its counterpoise, to withdraw one poison from the prescription without withdrawing the other which is its antidote, is the maddest course of all. Political justice to one side and not to the other, is worse than a set-off of injustice on both sides; political symmetry on a faulty plan is worse than chaos. Better far to reconstruct the whole, better still to let that which has worked well, work on. But, whichever course is taken, the condition in the representative system which it is our duty to maintain, even at the cost of any restriction or any anomaly, is that the intellectual status of the Legislature shall not be lowered, and that sufficient weight, direct or indirect, shall be given to property to secure it from the possibility of harm."

The Conservative Ministry determined to take up the question of Reform, and if possible bring it to a more successful issue than

had resulted from the repeated attempts of Liberal Governments during the past ten years. It was extremely difficult to devise a scheme which should be acceptable to every member of the Conservative party, and one of the first results of the discussions in the Cabinet was the secession of two prominent members of the Ministry: Mr. Henley, who objected that the proposed measure did not go far enough, and Mr. Walpole, who thought that it went too far. Notwithstanding these unfortunate losses, the Bill was introduced in February, 1859, by Mr. Disraeli, which, while lowering the franchise both in counties and boroughs, attempted to provide a counterpoise by establishing a variety of qualifications, educational, professional, and monetary. The Radical party, instead of welcoming this measure as, at all events, an important instalment of Parliamentary Reform for which they had been clamouring for years, united with the Whig faction to destroy the Conservative Government. Lord John Russell assumed his accustomed rôle of objector-in-chief, and on the second reading of the Bill moved a hostile amendment. Lord Robert Cecil took the opportunity of reiterating in the House of Commons the

principles he had enunciated in the Oxford Essay, and pointed out the advisableness of passing a Reform Bill before the popular excitement increased, and while moderation and compromise were still possible. Such arguments, however, were completely thrown away on the confederacy of doctrinaire Radicals and hungry office-seekers who formed the majority of the House, and the result was the defeat of the Derby Ministry by 330 votes to 291. The House was at once adjourned, and Lord Derby resolved to appeal to the country in the hope that a general election would result in the return of a House of Commons containing a sufficient majority of one party or the other to make the establishment of a strong Government possible, and put an end to the frequent Ministerial crises which had been for the last few years so detrimental to the best interests of the country.

His expectation was unhappily not realized. The Conservative party, it is true, gained twenty-nine seats, but was still in a minority when compared with the various sections of the Opposition. A vote of want of confidence in Ministers, proposed by the Marquis of Hartington, was carried on the 10th of June

by a majority of thirteen, and Lord Derby immediately resigned. Lord Robert Cecil had been fortunate enough once more to escape a contested election, and received as his colleague in the representation of Stamford, the present leader of the Conservative party in the Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote.

The fall of the Conservative Government paved the way for the return of Lord Palmerston to power, after protracted negotiations between the various sections of the Liberal party. The new Administration appeared to be based upon the principle of *laissez-faire* as applied to the Government. Afraid of losing office, and opposed by a strong and united party, the only policy that seemed possible to the veteran statesman was to avoid every subject that was likely to promote discussion among his followers. Lord John Russell, having turned the Conservative Government out on the question of Reform, was compelled in 1860 to bring in a measure of his own, which, having utterly failed to create the least feeling of enthusiasm in the country, was quietly shelved before it reached Committee, and during Lord Palmerston's lifetime the Reform question was allowed to sleep. During the

debate on the second reading of this abortive measure, Lord Robert Cecil took occasion to call the attention of the House to the violent and indecent language in which Mr. Bright, after his wont, had been indulging during the Parliamentary recess, and to point out the danger, lest under an extended franchise a large number of members would be returned whose regard for the amenities of political life would be even less than that of Mr. Bright. It is only too certain that this melancholy prophecy has been in some measure fulfilled, and that from Mr. Bright to Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Rogers, there has been no inconsiderable descent. The session of 1860 is chiefly remarkable for the quarrel between the two Houses on the subject of the Paper Duties. The Government had found it necessary to demand a vote of two millions for the improvement of the national defences, and, fearful of alienating the support of the Manchester or peace-at-any-price party by this large expenditure on objects which those "friends of every country but their own" deemed neither necessary nor desirable, had hit upon the expedient of offering them a sop by repealing the Paper Duties, which had always been, for some

occult reason, a particular object of Radical detestation.

Undeterred by the opposition of the Conservative party, and the lukewarmness of the Prime Minister and many of the Government supporters, Mr. Gladstone insisted upon forcing his ill-timed measure through a reluctant House of Commons, only to see it ignominiously rejected by the Peers. It is unnecessary to say that this incident gave occasion for the usual amount of frothy invective against the House of Lords. Lord Palmerston with his usual moderation set his face resolutely against any unconstitutional agitation, and induced the House of Commons to content itself with putting on record its opinion that, although the Lords were perfectly within their right in rejecting the measure, it hoped they would not do so again.

Smarting under the blow he had received from the Upper House, Mr. Gladstone determined, by fair means or foul, to carry the repeal of the Paper Duties in 1861. His anxiety to avenge the defeat he had sustained in the previous year, and the necessity of securing the votes of the Manchester school, induced him to embark upon a line of action

far more unconstitutional than that which he charged the House of Lords with. The invariable custom had been that the different financial measures which composed the Budget should be divided into separate Bills, each Bill being passed in the regular manner through the House of Commons, and sent up to the Lords for their approval or dissent. Fearing that his Bill for the repeal of the Paper Duties would meet with the same short shrift at the hands of the Peers that it had in the previous year, Mr. Gladstone, by a clever piece of chicanery, proposed to comprise the whole of the Budget in one Bill, thereby compelling the House of Lords, who have no power of amending a money-bill, either to accept the whole income, including the repeal of the Paper Duties, or undertake the tremendous responsibility of stopping the supplies. This cunning trick was merely a variation of the old practice of "tacking" Bills which had prevailed during the worst periods of our Parliamentary history, and which every writer on the Constitution has effectually denounced. It is not to be wondered that the Opposition protested strongly against this unworthy device, and no one expressed in more forcible language his repro-

bation of this procedure than Lord Robert Cecil. As his speeches on the subject attracted considerable attention at the time, and have been frequently referred to and misrepresented since, it is thought advisable to reproduce the most important portions of them. In his speech of the 6th of May, on the resolution for the repeal of the Paper Duties, after having urged that, however desirable such a repeal might be, it could only be effected by postponing the long-desired remission of the duty on tea, and by a considerable increase of other taxes, he proceeded to comment on the strange intrigue between Ministers and the left wing of the Liberal party, which made it so necessary for them to strain every effort to pass the measure, and then passed on to consider the constitutional question between the two Houses, and the means by which Mr. Gladstone had proposed to solve it, and to point out the danger of the Constitution being tampered with to pacify the wounded vanity of a Cabinet Minister, and bolster up an alliance of Liberal factions. "My hon. friend" (Sir Stafford Northcote), he said, "showed the other night that nothing could be more vain and futile than to attempt to wipe out the acts of

the House of Lords towards this House last year by taking action against the House of Lords this year. But nothing can be more vain or futile than the device by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer attempts to fetter the action of 'the House of Lords for future years. It seems to me that the right hon. gentleman, the member for Birmingham and others, who take a strong view against the House of Lords, wholly mistake the question of last year. They seem to imagine the position was one of jurisdiction, that the two Houses were fighting in the arena by themselves, and that there was no one else whose behests they ought to consider and obey. The Government seem to think it was a fight of procedure, and forms, and precedent, and parchment. We are accused of reaction on this side of the House. It is said we fancy we are living in past centuries, and that we are applying to the present the passion of the past. But in listening to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we might be excused for thinking that we are still living and fighting in the days of the Stuarts. They do not see that behind and acting through the House of Lords, there was the great educated public opinion of the country, of which that House,

and this House too, are merely the vehicles and instruments; and not seeing that, they imagine that the fight will be settled by a conflict simply between the two Houses, and that they can fetter the action of the House of Lords by an ingenious device. Why, sir, if the occasion should again happen—which I pray may not be the case—that the House of Commons should act so madly and improperly as it acted last year, and that it should call down upon itself the condemnation of the public, the House of Lords will not be fettered by this or any other form from taking its legitimate operation. Suppose that the case of last year happened again, that the House of Commons, making no provisions for the wants of the year, had left the country with a gigantic deficit. What then? The House of Lords would alter the single Bill sent to them. They would strike out the clauses remitting duties, and send the Bill down again. And what would you do then? It would be painful to you. You would make many loud and angry speeches on the subject. But if the opinion of the country was against you, and with the House of Lords, you would again have to submit. You would have to renew the Bill, with the absence of the obnoxious

clauses, and send the Bill back in a penitential mood, and thus your new device will only force upon yourselves an additional humiliation. On the other hand, if the public opinion of the country did not support the House of Lords, the House of Lords are far too prudent ever to slight the House of Commons. But while you are so careful of the power of the House of Lords, no one seems to think that this new device will to a great extent withdraw the proposition of the Government from the discussion of the House of Commons. The wisdom of our ancestors provided that the details of every financial measure should be considered first in Committee, then at the second reading again in Committee, again on the third reading, and still again on the proposition that the Bill do pass. On all these occasions we have opportunities of discussion and amendment. But this is a device to put a stop to that in the Lords, and to leave no opportunity of discussing this question without resorting to the almost revolutionary measure of rejecting the Budget altogether. But while pursuing such a shadow, we are inflicting a damage on our own House. The right hon. gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Glad-

stone), told us the other night that he could not understand the opposition we had made to his proposal; because he had brought it forward in a spirit of conciliation." (It may be parenthetically observed that whenever Mr. Gladstone brings forward any proposal which is particularly obnoxious, both in form and substance, to his political opponents, it is invariably done "in a spirit of conciliation.") "I told him that he was keeping up a quarrel which had existed too long, and that he must know perfectly well the reason why we oppose the measure. We oppose it as we must oppose any measure that may injure the revenue and leave the wants of future years destitute of provision. But this is not all. We know that this measure has a special political character. It is the purchase-money of a political bargain. It is the hush-money to the stern and watchful guardians of the public interest to induce them to condone the backslidings of others in a new direction. I am not surprised that the right hon. gentleman should take advantage of the opportunity and offer hush-money that costs him so little. But I am surprised at the easy virtue that is satisfied with so paltry a bribe. But at all events he cannot expect

us to be passive witnesses of such a bargain, carried out by such means, and having for its effect results so detrimental to the Exchequer and to the country."

On the motion for the second reading of the financial resolutions, Lord Robert Cecil returned to his attack upon the dishonest policy of the Government, which was still further aggravated by their attempt to rush the measure through a half-empty House at an unusually late hour. Mr. Gladstone having attempted to hoodwink the Opposition by declaring that there would be plenty of opportunity on future occasions for discussing the Government policy in the matter, Lord Robert Cecil rose and said: "Sir, often as I have heard the strongest and strangest statements from the right hon. gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am absolutely aghast at the audacity which he has exhibited on the present occasion. What the Government are now proposing is, to subdue the House of Lords. This is the stage at which the Government intend to obtain power to take a course hitherto unprecedented in our financial legislation for half a century. It has been the practice, hitherto, to divide all measures of finance into separate Bills,

and to send them up separately to the House of Lords; but now, for a special political object, to avenge a special political defeat, to gratify a special pique, and to gain the doubtful votes of a special political section, it is proposed to vary the practice of half a century, and yet the right hon. gentleman stands at that table and tells us he is proposing to take the usual and invariable course. At this hour—half-past twelve—it is not the proper time to discuss whether the right hon. gentleman has taken the proper method to override the independent judgment of the House of Lords, nor whether that attempt is likely to succeed, or to reflect credit on the House of Commons, or on the Government that proposes it. This, however, is the lever that is to alter the Constitution. I believe that the measure will be utterly futile, that it will leave the Constitution exactly as it finds it, and that the power of the House of Lords to check the infatuation of the House of Commons will be entirely unaltered. Whether the course we are asked to take is wise or not, it is too important, and goes too deeply into the principles of the British Constitution to be discussed at this late hour of the night. I, therefore, only rise to protest

against the right hon. gentleman's attempt to impose this proceeding upon us as the ordinary routine financial proceeding. He is, on the contrary, taking a course which is perfectly unusual, and to which I am persuaded the House will not give its consent."

This vigorous exposure of a crafty device to impose upon the House compelled the Government to consent to the adjournment of the debate, and brought down vials of wrath from Sir George Grey and Mr. Gladstone on the member who had dared to thwart their attempt to steal a march on the Opposition. On the other hand, Mr. Disraeli spoke in terms of the highest praise of the forcible protest which Lord Robert Cecil had made. "I confess," he said, "I have listened with satisfaction to the noble lord, both last night and to-night, as it appeared to me that I never heard more constitutional opinions expressed in more effective language. I trust that on Thursday he will be able to take that part in our debates in which I think he has greatly distinguished himself."

On May 15th, Lord Robert Cecil once more protested against the unconstitutional procedure of Mr. Gladstone, and, replying to

the charge that he had asserted during a previous debate that the course taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was worthy rather of an attorney than of a statesman, he acknowledged that on that occasion he had done great injustice to the attorneys, who were a very honourable set of men, while the conduct of the Government was distinguished by legal chicanery.

Such was the true account of an incident which has been misrepresented, misdated, and misstated in almost every particular by Mr. Justin McCarthy in his brilliant "History of Our Own Times." The expressions made use of by Lord Robert Cecil on these occasions were not one whit stronger than circumstances demanded; while the apology he made to the legal profession for the unjust slur he had cast upon them by comparing the sharp practice of Mr. Gladstone to that of an attorney, was certainly sincerely meant and thoroughly justified. A lawyer who condescended to make use of the tactics employed by the Liberal Government in their dispute with the Lords, would certainly not be considered by his brother-practitioners as a high ornament of his profession. The part taken by Lord Robert Cecil in these debates confirmed his reputation as one of the

most ready debaters and most brilliant speakers in the House of Commons.

But it must not be supposed that his whole time was taken up in exposing the disingenuous tactics of her Majesty's Government. He took an active part in all questions relating to education and pauperism, and in a lengthy and important speech on Mr. Villiers' motion for a Committee to inquire into the question of the relief of the poor, he showed an intimate knowledge of the working of the Poor Laws, and expressed strong opinions on the evils of indiscriminate charity. During this session he was also found more than once inveighing against the insidious attempts of the Liberation Society to weaken the influence of the Church of England in various directions; and on the subject of the Civil Service Commission he protested strongly against the craze for examinations which at that time was beginning to lay hold of the official mind.

The session of 1862 was not occupied with subjects of any remarkable interest, the fact being that the Prime Minister was becoming more and more adverse to change, and the heterogeneous nature of the Cabinet made it particularly desirable to avoid every sub-

ject which could possibly arouse a difference of opinion. The Reform question was once more allowed to slumber, and the people were advised to rest and be thankful. During this session Lord Robert Cecil spoke frequently on such subjects as education and church-rates, and on one occasion made an elaborate speech on finance, which attracted considerable attention and praise from men on both sides of the House. On another occasion he had to expose an attempt on the part of the Government to exact or demand the income-tax from the heavily burdened tax-payer before it was legally due. Mr. Gladstone endeavoured to shelter himself behind others, but it was impossible to dispute the facts which Lord Robert Cecil brought forward, or to resist the deductions which he drew from them.

In 1863, England found herself dragged into one of those petty quarrels with foreign powers which so curiously diversify the history of Liberal Administrations. The facts were briefly these. Some naval officers who had apparently been dining rather freely came into collision with the Brazilian police authorities at Rio. The police, chiefly through ignorance, seem to have behaved

with unnecessary harshness, though it was hardly denied that the report of the British Consul grossly exaggerated the whole affair. Unfortunately, almost at the same time a complaint was made that the crew of a vessel which had been shipwrecked on the Brazilian coast had been treated with inhumanity, though in this case also the real facts were clothed in obscurity, and many different versions were current. However, the Government at once began to bluster and threaten hostilities, and it was with difficulty that war was prevented. On Mr. Bramley-Moore's motion censuring the Government for their conduct, Lord Robert Cecil spoke blaming the Ministers for the carelessness with which they had investigated the matter, and complaining of the way in which the Government truckled to the great powers and bullied the small states. "It appears to me," he said, "as if Earl Russell adopted a sort of tariff of insolence in his correspondence with foreign powers." The Government which had meekly pocketed an affront from Prussia, had been lecturing Denmark and insulting Brazil, and he concluded by saying that he for one thought the greatest glory of the country would be to treat all powers, weak and strong, with the same

justice and the same courtesy, and not to take advantage of accidental strength, which existed to-day and might pass away to-morrow, to commit an outrage upon a friendly power which she might never forget.

Shortly after this a debate on army organization occurred, in which he took part, strongly urging the necessity of a complete remodelling of our system, and denouncing small economies, which did little to lessen taxation, while they seriously impaired the efficiency of the service. "You must reduce expenditure without reducing the army," was the sum of his contribution to this important subject.

The sufferings which the unfortunate inhabitants of Poland were enduring at the hands of their Russian oppressors, excited the strongest sympathy among men of all political opinions in England. Mr. Disraeli and Lord Robert Cecil joined with the Premier and Mr. Hennessy in denouncing the cruelties and horrors committed by the Government of the Czar, and the opinion was freely expressed that England, as one of the signatories of the Treaty of Vienna, ought to protest against the gross misgovernment of Poland. Lord Palmerston's Ministry was,

however, unable to do anything but put on record officially the feelings of distress and indignation with which the English people had heard of the doings in Poland, the only apparent result of which was to produce a coolness between the Cabinets of London and St. Petersburg.

But perhaps the most interesting incident of the session of 1863 was the attempt of Mr. Gladstone to meet the deficiencies in the revenue, occasioned by his experimental finance, by proposing to tax charitable corporations. Lord Robert Cecil was among the most earnest opponents of this scheme, and it was owing to the opposition of the Conservative party, and the strong feeling of dislike which the proposal excited out of doors, that the Government was compelled to avoid certain defeat by withdrawing that part of the Budget. Mr. Gladstone had needlessly embittered the question by inveighing against many charities, and casting a slur both on the donors and the recipients of them. "The whole of his speech," to quote Lord Robert Cecil, "was a long indictment against charities, the benevolent, and the poor. From the beginning to the end of his speech he threw the whole of his impassioned

eloquence into an invective against those who gave and those who received." Charities, the hereditary possessions of the poor, had been violently attacked; the widow in her alms-house, the patient in his hospital, the most miserable of mankind were to be taxed in order to repair the finances of a Liberal Government, under the specious pretext that an exemption from taxation was equivalent to a grant of public money, and that some of these charities had been misapplied and misused.

As we have already seen, Lord Robert Cecil had always taken a most lively interest in all matters affecting the well-being of the labouring classes, and more especially in the important question of primary education. In 1864 the Education Department was in the hands of Mr. Lowe, who, with his customary vigour and lack of caution, was carrying out very considerable alterations in the method of apportioning the Government grants in aid of elementary schools. Mr. Lowe's scheme, which had the effect of placing endowed schools at a distinct disadvantage and checking bequests for educational purposes, was made the subject of an adverse motion in the House of Commons, which, having

been supported by Lord Robert Cecil and many members on both sides of the House, the Government were compelled to accept, and thereby consent to the reversal of Mr. Lowe's policy. But this was not the only occasion during the session of 1864 that Lord Robert Cecil found himself in direct antagonism to Mr. Lowe on the question of education. On April 12th he brought a most serious charge against the Vice-President of the Council, that of "mutilating the reports of her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools by excluding from them statements and opinions adverse to the educational views entertained by the Committee of Council, while matter favourable to them was admitted," and moved that this treatment of the reports was "a violation of the understanding under which the appointment of inspectors was originally sanctioned by Parliament, and leads entirely to destroy the value of their reports." This motion, which was seconded by Mr. Walter, and strongly supported by Mr. W. E. Forster and other members, was carried after a short debate and a very lame defence by Mr. Lowe, by a majority of eight. The consequence was that Mr. Lowe immediately resigned,

although both Lord Robert Cecil and the others who had acted with him in the matter entirely disclaimed any intention of personally censuring him. What they had very properly objected to was the policy of the Education Department in the matter of garbling reports, a policy which, as recent events have shown, the Department has not even yet quite abandoned, but than which nothing can be conceived more detrimental to the public service. Mr. Lowe, however, chose to construe the motion as a vote of censure on himself, and in consequence deprived the nation of his valuable services. It is right to add that a Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons, and on which Lord Robert Cecil sat, exonerated Mr. Lowe from any special personal complicity in this unlucky business, though it disclosed a state of things which was certainly not very creditable to the Department.

The wanton attack of the German powers on Denmark created great indignation in England, and gave rise to frequent questions and debates in Parliament. The Palmerston Government had employed language which was certainly calculated to encourage the

Danes to resist the demands of Austria and Prussia, and to give them the impression that in so doing they might rely upon the assistance of England. But the fact was that at that juncture England, as is customary when she is governed by Liberal Ministers, was without a friend in Europe. She had alienated Russia by her remonstrances on the subject of the Polish insurrection, and had irritated the French Emperor by her refusal to take part in a projected European Congress, and in this isolated condition it was well-nigh impossible for her to render any aid to the Danes, who were making such a gallant fight against the German powers. But the conduct of the Government in the whole matter had been weak and irresolute in the extreme, and the motion which Mr. Disraeli brought forward on July 4th, exactly expressed the feelings of the majority of Englishmen on the subject, though party ties were strong enough to cause its rejection in the House of Commons by a majority of eighteen. This motion, which was "to express to her Majesty our great regret that, while the course pursued by her Majesty's Government has failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and

independence of Denmark, it has lowered the just influence of this country in the countries of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace," was supported by a speech of considerable length and marked ability by Lord Robert Cecil. After reviewing the policy of Ministers towards Denmark, and showing the various twists and turns which this policy had taken owing to the discordant elements in the Cabinet, and the difficulty of resolving upon any settled line of conduct, he concluded by showing the advantage which would accrue to the foreign policy of the country if the House of Commons were to record its disapproval of the conduct of Ministers. "Whether or not," he contended, "any good would accrue to Denmark from the passing of this motion, at all events one thing remains—if we cannot save Denmark we may at least rescue England from the danger of suffering further dishonour for the future. We can record upon the Journals of the House a condemnation of the offence of those who betrayed Denmark and brought England into contempt; and we can rescue the country from the danger to which she is exposed during every hour that a Ministry which has shown so low an appreciation of

the national honour is suffered to continue in office."

The Government was indeed most unfortunate during this session. Not only had it very narrowly avoided a direct vote of censure, but one of its most prominent members had been obliged to resign, and Mr. Lowe's departure from the Ministry was speedily followed by that of Mr. Stansfeld under still more unpleasant circumstances. This gentleman had formed a friendship with Mazzini and other Italian conspirators, who were at that time actively engaged in plots against the Emperor of the French. During the trials of these would-be assassins in Paris, it was discovered that Mazzini was in the habit of receiving letters from one of the prisoners directed to him under an assumed name to the care of Mr. Stansfeld.

There was no imputation of course that Mr. Stansfeld was cognizant of the assassination plot, but it was felt that his conduct in mixing himself up with foreign conspirators at a time when he was holding office under the Crown was, to say the least, highly imprudent. A motion, which met with Lord Robert Cecil's support, to appoint a Committee to inquire into the circumstances of

the case was only defeated by a majority of ten (of whom Mr. Stansfeld himself was one), and Mr. Stansfeld found it advisable to retire from the Ministry.

But in the next year the Government was destined to suffer a still more severe loss, by the resignation of the able but unpopular Lord Chancellor, Lord Westbury. There had been suspicions afloat for a considerable time that the patronage appertaining to his high office had not been dispensed with that care and deliberation which the country had a right to demand, and the matter of the appointments to the Leeds Court of Bankruptcy was taken up by the House of Commons, and made the subject of a severe motion of censure on the Chancellor, resulting in the Government being compelled to accept an amendment acquitting Lord Westbury of any imputation of corrupt practices, but accusing him of bringing discredit upon the administration of his great office by a laxity of practice and a want of caution. Such a motion carried without a division in the House of Commons was not unnaturally regarded by the Chancellor as an intimation that he must resign the seals of office, which he lost no time in doing. Thus in two

sessions, no less than three members of the Liberal Government had been compelled by adverse votes in the Commons to resign their posts. Notwithstanding these rebuffs, the Government with true Whig tenacity clung to office, and though, to use a modern phrase, the mandate of the constituencies had long ago been exhausted, Ministers showed no intention of dissolving Parliament until, by the operation of the Septennial Act, they were absolutely compelled to do so.

As a natural consequence the session of 1865 was almost barren. Many interesting subjects were discussed, but unless there was some personal element to lend a mild excitement to the debates, it was difficult to keep the House together. The attention of members was directed to the general election, which was actively approaching, and in the words of a contemporary writer, "their speeches were addressed not so much to the House of Commons as to their constituents."

The most important speech made by Lord Robert Cecil during this session, was in support of a motion for a Select Committee "to inquire into the constitution of the Committee of Council on Education, and the system under which the business of the office

is conducted, and also into the best mode of extending the benefits of Government inspection and the Parliamentary grant to schools at present unassisted by the State." He urged that the powers of the Education Committee of the Privy Council had increased, were increasing, and ought to be diminished by a stricter Parliamentary control, and that the discontent and difficulty which the existing system had occasioned urgently demanded a Parliamentary inquiry. The Government consented to the appointment of the Committee, of which Lord Robert Cecil was one of the members, and which did valuable work in preparing the way for a comprehensive and rational system of education.

On June 14th, 1865, by the somewhat unexpected death of his elder brother, Lord Robert Cecil became Viscount Cranborne, and heir to the Marquisate of Salisbury.

Parliament was dissolved on July 6th, and in a lengthy review of the Parliamentary history of the past six years, the *Times* of that day alluded to the various reputations which had been made or marred during that period. After mentioning Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, and other leading members of the Conservative party, the

writer went on to say, "Lord Cranborne, better known as Lord Robert Cecil, brings great ability to the support of his party. Industrious, pugnacious, vigorous, and eloquent, Lord Cranborne has since the beginning of the Parliament made his way from comparative obscurity into the front ranks of Parliament. His occasional rashness requires to be tempered by experience ; but the virtues of prudence and moderation are more possible of attainment than the ability which is given only at birth." This tribute from a not very friendly critic of Conservative politicians was richly deserved. In 1859 Lord Robert Cecil was hardly known outside the House of Commons, while in Parliament he was merely regarded as a promising young politician and an incisive speaker. In 1865 he was universally recognized as one of the leaders of the Tory party, as a high authority on many subjects, and inferior to few in eloquence. He had shown himself able to master intricate details without losing that breadth of view which is necessary to the statesman, while he had evinced a deep interest in many subjects which were removed from the battle-ground of mere party politics.

At the general election which followed, the Liberals did not deem it advisable to contest Stamford, and, in conjunction with Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Cranborne was unanimously returned for that borough. In returning thanks to the electors, after having touched on various questions of domestic interest, he proceeded to lay down what he conceived to be the true principle which should guide England in her dealings with foreign powers; and his words on this occasion receive additional value from the fact that, thirteen years later, the speaker himself was called upon to maintain the interests of England at one of the most critical periods in the present century. "In our foreign policy," he said, "what we have to do is simply to perform our own part with honour; to abstain from a meddling diplomacy; to uphold England's honour steadily and fearlessly, and always to be rather prone to let action go along with words, than to let it lag behind them." Had such a policy been carried out by the Liberal Government, England would have been saved the humiliation of deserting Denmark, who, in her contest with the great military powers of Germany, had relied in vain on the brave words of Lord

Russell, and of witnessing her protests on behalf of the unfortunate Poles contemptuously disregarded by the autocrat to whom they were addressed.

The election of 1865 took place at a most opportune moment for the Liberal party. Lord Palmerston, though more than eighty years of age, was still vigorous and active as ever, and the longer he remained in power the more popular he became. The Conservatives hardly wished to oust the veteran statesman, who was as much opposed to violent and organic changes as the strongest Tory, while the Liberals felt that their best chance of ingratiating themselves with their constituencies was to proclaim themselves Palmerstonians. Lord Palmerston's foreign policy, taken as a whole, had commended itself to the English people, who were inclined to attribute the mistakes of the Government to other Ministers, while giving the Prime Minister credit for every success that was achieved. The majority of the electors, little suspecting the great era of change which was approaching, and having a fixed idea that a strong Conservative Government was an impossibility, gave their votes for Liberal candidates, who were to swell the

ranks of Lord Palmerston's followers in the Lower House.

Dís aliter visum. The elections were completed by the end of July. A substantial Liberal majority was secured ; but on October 18th, before the new Parliament had assembled, Lord Palmerston was dead. Looking back, after many years of Gladstonian rule, Lord Palmerston seems to belong to a by-gone age—an age when patriotism was not the exclusive possession of the Tory party, and when the appeal to the streets would have been equally distasteful to Liberal and Conservative statesmen. Looking back, we are inclined to marvel at the opposition he met with from the Conservative party, and to wonder whether, after all, they were not his truest supporters in saving him from his friends.

Lord Palmerston's death is an epoch in our history. It seemed as if the changes made in the Government were slight. Lord Russell became Premier; Mr. Forster and Mr. Goschen entered the Ministry—that was all. But the removal of Lord Palmerston meant far more than this. It meant that Mr. Gladstone became leader of the House of Commons, and Prime Minister in all but name, and that the destinies of the Liberal

party were to be entrusted to one who was daily approaching nearer to the Radical section of the party. It meant that the magnificent common sense and moderation which had restrained the revolutionist and derided the doctrinaire were gone, and that henceforth the Liberal party was to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, under the leadership of a statesman, one of whose chief characteristics is his miraculous power of imbibing new ideas. It was under these altered circumstances that the eventful session of 66 opened.

The change was apparent at once. The question of Reform, which it had been tacitly agreed the Liberal party was not to touch during Lord Palmerston's lifetime, was brought prominently forward. A paragraph in the Queen's Speech prepared the public mind for the Bill, which was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Gladstone, on March 12th. Mr. Bright and his associates had been doing their best to fan the flame of agitation by violent speeches and extravagant promises. Obscure demagogues convened meetings in obscure localities, and demanded manhood suffrage, and popular expectation looked for a measure which would

effect far greater changes in the representation than the Reform Bill of 1832. To the surprise of every one Mr. Gladstone's proposal was confined to a modest reduction of the franchise. The far more important questions of Redistribution of Seats and Definition of Boundaries were postponed till some future occasion. The dislike with which the Bill was received, even on the Liberal side of the House, irritated the Chancellor of the Exchequer beyond measure. He attempted to shift popular indignation against his opponents by representing them as enemies of the working classes. Audiences were exasperated by garbled extracts from the speeches of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Lowe, and a paltry measure which proposed a 14*l.* franchise in the counties and a 7*l.* franchise in the boroughs, was spoken of by its authors as if it were the greatest boon which a Government could confer upon the people of England. Mr. Bright, who would have been the first to denounce such an imperfect and half-hearted attempt at reform if it had been introduced by a Conservative Government, lent it the whole weight of his support, and was able to induce the Radical party to follow his lead. On the other hand, a considerable sec-

tion of the Liberal party, headed by Earl Grosvenor and Mr. Lowe, were determined that they would consent to no Bill that did not include a redistribution of seats as well as a reduction of the franchise. During the debate on the first reading of the Bill, Lord Cranborne made a most vigorous speech, in which he pointed out the trivial nature of the proposed alterations, and strongly animadverted on the injury which would be done to the rural constituencies if the measure was passed unaccompanied by a satisfactory scheme of redistribution, and pressed upon the House the great danger of carrying a Bill which not only did nothing to redress existing inequalities, but actually intensified them, by projecting a large number of urban voters into county constituencies. The reason of this was, he thought, not far to seek. "The Chancellor of the Exchequer," he argued, "has produced a measure which we should have expected from him. Throughout the whole of his political career—and he has passed through many phases of opinion, and shown great varieties of character—there is one, if I may so call it, golden link which connects them, and that is his persistent, undying hatred of the rural interest. I call

the attention of hon. gentlemen who represent counties to the manner in which this peculiar characteristic of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made itself seen in the Bill which he has presented to the House. The counties, as they at present stand with respect to the boroughs, have one or two great grievances to complain of. The first is the obvious one that they are to a great extent unrepresented. I believe sixty or seventy members ought to be added to the counties if you would bring them up to the level of the boroughs in the representation according to population. . . . But that is not the only grievance under which the counties suffer. A great grievance of which they have a right to complain is this—that throughout many counties there are a number of unrepresented towns, the inhabitants of which are purely urban in their sympathies, and as they enjoy county votes, in conjunction with the freehold vote in the represented towns, they almost entirely swamp the rural interest of the county. If reformers were just, if their pretences of equity in the distribution of political power were anything more than a sham, they would long ago have recognized the enormous inferiority to which the rural popula-

tions are subject in the electoral system. But what is the Reform Bill to do? Does it remedy this inferiority? On the contrary, it aggravates it enormously." He went on to prove in detail the injustice of the Government scheme, and the danger which would result from the sanctioning of such an imperfect measure.

The discontent of an important section of the Liberal party, and the exposure which the tactics of the Government had met with at the hands of Lord Cranborne and other speakers, led to the introduction of an amendment to the second reading of the Bill. This amendment, which was moved by Earl Grosvenor (now Duke of Westminster), and seconded by Lord Stanley (now Earl of Derby) in a speech which was admitted to be unanswerable, and which Lord Derby himself has shown his inability to controvert, declared that it was inexpedient to discuss a Bill for the reduction of the Franchise, until the House had before it the entire scheme contemplated by the Government for the amendment of the representation of the people. Lord Cranborne's speech on this occasion is extremely valuable for its bearing on later events, and it is therefore thought desirable

to give the more important portions in full. It must be premised that it was delivered after the Easter recess, a considerable portion of which had been spent by Mr. Gladstone in endeavouring to irate the working classes against his opponents by misrepresenting their position and misstating their arguments. Lord Cranborne, therefore, naturally addressed himself first of all to dispel the cloud of misrepresentation which obscured the arguments of the Opposition. "In dealing with the question before the House, the first feeling," he said, "which must press on the mind of every person who advocates the amendment to this Bill, is that of a desire to rid himself from certain odious charges which it has been the policy of the supporters of the Bill to bring against all those who oppose it. It was said very justly by the noble Lord the member for Haddingtonshire, that defamation of opponents was one of the main engines by which the Bill was supported.

"I wish, therefore, before I go into the Bill, to deal with these imputations which have been so freely made, especially by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Before entering into the discussion of this Bill, it appears to be necessary that we should make our

confession of faith with respect to the working men. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has thrown imputations of the gravest and most damaging character on all members on this side of the House, and indeed upon all those who support the amendment of the noble Earl. He was not content with throwing these imputations in the House itself, where, indeed, they appeared in a milder and more modified form, but when the debate was adjourned, as has been said, from this House to another place, and when the right hon. gentleman went down to Lancashire, where there were no opponents to answer him, and where he could make what statements he pleased without fear of being contradicted, he made accusations of a most damaging character against those who oppose this Bill. He told his audience that members on this side of the House readily and earnestly accepted the imputation that they treated the working classes as an invading army. Now, I venture to say, there is not the slightest foundation for the imputation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer threw upon us. When first he made it I protested against it, because I, in common with my hon. friend the member for Stoke, were the only speakers

who followed the right hon. gentleman in the debate, and I concluded that by some strange misapprehension he had drawn from our words, that we accepted that most damaging imputation. I have since ascertained, however, that it was not from our words that the right hon. gentleman drew the imputation he made against us, but solely, it appears, from the interpretation he was pleased to put on a cheer which he thought he heard from this side of the House. The right hon. gentleman had remarked in his speech that we looked on the working classes as an invading army. And if the right hon. gentleman imagined at the time that he heard from this side of the House some inarticulate assent to that proposition—a fact which I believe is absolutely destitute of foundation, why did he not attempt to fix the odious charge at the moment when it could be contradicted and disproved? But he goes down to Liverpool, and there, before a select audience of his friends, admitted by tickets, tells them in effect that the Conservative party looked upon the working classes as an invading army. Now, it does not seem to me that such conduct is consistent with the obligations which a leader of the House of

Commons ought to accept. If the leader of this House has occasion to impute to any of its members opinions which he deeply censures, it is on the floor of this House, and on the floor of this House alone, that he ought to impute these sentiments to them. I venture to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may search the annals of the House of Commons in vain to find a precedent for the leader of this House going down to a provincial audience, and telling them that those who oppose him in debate are guilty of sentiments on which he casts the gravest censure. I followed the right hon. gentleman in order to make my protest against the use of such weapons as he had resorted to with reference to the working classes. Sometimes we are told we distrust them, sometimes that we insult them, sometimes that we detest them, sometimes that we are anxious to exclude them from all share in the political government of the country. I can quite understand, when you have nothing to say for your Bill, and nothing to say against the amendment, it is very convenient to shower dirt on those who oppose the measure; but I will venture to say that the right. hon. gentleman cannot obtain

from the words of any speeches on this side of the House anything to justify the odious charge he has made against us. For myself, I will venture to make my confession of faith on the subject of the working classes. I feel there are two tendencies to avoid. I have heard much on the subject of the working classes in this House which, I confess, has filled me with feelings of some apprehension. It is the belief of many hon. gentlemen opposite, that the working classes are to be our future Sovereign; that they are to be the great power in the State, against which no other power will be able to stand; and it is with feelings of no small horror and disgust that I have heard from many hon. gentlemen phrases which sound, I hope unduly, like adulation of the Sovereign they expect to reign over them. Now, if there is one claim which the House of Commons has on the respect of the people of this country, it is the great historic fame it enjoys; if it has done anything to establish the present balance of power among all classes of the community, and prevent any single element in the Constitution from overpowering the rest, it is that in presence of all powers, however great and terrible they may have been, the House

of Commons has always been free and independent in its language. It never in past times, when kings were powerful, fawned upon them. It has always resisted their unjust pretences. It always refused to allow any courtierly instincts to suppress in it that solicitude for the freedom of the people of this country which it was instituted to cherish. I should deeply regret if, at a time when it is said we are practically about to change our Sovereign, and when some may think that new powers are about to rule over the country, a different spirit were to influence and inspire the House of Commons. Nothing could be more dangerous to the reputation of the House, nothing more fatal to its authority, than that it should be suspected of sycophancy to any power, either from above or below, that is likely to become predominant in the State.

“ My own feeling with respect to the working men is simply this, we have heard a great deal too much of them, as if they were different from other Englishmen. I do not understand why the nature of the poor or working men in this country should be different from that of any other Englishmen. They spring from the same race; they live under

the same climate; they are brought up under the same laws; they aspire after the same historical model which we admire ourselves, and I cannot understand why their nature is to be thought better or worse than that of other classes. I say their nature, but I say nothing of their temptations. If you apply to any class of the community special temptations, you will find that class addicted to special vices. And that is what I fear you are doing now. You are not recognizing the fact that, dealing with the working classes, you are dealing with men who are Englishmen in their nature, and who have every English virtue and vice. You are applying to them a special training, and yet refuse to look forward to the special result, which all who know human nature must inevitably expect. Those members who have sat on Election Committees will, I think, agree with me, that the franchise is a convertible commodity. It has a value indeed in two ways. The franchise has a direct money value to those who do not care much about public affairs, in the way of bribery. It has an indirect value to those who do not care much about public affairs, in the way of encouraging unjust and special class legislation.

“ If you give the franchise to those who may naturally be tempted to misuse it, you must expect that the larger proportion, who are not deeply interested in public affairs, will be liable to the temptation—I do not say they will always yield to it—of treating it as a saleable commodity.

“ The minority, more influential, more deeply interested in public affairs, will be liable to the temptation of treating it, not as a saleable commodity, but as something to get for them laws with respect to taxation and property specially favourable to them, and, therefore, dangerous to all other classes of the community.

“ That is the temptation to which you are exposing the working man by giving him the franchise. I say further, that you are exposing him to it more than other classes of the community, for this simple reason, that he is poorer. It is perfectly true that the poor have their virtues as well as the rich, and that the rich have their vices as well as the poor. But the vices of the poor have, unfortunately, a special bearing on their fitness for the exercise of political rights. The poor are liable more than the rich to be tempted if you place in their hands anything that is

pecuniarily convertible. A great deal of odium has been cast on some members of this House, because they have stated that the working classes are more venal than the rich. That is not true as to their nature, but it is true as to the temptations to which they are exposed. It is ridiculous to say that 50% will not tempt a man more, of whose income it forms a third or a fourth, than one of whose income it forms only the thirtieth or fortieth part; and therefore all bribes, whether in the direct form of money value, or in the indirect form of class legislation, must be expected to operate more on the working classes than on any other class of the community. It is not a paradox, but a simple truism, that a man who is hungry will care more for a good dinner than one who has already dined. But, Sir, that seems to me to be the simple truth about—I will not say the working classes, for I dislike to treat any particular vocation as distinct and separate in this community, but as to those who have less property in the country. In proportion as the property is small, the danger of misusing the franchise will be great. You may cover that by sentiment. You may attempt to thrust it away by vague declamations; but, as a matter of

fact, and as a matter of truth, it will remain all the same. And now, sir, having spoken in this way about the working classes, I shall sum up, as far as I can, what seems to me the result of the debate that we have had in respect to the amendment of the noble Earl. I do not know whether the idea may have been present to other members on this side of the House, but it appears to me that there has been, seemingly, a kind of demon, that has attended all the members of the Government and speakers upon that side of the House, which has forced them, in spite of themselves, always to speak in such a way as virtually to support the amendment of the noble Earl. Everything the supporters of the Bill have said has been really an argument in favour of the amendment. Take the Government first. The Government began by holding very cavalier language on the subject of the Franchise Bill. They at first did not in the least care to deal with the redistribution of seats. It is true the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not absolutely say so, but he used language which bore no other interpretation than that he intended to bring in the Seats Bill next year. Well, the right hon. gentleman was

driven from that position, and then he said the Seats Bill was to be brought in this year, but only formally, and then the right hon. gentleman again gave way, and stated that that Bill should be made a matter of standing or falling by the Government; and now we are told that a yet further step is to be made, and that the Seats Bill is to be pressed *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill, in order to satisfy the scruples of some of the supporters of the Government. I feel a difficulty, however, in believing that statement, because, as soon as I heard of it, I referred back to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a former occasion, and it appeared to me that it was impossible for a statesman to give a stronger pledge that such a course should not be taken than was then given by the right hon. gentleman; and in case the Chancellor of the Exchequer should, at a later period of the evening, make any such announcement—which I hope for his own sake he will not do—I should like to read to the House what he said at the beginning of this debate with reference to pushing forward the Seats Bill. In moving the second reading of this Bill the right hon. gentleman spoke as follows:—‘Allowing for full and free dis-

cussion regarding the subject, we could not expect that these two portions of it would be dealt with, and still less the other portions of it, within the ordinary and usual duration of the session. But, beyond that, I have stated, as is well known, that we for our parts, from motives of duty, decline to proceed with any other part of the subject until the fate of the Franchise Bill is determined. When its fate is determined, it will then be for us to review our position.'

"Now, sir, if the right hon. gentleman, in spite of that declaration, should state that he will proceed with the Seats Bill *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill, that is to say, will proceed with it before the fate of this Bill is determined, he will, in effect, be admitting that he has departed from the motives of duty which originally actuated him; and the House will take notice that such a proceeding will entirely dispose of that question of time which the right hon. gentleman made so much of when he introduced the Bill. He then insisted strongly that there were only twenty-four nights between the 12th of April and the practical close of the session, at the disposal of the Government, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, and out of these

twenty-four nights, twelve would be needed for the financial business of the Government, so that twelve only remained for the Reform Bill, and, therefore, he argued, and argued in an unanswerable way, if you once granted that he ought to have introduced the matter this session at all, that it was impossible to proceed with the Franchise Bill, and also with the Seats Bill in the present session. If, however, these rumours which are flying about are correct, and if the right hon. gentleman does pledge himself to proceed with the Seats Bill *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill, it will follow that he did not use that argument about the time of the House with any personal conviction that it was correct. I suppose the Solicitor-General for Scotland, or the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, would tell us that it was part of a Parliamentary manœuvre, and that it was impossible to get a majority without it, and according to the modern morality of Governments, I have no doubt that the right hon. gentleman and his friends will think that a perfectly satisfactory reason for having pressed upon the House of Commons an argument which they themselves did not believe. But, to use an expression once used

by a friend of the right hon. gentleman's, 'I do not like to see unnecessary humiliation,' and I think that if the right hon. gentleman makes any attempt to influence votes by such a concession, he will be submitting himself to unnecessary humiliation. It is a very painful thing to see a man eat dirt at any time, but it is a much more painful thing to see a man eat dirt when you know he will not be paid for it, and my fear is, that the right hon. gentleman will injure his own character and position by thus contradicting all his previous statements, and falsifying all his previous arguments, without gaining a single vote in the division that is impending. For such a course would be founded on an entire misconception of the nature of the objection that we have to the proceedings of the Government. What we want is not that the Seats Bill and the Franchise Bill should proceed *pari passu*, that is to say, one after the other; but what we want is that they should proceed together, that is to say, in one and the same Bill. We wish, indeed, for information, but information is not our main object. What we wish for most is : control. It is a small matter to be told what the Government will do, for the Government is not all-powerful; what we wish is, that the

form of the Bill shall be such that from the first to the last, the House of Commons shall enjoy an undisputed and undiminished control over both branches of the subject." The arguments of Lord Cranborne and other speakers had great weight with the House, and after the debate had lasted eight nights, the Government only succeeded in defeating the amendment by the narrow majority of five. Under the circumstances this was tantamount to defeat, and Mr. Gladstone was obliged to consent to the immediate introduction of a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats, a measure as incomplete and unsatisfactory in its character as that for the extension of the Franchise. Subsequently the two Bills were amalgamated and passed the second reading unanimously, but in Committee were met with a number of hostile amendments, some of which were carried, while the others were only defeated by a very few votes. At length, on the 18th of June, the unfortunate Bill was put out of its misery. Lord Dunkellin's amendment, substituting rating for rental as the basis of the Franchise, was carried against the Government by a majority of eleven, and the fate of the Ministry was sealed. It was at first supposed that the Government would dissolve

Parliament, but they were soon made aware that the country was little likely to give its support to such a meagre instalment of Reform as they were willing to propose, and it was thought wiser to resign office, and leave to a Conservative Administration the hard task of bringing the Reform controversy to a speedy and satisfactory settlement.

Lord Derby, now advanced in years, was by no means eager to resume the reins of power. Experience had taught him that the advent of a Conservative Government was the inevitable signal for the various sections of the Liberal party to make up their quarrels and join in a factious and bitter opposition to every measure that may be proposed by Ministers; but, relying on the generous support of the whole of the Tory party, and knowing that he could, without difficulty, form a Cabinet which, in ability and statesmanship, should be immeasurably superior to that which it took the place of, and feeling, moreover, that the country demanded great personal sacrifices from its public men, he consented to form his third administration. Of the younger men on the Conservative benches in the Lower House, none was more clearly destined for high office than Lord

Cranborne, and the announcement of his appointment to the important post of Secretary of State for India was received with satisfaction by men of all parties. The *Saturday Review*, in an article on the new Cabinet, alludes to the appointment thus:—"Lord Cranborne has earned his position exclusively by his Parliamentary exertions. His great ability has been recognized by common consent, and his activity has been rendered more conspicuous by a not inconsiderable admixture of pugnacity. His advancement to the high rank of Secretary of State for India has not been unexpected. It is impossible that he should be familiar with the complicated question of Eastern Administration; but, with the exception of Lord Stanley, there was no competitor in his party who possessed more special qualification for the place. In default of peculiar fitness, Lord Derby has probably exercised a sound judgment in committing the India Office to one of the acutest intellects, and most energetic characters to be found in the ranks of his party."

On the 12th of July, 1866, Lord Cranborne was, for the fifth time, elected member for Stamford without opposition, and in acknowledging the high compliment which had

been paid him, he took occasion to make an extremely conciliatory speech, pointing out the substantial agreement which existed on almost all questions of foreign, colonial, and Indian policy between moderate men on both sides of the House. He attributed the fall of the late Government to Mr. Gladstone's refusal to give the House of Commons any complete information on the Reform question, and indicated that the Conservative Ministry would treat the subject in a far more open and comprehensive spirit.

His former colleague, Sir Stafford Northcote, who held the office of President of the Board of Trade in the Derby Ministry, had resigned his seat at Stamford on being chosen as one of the representatives of North Devon, and his place in the Lincolnshire borough was taken by Sir John Hay, one of the Lords of the Admiralty.

With this election the first period of Lord Salisbury's public career closes. He had sat in the House of Commons during thirteen sessions, and by his eloquence and ability had materially contributed to the maintenance of the reputation of the first legislative assembly in the world. He had shown himself a keen critic of the shortcomings of his

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political opponents, and a valuable and industrious member of Committees. He had now to prove that he was equal to the task of administering and guiding the fortunes of our great Eastern dependency, and capable of defending the policy of a Conservative Administration against a formidable and unscrupulous Opposition.

CHAPTER III.

1866—1867.

THE Liberal Ministers had resigned towards the close of a session which they had wasted in trying to force their unsatisfactory scheme of Reform through an unwilling House of Commons, and when the Conservative Government was at length formally constituted, and those of its members who held seats in the Lower House had been re-elected by their constituents, there remained but the fag-end of the session. It was impossible for Ministers to prepare any important measures, and all that could be expected of them was that the necessary business should be got over rapidly so as to allow the House to be prorogued at the customary time.

Lord Cranborne made what may be considered his first official appearance in the House on Thursday, the 19th of July, when he brought forward the Indian Budget. Nothing, perhaps, in the whole of his career is more

remarkable than the lucid exposition he gave of the difficult and intricate subject of Indian finance when he had only held office a fortnight. The House was fairly taken by surprise at the indefatigable industry and power of acquiring facts which had enabled him in such a brief space of time to make himself master of the details of a subject in which he had hitherto taken no special interest. Friends and opponents alike, in the House and in the press, united in complimenting the new Indian Secretary on his clear and sensible exposition of the financial condition of our Eastern dependency, and in congratulating the country on obtaining the services of so industrious and able a Minister. The chief principles of policy which he laid down in this speech were the necessity of pushing on public works, especially railways, and the advisability of maintaining peace throughout the empire, and avoiding needless annexation of territory, while he earnestly repudiated the idea of diminishing the strength of the Indian army.

Parliament was prorogued on the 10th of August, to the great relief of many members, who were seriously alarmed at the riots and demonstrations on the subject of Reform,

which, in the summer of 1866, were making London anything but a desirable place of residence. A mob, incited by agitators, who in their turn were patronized by Liberal ex-Ministers and members of Parliament, had torn down the railings and trampled on the flower-beds in Hyde Park, with the object of manifesting their peculiar fitness to take part in the government of the country; while other revolutionists had held meetings in which in the same breath they demanded manhood suffrage, and bewailed the fate of the Liberal Government which had refused to reduce the franchise below 7*l*.

The recess was occupied in much the same way. Magnificent demonstrations were held, and equally magnificent resolutions passed. Mr. Gladstone, to whom more than to any one else the failure of the Reform Bill was due, was lauded to the skies, and the Tory leaders, whose views on the great question of the day were at least as liberal as those of their opponents, were assailed with every weapon that calumny and party spite could furnish. Briefless barristers, hungry journalists, petty demagogues, and obscure local politicians, under the distinguished patronage of Mr. John Stuart Mill and others who claimed to

be philosophers and statesmen, had their little day, and eagerly competed to perform those services to the country which the Liberal party so heartily appreciates and so generously rewards.

But underneath and apart from all this reckless chatter and organized agitation there was a real feeling among the masses that the time had come for a new Reform Bill to be passed ; they cared not whether it was the work of a Liberal or a Conservative Government. It was clear that the Tory Ministry, if it wished to retain office, must not let another session pass without making a strenuous effort to amend the existing form of representation, and it was equally evident to all politicians that in the actual condition of parties no satisfactory measure could be carried except by a Conservative Government.

The principle was universally admitted, but it was quite another matter for the Cabinet to draw up a measure which would be satisfactory to every member of the Tory party, and, at the same time, be of such a nature as to disarm Liberal criticism.

The next meetings of the Cabinet were held during the autumn of 1866, and rumours were industriously circulated that there were

serious differences of opinion between Ministers, which must result in a serious secession and the formation of a Tory "cave."

Rumours notwithstanding, the Conservative Ministry met Parliament on the 5th of February, 1867, with an unbroken front, and the Queen's Speech announced that a measure of Reform would be introduced. Recognizing the fact that both of the great parties in the State were agreed that a change in the electoral system was an unavoidable necessity, Mr. Disraeli proposed that the House should clear the way by passing certain resolutions embodying principles of Reform, and that having thus secured the approbation of the majority, these principles should form the basis of a Bill which the Government pledged itself to introduce without loss of time, and proceed with as rapidly as the forms of the House permitted. Nothing could have been fairer than this proposal, and nothing could have shown more conclusively that the Conservative Government was determined that the great question of Reform should be settled, not in the interests of any one party, but by an united House of Commons in the interests of the nation. But such considerations as these did not recommend themselves to the

followers of Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone, whose idea of patriotism was a Liberal Government in power, and who were chagrined at finding that all the demonstrations they had taken part in, and all the agitation they had fomented during the past months, were not likely to bring them any nearer the paradise of office. The plan of proceeding by resolutions was rejected, and the Government was compelled to bring in a Reform Bill, which the Opposition fondly hoped would unite the Liberal party, and oblige the Government to resign, or, at least, would bring into evidence the differences of opinion which were known to exist among Conservatives, and even in the Cabinet itself.

These tactics proved partially successful. On the 4th of March, Lord Derby announced in the House of Lords that the Government had determined to introduce a Reform Bill, and that in consequence of the form which it had been decided that that Bill should take, three of the most distinguished members of the Cabinet, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Cranborne, and General Peel, had resigned their offices. On the following day, Mr. Disraeli explained to the House of Commons the position of affairs in a remarkably moderate and

conciliatory speech. He declared that the whole Cabinet were agreed as to the necessity of introducing a measure of Reform, and that at first it was proposed to bring forward a very moderate Bill, but it soon became evident from the temper of the House and the state of public feeling outside that such a measure could not be carried. It was consequently resolved that a Bill of a wider and more thorough nature should be put forward, and it was this decision which caused the resignation of the three Cabinet Ministers. Mr. Disraeli spoke in feeling terms of the loss the Government had sustained by this secession, and declared that "separation from men with whom you have long been bound by a tie of the most intense interest—that of attempting to manage the affairs of a great country in the hope that you may be contributing to the public welfare—is one of the most painful and saddest incidents that can occur. I rank it among the calamities of life." He went on to say that he had lost colleagues with whom it was a pride and a pleasure to act, and referring to Lord Carnarvon, he added: "There is one among them whose commanding talents, whose clear intelligence, capacity for labour, and power

of expression will always, I am sure, qualify him for taking a leading part in the affairs of this country." Such a tribute, paid under such circumstances, does equal honour to the giver and the recipient.

After a characteristic and straightforward speech from General Peel, Lord Cranborne rose to explain the reasons which had compelled him to resign office. After expressing his dislike of the disagreeable egotism of such discussions, he proceeded to say that the heavy work which his department entailed had prevented his being able to give much time to the consideration of the details of Reform, that he had agreed in the principles embodied in the resolutions, but was not prepared to admit the interpretation which was put upon them, particularly on the fifth, which stated that "the principle of plurality of votes would facilitate the settlement of the borough franchise on an extensive basis." Under these circumstances, feeling that a Government in which there were dissensions was not a likely Government to satisfy either the House or the country, he had deemed it his duty to resign office. At the same time he declared that he should be very glad if it should be possible to pass during the session

a measure which should give satisfaction to those who were undoubtedly dissatisfied, and remove from the arena of politics a matter of such fierce and dangerous controversy. "But," he concluded by saying, "I am sure that this question never would be settled if any who entertained sincere convictions against the propositions that were made allowed the suspicion to fall upon them that, for any party or personal consideration, they were suppressing their own convictions, and acting against them. It is only by the most perfect sincerity, and by earnestly striving each in our own sphere as much as we can to take this subject out of the category of those questions which tend to give rise to party struggles, that we can get rid of a difficulty which has become serious, and remove what has also become in effect a disgrace to the efficiency of the House of Commons." This manly and statesmanlike speech was received with general approbation. It was felt that Lord Cranborne had acted his part nobly. He had not availed himself of the opportunity to inveigh against the policy which his former colleagues had decided on adopting. He had given them full credit for sincerity of motive, but had declared that he could not

go along with them. The fact was that Mr. Disraeli and Lord Cranborne differed entirely as to the mode of procedure which a Conservative Government ought to adopt under the circumstances. While agreeing as to the advisability of getting the Reform question settled, the former held that the House of Commons must guide the Government on all matters of detail; the latter considered that a Conservative Ministry ought not to allow itself to be dictated to by a Liberal majority. Much can be said for both these views. Those who believe that a Minister should adapt his policy to the exigencies of the time will naturally support Mr. Disraeli's contention, while others who deem consistency to be the highest of political virtues will applaud Lord Cranborne's determination. The one side will plead the necessity of a wise adaptability to circumstances, while the other will lay stress upon the maintenance of principle. It has been argued that the difference between the two statesmen was moral and psychological, rather than political. For ourselves, we are inclined to think that the dissimilarity of views arose more from a disparity of age than any other cause. Mr. Disraeli's experience had taught him the

paramount necessity, in the interests alike of his party and his country, of settling the question of Reform immediately, and not allowing another season of riot and agitation to afflict England. His experience had shown him that, however firmly rooted the principles of a statesman or of a party may be, the application of those principles must be varied by circumstances. He had experienced the evils of a prolonged resistance to popular demands, and he had perceived the factitious advantage which the Liberal party had obtained by their supposed monopoly of a desire for popular liberties. Lord Cranborne, on the other hand, a generation younger in point of age, and comparatively new to political, certainly to official, life, was inclined to regard public questions too much perhaps in their theoretical aspect; he was impressed by the essential distinction which exists between the two great parties in the State. He was fearful lest by assenting to a large transference of political power, the Conservative party might be signing its own death-warrant. He had taken perhaps too much in earnest the wild talk and extravagant resolutions of obscure agitators, and dreaded placing political power in the hands of those who might

be misled by noisy demagogues and place-hunting politicians. To a man of his energy and administrative capacity, the resignation of an office in which he had so highly distinguished himself, and with the details of which he had been making himself familiar, must have been no light affliction, and when this involved the separating himself from his colleagues, and to a certain extent placing himself in opposition to them, it required a considerable amount of moral courage to pass the Rubicon. But having once arrived at the conclusion that he could not conscientiously support the policy of the Government, Lord Cranborne did not hesitate to sacrifice much that would have induced many another man to stifle his convictions and suppress his scruples.

Having changed his seat on the Treasury Bench for one below the gangway, Lord Cranborne had two alternatives before him. He might have retired for awhile from political life, and suffered the debates on the Reform Bill to proceed without his intervention. Such a course would have recommended itself to one who was eager to resume office when the Reform question was settled, or to one who considered party ties more binding than the

dictates of conscience. The course which Lord Cranborne adopted, painful as it must have been to himself, was more honest. He had opposed some of the principles of the Bill in the Cabinet, and he felt it was his clear duty to continue his opposition to them to the bitter end, and as day by day the Bill became more and more thorough, as concession after concession was made to the Liberal majority, as the various elaborate checks on household suffrage were one after the other removed, Lord Cranborne's opposition became more and more determined. He was fighting a losing battle, he knew, but this did not divert him from the path of consistency and duty, and when at length the Bill passed the House of Commons he could say with truth, "*Liberravi animam meam.*" He had been compelled to oppose many of his oldest political friends, to inveigh against the policy of many with whom he had worked for years; he had seen himself held up to opprobrium as the enemy of the people, and ridiculed by cultivated and philosophical Radicals as a member of "an extra-stupid section of the stupid party;" but he pursued his course honourably and consistently, and in the end earned the praise of all those men who, whatever their own poli-

tical views, could appreciate resolution of purpose and unflinching maintenance of principle. The unexpected success of the Conservative Government in settling the difficult problem of Reform was gall and wormwood to the Liberal party. The bread had been taken out of the mouths of hungry place-seekers, the cup of power had been dashed from their lips. Posterity would for ever connect the enfranchisement of the working classes with the names of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, not with those of Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone. Disheartened at their failures, they could at first think of no means of avenging them on their victorious opponents save by employing the artifices of cavil and obstruction. Every Bill that the Government brought in was subjected to petty annoyances and paltry criticism; every appointment that was made provoked a storm of questions or hostile motions. But when the session of 1867 was brought to a close on the 21st of August, the Liberal party were as far as ever from the fair haven of office, and the autumn had to be spent in the difficult task of devising a popular cry which might induce the new constituencies to forget the claims which the Conservative party had to their gratitude and their confidence.

The necessity of sending an expedition to rescue the English captives in Abyssinia compelled Parliament to meet in November, 1867, but the business was of a formal character, the only incident being a factious attempt on the part of Mr. Lowe to discredit the Government for having taken prompt measures, a proceeding totally opposed to the dilatoriness which has characterized Liberal government under similar circumstances, and therefore particularly obnoxious to the official Liberal mind. Ministers, however, triumphed by a majority of 175, and the business of the session was adjourned to February.

Meantime, a series of unhappy events had provided the Liberal party, ever willing to make capital out of the misfortunes of their country, with the election cry they had so long been seeking for. The state of Ireland had been aggravated by the cessation of the American Civil War, which flooded the country with military adventurers, who worked upon the feelings and aroused the ardour of the impressionable and discontented population, imbued with a vague idea that emancipation from Saxon tyranny would convert Ireland into an earthly Paradise. One or

two petty skirmishes had taken place between the Fenians and the English troops, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and it was popularly supposed that the plot had been annihilated, when England was startled by the rescue of two suspected Fenians in Manchester from the van in which they were being conducted to prison, and the murder of the police-officer who had charge of them. The skill with which this daring outrage was carried out in broad daylight in a crowded street in one of the largest cities of England, proved that the Fenian conspiracy was still active, and in December it gave evidence of its vitality in a still more terrible fashion by the diabolical attempt to blow up the House of Detention at Clerkenwell, in which certain Fenians were imprisoned. We have Mr. Gladstone's own testimony that it was these terrible events which suggested to him the advisability of proposing in the House of Commons a series of resolutions affirming the necessity of immediately disestablishing and disendowing the Irish Church. The fact that a Royal Commission was at that very time sitting, and had not presented its report, proves sufficiently that the proposed legislation was not contemplated in the interests of

the country, or with the hope of pacificating Ireland, but simply and solely with the intention of reuniting the Liberal party, and furnishing them with a popular cry for the approaching general election.

Accordingly, almost immediately after Parliament had reassembled in February, 1868, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of his intention to move that the House resolve itself into Committee, for the purpose of considering the condition of the Established Church in Ireland, and on the 30th of March the debate on the Irish Church commenced. It is necessary to remark that about a fortnight before this a considerable change had taken place in the personnel of the Ministry, by the retirement of Lord Derby and the elevation of Mr. Disraeli to the Premiership. This change necessitated others, the most important being the substitution of Lord Cairns for Lord Chelmsford as Chancellor.

The Government, through Lord Stanley, opposed Mr. Gladstone's proposition, and suggested that whatever changes might be necessary in the status and endowment of the Irish Church, the question ought to stand over for decision until the new Parliament met. By that time it was confidently expected

that the Royal Commission would have presented their report, and Parliament would be placed in possession of full data on the subject. Nothing could have been fairer than this contention. The business of the session of 1868 was to complete the work of Parliamentary Reform, by passing Bills for Scotland and Ireland, and devising a satisfactory method of checking bribery at elections; and Parliament was bound to dissolve itself as quickly as possible, to give the new electors an opportunity of exercising the franchise. It was, moreover, highly undesirable that Parliament should be asked to express its opinion upon so important and complicated a subject before it had time to acquire the necessary information, or master any of the details. This moribund Parliament, which by the very passing of the Reform Bill had confessed itself a very imperfect representation of the people, was asked to delay its own dissolution, and to give its sanction to a grave constitutional change, in order that the Liberal party might snatch the reins of power from the hands of their opponents. The history of England does not record a more disgraceful piece of party manœuvring than this.

Lord Cranborne took part in the first night's debate, and expressed the strongest objections to Mr. Gladstone's proposal, while at the same time he contended that, in his opinion, the Government ought to have met it with a direct negative, instead of by an amendment which might seem in some degree to admit the force of Mr. Gladstone's arguments, and he declared that he could not vote for the amendment, though he should give a hearty negative to the original motion. He proceeded to defend the principle of an Established Church in eloquent terms. "The right hon. gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) spoke of a sentiment in favour of an Established Church with respect, although he avowed that he himself had escaped from its spell, and felt bound to oppose it now. I must frankly avow that I am not of his opinion, and that that sentiment still exercises a hold over me that I regard as sacred. It appears to me that there is no problem in the development of modern society more important and more difficult, and yet which touches more deeply the sacred springs of human feeling and the most important interests of human society, than the connection that exists between Church and State. Under these circumstances

I cannot look upon the sentiment in favour of the Established Church as a thing to be praised, but to be disregarded. This sentiment appears to me to be bound up with our national life, to enter deeply into our Constitution, and, even if no higher motives restrained us, we could not, in my opinion, abandon it without imperilling all the greatness, and all the material advantages of which we are so proud. And therefore, although the principle involved in that sentiment be applied to a part of the United Kingdom where it is severely tested, and where we have to rely more upon abstract principle, and less upon expediency than I could have wished, still my feeling is that, even as applied to the case of Ireland, it is a principle which I will not desert; it is a principle which has done so much good in past times; it is a principle from which we may hope so much hereafter; it is a principle which I have always supported, that, even if I were inclined to doubt of its soundness, it would not be in this moment of its trial and adversity that I would shrink from upholding it. I do not wish to go to a lower motive; I should rather choose to rely upon the importance of maintaining the connection between Church and

State, and of having some organization by public authority of higher principles than the mere material instincts which ordinarily guide politicians. I would rather look to something more than to the ordinary dictates of political economy, or to the necessities of our political organization. But, if I did seek for lower motives, I think I could easily find them. I confess that I doubt whether the object for which this great change is to be effected would be attained, even were the sacrifice made. We seek for peace—peace above all things is what we desire in Ireland. And you are going to do, what? to secure peace? Why you are going to draw down upon yourselves the certain and bitter enmity of one-third of the population—the most able, the most wealthy, and the most influential portion of the population of Ireland, without your having any security whatever that you will conciliate the remainder of that population.”

This eloquent speech derives a special interest from the fact that it was the last occasion on which Lord Cranborne addressed the House of Commons. On the 3rd of April, Mr. Gladstone's resolution was carried by a majority of fifty-six, and the House imme-

diately adjourned until the 20th of April. During the interval, on the 12th of April, the Marquis of Salisbury died, and Lord Cranborne became a member of the House of Lords. The writ for Stamford was issued on the 29th of April, and on the 7th of May the new Marquis of Salisbury took his seat in the hereditary chamber.

His career in the House of Commons had been a brilliant and an honourable one. He had early made his mark as an eloquent speaker and a ready and effective debater, and it was not long before he developed the qualities of a statesman and a leader. He had taken an active interest in many questions which lay outside the domain of mere party politics, and had acquired a reputation as an authority on educational and ecclesiastical subjects. During his short term of office he had given proofs of remarkable administrative capacity, and had fully sustained the reputation he had won as a man of capacious and original mind, and unflagging industry. His opponents had always paid the highest tribute to his honesty of purpose and complete freedom from vulgar ambition, and those of his own party from whom he differed recognized and respected

his motives, and looked confidently forward to the time when he would once more be holding high office in a Conservative Administration. The *Times* of the 14th of April, in a leading article on the death of the Marquis of Salisbury, after paying a just tribute to the deceased statesman, pointed out that the chief importance of his death lay in the elevation to the House of Lords of his gifted son, of whom the writer speaks in terms of high encomium. "He has proved himself in the Commons an orator, an administrator, and, it must be added, a thinker of the first class; and whereas others give promise at their entrance into public life too often falsified in after-years, the new Lord Salisbury has developed a higher character by experience and familiarity with the problems of statesmanship than even his friends at first expected. All were assured of his ability, but few could have anticipated the breadth of view he manifested during the short time in which he controlled the destinies of the Indian Empire."

CHAPTER IV.

1868—1874.

LORD SALISBURY'S apprenticeship in the House of Commons had prepared him for at once taking a leading part in the debates in the House of Lords. Accordingly, the very first night after he had taken his seat as a peer, he addressed the House on a colonial subject, and before the session was over he had acquired a high reputation in the hereditary chamber. Lord Salisbury, at all events, would not have endorsed the well-known words of Walpole on his elevation to the peerage; though he may have regretted that he had for ever quitted that assembly in which he had won his first triumphs, he by no means considered that his peerage would render him insignificant. For an accomplished speaker and a practised debater the House of Lords affords ample opportunities, while the absence of much of that bitter and

factions party-spirit which is unhappily a marked feature of the debates in the Commons, causes arguments and oratory to have greater weight there than in the Lower House. In 1868 the Conservative party stood in need of debating power in the Lords. Lord Derby, it was only too evident, could not long continue to take part in the debates of that assembly, which his genius and eloquence had so long adorned, and almost the only speaker of real mark was the Chancellor, Lord Cairns, though the Conservatives might almost reckon amongst their number the veteran Reformer, Earl Grey, who had no love for modern Radicalism, and the episcopal bench included amongst its occupants the greatest of living orators, the Bishop of Peterborough.

The progress of what is known as Ritualism in the Church of England was a subject which agitated the public mind not a little at this period, and a Royal Commission had been appointed in 1867 to inquire into the state of the law on Ritual, and offer suggestions. It had presented its report, and there was an anxiety in some quarters that legislative effect should be given to the recommendations of the Commissioners. On

the 15th of May a conversation on the subject took place in the Lords, during which Lord Salisbury took occasion to protest against the extreme views of Lord Shaftesbury, and urge the Lords not to precipitate themselves into a course of hasty legislation. "If ever," he said, "there is a subject that requires to be treated with care and caution and deliberation, it is those matters which, in themselves, may be thought unimportant, but which in their bearing on the belief of religious men in this country are supremely important, and likely, if dealt with rashly and inconsiderately, to precipitate divisions. . . . It is precisely because the matters in dispute are not disputed on account of their intrinsic value, but because they are supposed to be important as symbols of the doctrines to which we all attach the deepest value—it is for that reason that they have taken a deep hold of the feeling of the country, and have excited the earnest fears and apprehensions of my noble friend; and it is on that account I am afraid they will excite fears and apprehensions on the other side, which will produce violent dissensions in the Church of England if violent proceedings are taken." On many other occasions, as will be seen later on, Lord Salisbury protested

against any narrowing of the national Church by introducing vexatious restrictions and regulations which would be barren of any results except irritation and controversy, and would only drive into extremes those who found themselves conscientiously unable to obey the new laws.

Meanwhile Mr. Gladstone had succeeded in carrying his resolutions on the Irish Church through the House of Commons, and had brought in a Bill to prevent new appointments being made in the Church of Ireland, pending the settlement of the question of disestablishment. This measure was passed by considerable majorities through the Lower House, and came on for the second reading in the Lords on the 25th of June. The debate was adjourned, and the next night Lord Salisbury delivered a powerful speech against the Bill. He showed that the course proposed was unprecedented, and that under the guise of a mere suspending Bill, an attempt was being made to force the new Parliament to complete the work of disestablishment, and by a side-wind to procure the sanction of the Lords to the principles involved in it. He went on to argue that this was not a case where compromise was possible. The advocates of the measure would be

content with nothing less than the complete disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church, as they had proved by rejecting the proposal that the question should stand over until the Royal Commission had presented its report. Turning to the merits of the scheme, he denied that there was any essential distinction between public and private property, and asserted that the property of a corporation should be as sacred as that of an individual. There were many reasons, he admitted, for reforming the Irish Church, but the only argument for disendowing her was that a certain number of persons envied and grudged her the possession of the property, and to admit the force of such an argument was to endanger the tenure of all kinds of property. "I feel convinced," he said, "that if you familiarize the minds of the people of this country with the idea of yielding to the mere display of discontent, and the mere ostentation of envy, you will cause injury to property otherwise secure, and it is not with corporate property that this principle will end."

Passing on to the question of expediency, he denied that the Irish Church was as unpopular as had been contended, and protested against applying the test of numbers to the

question of an Established Church, which, he urged, would prove equally well that the Church in Wales and in Cornwall ought to be disestablished. He next attacked the argument which Mr. Gladstone and others had strenuously maintained, that the destruction of the Irish Church would conciliate the Irish, and put an end to agitation. "Your proposal," he said, "seems to be to still the waters of this agitating time, as the ancient Greeks were wont to do, by offering up a victim to the avenging deities; but are you quite sure that the avenging deities are prepared to accept your offering? I have heard many elaborate attempts to prove that Fenianism is the true necessity that has caused this movement. But is it not an extraordinary phenomenon that for the first time in the history of rebellion, we have rebels who do not know the real motive which is the cause of their rebellion! This is the age of rebellions—we have seen them in all countries—but I have never before heard of one where they were at a loss to state the grievances they desired to see removed. You tell us that, though the Fenians never raised a cry against the Established Church, it is the Established Church

which is really at the bottom of their agitation. It is impossible to conceal from ourselves that something very different is at the bottom of the Fenian movement; and I suspect when the Irish people hear that many Liberal landlords have joined in this attack on the Irish Church, they will say the reason is that they think they will save themselves by making the parson their Jonah, and throwing him overboard. My Lords, it is against the land, and not against the Church that this Fenian agitation is really directed. You offer them what they do not ask for; you offer them that which will not pacify them. Talk of the monuments of conquest, the landlord is a much more complete monument of conquest than the clergyman. The clergyman does not hurt the peasant; if the clergyman be taken away, the peasant would be no richer, but rather poorer; but the landlord holds the property which the peasant in his traditions well remembers once to have belonged to his sept. If you seek to appease the danger by mere concession; if you yield to the mere demands of anger; or, to use the euphemistic language we have heard, if Fenian outrages are to make you reason calmly and dispassionately, it is to the land-

lord, and not to the clergyman that you should really turn your attention."

How clearly have the events of the last few years borne out the truth of this contention, and proved the utter futility of the attempt to lay the demon of Irish agitation by destroying the Protestant Church! That concession to rebellion had the effect of encouraging further demands, and confiscation has not ended with ecclesiastical revenues or corporate property. Lord Salisbury concluded his speech with a vigorous protest against the mischievous theory which had been frequently put forward during the course of the debate that the House of Lords was obliged to pass a Bill which had been approved of by considerable majorities in the Commons. "We have heard," he said, "from the opposite bench several very animated appeals to this House, and several constitutional lectures as to our duties. The noble earl (Lord Clarendon) went so far, as I understood him, as to tell us that we must watch public opinion more closely, and pay greater attention to the majorities of the other House of Parliament. My Lords, it occurs to me to ask the noble earl whether he has considered for what purpose this

House exists, and whether he would be willing to go through the humiliation of being a mere echo and supple tool of the other House, in order to secure for himself the luxury of mock legislation? I agree with my noble friend the noble earl below me (Lord Derby) that it were better not to be than to submit to such slavery. I have heard many prophecies as to the conduct of this House. I am not blind to the difficulties of its position in this peculiar age; I am not blind to the peculiar obligations which lie on the members of this House in consequence of the fixed and unalterable constitution of this House. I quite admit—every one must admit—that when the opinion of your countrymen has declared itself, and you see that their convictions—their firm, deliberate, sustained convictions—are in favour of any course, I do not for a moment deny that it is your duty to yield. It may not be a pleasant process; it may even make some of you wish that some other arrangement were existing; but it is quite clear that whereas a member of a Government, when asked to do that which is contrary to his convictions, may resign, and a member of the Commons, when asked to support any measure contrary

to his convictions, may abandon his seat, no such course as this is open to your Lordships; and therefore on these rare and great occasions on which the national mind has fully declared itself, I do not doubt your Lordships would yield to the opinion of the country; otherwise, the machinery of government could not be carried on. But there is an enormous step between that and being the mere echo of the House of Commons. . . . I have no fear of the conduct of the House of Lords in this respect. I am quite sure, whatever judgment may be passed on us, whatever predictions may be made, be your term of existence long or short, you will never consent to act except as a free, independent House of the Legislature, and that you will consider any other more timid or subservient course as at once unworthy of your traditions, unworthy of your honour, and, most of all, unworthy of the nation you serve. I admit that the future is full of difficulty, and that on many questions of doubt and perplexity which may be submitted to the House, your prudence and judgment may be sorely taxed; but I am quite clear that with respect to this Bill, so vague, unmeaning, ill-constructed, and having behind

it projects of change so vast, so crude, so sweeping, your Lordships can have but one duty, and that is to reject it." If the necessity of a second chamber be admitted, the position taken up by Lord Salisbury must be pronounced to be impregnable. It amounted to this—that the Lords were willing to give way to the voice of the nation when that voice was clearly and unmistakably heard, but it refused to admit that the House of Commons was invariably correct in interpreting that voice. The House of Commons, for example, that was elected in 1865 had received no mandate from the people to deal with the Irish Church question, and the Lords were perfectly right in demanding that before any irrevocable measure was passed, the nation should be asked its opinion, and that if that opinion was in favour of disestablishment, the Lords would deem it their duty to acquiesce. Accordingly when the general election of 1868 had shown that such was the general desire, and when the Bill for Disestablishing and Disendowing the Irish Church had passed the House of Commons by very large majorities, Lord Salisbury strongly deprecated any further resistance on the part of the Lords, and it was mainly by his

judicious advice that the Bill obtained a second reading in the Upper House, and the Peers were able to effect very considerable improvements in the measure while it was passing through Committee. By this means a prolonged contest between the two Houses was avoided, and somewhat better terms were obtained for the disestablished church.

Lord Salisbury, as we have seen, had very clear views as to the power and functions of the House of Lords. He had no desire that it should sink into a mere echo of the Commons, and forego its legislative rights through fear of provoking the threats of demagogues and revolutionists "et propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas." But he was perfectly willing to admit that there were changes, both in its composition and procedure, which might be beneficially made, and on two occasions during this period we find him taking a prominent part in schemes for the improvement of our Parliamentary system. In March, 1869, he brought in a Bill for the remedy of a recognized evil in our mode of legislation. At the present time it is necessary that a measure to become law should pass both Houses of Parliament during the same session, the inevitable result of which is that many Bills which have

received the assent of one House are dropped for a year because the other Chamber has not got sufficient time to consider them. When August comes, all Bills which have not gone through all stages in both Houses must be dropped, and the whole work gone over again the following year. Such a custom is absurd and indefensible, and has on many occasions proved injurious to the public interest. This evil Lord Salisbury proposed to remedy by his Parliamentary Proceedings Bill, which provided that any measure which had passed one House could be considered by the other House in the ensuing session, provided that the assent of the Crown and the two Houses was obtained to this procedure. In addition to the great advantages of this scheme which have been already mentioned, it would have prevented Bills being, as is too often the case, hastily and carelessly considered at the fag-end of the session, a system which frequently involves the introduction of a supplementary or amending measure a year or two later. Lord Salisbury's Bill was read a second time in the Lords, and referred to a joint Committee of both Houses. The Liberal Ministry, however, took no steps to press this most necessary reform, and the result was

that the country has still to put up with the old cumbersome and tedious system.

The other occasion was on April 9th in the same year, when Lord Russell brought in a Bill for the creation of a certain number of Life Peerages. The measure laid down stringent rules as to the number of such peerages that might be created in any one year, and as to the total number of Life Peers who might sit at the same time, and was introduced in a moderate and sensible speech, which conciliated many who were opposed to any violent or sweeping changes in the Upper Chamber. Lord Salisbury rose after Earl Russell, and declared his hearty approval of the principle of the measure, which, in his opinion, required extension rather than restriction. Speaking with hesitation as a young member of the House, he argued that the chief deficiency in the House of Lords was a want of representatives of mercantile and industrial interests, who would bring their practical knowledge and experience to bear on many subjects which came before the Lords, especially such as related to the health and moral condition of the people. He believed that the Bill if carried would make the House strong in the support of public opinion, strong in its influ-

ence with the country, strong in the character and ability of those who compose it, and strong in its relation to the other powers of the Constitution. "We must try," he said in conclusion, "to impress on the country the fact that because we are not an elective House, we are not a bit the less a representative House; and not until the constitution of the House plainly reveals that fact shall we be able to retain permanently, in face of the advances of the House of Commons, the ancient privileges and constitution of this House. I feel that the question is an important one, and I am the more anxious to say a few words upon it, because I differ in opinion from those with whom I ordinarily concur. The future of the House of Lords is one of great hope as regards its stability, and the wisdom of your Lordships at this particular crisis of time in dealing with its constitution will decide how far the power of this House shall remain intact, or how far it shall sink before the advancing power of the House of Commons."

The history of the Life Peerages Bill is a strange one. It was read a second time without a division, and carefully considered in Committee, Lord Salisbury taking an active part in the discussion, and vigorously supporting the

principle on which it was based. But before the third reading came on, an untoward incident occurred. Mr. Bright, who was a member of the Liberal Cabinet, had addressed an intemperate and insolent letter to one of his constituents on the subject of the House of Lords, in which, after threatening the Peers, and hinting that, if they rejected the Irish Church Bill, the constitution and powers of the House of Lords would be called in question, he indulged in a little cheap and ill-timed sarcasm at "the childish tinkering about life-peerages." This letter, although disclaimed by his colleagues, had a disastrous effect on the Life Peerages Bill. The Government had shown no disposition to take up the matter warmly, and after Mr. Bright's remarks on the subject, it was felt that the measure would have very little chance in the Lower House. Accordingly, when Lord Russell moved the third reading he encountered a considerable amount of opposition, and after a short debate it was rejected by 106 to 76. Thus a politician whose name is connected with no single piece of valuable constructive legislation was able to retard an important and much-needed reform by an ill-advised rudeness.

The General Election of 1868 has already

been alluded to. It is only necessary to say that the people, carried away by the magnificent promises made to them by Liberal candidates, and believing that Ireland was to be tranquillized by a series of heroic concessions, returned a large majority of members pledged to support the Liberal party. Mr. Disraeli resigned office without waiting to meet the new Parliament, and Mr. Gladstone became Premier. The Irish Church Bill was finally passed on July 23rd, 1869, and on August 11th Parliament was prorogued.

In October Lord Derby died, and though his death at an advanced age can hardly be said to have greatly affected the cause of politics, it had an importance of another kind. For seventeen years he had held the honoured post of Chancellor of the University of Oxford. It had been a troubled and changeful period in Academic History, and the patience and good temper of the Chancellor must have been frequently severely tried by the foolish and ignorant attacks on the University by persons who made up for want of knowledge by excess of bitterness, and hardly less by the fatuous defence which every time-honoured abuse received from a certain section of

Oxford Tories. Nor was there any likelihood that the autumn of 1869 would see the beginning of a new era of peaceful rest and quiet, unobtrusive work for Oxford. The zeal of Reformers was still unsatisfied, and the criticisms on Oxford ways and Oxford methods were as multifarious and as severe as ever. It was universally felt that to a great extent the future of the University must depend on the choice she made of a successor to Lord Derby. Hardly was the Chancellor dead before University opinion testified unmistakably in favour of Lord Salisbury. And it was hardly possible that a wiser choice could have been made. As an orator and debater of no ordinary power, as an enlightened and high-principled statesman, as an accomplished man of letters, as an earnest student, as a sincere and devout Churchman, and as one who had given frequent proofs of the deep interest he took in his University, Lord Salisbury was the man to whom Oxford naturally looked to fill the vacant office. Accordingly, in a Convocation holden on November 12th, 1869, the Marquis of Salisbury was unanimously elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford.¹ The

¹ When the votes were counted, it was discovered that one gentleman, either through error or to "create

ceremony of installation took place in the following June amidst crowds of distinguished members of the University assembled from all parts of the kingdom to do honour to the new Chancellor.

From the Installation Ode, composed for the occasion by Sir Francis Doyle, the Professor of Poetry, and sung by a carefully-selected choir, it is worth while to quote a few stanzas :—

“When Spain’s uncounted keels essay’d
To crush the soul of our wild sea,
Even as her brooding power had weigh’d
Upon the spirit of the free ;
Who knows not how the people rose,
As the deep rises in its flow,
Lifting the great white foam, that shows
An ocean’s strength below ?

“So moved thy sire in light above
The mighty wave of England’s heart,
One with it, brighten’d by its love,
Too wise to dream of life apart.
Seek thou, as he sought, to make Fame
An echo of wide thoughts, a glow
That like some keen electric flame
Sways pulsing to and fro.

a diversion,” had voted for Lord Carnarvon, who had never been proposed for the office.

“ So shalt thou face the struggle stern
That lies before thee on thy way,
And victor thus, or vanquish'd, earn
A wreath more lasting than the bay.
So shalt thou find that other feet
Tread other paths to the same end,
And, under one high influence, meet
Each true man as a friend.”

It is needless to say that the University has never regretted the choice she made in 1869. In Lord Salisbury she has found a Chancellor who in the truest sense has befriended and supported Oxford. He has shown himself skilful in detecting flaws in her constitution and abuses in her system, and has been ready to assent to and even inaugurate changes and reforms where they have been proved to be necessary, while at the same time he has cherished a reverential love for Oxford ways and Oxford traditions, and has strenuously resisted attempts which have been made to remodel her constitution after the fashion of some German University, or needlessly interfere with her powers of self-government, and degrade her to the level of a superior Board School.

The Disestablishment of the Church did not act as a charm to still the angry waves

of Irish sedition, and the winter of 1869 showed that outrages against man and beast still formed part of the Fenian programme. The sop had been received, but the Cerberus was as untamed as ever. And so the Government which had tried to rule Ireland by conciliating disaffection and destroying one of the most conspicuous marks of English ascendancy, was compelled, early in the session of 1870, to introduce a stringent Peace Preservation Bill, which, owing to the absence of an organized Irish party, was passed by the Lower House without much difficulty. When it reached the Upper House, Lord Salisbury, in a speech which even his political opponents characterized as temperate and patriotic, congratulated the Liberal party on the fact that some of its members were awaking from the dream in which they had been so long indulging, and were beginning to see that such fierce outbursts of crime as those which had been disgracing Ireland must be repressed sternly and severely. "It has been their idea," he said, "for almost a generation, that conciliatory and remedial measures only were necessary to the solution of the Irish problem. I trust that they are awakening from that

dream. They now learn that after one hundred years of that treatment, Ireland is less loyal and less orderly than she was when George III. ascended the throne. The present emergency will compel them to recognize the fact, which lies at the bottom of the Irish difficulty, that in that country you are dealing with a population of a lower civilization in many points than your own, that the liberty—that representative government—that the almost unbounded licence of speech and action, which is healthy aliment to our own people, is a dangerous stimulant to the social condition of the Irish nation. In this country you are content—you have long been content—only to guide; in Ireland it is essential that you should govern. Until you have learnt that—until you have established it deeply in the mind of the Irish people—you will not get them to listen to your views and arguments, nor will you gain the full result of these remedial measures which, as far as they are just, I heartily approve of. I cannot conclude better than by using the words of one who has passed from us, and who has been touchingly alluded to in the course of this debate. You must, in the words of Lord Stanley forty years ago, when he was a

member of the House of Commons and a member of a Liberal Ministry,—you must “teach the Irish people to fear the law before you can induce them to like it.” I fear that the Government is doing the opposite thing. I fear that you have been too sanguine in the pursuit of remedial and conciliatory measures, sacrificing principles, loyal friends, and all the conditions of the Constitution, in this endeavour to conciliate; and until this moment they have trod with very lagging and hesitating steps in the necessary path of executive vigour. I am bound, however, to acknowledge that this Bill is a great step in advance, and I heartily thank the Government for it.”

The chief legislative work of the Session of 1870 was the Irish Land Act, which the Conservative party, while objecting to many of its provisions, and wisely sceptical as to the great results it was expected to accomplish, allowed to pass unopposed. The Lords received it in the same spirit, and employed themselves in correcting some of the most glaring faults it contained, hoping thereby to make it more acceptable to those whom it would mainly affect, and who would have the responsibility of carrying out its

provisions. In this work of amendment Lord Salisbury took an active part, and the value of his suggestions and alterations was gratefully recognized by Ministers. From his speech on the second reading of the Bill, the following extract, conceived in the happiest vein of friendly sarcasm, is taken. During the debate some of those who had spoken against the Bill had alleged that it was entirely opposed to all the recognized laws of political economy, while its supporters had as confidently asserted that its provisions were completely in harmony with the principles of that science. Lord Salisbury had his own opinions on the subject, and was disposed to judge the Bill on its merits, rather than by any abstract rules. "When I am told," he said, "that a thing is contrary to the doctrines of political economy, I confess that I never exactly know what the expression means. Political economy is an oracle whose utterances we profoundly respect; but which, like a certain oracle of old, is apt to suit its utterances to the wishes of those who have the guardianship of it for the time being. On a certain occasion when the Delphic Oracle was in the power of the Macedonian army, its utterances were said to be 'Philip-

pized,' and I am afraid that the utterances of political economy nowadays are only too apt to be 'Gladstonized.' When I first entered Parliament, it used to be regarded as an axiom that could not be controverted, that commercial treaties were founded on erroneous and unsound principles, and could not be for the benefit of the countries entering into them. Circumstances, however, have changed; political economy has reviewed its doctrines, and commercial treaties are regarded as the most orthodox things imaginable. Again, some time ago, it was a fundamental doctrine of political economy that Government should not enter into manufacturing operations, whereas it is now actually proposed that our Government shall manufacture coin for foreign states, and I presume political economy has altered its language accordingly. And so it is with regard to liberty of contract. Formerly, it was supposed that political economy required that the power of contract should be unrestricted; whereas now nothing can be more admirable or more just than that people should be deprived of that power. Amid all the vagueness and uncertainty that prevails upon the subject, there is at least one proposition on which we feel absolutely certain,

and that is that political economy is the property of the Liberal party, and that, therefore, its doctrines must take whatever form may best suit their views for the time being."

A considerable number of measures of social interest were discussed in the House of Lords during this session, and some of them were successfully passed through both Houses, though the anxiety of the Liberal Government to please the extreme section of their supporters by inaugurating an era of violent change prevented their being able to give sufficient time or attention to smaller and more practical measures of reform. Lord Salisbury took an active share in promoting many of these Bills, and his name was honourably connected with the Attorneys' and Solicitors' Remuneration Act, and the Medical Officers' Superannuation Act, and many other measures which have proved most beneficial to the classes affected, while in 1871 he took charge of Sir John Lubbock's Bank Holidays Bill, and successfully piloted it through the Upper House.

When the session of 1871 opened it was obvious that the Liberal Government was sensibly weakened. It had managed by its rare virtues, as well as by its frequent shortcomings, to alienate large and important sec-

tions of the English people. The Education Act of Mr. Forster was a compromise that pleased no one, least of all the political Dissenters who had hailed the disestablishment of the Irish Church as an indication that Mr. Gladstone was prepared to join in their attack on the Church of England, and, if not actually destroy its connection with the State, at all events diminish its power and weaken its influence, as far as secular legislation can impair the power and influence of a religious body. A far larger and more patriotic class were indignant at the cowardly fashion in which English Ministers had accepted the denunciation of the Black Sea Treaty by the Czar, while the peace-at-any-price party were angry at the determination announced by the Government to maintain the integrity and independence of Belgium at all hazards. Men, again, who belonged to no party, but were the friends of law and order, were disgusted to find that the policy of conciliation, which was to have wrought such marvellous and beneficial changes in Ireland, had only succeeded in weakening the hold of England in that country, in dispiriting the loyalists and encouraging further demands from the anti-English party.

At home, too, there was a deep-rooted distrust of a Government which appeared to rely for its continued existence on being able to produce at least one measure of organic change per annum. Events on the Continent were calculated to intensify this alarm, and the existence of a knot of men, some of whom held seats in Parliament, who avowed their desire for a Republican form of Government, was producing a reaction by no means conducive to the welfare of the Liberal Ministry, many of whose members had contrived to become personally unpopular with large classes of their fellow-countrymen.

The Government provided two measures of considerable importance, as *pièces de résistance*, for the legislative banquet of 1871, in addition to a Coercion Bill for Ireland, a usual feature during a period of conciliation under a Liberal Government. The first of these Bills was one for the reform and re-organization of the army, one of the features of which was the abolition of purchase. The Bill met with the greatest opposition in the House of Commons, until at length the Government found themselves obliged to limit it to a measure for the abolition of purchase, and even after that, it only passed

through the Lower House by a majority of fifty-eight, the normal Government majority being at that time over 100. Under these circumstances it reached the House of Lords, where it was met by a resolution, moved by the Duke of Richmond, declining to proceed with the truncated measure until the House was put in possession of the whole plan of the Government. This amendment was carried by a majority of twenty-five, and the Purchase Bill was shelved, to all appearance, till the next session, when it was suddenly announced that the Queen, by the advice of her Ministers, had issued a Royal Warrant abolishing purchase. A storm of disapprobation from all but the most servile followers of the Government greeted this high-handed and arbitrary act. No one questioned the legal right of the Sovereign in the matter, and no one blamed her for following the advice of her responsible Ministers, but that a Liberal Government should revive an antiquated prerogative of the Crown, for the sake of obtaining a party triumph over their opponents, was monstrous in the eyes of all impartial men; while cool-headed partisans of the Ministry saw that the temporary victory would make the coming defeat only the more crushing

and complete. Mr. Fawcett, who had already made his mark in the House of Commons as an independent thinker and a calm reasoner, at once entered his protest against this unconstitutional act, and the complaisance with which it had been received by a large section of the Liberal party, and contrasted their attitude when in opposition with what it was now they were in office. "I venture to assert," he said, "that if things had been changed in this House, if the great parties had crossed over, and the right hon. member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) had appealed to royal prerogative, we should have heard—from a quarter which I need not more particularize—eloquent and passionate denunciations about this high-handed act of a Tory Minister; and that denunciation would certainly have been deserved by some who have approved of the Royal Warrant." Mr. Horsman, Mr. Bouverie, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and other independent Liberal members joined in protesting against an act which scarcely found an apologist outside the ranks of those who were comprised, or hoped shortly to be comprised, within the limits of the Ministry.

In the House of Lords a motion censuring

the Government for their abuse of power was carried by a majority of eighty, and in the discussion of the subject Lord Salisbury made a vigorous and eloquent speech, in which he drew attention to the extreme constitutional importance of the question, and the dangerous precedent which had been established. He alluded sarcastically to the position of Ministers who were constantly being coerced and driven into extreme measures by the advanced section of their party, and who were compelled to enforce the opinions of this section by bullying the House of Lords; and when this proved ineffectual, invoking the aid of the royal prerogative. He held that one of the most important functions of the House of Lords was to reserve for the opinion of the constituencies measures passed by the House of Commons under the pressure of the Radical section of the Liberal party, and he considered that it was hardly in consonance with the independence of the Lords or their constitutional position in the State that they should be compelled to give legislative sanction to measures of this kind. "After all," he asked, "if we are only to exercise our authority by always sacrificing our opinions, is it quite worth while to exercise

that authority at all? Is it worth while to hold powers merely for the purpose of using them in support of the views of other people, and against our own convictions? My Lords, I do not believe that such motives as these will influence your decision. You are called upon to vote upon a great constitutional wrong. You are called upon to defend the independence of Parliament against the misuse by an imperious Minister of the prerogative of the Crown. You are called upon to stamp with disapprobation an act which has no precedent in English history—an act which, if you did not mark it as it deserves, would stand for ever in derogation and depreciation of the authority of the House to which you belong. I know that the popular defence out-of-doors for the act of the Ministry is that any act, however unprecedented and unconstitutional, is venial if done in furtherance and in support of the opinion of the House of Commons. But such views are little in accordance with the preservation of the balance of the Constitution which we hold, and I am sure that on reflection they will be little approved by the people of this country. Do not let it be said that this vote of censure is an unpractical proceeding because it will not be followed by

the resignation of the Ministers. This is the record of a solemn opinion which you place before your countrymen for their approval. It is an invitation to them to consider this great constitutional question. It is an invitation to them, who are in the last resort the supreme authority, to determine whether it is or is not right that every branch of the Constitution should observe with self-restraint and with courtesy the limits of each other's powers. Those who are not favourable to our existing institutions, those who are in love with the sweet simplicity of a National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage, and changing its constitution once every twenty years; such persons, I have no doubt, will give their warm approval to an act which has set two branches of the legislature in conflict at the bidding and under the patronage of the third. But I am sure that the act of the Government will not be approved by those who value the special stability which, among all the nations of Europe, is the privilege of the institutions under which we dwell; and I am sure they will join with you in marking with deserved condemnation an act which, above all others, is a menace to the independence of Parliament, and an insult to the

acknowledged authority of the House of Lords."

The other measure which the Government had set its heart on passing during the session of 1871 was a Bill for establishing secrecy of voting in parliamentary and municipal elections by means of the ballot. We have already seen that Lord Salisbury had his own views on the subject. He was impressed with a strong sense of the necessity of stopping the practice of intimidation at elections, and it was to effect this that he had introduced a Bill many years before, establishing the system of voting-papers, which, had it been adopted, would have obviated most of the evils which the ballot was intended to remedy. But the Liberal party has always held as a cardinal doctrine of faith that all reforms proposed by Tories should be opposed and obstructed, and once more pressure had been employed by the Radical wing to induce the more moderate Liberals to support the introduction of the ballot, and very many who in their hearts were opposed to the idea were fascinated by the confident Radical prediction that under the ballot a permanent majority would be secured for the Liberal party. It was a remarkable and interesting fact that

nearly all the members of the Cabinet that introduced the Bill, and a considerable majority of those who helped to pass it through the House of Commons had frequently on former occasions opposed it, both by their speeches and their votes. On this occasion, however, the screw was worked effectually, and the Bill passed through the Commons after long and acrimonious debates, and by considerably reduced majorities, many members on the Liberal side moreover consoling themselves that the Lords would be sure to reject it. It was not until August 10th that the measure, reluctantly passed by the Commons, reached the House of Lords. The session had now run its ordinary length, and the period of the year had arrived when it is well-nigh impossible to keep Parliament together, and when any serious or prolonged discussion on important subjects is out of the question. Under these circumstances the Lords naturally rejected the Bill, thereby giving the Government an opportunity of reintroducing it to their notice at a more reasonable period in the ensuing session. It is astounding to find that such an extremely moderate and reasonable exercise of their undoubted privilege called down upon the Lords all the vials

of wrath of which Mr. Gladstone and his associates in Parliament and the press possess an apparently inexhaustible supply. The imperious nature of the Prime Minister could not put up with a check. He was unable on this occasion to invoke the aid of the royal prerogative; he could only misrepresent the action of the Lords, and endeavour to excite popular indignation against them. "Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo," might well have been his motto then as on many subsequent occasions. The House of Lords, however, was uninjured by this ebullition of pique and chagrin, and the only persons that suffered from the conflict were her Majesty's Ministers, who, it was clearly seen, were attempting to divert the gaze of their fellow-countrymen from their own shortcomings and failures, by exhibiting a fancy picture of their opponents as an insolent aristocracy, who were thwarting the dearest wishes and expectations of the people; whereas, in truth, the utmost that the Lords had done was to delay for one year the passing of a measure which had been before the House of Commons for more than forty years, and had been rejected no less than twenty-eight times by that assembly.

If the conduct of the Lords in the matter deserved censure, that of the Commons was beyond forgiveness.

The abolition of religious tests in the Universities was the subject of a Bill which passed through both Houses during this session, and in which Lord Salisbury, as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, naturally took a warm interest. He proposed a considerable number of amendments, and succeeded in maintaining the principle that religion should still be considered to be one of the subjects of an University curriculum, that definite religious instruction should be provided for those undergraduates who were members of the Church of England, and that the services in the college chapels should be kept up as before the passing of the Act. Lord Salisbury was also chiefly instrumental in preventing the diversion of the revenues of Emmanuel Hospital and other educational foundations in London to purposes for which they had never been designed.

The Franco-German war and the Black Sea Conference naturally directed the attention of statesmen to the position of England as one of the leading members of the European States system, and the publication of projects

which had been discussed between Napoleon III, and Prince Bismarck for the absorption of Belgium and Holland by France and Prussia respectively, provoked inquiries as to the attitude which England would take up in the case of any wanton attacks upon the smaller European States, and what means she had at her command to ensure her wishes and interests being respected. Lord Salisbury brought the matter before the Lords, by moving that the guarantees which this country had entered into should be reprinted and laid before the House. In a very remarkable and lucid review of the condition of affairs he pointed out that we were bound by treaties to protect the territories of no less than six European countries—Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, and Sweden; that since the time when most of these guarantees were given the military strength of the great powers of Europe had increased, while that of England had sensibly diminished; that we still claimed to be the chief protectors of the liberties of Europe, and to have a right to be consulted on all international questions; while we were certainly not in a position to fulfil our engagements if we were suddenly called upon to do so. He suggested that it might

be a suitable time, when the map of Europe was being in some degree reconstructed, to review our engagements and the means we possessed of meeting them, and he urged the Government to look boldly at the future, and no longer to postpone their decision to the last extremity, but to decide whether anything was to be done to provide forces adequate to fulfil those obligations, or whether they should ask the other powers to allow them to withdraw from or considerably modify their engagements. "Unless," he said, "the Government come to some determination; if they continue this system, which I must call permanent braggadocio; if they will not adapt their promises to their powers, or their powers to their promises, I foresee a time of terrible humiliation to this country which may shake our institutions to their centres. Therefore it is that I now venture to ask the noble earl the Secretary for Foreign Affairs to give us some assurance of his policy in this respect, and now, while the nations of Europe are in council as to the future aspect which the political whole of Europe is to assume, not to forget the guarantees, but to do something to spare us the terrible humiliation which will come upon

us if the day should arrive for meeting, with such a force as the estimates now present, the great military monarchies of Europe." This remarkable speech, reflecting as it did the feelings and anxieties of all patriotic Englishmen, had a very considerable effect, and the Government, who had been priding themselves on their supposed economy, and had been constantly preaching the necessity of retrenchment, found themselves compelled to adopt vigorous measures, to increase the army estimates by 3,000,000*l.*, and to pay attention to our national defences.

India under the rule of Lord Mayo was prosperous and contented, and in view of the continuous progress of the Russian power towards the frontiers of our Eastern empire, it was advisable that no pains should be spared to strengthen our hold on the people of India, and make the blessings of our rule more keenly felt. In presenting petitions from inhabitants of British India, Lord Salisbury took occasion to press upon the Government the importance of reforming the finances of that country, and introducing a greater regularity and certainty with regard to the taxes we levied from the natives, and at the same time inquire into the administrative system with the view

of discovering whether there were any alterations that it might be desirable to make. The composition of the legislative council and the annual migration of the court to Simla, were subjects which the petitioners had noticed, and Lord Salisbury, while strongly deprecating the introduction of any party feeling into Indian questions, and expressing full confidence in the Duke of Argyle, who at that time was Secretary of State for India, suggested that the present was not an unfitting time for reviewing our administrative system, and especially the financial part thereof. It is worth while noticing how thoroughly patriotic a support the Conservatives invariably gave to Mr. Gladstone's Government on all questions of external policy, and to contrast it with the jealous opposition they were destined to meet with at the hands of the Liberal party during the premiership of Lord Beaconsfield. This speech, though not of any great intrinsic importance, is interesting as illustrating this fact, and as showing that Lord Salisbury, amid all the other questions which, as one of the leaders of the Opposition and Chancellor of Oxford, demanded his attention, continued to watch with interest the fortunes of the

great dependency over which he had for a brief period presided.

The session of 1871 had hardly strengthened the position of the Government, which was considerably impaired during the recess by the various petty jobs which were perpetrated by Ministers, and which compelled them, in the words of Mr. Disraeli, to live in a perpetual blaze of apology. Public opinion loudly condemned many of the appointments made by Ministers, while the insolence and high-handedness of some of the officials shocked many of the staunchest partisans of the Liberal party. There was hardly a subject which this unfortunate Government took in hand that it did not continue to mismanage, scarcely an appointment they made that was not open to grave animadversion, scarcely a profession or a trade that they had not harassed and vexed. Mr. Lowe's budgets had been miracles of folly, and his attempts to alter the assessment of the income tax and to impose a duty on matches, had provoked such a storm of hostile criticism that he had been obliged to abandon them. The business of the House of Commons had been frequently allowed to get into arrear, and the country had witnessed the commencement of those

“Scenes in the House” which are now considered to perform a regular part of the Parliamentary session. Ministers had attempted to condone their own failures by abusing in unmeasured terms all who disagreed with them, and endeavouring to induce the country to believe that their ill-success was due to the invincible wickedness of the Opposition, and the obstructiveness of the House of Lords. But the tide of popularity which had borne the Liberal party to power in 1868 was on the ebb, and the by-elections which occurred during 1871 and 1872 unmistakably showed the feelings of the country.

The session of 1872 was occupied to a considerable extent with the investigation of some of the most flagrant jobs perpetrated by the Government during the recess. Of these the appointment of Sir Robert Collier as Lord Justice of Appeal was the one which attracted the most attention. The facts, which were undisputed, lie in a nutshell. An Act reorganizing the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was passed in 1871, in which it was expressly stipulated that none but judges should be appointed on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the object of this proviso being that no one who

had not had judicial experience should become a member of a Committee possessed of such important powers, and that the appointments to the Committee should be free from the taint of political partisanship. It was barely six months after the passing of this statute that the Government, at whose instance it had been enacted, deliberately broke it; not, perhaps, in the letter, but certainly in the spirit. Sir Robert Collier, the Attorney-General, was appointed first of all a Judge of the Common Pleas, and two days afterwards a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Public opinion was unanimous in condemning this gross evasion of the law, and in the debates which took place on the subject in Parliament, the Government were only saved from direct censure by their own votes. In the Lords the motion was lost by a majority of one, and in the House of Commons by twenty-seven. Lord Salisbury in a forcible speech pointed out the true nature of the question, which was whether Ministers were to be allowed to regard Acts of Parliament as constitutional fictions, and to be permitted to make important appointments mere jobs without being severely censured by Parliament. He adverted

to the fact that this was not an isolated case. What was known as the Ewelme scandal had just occurred. An Act of Parliament had provided that the Crown must appoint a member of the Convocation of the University of Oxford to the living of Ewelme. Mr. Gladstone immediately selected a clergyman who was a member of the University of Cambridge, and who, to technically qualify for the benefice, incorporated as a member of the University of Oxford. Lord Salisbury commented in strong terms on the gross scandal occasioned by such infringements of the law, and the alteration which a continuance in such a course of action must produce in the relations between Parliament and the Executive Government. "There are two ways," he said, "of doing business. You may do it as between friends and honourable men, and you may do it as if you were brought into contact with the lowest class of attorneys. In the first case you trust to an honourable understanding with the persons you deal with that the contract will be performed in the spirit in which it was concluded. In the other case you watch for every quirk to see what advantage can be taken; you stop up every gap; you fill up

every hole his ingenuity can possibly discover." Hitherto, he said, the dealings between Parliament and the Government had been conducted on the first of these principles, but henceforward, if Ministers pursued the course they had entered upon, every Bill would have to be drawn up on the latter principle; and while he deprecated any appearance of jobbery in any ministerial appointment, he contended that such a suspicion should be avoided in judicial appointments above all others, and that on more than one occasion the Lord Chancellor had unfortunately incurred the reproach that judgeships had been given as rewards for party services.

Such incidents as these alienated many persons from the Government, and the cases of Sir Joseph Hooker, the eminent botanist, who had been bullied and insulted by Mr. Ayrton, and of Lord Granard, who, while holding the office of Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Leitrim, had written a letter attacking in unmeasured language the verdict of Mr. Justice Keogh in the matter of the Galway election, still further increased the popular discontent with Mr. Gladstone's Government. Parliament, too, seemed weary

of sensational legislation, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the Government was able to pass two important measures during the session—one, the Ballot Act, had to be forced on the House of Commons; the other, a Licensing Act, created great dislike, which in some places led to riots, and had to be considerably modified a year or two later. Many valuable Bills brought in by private members of both Houses had to be sacrificed, among which was the Limited Owners' Improvements Bill, introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Salisbury.

The object of this measure was to enable those who owned entailed estates to raise money on their land for the purpose of effecting improvements. In his speech on the second reading Lord Salisbury dwelt especially on the question of labourers' cottages. Good cottages, he contended, were an improvement essential to every well-managed estate, and ought to be erected out of money raised on the property, and not out of the pocket of the life-owner. The Lords passed the second reading of the Bill unanimously, but when it came to the Committee stage its progress was blocked by the Ballot Bill, which had been sent up from the

Commons, and which the Government were determined to pass. And yet there can be little doubt that Lord Salisbury's Bill would have done far more for the benefit of the labouring classes than secret voting has ever done or is likely to do. The main provisions of the Bill were incorporated in a much larger measure known as the Settled Lands Act, which was drawn up and introduced by Lord Cairns in 1882, and which, though the work of a Conservative Peer, is probably destined to have much better results than any other measure passed during the earlier years of Mr. Gladstone's second Administration.

Another matter to which Lord Salisbury called the attention of the Lords was the establishment of responsible government in Cape Colony. The circumstances under which this radical change in the constitution of this important colony had taken place were by no means satisfactory. The Liberal Ministry apparently regarded representative government as an infallible panacea for every form of political evil, and the accepted theory among the doctrinaire politicians of the day was that, as England was destined very shortly to lose her colonies, it was desirable, in view of the long-hoped-for day when the connec-

tion with the mother-country should cease to exist, that the colonies should be encouraged as far as possible to rely upon themselves and adopt means for their own government and their own defence.

Accordingly, Sir Henry Barkly was sent out to the Cape with the understanding that he should persuade the colonists to adopt a system of representative government, and he succeeded in inducing the two Houses which formed the Legislative Assembly to pass a measure establishing the form of constitution which was desired by the Home Government. Lord Salisbury pointed out the great objections to the mode of procedure which had been adopted. He showed that the measure had been in the first instance rejected by the Legislative Council, and was subsequently only carried by a majority of one, that in the House of Assembly it only obtained a majority of ten, that the mass of the colonists had never been consulted on the subject, and that public opinion in the Eastern Province, where English settlers predominated, was strongly opposed to it. In addition to this he argued that in Cape Colony there were two or three distinct races, and that the immediate effect of the measure would be to place the chief power

in the hands of the Dutch settlers, while it was even possible that under this system at some future period the natives might obtain political supremacy. It is needless to say that the Liberal party entirely disregarded these warnings, and thus, in the opinion of many competent judges, commenced that policy of weakening English power in South Africa which has entailed so many misfortunes and so much humiliation upon this country.

But Lord Salisbury's activity and industry were not confined to debates in the House of Lords. During the years 1871 and 1872, in conjunction with his old colleague, Lord Cairns, he was engaged in setting the affairs of one of our most important railway companies to rights. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway had contrived to get into a most perilous state, and was on the point of collapse, when Parliament intervened and passed an Act appointing two arbitrators with almost unlimited powers to settle the affairs of the company, and put it into a more satisfactory pecuniary condition. Lord Cairns was selected for his vast legal experience and remarkable ability as one of the arbitrators, while Lord Salisbury possessed a practical knowledge of railway matters and a talent for business

which were not surpassed by any statesman. The condition of the company seemed almost hopeless when the Act was passed. No less than forty-six Chancery suits and seventy-eight actions at Common Law were pending, and in addition, seventy-nine cases were filed for the consideration of the arbitrators. The interests involved were between 17,000,000*l.* and 18,000,000*l.* sterling. The whole revenues of the company were locked up, and many families were reduced to destitution because the income which they ought to have derived from the securities of the company could not be paid. Nor was this all. Many of the Courts of Law were blocked up and impeded by the magnitude and cumbrousness of the litigation which had arisen. The work undertaken by the arbitrators was highly onerous and responsible, both from the magnitude of the interests involved, the almost unlimited power entrusted to them, and the enormous difficulty of reducing such a chaos to anything like order; and yet, in July, 1873, Lord Cairns was able to tell the House of Lords that within eighteen months after the passing of the Act the whole of this extremely complicated matter had been settled, and he did not hesitate to say that he attributed the result

mainly to the unexampled assistance he had received from his co-arbitrator. And, indeed, it would be difficult to over-estimate the services rendered to the unfortunate shareholders in the railway, and indirectly to the whole nation, by one whom Radical orators love to depict as caring for nothing but the privileges of his order and the interests of his class.

The session of 1872 had clearly exhibited the great Liberal Ministry in a state of impotence and disorder, unable to conduct the affairs of the country with reputation, or the business of Parliament with success, barren in legislative acts, though fertile enough in jobs and scandals. It was notorious that there was a complete lack of harmony in the Cabinet, while the Opposition was becoming more confident and more united. The Prime Minister under these circumstances determined to make one great effort to revive the waning fortunes of his party by introducing another of those "heroic" measures with which his name was connected. He had declared in 1868 that the Irish question was divided into three parts, the Church, the Land, and Education. He had already dis-established the Church, and made radical changes in the system of Land Tenure; it

remained for him to frame a measure which would satisfactorily settle the thorny question of University Education.

It was admitted on all sides that the condition of higher education in Ireland was most unsatisfactory. The University of Dublin had done and was doing good work, but her sphere of action was limited, while the Queen's University, of which so much had been expected, had turned out to be a complete failure. The number of University students in Ireland was, in proportion to the population, far smaller than in England or Scotland, and that number was steadily decreasing, while of the actual registered students comparatively few were getting the full benefits of an University education, many of them being content with attending courses of lectures in some particular branch of study, and neglecting the cultivation of the liberal arts which in other countries are regarded as forming the most important and necessary element in higher education. It might have been thought that it would be possible for the Government to produce a measure which should remedy this state of things, without infringing the rights of conscience or the susceptibilities of the Irish nation. But the task was no easy one,

and the previous failures of the Liberal Administration in all measures of constructive legislation did not inspire popular confidence. Architects of ruin and apostles of destruction and confiscation are not the men who are likely to succeed in building up a constitution or reorganizing a complicated mechanism. In the evolution of political society destructive forces have their part to play, but it requires other and very different instruments to effect the work of gradual change and development which is necessary to the existence and well-being of a State. The *raison-d'être* of the Gladstone Ministry was abolition and destruction, work which, though often necessary and beneficial, does not require a very high order of statesmanship, and which, neither in difficulty nor in value, can be compared with that of constructive adaptation, which is the key-note of Conservative policy. No one could accuse the Liberal Ministers of having been backward in the work of destruction. During the few years they had been in office, Mr. Gladstone and his Cabinet had disestablished the Irish Church, destroyed church rates, done away with University tests, and abolished purchase in the army, and all this had been done so effectually that

there was no possibility of these institutions ever being revived. But they had not been equally distinguished in the field of constructive legislation. The Education Act was carried through the House of Commons by the support of the Conservative party, in the teeth of a violent opposition from a considerable section of Ministerialists; the Judicature Bill merely gave legislative form to the recommendations of a committee presided over by Lord Cairns; the Irish Land Act was such an imperfect measure that it entirely failed to settle the question, and had a few years later to be superseded by another Act; the Licensing Act was found to be unworkable, and in 1874 the Conservative Government were obliged to modify many of its provisions; while innumerable Bills introduced by Ministers had to be withdrawn or were rejected because it was seen that they were wrong in their conception, faulty in their execution, and would fail to produce the results desired, though they would cause infinite annoyance and dissatisfaction to large classes of the community. The Irish University Bill, which was brought in early in the session of 1873, is a standing proof of the inability of a Liberal Ministry to devise any great con-

structive measure of Reform. The Bill was received with universal disapprobation; the Secularist and the friend of religious education, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, the Orangeman and the Home Ruler, combined in attacking its provisions. Its errors and shortcomings were exposed, and it was conclusively proved that it was unacceptable to every class in Ireland, and that if it were enacted it would only render the present confusion more confounded. It is probable that hardly one of those members who voted for the Bill approved of its provisions, but considered that the ties of party and the admiration they felt for the Prime Minister required the sacrifice of their opinions. But large as Mr. Gladstone's majority was, and strong as was the coercive power of the Liberal organization, the Bill was doomed, and on March 11th the second reading was negatived by 287 to 284. Mr. Gladstone at once resigned, but the Conservative leaders were in no haste to snatch the fruits of their victory. They saw the impossibility of carrying on a Government in a hopeless minority, and preferred that the dissolution should be postponed till the cup of popular indignation against the Liberal Ministry was full. Mr. Gladstone was

therefore obliged to resume office discredited by his defeat, and impotent alike for good or ill.

The session hardly presents any other remarkable features. A Peace Preservation Act for Ireland was of course passed, and a considerable time was expended in investigating some of those scandals with which Liberal Governments have made us familiar. In the various business that came before the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury took an active share. He suggested an important modification in the constitution of the Final Court of Appeal, which was subsequently carried out, his object being to preserve the judicial functions of the House of Lords, and at the same time strengthen the legal element in that chamber by the introduction of a certain number of judges as *ex-officio* Peers with the right to sit and vote in Parliament. By this means the principal advantages which resulted from the existence of the House of Lords as a Court of Appeal were retained, while at the same time the evils attaching to that jurisdiction were removed. On a subsequent occasion he took the opportunity of reiterating his views on the subject of Life Peerages, and strongly supported Lord

Russell's motion for the creation of judicial Peers. He lamented the small attendances on ordinary occasions in the House of Lords, and pointed out that this was partly the cause and partly the result of the small amount of business which came before the Upper House. He answered the objection that the power of creating life Peers would be a dangerous weapon in the hands of an unscrupulous Minister, by showing how easy it would be to place restrictions on this power, and how strongly public opinion would condemn any such misuse of authority. He urged the Peers to accept the motion, and so indicate to the country that they did not value their privileges more than their usefulness, but were ready to welcome with the utmost earnestness any change in the constitution of the House of Lords, which would strengthen their voice as a deliberative, revising, and legislative body, and so increase their usefulness to the country, and the probability of the permanence of their House. The motion, it is hardly necessary to say, met with no support from the Government, and after a short debate was withdrawn.

Of the many scandals provoked by the utterances and actions of Ministers, one of

those which came before the House of Lords this session was a speech delivered by the Duke of St. Alban's, who held a minor office in the Government, at a Liberal banquet at Nottingham. This oration, which was by no means a model of good taste, was made the subject of a question by the Duke of Richmond, in replying to which the Duke of St. Alban's was guilty of unpardonable rudeness, and brought upon himself Lord Salisbury's severe censure. It would appear that in the Nottingham speech the Duke of St. Alban's told his hearers that the sympathies of the Queen were with the Liberal party, and then proceeded to speak in contemptuous terms of the House of Lords as comprising two classes, those who attended the debates and voted according to their convictions, and those who were brought down to the House from time to time and voted as they were told. The latter were, of course, Tories, who formed a blind majority at the back of the leader of the Opposition. This favourite cuckoo-cry of Liberal orators was attacked and exposed by Lord Salisbury. He completely disproved by reference to recent history the existence of the permanent Tory majority, and showed that on many occasions the

Conservative party in the Lords had been defeated, and that the facts on which the Duke of St. Alban's relied were absolutely non-existent. This castigation had the effect of teaching the Duke that he was not to err in that manner again, and from that day forward his Grace's voice has not often been heard at Liberal banquets. The incident is worth notice as showing that twelve years ago precisely the same groundless charges against the House of Lords were made as now, the same weapons of misrepresentation and misstatement employed, which the voice of truth and sense could readily refute.

During the recess, Mr. Gladstone endeavoured to strengthen and rehabilitate his Ministry by shuffling the offices and introducing some fresh blood in the persons of two or three of those independent Liberals who had been the most damaging critics of the Government, and inducing Mr. Bright to accept the almost sinecure office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The coming session was looked forward to with a languid expectation. Liberal members were untiringly haranguing their constituents on the virtues of Mr. Gladstone and the grand achievements of his Government, and hinting mysteriously that

the coming session would see a Ministerial measure produced which would earn for its authors the eternal gratitude of their fellow-countrymen. Somehow, it did not appear that the people entertained precisely the same views; they seemed to be tired of this career of plundering and blundering. One by-election after another went against the supporters of the Government, and the reality of the much derided Conservative reaction was evident.

During the autumn both parties were unusually active, and the *Times* noticed the large number of political meetings that were held as a proof that no ordinary preparations were being made for the election which was clearly not very far distant. To what are termed extra-Parliamentary utterances Lord Salisbury made an important contribution at a Conservative banquet at Hertford, on the 17th of October, given for the purpose of introducing some Conservative candidates to the neighbourhood. In proposing "Our Conservative member and our future Conservative candidates," he explained the reasons why he was anxious that the coming election should stamp on the House of Commons the opinions they valued. "This particular Ministry, with many claims on account of ability—

I do not say sincerity—and respect, has this peculiarity, that it has been, in contrast, I may say, to all English Ministries for many generations past, a Ministry of heroic measures—(cheers and laughter)—though far be it from me to accuse them of heroism. (Renewed cheers.) They keep their heroism entirely to the Home Office, and do not let it transgress the threshold of the Foreign Office. Their advocates themselves rather look upon them as remarkable instances of Christian meekness and humility; but I am afraid it is that kind of Christian meekness which turns the left cheek to Russia and America, and demands the uttermost farthing from the Ashantee.

“But at home the Government have shown a heroism approaching to sternness towards every interest that happened to be in a minority. And what has been the result of their measures?

“Why, they have abolished an Established Church with circumstances of great hardship, throwing congregations, who had had all the offices of religion found for them for many generations, upon their own resources, and they have done that in order to acquire the goodwill of a priesthood noted throughout the world for its arrogance. And they have

passed an heroic measure adjusting the position of landlord and tenant in Ireland. It is a complicated measure, and it is not easy to give its purport in one word, but it may be safely said of it, that with respect to good farmers, and farmers of the character and position we might have in this country, it left matters exactly as it found them; but with respect to the poor and unimproving farmers, it placed the landlords in an absolute wardship and tutelage of the police magistrate as to how he should manage his property. Well, that was a bold infringement upon all the principles that had hitherto guided English legislation. It was done in order to conciliate a peasantry who had been noted for their turbulence and disaffection to England. How is this measure associated with the arrogance of the priesthood, and the turbulence of the peasantry? It is a matter of notoriety that both are more violent and exacting, and more insatiable than at any other period of their history. The priesthood have made demands that the education of the country be absolutely placed in their hands; and the peasantry will not be satisfied unless the bond between England and Ireland is broken.

“That was not a great success, but we were

comforted with promises. We were told that if we would only wait, all these things would be reversed. Well, those who lived on promises would never want for cash. At any rate, we were asked to wait; we ought to see that matters were progressing in the direction of improvement. As for the Liberal legislation of which so much was said, some of the measures in question were wise, some unwise, some wise in principle, but unwisely applied. Certainly, I cannot admit their claim to the prosperity which the country is enjoying. It is rather to be attributed to the invention of railways and to scientific discoveries, which have enabled people to turn over their capital four times where they could formerly have turned it over once. But the last forty years have brought us to such an evil habit of believing that organic change is a necessary function of Parliament, that, if the year has gone by, and nobody is despoiled and no institution is smashed, we say the session has been wasted, that it has been a barren session. Unless I misread the signs of the times, the feeling of the country is that this heroic legislation must now cease.

“ We are asked what would be the policy of

the Conservatives if they came into office? We are asked if we should repeal the measures that have been passed. My Lords and Gentlemen, the processes of destruction are in their nature irrevocable. You can no more set on foot an institution which has been cast down, than you can raise the dead. The continuity of existence is broken, and the traditions that cling around it are dissipated. Its power for good is gone. If you were to set it up, it would not be setting up the old thing that existed, but a new thing that you had invented in its place. It may be in the power of future Parliaments in some degree to repair the evil, but they never can recall the past. This, at least, they can do. They can put a stop to the further progress of this principle of assaulting interests for the purpose of showing the industry of Parliament. They may, and I believe that is the policy they ought to pursue, they may return to the paths of conciliatory legislation. If change is needed, surely it is not too much to ask that you shall wait until you have persuaded the great mind of the country that that change is needed, and not carry it by the mere force of coercive legislation?

“ But there is plenty for Parliament to do.

There are plenty of measures, upon the principles of which everybody is agreed, which are only waiting till Parliament can find the time, and upon which Parliament may fairly decree the details, and which will not leave behind them any bitterness or any sting. I do not dispute the necessity of reforms of the past; but at least let the time that is past suffice for these violent changes. Surely the body politic is not so corrupt that any more of this violent surgery is necessary! It may be necessary at times to cut out gangrenes, as we are told, and amputate mortified limbs, but that is a process that cannot go on for ever. The body politic cannot, any more than the body natural, live on a *régime* of perpetual amputation. Now, that is the mission which, it appears to me, Conservatives have in this country; and do not let them be misled by being told that they must repeal legislation that is passed, and that they have no turn for them, unless they make great changes in principles. Let Parliament proceed with its ordinary work, without leaving at every step it takes a bitter resentment to dog its footsteps. I do not think the precise composition of the Government of the future a matter of first importance.

It may be that we are to have a strong Government, I wish that it may be a Conservative Government—(cheers); but if we are to have a weak Government, I wish it may be a Liberal one. (Laughter.) It may not be in your power to drive this Ministry from place; you may not be able to terminate its official life, but you will be able to draw its teeth and clip its claws—(cheers); and after all, though there are better things that we can imagine, after all, government by a toothless Liberal Ministry is not so bad a thing as many others—(cheers), because it does this—it insures that Parliament shall be too divided to give its attention to projects of revolutionary innovation, and it binds over the Liberal leaders in heavy security not to agitate. Therefore I trust that we shall not be discouraged by any calculations that may be made as to the difficulty of securing a strong Conservative majority. Let us do so if we can, but if we cannot, remember that the first thing is to influence the composition of the House of Commons. What the House of Commons thinks, the Ministry will in the end do. We are threatened in Ireland with a large majority of Home Rulers—that is to say, of persons who are

pledged to demand the disintegration of the Empire, and I hope that their demand will be met by the prompt coalition of every English party to repel it with disdain. (Cheers.) We have by the side of us countries in a state of continual effervescence, the revolutionary movements of which may at any moment act upon our country, and plunge us into national difficulties and war, and in such a time we must not think of personal ambition, or of mere party claims. (Cheers.) If the members of the Liberal party desire to recast the party structure, or renew party lines, I trust no personal considerations in the Conservative party would injure such a blessed consummation; but I am quite sure that the members we recommend to you this evening would feel that we have a higher duty to perform than that, and that their business is to secure that every interest shall be allowed to rest in peace, secure from legislative assault, and to impose a truce on those perpetual attacks on classes, and institutions, and interests, which are fatal to the union, the peace, and the prosperity of the country; and therefore, gentlemen, I most heartily commend them to your support."

Almost simultaneously with this speech an

article appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, which attracted wide-spread attention, and was currently attributed to Lord Salisbury. The writer, whoever he was, wielded a most powerful pen, and mercilessly exposed and dissected the Radical programme, and pointed out the dangerous nature of the principles of Mr. Chamberlain, who was at this time emerging from obscurity, though it was not until 1876 that he obtained a seat in Parliament.

Lord Salisbury had not misinterpreted the sentiments of the people of England, and when, in January, 1874, Mr. Gladstone, chagrined at the repeated defeats his followers had suffered at the polling-booths, and anxious to avoid another session of humiliation and discredit, suddenly dissolved Parliament, the result was just what Lord Salisbury had anticipated. A House of Commons was returned containing, for the first time since the days of Peel, a compact and united Conservative majority. Ministers dared not face Parliament, but resigned directly the issue of the general election was known, and a Conservative Government, under the leadership of Mr. Disraeli, was installed in office.

CHAPTER V.

1874—1880.

"WE must have Robert Cecil back," Mr. Disraeli is reported to have said in 1867, and in 1874 it was universally felt that the Marquis of Salisbury must be a member of the Conservative Cabinet, if that Cabinet was to include all that was wisest and best in the Conservative party. There were not wanting *flâneurs* to assert with confidence that Lord Salisbury had positively declared that he would never serve under Mr. Disraeli, and that the Tory Premier would have to count amongst his most determined opponents the ablest statesman and the keenest debater in the House of Lords. Lord Salisbury intended, it was said, to form a Tory "cave," which would render the speedy return of the Liberals to power an absolute certainty.

Lord Salisbury, contended other quidnuncs,

was a reactionary, and would not consent to join the Conservative Ministry unless the Prime Minister pledged himself to re-establish the Irish Church, repeal the Land Act, abolish the ballot, and restore purchase in the army. Such statements were the offsprings of desire rather than of belief. The defeated and discredited Liberals saw with dismay the probability of a Tory Government being formed, which would not only command the allegiance of a substantial majority in both Houses of Parliament, but would contain a greater number of statesmen of the first order than any Liberal Prime Minister had ever been able to gather round him. The Cabinet, moreover, would be united in its policy; the question of Reform was a matter of ancient history, and Lord Salisbury and Lord Carnarvon were quite ready to accept the settlement of 1867 as a *fait accompli*, and as practical politicians were perfectly aware that the legislative measures which had been passed by the Gladstone Government could no more be repealed than could the Act of Settlement or the Mutiny Act. The public mind was speedily set at rest by the announcement that Mr. Disraeli had formed

his Cabinet, and that the Secretaryship for India would be filled by Lord Salisbury. Never was an appointment hailed with greater satisfaction by the press and the people than that of the Marquis of Salisbury. It was a sign and seal of the complete union of the Conservative party, it ensured the new Government the support of one of the first of English statesmen, and it gave our great Eastern dependency a wise and energetic ruler, and this at a critical period in its history. Mr. Gladstone had been too closely occupied during his tenure of office in passing startling and heroic measures of home legislation to pay much attention to Indian affairs, and the astounding fact that in 1868 he actually proposed to make Mr. Bright Secretary for India is sufficient in itself to show how little he appreciated the position of the English in the East, and the difficult and dangerous questions connected with Indian administration. Fortunately Mr. Bright declined the post, and thus in all probability saved England from complications of the most serious character; and the Duke of Argyle, who held the Secretaryship from 1869 to 1874, managed at least to prevent Gladstonian ideas from being applied

to the government of India, though the advance which Russia was allowed to make in Central Asia during this period, led a few years later to most important results. But there was another and a more pressing question which the new Secretary was called upon to decide.

The autumn of 1873 had been remarkable in many districts of India for an almost entire absence of those rains which are so necessary at that season of the year for the rice crop, which forms the staple food of millions of the native population. In Bengal there seemed every probability that more than twenty millions of persons would be absolutely deprived of the means of subsistence unless prompt measures were taken to supply the deficiency in the rice crop either by importation or otherwise. Before the end of the year it was clear that a famine on a most gigantic scale was impending, and the Indian Government was busy in devising some plans to counteract this terrible visitation. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (Sir G. Campbell) proposed that all exportation of grain from India should be absolutely prohibited as long as the scarcity in Bengal lasted, and that the rice which under

ordinary circumstances would have found its way to European merchants should be sent into the famine-stricken districts. Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy, on the other hand, proposed that the export trade should continue as before, and that the Government should import rice into Bengal. He objected to Sir G. Campbell's plan as being a dangerous interference with the freedom of trade, certain to injure, if not to permanently cripple, the grain trade of India. While the prohibition on exportation lasted, other countries would strain every nerve to supply Europe with rice, and when the danger of the moment was over, India might find that the grain trade had been diverted into other channels, and that it was impossible for her to recover it. Lord Northbrook's views were vehemently combated both in India and in England, and it was confidently expected that one of the first acts of the new Secretary would be to negative the Viceroy's proposals, and prohibit the exportation of grain from India as long as the famine in Bengal continued. Lord Salisbury had every temptation to adopt this policy. In assenting to this course he would undoubtedly have gained a considerable popularity; he would have had the support of

public opinion, and of the most important portion of the English and Indian press. Lord Northbrook would in all probability have resigned, and his place might have been filled by a Viceroy whose general views would have been more in harmony with those of the Government. But fortunately Lord Salisbury took a wiser, and more statesmanlike view of the case. Having convinced himself that Lord Northbrook's plan was the right one, he did not hesitate to adopt it, though he well knew that by so doing he was incurring a grave responsibility, and that failure would entail not only a heavy loss of reputation on himself, but the most disastrous consequences on the people of India. The plan was thoroughly and completely justified by success. Parliament readily sanctioned a loan of ten millions to relieve the famine; steamers were chartered to convey supplies of food to the starving districts, with the happy result that the much-dreaded famine caused absolutely no increase in the death-rate in Bengal. How completely Lord Salisbury had mastered all the details of this most intricate problem, and how energetically he applied himself, in the teeth of much opposition, to carrying out the plans for

relief is evident from a perusal of the journals of the day, and still more from his own speeches on the subject in the House of Lords. The following extracts clearly set forth his views on the question and show his determination, not merely to content himself with relieving the pressing needs of famine-stricken Bengal, but to devise measures to prevent, as far as is possible by human means, a recurrence of similar disasters. The hearty support he gave to Lord Northbrook's policy, and the well-deserved praise he bestowed upon his energy and judgment, positively astounded the Tapers and Tadpoles of both parties, whose maxim it is that it is impossible for a political opponent ever to be in the right.

Touching first of all upon the general question of Lord Northbrook's policy, Lord Salisbury said, "I think the main controversy carried on is as to the expediency or otherwise of arresting the export of grain by an act of executive power. As to this policy it may be impugned under two heads. You may look at it as a mere question of finance, and wonder whether the course taken was the cheapest that could have been taken, or you may look at it in a more important light,

as part of the machinery of dealing with the famine, and inquire whether the Viceroy's policy has imperilled the supply which could otherwise have been brought to the homes of the starving population. Only in the latter light can the question be looked at as very serious. As a question of finance—as to whether it would be cheaper to buy grain before it went to Calcutta, rather than procure it as imported at other ports—I do not think it necessary to trouble your Lordships, because the point is one on which different opinions may naturally be held, and it is one of which the pecuniary importance is not very great. But as to the far more important question, whether the Viceroy, by not arresting the export of grain, has imperilled the supply for the distressed districts, I think there is one thing that has been forgotten. It is that the grain which has been exported has not been exported from the districts which are suffering. It is true that grain has been exported from Bengal; but there is a large surplus crop in some parts of Bengal, and the difficulty has been, not to procure grain, but to bring the supplies to the homes of the starving population. No grain to speak of has been exported from Northern Tirhoot—

our difficulty is to get the grain up there. What advantage, then, would it be to stop the export of grain from other parts of Bengal, when the difficulty is to convey it from the stations of Eastern India to the northern districts where it is wanted? Therefore, I do not think this question has so important a bearing as is generally supposed on the difficulties with which the Government had to deal. For present purposes the supply of grain is abundant—the difficulty is one of carriage. Then it must be remembered that, while you would not have appreciably relieved your embarrassments by stopping the export of grain, you might have incurred considerable danger by such a policy, because the one terror which appears to have been before the Viceroy's eyes, was lest he should paralyze the operations of private trade. If he had taken so violent a measure, private traders would have been seized with a panic, and would have abandoned the idea of attempting of themselves to convey grain into these parts of the country, and the result would be that the real famine would be aggravated by an artificial one. At the beginning of the famine, the Commissioners at Patna proposed to traders to take up grain

to the distressed districts. The reply was that they were not accustomed to it, and did not understand it. They were accustomed only to export. I understand, however, that since then confidence in the prospect of such a trade has changed their feeling, and, as I have been informed, the private traders are carrying their stores to those districts, and that grain is by those means pouring into the distressed districts at a greater rate than that which is carried up by the public agency, and amounts to nearly 2000 tons a day. So much for the more serious question." He then proceeded to defend Lord Northbrook's action in not imposing a hard and fast labour test as a qualification for relief, but granting food unrestrictedly to those natives who were too aged or enfeebled to purchase it by labour; and after refuting the statements as to the mortality caused, he indulged in a hearty panegyric on Lord Northbrook and those who had so efficiently seconded him in carrying out the great work of relief. "I should not," he said, "be doing justice to my own feelings if I did not say how much reason we have to be grateful for his exertions, and how much reason we have to admire the vigour, judgment, and self-denial with which he has

applied himself to his tremendous responsibilities. All of us on this side of the House always admired his ability, but we had no notion how his powers would expand under the pressure of responsibility, until we saw the measures he had adopted and the conduct he had pursued in the terrible position in which he found himself placed by this famine. My Lords, we have every reason to repose confidence in him, and I have no doubt at the end of the year he will have the satisfaction of feeling that millions of human beings owe their lives to his exertions."

He concluded by saying that the Government were fully determined to do everything that lay in their power to prevent the recurrence of such a calamity. Means of transit were to be improved, the railway system was to be extended, and a comprehensive and systematic plan of irrigation was to be carried out. To effect this, he considered that it would probably be necessary to remodel the Department of Public Works, and introduce a better organization. Nor did this promise remain unfulfilled. With characteristic energy Lord Salisbury introduced a Bill into the House of Lords in May, which provided that a member should be added to the

Viceroy's council, who should have the charge of public works, and thereby ensure that special attention should be given to that most important department, and probably nothing has more contributed to the industrial development of India than this simple and salutary change.

The Conservative Ministers had little time, even if they had the desire, to elaborate any grand or startling measures during the session of 1874. They were content to place on the statute some unobtrusive and moderate Acts of Parliament which, while they remedied certain grievances felt by one class, were not conceived in a spirit of hostility to another class, their object being that the relations between different classes should be maintained "on a footing of enduring harmony and mutual good-will," rather than the encouragement of jealousy and suspicion which seems to underlie all Liberal legislation. Relief was given to the long-suffering income-tax payer, local burdens were decreased by subventions from the Imperial Treasury, the sugar duties were totally abolished, an important Factory Act was passed, the patronage system in the Church of Scotland was altered in deference to the wishes of the members of that Church,

and other minor measures, many of them amendments of Acts hurriedly passed by the late Parliament, were proofs of the activity and wisdom of Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet, and thoroughly justified the verdict which the country had given at the general election.

But the Parliamentary session of 1874 will be chiefly remembered for the ill-starred Public Worship Regulation Act. It was admitted on all sides that simplification of procedure in ecclesiastical matters was most desirable, and that the expenses and delays attendant on suits in the ecclesiastical courts were a grave scandal. Many criminous, heretical, and contumacious clergymen escaped punishment owing to the difficulties which were placed in the way of getting a suit against them heard and decided. The primary object of the archbishops who introduced this measure, was to increase episcopal authority over the clergy, and to give to parishioners who considered themselves aggrieved by the mode in which divine worship was conducted by their clergyman, power to appeal to the bishop. The bishop was to be assisted by certain assessors, in conjunction with whom he might, if he thought it desirable, hold a regular

inquiry into the alleged grievance, and prohibit the continuance of any practices which were contrary to the Book of Common Prayer, and likely to give offence. Appeal was allowed from the bishop to the archbishop, but no further. Such a measure would probably have proved acceptable to the large majority of clergy and laity, but, most unhappily, the Archbishop of Canterbury embittered the question by denouncing in unmeasured terms the excesses of certain ritualistic churches, and thus a Bill which was ostensibly only intended to improve and simplify legal procedure, became connected with a determination to stamp out Ritualism, and was regarded by friends and enemies alike as a most powerful weapon in the hands of those who were leading the anti-Ritualistic crusade. But this was not all. Before the Bill left the House of Lords its whole character was altered; instead of episcopal and archiepiscopal tribunals, every case was to be tried before a lay judge appointed by the archbishops and confirmed by the Crown; the sole power left to the bishop of the diocese in which the parties resided, was that of prohibiting proceedings in cases where he considered that

the charges brought were frivolous, and that no good would result from the suit being continued; against this episcopal veto there was no appeal allowed. To men like Lord Salisbury, whose sympathies were not confined to one party in the Church, and who was anxious that the national and comprehensive character of the Church of England should be maintained, such an intolerant and one-sided measure was naturally most repugnant. He knew that a very large section of English clergymen were desirous of limiting as far as possible the interference of lay courts in ecclesiastical matters, and he foresaw that any attempt to put the Act into force would only aggravate the evils it was intended to remedy, and might bring about a most serious conflict between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. In his speech on the second reading, Lord Salisbury, after stating that the Government occupied an entirely independent position towards the Bill, proceeded to point out the dangers which he conceived would arise from hasty legislation on so important a subject. He admitted that there was a small section among the clergy which had exhibited a total disregard for law in the administration of public worship, and that

such lawlessness justly deserved punishment, but he denied that it had been shown that any large party in the Church sympathized with them, while the proposed legislation would tend to alienate one of the chief schools of thought of which the Church of England consists. He alluded to the confident prophecy which had been made that the Bill would drive the Ritualists out of the Church, and that she would be all the better for their secession. "I doubt," he said, "very much whether it is not an anachronism to talk of secession in this matter at all. Secession has been practised from time to time by parties in the English Church. It has always left the Church weaker than before; it has always been ruinous to the prosperity of almost all the seceding parties themselves, with perhaps the solitary exception of the Wesleyans. I doubt very much whether, in existing circumstances, and in the present temper of men's minds, secession would be followed now. Secession means disestablishing yourself without disestablishing your opponent—it means yielding up vantage-ground; and because any such course would bring, to my mind, the greatest evil which either the Church or country could suffer, I very much fear that

if your legislation could be justly accused of oppressing a large party in the Church, that large party would not secede, but would rather seek to free the Church from its relations with the State. Anything more deplorable I cannot conceive; but men's minds are so excited, there is so much bitter feeling abroad, that such a course is not out of the bounds of probability; and as prudent legislators you are bound to remember upon what hidden embers you tread when you enter on the path of such legislation as this. I take it, then, that no more fatal act could be done than to interfere with, or put in jeopardy that spirit of toleration upon which, as upon a foundation, the stately fabric of your Church Establishment reposes. There are three schools in the Church which I might designate by other names, but which I prefer to call the Sacramental, the Emotional, and the Philosophical. They are schools which, more or less, except when they have been crushed by the strong hand of power, have been found in the Church in every age. They arise, not from any difference in the truth itself, but because the truth must necessarily assume different tints, as it is refracted through the different *media* of different minds. But it is upon the frank and

loyal tolerance of these schools that the existence of your Establishment depends.

“The problem you have to solve is, how to repress personal and individual eccentricities, if you will, how to repress all exhibitions of wilfulness, of lawlessness, of caprice; but, at the same time that you do that, you must carefully guard any measures which you introduce from injuring the consciences or suppressing the rights of either of the three schools of which the Church consists. On this condition alone can your legislation be safe. If you accomplish this end, if you solve this problem, no doubt you will remove causes of irritation and conciliate many hearts and minds to the Church which are now alienated, and you will have done a good work. But if you legislate without solving this problem; if you disregard this condition; if you attempt to drive from the Church of England any one of the parties of which it is composed; if you tamper with the spirit of toleration of which she is the embodiment, you will produce a convulsion in the Church, and imperil the interests of the State itself.”

This eloquent defence of a “*libera Chiesa nel libero Stato*” unfortunately produced but

little effect. The House of Lords only too faithfully represented public opinion, which, in its dread of Romanism, was eager for the passing of a measure which was of as little practical use as the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, and only served, like that ludicrous monument of bigotry, to keep alive religious differences and embitter theological controversy. During its passage through Committee, Lord Salisbury, who was convinced of the futility of attempting to resist the popular demand for the Bill, attempted to improve some of its details, but in almost every instance found himself in a minority, and, with all its imperfections on its head, the Bill went down to the Commons, where, most unhappily, the sympathies of the Prime Minister were elicited in its favour. It is difficult to account for the attitude which Mr. Disraeli assumed on this occasion; probably his warmest partisans will admit that for once Homer nodded, and that it would have been far wiser in the interests alike of the Church and the Conservative party if he had never lifted up his voice in support of the Public Worship Regulation Bill. The breach which was made in the old alliance between the High Church and the Tory parties has not yet been closed, though

Churchmen are beginning to discover that their support of Mr. Gladstone has been of little service to their cause, and that they have not much to hope from a party which includes amongst its leaders Mr. Bright, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Chamberlain.

One important alteration which was made in the measure by the House of Commons seemed likely to lead to a conflict between the two Houses, and even to the secession of Lord Salisbury from the Cabinet. The saving clause in the Bill was that which gave the bishop of the diocese absolute power to veto proceedings, and this safeguard naturally provoked the opposition of the extreme party in the Commons, who at length succeeded in introducing a proviso allowing an appeal to the archbishop against the veto of the bishop. When the Bill returned to the Lords a very strong feeling was evinced against this alteration, which found vent in a vigorous speech of Lord Salisbury, in which he dwelt especially on the un wisdom of multiplying the fetters with which the clergy were bound, and exposing them to the malignity of wandering societies, the result of which would certainly be an increased diminution in the number of candidates for holy orders, and a draining of

the life-blood of the Church, inasmuch as any man of independent mind would shrink from exposing himself to the dangers which the Bill, if thoroughly carried out, would involve. He concluded by saying, "Much has been said of the majority in another place, and of the peril in which the Bill will be if the clause under discussion is rejected. There is a great deal of that kind of bluster when any particular course has been taken by the other House of Parliament. But it should be borne in mind that the majority was only twenty-three, and that those who are most interested in supporting the amendment are the very persons who, above all things, desire that the Bill shall pass. It is absurd, then, to suppose that if the clause be rejected, there will not be found twelve men among them with sufficient common sense to accept the Bill without it rather than lose it altogether, I, for one, therefore utterly repudiate the bugbear of a majority of the House of Commons. It is, I contend, your Lordships' duty to take the course which you deem to be right. Upon you rests the responsibility of making a measure which can be worked with safety to the peace, prosperity, and order of the Church of England, or one which will issue

in endless calamities and disasters." The clause was accordingly rejected by the Lords, and the Commons somewhat reluctantly concurred in the omission. But the debate in the Lower House was chiefly noticeable for a speech of the Prime Minister's, in which he alluded to Lord Salisbury's remarks about the majority in the House of Commons. "As to Lord Salisbury's language," he said, "let us not for a moment be diverted from the course which we think, as wise and grave men, we ought to follow by any allusions to the spirit of any speech which may have been made in the course of debates in the other House of Parliament. My noble friend was long a member of this House and is well-known to many of the members even of this Parliament. He is not a man who measures his phrases. He is one who is a great master of gibes and flouts and jeers, but I do not suppose there is any one who is prejudiced against a member of Parliament on account of such qualifications. My noble friend knows the House of Commons well, and he is not perhaps superior to the consideration that by making a speech of that kind, and taunting respectable men like ourselves with being a 'blustering majority,' he probably

might stimulate the *amour-propre* of some individuals to take the course which he wants, and to defeat the Bill." Mr. Disraeli proceeded to defend the legitimate right of the House of Lords to amend the Bill, and entreated the Commons to accept the alteration, the result being that they unanimously agreed to waive their objections to the amendment. The Prime Minister's bantering references to his colleague were thought in some quarters to be indicative of a want of harmony in the Cabinet, and it was confidently asserted that Lord Salisbury had sent in his resignation. The manifest absurdity of this *canard* did not prevent it being eagerly circulated by those members of the defeated party who considered that they would be best occupied, not in healing their own divisions, but in endeavouring to promote discord in the Ministerial camp. These worthy individuals were considerably disconcerted by the explanation which Lord Salisbury took an early opportunity of giving in the House of Lords, in which he absolutely denied having employed the obnoxious phrase, "blustering majority" with regard to the House of Commons. He went on to say, "I did use the word 'bluster,' but with this reference: It

had been argued by somebody in this House that we were bound to take a particular course because the House of Commons were very resolved, and because, if we did not take that course, the Bill would be lost. My Lords, I have always objected to the argument, when there is a difference of opinion between the two Houses, that it is the privilege of the House of Commons always to insist, and the duty of the House of Lords always to yield. It is not uncommon to use that argument when we come to the last discussions in conflicts of that kind, and I venture to think it is an argument of a nature which may be justly designated by the term 'bluster.' But whether that be the case or not, what I am now concerned to say is, that it never entered my head to use a term in the least degree disrespectful to the other House of Parliament. I regret that the statement should have been made, because I should exceedingly dislike to have it attached to my name, and by such distinguished authorities, or to have it thought that I could be guilty of such an offence at all."

After such a full and satisfactory explanation, the incident, which both at the time and since has been made far more of than it

deserved, terminated. At the Lord Mayor's dinner, on the 9th of November, Mr. Disraeli took the opportunity of referring in terms of well-deserved eulogy to the sagacity and energy of the Secretary for India, thereby effectually silencing all rumours of a split in the Cabinet. At the same banquet Lord Salisbury, in returning thanks for the House of Lords, dwelt once more on his favourite topic, the truly representative character of that assembly as the mirror of the opinions of the people over whose destinies it helped to preside, and he expressed his profound distrust for those neat and squared theories of which the Radical party seem to possess an inexhaustible supply, and which, whenever they are put into practice, result in discredit and danger to the country.

The recess was undisturbed by agitation, and the people of England were able to enjoy their Christmas without the shame of some humiliation abroad, or the dread of some new measure of harassing legislation. Mr. Gladstone, though still nominally the leader of the Liberal party, seemed to have abandoned politics for the barren fields of theological controversy, and startled the world by publishing a pamphlet, in which he proved to his

own satisfaction that it was impossible for a Roman Catholic to be a patriot, a conclusion which his appointment of Lord Ripon as Viceroy of India was a strange commentary on. In January, 1875, he formally abdicated the leadership, and left his party to extricate itself as best it could from the difficulties to which he had in no small measure contributed. The Marquis of Hartington was selected to fill the vacant post, to lead those members of the Opposition who would consent to follow his guidance, and if possible find some policy which might tend to reunite the *disjecta membra* of the Liberal party.

The Conservative Government meanwhile followed the lines which its leaders had laid down when in opposition. They conceived that the chief business of a Government was to conduct the affairs of the country with dignity and honour, without blustering or bullying to maintain the interests of England abroad, and by remedial legislation at home to promote harmony and good-feeling between all classes. A speech which Lord Salisbury made in the House of Lords on the occasion of the second reading of the Supreme Court of Judicature Bill very clearly explains the aims and motives of the Government in their

domestic policy. Replying to Lord Granville, who had taunted Ministers with not passing grand and sweeping measures, Lord Salisbury said, "The noble Earl has referred to a point to which he is very fond of adverting in his addresses to the House; that the measures of 'the Government are all of them feeble, unsatisfactory, and empty. The noble Earl seems to think that the public stomach should be entirely fed on violent and compulsory legislation, and that it would suffer considerable disappointment, and its appetite would not be satiated by the legislative food supplied by her Majesty's Government. When the noble Earl asserts that any member of the present Government has led the public to believe that when they came into office they would introduce measures of the strong and violent kind proposed by the late Ministry, he is under a total misapprehension. 'Worrying legislation,' 'harassing legislation,' 'heroic measures,' have been denounced by those who formerly sat on the Opposition benches in either House of Parliament, with perhaps wearisome pertinacity, and if any one assurance has been given by those who sit on my side of the House more than another, it is that we will avoid

harassing legislation. If, therefore, after these announcements the noble Earl opposite has really been expecting such measures from the present Government, he has certainly been building his hopes on a false basis. Violent legislation has always been alien to the spirit of the Conservative party. Compulsion, on the other hand, is dear to the Liberal party. Their only idea of freedom, is freedom for the majority to coerce the minority. This is not my notion of the legislation which would be either acceptable or useful to the country. Those who sit on this side believe that persuasion is the best and most useful instrument which Parliament can wield, and that compulsion should only be adopted with reluctance and as a last resort. The measures of the Government that are usually referred to by speakers of the school of the noble Earl opposite, who desire to show that their legislation is feeble, are such measures as the Land Transfer Bill of my noble and learned friend on the Wool-sack, and the Artisans' Dwellings Bill which is now passing through the other House. It is complained that in the one case we do not force the landowners to register their titles, and that in the other case we do not force

vestries to rebuild on the sites required to be cleared ; but that in each instance we place before them the advantages of the course we recommend, give them every facility for pursuing it, and then leave them to be guided by their own sagacity and public spirit. The Government believe that this method is more in accordance with the traditions of the country, and more consonant with the present feelings of the people than the hasty and violent adoption of compulsory measures before they have ascertained that compulsion is necessary. Of course it may turn out that any persuasive measures which they may adopt may ultimately be insufficient ; they may be unable to persuade those whose feelings they desire to alter and whose course they wish to modify ; and at last there may remain an impracticable minority to whom it may be necessary to apply compulsory measures. But that is an alternative which they ought to put off till the furthest possible time, and if they are driven to adopt it at last, compulsory measures will then be submitted to all the more willingly, because it will be felt that they have not been resorted to until every other method failed."

At the banquet of the Middlesex Conserva-

tive Association in June, Lord Salisbury again defended the principles on which the Government based their legislation. Alluding to the great Conservative victory in 1874, he said that the leaders did not claim that their success was won by their own talents. "We were preceded in office by a Ministry of singular ability, and the victory was not one in favour of any particular set of men, but in favour of great principles that will endure when the men are forgotten. In the next few years who can say how the merely personal composition of a Ministry may be changed! Statesmen may have shifted over from side to side in the House of Commons; but whatever the vicissitudes of power, for a quarter of a century and even longer the echoes of that great victory of 1874 will resound in the councils of the nation. It is a declaration that will not speedily be forgotten either by Conservatives or Liberals—that by whatever name the majority in the House of Commons may be called, the English nation will never endure destructive legislation. There may be some here who have sometimes complained that the Conservative Government has been content with what I may call moderate Conservative

measures, and has not imprinted a bright and strong party colour on any of their measures. Undoubtedly the temptation to do so was very great. If we had we should not have displeased our friends. We have a majority in both Houses of Parliament, and might have carried measures which would in themselves have told distinctly from what party they had come. But we determined to remember the traditions of the British Constitution, and keep in view the future rather than merely the present. We considered that the pendulum might swing back, and that if we sowed moderation we should reap a harvest of moderation in years to come. I trust therefore, indeed I feel certain that the Government has done right."

The measures passed during the session of 1875 fully deserved the character which Lord Salisbury had given them. They were moderate, conciliatory, and beneficial. The Agricultural Holdings Act and the Land Transfer Act, though permissive in their character, are important as enunciating great principles and as showing that Land Reform is not a monopoly of the Liberal party. The Artisans' Dwellings Act was a redemption of the pledge which the Conservative leaders

had given, when in opposition, that sanitary measures should have the serious attention of Parliament, and it is doubtful whether any Act has done more towards ameliorating the condition of the poor in our great towns. A comprehensive Bill was also carried for the amendment and consolidation of the laws relating to the public health, and thus the country saw for the first time a Government which was not above dealing with sanitary matters, and could afford to despise the vulgar taunt of Radical agitators that they were committed to "a policy of sewage." Not less important to the well-being of the working-classes were Mr. Cross's two Acts amending the laws relating to master and servant, and those regarding conspiracy as connected with trade offences, Acts which have gone far to prevent those struggles between capital and labour which have been so injurious to all classes in the community. In finance, notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's persistent opposition, Sir Stafford Northcote carried a scheme for the reduction of the National Debt, the advantage of which even Liberal statesmen have been compelled to admit.

One of the most keenly-felt grievances

connected with the abolition of purchase in the army was remedied by the Regimental Exchanges Act, while the Merchant Shipping Act did something to satisfy even Mr. Plim-soll. Many other minor measures affecting trade were successfully carried through, and all this despite the obstruction of the Home Rule party to the Peace Preservation Act. The state of Ireland had considerably improved since the Conservative Ministry had come into office, but the Government were by no means inclined to jump at the conclusion that the long-looked-for reign of peace and prosperity had commenced in the sister isle, and did not consider that a temporary diminution in crime and outrage would justify them in giving up those powers which have so often been found necessary for the preservation of order in Ireland. Accordingly, the Peace Preservation Act was renewed, though, in recognition of the improved condition of the country, many of its most stringent provisions were released. Thus, the session of 1875, though barren of heroic measures and root-and-branch legislation, placed many valuable measures on the statute-book and tended to strengthen the confidence of the people in the Government.

In Lord Salisbury's special domain, the year 1875 was one of very considerable importance. A consolidation Act, known as the Indian Legislation Act, was passed with almost unanimous approbation; but the most difficult matter with which the Secretary of State for India had to deal was the trial and deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda.

Baroda, one of the dependent states in the Bombay Presidency, was governed by a Mahratta prince, assisted by an English Resident. The Gaekwar family had produced many brave warriors and skilful administrators, but the then ruler of Baroda, Mulhar Rao, seemed to possess all the worst qualities of an half-civilized Oriental despot, and to be alike unable and unwilling to govern his territories with firmness and justice. His delinquencies culminated in a deliberate attempt to poison Colonel Phayre, the English Resident, whom he naturally detested as the only check on his misgovernment and wickedness. The Indian Government thereupon suspended him from authority, and appointed a Commission to examine into the charges brought against him. After a long trial the English Commissioners decided that the charges against the Gaekwar had

been completely substantiated, but the three Indian princes who had been associated in the Commission refused to find a verdict against him. Lord Northbrook, however, came to the conclusion that the Gaekwar's guilt had been thoroughly proved, and with the consent of the Home Government issued a proclamation deposing Mulhar Rao, and appointing a young prince of the Gaekwar family to fill his place. It was generally admitted that this was the only possible solution of the difficulty, though the acquittal which the Gaekwar had received from the native Commissioners, and the doubtful character of some of the witnesses against him, had to a certain extent prejudiced native feeling in India in his favour. A far more satisfactory incident was the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, which took place in the winter of 1875, and which proved in every respect a complete success.

Lord Salisbury's views as to the relations which should subsist between the English and the natives of India were well expressed in a speech he made in July, 1875, in distributing the prizes at Cooper's Hill. The only danger he could see to the continuance of English rule in India arose from the fact that

some of those who were sent out to assist in the government of the great dependency evinced too much of that strong John Bull pertinacity which made them look down upon every race except their own. This feeling he most strongly condemned. "The vast multitudes of India," he went on to say, "I thoroughly believe are well contented with our rule. They have changed masters so often that there is nothing humiliating to them in having gained a new one. Otherwise there is no immediate danger; but no system of government can be permanently safe where there is a feeling of inferiority or of mortification affecting the relations between the governing and the governed. There is nothing I would more earnestly wish to impress upon all who leave this country for the purpose of governing India, that, if they choose to be so, they are the only enemies England has to fear. They are the persons who can if they will deal a blow of the deadliest character at the future rule of England; but I am convinced that all will take a higher and a better view of their responsibility, and that, as generations go on—as bodies of students are turned out of this college—they will go forth feeling their

position as missionaries of civilization, and fully recognizing the responsibility that lies upon them of drawing tighter the bonds between England and that splendid Empire with which it is our vast responsibility to deal."

An unfortunate difference of opinion arose during this year between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Lord Northbrook had certainly exceeded his powers in carrying through his Legislative Council an Act altering certain of the customs duties without consulting the Home authorities. Lord Salisbury felt that this assumption of legislative independence on the part of the Viceroy could not be suffered to pass without protest, and in a strongly-worded despatch he ordered the reconsideration of the Act, and informed the Viceroy that for the future he must be more careful to submit all such matters to the Home authorities before proceeding to legislate upon them. Lord Northbrook's resignation, which took place in January, 1876, was not unnaturally connected in people's minds with this conflict of authority; but when the subject was brought before Parliament, Lord Salisbury had no difficulty in showing that both legally and constitutionally he was

perfectly in the right in the position he had taken up.

Meantime, the everlasting Eastern Question was heard of again. The inhabitants of the Herzegovina, one of the semi-Christian provinces of the Turkish Empire, broke out into revolt, and the insurrection, not without assistance from Serbia and Montenegro, spread to Bosnia, and soon reached dimensions formidable enough to the ill-disciplined army and ill-furnished treasury of the Sublime Porte. The immediate result of the revolt, and of the expenses involved in the attempt to put it down, was the announcement by Turkey that she would be unable to pay the interest on her National Debt. This determined the Northern powers to take vigorous action at once. Germany was at least interested in the financial question; Austria was eager to put an end to the revolt, which she feared might spread to her own Slavonic provinces; and Russia was ready as ever to seize an opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Turkey, and posing as the champion of the oppressed Christians. But before the three powers could arrange their plan of action, Europe was electrified by the announcement that the English Government had purchased

the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal. By this bold and prudent policy England was guarded against any eventualities which the reopening of the Eastern Question might bring about. As a financial operation it was most brilliant, and has proved entirely successful. The shares which were purchased in 1874 for the sum of 4,076,000*l.* were ten years later worth more than 10,000,000*l.*; the purchase-money having been raised by a sinking fund, has hardly been felt by the tax-payer, while the rate of interest—five per cent.—which is guaranteed, is far more than can ordinarily be obtained in these days of cheap money. But it is not as a financial operation that the purchase of the Suez Canal shares is chiefly worthy of note. It was a declaration to the powers of Europe that England was determined at all hazards to maintain her route to India, and that her chief interest in the Eastern Question was its bearing on the security of that route. It was a declaration, too, on the part of the English Government to all whom it might concern that the policy of isolation and non-intervention was not one which commended itself to her Majesty's present advisers, and that however much England might have abstained from conti-

mental politics during Mr. Gladstone's premiership, that abstention was now at an end, and England would be as keen and active as any other State in the maintenance of her own rights and her own interests. The universal satisfaction with which this stroke of policy was received at home and by all England's well-wishers abroad was only marred by a few snarls from Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and other members of the late Ministry, who seemed incapable of understanding a foreign policy which did not consist in inflicting a series of humiliations on their country.

The session of 1876 saw the Opposition at their wits' end to discover any means of raising an agitation against the Ministers, whose popularity since they assumed office had been steadily on the increase. The first measure introduced by the Government was one for adding to the Royal Titles a fresh one significant of the fact that the Queen's authority was now exercised directly over the millions of India. That such an obvious proposal should have been violently assailed by the Opposition in Parliament, and in the Press; that petitions innumerable should have been got up, and meetings held in

every important town in the kingdom to entreat Parliament never, never to consent to the introduction of such a title as Empress ; that ordinarily sane politicians should have accused Ministers of trying to establish an imperialism *à la mode de Napoleon III.*, and that ex-Cabinet Ministers should not have hesitated to calumniate their sovereign, may seem strange to those who have not learnt from history that "the great heart of the English people" has been easily stirred by clever agitators to a passionate longing for their lost eleven days, and that a skilful pen could succeed in presenting a simple commercial transaction as an attempt to crush a down-trodden race. With the recollection of the success which attended the Opposition to Walpole's Excise scheme, we may almost wonder that the Royal Titles Bill ever passed into law. It would hardly interest readers at the present day to dilate on the debates which the factious opposition to the Bill occasioned, and it will be sufficient to mention that on the second reading of the measure in the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury made a vigorous speech and succeeded in completely destroying the arguments which had been put forward by the opponents

of the Bill and in inducing the House to read it a second time unanimously.

Lord Salisbury was more interested in a measure which he brought before the House of Lords in the early days of the session for the reform of the University of Oxford. In his double capacity as Chancellor of the University and one of the most prominent members of the Government, Lord Salisbury was eminently qualified to undertake this delicate task. The Commission to inquire into the revenues of the Universities and Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, which had been appointed by the late Ministry, had issued its report at the end of the year 1874, and had suggested various ways in which these large revenues might be made more useful for the purposes of learning and education. Lord Salisbury's Bill proposed to appoint a new Commission, which should have power, in conjunction with certain members of the various colleges concerned, to draw up statutes for the colleges, to arrange for the better management of the finances of the colleges and the University, to compel the colleges to contribute according to their means to the expenses of the University, to increase the professoriate and appoint readers

and lecturers, and above all to sweep away the greatest of all abuses, permanent non-resident fellowships. The real gist of the whole question he declared lay in these "idle fellowships," which gave men the sum of 250*l.* or 300*l.* per annum for life as the reward for excellence in a certain examination. To these fellowships no duties were attached, and a man who gained one might, if he chose, provided only he abstained from matrimony, remain in idleness for life. "I do not believe," said Lord Salisbury, "that any one starting fresh in the matter would ever think of establishing rewards of that kind. It is not only out of all proportion to the service for which it is a reward, but it is out of all keeping with the course adopted with regard to all other positions in life. If a man succeeds in the army you promote him, but give him a more responsible command; in the Church if a man succeeds, you make him a Bishop and give him ten times more labour. In the Civil Service, when you give a man increased pay you call on him to fill an office of higher trust. Only in this case of fellowships to which no duties are attached do you reward merit by absolute idleness. It is against the whole law of public life.

In public life if a man succeeds, you give him more important work, but not idleness. Throughout the whole of English life the principle of the reward of success is the giving an opportunity for harder work, but not idleness. . . . The plan of idle fellowships was not in accordance with the designs of the founders, who always attached residence and duties to the fellowships. It is a comfort to know that the University has become thoroughly alive to the evil of this state of things, and from it we shall meet with no opposition in applying such a remedy as may be thought necessary. It seems that if all these idle fellowships were to be done away with and no one was to hold a fellowship without doing educational work, we should have a sum of 50,000*l.* to 60,000*l.* or 80,000*l.* a year. That, under an improved system, could be applied to University purposes." He proceeded to explain that by "University purposes" was meant the erection and maintenance of better University buildings, the endowment of new professorships, the increase of the emolument of certain already existing professorships, and provision for the more efficient teaching of the large and increasing body of unattached students. The

Bill did not alter in any way the constitution of the University, and in the opinion of very many persons an opportunity was missed of giving the University of Oxford a more popular and efficient system of self-government. Be this as it may, the measure was received with general satisfaction, as being a real instalment of reform conceived not in the interests of any one party or school of thought, but with a genuine desire to benefit the cause of learning and the welfare of the University. A similar measure with regard to the University of Cambridge was introduced a little later into the Lower House, and though pressure of other business prevented their becoming law in that session, Bills of substantially the same character were passed in 1877, and have already proved most beneficial to our great national seats of learning.

While the House of Lords was discussing the details of Lord Salisbury's scheme of University Reform, events in the East were progressing with startling rapidity, and the attention of Englishmen was concentrated on Turkey. The revolt in Bosnia and the Herzegovina continued, and was spreading to other provinces, distracted counsels reigned

in Constantinople, and the "Divine figure of the North" seemed drawing near the goal of its ambition. At the close of 1875 the three Imperial Chancellors had agreed on a common line of policy, which was embodied in the famous Andrassy Note, drawn up by the Austrian statesman of that name. This was in effect a protest addressed by the powers to Turkey urging the necessity of stringent measures of reform, in the disturbed provinces, and containing solemn warnings of the serious consequences which would result from any delay in carrying out these reforms. The English Government gave its adhesion to this Note, though not without chagrin that its advice, as one of the signatories of the Treaty of Paris, had not been sought before the other powers committed themselves to this step. As was generally expected, the Andrassy Note proved a complete failure. The Porte surpassed itself in promises, but it had neither the power nor the desire to carry them out.

During the early months of 1876 the insurrection continued to spread, and the rulers of Servia and Montenegro found it more and more difficult to restrain their subjects. The finances of Turkey had defied all attempts to

set them straight; the fanaticism of the Mohammedan population burst forth in deeds of violence and brutality; the Sultan was deposed, and his successor was only allowed to enjoy the semblance of the power for a few weeks; everything, indeed, seemed to show that the sick man was at death's door, and the question of the disposal of his property was openly discussed.

The *Drei Kaiserbund* now determined on intervention. The Berlin Memorandum was drawn up by the Imperial Chancellors without even the form of consulting the other powers, and the would-be dictators of Europe arrogantly demanded the assent of England, France, and Italy to their predetermined course of action. The crisis was a momentous one for the English Government. They were called upon to decide whether by accepting the Memorandum England should voluntarily place herself in a position of subordination to the northern powers, and abdicate the right to that important voice in the settlement of the Eastern Question which the Crimean War had given her, or whether she would take the grave responsibility of momentarily isolating herself from the European concert with the hope of thereby regaining some of the pres-

tige which the policy of effacement pursued with such success by Mr. Gladstone had deprived her of. Wisely and patriotically the Cabinet decided to refuse "to accept a plan in the preparation of which it had not been consulted, and which it did not believe would succeed." Events have most completely justified the course taken by the Government, and even at the time public opinion in England generally applauded the view.

But a far greater trial was in store for her Majesty's Ministers. The revolt in the Turkish provinces had been allowed to increase owing to the supineness of the authorities, but when symptoms of disaffection began to manifest themselves in Bulgaria, the Porte determined not to lose a moment in repressing them. The result was the famous Bulgarian atrocities. Our subject, fortunately, does not compel us to dwell on these horrors, and it will be sufficient to say that cruelties and barbarities of all kinds were practised by the Bashi-Bazoucks and other Turkish irregular troops, that these atrocities were grossly exaggerated, and that every effort was made by interested statesmen to utilize the natural sympathy and indignation which was felt in

England and to direct it against the Government. The wind for which the Opposition had been so long whistling seemed at length to have arisen, and it was thought that the gale would be strong enough to blow the Ministers from their places and seat their opponents in office. The summer and autumn of 1876 were devoted to "atrocitv-mongering;" meetings were held all over the country; politicians, who a few short weeks before had been ignorant of the very existence of Bulgaria, were now ready with cut-and-dried schemes for the regeneration of that interesting province; impassioned orators declared that the English Government were responsible for every horror that had been perpetrated; the idea that this country had any concern in the maintenance of Turkey was scouted; and India and British interests were to perish rather than that the Turks should be permitted to "encamp" any longer on European soil. The agitation was cleverly managed. It appealed to the noblest sentiments in human nature and to the dearest prejudices of Englishmen. But it was overdone. The generation that had witnessed the Crimean War had not passed away, and the disinterestedness of Russia was not ap-

parent to those who had traced the growth of her Asiatic dominions. The atrocity business was overdone, and quiet, sensible Englishmen began to ask themselves whether there was not another side to the question, and whether those who had stirred up the unfortunate Bulgarians to revolt were not to some extent guilty of the horrors with which that revolt had been suppressed.

Meanwhile the Government, undeterred by the clamour of interested agitation, were endeavouring by peaceful means to save Europe from a general war and restore order and tranquillity to Turkey. Their task was rendered more difficult by the fact that Servia and Montenegro had declared war against Turkey, and that, contrary to general expectation, the Turks were getting by far the best of it. Russian volunteers were to be seen in large numbers in the Servian army, and it was obvious that immediate action was necessary if the intervention of Russia was to be prevented. Under these circumstances it was decided that a Conference of the European powers should be held at Constantinople, with the double object of securing reforms in Turkey and preventing Russia from taking up arms. To this important Con-

ference Lord Salisbury was sent as the representative of England.

But it is necessary to revert to Indian affairs for a moment. In January Lord Northbrook resigned the Viceroyalty, and was succeeded by Lord Lytton, who was almost at once called upon to deal with a very unpleasant case, that of Mr. Fuller, who had through perfectly unnecessary violence caused the death of a native servant, and who had received a merely nominal punishment from the local tribunal. Nothing could have better illustrated the need of such a speech as Lord Salisbury had made the previous year at Cooper's Hill; and the strongly-worded minute which the Viceroy issued on the subject showed that the Government were determined to act on the noble principles enunciated by Lord Salisbury, and to repress any attempts at cruelty or violence on the part of the English towards the natives. In 1876 Lord Salisbury again spoke on the same topic to the students at Cooper's Hill, and deprecated the coldness which existed between the two races in India, which had made a painful impression upon "that very distinguished body of travellers who had recently visited India." The aim of the Government

was to unite India more closely to England, and to strengthen the ties between the two races ; and this policy he was convinced, if Europeans were wise, would bring with it nothing but benefit to India and nothing but security to England. "I entreat you," he continued, addressing the students, "to remember that in this, as in all other matters, your duty as members of a great service in India extends beyond that which merely comes to you in official hours. Perhaps as large a part of your duty will be accomplished in your social relations. With the great command of public opinion which is necessarily given to the members of the service, their thoughts and their sentiments are a matter of grave moment, and will seriously affect both the feelings of ourselves and the future course of the government of the country. I am sure that those who instituted this college had many other objects besides the intellectual attainments which they have been so skilful in calling forth. They had, among other objects, that of nourishing a healthy sentiment among the students, and of sending forth to bear rule in India Englishmen worthy of the name which they bear. I feel sure that this expectation of theirs will not be

disappointed, and that you will feel that in entering upon a career which now promises you great material success, you will at the same time remember that it imposes upon you, as no other career or profession does, the highest responsibility for the mode in which your opportunities are fulfilled." These noble words made a deep impression, and even Mr. Bright, who is never ready to praise a political opponent, was constrained to admit that in Lord Salisbury's conduct as Minister for India he had shown a great liberality and a great disposition to do that which he believed to be just.

The only piece of legislation passed during the session of 1876 was an Act enabling the Government to suppress the slave trade in the native states. In fact, the year was almost barren of legislation; many important measures had to be shelved owing to the time which had been wasted over the Royal Titles Bill, and the persistent opposition which Ministers had to contend against throughout the session. An amendment of the Education Act, a Merchant Shipping Act, and an Act regulating enclosures were the chief measures besides the Royal Titles Bill which the Government were able to carry this session. At the Lord

Mayor's banquet at the Mansion House, Lord Salisbury, who responded for her Majesty's Ministers, alluded to the paucity of Bills which had been passed, and attributed it to the fact that the House of Commons was becoming more and more fond of debating instead of legislating. But the most important part of his speech on this occasion dealt with foreign policy. Speaking of the atrocities in Bulgaria, he said that if they were true the unanimous judgment of the people of this country could not be doubtful, but that it was right to remember not only that much remained unproved, but also that much appeared to be exaggerated; and what was more important, that we had no ground for laying to the charge of the Turkish Government any intentional hand in these horrors. "It has always been the case where any Government has been compelled to employ other than their own drilled forces in suppressing a rebellion that such acts as these have unfortunately been committed. We, ourselves, if we look back to the history of our own islands some seventy years, and in our own colonies at a much more recent date, will find no exception to this general law in that respect. We may be certain that

the Turkish Government will make every effort to put a stop to these horrors; and if they did not do so from their own feelings, the voice that is rising from every part of Europe must warn them against allowing such proceedings to go on. . . . But with reference to these matters those in office and those out of office stand in a somewhat different position. Those who are in office have their feelings like other men; but they hold the resources and power of England not as owners, but as trustees. An owner may do what he likes, looking to his sympathies, his anxieties, and his wishes, but a trustee must act according to the strict rights and interests committed to his charge. These are the principles which must guide the Government in dealing with the difficult and painful task before them. We do not believe that in the long-run the sentiments which are natural to the people of this country will be found at variance with the duties which policy imposes upon us. We believe that if we uphold the rights and interests of England, and adhere to the treaties by which England is bound, and look upon that course as the first and chiefest of those duties prescribed to us, we shall thereby be doing the utmost that in

us lies to maintain the real interests of peace, humanity, and civilization."

Such a moderate and statesmanlike view of the duties of English Ministers augured well for the success of Lord Salisbury's mission to Constantinople, and the Prime Minister was only echoing the sentiments of his fellow-countrymen when, in announcing that Lord Salisbury would represent England at the Conference, he declared that he and all his colleagues had "complete confidence in his ability, in the grasp of the subject which they feel confident that he will take, and in the firmness of his character;" and a leading Liberal journal thus spoke of the appointment: "It is certainly a matter of great congratulation that the conduct of the negotiations is placed in Lord Salisbury's hands. No appointment could have been more reassuring. He has had to deal with subject races, and has shown a real sympathy with them. He has had to do with mixed races and has acquired a large experience of their treatment. He understands the necessities of government and the necessity of controlling governors. He is a man of a large penetrating, and independent mind, who, if he be at times over-suspicious of enthusiasm,

is not likely to be satisfied by a make-believe."

It was under these favourable auspices that Lord Salisbury's mission was undertaken. On the 20th of November he left London, accompanied by the Marchioness of Salisbury, Lord Cranborne, and Lady Maud Cecil. But it was not the intention of the Government that their envoy should proceed direct to Constantinople. One of the most important parts of his mission was to personally interview the foreign Ministers of the principal European states, make them acquainted with the objects and tendencies of English policy, and obtain information from them regarding their attitude on the Eastern Question. He accordingly visited Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome before proceeding to Constantinople, where he arrived on the 5th of December. After preliminary exchanges of visits between the envoys, the real business of the Conference began on the 23rd of December. The representatives of the great powers, after some discussion, agreed to take the proposals of the British Government as the basis of deliberation. It is as well to recapitulate briefly these propositions, in order to show that the charges which were recklessly brought

against her Majesty's Ministers of neglecting the interests of the Christian people in the East, and encouraging Turkey in her resistance to the demands of Europe, are absolutely baseless. The proposals were—

1. Peace and the restoration of the *status quo* to Servia and Montenegro.
2. Turkey to concede local self-government to Bosnia and the Herzegovina.
3. Guarantees to be given for the well governing of Bulgaria.

Various schemes were suggested and discussed at the Conference, but eventually the plenipotentiaries agreed to the English programme. With incredible folly the Sultan and his Ministers, after exhausting every means of prevarication in their power, at length on the 20th of January definitely rejected the proposals of the powers, and so practically put an end to the Conference. Lord Salisbury returned to England with the consciousness that if his mission had failed it was because success was impossible under the circumstances. Against wilful blindness it is hopeless to fight.

Parliament reassembled on the 8th of February, 1877, and Lord Salisbury took an early opportunity of explaining the position he had

taken up at the Conference, and his views as to the true policy of England in the matter, strongly protesting against the idea of coercing Turkey. With merciless logic he dissected the demands of the Opposition which had been put forward in the House of Lords by the Duke of Argyll, and showed how far they were from having arrived at any clear notion of how to carry out their favourite nostrum of compelling the Turks to listen to the voice of united Europe. "It is very easy," said Lord Salisbury, "to talk of threatening coercion against the Turkish Government; but have you picked the idea to pieces in your own mind? What do you mean by coercion? I know it means that your fleet may sail up the Bosphorus and threaten Stamboul. But suppose Turkey refuses, you can do nothing more. I do not suppose that military coercion, considering the extent of the Turkish Empire, would be a course which military strategists would recommend—a naval coercion would naturally be adopted. But suppose Turkey refuses, and you proceed to the *ultima ratio*—you might indeed dethrone the Ottoman dynasty—that would be the signal for confusion and anarchy in every part of the Empire. You announce to all the

Mohammedan population that the dynasty to which they have for hundreds of years been attached, and to which they are attached still, has been struck down by a Christian power in the cause of Christians. You make this declaration to a mixed population of Mohammedans and Christians—and the Mohammedan population being armed and the Christian population being still unarmed, what would be the result but a most frightful exaggeration of those horrible scenes which we have heard so much of as occurring in Bulgaria? The policy of coercion is, with respect to any country as regards its internal affairs, one of the gravest and most responsible policies which a Government can adopt. It used to be somewhat in fashion—we have tried it in past times; but I doubt if we have ever tried it with effect and benefit to those whose condition we tried to ameliorate. In more recent times we have sometimes threatened coercion without carrying it out; but I do not think that on these occasions we have been really kind and beneficent towards those in whom we were interested. . . . It has been necessary for me to speak because I observed in the speeches of noble Lords opposite an attempt to attach to the opinions we enter-

tain and the policy we have pursued, a want of sympathy with the Christian populations which have so deeply suffered. I desire to repudiate that imputation in the most distinct and emphatic manner, and to say that their interests have never been absent from our minds ; but we have also had present to our minds the danger that hasty and unwise action might produce to those whom we designed to benefit. We entertained the hope, and still entertain it, that by slower and more peaceful means all our objects may be accomplished."

On the 20th of February Lord Salisbury again spoke on the Eastern Question, and this time with greater freedom, as in the interval the papers relating to the Conference had been presented to Parliament. The objects of the Conference he declared to have been—" first of all to restore peace between Turkey and Servia and Montenegro, and then to obtain good government for the Turkish provinces ; but undoubtedly we also went into the Conference to stop a great and menacing danger—namely, the prospect of war between Russia and Turkey. This, then, being the evil which we came to avert, it naturally was in pointing that out that our

moral influence on the Porte rested. We said to Turkey, 'Unless you do this or that, this terrible danger which may well involve the loss of your Empire is ready to fall upon you; we hope that our influence and advice may be able to avert it—indeed, we come here for that purpose—but we warn you that we shall accept no responsibility for the future if you treat our advice with disdain.' . . . It seems to me, as it must to everybody else, that the refusal of the Turks is a mystery, for the infatuation of that course seems to be so tremendous. I observe that the wonder at their conduct has been very general, for all kinds of excellent and extraordinary reasons have been suggested to explain it. To myself it certainly appears that one of the causes which led the Turks to this unfortunate resolution was the belief which has been so sedulously fostered—I know not by whom, but by irresponsible advisers—that the power of Russia was rotten, that the armies of Russia were suffering from disease, that the mobilization of the army had failed, and that consequently the fear of war was idle. They counted upon every possible contingency. Their traditional policy had been to maintain themselves by the division of the powers, and

they imagined that the powers would still be divided, and that a general European war would save them." After pointing out that it was impossible for the plenipotentiaries at the Conference to threaten coercion, he twitted the Duke of Argyll and the Opposition on their inability to define coercion; or to suggest any satisfactory solution of the question of the East. "I listened to the noble duke with most rapt attention, but my expectations were doomed to disappointment. In this strange discussion the parts of Government and Opposition are entirely changed. The Government have been all candour. Their candour can be weighed in ounces. We have absolutely poured the records of our thoughts and proceedings on the table of the House. But for the life of us we cannot yet get from the Opposition, which is usually so frank, because it is free from responsibility, any statement of their opinion or their desires. All through the autumn they have been longing for the meeting of Parliament—they have been urging that we should summon Parliament before the close of the usual recess. The one thing necessary for their happiness was that Parliament should meet in order that

they might challenge the proceedings of an inhuman and detestable Government, and bring them into accordance with the feelings of the people. Now Parliament has met, and butter will not melt in their mouths. We cannot induce them by any request, however humble and however modestly worded, to place on the journals, in the form of a distinct opinion, the grounds on which they censure our policy, and the reasons why they pursued us with every kind of vituperation their vocabulary contains during three long months. And now the noble duke pursues the same policy. Our fault is that we did not adopt a policy of coercion. We say, 'What is coercion?' 'Ah,' says the noble duke, 'that is telling.' The noble duke is not going to be so indiscreet. He will blame us for not giving ourselves up to his word 'coercion,' but no force—not even wild horses—shall draw from him what the meaning of coercion is." He then proceeded to show, as in his former speech, the impossibility of coercing Turkey without a long and desperate struggle, out of which England could not hope to gain anything.

The Powers made one last attempt to maintain peace by a Protocol signed at Lon-

don on the 31st of March, but after the failure of the Conference, war was inevitable. The Russian Government, being satisfied that the other powers would not intervene on behalf of Turkey, yielded willingly enough to the national feeling, and declared war on the 24th of April. England contented herself with protesting against the unwarrantable course, and adopted an attitude of neutrality, ready, if the emergency occurred, to interfere for the protection of British interests in the East. It forms no part of our plan to give a history of the Russo-Turkish War, which continued to rage during the whole of 1877. Suffice it to say that the heroic resistance of the Turks, and the gallant conduct of the defenders of Plevna did much to rehabilitate them in the eyes of Europe, and in England the philo-Russian party, which had been created by the Bulgarian atrocities and the agitation that followed them, was rapidly decreasing in numbers and importance. The wisdom and moderation of the Government in refusing to listen to the foolish cry for coercion was apparent now to those who had fondly imagined that the Porte would capitulate directly force was brought to bear, and the terrible losses entailed upon Russia by

her intervention made Englishmen rejoice in their own immunity from the evils which the coercion of Turkey had caused. The interest taken in the Eastern Question and the frequent and lengthy debates which took place on the subject, combined with an organized obstruction on the part of a small group of Irish members, headed by Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, prevented the session of 1877 being very fruitful in legislation. Some valuable measures, however, were passed, such as the Universities Act, and the Prisons Act, which enforced a more satisfactory and economical system of prison management, and relieved the local rates of a heavy and unjust burden. A Judicature Act for Ireland and many other useful Bills became law, despite the unparalleled opposition which the Government had to encounter.

The year was an important one in the history of India, and Lord Salisbury's time was fully occupied in the business of his department. The advance of Russia in Central Asia and her intrigues in Afghanistan attracted considerable attention and gave rise to debates in the House of Lords. But there were other matters of a more pressing character connected with our Eastern dependency.

The first day of the year witnessed the grandest and most imposing ceremony ever seen in India—the durbar at Delhi on the occasion of the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India. The enthusiasm and joy exhibited by the assembled multitudes, and the feelings of real delight with which the announcement of the title was received throughout the whole of India, were in themselves conclusive proofs of the wisdom of the Queen and her Ministers in despising the factious cry which interested politicians had raised against the proposed title. Unhappily this year was signalized by another terrible famine in India. In 1874 it was Bengal that suffered, now Bombay and Madras were attacked by this fearful scourge. The English people responded nobly to the cry for help, and no less than half a million was readily subscribed to mitigate the horrors of the famine. The Indian Government relaxed no effort, and the experience of 1874 had taught them how to cope with the foe successfully, and widespread as was the dearth, the amount of suffering and mortality caused by it was extremely small. Lord Salisbury heartily co-operated with the Indian officials, and it was acknowledged on all sides that it was fortunate indeed that

during these two great periods of famine the India Office was presided over by so able and energetic an administrator.

In October Lord Salisbury visited Bradford, and took the opportunity of an address being presented by the local Chamber of Commerce to explain and justify the measures which had been taken by the Government in the matter of the Indian famine. Mr. Bright, undeterred by his want of practical knowledge of India, had been expatiating in Parliament and outside on the benefits of irrigation, which was his sovereign remedy for famine in India. Lord Salisbury, alluding to this demand for a vast expenditure on irrigation works, said, "I am the last person to speak against a judicious, circumspect, and liberal expenditure on public works; but there is a great difference between that and rushing hastily into an expenditure of thirty millions, a sum which, I am sorry to say, fell from the mouth of one of the most distinguished authorities in the country, Mr. Bright. Irrigation is a very good thing indeed, but it won't prevent famine, for water will not flow up-hill." The only true remedy, he contended, against occasional famine and scarcity was the frugality of the people themselves in time of plenty;

and when there were too many for the land, emigration must be resorted to.

In the evening of the same day Lord Salisbury addressed a mass meeting in St. George's Hall. After alluding to the satisfactory progress which Conservatism was making in Bradford, he proceeded to speak of the Eastern Question, and declared that the Government would always gladly follow the counsels which the Opposition so liberally gave them, when those counsels happened to coincide with what they had always intended to do themselves. No doubt there was a war party—in fact there were two war parties. One of them, whom he thought very mistaken, wished to spend the blood and treasure of this country in the maintenance of the Turkish Empire. The other wished us to take the side of Russia. But suppose we had done so in February last, what would have been our condition now? As to the future, he had nothing to add to the statement which was made by a colleague of his very early last session—namely, that her Majesty's Government would pursue British interests, and British interests alone.

“We have been reproached with selfishness in this view; in fact the reproach of selfishness has been addressed to us from

both sides. Now, there is nothing easier than to be brave with other people's blood, or generous with other people's money. If her Majesty's Government had in the course of the war to sacrifice all their own fortunes, and then to go into the field to be shot, you would fairly say that it was a brave and generous action for them to undertake such a war. But as long as these two duties fall, one of them exclusively, and the other mainly, upon other people, I dispute entirely the application of these two adjectives of 'brave' and 'generous' to the acts of a Government which plunges a nation into war." The Opposition maintained that we ought to have acted with our allies, and imposed the decisions of the Conference on the Turks. This was good advice, but it was subject to the qualifications with which a certain recipe in an old cookery-book commences, because before you act with your allies, you must first catch your allies. All Europe, except Russia, was of one mind—that however much we might desire reforms in the Ottoman Empire, it did not so deeply concern us as to justify us in spending the money of our people, and shedding the blood of our soldiers. Both friends of the Russians and friends of the

Turks had said we were observing a selfish neutrality because we pursued only the interests of England. At any risk, he must still maintain that the first business of the English Government was, as honest trustees, to consider English interests, and that if they swerved, out of their own personal feelings or wishes, one iota from the straight line, they were guilty of breaking a trust which was reposed in them. There were two kinds of diplomacy, one which gives counsel, and one which conceals a threat behind the counsel. We were not in a position to do anything but offer pacific counsels without departing from what he had described as the first duty of an English Minister. Coming next to party policy, he observed that he would not attempt to say anything in reply to the boastings of Liberal orators:—

“ You would think me exceedingly tiresome if I went back to the days of Charles Fox, and told you how he sympathized with the enemies of Great Britain, how he was glad when America conquered, and how the Whigs of his day were supporters of Napoleon. You would think me very tiresome if I dwelt upon how Mr. Bright opposed the Factory Act, or how Mr. Cobden told us in

1848 that a future war was impossible. You would think me very tiresome if I reminded you how he said he would crumple up Russia five-and-twenty years ago. I quite admit that that would be perfectly irrelevant to the controversy which lies before us. Mr. Bright might none the less be one of the most distinguished orators and distinguished statesman that this country has produced, because he may at this time, or at that, have made some error, either in his advice or in his foresight. What we have to deal with is not reopening up the past, and flinging the remains of past controversies at each other's heads; what we have to do is to address ourselves to the present, and to find out a solution of the difficulties before us." When the present Ministry was charged with passing but few measures, he would invite the country to test the matter, not by the number, but by the quality of the Bills which became law. When the medical profession were only paid for their physic they sent their patients, the result was generally a large bill, and bad doctoring. If, in addition, patients refused to pay their attendant unless he sent them very drastic medicines, their health as well as their pockets would suffer.

“ I observe that when Lord Granville was here, he said it filled him with surprise that a Government, which he was pleased to say was able and, to some extent, competent, should have so little ambition to connect their names with any great act of legislation. Now that reproach of Lord Granville seemed to me to throw a flood of light upon the conduct of the past Administration. I never could understand why they went about disturbing everything, and offending everybody, setting class against class, making as many walls for their own heads to run against as they could, and doing all that they could to divide a previously harmonious community. But now I understand it all. If it was necessary that each member of the Ministry should connect his name with some great act of legislation, it is obvious that that could not be done without very materially disturbing the unfortunate persons who were to be the subjects of that act of legislation. Of course it is easy by doing such things as disestablishing churches, and descending so low as to threaten public-houses, by attacking those two ends of the scale, and almost everything between them, it is very easy to make a name; but that is not the object which we have set

before ourselves in undertaking the work of legislation."

By the close of the year it was clear that the Turkish resistance had been beaten down by the overwhelming forces of Russia, assisted as she was by contingents from the Principalities. Plevna, after a dauntless resistance, capitulated in December, and in Asia as in Europe the progress of the invading troops could no longer be checked. Under these circumstances the Porte appealed to the mediation of the European powers, who, however, refused to interfere. In England the course of the war was watched with the utmost anxiety, and Ministers wisely determined to summon Parliament at a somewhat earlier period than usual, so as to have the means of providing against any emergencies. When the Houses assembled on the 17th of January, the necessity of taking every precaution to safeguard the interests of England was apparent, as the victorious Russian army was pursuing its course unchecked to Constantinople. But the Opposition apparently thought of nothing and cared for nothing but thwarting and hampering the Government. Charges of all kinds were most recklessly brought

against Ministers by responsible statesmen, and every artifice was resorted to, happily in vain, to discredit ministerial policy in the eyes of the country. In the debate on the Queen's Speech, the Duke of Argyll had attempted to deduce from certain articles in Conservative newspapers materials for attacking the Government, thereby laying himself open to an effective retort from Lord Salisbury, who, after criticizing other statements in the noble duke's speech, continued: "No doubt I have seen at work, since we have been in power, some distinguished professors of the art of opposition. I believe when we were in opposition, we were not indolent, and not deficient in ingenuity; but the idea never crossed our brains to impute to the Cabinet of the day that they wrote all the leading articles of the so-called ministerial papers. It is certainly a most ingenious device, that of putting into the mouths of political opponents that which they never said and never intended to say. The beauty of the thing is, you cannot disprove it. Nobody knows who wrote those articles; they may all have been written by my noble friend at the head of the Government; but it would be perfectly impossible, unless we

could produce the persons who wrote them, to prove that they were not written by members of the Cabinet. I submit to my noble friends whether this discussion of newspaper articles, ministerial or otherwise, is likely to give credit or decorum to our debates. As for me, my acquaintance with newspapers is not so great that I can say whether the *Morning Post* abuses me or not; but if it likes to abuse me, I hope it will continue to do so. I am sorry to hear the suggestion of the idea of what is called a 'ministerial paper' from noble lords opposite. It is an institution which exists in France, but does not exist in this country, where the newspapers are conducted with great ability and take independent views. I believe we have the phenomenon of two or three extremely Liberal papers which support the Government on this particular Eastern Question. But the idea of representing them as binding the Government of the day is an idea borrowed from our friends in France, which I am sure will not improve the character of our deliberations."

This is a fair sample of the opposition that Ministers had to contend against during this critical period. Everything that they said or

did, everything that they did not say or do, everything they were supposed to have said or done, everything that was said for them or about them, was at once seized hold of by irreconcilable antagonists, and made the text for renewed attack.

But in the East affairs wore a most serious aspect, and the vast majority of Englishmen of all parties were content to leave the conduct of business in the hands of the Government, by whose skill and resolution it was hoped that the honour of England might be maintained. It was found necessary to ask for a vote of credit from Parliament to the amount of six millions, and to despatch a portion of the British fleet to Constantinople; and there can be no hesitation in asserting that these prompt measures, though they unfortunately occasioned the resignation of Lord Carnarvon, did more than anything else to prevent the Russians from seizing Constantinople, a step which would have been the immediate prelude of a general European war. The Russians having thus, by the timely action of the British Government, been compelled to abandon their long-cherished idea of occupying Constantinople, succeeded in wringing from the vanquished Turks a treaty

which, if enforced, would have totally destroyed the Ottoman power in Europe, and made Russian influence predominant in the East. The English Government at once protested against the Treaty of San Stefano, and insisted that the settlement of the East should be the work of an European Congress. At first Russia seemed to pay little heed to the remonstrances of England, but the calling out of the reserve forces showed the resolution of the Government to submit the question, if need were, to the arbitrament of war. This vigorous action was too much for Lord Derby, who had with considerable difficulty been induced to remain in the Government when Lord Carnarvon seceded, and who now shrank from the burden and responsibility which the policy of his colleagues would have entailed upon him. The resignation of Lord Derby was a double gain to the Ministry. His cautious and lymphatic temperament was ill adapted to carry through a bold and vigorous foreign policy; his lack of enthusiasm and sympathy had deprived the Government of much of the popular support it had a reason to expect; while the lukewarmness and half-heartedness of his political principles unfitted him for the leadership of a great national

party, and there was a general feeling of satisfaction among Conservatives when his resignation was announced, which was greatly increased when it was known that he was to be succeeded at the Foreign Office by the Marquis of Salisbury.

The change was at once apparent, and exercised a most healthy influence on the negotiations with Russia. On the 27th of March Lord Derby announced his retirement from office, and on the 1st of April Lord Salisbury forwarded to the English ambassadors at the chief Courts of Europe a despatch in which, after briefly recapitulating the negotiations which had taken place between England and Russia, he showed most conclusively that, in accordance with the public law of Europe, it was necessary that the Treaty of San Stefano should be submitted to the Congress of European powers. From this magnificent document, which was on all sides admitted to be one of the most masterly State papers ever issued, the following extract is taken, as showing the position assumed by the English Government at this most important crisis. "How far the stipulations of the Treaty of San Stefano would commend themselves as expedient to the judgment of the European

powers it is not at present possible to decide. But even if a considerable portion of them were such as were likely to be approved, the reservation of a right at discretion to refuse to accept a discussion of them in a Congress of the powers, would not on that account be less open to the most serious objection. An inspection of the treaty will sufficiently show that her Majesty's Government could not, in an European Congress, accept any partial or fragmentary examination of its provisions. Every material stipulation which it contains involves a departure from the Treaty of 1856. By the declaration annexed to the first Protocol of the Conference held in London in 1871, the plenipotentiaries of the great powers, including Russia, recognized 'that it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting powers by means of an amicable arrangement.' It is impossible for her Majesty's Government, without violating the spirit of this declaration, to acquiesce in the withdrawal from the cognizance of the powers of articles in the new treaty which are modifications of existing treaty engage-

ments, and inconsistent with them. The general nature of the treaty, and the combined effect of its several stipulations upon the interests of the signatory powers, furnish another and a conclusive reason against the separate discussion of any one portion of those stipulations apart from the rest.

“The most important consequences to which the treaty practically leads, are those which result from its action, as a whole, upon the nations of south-eastern Europe. By the articles erecting the new Bulgaria, a strong Slav state will be created under the auspices and control of Russia, possessing important harbours upon the shores of the Black Sea and the Archipelago, and conferring upon that power a preponderating influence over both political and commercial relations in those seas. It will be so constituted as to merge in the dominant Slav majority a considerable mass of population which is Greek in race and sympathy, and which views with alarm the prospect of absorption in a community alien to it, not only in nationality, but in political tendency and in religious allegiance. The provisions by which this new state is to be subjected to a ruler whom Russia will practically choose, its administration framed

by a Russian Commissary, and the first working of its institution commenced under the control of a Russian army, sufficiently indicate the political system of which in future it is to form a part.

“Stipulations are added which will extend this influence even beyond the boundaries of the new Bulgaria. The provision, in itself highly commendable, of improved institutions for the populations of Thessaly and Epirus, is accompanied by a condition that the law by which they are to be secured shall be framed under the supervision of the Russian Government. It is followed by engagements for the protection of the members of the Russian Church, which are certainly not more limited in their scope than those articles of the Treaty of Kainardji upon which the claims were founded, which were abrogated in 1856. Such stipulations cannot be viewed with satisfaction either by the Government of Greece or by the powers to whom all parts of the Ottoman Empire are a matter of common interest. The general effect of this portion of the treaty will be to increase the power of the Russian Empire in the countries and on the shores, where a Greek population dominates, not only to the prejudice of that nation,

but also of every country having interests in the east of the Mediterranean Sea. The territorial severance from Constantinople of the Greek, Albanian, and Slavonic provinces, which are still left under the government of the Porte, will cause their administration to be attended with constant difficulty and even embarrassment; and will not only deprive the Porte of the political strength which might have arisen from their possession, but will expose the inhabitants to a serious risk of anarchy.

“By the other portions of the treaty analogous results are arrived at upon other frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. The compulsory alienation of Bessarabia from Roumania, the extension of Bulgaria to the shores of the Black Sea, which are principally inhabited by Mussulmans and Greeks, and the acquisition of the important harbour of Batoum, will make the will of the Russian Government dominant over all the vicinity of the Black Sea. The acquisition of the strongholds of Armenia will place the population of that province under the immediate influence of the power which holds them; while the extensive European trade which now passes from Trebizond to Persia, will, in consequence of

the cessions in Kurdistan, be liable to be arrested at the pleasure of the Russian Government by the prohibitory barriers of their commercial system.

“Objections may be urged individually against these various stipulations ; and arguments, on the other hand, may possibly be advanced to show that they are not individually inconsistent with the attainment of the lasting peace and stability which it is the highest object of all present negotiations to establish in the provinces of European and Asiatic Turkey. But their separate and individual operation, whether defensible or not, is not that which should engage the most earnest attention of the signatory powers. Their combined effect, in addition to the results upon the Greek population and upon the balance of maritime power which have been already pointed out, is to depress, almost to the point of entire subjection, the political independence of the Government of Constantinople. The formal jurisdiction of that Government extends over geographical positions which must under all circumstances be of the deepest interest to Great Britain. It is in the power of the Ottoman Government to close or to open the Straits which form

the natural highway between the Ægean Sea and the Euxine. Its dominion is recognized at the head of the Persian Gulf, on the shores of the Levant, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Suez Canal. It cannot be otherwise than a matter of extreme solicitude to this country that the Government to which this jurisdiction belongs should be so closely pressed by the political outposts of a greatly superior power that its independent action, and even existence, is almost impossible. These results arise not so much from the language of any single article in the treaty as from the operation of the instrument as a whole. A discussion limited to articles selected by one Power in the Congress would be an illusory remedy for the dangers to English interests and to the permanent peace of Europe, which would result from the state of things which the treaty proposes to establish.

“The object of her Majesty’s Government at the Constantinople Conference was to give effect to the policy of reforming Turkey under the Ottoman Government, removing well-grounded grievances, and thus preserving the empire till the time when it might be able to dispense with protective guarantees,

It was obvious that this could only be brought about by rendering the different populations so far contented with their position as to inspire them with a spirit of patriotism, and make them ready to defend the Ottoman Empire as loyal subjects of the Sultan.

“This policy was frustrated by the unfortunate resistance of the Ottoman Government itself; and, under the altered circumstances of the present time, the same result cannot be attained to the same extent by the same means. Large changes may, and no doubt will, be requisite in the treaties by which south-eastern Europe has hitherto been ruled. But good government, assured peace, and freedom for populations to whom these blessings have been strange, are still the objects which this country earnestly desires to secure.

“In requiring a full consideration of the general interests which the new arrangements threaten to affect, her Majesty’s Government believe that they are taking the surest means of securing these objects. They would willingly have entered a Congress in which the stipulations in question could have been examined as a whole in their relation to existing treaties, to the acknowledged right

of Great Britain and of other powers, and to the beneficent ends which the united action of Europe has always been directed to secure. But neither the interests which her Majesty's Government are specially bound to guard, nor the well-being of the regions with which the treaty deals would be consulted by the assembling of a Congress whose deliberations were to be restricted by such reservations as those which have been laid down by Prince Gortschakoff in his most recent communications."

This clear and forcible exposition of the aims and intentions of the Government had a most salutary effect on Russia, who saw that any attempt to enforce the terms she had extracted from Turkey at San Stefano would meet with determined resistance from England. Lord Salisbury's arguments commanded the assent of the other European powers; and the foreign press, with hardly a dissentient voice, joined in congratulating England on possessing such a skilful Foreign Minister, and on having put forward a policy which was conceived in a spirit of anxiety for the best interests of Europe. On the 8th of April Lord Salisbury defended the circular in the House of Lords, denying that it was

a warlike manifesto, and commenting most severely on Lord Derby's ill-timed and partial disclosures of what had taken place in the Cabinet while he was a member of the Government. "I never before heard," he said, "one who was a Cabinet Minister speak so freely of that which passed in the Cabinet. I listened to the speech of my noble friend with ever-increasing astonishment. I would, however, represent to him that statements of matters which have passed in Cabinets involve the opinions of others, and must be exceedingly unsatisfactory to those who are without, because no record is made of that which is said in Cabinets. My noble friend's recollection seems to be very active. I have no right to assume that his memory is worse than mine, nor have I any right to ask anybody to believe him rather than me. I only cite the difference of opinion between us for the purpose of relying on the constitutional practice that such matters should not be mentioned in public. My lords, my noble friend pointed out several measures of the Government to which, in the public eye, he was a consenting party. He did not, he said, in reality consent at all; one was a compromise, while to another he was persuaded

by some observations which fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which appeared to be founded on a mistake. Now, my lords, am I not defending a great constitutional principle when I say that for all that passes in a Cabinet, each member of it who does not resign is absolutely and irretrievably responsible, and that he has no right afterwards to say that he agreed in one case to a compromise, while in another he was persuaded by one of his colleagues? Consider the inconvenience which will arise if such a great constitutional law be not respected. Supposing all the members of Cabinets were to rip up the history of their proceedings, and to ask who was responsible for this inaction or that neglect—a question which it might be impossible to answer—what, I should like to know, would be the result? It is, I maintain, only on the principle that absolute responsibility is undertaken by every member of a Cabinet who, after a decision is arrived at, remains a member of it, that the joint responsibility of Ministers to Parliament can be upheld, and one of the most essential conditions of Parliamentary responsibility established.”

After replying to the various criticisms

which had been made on the policy of the Government, he concluded by expressing his belief that the English people would be willing to make any sacrifice to prevent grave injuries being done to the interests of their country. "I venture to hope that the people of this country, in spite of their views of material prosperity, still recognize national sentiments leading to exertions and to self-sacrifices, for the sake of which, if the need should arise, they must renounce for the moment the enjoyment of that prosperity itself. How far off that occasion may be, it is not for me to say. I earnestly hope—nay, I may say I have good ground for hoping—it is not within the ken of the present generation; but if it be not, depend upon it, it will not be because Englishmen are not stiff and determined in the assertion of their legitimate rights and the maintenance of their ancestral honour. Englishmen are moderate, careful to avoid unnecessary offence, slow to come to a dangerous and violent conclusion, but tenacious and resolute when the conclusion has once been arrived at; and such qualities and spirit I hope you will find in the Government of this country, whoever it may be that sit on this bench. We have undoubtedly inherited great duties. We

are bound to foster the aspirations of the rising races of the south-east of Europe ; we are bound to consolidate their nationalities ; and in their patriotism, in their love of their own traditional histories and past stories, to find a security for future stability and peace. But we have more important interests than all these. We are trustees for the British Empire. We have received that trust with all its strength, all its glory, all its traditions ; and the one thing that we have to take care of is that we pass them on untarnished to our successors."

The determination of the English Government that the Treaty of San Stefano should be submitted in its entirety to the Congress of European powers was still more remarkably evinced by the next move—the despatch of the Indian troops to Malta, which sufficed to convince the Russian Government of the power of England to enforce her demands. After a brief delay the welcome news was received that the representatives of the various European powers would meet at Berlin, and that the Treaty of San Stefano would be communicated to them by Russia. Thus, by continued prudence and firmness, the English Ministers had won a great diplomatic vic-

tory, and restored their country to her true position in Europe. The resolution, patience, and firmness which had been displayed by Lord Salisbury during these arduous negotiations, contributed in no small degree to their success, and the gain to England from Lord Derby's resignation was more than ever apparent. The country heard with pleasure that the English representatives at the Berlin Congress were to be the Premier and the Foreign Secretary. In their hands the interests of England would be safe.

It is interesting to note that during this most anxious period Lord Salisbury found time to preside at the annual dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund, and make one of the cleverest and wittiest speeches ever delivered even on such an occasion. In responding to the toast of his health, he alluded in graceful terms to his own connection with the Press in former days, and the interest which that experience had always given him in journalism.

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