THE VOTER'S FRIEND,

BEING

A BRIEF SUMMARY

OF

THE MOST RECENT CONDUCT

OF

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENTS;

WITH VALUABLE STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

BY

A VOTER.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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TO MY READERS.

I ENDEAVOUR to place the following memoranda before the public in a plain, matter-of-fact form, claiming nothing more for the publication than that it is a compilation principally of notes taken during a number of years, though in many cases I have lost trace of the source of my information. I have endeavoured in all cases to be perfectly sure of my ground when speaking of what I believe to be actual facts, but it is of course possible that errors may have crept in where I have had to trust to my memory; and in matters of opinion, I think all who disagree with me will find that I give at least reasonable evidence, based upon facts, for my opinion.

With this brief introduction I venture to place these papers before you.

I remain

Yours faithfully,

A VOTER

FOR SOUTH-EAST LANCASHIRE.

July 18th, 1882.



THE VOTER'S FRIEND.

HOW POLITICAL OPINIONS ARE FORMED.

How many thousands, nay, how many hundreds of thousands of voters are there in this country whose political opinions are the result of prejudice and not of actual knowledge? How often is it that a man is a Conservative or a Liberal simply and solely because his father was before him, or his employer is? And how often do such men vote against the interests of their country and against *their own interests* simply because they have not the time, the opportunity, or the inclination to make themselves acquainted with the relative merits of the two great political parties, but prefer to follow in their parents' footsteps, even when the condition of parties with regard to each other has absolutely changed from the state they were in but a few years ago? Such men, not studying history, and not following the gradual change which has been taking place in political feeling, fail to see that there is no real difference between the moderate Liberal and the modern Conservative, but there is a vast difference between the Conservative and the Radical, though, for convenience, the latter is generally spoken of as a Liberal—a complete misnomer. The name "Liberal" is a taking one, and on that account many people take to it who object to the term "Radical," forgetting that Radicalism rules the country, and the moderate Liberal or Whig is overruled by the noisy, active, and factious extreme party, who borrow a name that does not belong to them. The Conservative or modern Tory has shown by his recent conduct that he is always ready to support the true Liberal in any measures for the benefit of the country; and has also shown, without the slightest shadow of a doubt, that he is capable of constructing and passing a vast number of useful measures as is shown elsewhere by a list of no less than FIFTY ACTS PASSED IN SIX YEARS, in spite of systematic obstruction and foreign complications. I venture to say that such a continuous succession of sound legislation cannot be shown in any other part of English History, and it behoves everybody who has been accustomed to call himself a Liberal to see if these Acts are not more in conformity with his ideas than the Radical measures of the present Administration. To select our own rulers may be said to be the highest privilege we are possessed of, so it should not be exercised lightly, and for those who have not the time for an exhaustive study of recent political history these pages are written, with the hope that they will afford a means of enabling voters to grasp the main differences in the most recent conduct of the two political parties; and even those who follow events from day to day may find something new, or something they have lost sight of, in an attentive perusal of the following memoranda.

THE ROYAL FAMILY.

One of the favourite subjects on which a *section* of the Radicals dwell is that of Royalty, and they do not hesitate to attack the gracious Queen, who, for 46 years of the most prosperous portion of our history, has

reigned over us. This very thinly-veiled sedition is however not likely to be taken into favour by the bulk of the population, for they will pause long ere they try to obtain a shadow for the substantial Constitution of Sovereign, Lords, and Commons, which was settled 200 years ago, and which has held its place firmly during that time, whilst nearly every other country has been torn asunder by bloodshed, strife, and rebellion. What is the reason for this long-continued state of security? It is, as Lord Beaconsfield says, "Because the wisdom of our forefathers placed the prize of supreme power outside the sphere of human passions. Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and all parties could rally, representing the majesty of law, the administration of justice, and being at the same time the security of every man's rights and the Fountain of Honour." These are powerful words by a thoughtful man, and will bear reflection. Now those who attack our system of government, do so generally on the score of expense; so as the "Model Republic" of America has been so often eulogised by Radicals, some of them in high places, we will compare the annual expense of their system with ours, excluding of course the salaries of the officials, as Prime Minister, Home Secretary, &c. Now as the members of our two Houses are not paid, the expense is solely on account of Royalty, and for the year 1881, is briefly as follows :—

Civil List (which includes Salaries and Expenses of the Queen's Households, Windsor, Balmoral, &c.	£385,000
Royal Pensions (see the Radical *Financial Reform Almanack*, 1882, page 114)	158,000
	£543,000
Deduct money received from the Crown Lands, transferred by the Queen to the Country (*Financial Reform Almanack*, page 145)	463,437
Total cost to the Country, 1881	£79,563

about one half-penny per head of the population. Most of the Royal Pensions are paid by agreement made, as Mr. Gladstone said in the House of Commons in March last, when the Queen's Civil List was fixed as for an unmarried Sovereign.

Now take the cost of the American system of Government. There are 285 members of the House of Representatives, and 74 members of the Senate, making 359 members of Congress at £1000 each, with allowance for travelling; and there are 37 States, each with a Legislature with members paid at the rate of 350 dollars (£70) per head, not a great salary truly, but then the members number in all 5010.

359 Members of Congress, at £1000 each	£359,000
Mileage for Travelling (say)	30,000
5010 Members of the 37 Legislatures, at £70 each	350,700
	£739,700

or about nine times the cost of our system, and this enormous sum does not include the salaries of the Governors or Presidents of the various States. This comparison is simply upon the *cost* of the two systems, and I leave the subject without further comment.

INCOME TAX PAYERS.

PEOPLE WITH INCOMES FROM £100 TO £150 PER ANNUM previous to the advent of the Conservatives had to pay income tax.

In 1876 the Conservatives abolished it for all with incomes below £150, in spite of the strongest opposition of Mr. Gladstone, as can be seen from the debates on the Budget of that year.

PEOPLE WITH INCOMES FROM £150 TO £300 under Mr. Gladstone's former rule had an allowance of £80 on which they had *not* to pay; the Conservatives increased this allowance to £120.

PEOPLE WITH INCOMES FROM £300 TO £400 under the Liberals' former rule had to pay on the whole sum; under the Conservatives they were allowed a reduction of £120, and paid tax only on the difference.

The Liberals in six years have received from income tax payers no less than £12,006,365 MORE than the Conservatives did in a similar time, as will be seen from the following table, the figures being taken from the Radical publication, the *Financial Reform Almanack.*

Liberal years.		Conservative years.	
1870... at 5d.	£10,108,589	1875... at 2d.	£4,315,132
1871... „ 4d.	6,290,611	1876... „ 2d.	4,041,892
1872... „ 6d.	9,328,102	1877... „ 3d.	5,284,091
1873... „ 4d.	7,403,737	1878... „ 3d.	5,841,265
1874... „ 3d.	5,641,791	1879... „ 5d.	8,865,491
1881... „ 6d.	10,776,012	1880... „ 5d.	9,194,606
2s. 4d.	£49,548,842	1s. 8d.	£37,542,477

The difference between these two sums amounts to nearly the whole total of the first *three* Conservative years. These instructive and striking figures of course refer to the financial years ending on the 31st March of the year named.

A CHAPTER OF BLUNDERS.

THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT FROM 1868 TO 1873.

One hardly knows where to begin in enumerating the "plundering and blundering" which distinguished this sad period, a series of years only to be excelled in disaster by the time since the Conservatives were defeated in 1880. It seems perfectly astonishing that the voters of our kingdom should have so soon forgotten the wholesale messes the Liberals made of nearly everything they took in hand during the above-named years, continued blundering that disgusted everybody, and caused Mr. Gladstone to be rejected when he tried to ride into power in 1874. But bad trade and wholesale misrepresentation in 1880 caused a fresh lease of power to be given to the men who have since but too surely followed in their previous courses, though with infinitely greater disaster to the country. Many of my readers will readily recollect some of the most noted blunders of Mr. Gladstone's first administration, others are less known. The sad mess they made in dealing with the Cattle Plague caused scores of thousands of cattle to be lost which might have been saved. This was caused by the Government *empowering* the local authorities to adopt

certain remedies instead of *compelling* them. Over 100,000 cattle died of the plague, which was imported from Southern Russia. The loss of the Megæra will long be remembered as showing a miserable cheese-paring policy. This ship had been placed by the previous Government at the bottom of the list of troopships as unfit for use, but this truly Liberal Government, almost immediately on coming into office, selected it to carry troops to the other end of the world, and it was only by running the vessel on a desert shore that the lives of those on board were saved. The loss of the Captain was more disastrous, 500 lives being sacrificed through its overturning. The Government had been warned that the vessel was top-heavy. The Alabama claims cost us £3,000,000 through the Government consenting to arbitration on unfair terms, to stop American agitation. This concession to agitation has since been carried to greater lengths. The Government "jobs" were notorious, a fifth-rate M.P., Mr. W. H. Gladstone, being given a post and £1,000 per year; a personal friend of the Prime Minister, Mr. Harvey, being appointed to the rich living of Ewelme against law; and Sir R. Collier, having become inconvenient as Attorney-General, being given a judgeship, expressly against an Act of Parliament, the appointment receiving the rebuke of the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, and the Government narrowly escaping a vote of censure on the subject. Sir Spencer Robinson was dismissed from an office without any reason, after he had, to enable him to take the office, given up professional prospects at the instigation of the Government. The Budget proposals were outrageous; it was proposed to tax carts, horses, agricultural machinery, and matches, and five quarters' income tax were collected in one year, 1869-70. In 1871, when Mr. Lowe had to raise £3,000,000 extra, his proposal about taxing matches and all his other proposals fell through, and he was obliged to content himself with the "sweet simplicity," as Mr. Disraeli put it, of 2d. in the £ extra income tax, making it 6d. higher than their Conservative successors had it, though Mr. Gladstone soon found an opportunity in 1880 to place it at 6d. again. Mr. Lowe showed that 600,000,000 boxes of matches were sold in the British Isles every year, and that a tax on them would reduce the consumption by one-third, but he did not calculate that this would have made thousands of children into paupers or criminals, until it was brought home to him by a squalid procession of some thousands of wretched-looking people to the Houses of Parliament, to protest against the tax. In the Post Office over £1,000,000 was misappropriated, the Post-Master General seeming to know nothing of the working of his department. Great injustice was done to Father O'Keefe, an active Irish schoolmaster, who had quarrelled with his bishop, and who was suspended by the Pope, *over the head of our government.* A Government Bill was brought in to amend the jury system so that five persons could convict a man of burglary, but it would take twelve to convict him of sedition. It collapsed, of course. Mr. Stansfeld's Bill about local taxation collapsed also. The Government was also defeated on the Embankment Bill. Mr. Ayrton's blundering will be recollected, and also Mr. Bruce being bribed with a peerage to give up the Home Secretaryship he had so mismanaged. On August 9th, 1871, the *Times* said, "There is no shutting our eyes to the growing discontent of the country with our naval and military administration," and soon

after the losses of the Megæra and the Captain, and the failure of the Government to get up some manœuvres in Berkshire, the Duke of Somerset gave vent to the general feeling by speaking of "armies that cannot march, and ships that cannot swim." In the famous Zanzibar contract, the Government gave £27,000 to a company for work which another was willing to do for £16,500. It is hard work to enumerate all the extraordinary blunders of these wonderful statesmen who succeeded in giving our Colonies the idea, by refusing loans, &c., that we wanted to sever the connection, and whose foreign policy, as shown in the Alabama case, the German war, and the Russian case to be hesitating and weak in the extreme. War was declared between France and Germany on July 16th, 1870, but not till August 2nd did the Government speak out to say that they intended to keep their engagements; it was then only after a powerful speech from Mr. Disraeli had stirred up the press to make the Government act, and then we pledged ourselves in case Belgium was invaded to make war against the invader. Luckily we had not to do it. In October, 1870, we had the startling news that Russia intended to break from the Crimean Treaty, and our Government had the country with them when they said that the question "*in its present state was of such a nature as to make it necessary for England, with or without allies, to go to war with Russia.*" After these bold words they consented to a conference, and Russia got all she wanted, when a bold stand would without a shadow of a doubt have made her draw in her horns, as she did in 1877, when within striking distance of that grand object of her ambition, Constantinople. These are some of the things that in 1874 urged an indignant people to hurl from power the men who were responsible for them; but in 1880, a short-memoried public, blinded by bad trade, and with the wild, mischievous Midlothian speeches ringing in their ears, again returned to power Mr. Gladstone and the men who have helped him to bring disgrace and disaster on our country.

LIBERAL OPPOSITION TO CONSERVATIVE FACTORY ACTS.

The first important Factory Act was passed in 1833, and it was to regulate the employment of children and young persons in Mills and Factories; it was under the charge of the Conservative Lord Ashley (now Lord Shaftesbury), and received the strong opposition of many Liberals, amongst them being Mr. Cobbett, Mr. Mark Philips, Mr. Potter, and Mr. Fryer, all representing important manufacturing towns.

The next important Bill on this subject, also Lord Ashley's, was passed on August 10th, 1842, and Mr. Gladstone is seen silently obstructing the measure by recording his vote against it. This Bill prohibited the employment of females, and of boys under ten years of age, in mines, and joining Mr. Gladstone are to be found Mr. Stansfeld, M.P. for Huddersfield, and Mr. Ainsworth, M.P. for Bolton. I can give chapter and verse for these statements, by reference to *Hansard*.

Next we see the Conservative Sir James Graham bringing in a Bill for the education of factory children, but he was obliged to withdraw it because of the clamour of a considerable section of the Liberals. This was in 1843.

In 1844 "An Act to amend the laws relating to labour in factories"

was passed, and on the TEN HOURS CLAUSE of Lord Ashley, Mr. John Bright expended his utmost eloquence, denouncing it as bad in principle, saying it would reduce wages, and winding up an eloquent speech by saying the Bill was "miserable legislation, on principles false and mischievous." (*Hansard*, 3rd Series, pages 1070—1071.) These and other attacks caused the rejection of the clause for the time being, and Mr. Gladstone is found to vote against it in two divisions. (*Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 73, p. 1264, and vol. 74, p. 1106.)

Mr. Fielden and Mr. Ferrand (Conservatives) then introduce a Ten Hours Bill, and Mr. Hume, the well-known Radical, delivers a long speech against it, and proposes the Bill be read a second time that day six months. Mr. John Bright again shines conspicuously, saying, satirically, that the help of the Legislature is asked "in favour of young persons from 13 to 18 years of age, and on behalf of women of all ages." Being reminded that he once signed a petition in favour of such a Bill, he denounced his act as one "of boyhood." He says he feels "compelled to give the motion for the second reading his most strenuous opposition," and in every way seeks to prevent its passing. On the second reading Mr. Bright acted as one of the tellers, and was defeated by 195 to 87, receiving the support of such men as Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. Cardwell (now Lord Cardwell), Sir John Trelawney, &c.; whilst voting *for* the Bill are to be found Mr. Disraeli, Lord John Manners, Mr. Ferrand, Mr. Henley, Sir John Pakington, and Mr. Newdegate. We find that Mr. Gladstone at this time has so far learned wisdom that he absents himself from all the divisions, so no credit to him that the Bill was passed. Reference to Mr. John Bright's speeches at this time are most instructive. He said he "felt bound at every stage to vote against the Bill," he threatened the House with "such a formidable combination of the owners of capital, that the House could not successfully legislate." Previous to the second reading he seconded a motion "for the adjournment of the debate," and acted as teller, a distinct piece of deliberate obstruction. He also acted as teller against the House going into Committee on the Bill, but all his opposition was in vain, *the Conservatives passed the measure,* and it still stands to cast the lie in the teeth of those who state they do not legislate for the working classes.

Numerous other Acts for the benefit of factory operatives might be named, most of them being brought forward by the Conservatives, but they need not be referred to in detail, as the object of this article has been gained in showing that the first movement in this direction was made by the Conservatives, and received the bitter opposition of Mr. Bright and the Radicals. The most recent Factory and Mines Acts were brought forward by Mr. Cross (now Sir R. Cross) in 1874, 1875, and 1878, and I will wind up this article by giving Lord Shaftesbury's opinion of the Bill of 1878. He said, "I am lost in wonder at the amount of toil, of close investigation, and of perseverance which the Home Secretary must have brought to bear in the preparation of this Bill. The right hon. gentlemen had to deal with 45 Acts, extending over a period of 50 years. By this Bill the whole of this scattered legislation will be brought into one lucid and harmonious whole. I believe that 2,000,000 of people of this country will bless the day when Mr. Cross was invited to become Secretary of State for the Home Department."

THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE.

Those connected with the agricultural interest will probably find something in the following extracts to guide them in forming a correct estimate of the above-named Alliance, and I may mention that I am indebted for this summary of facts to Mr. Jacob Wilson, member of the Royal Agricultural Commission, member of the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society, &c., whose speech of February 17th, 1882, should be read by all.

The Farmers' Alliance is an Association formed for the purpose of sending Radicals to Parliament, and for the purpose of forwarding Radical principles generally. What is the proof of this? Almost without an exception the leaders and officials are extreme Radicals. The President is Mr. James Howard, Radical M.P. for Bedfordshire; the Vice-President is Mr. Barclay, Radical M.P. for Forfarshire; and the Secretary was formerly editor of a Radical newspaper in London. None of the three are farmers. The Alliance turned out of Parliament a great friend of the farmers, Mr. Clare Sewell Read, because he was a Conservative, and they always throw in their lot with the Radical candidates. In March, last year, Mr. Chaplin, of course a Conservative, brought forward a motion to enquire into the serious outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease; he was strenuously opposed by the above-named Mr. Howard and his supporters in the House, although he showed that the Conservative Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, had for nine months before the late Government left office, stamped out foot-and-mouth disease from the country, and that three cargoes of diseased cattle had been admitted by the Liberal Government, and had spread the disease over the country. The representatives of the Farmers' Alliance defeated Mr. Chaplin's motion, and within twelve months from that date no less than 78 cargoes of diseased animals were imported into the country. Mr. Howard also opposed on two occasions Mr. Chaplin's Tenants' Compensation Bill, and Mr. Barclay opposed a Bill brought forward in 1881 to exempt from the Law of Distress machinery hired or borrowed by a farmer. Mr. Barclay also joined with such men as Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Mundella in opposing at every stage the Cattle Bill of 1878, Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act. I think no further proof can be required to show that the representatives of the Farmers' Alliance oppose anything for the benefit of the farmers if it has a Conservative source. By an attractive title they seek to catch the votes of the farmers for Radical purposes, but a full knowledge of the foregoing facts will prevent voters being led astray.

It is puzzling to know on what grounds the Radicals claim to be the friends of the farmer, their measures for the relief of the agricultural interest being so very, very few. Since their advent to office in 1880, they have passed *two* measures bearing on this subject, one of which is the wretched Hares and Rabbits Bill, the chief effects of this Act being to do away with the freedom of contract previously existing between landlord and tenant, and to prevent the farmers claiming compensation for damage done to their crops by ground game. The other measure is the repeal of the malt tax, which I will make no comment upon except to ask each individual farmer to ask himself "What benefit do I derive

from it?" I think the answer in nine cases out of ten will be "None." Against these two measures of doubtful advantage we have a substantial amount of legislation in this direction by the late Conservative Government, and standing out prominently we notice the Act for making penal the adulteration of seeds, the relief of local taxation by 2½ millions annually, the abolition of the taxes on agricultural horses and collie dogs, the Cattle Bill referred to before, for the prevention of foot-and-mouth disease, &c., and the Act providing for tenants' compensation for improvements, the Agricultural Holdings Act, which, though not compulsory, has furnished the ground work for many an amicable agreement between landlord and tenant, and as its clauses become more known its bearing will become wider, until probably the time will arrive when *all* agreements will be based upon it.

THE SUEZ CANAL SHARES.

A Stroke of Statesmanship.

There is scarcely anything which shows the factious spirit of the Liberal party, combined with their want of foresight, more than their opposition to, and comments upon, the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares by the Conservative Government. The transaction took place in 1876, and was almost universally admitted by the press to be a grand move on England's part, as it gave her a standing right to interfere in anything that menaced our route to India; and the Eastern question was again looming in the distance.

The original capital of the Canal Company was £10,000,000, and by the purchase England became possessed of shares to the value of nearly half of this amount, and as the Khedive of Egypt had sacrificed his coupons for 25 years, he undertook to pay us £200,000 per year for the nineteen years the shares would by his contract bear no interest. Such was the jealousy of Mr. Gladstone and his followers at this grand stroke that they proposed a vote of censure on the Government, which vote was lost by a majority of over 100, more than double the Conservative *nominal* majority. I have before me extracts from seven principal London papers, of February 21st, 1876, and they all unite in emphatically condemning the action of the Liberals, even the *Daily News* joining the general throng. On February 8th, 1879, Lord Hartington said, "The shares bought by the Government do not tend to give us any influence whatever, either direct, indirect, or moral, or of any kind," &c. On December 5th, the same year, Mr. Gladstone, in one of his intemperate Midlothian speeches, said, "The purchase of the shares was a delusion" and "a financial operation of a ridiculous description." On April 8th, 1881, in answer to a question, this far-sighted statesman (?) admitted that the shares were then worth £8,826,000, we having paid for them £4,076,000; "consequently," he said, "there may be said to have accrued A PROFIT OF ABOUT £4,750,000," and it further came out that we had received 5 per cent interest on our outlay regularly since the purchase. That the present Government attach a great *political* importance to the shares is shown by their still keeping possession of them when according to their own account such a vast profit could be made out of them. It was for political purposes the shares were acquired, but at the same time it was pointed out that their value could not fail to be greatly increased,

from the mere fact of England having possession of them instead of Egypt. The Conservative policy is fully vindicated, and the factious opposition of the so-called Liberals as fully condemned. As Mr. Disraeli said, nothing can be more certain from the words of Mr. Gladstone and his followers, than, if they had been in power, this great opportunity would have been lost.

RECENT LIBERAL LEGISLATION.

Undoubtedly the Liberals have from time to time brought forward and passed good measures, but their acts show to great disadvantage compared with recent Conservative legislation. It is not my province to go through a complete list of the measures of Mr. Gladstone's two administrations, but I shall briefly speak of those that are best known to the public, leaving to others to expound the merits of measures not mentioned here, if there are any. Mr. Gladstone's first great act on coming into the Premiership was to disestablish, and partly disendow, the Irish Church. His own previous opinion on the subject is seen in the following extract from one of his articles written in 1838. He writes, "The Established Church is the great bond of union between the two countries; and if ever that unfortunate event should arise when they should rashly lay their hands on the property of the Church to rob it of its rights, that would seal the doom and separate the connection between the two countries," and so late as 1865, his opinion seems to have undergone very little change, but as he 12 years afterwards said, certain Irish outrages brought the question "within the range of practical politics," and by a series of exciting speeches he succeeded in arousing the Irish and everyone else, rode into power at the head of a large majority, and sacrificed the Church he had previously upheld in every possible way. Then we had that other "tribune of the people," Mr. John Bright, blindly prophesying in the following words about the disestablishment, "I see it giving tranquillity to our people, greater strength to the realm, and new lustre and new dignity to the Crown. I cannot doubt that it will be accompanied by the blessing of the Supreme in its beneficent results." Mr. Bright does not make a good prophet. The Irish by their acts and speeches showed that they only looked upon this and other measures as stepping stones to Home Rule. The Irish Land Act of 1870, which the Liberals crowed about as having settled the question, is now all but obsolete, since the passing of that horrible and sinful Bill for the barefaced robbery of Irish landlords, the measure of 1881. Their attempt to settle the Irish University question was a complete failure and resulted in their resignation in March, 1873, though they had to take office again. Their other Irish measures will be referred to under the head of "Ireland;" they consist principally of Coercion Acts.

Their Acts for the benefit of other portions of our kingdom are very few indeed, compared to the vast number passed by the Conservatives; they consist almost entirely of the Education Act, the Licensing Act, the Ballot Act, the Abolition of Purchase, the Employers' Liability Act, the Burials Act, and the Hares and Rabbits Bill; and let us note the cost of some of these measures. The cost of the Education Act—one of the chief successes of the Liberals—is extremely hard to estimate, but all who pay School-board rates can get at the amount for their own district—

4d., 6d., 9d., and even 1s. in the £ represent the amounts paid locally, in addition to the Imperial taxation, which in 1881 amounted to £4,288,214; an enormous amount (see *Financial Reform Almanack*, 1882, page 145). Then let the Scotch take note that the Conservatives helped Mr. Gordon to beat the Liberals when they wanted to do away with the Scotch system of religious education, and the Duke of Richmond beat them on the question of having a Scotch Board of Education, instead of one to sit in London. The Licensing Act was made a good one by borrowing largely from Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson's Bill, but there is one Liberal clause in it, conferring on grocers the right to sell intoxicating liquors, which is one of the greatest curses to domestic sobriety that ever man conceived. The Ballot Bill, as originally drafted, was to enable a man "to vote secretly *if he liked*," as Mr. Gladstone put it; but as it was evident that under such circumstances means might easily be taken to make voters show their papers to those interested, the Bill was completely altered, Mr. Gladstone as usual turning his back on his former professions, for he had all his life up to 1870 been against the Ballot. The Act was supposed by the Liberals to do away with bribery, and with the influence of Tory landlords, so the first general election after it was passed, 1874, resulted in placing the Tories in a majority they had not enjoyed for 30 years, and the bribery during the 1880 election was notorious. I don't disapprove of the Act, but simply mention these things as showing the Liberal blindness. The Abolition of Purchase was passed by an unseemly exercise of the Royal Warrant, and Mr. Fawcett said that if it had been done by the Conservatives "it would have been condemned by Mr. Gladstone, with the consent of the whole Liberal party." Its cost to the country was estimated at about £500,000 per year for 20 years, and £1,000,000 per year afterwards for retirements. In 1873 it cost £946,500—truly these Liberals are very economical (see *Financial Reform Almanack*, page 145). The Burials Act, amongst other injustices, renders it impossible for a Church of England man to give a piece of ground to the use of his own burial service only, but allows a Dissenter to give land for such a purpose. Is this justice? It is only the accident of office which places the Employers' Liability Act to the credit of the Liberals, for the Conservatives had one in hand when they were defeated in 1880. The ridiculous Hares and Rabbits Bill is briefly spoken of elsewhere (see The Farmers' Alliance). The above measures, I think, are the principal ones passed by the Liberals during 7¼ years, though perhaps I had better add the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill, which caused such confusion over the Principality for a while, nobody being sure whether it was to come into operation at once or in another year. Let anyone compare this list, or any that can be prepared of the Liberal legislation of 7¼ years, with the list of Conservative measures of six years which will be found on another page, and then say which have most of solid advantage to the country, and which cost the least.

ENGLAND'S WARS
During 50 Years.

1834	Kaffir war	L	Melbourne
1837	Canadian Rebellion	L	do.
1839	Afghan war	L	do.

1839	Aden outbreak	L	Melbourne
1840	Sidon war	L	do.
1841	Beyrout taken	L	do.
1841	Chinese war	L	do.
1841	Cabul insurrection	L	do.
1843	Scinde war	C	Peel
1845	Gwalior war	C	do.
1845	Sikh war	C	do.
1845	Kaffir war	L	Russell
1851	Burmese war	L	do.
1854	Crimean war	L	Aberdeen
1857	Indian Mutiny	L	Palmerston
1857	Persian war	L	do.
1857	Chinese war	L	do.
1860	New Zealand Rebellion	L	do.
1863	Ashantee war	L	do.
1867	Abyssinian war	C	Derby
1873	Ashantee war	L	Gladstone
1879	Zulu war	C	Beaconsfield
1879	Afghan war	C	do.
1880	Basuto war	L	Gladstone
1881	Boer war	L	do.
1882	Egyptian war	L	do.

By this we see that 20 of these wars occurred during Liberal terms of office, and only 6 during Conservative rule. It would take too long to go into the merits of each war, but a few remarks on some of those our present statesmen have had a hand in may not be amiss. The Crimean war was caused, as every reader of history knows, through the indecision of our Liberal statesmen in not giving Russia emphatic notice that we intended to defend Turkey. Without endeavouring to *prove* this, as it would take too long, common sense teaches us that Russia would not have rushed into a war against England, France, and Turkey combined, had she any idea that we were in earnest. Our weak hesitating policy caused her to go on until it was too late to retract, and the action of France of course depended on England's action. The war cost us about 40,000 men and about £100,000,000, besides £6,000,000 we lent to Turkey. About £40,000,000 was added to the National debt. Contrast this with the signal defeat inflicted on Russia by the late Conservative Government, without a drop of English blood being shed, when Russia was about to grasp that grand object of her ambition, Constantinople. Then we had indeed "peace with honour." The last Chinese war is almost forgotten, but many people will recollect the vote of censure passed on the Liberal Government on March 2nd, 1857, for their conduct. This war cost about £5,000,000. I don't know what Mr. Gladstone's Ashantee war was for. It cost £1,000,000. The Abyssinian war, though declared by the Conservatives, was the direct result of Liberal neglect and blundering, for proof of which statement see Cassell's "History of England," vol. 9, page 310. The Zulu war probably saved from massacre the whole of the white population of South Africa. The Afghan war was made to counteract Russian intrigue, and we have since had positive proofs, by money and documents found in Cabul, that Russia intended

making Afghanistan the medium of an attack, sooner or later, on our Indian possessions. One of the most frightful blunders of the present Gladstone cabinet was to damage our *prestige*, and render useless our victories, by ignominiously "scuttling out of Candahar," where we were so securely settled. Of the three wars of the present Cabinet the first was made to disarm the Basutos who had helped us against the Zulus. The Boer war was the direct result of Mr. Gladstone saying, on March 30th, 1880, at Peebles, that he would "repudiate" the annexation of the Transvaal. Of course when he came into power a few of the leading agitators in the Transvaal called upon him to keep his word, and as he refused, the Boers made war upon us, Mr. Gladstone accepting the challenge, and saying in the Queen's speech the following year, that he would "vindicate the Queen's authority." The British troops were beaten in several engagements, and then our Rulers despatched the Afghan hero Sir F. Roberts and 12,000 men to "vindicate the Queen's authority," but before they arrived a shameful peace was concluded, and the Boers, who only numbered one-twentieth of the population of the Transvaal, had all their own way. This is probably the most criminal act of the Government, to send our gallant troops to perfectly needless slaughter; for if the Cabinet intended to make such a peace, why didn't they do it before blood was shed? And Mr. Gladstone gives as his reason that it was to save him from "blood-guiltiness." It is almost sickening to read his words. The following lines show in a very brief form the beginning of

THE EGYPTIAN WAR.

Sir William Harcourt has boasted that he and his colleagues have "overthrown and reversed the foreign policy" of the late Government. *Part of that policy was to remain on perfectly friendly terms with Turkey and Egypt*, and on the Conservatives leaving office, there was not the most remote prospect of a cloud appearing to obscure the amicable relations established. Mr. Gladstone, in his blind hatred of Turkey, soon induces his Cabinet to agree to our fleet demonstrating against the Albanian subjects of the Porte. The demonstration was a silly farce, but we lost our friendly relations with Turkey through it. Then, after an interval, some disturbances occur in Egypt threatening the position of the Khedive, and France and England, without consulting any of the other Powers, send a Dual Note, setting forth "the determination of England and France to support His Highness and the Government against difficulties of various kinds which might impede the progress of public affairs in Egypt," and "to ward off by their united efforts all causes of internal and external complications which might menace the *régime* established in Egypt." In this other Powers having interests in Egypt are completely ignored, and England binds herself to act with France, whose rulers have just incurred the lasting enmity of the Moslems by their unjustifiable agression in Tunis. The natural result is that Turkey and the other Powers issue protests, and England then tells them that she did'nt mean "material support," but neglects to tell this to the Khedive, who, of course believes that the words in the Dual Note mean what they say. A military revolt breaks out, we then send an Ultimatum saying such and such things must be done, and we send our

fleet to enforce our orders apparently, or to protect our countrymen in Alexandria. The fleet does neither of these things, for the Ultimatum is ignored, and the Egyptians, exasperated at the presence of the foreign vessels, rise and murder over 200 Europeans, with the powerful fleet sailing idly by, doing nothing to prevent the massacre and nothing afterwards to punish it. "Firmness at the right moment is the real secret of a policy of peace," as Lord Salisbury says, and all this bungling might have been avoided if our rulers had adopted a firm and consistent policy at the first; but things have gone from bad to worse, and on July 11th we find our fleet in danger, and are almost compelled to make war on those we were so friendly with under the Conservatives. Even the *Daily News* condemns the policy which led to the war, as is seen in the following extract from that paper of July 15th, 1882. "We believe that if a more prudent policy had been pursued earlier a pacific settlement might have been found of the problems which have been brought to a bloody and terrible issue." Liberal orators have endeavoured to make out that the interference of England and France in Egypt commenced under the Conservatives, but it should be well known that it was simply to manage the financial affairs of the Khedive, and that we asked for and obtained the *full consent of Turkey and the other Powers* before we sent our financial agents.

A RADICAL FALLACY.

There is probably no subject in the whole range of politics on which the Conservatives are so recklessly misrepresented as on that of Home Legislation. From the highest to the lowest all Liberals and Radicals seem to unite in slandering their opponents on this subject, trusting no doubt to the short memories and generally superficial knowledge on political subjects of the great bulk of voters; for if the Radical statements are sifted, their utter absurdity is conclusively shown. In opposition to these gentlemen, I will state that during the last 30 years the legislation of the Conservatives shows to immensely greater advantage than that of the Liberals. The Radicals have brought in a number of measures that have created great uproar in the country by the large opposition they have encountered, such as their abortive Reform Bills, their Irish Land Bills, their Irish Church Bill, &c., and from the great noise their measures have made, and the great crowing the Radicals have done when they have managed to pass one, an impression has somehow been created amongst those who do not sift such matters, that they have done a great deal. But it is the old story of "great cry and little wool;" for a careful comparison of the legislation of recent Liberal and Conservative years will show immeasurably to the advantage of the latter. I shall not attempt to deal with all the legislation of the period I have mentioned, but before passing on to the measures of the last Conservative administration I would ask readers to note that during *only four months* of the late Lord Derby's government of 1852, they passed three measures of universal importance, viz: the Militia Bill, the Law Reform Bill, and the County Courts Bill, and Lord Lyndhurst said at the time that they were greater measures than had been passed since the commencement of the Queen's reign. In 1868 the Conservatives negotiated the purchase of

the Telegraphs, which has resulted in the establishment of Telegraph stations in hundreds of places previously without, and has greatly lowered the cost of telegrams; take also the numerous Factory Acts of the Conservatives. Against these grand measures take Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary proposal in 1863, to tax charitable institutions, and the fact that from 1860 to 1864, under Lord Palmerston, with Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, not one single Government Bill was passed, a greater waste of time even than during the last $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, though not so disastrous in its effect. With these remarks I will give a list of the

FIFTY CONSERVATIVE MEASURES

passed from 1874 to 1880 by the late Government, with a very brief comment on each :—

1874	Licensing Act	Church Patronage (Scotland) Act
	Factories Act	Endowed Schools Act
	Rating Act	
1875	Regimental Exchanges Act	Public Health Act
	Peace Preservation Act	Friendly Societies Act
	Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act	Agricultural Holdings Act
		Unseaworthy Ships Act
	Masters' and Workmen's Act	Land Transfer and Titles Act
	Artisans' Dwellings Act	Public Works Loans Act
1876	Royal Titles Act	Merchant Shipping Act
	Inclosure of Commons Act	Elementary Education Act
	Pollution of Rivers Act	Crossed Cheques Act
	Appelate Jurisdiction Act	Winter Assizes Act
1877	Prisons Acts	Army Promotion and Retirement Act
	Universities Act	Justices' Clerks Act
	South Africa Act	Canal Boats Act
1878	Factories and Workshops Act	Highways Act
	Bishoprics Act	Epping Forest Act
	Contag. Diseases (Animals) Act	Scotch Education Act
	Irish Inter. Education Act	Scotch Roads and Bridges Act
	Territorial Waters Act	
1879	Army Discipline Act	Artisans' Dwellings (Amendment) Act
	Prosecution of Offences Act	National School Teachers (Ireland) Act
	Summary Jurisdiction Act	Public Health (Interments) Act
	Companies Act	Parliamentary Elections Act
	Univ. Education (Ireland) Act	
1880	Irish Relief Act	Law of Hypothec (Abolition) Act

Now, if any man after reading this list should repeat the reckless statements of the Radicals about Conservative legislation, there is no word too strong in the English language to be used to him, and if anyone has had a lingering doubt on the point, I hope this list will set it at rest, at once and for ever; and recollect these are not measures the result of popular clamour, but are, most of them, measures taken up by the Conservative Government on its own initiative. Private members' Bills are omitted, such as the Irish Sunday Closing Bill and Sir W. T. Charley's Bills for the protection of females and of infant life, which deal with a delicate subject in a very effectual manner, &c. Compare the above list with any list that can be made of the measures of Mr. Gladstone's two Governments, and see which has most of benefit for the working classes, for all classes, for Scotland, and Ireland, in spite of Mr. Gladstone's everlasting "tinkering at the Irish Land Laws."

I now proceed to give a short

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

of the above-named measures. The Licensing Act redressed many grievances the licensed victuallers had from Lord Aberdare's Act. The Factories Act is dealt with under another heading. The Rating Act provides for the rating of woodlands, shooting and fishing rights, and of mines; removing injustices that had been complained of. The members of the Church of Scotland felt strengthened by the next Act on the list, which provided for the appointment of ministers by the congregations, instead of by private and public patrons, without injuring the interests of the latter. The Endowed Schools Act was passed to transfer to the Charity Commissioners the functions formerly held by the Endowed Schools Commissioners, whose acts had caused much distrust in the country.

The Regimental Exchanges Act, a measure of justice, much appreciated by officers of the army, was contested at every stage by the Liberal leaders for three weeks. The Peace Preservation Act consolidated other Acts of the same nature, with *very great alleviations*, but it took *all the Government nights for six weeks* to pass the measure, owing to the gross obstruction practised by the Home Rulers, assisted by many well-known Radicals. Hard-working Mr. Cross's Acts, the Conspiracy Act and Masters' and Workmen's Act protected workmen from intimidation by companions on strike, and placed master and man on a level, by doing away with the unjust law which provided that a workman could be imprisoned for doing that which the master could only be fined for. Another of Mr. Cross's Acts, the Artisans' Dwellings Act, is one of vast use, and if the Corporations of all the large towns could afford to carry it out, it would result in a great increase of healthiness in the country. The Corporation of the city of London, the Metropolitan Board of Works, and other public bodies, find the great good of the measure; Manchester pronounced well of it, but on account of other extensive works they were carrying out, hesitated to adopt it; but the Birmingham Corporation, after a practical acquaintance, thought so well of it that, Radicals as they are, they *entertained Mr. Cross at a public banquet* to thank him for the great measure. Some parts of the Act that were found not to work well were remedied in 1879. The Public Health Act consolidated the Sanitary Acts, with additions and improvements. The Friendly Societies Acts protected the earnings of the middle and lower classes, by providing efficient regulations for the management of the different societies. The Agricultural Holdings Act is briefly spoken of under the head of "The Farmers' Alliance." The Land Transfer Act is admitted to be a great improvement on the law previously existing on this subject. The Public Loans Act effected economies in the method of granting loans to Local Boards, Corporations, &c., and generally simplified the working. The Unseaworthy Ships Act was one for which we must give Mr. Plimsoll his due, as it was passed mainly through his agitation, when it was found impossible to pass the more comprehensive measure Sir Charles Adderley introduced at the beginning of the session, owing to the time lost through obstruction. It was, however, a Government Bill, and the subject was dealt with more at length the following session under the head

of the Merchant Shipping Bill. *Mr. Plimsoll tried for years and years when the Liberals were in office to get them to take the matter up. He tried in vain.*

The Royal Titles Act was one much scoffed at by the Liberals, until it was pointed out that the Duke of Argyll, when Secretary of State for India, had conferred on the Queen the title of Empress of India, *without the authority of Parliament*, whereas the Conservatives had the emphatic sanction of both Houses for their Act, which was passed, not to give the Queen an empty title, but for political reasons, to show the world in general, and Russia and India in particular, that we considered the latter country an integral portion of our Empire. The previous action of the Liberal Government showed that both parties were practically agreed on the *policy* of the Act; but this is not the only time by many that the Liberals have condemned their opponents for things they have done themselves. *In* or *out* of office makes all the difference to them. The Inclosure of Commons Act protected the rights and interests of the public in common lands. The Pollution of Rivers Act would result in vast improvements in the state of many of our rivers if the local authorities would more stringently enforce its provisions. The Appellate Jurisdiction Act made serviceable provision for intermediate courts of appeal, and settled what the High Court of Appeal should be. The Merchant Shipping Act contained many clauses for the protection of seamen's lives, supplementing the Unseaworthy Ships Act. The Elementary Education Act generally amended the Liberal measure, and provided for the religious education of children whose parents should desire it. The Crossed Cheques Act was of commercial advantage. The Winter Assizes Act remedied an injustice whereby prisoners were liable to remain an undue time in gaol awaiting trial.

The Prisons Act, owing to systematic obstruction by the Home Rulers and a section of the Liberals, occupied twelve sittings of the House in 1877; it provided for an uniform treatment of prisoners in each division of the Kingdom respectively, Acts supplementing the English Act being passed for Scotland and Ireland. Other benefits of the Act cannot be treated of in the space at my command. The Universities Act enabled the authorities of Colleges and Universities to use their revenues in a more beneficial manner than before. By obstruction the debate on this question was kept up ten nights. There was also vast obstruction over the South Africa Act, which was simply to enable our African colonies to unite themselves under one local Government, and to partly settle the constitution under which the Confederation, if it took place, should be ruled. The Army Promotion Act remedied a great omission from the Army Act of Mr. Gladstone. The Justices' Clerks Act provided for salaries being paid to this useful body of men instead of fees. The Canal Boats Act placed under inspection our inland navigation, regulating the sanitary conditions under which about 400,000 people were previously living in sin and dirt, most of them.

The Factories and Workshops Act is one of enormous benefit; it consolidates and amends the Factory Acts of 50 years, bringing them, as Lord Shaftesbury says, "into one lucid and harmonious whole." (See the Article on Conservative Factory Acts.) The Bishoprics Act was described by the Archbishop of Canterbury as "the greatest ecclesiastical reform

since the Reformation." The Contagious Diseases (Animals)Act stamped foot-and-mouth disease out of the country during the last nine months of Conservative rule, but as is pointed out under the heading of "The Farmers' Alliance" the Liberals have since allowed it to be imported. Had such an Act as this been in force in the previous Liberal Administration we should probably have saved 100,000 cattle that died of the cattle plague in the United Kingdom. The Irish Intermediate Education Act was one of real benefit to Ireland, and was warmly welcomed by all concerned. The Scotch Education Act and the Scotch Roads and Bridges Act show that another portion of the Kingdom again received attention. The cost of maintaining roads was more fairly distributed by the Highways Act, and Epping Forest was secured to the people of London by the Act bearing its name.

I question if there is a single year in English History in which more useful and solid measures were passed than in the year 1878, if we except the year 1875. These two sessions contrast gloriously with the successive comparatively barren sessions of Mr. Gladstone's Administrations; in fact I think it is not too much to say that they will eclipse of themselves all that Mr. Gladstone has done during seven years' premiership, so many of his Acts having utterly failed to give the satisfaction that was anticipated from them by the Liberals.

In 1879 the Army Discipline and Regulation Act was the outcome of a Select Committee, and amended the military law, besides making valuable provision for saving Parliamentary time in after years. The Home Rulers again showed prominently by their systematic obstruction, being ably assisted by some of the Radicals, Messrs. Chamberlain, Rylands, and Peter Taylor being the most prominent; and even Lord Hartington helping the waste of time by surrendering to Mr. Chamberlain in an obstructive amendment, which was defeated by 106. Owing to obstruction the Bankruptcy Law Bill had to be dropped after passing the Lords. The appointment of a Public Prosecutor was a useful Act which had been agitated for in vain under Liberal Governments. The benefits of the Summary Jurisdiction Act are too great to be treated of in this short summary. Bankers will recollect the benefit of the Companies Act, which the Radical newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, a few days after the Act came into force, said was "proving a very distinguished success." The great event of this Session was the passing of the Irish University Bill, which has apparently settled in a satisfactory manner a most difficult question, and one on which the first Gladstone Administration was wrecked. The National School Teachers Act (Ireland) provided for £1,300,000 of the Irish Church Fund, then lying idle, to be applied towards a Pension Fund for Irish National School Teachers when they became old or infirm. Thus we see two more useful Irish Acts passed by the Conservatives without stirring up all Ireland. The Public Interments Act gave power to local authorities to provide cemeteries where required. The Irish Relief Act of 1880 will be fresh in people's memories; it was to give authority to the Government for the public money they had spent during the Winter recess to relieve the great distress in Ireland then prevailing. The Abolition of the Law of Hypothec will be appreciated by the Scotch people, who had so long clamoured for it in vain under Liberal rule.

This is a summary as brief as possible of the benefits of Conservative legislation during *six* years, and I think a careful comparison with the legislation of Mr. Gladstone's *seven and a half* years will show immeasurably to the advantage of the Conservatives. Then see the

SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR SCOTLAND

under the Conservatives, in addition to the numerous Acts in which the Scotch participate as much as the English—

Church Patronage Act
Prisons Act
Education Act
Roads and Bridges Act
Abolition of the Law of Hypothec Act

SPECIAL SCOTCH LEGISLATION UNDER THE LIBERALS

To this date July 18th, 1882.

SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR IRELAND

under the Conservatives, without its being necessary to stir up the passions of the Irish people. The result shows that the Conservatives legislate in earnest without flooding the country with exciting speeches—

Peace Preservation Act (in which most of the sting was taken out of the previous Acts)
Prisons Act
Intermediate Education Act
University Education Act
National School Teachers Act
Relief of Distress Act

UNDER THE LIBERALS—

Irish Church Act, 1869
Land Act, 1870
Peace Preservation Act, 1870
Suspension of Habeas Corpus Act, 1871
Coercion Act, 1881
Land Act, 1881
Coercion Act, 1882

WORKING MEN

will do well to study the results of the most recent Liberal and Conservative legislation, and see which party has passed most measures for their benefit. I think the result will be that they will agree with the two well-known Liberals whose opinions I here quote.

MR. PLIMSOLL (Liberal ex-member for Derby). "I am a Liberal of the Liberals. I have supported Liberal measures ever since I came into this House, but it has been borne in my mind that the interests of the working classes, when at issue between themselves and capitalists, are safer with the Conservatives than the Liberals. I suppose the working classes of the country will not be slow in arriving at that conclusion, which has been forced on my mind."—*Shipping Survey, &c., Bill Debate, May* 14, 1873.

MR. MACDONALD (Liberal working men's member for Stafford). "You have gained more from the Conservatives in respect to matters affecting

the working men than the Liberals would ever have granted."—*Addressing his constituents, Guardian, January* 14, 1879.

OBSTRUCTION.

The Liberals have laid the blame of their barren sessions on "obstruction," and as in their previous administration they had not this evil to contend against, my remarks will be confined to the present Government and their immediate predecessors. To begin with, when the Conservatives were trying to pass their mild Peace Preservation Act there was enormous obstruction, not only by the Home Rulers but by many Liberals, so that the measure took all the Government nights for *six weeks* to pass. This shows greater obstruction than the present Government have had for their two fierce Coercion Acts. During the first four weeks of the session of 1881, not one single Conservative voted against the Liberal Government, which patriotic conduct drew from Mr. Gladstone the following acknowledgment:—

"I take this opportunity of offering to honourable gentlemen opposite my respectful thanks for the fidelity, self-denial, and self-sacrifice with which they have come here night after night, ay, and through night after night, to perform their duty to their country," and Mr. Trevellyan said, of the New Coercion Bill of 1882, "The leader of the Opposition had given a manly and loyal support to the Bill, and the Government accepted that speech as the expression of the feeling of the Conservatives."

This is conclusive testimony that the Conservatives have supported the Government in their measures for endeavouring to restore order in Ireland. Next, see the following statistics of obstruction during the last session of the Conservatives, and the first session of the Liberals:

Conservative Government. 1879.	Speeches.	Liberal Government. 1880.	Speeches.
*Lord Hartington	96	†Mr. Gorst	105
*Mr. Chamberlain	135	†Lord R. Churchill	74
*Sir C. Dilke	175	†Sir H. D. Wolff	68
*Sir W. Harcourt	177	*Mr. Biggar	58
*Mr. O'Donnell	310	*Mr. Finnigan	47
*Mr. Parnell	490	*Mr. O'Connor	55
Total	1,383	Total	407

* Liberals. † Conservatives.

By this we see that in 1879 *three members of the present Cabinet*, assisted by Sir Charles Dilke, spoke 583 times, whereas six of the most active speakers in 1880, three being Conservatives, spoke only 407 times. These figures are instructive. Then, take *Hansard*, vols. 252 to 265, 1880 and 1881, for the following number of columns of speeches:—

	Conservatives.	Liberals.	Home Rulers.
1880	2,086	4,171	1,548½
1881	3,285	6,315	4,440½
Total	5,371	10,486	5,989

This article may be appropriately concluded by giving Mr. Gladstone's opinion of "obstruction," at a time when many of his followers were

helping the Home Rulers to delay Conservative legislation. In the *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1879, he says "It is not necessarily an outrage, *an offence, or even an indiscretion*," and "the keenest advocate of penal measures against the Irish members may be led to pause," if he considers the obstructor "by his tenacity has been enabled to modify the action of the Government."

ANOTHER CHAPTER OF BLUNDERS.

Mr. Gladstone's Second Administration.

The Liberal second period of "plundering and blundering" commenced in April, 1880, and since then we have had a succession of disasters such as probably never before occurred in our modern history. It seems as if all the members of the Cabinet have been totally destitute of the most ordinary foresight, and have wilfully blinded themselves to what everyone else could see, ignoring warnings, and in their almost criminal hatred of what their predecessors had done, sending our troops to needless slaughter, and sacrificing nearly all the advantages abroad that Lord Beaconsfield had given us. The first humiliation we had to suffer was the Prime Minister of England abjectly apologising to Austria for gross insults given her when he was "in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility," as the "grand old man" said. Oh! that excuse, what sins were committed in its name, and what untold suffering in Ireland and elsewhere might have been saved had he only considered the effect his words would have if ever he got into power again. But Mr. Gladstone never considered this; his object was at any cost to turn out the Conservatives. What mattered it to him if the evil passions of the Irish were again stirred up, if truth was sacrificed, if honour was thrown to the dogs, if he and his party could once more get our country into their clutches. If he was tackled to give a definite pledge on a subject, as on the liquor laws, he said "I am not here to give a pledge on this or any other subject," a policy of "open your mouth and shut your eyes and see what I will give you." Well, the public did open their mouths, and a nice mess they have received; they spit and splutter, but it is not so easy to get rid of the mess, and for many a long year they will regret shutting their eyes now they taste the nauseous result. It is impossible in the short space at my command to enter into an elaborate *résumé* of the blunders of the last $2\frac{1}{4}$ years; so my remarks will be as brief as possible.

Their first session was characterised by a wholesale turning of backs on things they had previously condemned for party purposes; the Berlin Treaty, which they made a childish and ridiculous effort to enforce by the demonstration of Dulcigno, causing the deaths of hundreds of Albanians, whose brethren were *forced* into the arms of the barbarous Montenegrins. This bloodshed was the first piece of "blood-guiltiness" of the Gladstone administration, and no one but the members of the Cabinet can be blamed for the blood shed in defence of Albanian homes. Many Liberals out of office condemned the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, but in office defeated a Bill for its repeal by 194 to 20. They condemned the Indian opium traffic, but withdrew a Bill for its abolition. They said England's debts should be paid currently, but Mr. Gladstone's

fancy Budget made no provision for such payment, he adopting Sir Stafford Northcote's plan. Many other instances can be given of this spirit of saying things when they are in a position of "greater freedom," &c., and repudiating them afterwards. Then what did they do towards clearing off the 25 measures Mr. Gladstone said were needed; why they passed the wretched Hares and Rabbits Bill, and the Employers' Liability Act, that is all from that list? They concocted an Anti-vaccination Bill for the unlimited spreading of small-pox, but withdrew it on pressure being exerted on them by an influential body of the first physicians of the country. They increased the license duty, and added one penny in the £ to the income tax, perfectly unneccessarily. They wasted *no less than six nights* in trying to get into the House that shining Atheist, Mr. Bradlaugh, and then only got him in, at his own risk, by an unseemly exercise of the Parliamentary screw, compelling a number of their followers to vote against their previously recorded convictions. They wasted another night by Mr. Gladstone attempting to suppress freedom of speech by suddenly jumping up in a tearing rage to move "that Mr. O'Donnell be no more heard," and though few people could defend what Mr. O'Donnell was saying at the time, such a proposition as Mr. Gladstone's fell like a thunderbolt, and was instantly opposed from all parts of the House, as it would enable any Minister with a majority at his back to suppress any member whose remarks might be distasteful to him; so Mr. Gladstone was compelled ignominiously to withdraw the motion his overbearing temper had urged him into. The happily named Irish Disturbance Bill was the *pièce de résistance* of the session, and the Ministers vied with each other in rousing up dangerous hopes in the Irish tenantry, using all sorts of language to "stir them up to mutiny and rage." This was a sad continuation of Mr. Gladstone's rash Midlothian speeches, and may be said to have perpetuated the evil he had so blindly begun. And we must remember that this was after the Government had allowed the Peace Preservation Act to lapse, against the advice of their predecessors and of nearly every magistrate in Ireland, saying in the Queen's speech of May 20th, "I am persuaded that the loyalty of my Irish subjects will justify me in relying upon the provisions of the ordinary law, firmly administered, for the preservation of peace and order." Blind! blind! The measure was one of frightful injustice, but they got it passed by a majority, not of 170, but of 67, about 40 being Home Rulers. However, the Lords, not being controlled by the Birmingham caucus, defeated the Bill by no less than 232, 220 Conservatives and 63 Liberals voting against it, and 51 Liberals (mostly officials) for it, so we see if every Conservative in the House had refrained from voting the Bill would still have been rejected. This iniquitous measure caused the Government to lose the services of the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Zetland, and others. Two Cabinet Ministers were unseated during the session, one for bribery, and further discredit was thrown on the Government by Mr. Fawcett having to make an apology for libelling their Conservative predecessors just before the Home Secretary was unseated. At the end the Government laid the blame of their barren session on "obstruction," complaining that six members had made amongst them 470 speeches; but Sir Stafford Northcote showed that during the last session of the Conservatives, six members, Liberals and Home Rulers, had made 1,383 speeches. (See

"Obstruction.") This session was distinguished by attempted bribes to Irish agitators, the triumph of Infidelism in the House of Commons, a cowardly policy in Asia, a wicked and short-sighted policy with Turkey, one penny in the £ increased income tax, and a vast increase in the Irish outrages.

The year 1881 will for ever be a blot on the history of our country, and one on which all true-hearted Englishmen will look back with shame and humiliation. It was distinguished by a measure, the Irish Land Act, passed in defiance of all notions of political economy, for the purpose of lowering Irish rents that had before been agreed upon by landlord and tenant. Freedom of contract was thrown to the dogs in deference to the members of the Land League, who were spreading sedition and outrage over the fair face of Ireland, and the Act when passed did not settle in any degree the Reign of Terror existing in that unhappy country. A stringent Coercion Bill had been passed, to replace the Peace Preservation Act they had wilfully allowed to lapse, and with 30,000 troops in Ireland the Government were afraid to give it effect. English and Scotch legislation was at a complete standstill. The Government tried to stifle freedom of debate, and they again tried to get a certain infidel and publisher of immoral works into Parliament. They increased the national expenditure over £1,000,000, they gave £500,000 to a puppet of Russia's, "scuttled out" of Afghanistan against the advice of the chief Indian statesmen, thereby causing civil wars and bloodshed, and rendering all Sir Frederick Roberts' brilliant victories useless, and they needlessly sent to slaughter Sir George Colley and hundreds of other brave Britons by their policy of "blood-guiltiness" and shame in South Africa. All this occurred in the first nine months of the year, and the humiliating catalogue is even now not complete, and yet men can be found who support those who are responsible for this disaster and disgrace, simply because they call themselves "Liberals"! Can people not see that the principles that allow such things to be done are nothing but of the most violent Radicalism? If some of the old dead statesmen and soldiers whose memories we revere could revisit the scenes of their labours, how they would grieve to see such a state of things, and to see that the old Whigs who still exist amongst us should hesitate to join their now natural allies the Conservatives, to put a stop to such misgovernment. Towards the end of this year the Government had so far stirred themselves as to imprison many hundreds of our fellow subjects in Ireland, *without trial*. What a noise the Liberals would have made had their opponents done such a thing.

The session now in progress is distinguished by a most determined effort being made to prevent freedom of speech in the House of Commons, night after night being utterly and completely wasted by the discussion of the measure, all the powers of the Birmingham caucus being used, backed by threats of resignation from Mr. Gladstone, to get so-called Liberal members to vote against their consciences, after the Government had said the subject was not to be of a party nature. Luckily the attempt has not been successful as yet. Two weeks of valuable time were wasted by a spiteful attack on the House of Lords, because they enquired into the working of the Irish Land Act, and in the end the Government practically admitted the soundness of the Lords' conclusions. More time and more

honour were again wasted over Mr. Bradlaugh, and again Scotch and English legislation were ignored. The disgraceful compact made by the Government with the Land League representatives is fresh in people's memory. In spite of the efforts of Mr. Gladstone and others to deny that any compact or understanding was arrived at, it has been conclusively shown that Mr. Parnell and some of his compatriots were to assist the Government in ruling Ireland and passing "Liberal" measures, if an Arrears Bill was brought forward and if the Parnellites were freed from gaol. Mr. Forster resigned rather than be a party to such an understanding, and he was the man who caused the letter to be read that partly disclosed what negotiations had been carried on. His successor, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and Mr. Burke, were immediately afterwards murdered, and Mr. Gladstone was compelled by public feeling to take steps to lessen the outrages in Ireland, although the murders of Mrs. Smythe and Mr. Herbert, but a short time before, had aroused no feeling amongst the members of the Government. A new Coercion Bill was brought in embodying some useful clauses from the Conservative Peace Preservation Act they had wilfully allowed to lapse; and again giving way to the Home Rulers, Mr. Gladstone tries to modify one important clause, so that searches can be conducted only in the day-time, which would completely destroy the value of any right of search; but in spite of a silly threat of resignation, Mr. Gladstone's amendment was defeated by 15, and the clause retains its value.

CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY.

One of the first things the Conservative Cabinet did in their comprehensive grasp of foreign questions was to purchase the Suez Canal shares, and we must never forget that this purchase, which gives us a *moral right* to protect the Canal, was opposed tooth and nail by the Liberals. It is dealt with more at length elsewhere. The Transvaal annexation was shown to be so necessary, that scarcely any opposition was shown to it either in Africa or at home—Lord Kimberley, the present Colonial Secretary, and many other eminent Liberals perfectly agreeing with it; it was not for a long time afterwards that Mr. Gladstone discovered that he might make a little political capital by denouncing it, when the memories of people had become obscured as to the circumstances of the case. The unfortunate remark of his, where he repudiated the annexation, was without doubt the cause of the war with the Boers. Another territorial acquisition of the Conservatives, long denounced by their opponents, is now found to be most valuable, for Cyprus, being about 700 miles nearer to the Suez Canal than Malta is, is found to be a most convenient rendezvous for our troops. Again is Conservative foresight shown, and also Liberal want of foresight.

The Eastern question is a long one, and my readers will no doubt be thankful if I do not go into it, except to say that England gave Russia emphatic notice immediately the Turkish war broke out, that we should protect our interests if they were menaced. When Russian encroachments were becoming dangerous, we began to make our famous preparations to protect our interests; the vote of £6,000,000, of which a little more than half was spent, enabled us to buy three powerful iron-

clads, numerous torpedoes, to provision Malta for three years, &c.; the sending of our powerful fleet through the Dardanelles, and the calling out of the reserves, brought out the terms of the San Stefano Treaty which the Russians were trying to keep secret, and finally the bringing of the troops from India, by showing Russia that we were thoroughly in earnest, compelled her to submit the Treaty to the Berlin Conference, where it was so modified that its most intimate friends did not know it again, Russia having to be content with some comparatively small acquisitions in Asia Minor, and finding her way to Constantinople and the Mediterranean for ever cut off. It was the taunt of the Liberals before the Conference that England was "isolated"; all the more honour, therefore, to the statesmen who accomplished so much at so small expense, *without shedding a drop of English blood.* It will long be remembered that every step the Conservatives took in looking after England's interests was violently and systematically opposed by those who called themselves Liberals, and such is the irony of fate that now, in so short a time afterwards, they feel themselves compelled to take exactly the same courses they had previously condemned in every possible way, and for exactly the same reason, the protection of British interests; only there is this difference, the Liberals have landed us in a war, and the Conservatives gave us peace; it makes so much difference who is at the helm of state. The Afghan war was caused, as is explained elsewhere, through Russian intrigue. The result was that the English showed their strength to all Asia, and remained in the splendid strategical position of Candahar at the close of the war—a position since wilfully lost by the jealousy and shortsightedness of the present Cabinet, our retirement being made simultaneously with the Russian advance to the north of Afghanistan. The money to pay for these foreign complications has been obtained by raising the income tax to 5d. (about the *average* of Mr. Gladstone's two terms of office), and by a slight increase in the duty on tobacco. Since the Liberals came into power again we have had the income tax raised to 6d. for one year, without the slightest necessity. The Liberal retreat from Candahar was approved of by Russia, and condemned by all the other foreign nations. This short summary may be appropriately terminated by quoting the opinions of two well-known Liberals on the Conservative foreign policy:—

Mr. Walter (Liberal member for Berkshire), after expressing regret that he did not vote for the vote of credit, "considered Lord Beaconsfield took one of the most vigorous and statesmanlike steps he had ever taken in bringing over those troops from India. . . . . It showed what was the meaning of the Government, and what were the resources they had at their disposal, and he said distinctly that no measure could have been taken more calculated to prevent war than that step. He felt he never gave a vote the correctness of which was more justified by the results than the one on the Afghan question."—*Speaking to his Constituents, Dec. 13, 1879.*

Mr. Hepworth Dixon.—"I am an advanced Liberal, but I happen for the last 25 years to have been intimately connected with the Eastern end of the Mediterranean, and I maintain that whether we take it for its natural beauty, for the enormous fertility of its soil—greatly neglected during the last 70 or 80 years, no more—or whether you

regard it from a political or military sense, the island of Cyprus is an acquisition of first-rate importance. As to the death-rate, the death-rate is higher in Malta than in Cyprus."—*At British Association Congress, August 25, 1879.*

FINANCE.

This is generally considered a dry subject, so I shall not burden my readers with many figures, but place the main excellence of the Conservative financial policy in brief form.

To begin with, Sir Stafford Northcote, in 1874, calculated that if the taxation was continued at the same rate as it had been during Mr. Gladstone's term of office, then expired, he would have a surplus of nearly £6,000,000. Mr. Gladstone had previously calculated that *in another* 14 *months* there would be a surplus of £5,000,000, and he proposed to abolish the income tax. The country did not allow him, so it fell to his successor to do something better in order to avoid taking this money from the taxpayers' pockets. Sir Stafford Northcote took off the following taxes :—

Sugar	£2,291,903
Horses	480,000
Income tax	1,840,000
	£4,611,903

and arranged for the relief of local taxation by another £1,000,000 or more. I think few can deny that this was a much better way of relieving all classes than by Mr. Gladstone's proposed method.

Next compare the taxation of the following two terms of office in the above named sources :—

Liberal Term, 1869 to 1873.		Conservative Term, 1874 to 1879.	
Sugar Duty	£16,946,341	Sugar Duty	£67,572
Horse Duty	2,033,210	Horse Duty	23,516
Income Tax (with 1881, see page 5)	49,548,842	Income Tax	37,542,477
	£68,528,395		£37,633,565

So, astonishing as it may appear to those who have not studied the question, the Liberals actually received close upon £31,000,000 more than the Conservatives in respect of these three items. The *Financial Reform Almanack*, or any book giving returns of taxation for the above-named periods, will show the accuracy of these figures.

Sir Stafford Northcote is the only Chancellor of the Exchequer who has made any *systematic* attempt to diminish the National Debt, and in 1877 he calculated that his arrangements (which are too long to be fully explained here) would in 30 years reduce the Debt by £162,000.000. During his six years of office he reduced the Funded Debt by £22,625,000 but as he added £5,064,000 to the Unfunded Debt to be paid in instalments during four years, the net reduction was £17,561,000, in spite of the Russian crisis and the Afghan and Zulu wars. Other sums added to the Unfunded Debt are really not *debt*, as they pay us more interest than we pay for the money, as loans to public bodies, &c., £12,460,000, pay

us from 3½ to 4 per cent, whereas the country only pays 3 per cent for the money, and the Suez Canal Shares £3,867,000 we pay 3 per cent for, whereas we received 5 per cent until the outbreak of the Egyptian war.

Mr. Gladstone's return to office has been signalised by a vast increase in the expenditure, juggling with the sources of revenue, increasing the income tax needlessly in 1880, increasing largely the license duties, knocking off the malt duty, which has got rid of a large source of revenue without corresponding advantages, experimenting with the wine duties, the silver duty, and the carriage duty, though some of his propositions have come to nothing, resulting in nothing but ridicule. His Budget speech of this session shows a sad state of affairs, he complains of a "sluggish revenue and an increasing expenditure." He said that the expenditure of the year 1881-2 was £85,472,000, which he also said was an augmentation over the previous year of £2,365,000. The war expenditure, including the Transvaal war charges, was £3,842,000 or about £1,500,000 more than in 1880-1, the last year the Conservatives can by any stretch of imagination be held responsible for. Next he said, although this year, 1882-3, will be relieved of war charges £2,250,000, the expenditure will still be £84,630,000 as "there may be said to be *an increase of ordinary charges amounting to £1,500,000.*" In this the increased cost of governing Ireland figures for £430,000, and Transvaal expenses for £400,000. And this is the result of putting in power a set of men whose great cry was "retrenchment."

IRELAND.

Don't let the reader be alarmed; I am not going over the vast extent of ground covered by this subject, but am only going to relate a few historical facts for others to place their deductions upon.

To begin with, what is the Liberal policy with regard to Ireland? Without doubt it is CONCESSION TO AGITATION, every act of the present Government shows the absolute truth of this statement, and the knowledge of the Irish agitators that this is Mr. Gladstone's policy has plunged Ireland into anarchy and ruin. When the Liberals came into power at the end of 1868, they set about to disestablish the Irish Church by inflammatory language. They succeeded in their object; but crime did not diminish; on the contrary it increased so much, that on March 17th, 1870, a *new Peace Preservatian Act* was asked for. It was granted, and at the opening of 1871 the Government said "the state of Ireland presented a gratifying contrast with the state of the island in the preceding Winter." The real fact was that outrage was triumphant, and no one resisting it, no fresh victims were required. One month afterwards the Irish Secretary moved for "a select and secret committee" to enquire into the state of some Irish counties. The result of the committee was that the *Habeas Corpus Act was suspended* and other precautions were adopted to cope with the frightful state of affairs disclosed. Justice Keogh's celebrated judgment showed the state of Galway.

This retrospect is just to show that the Irish were dealt with then as they are now, it was conciliation followed by coercion then; it is so now. Two Coercion Bills in the years 1870 and 1871, two also in the years 1881 and 1882. The Conservatives came into power in 1874, but the

Irish knew they had different men to deal with, and they were comparatively quiet, so that in 1875, in obtaining the renewal of the Peace Preservation Act, the Government were enabled to take much of the sting out of previous Acts, and on that mild Act they governed Ireland with success. The greatest testimony to this is Mr. Gladstone himself, who said in 1880 that the state of Ireland for tranquillity was such as was "unknown in the previous history of the country," though he blindly attributed it to a wrong cause. Some words of Mr. John Bright's in 1868 to an Irish magistrate no doubt considerably helped the agitation then, as he wrote "I can conceive a condition of things in Ireland under which such a change might be accomplished, if Ireland were united in demanding it, and were menacing England if it should be refused; but now I suspect our rulers, though uncomfortable, are not sufficiently alarmed to yield." Some words of Mr. Gladstone's in Midlothian did infinitely greater mischief, for he said that the murder of a policeman and the blowing up of a gaol brought certain Irish questions "within the range of practical politics." Directly after he uttered this disastrous sentence it was pointed out that if ever he came into power his words would have a dreadful effect. So has it proved. Quoted far and wide, to every excitable Irishman, used with all the practised skill of professional agitators, what effect *could* they have but to show the Irish that they had but to commit outrages to obtain concessions? The result has been proved, for no sooner does the Midlothian orator come into power than agitators are at work to obtain concessions by the system Mr. Gladstone said had prevailed with him before. Warned by the Conservatives and by nine-tenths of the magistrates of Ireland of the necessity of continuing the Peace Preservation Act, the Liberal Ministry wilfully allowed it to lapse, saying they can govern "by the ordinary law." Outrages increase fearfully, there is a cry for action, for an Autumn session, for anything to put a stop to the awful crimes staining the country, but the Government delay taking any measures until the following year, for as Mr. Chamberlain afterwards confessed at Liverpool, "to have stifled the agitation would have been to prevent reform," the "reform" pointed at being the measure for the robbery of the Irish landlords. Was ever a more disgraceful admission made? After the Land Act had been passed, the agitation still went on. Following the lines laid down, many fearful murders were committed, one of a gentle and accomplished lady; and just before Easter this year Mr. Gladstone says that Ireland is in a state of "social revolution," and directly after Easter, following his old lines, he lets out of gaol the chief "social revolutionists," and practically admits their programme. The Irish reply by murdering Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, and the eminence of the slaughtered men arouses the Government to draft a new Coercion Bill, having in it several useful clauses from the Conservative Peace Preservation Act they ought never to have allowed to drop. So after two years of disastrous failure in trying to govern Ireland, the Government find themselves obliged to begin anew, with the country in ten thousand times worse condition than when they began their experiments. Now, in persuance of the disgraceful Kilmainham compact made before the Parnellites were released from gaol, they are trying to pass the Arrears Bill, a measure for making law abiding taxpayers in England and Scotland

pay the just debts of dishonest, lawless Land Leaguers, and with the help of their caucus-controlled men they will no doubt succeed in passing this most iniquitous Bill, the principle of which they make no effort to defend. The Liberal attempt to govern Ireland has without a shadow of a doubt been a complete disastrous failure, the reason being given in the following words of Lord Salisbury's, the truth of which few will dispute. "The vital error of Mr. Gladstone's policy has been that, however unintentional, he has made the legislation and the administration of Ireland an instrument wherewith to purchase support for the Liberal party in Parliament, and he has made it, still further, an instrument to buy off the outrages and crimes of those who thought that in this matter they might force his conduct."

Those who have thoughtfully and honestly read the foregoing pages, will be forced to admit that Conservative rule of recent years has been infinitely better for the country than the rule of the Radicals. I care not from what point you view it, whether from an income taxpayer's point of view, a general taxpayer's, a farmer's, a working man's, a Scotchman's, or a loyal Irishman's, these pages prove that the Radicals do not show to advantage; whilst as to foreign affairs, whilst one party has a comprehensive grasp of them, the other party, by submitting to the Boers after being defeated, by "scuttling out of Candahar," and by plunging us into war with Egypt and mismanaging it afterwards, have proved that they do not understand foreign politics. Let voters weigh these things before they exercise their privilege, or they may do injury to their country and to themselves.

MR. DISRAELI ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

At Manchester, on April 3rd, 1872, the following words formed a portion of a celebrated speech by Mr. Disraeli:—"It is not merely the authority of the throne which is now disputed, but the character and influence of the House of Lords are held up by some to public disregard. Gentlemen, I shall not stop for a moment to offer you any proofs of the advantage of a Second Chamber; and for this reason: That subject has been discussed now for a century, ever since the establishment of the Government of the United States, and all great authorities, American, German, French, Italian, have agreed in this, that a Representative Government is impossible without a Second Chamber. * * * But, however anxious foreign countries have been to enjoy this advantage, that anxiety has only been equalled by the difficulty which they have found in fulfilling their object. How is a Second Chamber to be constituted? By nominees of the Sovereign power? What influence can be exercised by a Chamber of nominees? It is a proverb of general disrespect. Are they to be supplied by popular election? In what manner are they to be elected? If by the same constituency as the popular body, what claim have they, under such circumstances, to criticise or control the decisions of that body? If they are to be elected by a more select body qualified by a higher franchise, there immediately occurs the objection, why should the elected majority be governed by the elected minority? The United States of America were fortunate in finding a solution of this difficulty; but the United States had elements

to deal with which never occurred before, and never probably will occur again, because they formed their illustrious Senate from the materials that were offered them by the 37 Sovereign States. We, gentlemen, have the House of Lords, an assembly which has historically developed itself in an ancient nation, and periodically adapted itself to the wants and necessities of the times. What, gentlemen, is the first quality which is required in a Second Chamber? Without doubt, independence. What is the foundation of independence? Without doubt, property. * * Now, gentlemen, you must look to the nature of the property of the Lords. It is visible property, and therefore it is responsible property, which every ratepayer in this room knows to his cost. But, gentlemen, it is not only visible property; it is, generally speaking, territorial property; and one of the elements of territorial property is that it is representative. Now, for illustration, suppose—which God forbid—there was no House of Commons, and some Englishman—I will take him from either end of the island—a Cumberland or a Cornish man, finds himself aggrieved. The Cumbrian says, "This conduct I experience is most unjust. I know a Cumberland man in the House of Lords, the Earl of Carlisle or the Earl of Lonsdale; I will go to him; he will never see a Cumberland man ill-treated." The Cornish man will say, "I will go to the Lord of Port Eliot; his family have sacrificed themselves before this for the liberties of Englishmen, and he will get justice done me." So if there were, unhappily, no House of Commons, in every part of England where a man was in trouble he would remember that, from the very nature of representative property, there must be in the House of Lords a man connected with his county, with all the local influences which so largely contribute to the popular character of Englishmen. But the charge against the House of Lords is that the dignities are hereditary; and we are told that if we are to have a House of Peers they should be peers for life. There are great authorities in favour of this, and even my noble friend near me, with whom I rarely differ on any subject, the other day gave in his adhesion to a limited application of this principle, and on grounds no doubt highly deserving of consideration, that political requirements lead to the creation of what may be styled pauper peerages. One word on that. No doubt there are some members of the House of Lords who cannot manage their own affairs. And the same observation equally applies to some members of the House of Commons: and I suppose this will always happen so long as we have an assembly formed of flesh and blood, and not of paper. But I must say this, that so far as I can observe, it is not any of those peers created for official considerations who have given rise to any scandal of this kind. I know no instance of pauper peerages being obtruded on public attention. Generally speaking they have been noblemen of ancient lineage and large estate. But I have a word to say on the subject on what are called peers for life. Now, in the first place, let me observe that every peer is a peer for life, as he cannot be a peer after his death; but some peers for life are succeeded in their dignities by their children. The question arises, who is most responsible—a peer for life whose dignities are not descendible, or a peer for life whose dignities are hereditary? Now, a peer for life is in a very strong position. He says, "Here I am; I have got power and I will exercise it." I have no doubt that, on the whole, a peer for life would exercise it for what he deemed was the public good. Let us

hope that. But after all, he might, and could, exercise it according to his own will, which might be perverse and headstrong. Nobody can call him to account; he is independent of everybody. But a peer for life whose dignities descend is in a very different position. He has every inducement to study public opinion, and, when he believes it just, to yield to it; because he naturally feels that if the order to which he belongs is in constant collision with public opinion, the chances are that his dignities will not descend to his posterity. Therefore, gentlemen, I am not prepared myself to believe that a solution of any difficulties in the public mind on this point is to be found by creating peers for life. I know there are some philosophers who believe that the best substitute for the House of Lords would be an assembly formed of ex-governors of Colonies. I have not sufficient experience on that subject to give a decided opinion upon it. When the Muse of Comedy threw her frolic grace over society, a retired governor was generally one of the characters in every play; and the last of our great actors—who, by the bye was a great favourite in Manchester, Mr. Farren—was celebrated for his delineation of the character in question. Whether it be the recollection of the performance or not, I confess I am inclined to believe that an English gentleman, born to business, managing his own estate, administering the affairs of his county, mixing with all classes of his fellow-men, now in the hunting field, now in the railway direction, unaffected, unostentatious, proud of his ancestors if they have contributed to the greatness of our common country—is, on the whole, more likely to form a senator agreeable to English opinion and English taste, than any substitute that has yet been proposed. Gentlemen, let me make one more observation on the subject of the Lords. There is some advantage in political experience. I remember a time when there was a similar outcry against the House of Lords, but much more intense and powerful, and it arose from the same cause. A Liberal Government had been installed in office, with an immense Liberal majority. They proposed violent measures. The Lords modified some, delayed others, and some they threw out. Instantly there was a cry to abolish or to reform the House of Lords, and the greatest popular orator that probably ever existed was sent on a pilgrimage over England to excite the people in favour of this opinion. What happened? That happened, gentlemen, which may happen to-morrow. There was a dissolution of Parliamennt. The great Liberal majority vanished. The balance of parties was restored. *It was discovered that the House of Lords had behind them at least half of the English people.* We heard no more cries for their abolition or their reform; and before two years had passed England was really governed by the House of Lords, under the wise influence of the Duke of Wellington, and the commanding eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst; and such was the enthusiasm of the nation in favour of the Second Chamber that at every public meeting its health was drunk, with the additional sentiment for which we are indebted to one of the most distinguished members that ever represented a Lancashire borough, "Thank God, we have a House of Lords."

T. Sowler & Co., Printers, 24, Cannon Street, Manchester.

A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE.

Beaconsfield

SPEECH

BY THE LATE

EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.,

AT THE

FREE TRADE HALL, MANCHESTER,

APRIL 3, 1872.

GENTLEMEN,—The Chairman has correctly reminded you that this is not the first time my voice has sounded in this hall, but that was on occasions very different from that which now assembles us together, when nearly thirty years ago I endeavoured to stimulate the flagging energies of an institution in which I thought there were germs of future refinement and intellectual advantage to the rising generation of Manchester, and since I have been here I have learned with much gratification that it is now counted among your most flourishing institutions. There was also another and more recent occasion, when the gracious office fell to me to distribute, among the members of the Mechanics' Institution, those prizes which they had gained through their pursuit of letters and science. Gentlemen, these were pleasing offices, and if life consisted only of such offices, you would not have to complain of it; but life has also its masculine duties, and we are assembled here to fulfil some of the most important of these, when, as citizens of a free country, we have met to declare our determination to maintain the Constitution to which we are indebted for our freedom and our welfare. Gentlemen, there seems at first something incongruous that one should be addressing on such a topic the population of so influential and intelligent a county as Lancashire who is not locally connected with it; and I will frankly admit that circumstance did for a long time make me hesitate in accepting your cordial and generous invitation. But after what occurred yesterday; after receiving more than 200 addresses from every part of this great county; after the welcome which then greeted me, I felt that I should not be doing justice to your feelings, I should not be doing my duty to myself, if I any longer considered my presence here to-night to be an act of presumption.

Gentlemen, though it may not be an act of presumption, it still is, I am told, an act of great difficulty. Our opponents assure us that the Conservative party have no programme, and therefore they must look with much interest to one whom you honour by considering as the

representative of your opinions when he comes forward, at your invitation, to express to you what that programme is. The Conserva tive party are accused of having no programme. If by a programme is meant a plan to despoil churches and plunder landlords, I admit we have no programme. If by a programme is meant a policy which assails or menaces every institution and every interest, every class and every calling, in the country, I admit we have no programme. But if to have a policy with distinct aims, and these such as most deeply interest the great body of the nation, be a becoming programme for a political party, then, I contend, we have an adequate programme, and one which, here or elsewhere, I shall always be prepared to assert and to vindicate. Gentlemen,

THE PROGRAMME OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

is to maintain the Constitution of the country. I have not come down to Manchester to deliver an essay on the English Constitution; but when the banner of Republicanism is unfurled, when the fundamental principles of our institutions are controverted, I think perhaps it may not be inconvenient that I should make some few practical remarks upon the character of our Constitution—upon that monarchy, limited by the co-ordinate authority of estates of the realm, which, under the title of Queen, Lords, and Commons, has contributed so greatly to the prosperity of this country, and with the maintenance of which I believe that prosperity is bound up. Gentlemen, since the settlement of that Constitution, now nearly two centuries ago, England has never experienced a revolution, though there is no country in which there has been so continuous and such considerable change. How is this? Because the wisdom of your forefathers placed the prize of supreme power without the sphere of human passions. Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and all parties could rally, representing the majesty of law, the administration of justice, and being at the same time the security for every man's rights and the fountain of honour. Now, gentlemen, it is well clearly to comprehend what is meant by a country not having a revolution for two centuries. It means, for that space, the unbroken exercise and enjoyment of the ingenuity of man. It means, for that space, the continuous application of the discoveries of science to his comfort and convenience. It means the accumulation of capital; it means the elevation of labour; it means those fabrics of invention and power which cover the district in which you live, and which supply the requirements of the world; it means the unwearied improvement of that cultivation of the soil which has extracted from a somewhat churlish glebe harvests more exuberant than those furnished by lands nearer to the sun. It means that continuous order which is the only

parent of personal liberty and political rights. And you owe all these, gentlemen, to

THE THRONE.

There is another powerful and most beneficial influence which is also exercised by the Crown. Gentlemen, I am a party man. I believe that, without party, Parliamentary government is impossible. I look upon Parliamentary government as the noblest government in the world, and certainly the one most suited to England. But without the discipline of political connection, animated by the principle of private honour, I feel certain that a popular assembly would sink before the power or the seduction of a Minister. Yet, gentlemen, I am not blind to the faults of party government. It has one great defect. Party has a tendency to warp the intelligence, and there is no Minister, however resolved he may be in treating a great public question, who does not find some difficulty in emancipating himself from the traditionary prejudices under which he has long acted. It is, therefore, an excellence in our Constitution that before a Minister introduces a measure to Parliament, he must submit it to an intelligence superior to all party, and entirely free from influences of that character. I know it will be said, gentlemen, that, however beautiful in theory,

THE PERSONAL INFLUENCE OF THE SOVEREIGN

is now absorbed in the responsibility of the Minister. I think you will find there is some fallacy in this view. The principles of the English Constitution do not contemplate the absence of personal influence on the part of the Sovereign, and if they did, the principles of human nature would prevent the fulfilment of such a theory. I need not tell you that I am now making on this subject abstract observations of general application to our history. But take the case of a Sovereign of England, who accedes to his throne at the earliest age the law permits, and who enjoys a long reign, as, for instance, George the Third. From the earliest moment of his accession that Sovereign is placed in constant communication with the most able statesmen of the period, and of all parties. Even with average ability it is impossible not to perceive that such a Sovereign must soon attain a great mass of political information and political experience. Information and experience, whether they are possessed by a Sovereign or by the humblest of his subjects, are irresistible in life. No man with the vast responsibility that devolves upon an English Minister can afford to treat with indifference a suggestion that has not previously occurred to him, or information with which he had not been previously supplied. But pursue this view of the subject. The longer the reign, the influence of that Sovereign must proportionately increase. All the distinguished statesmen who served his youth disappear. A new generation of public servants rises up. There is a critical conjunc-

ture in affairs—a moment of perplexity and peril. Then it is that the Sovereign can appeal to a similar state of affairs that occurred perhaps 30 years before. When all are in doubt among his servants, he can quote the advice that was given by the illustrious men of his early years; and though he may maintain himself within the strictest limits of the Constitution, who can suppose when such information and such suggestions are made by the most exalted person in the country that they can be without effect? No, gentlemen; a Minister who could venture to treat such suggestions with indifference would not be a Constitutional Minister, but an arrogant idiot. Gentlemen, the influence of the Crown is not confined merely to political affairs. England is a domestic country. Here the home is revered and the hearth is sacred. The nation is represented by a family—

THE ROYAL FAMILY;

and if that family is educated with a sense of responsibility and a sentiment of public duty, it is difficult to exaggerate the salutary influence it may exercise over a nation. It is not merely an influence upon manners; it is not merely that it may be a model for refinement and for good taste—it affects the heart as well as the intelligence of the people; and in the hour of public adversity, or in an anxious conjuncture of public affairs, the nation rallies round the Family and the Throne, and its spirit is animated and sustained by the expression of public affection. There is yet one other remark that I would make upon our Monarchy, though had it not been for recent circumstances I should have refrained from doing so. An attack has recently been made upon the Throne on account of

THE COSTLINESS OF THE INSTITUTION.

Gentlemen, I shall not dwell upon the fact that if the people of England appreciate the Monarchy as I believe they do, it would be painful to them that their Royal and representative family should not be maintained with becoming dignity, or fill in the public eye a position inferior to some of the nobles of the land. Nor will I insist upon what is unquestionably the fact, that revenues of the Crown estates, on which our Sovereign might live with as much right as the Duke of Bedford or the Duke of Northumberland has to his estates, are now paid into the public Exchequer. All this upon the present occasion, I am not going to insist upon. What I now say is this, that there is no Sovereignty of any first-rate State which costs so little to the people as the Sovereignty of England. I will not compare our Civil List with those of European Empires, because it is known that in amount they treble and quadruple it;

but I will compare it with the cost of Sovereignty in a Republic, and that a Republic with which you are intimately acquainted—

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

of America. Gentlemen, there is no analogy between the position of our Sovereign, Queen Victoria, and that of the President of the United States. The President of the United States is not the Sovereign of the United States. There is a very near analogy between the position of the President of the United States and that of the Prime Minister of England, and both are paid at much the same rate—the income of a second-class professional man. The Sovereign of the United States is the people ; and I will now show you what the Sovereignty of the United States costs. Gentlemen, you are aware of the Constitution of the United States. There are thirty-seven independent States, each with a Sovereign Legislature. Besides these, there is a Confederation of these States, mainly to conduct their external affairs, which consists of the House of Representatives and a Senate. There are 285 members of the House of Representatives, and there are 74 members of the Senate, making altogether 359 members of Congress. Now each member of Congress receives £1,000 sterling per annum. In addition to this he receives an allowance called "mileage," which varies according to the distance which he travels, but the aggregate cost of which is about £30,000 per annum. That makes £389,000, almost the exact amount of our Civil List. But this, gentlemen, will allow you to make only a very imperfect estimate of the cost of Sovereignty in the United States. Every member of every Sovereign Legislature in the thirty-seven States is also paid. There are, I believe, 5,010 members of State Legislatures who receive about 350 dols. per annum each. As some of the returns are imperfect, the average which I have given of individual payment may be rather high, and therefore I have not counted the "mileage," which is also universally allowed. 5,010 members of State Legislatures at 350 dols. each make 1,753,500 dols., or £350,700 sterling a year. So you see that the immediate expenditure for the Sovereignty of the United States is between £700,000 and £800,000 a year. *I have strictly confined myself in this estimate to the cost of mere Sovereignty, entirely omitting that of Government.* I have not included the salaries of the President or the Governors of the thirty-seven States, ranging them with those of the administrators of the Union. I have not time to pursue this interesting theme, otherwise I could show you that you have still but imperfectly ascertained the cost of Sovereignty in a Republic. But, gentlemen, I cannot resist giving you one further illustration. The government of this country is considerably carried on by the aid of

ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

So great is the increase of public business that it would be probably impossible for a Minister to carry on affairs without this assistance.

The Queen of England can command for these objects the services of the most experienced statesmen, and men of the highest position in society. If necessary, she can summon to them distinguished scholars or men celebrated in science and in art ; and she receives from them services that are unpaid. They are only too proud to be described in the Commission as her Majesty's " trusty councillors ;" and if any member of these Commissions performs some transcendent services, both of thought and of labour, he is munificently rewarded by public distinction conferred upon him by the Fountain of Honour. Gentlemen, the Government of the United States has, I believe, not less availed itself of the services of Commissions than the Government of the United Kingdom ; but in a country where there is no Fountain of Honour every member of these Commissions is paid. Gentlemen, I trust I have now made some suggestions to you respecting the Monarch of England which at least it may be so far serviceable that when we are separated they may not be altogether without advantage ; and now, gentlemen, I would say something on the subject of

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

It is not merely the authority of the Throne that is now disputed, but the character and influence of the House of Lords are held up by some to public disregard. Gentlemen, I shall not stop for a moment to offer you any proofs of the advantage of a Second Chamber ; and for this reason. That subject has been discussed now for a century, ever since the establishment of the Government of the United States, and all great authorities—American, German, French, Italian —have agreed in this, that a Representative Government is impossible without a Second Chamber. And it has been, especially of late, maintained by eminent political writers in many countries that the repeated failure of the arrangement which is called the French Republic is mainly to be ascribed to its not having a Second Chamber. But, however anxious foreign countries have been to enjoy this advantage, that anxiety has only been equalled by the difficulty which they have found in fulfilling their object. How is a Second Chamber to be constituted ? By nominees of the Sovereign power ? What influence can be exercised by a Chamber of nominees ? It is a proverb of general disrespect. Are they to be supplied by popular election ? In what manner are they to be elected ? If by the same constituency as the popular body, what claim have they, under such circumstances, to criticise or to control the decisions of that body ? If they are to be elected by a more select body, qualified by a higher franchise, there immediately occurs the objection, why should the elected majority be governed by the elected minority ? The United States of America were fortunate in finding a solution of this difficulty ; but the United States of America had elements to deal with which never occurred before, and never probably will occur again, because they formed

their illustrious Senate from the materials that were offered them by the 37 Sovereign States. We, gentlemen, have the House of Lords, an assembly which has historically developed itself in an ancient nation and periodically adapted itself to the wants and necessities of the times. What, gentlemen, is the first quality which is required in a Second Chamber? Without doubt, independence. What is the best foundation of independence? Without doubt, property. The Prime Minister of England has only recently told us, and I believe he spoke quite accurately, that the average income of the members of the House of Lords is £20,000 per annum. Of course there are some who have more and some who have less; but the influence of a public assembly, so far as property is concerned, depends upon its aggregate property, which, in the present case, is a revenue of £9,000,000 a year. But, gentlemen, you must look to the nature of this property. It is visible property, and therefore it is responsible property, which every ratepayer in this room knows to his cost. But, gentlemen, it is not only visible property; it is, generally speaking, territorial property; and one of the elements of territorial property is that it is representative. Now, for illustration, suppose—which God forbid—there was no House of Commons, and some Englishman—I will take him from either end of the island—a Cumberland or a Cornish man, finds himself aggrieved. The Cumbrian says, "This conduct I experience is most unjust. I know a Cumberland man in the House of Lords, the Earl of Carlisle or the Earl of Lonsdale; I will go to him; he will never see a Cumberland man ill-treated." The Cornish man will say: "I will go to the Lord of Port Eliot; his family have sacrificed themselves before this for the liberties of Englishmen, and he will get justice done me." So if there were, unhappily, no House of Commons, in every part of England where a man was in trouble he would remember that, from the very nature of representative property, there must be in the House of Lords a man connected with his county, with all the local influences which so largely contribute to the peculiar character of Englishmen. But the charge against the House of Lords is that the dignities are hereditary; and we are told that if we are to have a House of Peers they should be

PEERS FOR LIFE.

There are great authorities in favour of this, and even my noble friend near me, with whom I rarely differ on any subject, the other day gave in his adhesion to a limited application of this principle, and on grounds no doubt highly deserving of consideration, that political requirements lead to the creation of what may be styled pauper peerages. One word on that. No doubt there are some members of the House of Lords who cannot manage their own affairs. And the same observation equally applies to some members of the House of Commons: and I suppose this will always happen

so long as we have an assembly formed of flesh and blood, and not of paper. But I must say this, that so far as I can observe, it is not any of those peers created for official considerations who have given rise to any scandal of this kind. I know no instance of pauper peerages being obtruded on public attention. Generally speaking they have been noblemen of ancient lineage and large estate. But I have a word to say on the subject of what are called peers for life. Now, in the first place, let me observe that every peer is a peer for life, as he cannot be a peer after his death; but some peers for life are succeeded in their dignities by their children. The question arises, who is most responsible—a peer for life whose dignities are not descendible, or a peer for life whose dignities are hereditary? Now, a peer for life is in a very strong position. He says: "Here I am; I have got power and I will exercise it." I have no doubt that, on the whole, a peer for life would exercise it for what he deemed was the public good. Let us hope that. But, after all, he might, and could, exercise it according to his own will, which might be perverse and headstrong. Nobody can call him to account; he is independent of everybody. But a peer for life whose dignities descend is in a very different position. He has every inducement to study public opinion, and, when he believes it just, to yield to it; because he naturally feels that if the order to which he belongs is in constant collision with public opinion, the chances are that his dignities will not descend to his posterity. Therefore, gentlemen, I am not prepared myself to believe that a solution of any difficulties in the public mind on this point is to be found by creating peers for life. I know there are some philosophers who believe that the best substitute for the House of Lords would be an assembly formed of ex-Governors of Colonies. I have not sufficient experience on that subject to give a decided opinion upon it. When the Muse of Comedy threw her frolic grace over society a retired Governor was generally one of the characters in every play; and the last of our great actors—who, by-the-by, was a great favourite at Manchester, Mr. Farren—was celebrated for his delineation of the character in question. Whether it be the recollection of the performance or not, I confess I am inclined to believe that an English gentleman—born to business, managing his own estate, administering the affairs of his county, mixing with all classes of his fellow-men, now in the hunting field, now in the railway direction, unaffected, unostentatious, proud of his ancestors, if they have contributed to the greatness of our common country—is, on the whole, more likely to form a senator agreeable to English opinion and English taste than any substitute that has yet been proposed. Gentlemen, let me make one observation more on the subject of the House of Lords. There is some advantage in political experience. I remember the time when there was a similar outcry against the House of Lords, but much more intense and powerful; and it arose

from the same cause. A Liberal Government had been installed in office, with an immense Liberal majority. They proposed violent measures. The House of Lords modified some, delayed others, and some they threw out. Instantly there was a cry to abolish or to reform the House of Lords, and the greatest popular orator that probably ever existed was sent on a pilgrimage over England to excite the people in favour of this opinion. What happened? That happened, gentlemen, which may happen to-morrow. There was a dissolution of Parliament. The great Liberal majority vanished. The balance of parties was restored. It was discovered that the House of Lords had behind them at least half of the English people. We heard no more cries for their abolition or their reform; and before two years had passed England was really governed by the House of Lords, under the wise influence of the Duke of Wellington and the commanding eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst; and such was the enthusiasm of the nation in favour of the Second Chamber that at every public meeting its health was drunk, with the additional sentiment for which we are indebted to one of the most distinguished members that ever represented a Lancashire borough, "Thank God, we have a House of Lords." Gentlemen, you will perhaps not be surprised that, having made some remarks upon the Monarchy and the House of Lords, I should say something respecting that House in which I have literally passed the greater part of my life, and to which I am devotedly attached. It is not likely, therefore, that I should say anything to depreciate the legislative position and influence of

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Gentlemen, it is said that the diminished influence of the Throne and the assailed authority of the House of Lords are owing to the increased power of the House of Commons, and the new position which of late years, and especially during the last forty years, it has assumed in the English Constitution. Gentlemen, the main power of the House of Commons depends upon its command over the public purse and its control of the public expenditure; and if that power is possessed by a party which has a large majority in the House of Commons, the influence of the House of Commons is proportionately increased, and, under some circumstances, becomes even predominant. But, gentlemen, this power of the House of Commons is not a power which has been created by any Reform Act, from the days of Lord Grey in 1832 to Lord Derby in 1867. It is a power which the House of Commons has enjoyed for centuries—which it has frequently asserted and sometimes even tyrannically asserted. The House of Commons represents the constituency of England, and I am here to show that no addition to the elements of that constituency has placed the House of Commons in a different relation to the Throne and the House of Lords from that it has always constitutionally occupied. We speak now on

this subject with great advantage. We recently have had published authentic documents upon this matter, eminently instructive. We have, for example, just published the census of the United Kingdom, and we are now in possession of the last registration of voters for the United Kingdom. Gentlemen, it appears by the census that the population at this time is about 32,000,000. It is shown by the last registration that, after making the usual deductions for deaths, removals, double entries, and so on, the constituency of the United Kingdom may be placed at 2,300,000. So, gentlemen, it at once appears that there are nearly 30,000,000 people in this country who are as much represented by the House of Lords as by the House of Commons, and who, for the protection of their rights, must mainly depend upon the majesty of the Throne. And now, gentlemen, I will tell you what was done by

THE LAST REFORM ACT.

Lord Grey, in his measure of 1832, which was, no doubt, on the whole, a statesmanlike measure, committed a great, and for a time it appeared an irretrievable, error. By that measure he fortified the legitimate influence of the aristocracy, and accorded to the middle classes great and salutary franchises; but he not only made no provision for the representation of the working classes in the Constitution, but he absolutely abolished those ancient franchises which the working classes had enjoyed and exercised from time immemorial. That was the origin of Chartism, and of that electoral uneasiness which existed in this country more or less for thirty years. The Liberal party, I feel it my duty to say, had not acted fairly by this question. In their adversity they held out hopes to the working classes, but when they had a strong Government they either brought forward Bills which were utterly futile, or they laughed their vows to scorn. When Lord Derby became Prime Minister, affairs had arrived at such a point that it was of the first moment that the question should be sincerely dealt with. He had to encounter great difficulties, but he accomplished his purpose with the support of a united party. And, gentlemen, what has been the result? In 1848 there was a French Revolution, and a Republic was established. No one can have forgotten what the effect was in this country. I remember one day when no woman could leave her house in London, and when cannon were planted on Westminster Bridge. A year ago there was another revolution in France, and a Republic was again established of the most menacing character. What happened in this country? You could not get half-a-dozen men to assemble in a street and grumble. Why? Because the people had got what they wanted. They were content and they were grateful.

But, gentlemen, the Constitution of England is not merely a Constitution in State, it is a Constitution in

CHURCH AND STATE.

The wisest Sovereigns and statesmen have ever been anxious to connect authority with religion—some to increase their power, some, perhaps, to mitigate its exercise. But the same difficulty has been experienced in effecting this union which has been experienced in forming a Second Chamber—either the spiritual power has usurped upon the civil and established a sacerdotal society, or the civil power has invaded successfully the rights of the spiritual and the ministers of religion have been degraded into stipendiaries of the State and instruments of the Government. In England we accomplished this great result by an alliance between Church and State, between two originally independent powers. I will not go into the history of that alliance, which is rather a question for those archæological societies which occasionally amuse and instruct the people of this city. Enough for me that that union was made and has contributed for centuries to the civilisation of this country. Gentlemen, there is the same assault against the Church of England and the union between the State and the Church as there is against the Monarchy and against the House of Lords. It is said that the existence of Nonconformity proves that the Church is a failure. I draw from these premises an exactly contrary conclusion; and I maintain that to have secured the blessing of

A NATIONAL PROFESSION OF FAITH

with the unlimited enjoyment of private judgment in matters spiritual is the solution of the most difficult problem and one of the triumphs of civilisation. It is said that the existence of parties in the Church also proves its incompetence. On that matter, too, I entertain a contrary opinion. Parties have always existed in the Church; and some have appealed to them as arguments in favour of its Divine institution, because in the services and doctrines of the Church have been found representatives of every mood in the human mind. Those who are influenced by ceremonies find consolation in forms which secure to them "the beauty of holiness." Those who are not satisfied except with enthusiasm reach in its ministrations the exaltation they require; while others who believe that the anchor of faith can never be safely moored except in the dry sands of reason are welcomed by a religion within the pale of the Church which can boast of its irrefragable logic and its irresistible evidence. I am inclined sometimes to believe that those who advocate the abolition of the union between Church and State have not carefully considered the consequences of such a course. The Church is a powerful corporation of many millions of her Majesty's subjects, with a consummate organisation and wealth which in its aggregate is vast. Controlled by the State, so powerful a corporation may be only fruitful of public advantage, but it

becomes a great question what might be the consequence of the severance of the controlling tie between these two bodies. The State would be enfeebled, but the Church would probably be strengthened. Whether that is a result to be desired is a grave question for all men. For my own part, I am bound to say that I doubt whether it would be favourable to the cause of civil and religious liberty. I know that there is a common idea that if the union between Church and State was severed, the wealth of the Church would revert to the State ; but it would be well to remember that the great proportion of ecclesiastical property is the property of individuals. Take, for example, the fact that the mass of

CHURCH PATRONAGE

is patronage in the hands of private persons. That you could not touch without compensation to the patrons. You have established that principle in your late Irish Bill, where there was very little private patronage to deal with. And in the present state of the public mind on this subject there is little doubt that there would be scarcely a patron in England—irrespective of other aid the Church would receive—who would not dedicate his compensation to the spiritual wants of his neighbours. It was computed some years ago that the property of the Church, in this manner, if the union was terminated, would not be less than between £80,000,000 and £90,000,000; and since that period the amount of private property dedicated to the purposes of the Church has largely increased. I trust that when the occasion offers for the country to speak out, it will speak out in an unmistakable manner on this subject; and, recognising the inestimable services of the Church, that it will call upon the Government to maintain its union with the State. Upon this subject there is one remark I would make. Nothing is more surprising to me than the plea on which the present outcry is made against the Church of England. I could not believe that in the 19th century the charge against the Church of England should be that Churchmen, and especially the clergy, had

EDUCATED THE PEOPLE.

If I were to fix upon one circumstance more than another which redounded to the honour of Churchmen, it is that they should fulfil this noble office ; and, next to being "the stewards of Divine mysteries," I think the greatest distinction of the clergy is the admirable manner in which they have devoted their lives and their fortunes to this first of national objects. You are well acquainted in this city with this controversy. It was in this city—perhaps in this hall —that the remarkable meeting was held of the Nonconformists to effect important alterations in the Education Act, and you are acquainted with the discussion in Parliament which arose in consequence of that meeting. I have due and great respect for the Nonconformist

body. I acknowledge their services to their country; and though I believe that the political reasons which mainly called them into existence have entirely ceased, it is impossible not to treat with consideration a body which has been eminent for its conscience, its learning, and its patriotism. So far as I am concerned, if I could have found that in the Education Act of last year any injustice had been done to the Nonconformists, I should have voted with them. But after puzzling my mind on the subject, I am at a loss to discover a single ground for their complaints. There is no favour under that Act shown to Churchmen which is not shared by Dissenters. Equally the Churchman and the Dissenter may establish his school. Equally, if necessary, the minority can find the protection of a Conscience Clause. I must express my mortification that, from a feeling of envy, or, at least, of pique, the Nonconformist body, rather than assist the Church in their great enterprise, should absolutely have become the partisans of a merely secular education. I hold that a national system of education not founded on the recognition of the providential government of the world would lead to national disaster, and I feel confident that it is impossible to stop at that mere recognition. The human mind will arrive at conclusions which you may call formularies and dogmas and proscribe by Acts of Parliament; but the conscience of man is more powerful than Acts of Parliament; and I am persuaded a system of national education which repudiates the religious instincts of our nature will be the greatest of failures, but more fatal to the State than to the Church. I should like, on this subject, to see the Church and the Nonconformists work together; but I trust, whatever may be the result, the country will stand by the Church in its efforts to maintain the religious education of the people. Gentlemen, I foresee yet trials for the Church of England; but I am confident in its future. I am confident in its future because I believe there is now a very general feeling that to be national it must be comprehensive. I will not use the epithet "broad," because that is an ambiguous epithet which may denote a sinister design. But I would wish Churchmen, and especially the clergy, always to remember that in our "Father's house there are many mansions," and I believe that comprehensive spirit is perfectly consistent with the maintenance of formularies and the belief in dogmas without which I hold no practical religion can exist.

MR. GLADSTONE'S CONDUCT.

Gentlemen, I have now endeavoured to express to you my general views upon the most important subjects that can interest Englishmen. They are subjects upon which, in my mind, a man should speak with frankness and clearness to his countrymen; and although I do not come down here to make a party speech, I am bound to say that the manner in which these matters are treated

by the leading subject of this realm is to me most unsatisfactory. Although the Prime Minister of England is always writing letters and making speeches, and particularly on these topics, he seems to me ever to send forth an "uncertain sound." If a member of Parliament announces himself a Republican, Mr. Gladstone takes the earliest opportunity of describing him as a "fellow-labourer" in public life. If an inconsiderate multitude calls for the abolition or reform of the House of Lords, Mr. Gladstone says that it is no easy task, and that he must think once or twice, or perhaps even thrice, before he can undertake it. If your neighbour, the member for Bradford, Mr. Miall, brings forward a motion in the House of Commons for the severance of Church and State, Mr. Gladstone assures Mr. Miall, with the utmost courtesy, that he believes the opinion of the House of Commons is against him; but that if Mr. Miall wishes to influence the House of Commons he must address the people out of doors; whereupon Mr. Miall immediately calls a public meeting, and alleges as its cause the advice he has just received from the Prime Minister.

But, gentlemen, after all, the test of political institutions is

THE CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY

whose fortunes they regulate; and I do not mean to evade that test. You are the inhabitants of an island of no colossal size; which, geographically speaking, was intended by nature as the appendage of some continental empire—either of Gauls and Franks on the other side of the Channel, or of Teutons and Scandinavians beyond the German Sea. Such, indeed, and for a long period, was your early history. You were invaded, pillaged, and conquered; yet amid all these perils and vicissitudes there was gradually formed that English race which has brought about a very different state of affairs. Instead of being invaded, your land is proverbially the only inviolate land—"the inviolate island of the sage and free." Instead of being plundered, you have attracted to your shores all the capital of the world. Instead of being conquered, your flag floats on many waters, and your standard waves in either zone. It may be said that these achievements are due to the race that inhabits the land, and not to its institutions. Gentlemen, political institutions are the embodied experience of a race. You have established a society of classes which give vigour and variety to life. But no class possesses a single privilege, and all are equal before the law. You possess a real aristocracy, open to all who deserve to enter it. You have not merely a middle class, but a hierarchy of middle classes, in which every degree of wealth, refinement, industry, energy, and enterprise is duly represented. And now what is the condition of the great body of the people? In the first place, they have for centuries been in the full enjoyment of that which no other country in Europe has even now completely attained—complete rights of personal freedom. In the second place, there has been a

gradual, and therefore a wise, distribution, on a large scale, of political rights. Speaking with reference to the industries of this part of the country, I can personally contrast it with the condition of

THE WORKING CLASSES

forty years ago. In that period they have attained two vast results —the raising of their wages and the diminution of their toil. Increased means and increased leisure are the two civilisers of man. That the working classes of Lancashire and Yorkshire have proved not unworthy of those boons may be fairly maintained; but their progress and elevation have been during this interval wonderfully aided and assisted by three causes, which are not so distinctly attributable to their own energies. The first is the revolution in locomotion, which has opened the world to the working man, which has enlarged the horizon of his experience, increased his knowledge of nature and of art, and added immensely to the salutary recreation and pleasure of his existence. The second cause is the cheap postage, the moral benefits of which cannot be exaggerated. And the third is that unshackled press which has furnished him with endless sources of instruction, information, and amusement. Gentlemen, if you would permit me, I would now make an observation upon another class of the labouring population. This is not a civic assembly, although we meet in a city. That was for convenience, but the invitation which I received was to meet the county and all the boroughs of Lancashire; and I wish to make a few observations upon the condition of

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.

That is a subject which now greatly attracts public attention. And, in the first place, to prevent any misconception, I beg to express my opinion that an agricultural labourer has as much right to combine for the bettering of his condition as a manufacturing labourer or worker in metals. If the causes of his combination are natural—that is to say, if they arise from his own feelings and from the necessities of his own condition, the combination will end in results mutually beneficial to employers and employed. If, on the other hand, it is factitious, and he is acted upon by extraneous influences and extraneous ideas, the combination will produce, I fear, much loss and suffering both to employers and employed; and after a time he will find himself in a similar or in a worse position. In my opinion, the farmers of England, as a body, cannot afford to pay higher wages than they do, and those who will answer me by saying that they must find their ability in the reduction of rents are, I think, involving themselves with economic laws which may prove too difficult for them to cope with. The profits of a farmer are very moderate. The interest upon capital invested in land is the smallest that any property furnishes. The farmer will have his profits and the investor in land will have his interest, even though they may be obtained at the cost

of changing the mode of the cultivation of the country. Gentlemen, I should deeply regret to see the tillage of this country reduced, and a recurrence to pasture take place. I should regret it principally on account of the agricultural labourers themselves. Their new friends call them Hodge, and describe them as feeble in body and stolid in mind. That is not my experience of them. I believe them to be a stalwart race, sufficiently shrewd and open to reason. I would say to them with confidence, as the great Athenian said to the Spartan who rudely assailed him, "Strike, but hear me." A change in the cultivation of the soil of this country would be very injurious to the labouring class; and, secondly, I am of opinion that that class, instead of being stationary, have made, if not as much progress as the manufacturing class, very considerable progress during the last forty years. Many persons write and speak about the agricultural labourer with not so perfect a knowledge of his condition as is desirable. They treat him always as a human being who in every part of the country finds himself in an identical condition. Now, on the contrary, there is no class of labourers in which there is greater variety of condition than the agricultural. It changes from north to south, from east to west, and from county to county. It changes even in the same county, where there is an alteration of soil and of the configuration of the land. The hind in Northumberland is in a very different condition from the famous Dorsetshire labourer—the tiller of the soil in Lincolnshire is different from his fellow agriculturist in Sussex. What the effect of manufactures is upon the agricultural districts in their neighbourhood it would be presumption in me to dwell upon—your own experience must tell you whether the agricultural labourer in North Lancashire, for example, has had no rise in wages and no diminution in toil. As for the Dorsetshire labourer, the whole of the agricultural labourers on the south-western coast of England, for a very long period, worked only half the time of the labourers in other parts of England, and received only half the wages. In the experience of many, I dare say, who are here present, only thirty years ago a Dorsetshire labourer never worked after three o'clock in the day; and why? Because the whole of that part of England was demoralised by smuggling. No one worked after three o'clock in the day for a very good reason—because he had to work at night. No farmer allowed his team to be employed after three o'clock, because he reserved his horses to take his illicit cargo at night and carry it rapidly into the interior. Therefore, as the men were employed and remunerated otherwise, they got into a habit of half-work and half-pay so far as the land was concerned, and when smuggling was abolished—and it has only been abolished thirty years—these imperfect habits of labour continued, and do even now continue to some extent. That is the origin of the condition of the agricultural labourer in the south-western part of England. But now, gentlemen, I want to test the condition of the agricultural labourer generally; and I will

take a part of England with which I am familiar, and can speak as to the accuracy of the facts—I mean the group described as the south-midland counties. The conditions of labour there are the same, or pretty nearly the same, throughout. The group may be described as a strictly agricultural community, and they embrace a population of probably a million and a half. Now, I have no hesitation in saying that the improvement in their lot during the last forty years has been progressive and is remarkable. I attribute it to three causes. In the first place, the rise in their money wages is no less than fifteen per cent. The second great cause of their improvement is the almost total disappearance of excessive and exhausting toil, from the general introduction of machinery. I don't know whether I could get a couple of men who could, or, if they could, would thrash a load of wheat in my neighbourhood. The third great cause which has improved their condition is the very general, not to say universal, institution of allotment grounds. Now, gentlemen, when I find that this has been the course of affairs in a considerable and strictly agricultural portion of the country, where there have been no exceptional circumstances, like smuggling, to degrade and demoralise the race, I cannot resist the conviction that the condition of the agricultural labourers, instead of being stationary, as we are constantly told by those not acquainted with them, has been one of progressive improvement; and that in those counties—and they are many—where the stimulating influence of a manufacturing neighbourhood acts upon the land, the general conclusion at which I arrive is that the agricultural labourer has had his share in the advance of national prosperity. I am not here to maintain that there is nothing to be done to increase the well-being of the working classes of this country. Generally speaking, there is not a single class in the country which is not susceptible of improvement; and that makes the life and animation of our society. But in all we do we must remember, as my noble friend told them at Liverpool, that much depends upon the working classes themselves; and what I know of the working classes in Lancashire makes me sure that they will respond to this appeal. Much also may be expected from that sympathy between classes which is a distinctive feature of the present day; and, in the last place, no inconsiderable results may be obtained by judicious and prudent legislation. But in attempting to legislate upon social matters, the great object is to be practical—to have before us some distinct aims and some distinct means by which those aims can be accomplished. I think public attention as regards these matters ought to be concentrated upon

SANITARY LEGISLATION.

That is a wide subject, and, if properly treated, comprises almost every consideration which has a just claim upon legislative interference. Pure air, pure water, the inspection of unhealthy habitations, the adulteration of food—these and many kindred

matters may be legitimately dealt with by the Legislature ; and I am bound to say that the Legislature is not altogether idle upon them, for we have at this time two measures before Parliament on the subject. One—by a late colleague of mine, Sir Charles Adderley—is a large and comprehensive measure, founded upon a sure basis, for it consolidates all existing public Acts and improves them. A prejudice has been raised against that proposal, by stating that it interferes with the private Acts of the great towns. I take this opportunity of contradicting that. The Bill of Sir Charles Adderley does not touch the Acts of the great towns. It only allows them, if they think fit, to avail themselves of its new provisions. The other measure, by the Government, is of a partial character. What it comprises is good, so far as it goes, but it shrinks from that bold consolidation of existing Acts which I think one of the great merits of Sir Charles Adderley's Bill, which permits us to become acquainted with how much may be done in favour of sanitary improvement by existing provisions. Gentlemen, I cannot impress upon you too strongly my conviction of the importance of the Legislature and society uniting together in favour of these results. A great scholar and a great wit 300 years ago said that, in his opinion, there was a mistake in the Vulgate, which, as you all know, is the Latin translation of the Holy Scriptures, and that, instead of saying "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"—*Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas* —the wise and witty King really said, *Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas*. It is impossible to overrate the importance of the subject. After all, the first consideration of a Minister should be the health of the people. A land may be covered with historic trophies, with museums of sciences and galleries of art, with universities and with libraries; the people may be civilised and ingenious; the country may be even famous in the annals and action of the world; but, gentlemen, if the population every ten years decreases, and the stature of the race every ten years diminishes, the history of that country will soon be the history of the past.

Gentlemen, I said I had not come here to make a party speech. I have addressed you upon subjects of grave, and I will venture to believe of general interest; but to be here and altogether silent upon the present

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

would not be respectful to you, and, perhaps, on the whole, would be thought incongruous. I cannot pretend that our position either at home or abroad is in my opinion satisfactory. At home, at a period of immense prosperity, with a people contented and naturally loyal, we find to our surprise the most extravagant doctrines professed and the fundamental principles of our most valuable institutions impugned, and that, too, by persons of some authority. This

startling inconsistency is accounted for, in my mind, by the circumstances under which the present Administration was formed. It is the first instance in my knowledge of a British Administration being avowedly formed on a principle of violence. It is unnecessary for me to remind you of the circumstances which preceded the formation of that Government. You were the principal scene and theatre of the development of statesmanship that then occurred. You witnessed the incubation of the portentous birth. You remember when you were informed that the means to secure the prosperity of

IRELAND

and the content of Irishmen were sacrilege and confiscation. When Ireland was placed under the wise and able administration of Lord Abercorn, Ireland was prosperous and I may say content. But there happened at that time a very peculiar conjuncture in politics. The civil war in America had just ceased; and a band of military adventurers—Poles, Italians, and many Irishmen—concocted at New York a conspiracy to invade Ireland, with the belief that the whole country would rise to welcome them. How that conspiracy was baffled, how those plots were confounded, I need not now remind you. For that we were mainly indebted to the eminent qualities of a great man who has just left us. You remember how the constituencies were appealed to to vote against the Conservative Government who had made so unfit an appointment as that of Lord Mayo to the Viceroyalty of India. It was by his great qualities when Secretary for Ireland, his vigilance, his courage, his patience, and his resources, that this conspiracy was defeated. Never was a Minister better informed. He knew what was going on at New York just as well as what was going on in the city of Dublin. When the Fenian conspiracy had been entirely put down it became necessary to consider the policy which it was expedient to pursue in Ireland; and it seemed to us at that time that what Ireland required after all the excitement which it had experienced was a policy which should largely develop its material resources. There were one or two subjects of a different character which, for the advantage of the State, it would have been desirable to have settled, if that could have been effected with the general concurrence of both the great parties in that country. Had we remained in office that would have been done. But we were destined to quit it, and we quitted it without a murmur. The policy of our successors was different. Their specific was to despoil Churches and plunder landlords, and what has been the result? Sedition rampant, treason thinly veiled, and whenever a vacancy occurs in the representation a candidate is returned pledged to the disruption of the realm. Her Majesty's new Ministers proceeded in their career like a body of men under the influence of some delirious drug. Not satiated with the spoliation and anarchy of Ireland, they began to attack every institution and every interest, every class and calling

in the country. It is curious to observe their course. They took into hand

THE ARMY.

What have they done? I will not even comment on what they have done. I will historically state it, and leave you to draw the inference. So long as Constitutional England has existed there has been a jealousy among all classes against the existence of a standing army. As our Empire expanded and the existence of a large body of disciplined troops became a necessity, every precaution was taken to prevent the danger to our liberties which a standing army involved. It was a first principle not to concentrate in the island any overwhelming number of troops, and a considerable portion was distributed in the colonies. Care was taken that the troops generally should be officered by a class of men deeply interested in the property and the liberties of England. So extreme was the jealousy that the relations between that once constitutional force, the Militia, and the Sovereign were rigidly guarded, and it was carefully placed under local influences. All this is changed. We have a standing army of large amount, quartered, and barracked, and encamped permanently in England, and fed by a considerable and constantly increasing Reserve. It will in due time be officered by a class of men eminently professional, but with no relations necessarily with general society; while the Militia is withdrawn from all local influences, and placed under the immediate command of the Secretary of War. Thus, in the nineteenth century, we have a large standing army established in England, contrary to all the traditions of the land, and that by a Liberal Government, and with the warm acclamations of the Liberal party. Let us look to what they have done with the navy. You remember, in this county especially, the denunciations of the profligate expenditure of the Conservative Government in this respect, and you have since had an opportunity of comparing it with the gentler burden of Liberal estimates.

THE NAVY

was not merely an instance of profligate expenditure, but of incompetent and inadequate management. A great revolution was promised in its administration. A gentleman, almost unknown to English politics, was strangely preferred to one of the highest places in the councils of her Majesty. He set to at his task with ruthless activity. The Consultative Council, under which Nelson had gained all his victories, was dissolved. The Secretaryship of the Admiralty, an office which exercised a complete supervision over every division of that great department—an office which was to the Admiralty what the Secretary of State is to the kingdom, which, in the qualities which it required and the duties which it fulfilled, was rightly a stepping-stone to the Cabinet, as in the instances of Lord Halifax, Lord Herbert, and others—was re-

duced to absolute insignificance. Even the Office of Control, which of all others required a position of independence, and on which the safety of the navy mainly depended, was deprived of most of its important attributes. For two years the Opposition called the attention of Parliament to these destructive changes, but Parliament and the nation were alike insensible. Full of other business, they could not give a thought to what they looked upon merely as captious criticism. It requires a great disaster to command the attention of England; and when the *Captain* was lost, and when they hung on the details of the perilous voyage of the *Megæra*, then public indignation demanded a complete change in this reforming administration of the navy. And what has occurred? It is only a few weeks since that in the House of Commons I heard the naval statement made by a new First Lord, and it consisted only of the rescinding of all the revolutionary changes of his predecessor, every one of which during the last two years has been pressed upon the attention of Parliament and the country by that constitutional and necessary body, the Opposition. Gentlemen, it will not do for me—considering time the I have already occupied, and there are still some subjects of importance that must be touched—to dwell upon any of the other similar topics of which there is a rich abundance. I doubt not there is in this hall more than one farmer who has been alarmed by the suggestion that Agricultural Machinery was to be taxed. I doubt not there is in this hall more than one publican who remembers that last year an Act of Parliament was introduced to declare that all publicans were sinners. I doubt not there are in this hall a widow and an orphan who remember the profligate proposition to plunder their lonely heritage. But, gentlemen, as time advanced it was not difficult to perceive that extravagance was being substituted for energy by the Government. The unnatural stimulus was subsiding. Their paroxysms ended in prostration. Some took refuge in melancholy, and their eminent chief alternated between a menace and a sigh. As I sit opposite the Treasury Bench, the Ministers remind me of one of those marine landscapes not unusual on the coast of South America. You behold a range of

EXHAUSTED VOLCANOES.

Not a flame flickers on a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumbling of the sea.

There is one other topic on which I must touch. If the management of our domestic affairs has been founded upon a principle of violence, that certainly cannot be alleged against the management of our external relations. I know the difficulty of addressing a body of Englishmen on these topics. The very phrase

"FOREIGN AFFAIRS"

makes an Englishman convinced that I am about to treat of subjects

with which he has no concern. Unhappily, the relations of England to the rest of the world, which are "foreign affairs," are the matters which most influence his lot. Upon them depends the increase or reduction of taxation. Upon them depends the enjoyment or the embarrassment of his industry. And yet, though so momentous are the consequences of the mismanagement of our foreign relations, no one thinks of them till the mischief occurs, and then it is found how the most vital consequences have been occasioned by mere inadvertence. I will illustrate this point by two anecdotes. Since I have been in public life there has been for this country one great calamity and there is one great danger, and both might have been avoided. The calamity was

THE CRIMEAN WAR.

You know what were the consequences of the Crimean War—a great addition to your debt, an enormous addition to your taxation, a cost more precious than your treasure—the best blood of England. Half a million of men, I believe, perished in that undertaking. Nor are the evil consequences of that war adequately described by what I have said. All the disorders and disturbances of Europe, those immense armaments that are an incubus on national industry and the great obstacle to progressive civilisation, may be traced and justly attributed to the Crimean War. And yet the Crimean War need never have occurred. When Lord Derby acceded to office, against his own wishes, in 1852, the Liberal party most unconstitutionally forced him to dissolve Parliament by stopping the supplies, or at least by limiting the period for which they were voted. There was not a single reason to justify that course, for Lord Derby had only accepted office, having once declined it, on the renewed application of his Sovereign. The country, at the dissolution, increased the power of the Conservative party, but did not give to Lord Derby a majority, and he had to retire from power. There was not the slightest chance of a Crimean War when we retired from office; but the Emperor of Russia, believing that the successor of Lord Derby was no enemy to Russian aggression in the East, commenced those proceedings with the result of which you are familiar. I speak of what I know—not of what I believe, but what I have evidence in my possession to prove—that the Crimean War would never have happened if Lord Derby had remained in office. The great danger is the present state of

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

When I was called upon to preside over the Government, I did so, so far as regarded the United States of America, with some advantage. During the whole of the Civil War in America both my noble friend near me and myself had maintained a strict and fair neutrality. This was fully appreciated by the Government of the United States, and they expressed their wish that with our aid the settlement of all differences between the two Governments should be accomplished. They sent here a Plenipotentiary, an honourable gentleman,

intelligent, and possessing general confidence. My noble friend near me, with signal ability, negotiated a Treaty for the settlement of those differences. He was the first Minister who proposed to refer them to arbitration, and the treaty was signed by the American Government. It was signed, I think, on the 10th of November, on the eve of the dissolution of Parliament. The borough elections that first occurred proved what would be the fate of the Ministry, and the moment they were known in America the American Government announced that Mr. Reverdy Johnson had mistaken his instructions, and they could not present the treaty to the Senate for its sanction—the sanction of which with them there had been previously no doubt. But the fact is that, as in the case of the Crimean War, it was supposed that our successors would be favourable to Russian aggression, so it was supposed that by the accession to office of Mr. Gladstone and a gentleman you know well, Mr. Bright, the American claims would be considered in a very different spirit. How they have been considered is a subject which, no doubt, occupies deeply the minds of the people of Lancashire. Now, gentlemen, observe this—the question of the Black Sea involved in the Crimean War, and the question of the American claims involved in our negotiations with Mr. Johnson, are the two questions that have again turned up, and have been the two great questions that have been under the management of this Government. How have they treated them? Prince Gortchakoff, thinking he saw an opportunity, announced his determination to break from

THE TREATY OF PARIS,

and terminate all the conditions hostile to Russia which had been the result of the Crimean War. What was the first movement on the part of our Government is at present a mystery. This we know, that they selected the most rising diplomatist of the day and sent him to Prince Bismarck with a declaration that the policy of Russia, if persisted in, was war with England. Now, gentlemen, there was not the slightest chance of Russia going to war with England, and no necessity, as I shall always maintain, of England going to war with Russia. I believe I am not wrong in stating that the Russian Government were prepared to withdraw from the position they had rashly taken; but suddenly her Majesty's Government, to use a technical phrase, threw over their Plenipotentiary, and, instead of threatening war if the Treaty of Paris was violated, they agreed to arrangements by which the violation of that Treaty should be sanctioned by England, and, in the form of a Congress, they guaranteed their own humiliation. That Mr. Odo Russell really made no mistake is quite obvious, because he has since been selected to be her Majesty's Ambassador at the most important Court of Europe. Gentlemen, what will be the consequence of this extraordinary weakness on the part of the British Government it is difficult to foresee. Already we hear that Sebastopol is to be re-fortified, nor can any

man doubt that the entire command of the Black Sea will in time be in the possession of Russia. The time may not be distant when we may hear of the Russian power in the Persian Gulf, and what effect that may have upon the dominions of England and upon those possessions on the productions of which you every year more and more depend, are questions upon which it will be well for you on proper occasions to meditate.

THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

I come now to that question which most deeply interests you at this moment, and that is our relations with the United States. I approved the Government referring this question to arbitration. It was only following the policy of Lord Stanley. My noble friend disapproved the negotiations being carried on at Washington. I confess that I would willingly have persuaded myself that that was not a mistake, but reflection has convinced me that my noble friend was right. I remembered the successful negotiation at Washington of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty by Sir Henry Bulwer. I flattered myself that treaties at Washington might be successfully negotiated; but I admit to my noble friend that his views were far more sound than my own. But no one when that Commission was sent forth for a moment could anticipate the course of their conduct under the strict instructions of the Government. We believed that Commission was sent to ascertain what points should be submitted to arbitration, to be decided by the principles of the law of nations. We had not the slightest idea that that Commission was sent with power and instructions to alter the law of nations itself. When that result was announced we expressed our entire disapprobation; and yet, trusting to the representations of the Government that matters were concluded satisfactorily, we had to decide whether it was wise, if the great result was obtained, to wrangle upon points, however important, which could not be recalled. Gentlemen, it appears that, though England was ready to make those sacrifices, the two negotiating States—the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States—placed a different interpretation upon the treaty when the time had arrived to put its provisions into practice. In my mind, and in the opinion of my noble friend near me, there was but one course to take under the circumstances, and that was at once to appeal to the good feeling and good sense of the United States, and, stating the difficulty, to invite confidential conference whether it might not be removed. But her Majesty's Government took a different course. On the 15th of December her Majesty's Government were aware of a contrary interpretation being placed on the Treaty of Washington by the American Government. The Prime Minister received a copy of their Counter Case, which he confessed he had never read. He had a considerable number of copies sent to him to distribute among his colleagues, and you remember, probably, the remarkable state-

ment in which he informed the House how he had distributed those copies to everybody except those for whom they were intended. Some were sent to foreign consuls, and one was sent to Lord Russell! You cannot have forgotten his answer to me on this matter in the House of Commons! Was there ever such a rigmarole? Time went on, and the adverse interpretation of the American Government oozed out, and was noticed by the press. Public alarm and public indignation were excited; and it was only seven weeks after, on the very eve of the meeting of Parliament—some 24 hours before the meeting of Parliament—that her Majesty's Government felt they were absolutely obliged to make a "friendly communication" to the United States that they had arrived at an interpretation of the treaty the reverse of that of the American Government. What was the position of the American Government? Seven weeks had passed without their having received the slightest intimation from her Majesty's Ministers. They had circulated their Case throughout the world. They had translated it into every European language. It had been sent to every Court and Cabinet, to every Sovereign and every Minister. It was impossible for the American Government to recede from their position, even if they had believed it to be an erroneous one. And then, to aggravate the difficulty, the Prime Minister goes down to Parliament, declares that there is only one interpretation to be placed on the treaty, and defies and attacks everybody who believes it susceptible of another. Was there ever such a combination of

NEGLIGENCE AND BLUNDERING?

And now, gentlemen, what is about to happen? All we know is that her Majesty's Ministers are doing everything in their power to evade the cognizance and criticism of Parliament. They have received an answer to their "friendly communication," of which, I believe, it has been ascertained that the American Government adhere to their interpretation; and yet they prolong the controversy. What is about to occur it is impossible for one to predict; but if it be this—if, after a fruitless ratiocination worthy of a schoolman, we ultimately agree so far to the interpretation of the American Government as to submit the whole case to arbitration, with feeble reservation of a protest if it be decided against us, I venture to say that we shall be entering on a course not more distinguished by its feebleness than by its impending peril. There is before us every prospect of the same incompetence that distinguished our negotiations respecting the independence of the Black Sea; and I fear that there is every chance that that incompetence may be sealed by our ultimately acknowledging these indirect claims of the United States, which, both as regards principle and practical results, are fraught with the utmost danger to this country.

Gentlemen, don't suppose, because I counsel

FIRMNESS AND DECISION

at the right moment, that I am of that school of statesmen who are

favourable to turbulent and aggressive diplomacy. I have resisted it during a great part of my life. I am not unaware that the relations of England to Europe have undergone a vast change during the century that has just elapsed. The relations of England to Europe are not the same as they were in the days of Lord Chatham or Frederick the Great. The Queen of England has become the Sovereign of the most powerful of Oriental States. On the other side of the globe there are now establishments belonging to her, teeming with wealth and population, which will, in due time, exercise their influence over the distribution of power. The old plantations of this country, now the United States of America, throw their lengthening shades over the Atlantic, and mix with European waters. These are vast and novel elements in the distribution of power. I acknowledge that the

POLICY OF ENGLAND

with respect to Europe should be a policy of reserve, but of proud reserve; and, in answer to those statesmen who have intimated the decay of the power of England and the decline of its resources, I express here my confident conviction that there never was a moment in our history when the power of England was so great and her resources so vast and inexhaustible. And yet, gentlemen, it is not merely our fleets and armies, our powerful artillery, our accumulated capital, and our unlimited credit on which I so much depend, as upon that unbroken spirit of her people, which I believe was never prouder of the imperial country to which they belong. Gentlemen, it is to that spirit that I above all things trust. I look upon the people of Lancashire as a fair representative of the people of England. I think the manner in which they have invited me here, locally a stranger, to receive the expression of their cordial sympathy, and only because they recognise some effort on my part to maintain the greatness of our country, is evidence of the spirit of the land. I must express to you again my deep sense of the generous manner in which you have welcomed me, and in which you have permitted me to express to you my views upon public affairs. Proud of your confidence and encouraged by your sympathy, I now deliver to you as my last words,

THE CAUSE OF THE TORY PARTY, OF THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION, AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

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SIX YEARS

OF

CONSERVATIVE

GOVERNMENT.

1874-79.

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SIX YEARS

OF

CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT.

The Government of Lord Beaconsfield has now been in office six years, and the life of the Parliament which bore it to power approaches its end. In a few months, at the latest, the people will be called upon to say, whether the Government and the Parliamentary majority which has steadily supported it, continue to enjoy their confidence, or have, as Mr. Gladstone and the Opposition generally assert with a vehement iteration which rather betrays doubt than denotes assurance, discredited themselves in their eyes. Already preparations for the contest are being made on every side, and it may be useful, therefore, to take stock of the work of the Government during the six years it has been in office, to note how far it has fulfilled the expectations its assumption of power excited, and carried out the programme its leading members proclaimed when in Opposition. We propose to do this in the following pages, in which we shall describe in the plainest and most matter-of-fact style, making no assertion for which a complete voucher is not forthcoming in the records of Parliament or in official documents, first, the legislation for which the Government may claim credit or must be held responsible; next, the administrative measures which, of its own initiative, it has carried out; and, finally, the course which it has taken in those great questions of Imperial policy with which it has been called upon to deal.

In the address in which, upon the announcement of the dissolution of Parliament in January, 1874, Mr. Disraeli asked

the electors of Buckinghamshire to return him again as their member, he said—"I have ever endeavoured, and if returned to Parliament I shall, whether in or out of office, continue to endeavour, to propose or support all measures calculated to improve the condition of the people of this kingdom. But I do not think this great end is advanced by incessant or harassing legislation." And he concluded thus:—"The cause of civil and religious freedom mainly depends upon the strength and stability of England. I ask you to return me to the House of Commons to resist every proposal which may impair that strength, and to support by every means her Imperial sway." The policy which the Government has pursued was distinctly foreshadowed in these words of the Premier. It has done more than any Government England has ever had to improve the condition of the people. A comparison of the barren Sessions of the last Parliament, when the time of both Houses was devoted to heroic legislation, recommended as a universal panacea, but bearing no other fruit than disappointment and discontent, with the Sessions of the present Parliament, in which, despite the most factious Opposition our Parliamentary annals record, a number of great social reforms have been effected, which constitute a veritable charter of the poor, is the best evidence of its services in this respect. It has fallen behind no one of those older Governments of which Englishmen are proudest in maintaining our Imperial sway. We have but to look to the increase of English authority in India, to the growing attachment of, and closer union with, our Colonies, to the great augmentation of our influence throughout Europe and the world, to see how well the Government has maintained the power and prestige of England, and how steadily it has used them for the assertion of the great interests of humanity as well as of the particular interests of this country.

LEGISLATION OF 1874.—Although Mr. Gladstone, following the example set him by Mr. Disraeli in 1868, resigned as soon as it became evident that his party would be in a minority in the new House of

LICENSING ACT—FACTORIES ACT—RATING ACT—CHURCH PATRONAGE ACT (SCOTLAND)—ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT.

Commons, it was not until the close of March—that is to say, six weeks later than usual—that Parliament could address itself to business. The new Ministers had little time to prepare measures for the consideration of the Legislature, but they nevertheless introduced and carried several Bills of a very useful if unassuming character. The general dissatisfaction which Lord Aberdare's Licensing Act had caused, as well amongst the general public as in the trade particularly affected by it, made it one of the first duties of the new Home Secretary, Mr. Cross, to present an amending Bill relieving the licensed victuallers of some of the more oppressive and degrading provisions of the Act, and diminishing the injudicious regulations which prevented the satisfaction of the legitimate wants of the public. That the measure, which was the subject of long debates, redressed all the injustice, and removed all the mischief of Lord Aberdare's Act, cannot be affirmed. But the new House of Commons was, almost as much as the old one, under the influence of the delusion that drunkenness prevails in proportion to the amount of public-house accommodation, and that consequently, by limiting the number of public-houses and closing them earlier, intemperance could be greatly diminished. Most people now recognise the fallacy of this theory, which has been vigorously attacked even by Mr. Lowe, who was a member of the Cabinet that supported with all its strength the original proposals of Lord Aberdare's Bill, which were far more stringent than those embodied in the Act. It is generally felt now that we must trust to moral means to check a vice which, curiously enough, has assumed its present serious dimensions since the first attempts at restrictive legislation of which Sir George Grey was the author. However, in 1874, the Government measure was the best that could be carried; and if it drew some hard and fast lines of which both our great and our small towns may legitimately complain, it undoubtedly removed the worst evils of the unjust and harsh legislation which branded a great trade with a disgraceful stigma, and condemned as responsible for the outrageous drunkenness of the country the very men whose interest it is to prevent all drinking that can become offensive to the public or provoke the interference

of the police—that is to say, the drunkenness with which alone Parliament can properly or with any hope of useful effect concern itself.

The only other measure of importance announced in the Queen's Speech was a Land Transfer Bill, which was introduced in good time by the Lord Chancellor, but was eventually withdrawn in the House of Commons. Several measures of considerable value, not mentioned in the Speech, were, however, introduced by the Government in the course of the Session, and became law. First of these we may put the Factories Act, the Home Secretary's first step in a career of singularly useful legislation. A measure with the same object, the reduction of the hours of work of women and children, and the better enforcement of the stipulations of previous Acts passed with this view, had been introduced by a private member. Mr. Cross was unable to accept this Bill, and undertook to bring forward one of his own, which was well received by Parliament, and passed into law with but little alteration. It fixed certain hours as those between which women and children might be employed. It prohibited their employment for more than four hours and a half without an interval for a meal. It secured them a rest of two hours during the day; and, finally, it prohibited the employment of children under the age of ten, and only permitted the employment of those above that age upon the production of certain educational certificates. The Rating Act, introduced by Mr. Sclater-Booth, the President of the Local Government Board, removed anomalies and injustices which had long been complained of. It provided for the rating of woodlands, of the rights of shooting, fishing, &c., and of mines of every kind which had hitherto escaped, because not mentioned in the Act of Elizabeth. In some respects, the most important of the measures passed in the Session of 1874 was the Church Patronage (Scotland) Act. This measure, introduced in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond, himself one of the largest Church patrons, removed the appointment of ministers from the private and public patrons, providing a certain small compensation for such of the former class as might choose to claim it, and vested it in the congregation of each parish, under regulations to be framed

by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. This measure, which was thoroughly approved by the Scotch Church, and heartily supported by most of the patrons whose rights it extinguished, was opposed by the advocates of Disestablishment upon the well-grounded belief that its result would be to strengthen the Scotch Church. Of course that was not the reason assigned for their opposition. But experience has shown that they fully appreciated the influence of the measure. The Church of Scotland has been greatly strengthened by legislation which gratifies the long-standing theories of the Scotch people, without in the slightest degree injuring private interests or weakening the connection of the Church with the State; and the position of the Church now appears so formidable to the non-conforming bodies of Scotland that they have, in the hope of maintaining their own relative position, embarked in a general agitation against Establishments. One other Act passed in the short Session of 1874 deserves a word of notice. It transferred the functions of the Endowed Schools' Commissioners, whose discharge of their duties had caused so much heart-burning throughout the country, and who had conceived themselves charged by the Liberal Government which appointed them with a mission to throw overboard the "pious founder," to the Charity Commissioners, who, it was assumed, would exercise their powers with fairness, in a judicious spirit of conciliation; and, above all, without any prejudices inducing them to put upon the Act of Parliament they administer an interpretation which strains and perverts its purpose.

LEGISLATION OF 1875.—In the first session of the new Parliament the Liberals were still too much overwhelmed by their crushing and unexpected defeat at the General Election to make any party fight. The measures of the Government, although some of them, as we have shown, of an important character, were hardly political in their nature, and the Opposition leaders and managers were still too new to their position to employ the factious arts to which Liberals out

REGIMENTAL EXCHANGES ACT—PEACE PRESERVATION ACT—CONSPIRACY AND PROTECTION OF PROPERTY ACT—MASTERS AND WORKMEN ACT—ARTISANS' DWELLINGS ACT—PUBLIC HEALTH ACT—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT—AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT—UNSEAWORTHY SHIPS ACT.

of place always resort. When Parliament met, however, in 1875, it was soon evident that no pains would be spared by the Opposition to impede the progress of the Government measures, and to endeavour by a policy of delay to waste the Session, and so discredit the Government. Mr. Gladstone came to the aid of Lord Hartington and Mr. Lowe, and the Liberal leaders were strenuously assisted in this policy of delay by the Home Rule party, some of the members of which showed a power of obstruction fully equal to that exhibited of old time by the O'Connells and the Scullys, with only this difference, that the Irish obstructives of former days were educated and able men. Among the first measures presented to Parliament was the Regimental Exchanges Bill, the purpose of which was to authorise exchanges between officers upon full pay upon condition of money payments. Lord Cardwell, in abolishing purchase, had left it free to officers to exchange, for he allowed the absolute necessity of such a permission, but had prohibited the payment of any consideration by the officer who desired, say, not to stay in, or not to proceed to, India, beyond a sum to be fixed by the War Office for outfit and passage to India, and consequently had practically put a stop to a very useful arrangement. Mr. Hardy's Bill proposed to allow officers exchanging to arrange their own terms, subject, of course, to regulations against abuse. The Bill was passed, but it was opposed in the most factious manner by the Opposition leaders. They debated and divided upon it at every stage, and altogether succeeded in occupying five or six Government nights—that is to say, practically three weeks of Government time. Even greater offenders in this matter of factious waste of time were the Home Rulers. The Peace Preservation Acts, without which Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, in spite of the messages of peace they had borne to Ireland in the plunder of the Church and the landlords, had found it impossible to govern the country, expired in the course of 1875. The Government proposed, in the Session of 1874, to continue them in the Expiring Laws' Continuance Bill,—the only possible course, as the necessity of the exceptional powers they gave the Executive was still evident, to be taken in so short a Session; but Mr.

Disraeli recognised the justice of the claim made by the Irish members that measures imposing upon Ireland such exceptional restrictions should be directly presented to Parliament, and that, too, at an early period of the Session. The Peace Preservation Bill, introduced by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, in accordance with this undertaking of the Premier, on the 1st of March, consolidated the various Acts known by the general title of Peace Preservation Acts, and re-enacted, with many material alleviations, their principal provisions. The Home Rulers did not receive the redemption of the Prime Minister's pledge in the spirit in which they should have met it. That they should have insisted upon full and complete discussion was natural and legitimate, but that did not content them. They used every device to delay the passage of the Bill. They talked against time; they interposed frivolous amendments at every stage of the measure, and, although nominally discountenanced by the leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Whips, they could always secure long and sympathetic speeches from the Radical benches, when there seemed to be a chance of wasting another of the few days which the rules of Parliament give the Government during the earlier part of the Session. The Bill, which might have been fully and exhaustively discussed in two evenings at the utmost, was so contested by the Home Rule faction, that it occupied twelve Government nights—that is to say, as the Government has but two nights a week at the commencement of the Session, six weeks of the some twenty or odd in which Government measures must be discussed and carried, and the main business of Parliament, the voting of Estimates and the grant of Supplies, must be transacted.

Perhaps the most important measures passed through Parliament in the Session so grossly wasted by these factious proceedings of the Opposition—and yet, as will be seen, so rich in legislation for the improvement of the condition of the people—were the Bills in which Mr. Cross dealt with the questions, which at the time he entered office were exciting so much attention, of the respective rights of employers and workmen, and of the procedure by which their disputes should be decided. In the Speech from the Throne in which the Session of 1874 was opened, a Royal Commission to

inquire mto the state of the law was promised ; and in 1875, Mr. Cross introduced the Bills of which we have spoken. Their general effect was to relieve of a criminal character any combination to do an act which would not have been criminal if done by one person, thus relieving working men of the most serious consequences of the law of conspiracy as interpreted by some of the judges ; and to substitute civil for criminal proceedings in the disputes between masters and workmen in questions where a breach of contract was asserted. The new laws have given satisfaction to the working classes, who feel themselves relieved from exceptional and unjust legislation, and have done no damage to the employers. The provisions of the Act for the protection of workmen against intimidation on the part of their companions on strike have been proved quite sufficient; and, upon the whole, Mr. Cross's Acts must be regarded as effecting one of the most timely, wholesome, and successful reforms of the law which have been achieved during the last twenty or thirty years.

Besides settling in a manner so generally satisfactory these vexed questions between employers and workmen, Mr. Cross introduced and carried a measure the full fruits of which are not yet visible, but which promises to do more to remove disease, diminish intemperance, and generally elevate the condition of the poorest section of the working classes than any Act which has been passed by the British Parliament. The Artisans' Dwellings Act enables the municipal and other local authorities of our large towns, if satisfied by official representations of the unhealthiness of any district, to make a scheme for its improvement—which scheme consists in removing the buildings already standing on the spot, and a provision for replacing them by others, which are to be designed for, and employed as, dwellings for artisans and others of small means, at the direct cost of the local authority, or by arrangement between it and persons, societies, or companies willing to erect such dwellings. Great care, too much care perhaps, is taken to protect the legitimate interests of the persons whose property is to be dealt with, and to prevent the local authorities from entering upon extravagant schemes likely to throw excessive burdens upon the ratepayers. It was objected to the Bill at the time by critics

who, if it had contained provisions enforcing its adoption upon every town, would have denounced it as tyrannical, confiscating, and wasteful, that because it was not compulsory it would be inoperative; but experience has fully justified the confidence which Mr. Cross declared that he put in our municipal corporations and in local self-government. The Metropolitan Board of Works, the Corporation of the City of London, the Corporations of Birmingham and of many other of our largest towns, have submitted to the Home Office great schemes of improvement, for the destruction of the worst of these dens of misery, fever, and crime, which form the great obstacle to the inculcation of sobriety and the rescue of the very poor from wholesale degradation; and although the great cost of the clearance of the sites, due to the principle upon which the compensation to the owners was reckoned, and the rigid devotion of the whole of the cleared ground to the erection of dwellings for artisans and labourers, have made the adoption of these improvements very expensive to the ratepayers, much good work has been done, and with the facilities given by the Amendment Act of 1879, much more rapid progress will now be made in carrying out the intentions of Parliament. Other Bills, giving effect to Mr. Disraeli's declaration at Manchester in the Easter of 1873, that the first consideration of a Minister should be the health of the people, and the apothegm over which so many cheap jokes were made—*Sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*—were also introduced by the Government in the Session of 1875; as the Rivers' Pollution Bill—which, although it passed the House of Lords in the spring, had to be withdrawn in the Commons—and the Public Health Bill, which met with better fortune. The Public Health Act, although in the first place a measure to consolidate the Sanitary Acts, contained many improvements and additions to these Acts, increasing the powers and extending the attributes of the local authorities, and in a most useful manner adding to the authority of the Local Government Board.

The Friendly Societies Act was another important measure of the Session, directed, as those we have already enumerated, to improve the condition of the people. Sir Stafford Northcote had

been Chairman of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the condition of these most important Societies, and he was able to frame a Bill which happily united the two necessary conditions of any wholesome legislation upon such a subject—the utmost possible independence and self-management of the different Societies, with the best working provisions for insuring sound rules, judicious management, sufficient rates of payment to maintain the solvency of the Societies, combined with an effective audit. Much more has been obtained by this careful regard for the independence of the Societies than could possibly have been achieved by the establishment of any cast-iron system of Government rules and inspection, the almost inevitable result of which would have been the loss of half the inducements these Societies offer to the working man, and of the whole of that large training for municipal and political life which the management of the Societies by their members gives to so many hundreds of thousands of artisans. The great Societies have set their houses in order, have corrected their original tables, which, defective and dangerous as they were, had been accepted in perfect good faith as sufficient; and if there are any Societies which still rest upon an insecure basis, the annual return of income and expenditure, and the quinquennial returns of assets and liabilities and of mortality, required by the Act, will force them to adapt their system of contributions and of management to that of the admittedly solvent Societies. The Agricultural Holdings Act was one of the measures introduced and carried by the Government in this Session. When the Bill was under consideration it was denounced, like the Artisans' Dwellings Act, for its permissive nature—that is to say, because it allowed, as it was essential it should do, any owner and would-be occupier of land to contract themselves out of its provisions. It was not the intention of its authors to interfere with any contracts into which landlords and tenants might freely enter. Their object was to give general force to particular customs, allowing a tenant compensation for his outlay, and to create a presumption of law in his favour. They gave every tenant compensation for unexhausted improvements, regulating the determination of what should be considered unexhausted improvements by comparatively clear and simple rules, and whilst thus protecting the investments

of the tenant, they equally protected the landlord against costly and unnecessary expenditure under the name of improvements. No doubt many landlords have contracted themselves out of the Act, and, indeed, on estates where leases are the rule the Act is necessarily inapplicable; but the tenant farmers, who were at first dissatisfied with the measure, now see that it has given them all they could reasonably ask, and the only complaints now made of its inadequacy come not from tenant farmers, but from an Association which pretends indeed, but without any authorisation, to speak in their name, and which is really only an organisation to promote the return of Liberal candidates for English counties at the coming General Election.

Amongst other measures of importance passed in this Session, we should mention the Land Transfer and Titles Act, the value of which is admitted on all sides; the Public Works' Loans Act, of which we can speak more conveniently when we discuss the financial policy of the Government; and the Unseaworthy Ships Act. At a very early period of the Session, Sir Charles Adderley had introduced a very comprehensive Merchant Shipping Acts' Amendment Bill, intended to protect our sailors against the sometimes careless and sometimes criminal conduct of a certain class of shipowners. Mr. Plimsoll, the member for Derby, had in his energetic agitation of the question not only provoked a great popular feeling in favour of some stringent legislation for this purpose, but shown a very strong case for it. The Government Bill, although not going so far as Mr. Plimsoll's proposals, would have given sailors all the protection that could be given them, whilst it abstained from excessive and mischievous interference with the course of trade. The measure naturally occupied a good many days. Amendments were proposed on all sides, some intended to reduce the measure of interference and regulation, some designed to extend and intensify it. There still remained a great number of amendments, threatening several days' more debate in Committee, upon the 22nd of July, and the Government was therefore compelled, in order not to sacrifice other measures further advanced in their progress, to withdraw the Bill. A short measure was, however, introduced and

carried, which, under the title of the Unseaworthy Ships Act, redressed the worst grievances of the sailor. It provided for the detention of unseaworthy ships; imposed penalties for sending them to sea; regulated the carriage of grain cargoes, by providing that the grain should be contained in bags, sacks, or barrels, or be secured from shifting by boards, bulkheads, &c.; imposed upon the ship-owner the obligation to the crew, in spite of any agreement to the contrary, to use all reasonable efforts to insure the seaworthiness of the ship; and required a load-line to be marked upon all ships above a certain tonnage, with the exception of yachts and coasting vessels.

LEGISLATION OF 1876.—The Session of 1876 was marked by even more factious conduct on the part of the Opposition than was shown in 1875. The keynote of the policy of the Liberal leaders was struck in the reception they gave to the Royal Titles Bill, a measure enabling the Queen to recognise the transfer of the government of India from the trustees who held it for her, the East India Company, to her own direct administration. Twenty years had passed since this change of government, but no special occasion had offered for the formal assumption by Her Majesty of a title emphatically asserting her sovereignty over India, until the visit of the Prince of Wales to that country. It had long been felt by those Indian officials most conversant with the native feeling, that it was desirable that the Queen should distinctly proclaim India a part of her dominions; and the opportunity given by the visit of the Prince—fruitful, as we have every reason to believe, of the happiest results for India and England—was wisely made use of. The Bill was generally welcomed, and the Liberal newspapers applauded it until they found that the Liberal leaders intended to oppose it tooth and nail. It was opposed first on the ground that it was unnecessary, but the chief argument urged against it was the title which it was understood Her Majesty would, if the Bill were passed, assume. The Opposition fought against the word "Empress," as if they thought some evil

ROYAL TITLES ACT—INCLOSURE OF COMMONS ACT—POLLUTION OF RIVERS ACT—APPELLATE JURISDICTION ACT—MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT.

spell lay hid in its letters. They resorted to means to oppose the Bill for which no precedent can be found in the worst annals of Liberal intrigue. They trotted out the old hacks of Radical agitation, and got up indignation meetings against the measure, on the ground that it would enslave the people of England. They divided at every stage of the Bill, and did not even scruple to snatch a division on the third reading, after the persons responsible in such a matter had informed the Government that no division would be taken. Mr. Robert Lowe, who made himself conspicuous in the opposition to the Bill, even ventured to declare at a Radical dinner that the Queen had pressed two previous Prime Ministers to introduce such a measure, but that they had refused, and that it was now brought forward because a more pliant individual had been found. When asked to explain his statement in the House of Commons, Mr. Lowe refused, and received the severest chastisement from Mr. Disraeli. The Premier, after characterising in well-deserved terms the conduct of the member for the University of London, declared, on the authority of the Queen, that there was not the slightest foundation for these allegations. A day or two after, Mr. Lowe confessed that there was not the slightest foundation for his statements, and that if there had been any foundation for them, he ought not to have made them. Mr. Lowe's humiliation was complete; but it does not appear from the subsequent action of the Liberal party that he has in any degree lost such influence and authority as he possessed with it by his admission that he had wantonly and maliciously calumniated the Queen in the hope of gaining a paltry political advantage. The opposition was continued in the House of Lords in much the same fashion, but the Bill was carried by enormous majorities, and became law with the general approval of the country. Her Majesty consequently assumed the style and title of Empress of India, and on the 1st of January, 1877, her new title was officially proclaimed, with every circumstance of pomp and state, at Delhi, in the presence of the Viceroy, and of the independent, the allied, and the tributary Princes of India.

Although in the factious opposition to the Royal Titles Bill

much time was wasted, the Government succeeded in carrying most of the measures it introduced. The Inclosure of Commons Act fairly settles a difficult question. It does not impede the inclosure of commons under circumstances in which that inclosure is a public as well as a private advantage, and sets again in motion the regular machinery for inclosure which had for some time previous been absolutely stopped. On the other hand, it takes stringent precautions to protect not only the rights, but the interests of the public, securing free access to the best points of view of any common, the preservation of objects of historical interest, the privilege of playing games, &c., where a recreation-ground is not reserved; and makes special provision for the health and amusement of the people in the case of what are called suburban commons. The Pollution of Rivers Act was a measure of even greater importance, the beneficial effects of which can hardly be estimated too highly. The measure deals with the three kinds of pollution which it was necessary to prevent. The first kind, the introduction into rivers of solid matter, it prohibits absolutely and immediately—a reform which only those who know how our streams have been choked up and defiled by the direct discharge into them of solid matter, or by placing it where, in the event of the stream rising above its banks, it must be carried off, can fully appreciate. The second kind of pollution, that by sewage, is dealt with as radically as possible. There is to be no fresh contamination from this source, and all local authorities which, at the time of the passing of the Act, have been in the habit of getting rid of sewage in this way, are required to at once take measures to render the liquid they may discharge into any stream inodorous and inoffensive. Any increase of the third kind of pollution, that by manufactures, is prevented; and all manufacturers are subjected to penalties, unless they can show that they are taking the best practicable and available means at a reasonable cost to render harmless the liquid that flows from their works.

The Appellate Jurisdiction Act settled in a most satisfactory manner the controversy as to the composition of the Highest Court of Appeal. It restored to the House of Lords the

jurisdiction taken from it, so far as regarded England, by the Judicature Act of 1873; strengthening the House as an Appeal Court by the appointment of two Lords of Appeal in Ordinary, whose duties are to attend the sittings of the House as the Tribunal of Appeal, and who, as long as they hold their offices, enjoy all the privileges of peers. Their rank is conferred upon them for their lives, their seat in the House is attached to their office, and their position is therefore not that of life peers, but rather of bishops, or barons holding by tenure. The Act contains other valuable provisions for intermediate Courts of Appeal, and is generally accepted as a very happy settlement of the question. The Merchant Shipping Act re-enacted the principal provisions of the Unseaworthy Ships Act, with many amendments extending the protection given by that measure to our sailors, and improving the procedure by which it is obtained. The legitimate interests of the shipowners are not lost sight of. An appeal is provided against decisions which they may consider unjust, and the Board of Trade is made liable in damages for any mistakes it may make, or any injustice it may commit; the so-called voluntary load-line enacted in the Unseaworthy Ships Act is extended to coasting vessels; and, finally, a prohibition is put upon deck-loading during the winter months.

Among the useful measures of this Session we may mention the Crossed Cheques Act, introduced by the Lord Chancellor, giving to special and general crossings of cheques the validity which the public had supposed to attach to them, but which recent decisions of the Courts of Law had denied them; and the Winter Assizes Act of Mr. Cross, remedying the hardship which used to be sustained by prisoners lying for trial in a county where the amount of criminal business to be done did not appear to warrant a winter assize. Under the new Act, prisoners for trial in one county can be tried at the assize held in another. The Bishopric of Truro Act authorised the subdivision of the very extensive Diocese of Exeter, and, with the Act founding the Bishopric of St. Albans, passed in 1875, added two to the number of the English Bishops.

The most important measure of the Session was, however,

the Act amending the Elementary Education Act of 1870, which did justice to the denominational schools, and reconciled, as far as could be done, the enforcement upon parents of the duty of educating their children, with a just regard for the rights of conscience. The measure was hotly contested by the political Dissenters and secular educationists, whose common object is to get rid of all religious instruction in our elementary schools—the former, because that religious instruction is calculated to strengthen the hold of the Church of England upon the people; the latter, because they are rabidly hostile to all religion, or, at the best, consider it as an indifferent matter. The Act asserts, in the first place, the duty of every parent to provide for the education of his children—the first declaration of that duty in English law. It entrusts the duty of enforcing this declaration in a School Board district to the School Board; in boroughs which have no School Boards, to a Committee appointed by the Town Council, and in other parishes by the Guardians of the Union. In the case of these latter parishes, however, the power of making compulsory bye-laws is only to be exercised upon the requisition of the parish. There are provisions prohibiting absolutely the employment of children under ten, and prohibiting the employment of children between ten and fourteen, except they have passed a particular standard and produce certificates showing a certain number of attendances at school. Boards of Guardians are allowed to pay the school fees for such parents as may not be paupers, but are nevertheless too poor to pay the fees; and the famous 25th clause of the Act of 1870 is repealed. By the Act of 1870, the Parliamentary Grant was never to exceed the amount of the school income derived from rates, fees, or voluntary subscriptions. This rule, which had no relation to the efficiency of the school, pressed very hardly upon many of the voluntary schools, and threatened in a short time to destroy some of the best and most needed of them. By the Act of 1876, it is provided that the Parliamentary Grant is not to be reduced, by reason of its excess over the income of the school, below the sum of seventeen shillings and sixpence per child, which is the sum that a child, who fulfils all the requirements of the Govern

ment, can earn. In future, therefore, although no school can receive the Parliamentary Grant which is not an efficient school, providing the education which the Department from time to time requires, schools which are efficient will not be punished for their poverty, and denied the contribution from the State, which they have fairly earned, simply because they have most urgent need of it. The change in the law is so just and expedient that it seems marvellous that it should have been so stubbornly resisted. Other clauses of the Act allow School Boards to establish day industrial schools, and provide for the dissolution of School Boards under certain circumstances. The latter clause, which was not in the Government measure, but was accepted by Lord Sandon, when proposed by Mr. Pell, was most passionately resisted by the Opposition, who pretended to see in it an attempt to get rid of School Boards generally. As, however, in point of fact, a School Board can only be dissolved when it has done nothing, and consequently shown that it is unnecessary, and then only by the vote of the district, the outcry was very ridiculous, and was treated as such by the country. Upon the whole, the Act must be considered one of the most valuable passed in the present Parliament, entitling the Government to the hearty confidence not only of Conservatives, but of all men who believe that religious instruction should be a part, and a most important part, of education.

PRISONS ACTS—UNIVERSITIES ACT—SOUTH AFRICA ACT—ARMY PROMOTION AND RETIREMENT ACT—JUSTICES' CLERKS ACT—CANAL BOATS ACT—OBSTRUCTION.

LEGISLATION OF 1877.—A large portion of the time which the wearisome, and for the most part factious, debates upon questions of foreign policy left to the Government in the Session of 1877 for the promotion of the Bills it had introduced, was occupied by two *remanets* of the previous Session—the Prisons Bill and the Universities Bill.

The English Prisons Bill occupied twelve, and the Universities Bill ten, sittings of the House of Commons, the principal part of the time so occupied being taken up in both cases, not by the discussion of the points of detail really before the House, but by the iteration of general objections to the principle of the Bills,

or by absurd attempts to give them a character it was never intended they should assume. Both Bills became law, and are now generally accepted as among the most valuable of recent additions to the Statute Book. The Prisons Acts—for the English Act was supplemented by Acts for Scotland and Ireland—insure uniformity in the treatment of prisoners throughout the United Kingdom, or at least throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively; making, what was before far from the case, a sentence carried into effect in one gaol equivalent to the same sentence carried into effect in another, and relieve the ratepayers of a very considerable charge at a comparatively small cost to the Treasury, the difference in outlay being caused by the economy incident to central and uniform management. The Universities Act, whilst interfering as little as possible with the discretion of the Universities and Colleges, enables them to appropriate their revenues in a manner which, it is hoped, will be more useful, and which in general opinion is considered more expedient.

Another measure which occupied a very large amount of the time of the House of Commons was the South Africa Act. There was nothing in the measure itself to provoke the opposition it received. Its purpose was simply to enable any two or more of our South African colonies to unite themselves in a Confederation, and to provide the general framework of the constitution of such a union. No attempt was made to force any colony into the union, but the general conditions of any combination were laid down. If any opposition could have been fairly made to the measure, it would have been on the part of the colonists, who might have objected, with some show of reason, to the reservation of all laws dealing with native affairs for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure. But those members of the House of Commons who might have been supposed to speak best the opinion of the colonists, made not the slightest objection to this wise and necessary restriction upon the powers of the Legislature of the New Dominion. Such opposition as the measure experienced on its merits, came from two or three members who had undertaken the case of the Transvaal delegates sent to London to protest against the annexation of the Republic—a question which, strictly speaking, had little or

nothing to do with a measure which was substantially only a licence to the South African colonies to unite in a Confederation. The great delay in the passage of the Bill was caused by the deliberate system of obstruction to all public business adopted by the extreme wing of the Home Rule party, and secretly encouraged by a section of the English and Scotch Radicals. These Irish members hardly pretended to have any interest in the Cape colonies. Their avowed purpose was to stop all public business, and they used every device which the rules of Parliament allowed. They were, in the end, vanquished with their own weapons; the House of Commons sat from four o'clock one afternoon to six o'clock the next to make progress with this Bill, and it further adopted (upon the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer) certain standing orders, to which the House itself seems not to have attached much importance, and which certainly have not proved of much value. The great difficulty in the way of dealing with misconduct of this kind consists in the natural unwillingness of the House to impose greater restrictions upon the freedom of its members than have prevailed before, and to diminish the legitimate opportunities of those who will not abuse them, in order to check the extravagances of a class of members who could hardly be dealt with effectually except by expulsion.

Another measure carried by the Government was the Army Promotion and Retirement Act. Lord Cardwell and his colleagues promised, when purchase was abolished, that a flow of promotion as rapid as that which existed before should be kept up. It was but just to the officers of the Army, and it was essential to the efficiency of the Service, that this should be done; but the Gladstone Government, in its usual fashion, neglected the duty because its fulfilment would have cost money, and so have increased the Army Estimates. Mr. Hardy (now Viscount Cranbrook), when he entered upon office, appointed a Commission to inquire into the matter, and upon its report prepared the scheme embodied in this Act, involving an immediate annual expenditure of £220,000. In future years the amount will be increased. The outlay, however, is not only just, but necessary; and very few Liberals ventured to contest the wisdom of the measure, which passed with

very little opposition, although, in addressing their constituents, they all treat the additional charge upon the revenue which it involves as a piece of Tory extravagance. Amongst the Government measures of smaller importance passed in the Session were two which deserve mention. The Justices' Clerks Act enacted that salaries should everywhere be paid to Justices' clerks in lieu of fees—a reform of far more importance than it appears, because it removes the feeling which very often obtained amongst the persons brought before Petty Sessions, that they sometimes had injustice done them in the magistrates' care for the interest of their clerks. The Canal Boats Act provided for the inspection and the proper sanitary regulation of these boats, as to the condition of which most horrible revelations had been made.

A number of other measures were introduced, and, after advancing certain stages, withdrawn. One of these Bills deserves special notice. We refer to the Burials Acts' Consolidation Bill, introduced in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon. This Bill, although in its main features a sanitary measure, would have removed every possible grievance of which Dissenters can complain, whilst consolidating the different Burial Acts, as to the contradictory character and confusing condition of which strong expressions had fallen from many of the Judges. It proposed to establish in every parish a burial authority, charged with the duty of providing a new burial-ground, unless there should be already a consecrated and unconsecrated burial-ground suitable and sufficient. By this provision, which was supplemented by a clause enabling landowners to give land for burial-grounds, every cause of complaint of the conscientious Dissenter from the Established Church was removed. He could be buried with the services of the Church or without them, as he pleased; or, in the event of his giving no directions as to the disposition of his remains, in such manner as his relatives might desire. But this did not suit the political Dissenters, who want to obtain an entry into the churchyard to act there as they please, in order from that vantage position to attempt to obtain the same rights in the Church itself. The Opposition, assisted by some of the Bishops, whose policy seems to have been to buy a temporary peace by

concessions which only encourage and facilitate fresh attacks, carried a clause which opened all burial-grounds without exception, no matter how recently given by Churchmen to the Church, not merely for the burial of Dissenters conscientiously objecting to be interred according to the rites of the Church of England without ceremony, but for the burial of Dissenters and Atheists with any ceremony or pomp their friends might please to indulge in. The Government could not, of course, accept an amendment which practically exposed the churchyards to the possibility of scenes of the grossest irreverence and wildest disorder, and therefore they withdrew the Bill.

LEGISLATION OF 1878.—Parliament met in 1878 some three weeks earlier than usual, and the Session only ended on the 16th of August, but although the number of days nominally at the disposition of the Government was therefore considerably larger than in ordinary Sessions, which begin in the second week of February and terminate in the last week in July, the time available for the consideration of Government business was really less than in the shorter Sessions. Parliament was called together earlier because the critical condition of foreign affairs rendered it necessary for the Government to apply to the House of Commons for a Vote of Credit; and discussions upon foreign questions, and the policy of the Government with regard to them, occupied a very considerable number of the nights which the rules of the House of Commons set apart for Government business. In spite, however, of this appropriation of time and the general preoccupation of the public in foreign questions, and of a repetition by a section of the Home Rule party, upon a somewhat smaller scale, of the obstructive tactics of the previous year, several Government measures of the greatest value were passed, and the Session of 1878 will compare almost as advantageously as those of 1875 and 1876 with the fruitless Sessions when Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT—BISHOPRICS ACT—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—IRISH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT—TERRITORIAL WATERS JURISDICTION ACT—HIGHWAYS ACT—EPPING FOREST ACT — SCOTCH EDUCATION ACT — SCOTCH ROADS AND BRIDGES ACT.

occupied the whole time of Parliament with schemes for destroying Churches, despoiling landowners, and confiscating the property of traders, and with Budgets which imposed unnecessary and unjust taxation in order to provide artificial surpluses.

Among the first of the measures introduced and passed was the Factories and Workshops Act, the main purpose of which was the consolidation of the various and sometimes conflicting laws for the protection of women and children then upon the Statute Book, but which in many important instances materially amended those laws. The measure was discussed at much length in the House of Commons, and many compliments were paid to Mr. Cross by his political opponents, but the most valuable tribute to the right hon. gentleman, and the most satisfactory description of the measure, came from Lord Shaftesbury, who, in the House of Lords, after expressing his gratitude to the Government for the Bill, said that he was lost in wonder at the amount of toil, of close investigation, and of perseverance which the Home Secretary must have brought to bear upon its preparation. Some two millions of people in this country, he added, bless the day when that right hon. gentleman was appointed Secretary of State for the Home Department. Another measure of much value was the Bishoprics Act, described by the Archbishop of Canterbury as the greatest ecclesiastical reform since the Reformation, which was vehemently opposed in both Houses by Liberals who profess to remain in communion with the Church, or rather claim to be members of it solely with the purpose of more effectively damaging it. But Lord Rosebery and Mr. Dillwyn—most significant representatives of the opposition the Bill experienced—were signally defeated; and it depends now only upon the liberality of Churchmen how soon four new Bishopries, every one of which is sorely needed, shall be established at Liverpool, Newcastle, Wakefield, and Southwell. All parties in the Church—that is to say, all parties anxious to increase its power of doing good—recognise the necessity of an increase in the number of Bishops, and the present Government, which had before carried through Parliament measures establishing the sees of Truro and St. Albans, and has thus added six to the number of episcopal sees, deserves the

confidence and support of all true and zealous Church men.

The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act has, it may be hoped, settled once for all the questions which recent visitations of cattle plague, and other infectious diseases hardly less destructive, have raised. The Bill, which was founded upon the investigations of a Select Committee appointed in 1877, was discussed at much length, and was materially altered in its passage through the two Houses. It establishes a central instead of a local control in all cases in which an outbreak of disease takes place; and whilst the restrictions upon the movement of cattle within the country are stringent enough to check the propagation of disease, the precautions taken against the importation of infected beasts, although not so complete as some high agricultural authorities desired, seem to be sufficient to prevent the introduction of disease, whilst they put no inconvenient check upon the supply of meat to our populous towns. In one respect, the most important measure of the Session was the Irish Intermediate Education Act. The absolute want of a good system of intermediate or secondary education in Ireland has long been recognised as an evil to be remedied. The measure introduced by Earl Cairns to supply this want judiciously avoided the rocks upon which all previous schemes for the higher education in Ireland have been wrecked. Substantially, the measure is one of payment for results. A million is taken from the property of the disestablished Irish Church, the interest of which is to be applied partly to the provision of exhibitions and other prizes for the successful competitors in examinations open to all students, and partly to payments to the managers of such schools as the examinations show to be efficient. The measure was welcomed by all parties in Ireland, and met with little or no opposition in Parliament. It was generally felt not only that the outlay would raise the condition of education in Ireland, but that the promotion of education was a far more appropriate application of the property of the disestablished Church than the reduction of the rates, as proposed by Mr. Gladstone.

Several other measures, not of the same political importance, but of much utility, were passed in the Session of 1878. We

may specify the Territorial Waters' Jurisdiction Act, which supplies a want in English law which only became apparent in the judgment in the case of the *Franconia*, and enacts that any person, whether a subject of Her Majesty or not, who may commit an offence punishable by English law within English territorial waters—that is to say, within three miles from the shore—may be arrested and tried in the usual way; the Highways Act, which provides for the better management of the roads, and distributes more fairly the cost of maintaining them; the Epping Forest Act, which finally secures the enjoyment of several thousand acres to the closely-packed denizens of the East of London; and, finally, the Scotch Education and the Scotch Roads and Bridges Act, both of which occupied a considerable portion of the time of Parliament, and both of which seem to have satisfied the Scotch people.

The measures passed in the Session of 1878, numerous and useful as they were, give, however, no fair idea of the programme of legislation which the Government had prepared for Parliament. The block of business caused by the frequent and long debates upon foreign policy, and the obstructive proceedings of the Home Rulers, rendered it necessary to withdraw not only the Valuation of Property Bill, the Bankruptcy Law Amendment Bill, the Bar Education and Discipline Bill, and other measures which had undergone the same fate the previous Session, but several others of importance and interest. The Criminal Code Bill, prepared by Sir James Stephen under the supervision of the Law Officers of the Crown, and intended to express in one Act the whole law and procedure relating to indictable offences, was read a second time, but there was no chance of giving it that consideration in Committee which a measure of so much importance demanded, and the Government withdrew it, to refer it to the examination of a Commission composed of Lord Blackburn, Mr. Justice Lush, Mr. Justice Barry, and the author. The County Government Bill, which proposes to substitute County Boards, to be elected in part by the Guardians and in part by the Magistrates, for Quarter Sessions, in so far as County Government is concerned, led to a great deal of debate; and it is quite certain that no Bill proposing to

transfer from the Magistrates functions which they have exercised on the whole so well, and so economically, can give satisfaction unless a very large amount of time is devoted to its details. The Grand Jury Law Amendment Bill, introduced by the Irish Secretary, was intended to transfer that portion of the Local Government of Ireland now vested in the Grand Juries to County Boards.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION ACT—PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACT—SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACT—COMPANIES ACT—UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) ACT — NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) ACT—ACT TO AMEND ARTISANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS' IMPROVEMENT ACT—PUBLIC HEALTH (INTERMENTS) ACT.

LEGISLATION OF 1879.—Parliament met on the 5th December, 1878, to receive from Her Majesty the announcement that the hostility to her Indian Government manifested by the Ameer of Afghanistan, and the manner in which he had repulsed her friendly Mission, had left her no alternative but to make a peremptory demand for redress. That demand had been disregarded, and Her Majesty had therefore directed that an expedition should be sent into the Ameer's territory, and had taken the earliest opportunity of calling them together, and making them the communication required by law. The time of the two Houses during the short sitting before Christmas was almost exclusively occupied by debates upon the question thus raised. The Opposition, who exhibited a great deal of irritation and violence, were signally defeated. The formal resolution, moved by Viscount Cranbrook in the House of Lords, to the effect that "The House consented that the revenues of India should be applied to defray the expenses of the military operations which might be carried on beyond the frontier of Her Majesty's Indian dominions," was met by an amendment, proposed by Viscount Halifax, declaring that the Government had unnecessarily engaged the country in the contest. The amendment was rejected by 201 to 65 votes—a majority far in excess of that which the Conservative party can claim to possess in the Upper House. In the Commons there were two debates. In the first—which arose upon an amendment to the report of the Address moved by Mr. Whitbread, disap-

proving the conduct of the Government, which had resulted in the war—the Government had a majority of 101. In the second—in which Mr. Fawcett met a resolution moved by Mr. Stanhope of the same tenor as that adopted by the peers, with an amendment asserting the injustice of charging the revenues of India with the cost of the war—the majority for the Government was 110.

When the Session was resumed on the 13th February, 1879, Lord Beaconsfield and the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the Bills which the Government proposed to lay before Parliament. The programme was neither lengthy nor sensational, but most of the measures promised were of much importance, and the general need felt for them seemed to render it almost certain that they would all become law. It consisted of the Army Discipline and Regulation Bill, by which it was proposed not only to obviate the necessity of carrying through Parliament every year long and wearisome Mutiny Bills, whilst reserving to it all that security and control which the annual Mutiny Bills were supposed to give, but to materially simplify and amend the whole military law. There was, further, a Bill for the Consolidation of the Criminal Law, or, in other words, Sir James Stephens' and the Attorney-General's Criminal Code, as revised by the Commission of Judges appointed to consider it. A Summary Jurisdiction Bill, a County Government Bill, a Bill for Amending and Continuing the Corrupt Practices Act, a Bill for altering the Law relating to Banking Companies—intended to facilitate, under sufficient securities, the transfer of unlimited into limited Banks—a Bill to alter in some important respects the system under which Public Loans are granted; and several of the *remanets* of former years—such as the Valuation Bill, the Patent Law Amendment Bill, and the Bankruptcy Bill, the latter materially amended—were also announced. This programme was, as we have said, a thoroughly practical one. It raised no great questions of principle, and hardly touched party issues. It made no excessive demand on the House of Commons. In the five or six months for which the Session might be expected to last, there was, after making every allowance for the already too evident purpose of the Opposition to

occupy a great deal of time with debates on foreign policy, not intended to affect the course of opinion in Parliament but to influence the country in view of the General Election—which, "measuring other people's corn by their own bushel," they fancied the Government would "spring" upon them—plenty of time to give all these measures ample consideration. It soon became apparent, however, that the Home Rulers, and the extreme section of the English Radical party, would do their utmost to prevent all legislation, and waste the Session. The purpose of the Home Rulers was that which inspired their action in previous Parliaments—to obstruct for the sake of obstruction; the purpose of the English Radicals was to prevent legislation, even when they admitted that legislation was necessary or desirable, in order that they might be able to include a "wasted Session," which they themselves had made, in their indictment against the Government. Thirty sittings were occupied with the Army Discipline and Regulation Bill—a measure which, as in its main features the outcome of the deliberations of a Select Committee presided over by Sir William Harcourt, might have been expected to meet with little opposition. Indeed, all the questions raised which were fairly debateable, might have been thoroughly threshed out in a couple of evenings. But Mr. Parnell and his little band fought the Bill clause by clause and line by line, and were from the first supported by the extreme section of English Radicals, of whom Mr. Peter Rylands, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and Mr. Peter Taylor are the most prominent representatives. For some time the nominal leaders of the Opposition, if they condescended to be present when the Bill was under discussion, professed to rebuke their followers; but at last they yielded to the pressure put upon them, and Lord Hartington, surrendering his own opinions to the dictation of Mr. Chamberlain, who had described him as the "late leader" of the Liberal Party, moved an amendment to the effect that no Bill for the discipline and regulation of the Army would be satisfactory which provided for the retention of corporal punishment for military offences. This resolution was rejected by a majority of 106, and the Bill was shortly after read a third time. It passed through the House of Lords without alteration or even

opposition, and must be esteemed one of the most useful chapters added to the Statute Book in recent years. It gives us, for the first time, an intelligible code of military law, whilst it in no degree interferes with the old privileges of Parliament, as it has to be re-enacted every year by a short Mutiny Act.

The time occupied by the Army Regulation Act, and by the idle discussions raised by the Radicals upon foreign questions, made it impossible for the Government to carry some of the most needed of the measures announced in February. The Bankruptcy Law Amendment Bill, for which the commercial community had asked so urgently, and which passed the House of Lords early in the Session, had to be withdrawn; and even the Criminal Law Consolidation Bill had to be dropped. The County Government Bill, the Grand Jury Law Amendment Bill, and the Valuation Bill shared the same fate.

But the Session, in spite of all these sacrifices and disappointments, was fruitful in that practical and most useful legislation which will be the honour of the present Government and of the Parliament which has so steadily supported it. We will mention, in the first place, the Prosecution of Offences and the Summary Jurisdiction Acts, which effect a great reform in the administration of the Criminal Law. The former supplies, in the clauses authorising the appointment of a Director of Public Prosecutions, with a certain number of assistants, a want which has long been felt, and, indeed, had recently become so urgent that the Government had found it necessary to instruct the Treasury Solicitor to prosecute in a number of cases. The Director of Public Prosecutions is, under the superintendence of the Attorney-General, and according to regulations made by him, or in special cases by his immediate direction, to institute criminal proceedings, or give advice or assistance where these proceedings have been already instituted. We have a guarantee, therefore, that the great criminals who have hitherto escaped punishment because their victims could not afford to take proceedings against them, will in future be brought to justice; and, on the other hand, we have in the clauses which enact that, if the Director should abandon a prosecution, the person who considers himself aggrieved

may proceed with it, and provide that nothing in the Act shall interfere with the right of individuals to institute, undertake, or carry on a criminal prosecution, sufficient security against the abuses which might result in this country, and continually occur on the Continent, from the omnipotence of a Public Prosecutor who is swayed by his political opinions and private friendships or animosities. The Summary Jurisdiction Act may be generally described—it is impossible to enter here upon a minute examination of its provisions—as a measure which, whilst it on the one hand gives in many cases to persons hitherto liable to summary jurisdiction, a right to claim a trial by jury, on the other hand, entrusts the magistrates who exercise summary jurisdiction, with large powers of mitigating the punishments which they were before bound to impose.

The Companies Act was not passed in the form in which it was introduced by Sir Stafford Northcote. Many of the clauses of the original Bill had to be abandoned, on account of the very short time left for their discussion—the Bill was only read a second time on the 29th July—but a measure was passed which fully provided for the immediate want which had to be met. By availing itself of the provisions of this Act, an unlimited banking company can register as a limited company, and in taking that step may increase the nominal amount of its capital, which increase of capital is only to be called up in the event of the company being wound up; or it may resolve that a portion of its uncalled up capital shall be "ear-marked" in the same manner as "reserve liability." But this is merely facultative. A banking company may register itself as limited without making any such reserve. That is a question between the shareholders and the creditors of the concern. The only restrictive provisions of the Act are, that no debts or contracts made before the registration as a limited company are to be affected by it, and that the limitation of liability is not to apply to the notes of the bank. Another clause provides that the accounts of every bank registering as "limited" under the Act, must be examined annually by an auditor or auditors elected by the shareholders. Already the directors of several of the largest Joint Stock Banks have recommended their

shareholders to adopt the Act; and it must, therefore, be taken to give bank shareholders the protection for which they have been asking without diminishing in any appreciable manner the security to bank customers.

The most important measure passed in the Session was, however, the University Education (Ireland) Act, which promises to settle, in a manner generally satisfactory, a most difficult question which has vexed statesmen for years. The measure was not mentioned in the programme of the 13th February, and was only introduced into the House of Lords on the 30th June. But it made its way pretty quickly through both Houses, the opposition with which a section of the Home Rulers had threatened it having been abandoned under the pressure, as it was understood, of the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops. The Act is, in some respects, but an outline which will have to be filled up by some money clauses. It authorises the Queen to establish a University in Ireland, which is to have power to grant degrees after examination to persons whom it may consider qualified; and no residence or attendance at lectures is to be obligatory on any candidates for a degree, except in medicine or surgery. The Queen's University is to be dissolved, and the Senate of the New University is to prepare a scheme for Exhibitions, Scholarships, Fellowships, and prizes. Of course any such scheme will need the creation of a charge on the Consolidated Fund, or an annual vote of the House of Commons, or some appropriation by Parliament from the Irish Church Fund; but there can be no doubt that in one of these ways the necessary funds will be promptly provided. Another Act for the encouragement of education in Ireland passed in this Session should be noted here. The position of the National School teachers—who receive, at the best, very scanty salaries, which allow no provision being made for sickness or old age—had long been urged upon the attention of Parliament. The National School Teachers' (Ireland) Act does justice to a most deserving class, and reflects great credit upon the Government. It constitutes a Pension Fund for the teachers, to which it applies the sum of £1,300,000 out of the Irish Church Fund, and secures to the teachers, from whose salaries a slight deduction is to be made as a contribution to the Fund, a

modest allowance after retirement from work on account of old age or infirmity. The Act amending the Artisans' Dwellings Act of 1875 removes two great hindrances to the operation of that measure. The arbitrators appointed under the Act to assess the value of the property to be taken under the different schemes for clearing sites, have considered themselves bound to give the owners, and other persons interested in the houses to be pulled down, the benefit of their own misdeeds. These owners or lessees had so crowded their houses with occupants, and so grossly neglected their sanitary condition, that the houses were condemnable under the Act. But by this conduct they had swollen the whole rental of these houses to a comparatively enormous amount, and they claimed compensation for their expropriation under the Act, on the basis of the rental they received; and the arbitrators, no doubt taking the proper legal view of the matter, allowed it them. The result has been, that the mere cost of clearing away the "rookeries," which the Board of Works, the City authorities, and the Municipalities of some of our large towns have obtained authority to remove, has proved even larger than would have been the removal of houses situated in respectable localities, and in good condition. The Act of 1879 provides that an arbitrator may receive evidence to prove that premises, on account of overcrowding, &c., had become a nuisance, and, if satisfied of the fact, may determine the cost of abating the nuisance, and fix the compensation to be paid for the house at the amount at which it might be taken to be worth after the abatement of the nuisance Another material amendment of the Act of 1875 is to allow the accommodation for the working classes which the former Act required to be upon precisely the area upon which the clearance was effected, to be provided, under certain safeguards, elsewhere. If we add that the Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Act was continued with an amendment providing that every Election Petition shall be tried before two Judges instead of one, we have described the legislation of the Session for which the Government may take credit and must be held responsible. But there is one Act of last Session which, although introduced by a private member, and carried through with only such facilities as

private members possess, deserves especial mention. We refer to Mr. Marten's Public Health (Interments) Act, which promises to practically settle the great burial question in a manner by no means satisfactory to the politicians who have so long traded on it. By applying the provisions of the Act of 1875, with regard to a place of reception for the bodies of the dead, "a mortuary," to a place for the interment of the bodies of the dead, "a cemetery," full power is given to local authorities generally to provide and maintain a cemetery wherever and whenever one may in their opinion be required. Local authorities are further allowed to accept donations of land offered them for such a purpose; and generally it may be said that, wherever the provisions of the Act are adopted, every shadow of a grievance which may have been felt by conscientious Dissenters will be removed. The Government, although it could give Mr. Marten no facilities for carrying his measure, warmly supported it; and, as soon as it became law, the Local Government Board issued a circular, drawing the attention of local authorities to the new duties it imposed upon them, and the new powers it gave them.

FINANCIAL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION.

When Mr. Gladstone dissolved Parliament at the end of January, 1874, a few days before it was expected to meet for the dispatch of business, he hoped, as he explained in his long and tedious address to the electors of Greenwich, to win back the country to his side by the promise of a repeal of the Income Tax. The *coup*, suddenly as it fell upon the public, had been some time in preparation. Mr. Lowe, who had boldly said in the spring of 1873 that he intended to be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the following year, had been shifted in the autumn to the Home Office, and Mr. Gladstone had added to the office of First Lord of the Treasury that of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Lowe's Budgets were framed upon the principle of securing, by underestimating the receipts of the financial year, a surplus, to be boasted of in the financial statement of the following year as the result of Liberal financial administration. The system did not pass unchallenged. Liberal members of

Parliament protested against the maintenance of old taxation or the imposition of new taxes, intended only to give the Government the credit of a surplus, and Mr. Lowe had more than once to "take back his Budget." But he adhered to his plan; and when Mr. Gladstone dissolved in 1874, he was able to estimate, in his address to his electors, that the excess of normal revenue over normal expenditure would be five millions. The calculation was correct enough, although the payment of the Alabama Award and the cost of the Ashantee War, reduced the actual surplus of the year to a comparatively small sum. Sir Stafford Northcote, taking, as he was compelled to do, the Estimates his predecessor had prepared, found himself able to dispose of five millions. The country had the immediate benefit of that sum. Justice was done to legitimate claims, and at the same time a great, and, indeed, necessary source of revenue, like the Income Tax, was not abandoned altogether, as Mr. Gladstone, in a true gambler's spirit, had proposed. It must always be remembered that Mr. Gladstone had promised the abolition of the tax more than twenty years before, and had never shown himself, in all the years he had occupied the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer, disposed to redeem the promise. On the contrary, he had raised the tax to a rate unknown before in time of peace to maintain the "bloated armaments" of the Palmerston Ministry, and allow the repeal of taxes, which were not dealt with from economical or financial, but from political and party, reasons. He had supported Mr. Lowe in keeping the tax at a rate which he was himself compelled to allow was too high, and the offer to abolish it altogether was simply made as a means of maintaining himself in power. Sir Stafford Northcote maintained the tax, but reduced it by one penny, bringing it practically to a rate which did not injuriously press upon the payers, and he thus removed a strong incentive to evasion, whilst maintaining a machinery which is invaluable in the event of any great national emergency. Further, the Chancellor of the Exchequer repealed the sugar duties. There was, no doubt, some regret on the part of sound economists at the abandonment of such a thoroughly legitimate source of revenue, which was made all the more perilous by Mr. Gladstone's threat to get rid of the Income Tax. But the

fact was, that the duties had been so manipulated by Mr. Lowe, that, despite the considerable sum they brought into the Exchequer, it was hardly possible to maintain them. Mr. Lowe had reduced the sugar duties by one-half in 1870, with the declaration that he would not go any further. In 1873 he reduced them by one-half again, and Parliament was distinctly told by Mr. W. H. Smith that what remained of the duties after this operation was so small that they would have to be totally abolished. Sir Stafford Northcote further abolished the duty on horses, with several duties of a kindred character, the total amount of his reductions of taxation being for the year £4,020,000. He applied another million to the relief of local taxation, and so fulfilled, in a most striking manner, the pledges given by the Conservative leaders when in Opposition. By a contribution towards the cost of the maintenance of lunatics, by an increase of the subvention for the pay and clothing of the Police from 25 to 50 per cent., and by a further payment of rates on Government property, the Chancellor of the Exchequer accepted a burden for the year of £1,010,000, whilst relieving local taxation permanently by the very considerable sum of a million and a quarter. By these arrangements the Chancellor of the Exchequer was left with a small estimated surplus, which, in spite of some considerable Supplementary Estimates, proved to be larger when the accounts of the year were made up.

In 1875, Sir Stafford Northcote's Budget was what we may call a quiet one. It repealed only one small stamp duty, and what relief it gave was only to a small class. A very just alteration was made in the system upon which brewers are charged with duties upon the number of barrels of beer they brew; and a stamp duty upon appointments to the Civil Service, producing little, but often pressing very heavily upon those who had to pay it, was abolished. The principal feature of the Budget of 1875 was the scheme of Sir Stafford Northcote for a regular and steady reduction of the National Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal was the payment of a sum of twenty-eight millions regularly on account of the Debt. At the time he spoke, the annual charge of the Debt, including the exceptional expenditure

authorised by previous Parliaments for its reduction in the way of Terminable Annuities, was £27,250,000. By raising the annual payment from the Consolidated Fund to the National Debt Commissioners to £28,000,000, to which sum it was calculated it would only arrive in the course of the financial year, 1877-78, Sir Stafford Northcote hoped to reduce the Debt in thirty years by the very considerable sum of £162,000,000, altogether independently and apart from the other arrangements adopted for that purpose. The proposal of the Minister was hotly contested by the Opposition, Mr. Gladstone signalising himself by the vehemence of his objections, but it was well received by the House and the country; and the Government may be heartily congratulated upon the bold, judicious, and moderate scheme by which, at a really inappreciable cost to the taxpayers of the present day, it has provided for the extinction of so large a sum of debt in so short a time. An important item of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget proposals was the measure for regulating and improving the system upon which loans are granted by the Treasury, under the provisions of various Acts of Parliament, to public bodies and local authorities, which is known as the Public Works' Loans Act. This useful Act simplifies the national accounts, brings the advances clearly under view and control, and effects considerable economies.

The tide of abnormal and feverish prosperity which overspread Europe after the conclusion of peace between France and Germany, and which swelled so enormously the returns of the revenue during Mr. Gladstone's administration, was already rapidly receding when the present Government entered into office in the spring of 1874. In his first two years of office Sir Stafford Northcote was, however, able to make large remissions of taxation, whilst providing for the increased expenditure rendered necessary to put the Army and Navy (which Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Lowe had starved) into a satisfactory condition; for the transfer of local charges to the National Exchequer, in favour of which the House of Commons had pronounced by an overwhelming vote when Mr. Gladstone boasted a majority of seventy or eighty; for the growth of the Education Vote, the necessary consequence of Mr.

Forster's Education Act; and for an honest and vigorous effort to reduce the National Debt. In 1876 the growth of these various charges, and the increasing depression of trade and commerce (felt in the cessation of that so-called elasticity of revenue which means, practically, the ability of the working classes to consume articles liable to duty—that is to say, speaking generally, beer, wines, spirits, and tobacco), compelled the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although his calculations had been fully realised, and the surplus of the year, in spite of large Supplemental Estimates, exceeded his original Budget calculation, to have recourse to additional taxation. The Estimates for the three great Services for the coming year (although only slightly in excess of the annual rate of augmentation under Mr. Gladstone's *régime*) showed so great an increase, that the comparison between the sum total of expenditure and the sum total of revenue Estimates showed a deficiency of three-quarters of a million. What was to be done? The expenditure was necessary. There could be no doubt about that. So the Chancellor had recourse to the ancient and, indeed, the only resource left to a Minister. He added to the Income Tax the penny he had taken off in 1874, but he increased at the same time the exemptions, and diminished the pressure upon the class which feels it most severely. The absolute exemption from the tax which Mr. Gladstone, with that utter want of practical acquaintance with the condition of the people which especially characterises him, had reduced to £100, was raised again to £150, and in place of the deduction of £80 before allowed on all incomes under £300, an allowance of £120 was made upon all incomes under £400. Mr. Gladstone, of course, vehemently opposed this proposition, and he was faithfully supported by his late colleagues. The House of Commons, however, thankfully accepted the measure, which, although it may not perhaps be easily justified theoretically, practically relieves the tax of its most oppressive features.

In his Budget for 1877, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—who found his Estimates for the past year, which had been attacked as extravagant and misleading in the House of Commons, with a

good deal of sound and fury, by the chiefs of the Opposition, verified in the most satisfactory manner—kept strictly to the arrangements of the previous year; imposing no new tax, and repealing only one—the Stamp Duty on Benefices, which pressed with extreme severity upon clergymen presented to small livings, whilst producing a revenue of only £6,000 a year.

Sir Stafford Northcote had reckoned in his Budget speech upon a surplus of a little more than £350,000 at the close of the year 1877-78. The expenditure, however, proved to be about £110,000 more than the Budget Estimate, although three-quarters of a million less than had been granted by Supplemental Estimates; so that the surplus, assuming the Estimate of revenue to have been exactly correct, would have been something more than £242,000. The revenue amounted, however, to some £617,000 above the Estimate, thus justifying the accuracy of the Chancellor's calculations; and there would, therefore, have been a surplus of £860,000 upon the year, but for the Vote of Credit for £6,000,000 granted by the House of Commons in February, 1878. At the close of the financial year, three millions and a-half had been expended in virtue of this credit, and there was consequently, upon the assumption that this extraordinary expenditure should be brought into the ordinary accounts of the year, a deficiency of £2,640,000. Sir Stafford Northcote's Estimate of Expenditure for the year 1878-1879, exclusive of a further sum of from a million to a million and a-half for extraordinary expenditure of the same kind as that made under the authority of the Vote of Credit, was £81,019,000. Taking the revenue, upon the assumption of no alteration in taxes or duties, at £79,460,000, here was a deficit of nearly £1,560,000 to provide for. By increasing the tax on dogs from 5s. to 7s. 6d., estimated to yield £100,000; increasing the duty on tobacco fourpence per pound, estimated to produce £750,000; and adding twopence to the Income Tax, the proceeds of which, for the current year, he took at £2,950,000—the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who sacrificed £30,000 by an exemption reducing the produce of the house-duty by that sum raised the revenue of the year to £83,230,000, leaving a surplus of £2,210,000. With this surplus and the extra

proceeds of the additional Income Tax for the current year, but only to be received in 1879-80, the legacy of £2,640,000 from 1877-78, and the estimated million or more of Supplemental Votes, would, with ordinary good fortune, have been provided for without adding a halfpenny to the public debt.

Unfortunately, the Supplemental Votes, which included three-quarters of a million, the cost of bringing the Indian troops to Malta and sending them back, amounted to £2,618,000, whilst a further sum of £400,000, on account of the war at the Cape, seemed, even at the close of the Session of 1878, likely to come upon the expenditure of the year 1878-79. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's surplus was, therefore, dissipated long before the time came for realising it, and the outbreak of the Zulu War—the news of which came so unexpectedly and disagreeably upon the Government, and necessitated a Vote of Credit for £1,500,000 in February—compelled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to preface his Budget statement for the year 1879-80 with the acknowledgment of a deficit on the financial year just closed of £2,292,000. The revenue had nearly reached his estimate, having amounted to £83,116,000, or £114,000 less than his calculation—a result principally due to the fact that the additional duty on tobacco yielded only £500,000 instead of the £750,000 it was expected to bring in. The expenditure, on the other hand, amounted to £85,407,000, or £4,388,000 more than Sir Stafford Northcote had anticipated at the commencement of the year. Coming to the current year, 1879-80, the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated the revenue at £83,055,000, or about £60,000 less than the receipts of the last year; whilst he calculated the expenditure at £81,153,000, exclusive of such further charges for the Zulu War as might come upon the Exchequer in the course of the year. There was thus, according to his calculation, an apparent surplus of one million nine hundred thousand pounds, out of which he hoped that all further charges for the Zulu War would be met. Speaking on the 31st of July, 1879, a fortnight before the close of the Session, and after the news of the Battle of Ulundi had arrived, and the speedy termination of the war could safely be reckoned upon, Sir

Stafford Northcote estimated the cost of the war, so far as it would be a charge on the present financial year, at three millions, or one million one hundred thousand pounds more than the surplus which, he had assumed, would meet that outlay. As Supplementary Estimates, amounting practically—they appeared larger, but were reduced by cross entries—to £64,000, had been voted in the course of the Session, the deficit upon the current year, assuming expenditure and revenue to exactly conform to this latest edition of the Estimates, will be £1,163,000, which sum Sir Stafford Northcote hopes that he will recover from the Cape Colonies. We trust that this hope may be justified; but it can hardly be expected that any portion of the sum the Government claims from the colonies will be received in time to allow of its appearance in the accounts of the current year, and unless, therefore, savings in other branches of expenditure larger than it would be safe to reckon upon have been effected, we must look forward to a deficit, which, in view of the diminution in yield of two of the main sources of revenue (Customs and Excise), may amount to a million and a-half. Assuming this to be the result, the accumulated deficit of these three years will amount to £6,430,000. That is to say, that for the assertion of the interests of England in the East, the preservation of the peace of Europe, and the successful conduct of a war in South Africa, for which the Government is not responsible, but which events have shown was absolutely necessary for the protection of the colonies, the country will have added to one form of its debt about six millions sterling, whilst it has reduced it in other forms, and almost entirely through the measures taken by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, nearly seventeen millions and a-half. The net apparent decrease of the debt is comparatively small. The real decrease consists in the fact that for more than sixteen millions of what now figures as national debt, the Government has absolute security, and receives a larger interest than it pays. The outcry raised against the Government in this matter of the debt has as much, and no more, foundation than would have the charge of extravagance against a landowner because he had added five thousand pounds to his debt to his bankers, at the same time that he paid off a

mortgage of seventeen or eighteen thousand pounds. Indeed, this illustration does not thoroughly represent the case. More than a million and a-half of the Vote of Credit for six millions, the whole of which sum is included in the account of expenditure which we have given, was devoted to the purchase of ironclad vessels built by private firms, which have added greatly to the strength of the Navy ; and further, every year from 1875 to the present, there has been an expenditure of considerably more than a million over the highest sum devoted to the purpose by Mr. Gladstone's Government for the construction and repair of ships. The increase of the unfunded debt, such as it is, might fairly be compared to a loan incurred by a landed proprietor in order to effect most valuable improvements upon his estate.

A desperate effort has been made by Mr. Gladstone, who remains the real leader of the Opposition, and his lieutenants, Messrs. Lowe, Childers, and Dodson, to establish a charge of extravagant expenditure against the present Government, and to represent it as adding to the burthens of the people, whereas Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Lowe were continually reducing them. There is not the slightest justification for the charge. There is no doubt, of course, that the expenditure is greater now than it was in the year 1873-74, but this no more proves that the expenditure is unnecessary, extravagant, or more burdensome to the people than the addition of the cost of collecting the revenue, which used to be deducted from the gross receipts, to the estimates of expenditure, proves that the expenditure has increased. The Tories have added, Mr. Gladstone says, eight and a quarter millions to the annual expenditure. These figures are grossly incorrect; but if we accept them, to what would the charge amount? The question for the country is not whether more money is spent now upon the Army and Navy, in the reduction of the Debt, upon education, and in relief of local taxation, than during Mr. Gladstone's administration ; but whether the additional expenditure is necessary, and has been judiciously made ? That question is answered in the most satisfactory manner by an analysis of the figures upon which the opponents of the Government profess to rest their case. Mr. Gladstone, whose usual tactics are to obscure all questions in a foam of high-sounding words,

ventured during his recent campaign in Midlothian upon specific charges against the financial policy of the Government, with a result which will probably induce him to return to his old system of vague and sweeping indictments. He compared the expenditure of the last year of his own Government, 1873-4, with the expenditure of 1878-9, and crediting himself with what he called the extraordinary expenditure of the year, such as the payment of the Alabama Award, and a payment on account of the Ashantee War, but giving the present Government no credit for its extraordinary expenditure for the Zulu War (which it as little desired as Mr. Gladstone did the Ashantee War, for which, however, he was distinctly responsible), or the expenditure necessitated by the events in Eastern Europe, he denounced the Government for having wantonly added more than eight millions to the national expenditure. Mr. Gladstone's attack, which was full of extraordinary blunders and mis-statements, such as the assertion that the Income Tax had been raised to sixpence, was promptly met by Sir Stafford Northcote, who explained very clearly at Leeds how the increase of expenditure, which was not eight millions and a quarter, but seven millions and a-half, had been caused. Two million three hundred thousand pounds are ascribed to an increase of the charges for the Army and Navy; three millions and a-half represent the increased charge upon the Civil Service Estimates, on account of Mr. Forster's Education Act, and the relief of local taxation at the expense of the National Exchequer; whilst one million nine hundred and thirty-seven thousand pounds are attributable to an increase of charge for the management and redemption of the Debt. The increase in the Army and Navy charges needs no elaborate justification. It would have been in large part necessary, even if the state of affairs in Europe during the last three years had not compelled the Government to put both forces in a condition for immediate action. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Lowe, in order to manufacture their bogus surpluses, had reduced the Navy to such a wretched condition, that in the last year of their administration they were compelled to largely increase the Estimates by an augmentation of the Vote for the construction and repair of ships. Still, so far had the mischief gone that Mr. Ward Hunt found, as

he declared in the House of Commons, only a "phantom fleet," and was obliged to take immediate measures to increase the number of ships, and put those already available into proper condition.

The increase in the Army charges has been quite as imperative. Lord Cardwell left the Army in a most disorganised and dissatisfied condition. Officers and men were alike discontented. Many of our regiments were mere skeletons; our best non-commissioned officers and private soldiers were leaving the Service as fast as they could, and such recruits as could be obtained were mere boys. Mr. Hardy set himself at once to work to improve the condition of the Service. He accepted frankly and loyally the changes so wantonly introduced by Lord Cardwell. To have returned to the state of things which existed before would have been to make confusion worse confounded. He gradually, but surely, redressed the grievances of all ranks, and increased the inducements to enter the Army. The Regimental Exchanges Act, founded upon the report of a Royal Commission appointed by Lord Cardwell, which said that the prohibition of paying and receiving money for exchanges between officers on full pay was a serious hardship to some and a serious loss to others, removed a grievance which caused great discontent; whilst the Army Promotion and Retirement Act secured at a considerable cost to the country that flow of promotion so necessary to the efficiency and satisfaction of the Service which the Purchase System supplied, and which Lord Cardwell, in abolishing purchase, promised should be maintained. Mr. Hardy also did much to make the Army Reserve a reality. But the most important of his measures is undoubtedly the increase of pay to the private soldiers and to the non-commissioned officers, which he carried through in 1876. He gave the men, in addition to their present pay, a deferred pay of 2d. per day, so that at the end of their six years' service there is a sum of £18 to their credit. A stronger inducement to good conduct and a better check upon desertion can hardly be imagined than this measure. Further, Mr. Hardy added a penny to the pay of the Guards, has given lance-corporals and lance-sergeants, who hitherto had performed onerous duties for nothing, the pay of their ranks, and has increased generally

the pay of that most important class, the non-commissioned officers.

In the Civil Expenditure a million and a-half of the increase is due to the operation of the Education Act. For this piece of extravagance—if extravagance it be—Mr. Gladstone himself, and his colleagues in the late Government, are in the first place responsible. The other two millions represent charges previously paid out of the rates, but transferred by the action of the present Government, and almost without opposition from Mr. Gladstone and his friends, to the National Exchequer; they are therefore not an addition to, but a change in the incidence of, the national burthens. Indeed, this amount of two millions now paid out of the Treasury falls far short of the whole diminution of local taxation, and the full saving to the ratepayers. The transfer to the Government of the management of prisons throughout the United Kingdom, enabled a large reduction to be made in the cost of maintenance, and we should be speaking quite within bounds if we were to estimate the actual relief to the taxpayers in the shape of a reduction of the demand upon them for rates and local charges, at two and a-half millions.

The increase of charge for the National Debt, £1,937,000, seems at first sight to give some justification for Mr. Gladstone's accusations; but when the figures are examined they will be found to redound very much to the credit of the Government. The only portion of this increase for which the Government is responsible, beyond the small sum of £129,000, the interest upon the Exchequer Bonds issued on account of the two Votes of Credit, is an amount of between six and seven hundred thousand pounds, which Parliament in 1875, on the proposition of Sir Stafford Northcote, voted, by raising the charge for the permanent debt to a fixed sum in excess of that required, for the gradual reduction of the Debt. The balance of the increased charge is merely a matter of account. The sum it represents is the interest the Government pays for the moneys it has borrowed, under the provisions of Acts like the Education Act, to lend to local bodies, or to invest under the direction of Parliament, as in the case of the Suez Canal, and for which an entry, approximately equivalent, appears on the

revenue side of the national balance-sheet. So far from having any need to shun inquiry into the comparative amounts of the Debt, and the comparative annual charges for it at the time they entered into office, and at the present day, Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues may point to the diminution they have effected in the Debt as one of the many proofs of the soundness of their financial policy. To have reduced the national indebtedness in all its forms, including not only the so-called permanent debt—a comparison confined to which would be much more favourable to them—but all kinds of unfunded debt and other obligations and liabilities, by the sum of ten millions two hundred and forty-two thousand pounds, in the course of these three troubled years, whilst putting the Army and Navy into a thoroughly effective condition, incurring an extraordinary expenditure of something like eight millions to maintain English interests in the East, adding a million and a-half yearly to the Education Vote, and transferring two millions of local taxation every year to the charge of the Treasury, and to have done it all in a time of commercial and agricultural depression, in a time of falling Revenue receipts, is an achievement of which any Ministry might be proud, and one which no Liberal Ministry ever accomplished. But this is just what has been done by the present Government, as has been shown by Mr. Hubbard in the most valuable letters he has published in the *Times*—not to defend Conservative Finance, but to point out what is the exact amount of the national revenue and expenditure after removing the mere cross and book-keepers' entries, and what is the amount of the national indebtedness, after taking due credit for the claims which the country has against those local bodies to lend to which it has increased the National Debt. The financial position of the country was never sounder than it is at the present time. Efficiency has been secured without any neglect of economy, and the public burdens are now considerably less than they were when Mr. Gladstone left office. If the revival of trade, which seems to have commenced, should continue, the revenue will doubtless advance by "leaps and bounds," as it did in the prosperous times in which it was the fortune of the Liberals to be in power, and the Government of the day will be able to make large remissions of taxation. It is enough for the present to remember

that, whilst the Government has met great and extraordinary charges, and reduced the national indebtedness more than seventeen millions, in spite of the revenue having fallen in consequence of commercial and agricultural distress, it, during the first part of its tenure of office, removed taxes amounting to just four millions and three-quarters per annum, and that even now, when it has, been compelled to impose additional taxation, the comparison between the amount of taxes removed and taxes put on shows that the additional burden is not even, taking the official estimates, a million, whilst in effect it has been much less. The million has not been put upon the poor and struggling, but upon the well-to-do and rich.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY.—The purchase of the late Khedive of Egypt's shares in the Suez Canal was the first practical demonstration of the intention of the Conservative Government to take a wider and nobler view of English interests and English duties than Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues had ventured upon. When it was announced that the English Government had purchased these shares, which represent something more than two-fifths of the original capital of the Canal Company, the approbation of the public was singularly unanimous. The Liberal newspapers outstripped the Conservative in their enthusiasm over this "bold, wise, and statesmanlike" proceeding, which was described as securing our road to India, and protecting any interests of England which might be threatened by the reviving Eastern Question. The shares which the Khedive had to sell, and which, if they had not been bought by the English Government, would have fallen into the hands of a French Syndicate, were 176,602 in number. They bore no interest, the Khedive having sacrificed to the Company the coupons for twenty-five years, but by the arrangement made with him he undertook to pay £200,000, or five per cent., upon the purchase-money during the nineteen years for which the shares would still, by his contract with the Company, bear no interest. By the plan which the Government adopted for raising the purchase money, the country will, at the end of thirty-seven years, have the

shares as its property without having paid a farthing for them, upon the well-justified assumption that the Khedive pays the interest for the nineteen years, and that the Canal pays a dividend of five per cent. for the following eighteen years. What England really gets for this outlay, if outlay it can be called, is a two-fifths part of a great undertaking, the cost and value of which are by no means shown by the original share or loan capital. The Khedive gave the Company land which will prove of great value, and he gave it, too, the forced labour of his unhappy subjects. The mere pecuniary advantage of the purchase is, however, its smallest title to public approval. By becoming the owner of so large a number of shares, the English Government acquires a power over the management of the Canal which will prevent any administration of it injurious to English interests. It is quite true that the English Government is not represented upon the Board of Management of the Company in proportion to its holding, but its power is not the less felt, and as its only object can be to secure the maintenance of the Canal in good condition, and keep it open for the transit of ships of all nations on fair terms, there is not any room for serious conflict of opinion between its nominees and the other directors. In the last resort, and if war or other difficulties should come, England is quite strong enough to take charge of, and administer for the benefit of those whom it may concern, a property in which she is the largest holder. The Opposition leaders put themselves, in the discussion of this question, in direct antagonism to the feeling of the country. They denounced the purchase of the shares in itself, first as a challenge to other countries, and then as a wasteful expenditure. The policy of the Government was now too bold and reckless, and now too weak and timid. One day the Government was arraigned for taking Egypt under its protection, and the next it was denounced for making a bargain which gave it no real control over the Canal. Then the bargain itself was criticised in a huckstering spirit; the shares, the Opposition leaders said, might have been bought cheaper, and the commission paid to Messrs. Rothschild was too great. Nothing in the way of objection was too extravagant or too contemptible for Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Lowe,

and the Marquis of Hartington; but the only result of their opposition to the purchase was to discredit them with the country, and to induce the general belief that if they had continued in power England would have neglected a great opportunity.

The annexation of the Fiji Islands, a measure long demanded as well in Imperial as colonial interests, must be placed to the credit of the Government. Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues showed themselves desirous to diminish rather than increase our colonial possessions. For them the Empire was too great a burden. The colonies did not exactly pay. Indeed, their policy, except that they would have wished the colonies to quit the Imperial connection of their own motion, was very much that of the statesmen of the last century, who did not believe in colonies which did not pay every farthing they cost, and so lost England what were then her best and richest possessions.

The scheme for a confederation of South Africa, to include not only the British colonies, but the Dutch Independent Republics, met at first with a good deal of opposition. The leading politicians of the Cape Colony did not like it; it would have merged them in a crowd of politicians, the leadership of whom they could only have assumed by the exhibition of special Parliamentary or administrative abilities; and the Dutch Republics were too much enamoured of their own way of warfare and their own independence. But later events have convinced even the strongest opponents of the scheme of its wisdom; and the annexation of the Transvaal Republic, which the anarchy prevailing there, and the hopeless contest into which the Boers had wantonly entered with the neighbouring native tribes, rendered necessary, has prepared the way for the welding together of the whole of that part of South Africa which is inhabited by Europeans in one great federation.

How necessary the annexation of the Transvaal was, and how great was the peril in which the Boers had put not only themselves, but the English colonists round about them, by their reckless policy, the Zulu War has sufficiently shown. The military organisation of King Cetewayo, whom the Boers foolishly provoked, and who, beginning to feel his power, had talked of washing the spears

of his soldiers in the white men's blood, had long been a danger to the colony of Natal. Sir Bartle Frere deemed the danger immediate, and although, when he sent, towards the end of the year 1878, a kind of *ultimatum* to Cetewayo, in which he demanded satisfaction for certain outrages committed on the frontier, and the disbandment of the King's army, and upon the rejection of his demands commenced war, he had no authority from the Government to take such action, there can be no doubt that he acted with a full knowledge of impending danger, and the subsequent difficulties experienced by the troops under Lord Chelmsford only confirm the view which he took of the situation. Sir Bartle Frere's error was, not that he over-estimated the danger, but that he underrated it. He had no sufficient idea of the discipline and courage of the Zulu army. There was at the time a larger force of English troops in South Africa than any Governor-General was likely, for a long time to come, to have at his disposal, and he no doubt calculated that with this force he could easily compel Cetewayo to accept his terms. Sir Bartle Frere's miscalculation or indiscretion has been of the greatest service to the whole of our South African colonies, and consequently to the mother country. The danger, the extent of which can hardly be over-estimated, has been dispelled, and at a cost far less than would have been required if the struggle had been put off. The power of England has been exhibited in the most unmistakable manner. The Zulu army, after a disaster to our troops deeply to be regretted on account of the loss of brave men it involved, and ever memorable for the indecent and unpatriotic manner in which it was "*exploited*" by the Opposition, was thoroughly defeated and scattered on all sides. King Cetewayo is a prisoner. His country has been divided between chieftains whose policy is marked out for them by the English Government, and who are to be controlled by English Residents. As the chief of another tribe and race, Secocoeni, whom the Boers in their arrogance had also provoked, has been captured, and his army destroyed or dispersed, there remains no other element of disturbance in South Africa than the discontent of the Transvaal Boers. That discontent arises entirely from the protection which British rule gives the natives, whom the

Boers — whose cause Radical and Home Rule Members of Parliament are fond of advocating—have been accustomed to treat practically as slaves. But this discontent, which has been very much magnified by some newspapers, is not at all dangerous. The Boers will have to content themselves, and the great majority of them are already content, with the freedom British rule gives them, and accept its obligations. We cannot restore to them a so-called independence which was a scandal upon civilisation.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.—It is impossible to treat adequately of the policy of the Government on the Eastern Question within the limits of this pamphlet. The foreign policy of the Government has been clear, straightforward, and consistent throughout; and although we cannot pretend, as we have said, to give here anything like a full exposition of that policy, or a sufficient record of the signal successes achieved by it, we may describe in broad outline its principal incidents and its decisive triumph.

When the disturbances in Bosnia and the Herzegovina first broke out in the Summer of 1875, nothing was wanting for their suppression—they arose nominally out of the exactions of the tithe-farmers—but a little energy on the part of the Porte and scrupulous fair dealing on the part of Austria. But the Porte was weak, and Austria, too, was weak; and Lord Derby, who had frankly said to the Turkish Government, "Put down this insurrection, and at the same time redress all the grievances which induced it," found himself practically compelled to give his support to that Andrassy Note which recommended to the Porte reforms which were made impossible by the fact that they emanated from an agreement of the three Northern Powers, of which Russia was really the author. It was clear for the Porte, then, that the insurrection was no mere protest against bad government. It was the commencement of a fresh campaign against Turkish rule in Europe. The Porte accepted the Andrassy Note, but the insurgents repudiated it. Then came the Berlin Memorandum, marking most clearly the character of the insurrection, and really aiming, as Lord Derby said, at the occupation of Turkish territory

by Russia and Austria. Any participation in this scheme was naturally rejected by the English Government; and then came the events which are still fresh in the recollection of every reader, the participation of Servia and Montenegro in the war, the Turkish victories, the Russian ultimatum, the Conference, and the War.

The policy of the English Government has been throughout consistent. It warned the Porte so far back as May, 1876, before the fleet was sent to Besika Bay, that it could not protect it against its own misconduct. It made it quite clear that England would never fight for Turkey, even if the maintenance of English and European interests made it necessary for her to act in opposition to Russia. This warning was often repeated by Lord Derby, and, when the Conference of Constantinople met, the Sultan and his Ministers were given, not more clearly, but more directly, to understand that England would regard with the greatest dissatisfaction the refusal of the reforms proposed, and must leave them to meet any attack which that refusal might precipitate. The Porte, however, refused to accept the scheme of the Conference, which, it must be allowed, was hardly put in the form calculated to make its acceptance probable, whilst declaring its determination to adopt certain reforms which would undoubtedly have vastly improved the condition of the people, whether Mohammedan or Christian. The English Government would have left the Porte to carry out these schemes, but that did not suit the purpose of the Russian Government, which, secure of the neutrality of Germany, was resolved upon war. General Ignatieff made a round of the capitals of Europe to propose the adoption of a protocol, which, professedly intended "to terminate the incident" of the Conference, was to take note of the Turkish promises of reform, and leave it to the Powers to watch events and reserve their action in the matter. The English Government had no objection to sign such a protocol if Russia would formally engage to disarm, but this Russia would not do, and finally a protocol was signed at London on the 31st March, 1877, in the main corresponding to the Russian draft, but accompanied by a declaration on the part of Count Schouvaloff, which amounted simply to this, that the

Sultan might send an Ambassador to St. Petersburg to treat of a mutual disarmament. As the French Ambassador pointed out, this declaration was not calculated to spare the susceptibilities of the Porte, which would not accept the protocol, and the Russian Government had its pretence for the declaration of war which soon followed. The English Government severely condemned this conduct of the Russian Government, which Lord Derby showed had no warrant for the allegations it put forward in defence of its conduct, and had committed a gross breach of its Treaty obligations. Lord Derby and his colleagues, however, determined to remain neutral so long as certain special English interests, set out in a despatch dated the 6th of May, were not affected.

Meantime the Opposition—or, to speak more correctly, Mr. Gladstone and his immediate friends—had been doing their utmost to help the designs of Russia—in the first instance, to justify her declaration of war; and in the second place, to drag England behind what it was assumed would be the Czar's triumphal chariot. The war went on, with the result that every day the English people, at first disposed to look indifferently upon the contest and take no part in it, recognised more and more the injustice of the Russian pretensions, and the danger threatening English interests in the triumph of the Russian armies, until at last the Turks were defeated everywhere, the Russians advanced within sight of Constantinople, and the Sultan sued for peace. The imminence of this catastrophe, the necessity of preparing to protect English interests, which, from the complete overthrow of the Turks, were likely to be gravely imperilled in any Treaty imposed by Russia, induced the Government to summon Parliament for an earlier date than usual. The two Houses met on the 17th January, 1878, and on the 24th the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that on the following Monday he would move a Supplementary Vote for Naval and Military Services. The same day Lord Carnarvon—who had offered his resignation once before, when it was proposed that the British Fleet should enter the Dardanelles, and had before that received a severe rebuke from the Premier for a most indiscreet and unfair statement of his own opinions, delivered, as if commissioned by the Government, to a

deputation which waited upon him upon a subject of an altogether different kind—resigned, and his resignation was accepted.

The Vote of Credit for £6,000,000, proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was granted, after debates which set in a remarkable light the factious conduct of the Opposition. Mr. Forster raised a discussion of six nights by an amendment affirming that there was no occasion for the Vote, and practically expressing approval of the Russian terms of peace; and although he withdrew the amendment at the instance of Lord Hartington, his followers took a division on it, and raised other debates, in which Mr. Gladstone made passionate speeches in opposition to the Government and the Vote. Meantime the English Fleet had entered the Dardanelles, the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano had been published, and Austria had proposed a Congress, to which the English Government had agreed, upon the condition that the whole of the Treaty of San Stefano should be submitted to its consideration. To this demand Russia returned a practical refusal, and the Government of Lord Beaconsfield called out the Reserve Forces. This step cost the Ministry the resignation of Lord Derby, whose difference with his colleagues appears to have been this, that whilst he was quite at one with them as to the object to be attained—he insisted very strongly upon the submission of the whole of the Treaty of San Stefano to the Congress—he was not prepared to agree to the only means by which that object could be attained. A remarkable despatch, in which the Marquis of Salisbury, who succeeded the Earl of Derby as Foreign Secretary, stated the position and summed up the demands of England, produced a great effect upon all the Continental Governments, and contributed largely to obtain for the Government that overwhelming popular support which never failed it in the subsequent stages of the question. The two Houses of Parliament thanked Her Majesty for calling out the Reserves, after debates in which the Opposition only demonstrated their own weakness, and the announcement that Indian troops had been called to Malta, although much grumbled at in both Houses, was decisively approved by Parliament, and heartily applauded by the public.

The blow struck home at St. Petersburg. Count Schouvaloff, who had been summoned there by the Emperor, returned to London towards the end of May with most conciliatory instructions. The demands of the British Government were accepted. The whole Treaty of San Stefano was to be submitted to the Congress, to the meeting of which there was now no obstacle. The Earl of Beaconsfield and the Marquis of Salisbury represented this country at Berlin, and achieved the most signal triumph of which English policy can boast during the last sixty years. The Government may proudly claim for itself this credit, that without the loss of a single man and at an expenditure of less than a twentieth part of the sum engulfed in the Crimean War, it forced Russia to content herself, although her armies were already at the gates of Constantinople, with some comparatively small acquisitions of territory in Asia Minor, and to accept a settlement of the Eastern Question, one chief result of which must be to destroy every hope of the extension of her empire to the Bosphorus and the Ægean, and render vain all the dreams her rulers have so long indulged in of reigning at Constantinople and dominating the Mediterranean. We have described in detail elsewhere* the character of the changes made by the Treaty of Berlin in the settlement Russia attempted to impose at San Stefano. We need only say now, that the Treaty and the Convention of Constantinople, by which we have acquired possession of Cyprus and taken guarantees for the better government of Asia Minor, have thoroughly approved themselves. The difficulties which have been met with in the execution of some of the stipulations of the Treaty were no greater than had been anticipated, and the prophecies of failure and disaster, in which Sir William Harcourt and other leaders of the Opposition indulged, have been signally falsified.

All those stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin which materially affected the Treaty of San Stefano, and were intended to provide security against any further attempt of Russia to realise her ambitious aspirations, have been completely carried out; the objects with which the English Government demanded the revision of the terms imposed upon Turkey by Russia in a

* "The Treaty of Berlin and the Convention of Constantinople."

Congress, and Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury went to Berlin to assert, have been entirely achieved. Such provisions of the Treaty as have not yet been carried out in their integrity, like the settlement of the frontier of Greece and Turkey, and the delimitation of Montenegro, only concern the English Government so far as it is one of the parties to the settlement at Berlin. Whatever their conclusion, no English interest will, even in the remotest manner, be affected. The Government has secured all that it insisted upon at Berlin, all that in English interests particularly, and European interests generally, it proposed to accomplish, when it demanded that the compact between Turkey and Russia should be revised by a European tribunal, and prepared to enforce its demand.

THE AFGHAN WAR.—The announcement that the Government of India had addressed something like an ultimatum to the Ameer of Afghanistan, although it came as a surprise upon the public generally, was not unexpected by those who had watched the course of affairs in Central Asia. As Sir Henry Rawlinson has said: "There have been for some years two distinct elements of mischief ever present and ever threatening danger—the intractable character of the ruler of Afghanistan and the persistent advance of Russia towards the Indian borderlands." The intractability of the Ameer, and his dislike and distrust of England, were the fault of our English Radical Governments. The advance of Russia is a danger which they have recognised, but have never screwed up courage to take precautions against The policy of "masterly inactivity" pursued by Lord Lawrence, and which practically consisted in the declaration that the Indian Government could give no help, not even that of moral influence, to the settlement of the war of succession in Afghanistan, and the offeusive announcement to Shere Ali that it would recognise any person who might obtain possession of the throne quite as readily as himself, naturally irritated the Ameer. The Indian Government of that day insisted that he was bound at all times and in all circumstances, by the engagement of his father, made in the Treaty of 1855, to be the friend of the friends and the enemy of the enemies

of the Indian Government, but it declined to recognise any corresponding obligation on its own part, and substantially said that its alliance was to be only with the winning side. Lord Mayo removed some of the distrust felt by the Ameer, and whilst refusing some rather extravagant demands made by him, led him to believe that he could rely upon the friendship of the English Government. The Ameer was not, indeed, quite satisfied, for the English Government refused him certain guarantees which he asked, but he still desired to be on friendly terms with us.

The advance of the Russians in Central Asia, which Liberal statesmen and Liberal newspapers are never weary, as if they had received a word of command from St. Petersburg, of proclaiming a mere development of civilisation rather advantageous than injurious to our rule in India, began, in 1873, to alarm Shere Ali. The capture of Khiva and the practical subjection of the Khanate —for the independence left a portion of it is but a phantom of diplomacy—led him to estimate very closely the value of the alliance with England concluded by Dost Mohammed, and which still subsisted. He sent a special envoy to Simla to put the matter before the Indian Government. Lord Northbrook seems to have been disposed to proffer the Ameer the assistance of the Government of India against unprovoked aggression, although it is difficult, after the letters and speeches of Lord Northbrook, to know what he really did intend. It is certain, however, that Mr. Gladstone's Government "pooh-poohed" the whole difficulty. There was no danger, it said, of Russian interference with Afghanistan. Its members could of their own knowledge guarantee the Czar's love of peace, and, above all, they could not commit themselves to anything which might have made it necessary to raise the Estimates. However, they instructed Lord Northbrook to say, and his Lordship seems to have said, that if the Ameer would "refer," in the case of any actual or threatened aggression by Russia, to the British Government, it would endeavour, by every means in its power, to settle the matter and avert hostilities. The Ameer, who knew how General Kaufmann was in the habit of making war, was naturally not assured by such a vague and meaningless declaration, and seems from that moment to have come to the

conclusion that his only safety ay in securing the friendship of Russia. When the Government of Lord Beaconsfield assumed power, in the spring of 1874, Lord Northbrook was still Governor-General of India, and it was in vain that the Marquis of Salisbury, who, with his colleagues, saw the danger of throwing the Ameer into the Russian camp, urged the necessity of taking measures to secure his friendship or prevent him from doing mischief. Lord Northbrook did not question the desirability of what the Home Government recommended, but he did not see the immediate necessity for taking any steps in the matter, and he had no fear of the Russian advance, and altogether—that was always his plea—the season was not a convenient one for doing anything. The English Government meanwhile had, however, seen more and more distinctly the danger of the position, and Lord Lytton went out to India with instructions to secure the friendship of the Ameer, or, failing that, to prevent Afghanistan being used by Russia to menace or disturb British India. He was authorised to offer the Ameer substantial pecuniary aid, the formal recognition of his dynasty—for which he had before asked in vain—and an explicit pledge of material support in case of unprovoked foreign aggression. But the Ameer had already thrown in his lot with Russia. He had already received a number of communications from General Kaufmann, which the Russian commander violated the understanding between his own Government and that of England in making. The overtures of the Viceroy were rejected under one excuse or other. The Ameer refused to receive a British Envoy even temporarily in his territory; and so matters stood when, in the summer of 1878, a Russian Mission was ostentatiously welcomed at Cabul. After that it was necessary for the English Government to act immediately and vigorously. The Viceroy at once announced to the Ameer his intention to send a Mission to Cabul, headed by an officer of rank, Sir Neville Chamberlain. The departure of the Mission was announced in sufficient time to enable the Ameer to make all proper arrangements for its reception; but when Major Cavagnari, who preceded Sir Neville Chamberlain, arrived at Ali Musjid, a passage was refused the Mission. No more distinct

act of hostility could have been shown by the Ameer. To have tolerated it would have been to throw Afghanistan into the arms of Russia, and to have suffered a loss of prestige in our own Indian dominions, the disastrous effect of which can hardly be exaggerated. However, the Home Government, consulted by the Viceroy, gave the Ameer an opportunity of apology and submission. He did not avail himself of it, and English troops at once occupied the passes through which an enemy might have advanced upon India. When they marched towards Cabul in the spring, they met with little resistance; Shere Ali had fled to Turkestan long before their approach, leaving all authority in the hands of his son, Yakoob Khan. The death of Shere Ali, which took place very soon after his flight from Cabul, left Yakoob Khan with as complete authority over Afghanistan as any ruler of that turbulent country can hope to enjoy; and in May he came into the English camp at Gundamak, and there concluded a peace, which recognised his sovereignty over Afghanistan, but left England in possession of the frontier, which the best military authorities had declared to be necessary and desirable. In accordance with the Treaty, and at the urgently expressed wish of the Ameer himself, Major Cavagnari, whose services had been recognised by signal honours, went to Cabul as English Resident. His reception was at first perfectly satisfactory; but on the 3rd September, certain regiments, whether mutinying for want of pay, or paid to commit the outrage, besieged the house in which the English Resident and his suite were quartered, and after a long and desperate fight, in which Sir Louis Cavagnari and his companions bore themselves nobly, murdered them. This outrage was soon avenged. The troops which were retiring on India, turned their faces again towards Cabul, and although the numerical strength of the force under General Roberts was small, and the road was most difficult, he entered Cabul on the 12th October, little more than a month after the crime had been committed which he went to punish. Yakoob Khan, the extent of whose complicity in the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari has not yet been determined, had come into the English camp some time before the army reached Cabul, and all resistance seemed to

have been abandoned. A subsequent combination of tribes, which the General does not seem to have been prepared for, compelled Sir Frederick Roberts to abandon Cabul, entrench himself in the Sherpur cantonments, and ask for reinforcements. Before, however, the reinforcements reached him, he had inflicted upon the Afghans the most decisive defeat they have ever sustained at our hands. They at once dispersed, and although slight attacks upon our positions — highland raids they may be called — are now and then reported, our authority is firmly established, and the only question which now remains to be determined is by what territorial and other arrangements the purposes for which we originally went to war—namely, the establishment of our exclusive control over the Foreign policy of Afghanistan, and the absolute protection of our Indian frontier—can be most efficaciously and economically insured.

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REFORM

OF

PARLIAMENTARY

PROCEDURE.

PUBLISHED BY THE
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JANUARY, 1882.

REFORM OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.

THE Session of 1882, if credence is to be given to the most authoritative announcements, is destined to attempt, as its most important achievement, a Radical reform of our Parliamentary procedure. Nobody who has been familiar with the "scenes" of which the House of Commons has been the theatre during the last four years can fail to recognise the expediency of such changes as may restore to that Institution the character of a deliberative and legislative assembly. That the ancient forms devised "by gentlemen for gentlemen" have come to be employed in a very different spirit, and for objects altogether extra-, or, indeed, anti-Parliamentary, is now unhappily notorious. To arrest particular legislation so long as any good purpose could be served by further discussion, or even to secure the postponement to another Session of novel proposals on which public opinion was imperfectly or not at all matured —these have always been recognised among the legitimate objects of a patriotic Opposition. The use of the machinery designed for these purposes as a means of preventing all legislation whatever, or of crippling and almost disabling the Queen's Government in the discharge of those administrative functions which can only be fulfilled by the co-operation of Parliament—this is certainly such an abuse of Parliamentary privilege as to call for signal chastisement and unsparing repression. An evil which had paralysed the efforts of the sober and conscientious House of Commons which was dissolved in 1880 has become, if not more detrimental to the State, at least more offensively prominent in the more excitable and less experienced Chamber now led by Mr. Gladstone, and cannot be dealt with too soon or too trenchantly. Let us only be on our guard, lest in rooting up these political tares, occasion may not be found for destroying at the same time much of the Parliamentary wheat on which the future of our Constitutional breadstuffs must depend.

"The lessons read, and to be read, to the country on the subject of Obstruction ought not to have for their main text the conduct of the Irish members. At worst they are but accessories. The Executive Government is the principal offender." Thus wrote Mr. Gladstone in August, 1879, after twenty-one days consumed in the discussion of the Army Regulation Bill, which, in its older and more exceptionable form as the Mutiny Bill, had been passed times out of mind by Governments of which he was a member in about as many minutes in the face of a Tory Opposition. Circumstances, as we know, alter cases; and the Irish members who may have flattered them-

selves that they were only "accessories" when they obstructed a measure introduced about eighteen months subsequently by the same Mr. Gladstone with the object of suspending the constitutional liberties of Irishmen, found themselves very rudely undeceived by the action of "the principal offender" on that occasion. They ought, no doubt, to have perceived that a Tory Minister who brings in an ordinary administrative measure which is passed every year in order to maintain the discipline of the army stands thereby convicted of the criminal waste of time which may be achieved in its discussion; but that a Liberal Premier, who had deliberately refused to renew the legislative precautions which, by his own confession, had coincided with unprecedented prosperity and tranquillity in Ireland, is in no sense responsible for the controversies which may be provoked in Parliament by his Bill depriving the Irish people of the ordinary rights of free citizens.

It is certainly with no wish to aggravate Mr. Gladstone's present difficulties that the great party now in opposition will approach the question of a reform in Parliamentary procedure. They have seen only too clearly, and too recently, how a conspiracy against Parliamentary government, developed by a handful of resolute and unscrupulous desperadoes, encouraged and stimulated by independent members—*i.e.*, by candidates for office in the next Administration—and excused, if not commended, by party leaders equally ungenerous and shortsighted, can be rendered an effectual method of bringing to a standstill the whole Parliamentary business of the Empire. No factious hindrance, no covert understanding with the enemies of Parliamentary government, need be apprehended by the existing Ministry on the part of their political opponents. The opportunity so earnestly desired, but sedulously declined, in the last Parliament has at last arrived. The Chamberlains and Mundellas, the Dilkes and Courtneys have now the most solid and conclusive reasons for effecting a substantial reform in the procedure of the House. The mere derelicts of Radicalism may, indeed, from time to time, as they flounder about, come aimlessly into collision with the Ministerial Armada. Mr. Dillwyn may chide and Mr. Rylands may chatter; but even they cannot be altogether impervious to the attractions so candidly urged by Lord Hartington on his Lancashire audience, when he pointed out the other day how the revolutionary programme could only be achieved by first gagging the House of Commons. It is not from politicians of this class that any strenuous or protracted resistance can under these, or, indeed, under any circumstances, be anticipated by a Liberal Ministry.

Let us hope, therefore, that practical and effectual reforms may be proposed and carried by the present Administration which would, from the reasons above indicated, have been entirely beyond the power of their predecessors in office.

It is essential to the fair discussion or effectual treatment of the various defects which are to be found in the existing procedure of the House of Commons that the Ministers who undertake to deal with them should possess the confidence, so far at least as this subject is concerned, of the bulk of the members of that House. Mr. Gladstone unhappily, as has been already shown, has not by his recent declarations done much to inspire this confidence. He has shown that while he is ready to suppress the utterances of a large minority of the Irish members upon a question of absolutely vital importance to the Irish people while he is in office, he has been no less willing to palliate offences of the most unabashed faction when they have served to embarrass a Government to which he has been opposed. People out of doors, who, like other lookers-on, see most of the game, cannot but think that Obstruction in Mr. Gladstone's eyes is only culpable when directed against himself, and that, like another distinguished theologian, he holds orthodoxy to be his "doxy" and heterodoxy to include everything which that "doxy" does not enforce. We shall, indeed, endeavour to hope that a couple of Sessions spent in controversy with Mr. Healy and the Messrs. O'Connor have taught him how impolitic as well as disingenuous was his apology for their forerunners in 1879. And the danger to be apprehended in his case is obviously the risk that the present swing of the pendulum many carry him just as far beyond the middle line of equity as his unlucky sophistry fell short of it when Sir Stafford Northcote was leader of the House.

If, however, Mr. Gladstone has not inspired absolute confidence as to the public spirit or prudence with which he may be expected to handle the very delicate structure of our Parliamentary liberties, his first lieutenant has most miserably contrived to make his task tenfold more arduous. Lord Hartington usually passes for a comparatively discreet politician. When a man of this sort makes a blunder it usually is one of almost prodigious magnitude. The *enfant terrible* of a Government is always a source of anxiety to his friends, but if he occupies, as he generally does, some humble post which enables his chief to profit from time to time by his almost irresponsible eccentricities, he may be kept about the premises as a creature not altogether without his advantages. But when the colleague who cannot be disavowed without a rupture of the Ministry deliberately admits to a public meeting that which if alleged by a political adversary would be attributed to malignant and baseless suspicion ; when that impression, which it must be the first aim of the Ministry to dispel, is emphatically enforced by its most stolid and least rhetorical representative, it must in all probability be impossible to obtain for the proposals thus disparaged by anticipation any attention more favourable than that which the captain of a merchantman bestows upon the suspicious vessel which, having suddenly hauled down the neutral colours previously

displayed, hoists the black flag with the death's head and cross-bones, and fires a pleasant shot of warning across his bows.

Lord Hartington has been good enough to inform us that the object which the Liberal majority in the House of Commons ought to have in view is not general but particular. The aim of the reform of Parliamentary procedure about to be attempted is not the relief of the House of Commons from disorder, from disgrace, and from impotence, but merely the enactment of certain political proposals enumerated by his lordship. If we had not greatly at heart, as all loyal subjects of the Crown have greatly at heart, a real simplification of our Parliamentary forms, we might be very grateful to the Secretary of State for India for an avowal which must paralyse the action of his colleagues on the only question which these ardent reformers seem to think of approaching in the coming Session. What we want is such a restraint upon the licence of individual members as may make ordinary legislation practicable. What the Cabinet wants, or at least says that it wants, is such a suppression of the right of speech of minorities as may make extraordinary legislation a mere registering of the decrees of an omnipotent Minister. The country which desires to have its business done thoroughly, carefully, and effectually, is disposed to regard the fondness with which ancient Parliamentarians cling to ancient forms as something not very far removed from the pedantry of Dryasdust. It is not for the constituencies, for the eager masses, to measure with a nice balance the value of some particular observance which constitutes in reality merely an isolated example of the spirit in which our ancestors sought to safeguard the liberty of debate. But whenever the people of these realms begin to understand that their readiness to dispense with obsolete formalities is being used as a means to substitute for the will of a free Parliament the dictation of an arbitrary Minister, farewell, at least for another generation, to all projects of reform of Parliamentary procedure.

Yet it will not be well to be too confident in the fidelity to be expected from the present House of Commons in representing the views of their fellow-countrymen out of doors. "The House of Commons is, and it may be hoped ever will continue to be, above and beyond all things a free assembly. If so, it must be content to pay the price of freedom." These are again Mr. Gladstone's words; and these at least reflect the abiding sentiment of the nation. We complain, and we protest, against the obstacles offered by existing procedure to the free effect which, after full discussion, should attend the expressed will of a Parliamentary majority. We cry aloud for a much more stringent and effectual method of curbing the insolence of individuals or the organised abuse of time-honoured privileges. But we will not submit to such a policy of subterfuge as seeks in our natural indignation the motive power for stifling free debate. Let the House of Commons regulate its procedure as it will, but

let it beware of any such concession to the requirements of a majority as shall leave the minority disabled from continuing discussion. This liberty of debate is the very essence of our Parliamentary system. Without it the House of Commons becomes only an inconvenient and cumbrous machinery for carrying out a policy which has been devised elsewhere. Any attempt to give to a majority that odious supremacy which has been denominated in other countries the *clôture* is simply high treason against the Constitutional liberties of the English people. The moment that this issue is fairly put before the constituencies, the verdict will be unmistakable. Arm your authorities with what powers you think fit to crush the frivolous or mischievous excesses of any member who abuses his privilege of debate; simplify, and, if need be, shorten the course of legislation upon Bills in general: this much will be willingly accorded to you; but the moment in which you propose to limit the right of minorities to discuss the measures supported by majorities, by the decision of those majorities themselves, you will have terminated the Parliamentary history of Britain, you will have destroyed the very *raison d'être* of the House of Commons itself.

One more consideration may deserve a moment's thought. What is called the Irish party is barely, even after two years' experience of the present Government, a majority of the Irish members. It is certainly a very small minority of the House of Commons taken altogether. It will not be difficult, in the event of the *clôture* being adopted, to legislate for Ireland as a general rule over the heads of this minority after they have been gagged by an obsequious rush of those gentlemen to whom "coercion is only a hateful incident." What will be the moral value of laws so enacted? What will be the practical effect of such legislation in Ireland itself? Will it not be that the world which now stands amazed at the forbearance of the Imperial Government in dealing with Irish disorder and Irish outrage will speedily come to realise that in the England of Mr. Gladstone Parliamentary forms may serve only to mask a hypocritical despotism, and that you had only to scratch the modern Russophile to find something more autocratic than the Tartar Autocrat? Difficult, well-nigh hopeless, as the task of governing Ireland has been made by the apostles of "Force no Remedy," it will be rendered desperate indeed by the policy of "Free Speech no Parliamentary Privilege." This is only one of the alarming results which must be developed by the policy now foreshadowed. Let us trust that the country will speak out in time to prevent its consummation.

SHAM FRIENDS OF THE FARMER.

When a body of men wake up one fine day and find themselves suddenly imbued with a burning interest in a subject of which they have hitherto been ignorant and careless, we may naturally suspect them of some hidden purpose. This is what happened to the Liberal party in 1879. Under the cloak of agricultural reform, a body of party politicians with strong partizan objects cast their eyes upon the British farmer and determined to use him for their own political purposes. Their scheme, however, could not even boast the quality of originality. It was begged, borrowed, or stolen, according to various readings of a curious transaction, from an Irish source ; and, as a matter of fact, the Farmers' Alliance, of which we deal, was first projected and founded by that ultra-active and bizarre personage, Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, the hero of a hundred Irish brawls in the House of Commons. In September of last year, Mr. O'Donnell vindicated, in a letter to the *Chamber of Agriculture Journal*, his right to be called the founder of the Farmers' Alliance. Moreover, he expressly admitted that his object was to form an electioneering organization for general purposes. To "smash up the solidity of the English county vote," and to enlist the farmer against the Conservative party in the general election then imminent—this was the principal object of the Farmers' Alliance as first conceived by its early champions, Messrs. O'Donnell, Blennerhasset, Barclay, James Howard, and W. E. Bear. An organ in the press was required, and the necessary lever for moving public opinion was supplied by Mr. Bear, editor of the *Mark Lane Express*. Such is the precise parentage of the Farmers' Alliance. It was the result of an Anglo-Irish combination to promote, not the interests of the farmer, but the political interests of the Radical party. It was, in fact, a caucus, with a policy of pseudo-agricultural reform as its professed object. If anything were required to prove this, it is to be found in the new types of agricultural champions which were to be found at the head of the Alliance after it was once started. Mr. O'Donnell, it is true, was promptly got rid of—evicted without any compensation for disturbance or permanent improvements, but in his stead we find (most strange apparitions) Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Peter Rylands, Mr. Jacob Bright, and Mr. Duncan McLaren posing as the friends of the farmers. Mr. Chamberlain, be it remembered, had in 1878 laboured unceasingly, night after night, to deprive the farmers' flocks and herds of protection against contagion. He denounced the Cattle Diseases Bill of the late Government as "one of the worst pieces of class legislation ;" and he divided the House of Commons against the proposal to compensate the owners of slaughtered cattle out of the general taxation of the country. Mr. Rylands, Mr. Jacob Bright, and Mr. McLaren supported Mr. Chamberlain in his attacks upon the Cattle Diseases Bill, the beneficial operation of which is triumphantly vindicated by the Royal Commissioners in their recent report. Such was the class of men who appeared prominently among the Parliamentary figureheads of the new association. After the general election of 1880 the following members of the new Parliament were

found to have been claimed by the *Mark Lane Express* during their candidature, as Farmers' Alliance representatives :—

COUNTY MEMBERS (14).

Name.	Constituency.	Occupation.
Mr. James Howard (L) *President*	...Bedfordshire	...Implement maker
Mr. J. W. Barclay (L) *Vice-President*	...Forfarshire	...Merchant, shipowner, farmer, and director of six joint-stock companies
Hon. T. C. Agar-Robartes (L)	...East Cornwall	...Son of landowner
Mr. Borlase (L)	...East Cornwall	...Small landowner
Mr. Marjoribanks (L)	...Berwickshire	...Barrister
Sir George Balfour (L)	...Kincardineshire	...Retired Indian General
Sir R. P. Blennerhasset (L)	...Kerry	...Irish landlord
Mr. R. P. Blennerhasset (L)	...Kerry	...Barrister
Sir D. Currie (L)	...Perthshire	...Shipowner
Mr. M. A. Bass (L)	...E. Staffordshire	...Brewer
Colonel Colthurst (L)	...Cork Co.	...Retired officer
Mr. E. L. Pemberton (C)	...E. Kent	...Landowner
Sir T. McClure (L)	...Londonderry Co.	...Retired merchant
Mr. Akers-Douglas (C)	...E. Kent	...Landowner

BOROUGH MEMBERS (24).

Mr. T. Earp (L)	...Newark	...Maltster and brewer
Sir D. Wedderburn, Bart. (L)	...Haddington Burghs	...Barrister
Mr. W. Fowler (L)	...Cambridge	...Retired banker
Mr. G. Palmer (L)	...Reading	...Biscuit manufacturer
Mr. J. Collings (L)	...Ipswich	...Retired merchant
Mr. P. A. Taylor (L)	...Leicester	...Politician
Mr. J. Pulley (L)	...Hereford	...Stockbroker
Mr. J. J. Colman (L)	...Norwich	...Merchant and mustard manufacturer
Mr. J. H. Tillett (L)	...Norwich	...Solicitor
Mr. B. Samuelson (L)	...Banbury	...Implement maker
Mr. J. Chamberlain (L)	...Birmingham	...Retired manufacturer
Mr. L. H. Courtney (L)	...Liskeard	...Barrister and professor
Mr. G. Courtauld (L)	...Maldon	...Manufacturer
Mr. T. B. Potter (L)	...Rochdale	...Retired merchant
Mr. A. H. Brown (L)	...Wenlock	...Retired officer
Mr. J. Cowen (L)	...Newcastle	...Newspaper proprietor
Mr. J. Cowan (L)	...Edinburgh	...Paper manufacturer
Dr. Cameron (L)	...Glasgow	...Newspaper proprietor
Mr. S. Morley (L)	...Bristol	..Wholesale hosier
Mr. Hollond (L)	...Brighton	...Barrister
Mr. L. Fry (L)	...Bristol	...Solicitor
Mr. P. Rylands (L)	...Burnley	..Iron master
Mr. Jacob Bright (L)	...Manchester	..Cotton spinner
Mr. W. H. James (L)	...Gateshead	...Son of landowner

The total number of Farmers' Alliance members in the list was 38, of whom only 14 were county members; but of these, no more than six represented English counties, while two of these gentlemen were the sole Conservatives in the list, and they have since seceded on becoming more closely acquainted with the organization. But the significance of the list of names does not consist only in the fact that they represent merely one faction in the political world. From an agricultural point of view, it is significant to notice the occupations of the gentlemen who were claimed at the commencement of the present Parliament as the newest champions and friends of the farmers. They are every-

thing *but* farmers. There is hardly an agriculturist, pure and simple, amongst the whole number. The rest are agricultural implement makers, brewers, bankers, barristers, merchants, manufacturers, newspaper proprietors, and politicians. These are the men who "run" the new politico-agricultural machine; some of whom, at the same time, derive profit in their various trades from the farmers, whom they pretend to patronise and protect.

But let us see what are the professed objects of the Farmers' Alliance, and what it has actually *done*. The programme contains a bundle of theoretical reforms dealing with the land laws of the country. It also aspires to follow the Irish Land Act, in practically giving fixity of tenure to tenants without requiring an equivalent from one party, or granting compensation to the other. It plays into the hands of the Manchester and Birmingham school of politicians, whose prime objects have ever been to destroy the bulwarks and undermine the foundation upon which agriculture has flourished for centuries in England. To create a deadly feud between landlord and tenant, and to divide the entire agricultural family into hostile sections—these are the selfish and unpatriotic objects of a small group of party politicians at a time when there is unparalleled depression in agricultural interests, and when the first and highest necessity is unity and concord between all classes.

The actions and behaviour in and out of the House of Commons of the representatives of the Farmers' Alliance prove these facts beyond all doubt:—

(1.) It was owing to the action of the Alliance that Mr. Clare Sewell Read, the earliest, ablest, and most upright champion of the tenant-farmer, was turned out of the House of Commons. The only reason was that he was a Conservative.

(2.) On March 22nd, 1881, Mr. Chaplin brought forward a motion calling attention to the serious outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease all over the country. He asked that no animals from countries where that disease was known to exist at the time should be permitted to land in this country under any circumstances whatever. What did the Farmers' Alliance do? Mr. James Howard, the chairman, and nineteen of the Alliance supporters in the House, offered the motion their strenuous opposition. (Mr. Akers-Douglas, a Conservative, was the only member of the Farmers' Alliance who voted with Mr. Chaplin.) Their opposition turned the scale in the division, the motion was lost, and the country has been ever since rendered liable to the further risk of imported disease.

(3.) Mr. Chaplin's Tenants' Compensation Bill was read a second time unanimously in 1881, although Mr. James Howard distinguished himself by speaking against it. It was reintroduced in the past Session. Mr. James Howard immediately blocked it in the hope of stopping its introduction. Luckily, in this he was disappointed.

(4.) In the Session of 1881 a Bill was brought in by Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Rodwell, and Mr. Cropper for the purpose of exempting machinery hired or borrowed by a farmer, and all stock agisted upon the farm, from the operation of the Law of Distress. The

Bill was approved by the agricultural press and the public, and there was no opposition except from Mr. Barclay, the vice-president of the Farmers' Alliance, who again "blocked" the Bill in the succeeding Session.

(5.) In fact, a prominent feature in the Farmers' Alliance is the complete abolition of the Law of Distress—a subject which was a leading question of discussion at the last election, and which has lately been inquired into by a Select Committee and by the Royal Commission. The reports of both bodies affirm the value and protection to the farmer of the Law of Distress with some modifications, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition (in the Committee) of the Farmers' Alliance representatives. The total abolition of the law would be merely an advantage to the tradesmen, the agricultural implement makers, the artificial manure makers, and other traders connected with agriculture, with whom the cry (merely an electioneering cry) originated.

(6.) But not only in purely agricultural matters have the Farmers' Alliance men proved themselves the positive enemies of the tenant-farmers. On the 28th March, 1881, Mr. Harcourt moved, "That in the opinion of this House it is expedient so to amend the Highways Act, 1878, that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates." Here was an opportunity for agricultural members to declare themselves unmistakably. It was virtually a question whether or not the demand should be granted for prompt financial relief from the growing cost of main roads. The result was as might be expected. It was only a week since the Farmers' Alliance representatives had defeated Mr. Chaplin's motion for the exclusion from English soil of foreign diseased cattle. The votes of the Alliance were again cast directly against the farmers' interests, the following having gone into the lobby against Mr. Harcourt, viz.:—Messrs. Agar-Robartes, Borlase, Sir G. Balfour, Sir R. Blennerhasset, Messrs. Marjoribanks, Jacob Bright, J. Chamberlain, J. Collings, L. Courtney, L. Fry, J. R. Hollond, W. H. James, G. Palmer, J. Pulley, P. Rylands, J. Tillett, J. Cowan and Sir D. Wedderburn. Here was a distinct local taxation division and the result was—for Mr. Harcourt, 145; against, 159. Once more the so-called friends of the farmer contributed to defeat a proposition intended and framed to relieve the agricultural classes throughout the country, and which, but for their opposition, would have been carried.

Such have been the origin, the object, and the acts of the Farmers' Alliance. Conceived by the Land League, fathered by Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, adopted by the Birmingham Caucus, and brought up by hand under the care of borough traders and city manufacturers, it has been from its birth an anti-agricultural, partizan-political organization. Let the agriculturists of England beware of this spurious imitation of Parliamentary championship. Its supporters have erected many platforms and spoken many speeches, but

"BY THEIR WORKS YE SHALL KNOW THEM."

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If a Session were important and memorable simply in respect of its legislative results, that of 1873 would be remembered only by its utterly negative character. Even in that respect, however, there would be little reason why the country should regret it. "Happy is the nation whose annals are dull;" and when a Radical Ministry is in office, that year is the most fortunate which is marked by the fewest inroads on the ancient institutions of the State. Time may be worse than merely wasted, and in comparison with the Sessions marked by the pestilent activity of a popularity-hunting, parsimony-mad Administration, a Session which is a sheer blank, on whose records is inscribed no successful attack on the efficiency of the services, the security of public order, the authority of the Constitution, and the sanctity of property, deserves to be regarded with satisfaction and remembered with thankfulness.

THE JUDICATURE BILL.—One only legislative achievement of the first order of consequence can be claimed for 1873; and that was not of the kind in which Liberal statesmen delight. It awakened no factious enthusiasm, appealed to no greedy or spiteful passions, secured no sectarian vote; it was a mere practical reform, though of more significance and value than any other Act carried during the ascendancy of the Liberals except Mr. Forster's Elementary Education Act; and like that great measure, its passage cannot be made matter of boast in after dinner speeches, or be claimed as a party triumph by those who are sadly in want of such consolation. It involved no party issue, it raised no party question, it was carried by no party vote. Its success depended from the first on the approval of the chief legal representative of the Opposition, and it owes as much to Lord Cairns's candid construction and friendly criticism—to his loyal support and considerate forbearance, as to the ability and influence of its author. Lord Selborne was a novice in the Upper House, and notwithstanding his high character and conciliatory temper, and his professional authority, rivalled only by that of Lord Cairns, had not had time to establish there a position comparable to that of his Conservative predecessor in office; and but for the aid of the latter, it is not unlikely that the criticism of Liberal landlords would have extinguished the one change of credit which this year has offered to the Liberal Ministry. But Lord Cairns knew that a thorough reform of the judicature was necessary; he had witnessed the failure of repeated attempts, and knew that the work could only be done by the consent of the professiona

representatives of both parties; he might disapprove much that the Chancellor proposed, but he evidently considered the present measure the best that the Liberals had yet propounded, and recognised the uncertainty of his own prospect of bringing in a better under circumstances that would give him a fair chance of carrying, especially as he could not but know that any measure proceeding from him, and likely to reflect honour upon a Tory Cabinet, would receive the bitter and unscrupulous opposition of Mr. Gladstone and his lay colleagues; and he therefore sacrificed all political and professional jealousies, and set himself to perfect and to carry his rival's work. He procured its reference to a Select Committee, whence it emerged much improved in efficiency; he induced the Peers to waive their judicial powers and when the Supreme Court of Judicature Bill left the Upper House, it provided, in the opinion of both the great judges who had helped to frame it, a single Court of First Instance almost adequate in strength to the duties which are notoriously too much for the many separate Courts at present existing, and a single Court of Appeal strong enough both in numbers and in dignity to deal with all appeals proceeding from the new High Court, from India and the Colonies. Scotch and Irish appeals were still left to the House of Lords; Ecclesiastical appeals were still left to the Privy Council, Lord Selborne having (with the consent, of course, of the Cabinet) decided from the first not to overload his Bill by touching either of these delicate subjects. The duty of the Government in the Lower House was clear. It ought to have sustained the compromises which had been accepted by its representatives in the Lords, and to have opposed any amendment inconsistent therewith. Instead of this, Mr. Gladstone and his legal advisers began by weakening the Court of First Instance by striking out the additions made to the Equity division after the fullest consideration; then degraded the Court of Appeal by reducing its salaries to the level of ordinary salaries in the Lower Court, and much below the level of the chief of that Court; so that judges whose services the State formally estimates at the lower rate will have to revise the decisions of those who are paid, and therefore ranked, as their equals, or even as their superiors. Besides this, in pursuit of the same petty parsimonious objects, they degraded the Chancellorship by making the pension contingent on service in the Court of Appeal for ten years; and to justify this measure, grossly insulted Lord Cairns and Lord Westbury for undertaking what they called "private business;" that is, arbitration on gigantic and complicated transactions, so utterly beyond the powers of any Court of Equity or Law that Parliament had to entrust the arbitrators with unlimited powers rather legislative than judicial, so important that Acts of Parliament were passed to regulate and render possible their solution.

What made the insult more preposterous and inexcusable was that the duties in question had been expressly imposed by Parliament on the two most eminent lawyers of judicial experience available ; so that they were rebuked for obeying the orders of the Legislature, and assuming functions which Parliament declined to entrust to any less considerable authorities. Lord Westbury was then unable to punish his assailants, who seem to have relied on his helplessness and on the admirable temper of Lord Cairns. The latter defended himself only by stating the facts, after which no Ministerial Peer dared offer an excuse for the outrage, or do more than stammer out a shamefaced assertion that the slanderers did not mean what they said.

THE QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.—The Commons, at the instance of Mr. Hardy, transferred Ecclesiastical Appeals from the Privy Council to the New Court ; and Mr. Bouverie seems to have thought that it was equally open to him to include the Irish and Scotch Appeals. Ministers ought to have known better—to have seen that this extension of a surrender of the privileges of the Peers, voluntarily made by them, if not a breach of privilege, was at any rate a violation of political comity. But they, to the general surprise, quietly accepted the amendment. It was open to Lord Cairns, had he wished to take advantage of his enemies' blunder, and would have been more strictly regular, to wait till the Bill returned to the Lords, and then to raise the question of privilege, in which case the measure must almost certainly have been dropped. Instead of this, he took the informal but generous course of warning the Ministry by an immediate notice of their error. Mr. Gladstone behaved with characteristic audacity of speech, and with that timidity of action he has generally displayed in presence of a formidable antagonist. He disputed the privilege claimed ; nay, spoke of the claim in terms which, considering that it was propounded by one of the greatest lawyers of the day, hardly became a layman, even though that layman was Prime Minister. But he proposed to conciliate the Lords by such a formal alteration of the clauses in question as would have placed on the records of the Commons a virtual admission of the claim. Mr. Disraeli pointed out that this course was altogether absurd, inasmuch as, even if the claim were sound, it has never been the usage of either House to recognize the privileges asserted by the other, save by forbearing to violate them ; and, thanks to his intervention, the Commons were spared the humiliation prepared for them by the leader of the House. The clauses were dropped, and the Bill finally passed without them.

This, such as it is, is the sole success of which Ministers can boast during the Session. The rest has been one succession of scrapes and humiliations, too numerous to be recapitulated. The chief of those

which require our notice may be severally described as the Alabama scrape, the Irish Education scrapes, the English Education failures, the Treasury scrapes, and the Ministerial squabbles.

THE ALABAMA SCRAPE.—The Alabama arbitration had ended, as everyone expected who had studied the meaning of the Three Rules and the Constitution of the Tribunal (foreign jurists differing from English in their view of all those points on which our case mainly rested, and on which, up to 1861, Americans had accepted and even exaggerated the English doctrine) in an award which, while it indirectly convicted the American Government of monstrous and extortionate pretensions, (a charge subsequently endorsed by Congress itself, which declares even the award to be in excess of the whole amount of tenable private claim) was formally adverse to England ; and it was so evident that the management of matters by our Foreign Office had materially contributed to this result that only the most discreet language and judicious bearing on the part of the Government could have rendered the issue otherwise than offensive to English pride. Moreover, the arbitrators had put upon the Rules an interpretation by which it was certain that America would not, when a neutral, abide, and which was equally intolerable to England—an interpretation only to be explained by the fact that no one of the three disinterested arbitrators represented a great commercial country, or a Power having colonies and transmarine possessions. Ministers contrived to make the award as odious, and their own relation to it as unpopular as possible. They sneered at the British arbitrator, who had pronounced a judgment which clearly set forth and logically enforced the Anglo-American theory of neutral obligations, and everyone understood that in doing so they were revenging themselves not on the Geneva arbitrator but on the British Chief Justice, for his protest against a judicial appointment which all England had condemned, and which had narrowly escaped the censure of Parliament. Then Mr. Glyn was so ill-advised as to speak of the indemnity as of a tribute paid to avert war—an insult to English pride such as Mr. Cushing himself would hardly have ventured. And finally it became apparent that Ministers had utterly neglected the practical aspect of the question. They treated the award as if our connection with it ended when the money was paid. Even when the bearing of the arbitrators' reasons upon our future position had been pointed out both by the Press and in Parliament, they actually thought that they had answered objectors when they observed (what everybody knew) that we were not formally bound by anything but the actual sentence. It was necessary for Mr. Hardy to remind them by a formal motion, that they had engaged to submit the Rules to foreign Powers,

and invite their concurrence, and that that concurrence would be given, if given at all, in the sense of the arbitrators' interpretations, which would thus become practically a rule of public law. Then at last ministers evaded the consequences of a series of blunders by promising to attach to any recommendation of the Rules a statement of the counts on which Great Britain declined to accept the Geneva interpretation. As it was plain that America might in turn put *her* construction on the Rules, this amounted to an admission that we had failed to obtain the one advantage promised by the framers of the Treaty of Washington, and purchased by our submission to be tried by *ex post facto* rules of law; viz., a code of neutral obligation precluding the escape of future Alabamas, and binding on America as well as on ourselves. However, as the mischief was past remedy, Ministers escaped the censure they had so well deserved.

THE FIRST IRISH SCRAPE.—Irish Education brought about the most serious scrape of the Session, and had very nearly entailed another scarcely less disastrous. From a very early period the more provident supporters of Mr. Gladstone had augured that the attack on the third branch of the Upas Tree would be fatal to them. Papists and Puritans might concur eagerly in despoiling the Irish Church, and need not quarrel over the spoliation of Irish landlords; but it was almost impossible that they should agree upon a scheme of Irish Education. The Romish hierarchy had long since declared that they would be content with nothing less than the endowment of a denominational Catholic university, free of State control though aided by State funds. Mr. Gladstone was "steeped to the lips in pledges" against Concurrent Endowment. And even if the Roman Catholic prelates should moderate their demands, or if, as seemed more probable, Mr. Gladstone should draw some distinction, satisfactory to his own ingenious conscience, between the endowment of a sectarian college and the endowment of a sectarian priesthood, it was scarcely conceivable that any scheme which could content the Roman Episcopate would be endurable to the Scotch Presbyterians, the English Nonconformists, the Secularists in the House of Commons, or the friends of academic education. Desertion, from one side or another, seemed inevitable. Nevertheless, when Mr. Gladstone introduced his plan, there was a moment of hope: the scheme seemed so very clever and plausible—too clever by half, said some distrustful observers. An unsectarian university was provided to satisfy the Protestants and Secularists, to which, for the contentment of Rome and Dr. Cullen, sectarian colleges, and primarily theirs, were to be affiliated. University endowments were to be nominally open to all, as the former desired; but by the exclusion of the holders of emolu-

ments in Trinity or the Queen's Colleges, all the more formidable Protestant competitors were removed, and the scholarships and fellowships of the University secured to the Roman Catholic seminaries, if only they could produce candidates capable of beating the beaten horses of Trinity.

At first the Bill seemed likely to pass. But by-and-bye it appeared, on closer enquiry, that too much had been done for the Roman Catholics, and yet too little. Such openings were left for making the governing council of the university distinctly Catholic that Protestants refused to go on until the names of the proposed nominees of Government were known, and security taken that they should not be swamped by the representatives of petty Roman Catholic schools. The excision of modern history and philosophy from the list of University studies disgusted all the friends of learning, even among the Catholics. Mr. Fawcett denounced with overwhelming logic and scathing indignation the provisions for punishing any professor who should offend the religious convictions of any student. But a more fatal difficulty remained. In explaining his Bill, the Prime Minister had stated that he had not consulted any of the parties concerned—neither the existing University of Dublin nor the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Of course this statement was true in the sense in which such statements are accepted from Ministerial lips; but everyone believed that Dr. Manning had been consulted, and had vouched for his Irish brethren. However that might be, Mr. Gladstone's assertion shut his own mouth, and opened those of the Irish hierarchy. They were free to repudiate any understanding, and stand out for higher terms; and they did so. Before the second reading, it was known that they had denounced the Bill. It remained for Ministers to try to conciliate their Protestant supporters by pledging themselves to satisfy their scruples about the Council, and to abandon the so-called gagging clauses: and as soon as they did this, the Irish Members—who wanted an excuse for voting according to the orders of Dr. Cullen—turned upon the Government, as they would have done in any case, and the Bill was doomed. Mr. Gladstone's strangely assorted majority of 90 melted like snow; and after Mr. Bourke's Amendment had been negatived, and when the question was put "That this Bill be now read a second time," it was negatived by 287 to 284. The next day the Ministry resigned.

THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS.—This was on the 12th ofMarch; and the next week was occupied in the discussion incident to what is called in political slang a Ministerial Crisis. Mr. Disraeli was summoned by the Queen, and at once and decisively informed Her Majesty that he was not prepared to undertake business of the Government in the present House of Commons, and that,

considering the kind of treatment which, as he knew by experience, he had to expect from an Opposition majority, he was not even able to wind up the Session with a view to a dissolution. The Queen communicated this reply to Mr. Gladstone, who ought at once to have resumed office. Instead of doing so, he addressed to Her Majesty a long lecture on the impropriety and unconstitutionality of the conduct of an Opposition which presumed to beat a Government which it was not ready to succeed, thus making his Sovereign the recipient of his complaints against his rival. Mr. Disraeli had no difficulty in refuting the absurd doctrine of Mr. Gladstone, and enquired, in language which would have been stinging indeed had not the latter interposed the shield of royalty between himself and the rebuke he deserved, what he could have done, or what advantage would have accrued from any postponement of his decisive refusal, after he and all his former colleagues agreed that they could not take office, even for a few months, with the actual House of Commons? Some of those organs which profess to understand Mr. Gladstone's meaning better than he does himself, excused the apparent folly and absurdity of his conduct by suggesting that he meant to intimate that if Mr. Disraeli could not deal with the present House of Commons, Lord Derby might. It is a sufficient answer to this absurd insinuation that Lord Derby was one of those colleagues who declined even to assist Mr. Disraeli in such an attempt, and that the idea of a peer undertaking to manage a hostile House of Commons when the ablest of his friends in that House declines to make the attempt is simply preposterous. We need not enter, at the challenge of Liberals, into a discussion of supposed rivalries which we know to be wholly unreal. Mr. Gladstone had treated the Queen so disrespectfully as to go off into the country while thus attacking Mr. Disraeli through her; and to his unwarrantable proceedings was owing all the delay that took place before he and his colleagues resumed office. That they did so reluctantly, that their attempt to force office on Mr. Disraeli was quite sincere, we have no doubt. Mr. Gladstone is believed to be heartily disgusted and weary of office, and his health and spirits are giving way. And he, in common with the rest of the Ministry, must have felt that the general objections to the resumption of office after defeat, which he stated so clearly, applied to them with especial force. The rest of the Session has been one long comment on the text which Mr. Gladstone then supplied. The discipline of the party is broken up, its union dissolved; the authority of the chiefs annihilated; the influence of the Whip had disappeared even before the Whip himself was removed to another and a quieter place. The House of Commons is "out of hand," and nothing can restore order but a dissolution. Yet a disso-

lution is so sure to scatter to the winds the great majority which still professes a nominal allegiance to Mr. Gladstone that he is under an irresistible pressure to postpone it to the last possible moment. An appeal to the country would at the worst give him a welcome dismissal from a situation in which he has failed more completely than the public are generally aware ; but to his party it means rout and ruin, ignominious and irretrievable.

MR. FAWCETT'S BILL.—The first consequence of the Ministerial defeat was that Mr. Fawcett pressed his Bill for the remodelling of Dublin University on old-fashioned Radical principles—a scheme intended not to conciliate Ultramontane prelates, but to give fair play to Catholic laymen, and to laymen of every creed, or of no creed whatever. Mr. Gladstone was at first furious at Mr. Fawcett's presumption in attempting to take such a business out of the hands of the Government ; but as it became painfully apparent that those hands were paralysed, and must drop any business in which opposition was to be feared, his more prudent colleagues interfered and arranged a compromise, in which the interests of the University and the claims of Presbyterians and Roman Catholics were postponed to the necessity of preserving some semblance of Ministerial dignity. Mr. Fawcett was allowed to abolish tests, but forbidden to meddle with the government of the University, which thus retains not only the features which Mr. Gladstone had pronounced intolerable, but those which the authorities themselves were prepared to abandon. It was loudly proclaimed, of course, that this arrangement was only temporary, and was made expressly to leave the matter open to be dealt with in a future Session by the Ministry. But we believe that no one now dreams that a Liberal Premier will, for twenty years to come, choose to burn his fingers at the fire which scorched Mr. Gladstone's so severely ; so that the result of the long promised measure of Irish University reform is to give to the existing constitution of Trinity a lease of life prolonged for another generation after all parties had agreed to remodel it. The progress of Mr. Fawcett's Bill was marked by only one incident of any interest. Two Irish members proposed to affiliate to the unreformed University that Roman Catholic college which had refused affiliation on equal terms to the University reconstituted in Roman interests. The thoroughly Irish nature of this proposal amused and perplexed the House, at the same time that it illustrated the peculiar character of the Irish political mind, and its absolute incomprehensibility by English intellects. Of course the affiliation, giving to Roman Catholic students a place in the University, and bringing University examinations to test the quality of Roman Catholic education, would have been a great advantage to everybody except the episcopal

rulers of the college ; but as it had just been proved that those rulers absolutely commanded the Roman Catholic vote, it was absurd to propose what they had already peremptorily rejected ; and only nine gentlemen were found to support the mover of the amendment.

THE SECOND IRISH SCRAPE.—Another Irish row was destined seriously to endanger the helpless Cabinet. Father O'Keeffe, a most active Irish priest, and the manager of five schools, which he had brought into a state of rare efficiency, quarrelled with his bishop, and was suspended by Dr. Cullen, not in canonical course, but by virtue of irregular and extraordinary powers derived from the Pope. Hereupon it was proposed that the Education Board should cease to recognise him as manager of the schools ; and this proposal was carried by one vote ; the Lord Chancellor, who might have to decide on the legality of Dr. Cullen's conduct (the matter having already been brought into the Courts) voting in the majority and thus prejudging the validity of the suspension. What was worse, the motion was carried by the vote of Mr. O'Hagan, the Chancellor's near relative, and counsel for Dr. Cullen. The gross indecency of this proceeding left the Cullenites clearly in the wrong, all rules and precedents notwithstanding. And as Mr. O'Keeffe retained possession of the schools, the effect of the action of the Board was not to remove him, but to deprive the masters of their salaries, and injure the schools. The affair was taken up by Mr. Bouverie in the House of Commons ; and the Government, not daring to defend the Irish Chancellor, managed by delays and postponements, and finally by asking for a Committee, to evade a vote of censure until, in the last days of the Session, Mr. Bouverie consented to accept the amendment of one of the rules of the Board, under which Mr. O'Keeffe's summary treatment had been vindicated, as a sufficient atonement. We expect to hear more of the matter, whatever the Irish Courts may decide as to the validity of powers received from the Bishop of Rome by a subject of the Queen, or the binding nature of an engagemement which deprives Her Majesty's subjects of the right to appeal for the protection of their personal character to Her Majesty in her courts of law.

MR. FORSTER'S FAILURES.—English Education was almost as dangerous ground as Irish to a Government which had lost its Parliamentary prestige and its authority over its followers. On the one side of the Channel it had to reckon with the arrogant pretensions of Ultramontane priests ; on the other with the no less impracticable pretensions of Nonconformist Irreconcilables ; while in either case submission was sure to entail a defeat at the hands of the Conservatives and Moderates, who on

education, as on some other subjects, are the real representatives of Liberal ideas, and the inheritors of Liberal tradition. Mr. Forster had been harassed from the first by the venomous and intractable hostility of the Dissenters to the 25th clause of the Act of 1870, under which the children of indigent parents were to be educated at the expense of the School Boards at such schools as their parents might prefer. Mr. Dixon had gone so far as openly to declare that the conscience of the ratepayer was to be preferred to that of the poor man ; the scruple of the pocket, which restrains a Dissenter from contributing through the *rates* (though not through the *taxes*) to the secular teaching given in Church schools, of more account than the religious scruple of the parent who objects to have his children brought up "as heathens" in a secular school. And where the Dissenters were strong they had, in utter disregard of law and duty, refused to execute this clause ; and in one case a town council went so far as to attempt to refuse payment of the School-rate demanded under the Act, for fear some small fraction thereof should be applied to the education of indigent children in religious schools. To get rid of such difficulties, and do away with a constant source of sectarian contests, Mr. Forster proposed in his Education Act Amendment Bill to transfer the duty of paying school fees for the indigent from the School Boards to the Guardians of the poor ; a suggestion originally made by Mr. W. H. Smith, and one which might have been tolerated as a basis of compromise, though open to strong objections from the Conservative standpoint as tending to pauperise those who are struggling against pauperism, and as unjust to the parent, who may be compelled to send his child to school by one power, while another, under Dissenting influence, refuses him the means of doing so. It was said, indeed, that no choice was to be left to the Guardians ; but surely a Dissenter could violate the law, or evade it, just as well in the capacity of Guardian as in that of member of a School Board ? However, the matter was settled by the peremptory refusal of the Dissenters to accept an arrangement which left just as it was the theory of a grievance which had never been more than theoretical, and Mr. Forster was compelled to drop this part of his measure, which thereupon ceased to be in any sense a measure of conciliation. In dropping it, he vindicated the paramount rights of the parental conscience in a speech which the champions of the pocket conscience will never forgive ; and the effect of their resentment has been felt at every subsequent election. A bill to renew the Endowed Schools Commission elicited general condemnation of the manner in which that Board had exercised its powers ; of the signal violation of every promise given by the Ministry in passing the original Act ; of the reckless theories avowed by Lord Lyttelton, and tending to wholesale plunder of charities ; and of the gross impropriety of appointing

a knot of extreme partisans to perform a judicial duty, and carry out a measure of reform which, according to distinct understanding, was to be applied only in cases of obvious abuse and mismanagement, not on a general theory of confiscation. Finally, after a general concert of censure, the powers of the Commissioners were renewed for a single year ; a result almost equivalent, under the circumstances, to a formal condemnation. Mr. Forster's failures were dignified and not discreditable, but still constitute an addition to the sum total of disaster and defeat incurred by his colleagues.

MR. STANSFELD'S COLLAPSE.—Mr. Stansfeld, compelled by the previous pledges of the Government, and the fear of Sir Massey Lopes, undertook to deal with the question of local taxation, and began in a manner which, by its strange contrast with the violent and provocative scheme of Mr. Goschen, spoke eloquently of the humiliation and weakness that had fallen on the Government. All proposals relative to local government were postponed to a future date, on the plea that it was essential first to re-adjust parochial and union to accord with county boundaries ; a necessity which Mr. Goschen had never perceived, and which, however welcome to the Government in the days of its helplessness, would never have been allowed to check its progress in the days of its strength. The plan for transferring to landlords a part of the taxes they now pay through their tenants, and thus rating them twice over, which was so large a part of Mr. Goschen's bid for popularity, was dropped altogether. Mr. Stansfeld undertook merely to deal with exemption, correct assessments, and consolidated rates. The two last measures perished in the annual massacre of the innocents. The first was discussed sufficiently to shew that the Government had never considered the practical operation of their proposals for rating mines and woodlands, was altered and amended till it lost the merit of that formal consistency which was its only charm, was sent up to the Lords at such a time and in such a state that its passage could not have been seriously contemplated even by Mr. Stansfeld himself, and was by them summarily extinguished, with no more contempt than was necessarily attached to such a piece of blundering patchwork.

MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S MESS.—Sir John Coleridge had his own mess, a little more ridiculous and a little less serious than any of the others. He introduced a bill to remodel our whole jury system; to revolutionise the oldest and most familiar part of the Constitution ; to substitute seven jurors for twelve and to abolish the requirement of unanimity, (except in particular cases, so that it would require five jurors to convict a man of

burglary, but twelve to find him guilty of sedition), and to enact that in future a certain number of special jurors should sit on every common jury. Having dragged his measure through several languid and contemptuous debates, he suddenly admitted that nobody seemed to like the proposed revolution, and dropped all these important clauses with as little compunction as if they had related only to the protection of miners' or of seamens' lives. After this nobody cared either to press or to oppose the Bill, and it disappeared in the general ruin of Ministerial legislation—probably not twenty Members of Parliament know how or when.

THE TREASURY MESSES.—Finally, there has been a series of Administrative scrapes which have occupied a considerable share of the attention of Parliament. The origin of these, or rather, the reason why they were not impossible, is probably to be sought in the bad understanding which has prevailed between the Ministers and the permanent chiefs of the Civil Service. As the Liberals have held office for thirty five years out of the last forty-three, it follows that five-sixths of these are of their nomination, and can have no Tory prejudices ; and it has always been a point of honour with them to give a loyal assistance to every Minister, in so much that even the private secretaries are transferred from one Minister to his successor and inveterate foe, and work equally well for either. Ministers have rarely, on first entering office, any acquaintance with the business they have to transact ; they are fully occupied by Parliamentary and poltical duties, and are wont to maintain confidential relations with the chiefs of departments, who are generally their intellectual and often their social equals, and to trust to them for guidance in the working of their offices. Otherwise, government by Parliamentary chiefs would be impracticable. But Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues came into office after pledging themselves to retrenchment, and to the doctrine that the departments were nests of jobbery—though their party has been almost continuously in office for twenty-seven years, and is therefore responsible for the condition of the Service. They therefore began by treating the Civil Service with jealous hostility and insulting suspicion ; Mr. Baxter, for example, going so far as to impute general corruption to his then department, the Admiralty, which, as he dared not attempt to prove, we may justly treat as a wanton slander. The heads of departments found themselves kept at arm's length, and their suggestions set aside, and of course ceased to offer them. Ministers would manage matters their own way. The Treasury would intermeddle in everything and overrule everybody. So began quarrels and blunders ; and

then came Parliamentary enquiries and Committees of Investigation. One of these found that Mr. Lowe had forced the competitive system upon the Service with a violent recklessness which had disgusted and alienated the experienced chiefs—all of whom protested against it—and had rendered the lower clerks and writers hopeless and useless by denying them promotion and reward. Another report shows that, while meddling with every petty detail, from the amount of pension to the purchase of a broom, the Treasury (Messrs. Lowe and Baxter as political chiefs, and their favourite, Mr. Lingen, as the permanent Secretary) had neglected their gravest duties; Mr. Lowe had taken the business of his colleagues out of their hands and neglected it; and Mr. Scudamore, head of the Telegraph Department, had been allowed to manage his office and deal with the Treasury without reference to his superior at the Post Office, and had spent several hundred thousand pounds without Parliamentary authority on his own mere motion, providing the money by using the Post Office and Savings Bank receipts, which should have been paid over to the Exchequer and to the National Debt office. Mr. Lowe had either connived at or overlooked his proceedings, it is impossible to say which; and Mr. Monsell, as Postmaster General, had been content to draw his salary and know nothing about the working of his department. Again, in the case of the arrangements for conveying the mails to Zanzibar, Mr. Lowe had taken the business out of the hands of the Postmaster General and the Secretary to the Treasury, and had given one company £27,000 for work which another was willing to do for £16,500, and for which the former finally accepted £20,000. A whole series of irregularities and omissions (not, of course, dishonest, but grossly careless) had been committed in regard to this transaction. Then Mr. Lowe altered, of his own authority, an estimate of a public work sent in by Mr. Ayrton, increasing largely both the transaction and the cost; and Mr. Ayrton publicly, in Parliament, repudiated all responsibility for the vote proposed in his name.

SHUFFLING THE CARDS.—There never was known, since Parliament and Government began, a series of blunders, breaches of rule, and discourtesies so gross and so unnecessary; and though Parliament, at the very close of the Session, forbore to vote an actual censure, Mr. Gladstone found it impossible to go on without taking measures to prevent a recurrence of such scandals. Mr. Baxter resigned the moment that Parliament was prorogued, declaring that he could endure no longer the slights put on him by Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Lowe, the worst Chancellor of the Exchequer we have had since Lord Halifax quitted the office, has been transferred to the Home Secretaryship, where his courtesies are

likely to delight the county magistrates and borough corporations as much as they recently delighted the Civil Service, or, a few years ago, the clergy and school managers. Mr. Bruce, after an administration which has stamped him the weakest of Home Secretaries, succeeds Lord Ripon as the President of the Council, and will, no doubt, discharge the nominal duties of that post as ably as the late negotiator of the Treaty of Washington. The Treasury is reconstructed, Mr. Dodson taking the Financial Secretaryship, for which no Liberal is more competent, and Lord F. Cavendish, late Private Secretary to the Premier, being appointed to assist his chief as a Lord of the Treasury; Mr. Gladstone himself resuming his old and favourite office, and combining the duties of Finance Minister with those of the Premiership. Mr. Bright, instead of Mr. Childers, will take the Chancellorship of the Duchy, and will doubtless be fitter than his more industrious predecessor for a place in which there is little or nothing to do. Whether his reputation, damaged only by rash and offensive speeches, will serve to shelter that of his colleagues, discredited by rash and offensive acts, time will shew.

THE PRESENT SITUATION.—In the meantime, Ministers are reduced to the lowest ebb of weakness, deserted by nearly every respectable organ, beaten at every election, defied by a mutinous Parliament which they cannot dissolve, and despised by constituencies to which they dare not appeal. Such is the result of the Session of 1873; and if this Parliament is really to meet again, it can only be to put the finishing stroke to the existence of an Administration which, having lost all that makes official existence worth having—honour, credit, power, dignity, and even hope—yet shrinks from suicide, and looks about in every direction for some new nostrum which may revive its exhausted strength, and prolong its life for another term of mischief and destruction, of failure and disgrace.

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Mr. GLADSTONE'S

FOREIGN POLICY.

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It is a favourite practice of the Liberals to taunt their opponents with having no policy of their own, but occupying themselves only in contradicting that of the Government. "What is your policy?" they say. "Is it anything but opposition to Mr. Gladstone, propose what he may?" And something may always be gained by such a taunt, when thrown at a party in opposition. Such a party—especially when in a minority of a hundred in the House of Commons—has no opportunity of developing a policy. Principles all statesmen must have; and Liberals are too discreet to ask us for our principles. It would not be convenient to them to be asked for their own. On some it would entail a dangerous avowal; on others, the labour of a difficult inquiry. But if we were to inquire in detail after their policy, the question might be troublesome to answer.

What is the policy of the Liberal party as a whole on such questions as Education, the Church of England, landed property? What is the common view of Mr. Forster and Mr. Dixon on the choice between secular and religious education? What is the policy of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Miall in regard to the Church of England? What do the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Auberon Herbert think of primogeniture and the power of settlement? What is the common faith of Lord Granville and Sir C. Dilke as regards loyalty to the Crown and the Constitution? On what have the Duke of Argyll and Mr. Peter Taylor agreed as the policy of the party towards the House of Lords? Nay, have the Lord Chancellor and the Solicitor-General a joint purpose in respect to Law Reform? On any one of the paramount issues of the day—issues not of detailed practice, but of general principle, what policy can the Liberals, as a party, be said to have, save to take that course, be it what it may, which will tend to keep Mr. Gladstone in or turn Mr. Disraeli out?

But it is in Foreign Affairs that a policy—a consistent course of conduct directed to a well-ascertained, definite, determined purpose, is most essential. It is not possible there to pursue a course of non-committal until the final issue is forced upon you: for the final issue depends on a hundred questions on which decisions must be taken from day to day. When it comes up, the course you must take will have been long ago determined by your previous actions: you cannot then consider the whole question and decide freely, for you have to deal with allies, opponents, and neutrals, who have been working all along in view of that which has come

upon you suddenly, and your relations to each of whom are fixed by the actions or omissions of bygone years. Say it is the question of the Turkish frontier. If you postpone making up your mind on that till Russia is ready again to occupy the Principalities, it will be too late for effective resistance; for Russia will not take that step till Austria is bought off or paralysed. The question is really involved in every issue that affects the strength of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And an English Minister who has not made up his mind as to the defence of the Danubian Principalities will find the matter taken out of his hands by some previous catastrophe in Austria, which he has passed over as not intimately concerning England. So, if we mean to hold India at any cost, we must have determined whether we will allow Russia to obtain gradual possession of Persia and of Asia Minor, or France of Egypt. And so a Minister who has not definitively made up his mind what he desires in regard to the great interests of England in Europe, Asia, and America, and what sacrifices he will make to achieve his desire, will find when those interests are really attacked that their fate has been settled by the settlement of questions in which he has taken no active part, not because he did not dimly appreciate their ultimate bearing on our interest, but because, not having formed a definite estimate of the value and a definite policy as to the maintenance of those interests, he has naturally preferred in each case the more convenient course of non-intervention and concession. And thus a Minister, who has by no means made up his mind to let our Empire go, or to sacrifice the European outworks of our domestic security, will betray both the one and the other for want of a policy, and sacrifice all that might be retained by vigour without gaining even such miserable advantages of economy and quiet as might be secured by a deliberate policy of inaction and submission.

Now a careful observation of the conduct and language of the Liberal Ministry during Mr. Gladstone's term of office, and indeed, for some time before that, ever since the reins began to be loosened in Lord Palmerston's failing hands, convince us that they have nothing that deserves the name of a foreign policy; no fixed conviction, no resolute purpose, no principle to which they will cling at all hazards, no intent so firm that nothing can induce them to forego it, even in regard to the most vital interests of England. They have not made up their minds whether the Colonies are to be regarded as an integral part of the Empire, or as an excrescence of which it would be an advantage to get rid; whether they are a precious possession, to be held at any cost save, perhaps, that of a desperate civil war, or an encumbrance which we may not instantly and rudely shake off, but which we should loosen by degrees, and persuade, if possible, to fall off of its own accord. On this point Conservatives have no doubt; they would fight for Canada as

for Kent, for Australia as for Ireland. Many Liberals avow their wish to get rid of Canada, because it would cost so much to defend her against the United States (for the alleged impossibility merely means, as the late Charles Buxton says, "impossibility" always means, an extravagant cost). And it is impossible to look at the conduct of the Ministry in the late negotiations with America without seeing that if they did not hold the latter view, at least, they had no grasp of the former; they did not struggle for Canadian interests and Canadian rights as they would have struggled for those of England.

So, again, we are compelled to doubt whether they have any definite policy in regard to the retention of India; that is to say, they do not seem to have made up their minds whether our Empire there is to be held at the point of the sword as long as we retain our place among nations, or whether it is an accident—a temporary trust which we cannot long hold, and for which, therefore, it is not worth while to make any great sacrifices, or incur any very serious risk. So with the intimately allied subject, the "Eastern Question" proper. They have not made up their mind to let Turkey fall; they have not made up their mind to uphold her at all hazards; and accordingly they uphold her so long as they can do it easily, and, so soon as it becomes difficult, drop her without repugnance. So with regard to the maintenance of our European position and the defence of Belgium and Holland. We maintain an army whose place, if it be intended merely to defend our shores, would be effectively and cheaply replaced by doubling our navy; but we do not maintain an army capable of taking part in the defence of those Continental fortresses which are the real outworks of London; because the party which has been dominant for the last twenty years has never known whether it meant to defend England on the plains of the Netherlands or on the shores of Sussex.

Not knowing exactly what they intend in the end, they are always governed by the convenience of the moment; not having in view a purpose which they mean to effect at any necessary cost, they adopt in each individual case the course most convenient to their immediate interest; that is always the course of non-interference. And thus, as on a memorable occasion we drifted into war, we drift now into a policy of peace at any price, whose natural and inevitable end—if we are not to surrender the ultimate objects of policy as we are surrendering one by one its mediate purposes—must be war at every disadvantage; war without allies, without preparation, and almost without hope; war not for the road to India, but for India with the roads all in hostile hands; war not for an Oregon frontier, but for British America; war not for Belgian fortresses, but for English homes. That war is, of course, far distant; probably none of us may live to see it; but

to such a war the administration of a Government without a foreign policy inevitably, however gradually, leads.

Look at the negotiations, one by one, in which our Liberal Ministers have been involved. Take first the biggest and noisiest, the Alabama negotiation, as it was called, though it embraced very much more than the Alabama claims. Can anything be more obvious than that throughout that miserable bungle there was nothing that deserved the name of a policy; no definite purpose except to come to terms at any rate? We had claims on America, and America had claims on us. She complained that vessels had sailed secretly and by stealth from English ports to prey on American commerce. Well, if it was so, there were American precedents in abundance; there were authorities to shew that no recognised law of nations had been broken so long as the ships left our ports unarmed; above all, there was the repeated and almost offensive assertion of that doctrine by every American Government, against us, against Spain, and against Portugal. We, on the other hand, had a claim against America. We complained, on behalf of Canada, that in open day, and after ample discussion of their intentions in the newspapers, bodies of men had been armed and drilled and organised in American cities, under the eyes of the police, and had marched across the frontier, unmolested, to wage a war of piracy, arson, and assassination in Canada. Every incident of the two cases contributed to excuse our offence and to heighten that of the American Government. An impartial judge might well have held our claim good and the American bad; a candid friend would probably have proposed to set one off against the other, or to submit them both to the same arbitration: what no man, who regarded either the substance or the form of justice, could have proposed was to give the American claim preference over ours; to treat the escapade of the Alabama and her successors as a worse or more serious offence than the Fenian invasion of Canada.

But the American negotiators went further than this. They insisted on their complaint, and they refused to listen to ours. There seemed but one course open; to break off the negotiation and to appeal with confidence to the public opinion of Europe and to the conscience of the world. But our Government was bent on coming to terms, no matter what; and it actually agreed to withdraw our stronger, clearer, more righteous claim altogether, and allow the weaker and more dubious claim of the United States to be referred to arbitration! Nay, more, after the Americans had thus carried the matter with a high hand, refused to entertain a claim obviously as well entitled to be referred to an arbitrator as theirs, and extorted submission to this arrogant injustice, Her Majesty's Government went out of their way to tender an apology for the escape of the Alabama, while withdrawing their demand for reparation on account of the

Fenian piracies ! Only one excuse can be offered for either party. With an amazing fatuity, after the Fenian banditti had been recruited, organised, mustered on American soil, and marched with the full cognizance of the American Government to rob Canadian farmers, burn Canadian homesteads, and shoot Canadian volunteers, the British Ministry *telegraphed thanks* to Washington for arresting and disarming some of the fugitive assassins whom the Canadians had routed, and who took refuge under American protection ! That preposterous exhibition of gratitude, it is said, hampered them in their demand for reparation on account of the neglect of America to repress the crime in its outset. Probably enough : but what can be said for the Government that was capable of giving thanks on such grounds ?

With almost equal recklessness the Canadian fisheries were sacrificed. Their value was enormous. They were British property in just as exclusive a sense as the oyster-beds of our shores, or the salmon of our rivers—as our corn-fields or our hop-gardens. American seamen have no more right to come within the three miles line, than to fell Canadian timber, or trap beaver in the Hudson's Bay territory ; and every load of fish they take is so much taken from the lawful owners. So valuable were these fisheries that Canada had been able to make admission to them the price of a treaty of free trade with the United States ; and when that treaty was abrogated hoped through them to be able to extort another. Free trade with the United States is much more to Canada than our trade with France to Yorkshire ; what Minister would have dared to give away without equivalent a property through which Yorkshire could purchase a Commercial Treaty with France ? Yet these fisheries were *given away*. The pretended equivalent is purely delusive. Admission to American fisheries—to which no Colonist ever cared to be admitted, or ever will go, is affirmed by the Americans to be a full indemity ; and a Commission is to decide whether any further price is to be paid ! What Minister would have dared to treat in this manner a people of four millions represented in the Imperial Parliament ? What Minister, anxious to do justice to the Colonies and to retain their allegiance, would have so forcibly reminded them that they were not represented there ? True, a Canadian Minister was on the Commission of negotiators. But that Commission took its ideas from Lord Granville ; and what could a Canadian Minister do against colleagues of Imperial authority, when once they had shewn their willingness to concede the American demands ? He knew that Canada, unsupported by [the] Imperial Government, must yield ; he knew that America knew it ; and it was useless for him to stand out. Had Lord Granville had clearly before his eyes the supreme object of satisfying Canada and retaining her allegiance, as paramount to all fancied necessity of conciliating America, he could never have so acted. But he had no strong conviction on the former point, the latter was

forcibly present to his mind ; and, of course, he sacrificed the indistinct to the distinct, the great object on which he was uncertain, to the little object in which he was deeply interested. When he and his colleagues came to reflect, they were so well aware that Canada had been unfairly treated that they departed from a prime principle of their parsimonious creed, and consented to give Canada a guarantee of upwards of two millions for a railway loan, in order to bribe her into assenting to the Treaty.

The San Juan question was simply abandoned, the English Government consenting to confine the reference in such a manner as to make it almost impossible for the German Emperor to decide except in favour of America. For there was evidence to shew that the Channel proposed by England was unknown at the time when the Treaty under which the dispute arose was framed ; the true intermediate Channel was excluded by the terms of the reference ; and thus America secured a decision in her favour before she went to arbitration.

The same thing occurred in the Alabama arbitration, and that at more than one point. First of the Indirect Claims—claims that we should reimburse America, not only for the actual damage done by the Alabama and her successors, but for the encouragement we had given to the Confederates, and the consequent prolongation of the war. Our negotiators thought they had barred these claims ; our Government thought so ; and it proved that they had been completely overreached. They were warned of their blunder as soon as the terms of the Treaty became known in Parliament ; they replied that the claims were certainly barred ; and behold, as soon as the American case came out, the claims re-appeared in all their monstrosity. It would seem that again Lord Granville had no clear purpose in his mind, for he remained silent till Parliament was about to meet, and till the Press had discussed the matter *usque ad nauseam* and determined for him the course he was to pursue. Only just in time to escape a vote in Parliament, which would have taken the decision out of his hands, did he even notify to the American Government the existence of so grave a discrepancy between their view and ours of the meaning of the terms of arbitration. And if, through the long negotiations which followed, he was kept tolerably true to the British standpoint, those who watched their tedious course can hardly doubt that this was due rather to the vigilant interposition of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, and to the jealous temper of Parliament, than to any native firmness of his own.

Again, as to the Three Rules. The American Government has prevailed that the case to be referred to the arbitrators should be governed not by the law of nations as it stood at the time when the acts impugned were committed, but by certain rules drawn up by America with express reference to the case, and with the direct intention of

condemning our conduct. The excuse made by the Ministry for accepting these *ex post facto* Rules was twofold. First, that they only represented what—after the escape of the Alabama, certainly not before—was the principle of our official action. But our defence, all along, was that we had done *much more* than we were bound to do : otherwise we stood condemned at once by the inconsistency between our conduct in the case of the Alabama and in that of the rams. And yet our Government allowed our conduct in the latter case to be made the standard by which the former was to be judged. Thus was condemnation, by their own showing, assured beforehand. The second element of their excuse was that it was worth our while to accept the application of the Rules in the past, in order to constitute them part of the law of nations, especially as against America, for the future. This was the vital point of the defence : consider what happened, and then say if the Ministry can be said to have had "a policy" in the business.

The Arbitrators decided against us upon these Rules, and in doing so placed interpretations upon them which it is admitted on all sides that England could not possibly accept. Thereupon Mr. Gladstone's Government were asked "What do you intend to do with regard to "these Rules? You are bound by Treaty to join with the United States in "recommending them to other Powers. Will you do so? And if you do "so, will you recommend them in the sense put upon them by the Arbitra-"tors, or not? If you do, you bind yourselves, for example, to exercise "jurisdiction over a French ship of war in your own ports, if she should at "some past time have infringed these Rules in British waters. You bind "yourselves also to arrest a future Alabama under a belligerent flag—that is "to enforce your neutrality by an act of war. If you do not accept the "Arbitrators' interpretation, what steps will you take to explain to Foreign "Courts that you do not do so? Obviously, till you take such steps, the "Powers that may accept the Rules will accept them in that "sense ; and in any future dispute that is the sense in which they will be "pressed against you, and which will govern future arbitrations. And if you "do put a sense of your own on these Rules, America may refuse to accept "them in that sense, and you will lose the only advantage you profess to have "derived from this negotiation—that of binding the United States by these "Rules for the future." Ministers had no better answer to make than that their recommendation of the Rules would be purely formal; that is, that they would not fulfil their engagement in its spirit. Thus, they forfeit the right to insist on the Rules as against America, which was the sole consideration for all our sacrifices ; and yet remain liable, on all future occasions, to have them pressed against us as Rules of public law in the arbitrators' sense. A more signal exhibition of bungling irresolution and incapacity it is difficult to conceive. The idea that we should gain any practical

advantage by making America promise to observe these Rules in future, after we had allowed her peremptorily to set all rule and all equity aside in the case of the Fenian raid—the idea that we had set an example of arbitration to all the world by inducing her to refer her claims against us to arbitration on her own terms provided we would drop our claims against her—are too futile to deserve comment. But it should not be forgotten that one important if not prominent member of the Ministry claimed credit for the Treaty of Washington as having purchased peace by payment of tribute; saying (truly enough) that it is cheaper to pay America three millions than to fight her! And really this precious phrase comes nearer than any other to a definition of the foreign policy of the Government—a policy of gratuitous surrender and expensive humiliation.

Pass from America and turn to the East. Do we mean to uphold Turkey, or at any rate to take care that her present dominions shall not fall under the control of Russia? Do we mean to keep open, and clear of Russian hands, and beyond Russian reach, the land route to India? Or do we mean to let Russia gradually close upon us in Syria, in Persia, in Oxiana, till we have to fight for India on the Indus itself? It is impossible to extract an answer from the policy of the Ministry, except that they have not made up their mind. If they had determined that the independence of Turkey is a necessity of English policy in Asia, they would never have allowed Russia to regain command of the Black Sea. To destroy that command was the great object of the Crimean war. We spent a hundred millions, and fifty thousand valuable English lives to destroy Sebastopol and the Russian fleet in the Euxine; and Lord Palmerston, who thoroughly understood Eastern affairs, insisted on a treaty binding Russia not to rebuild either. Observe, Russia has no legitimate outlet from the Euxine, nor can she be assailed there by any dangerous enemy. Turkey holds the Dardanelles, and may not either let Russian ships through to attack (say) France, or French ships through to attack Russia. An Euxine fleet and Euxine fortresses can be needed only against Turkey; that is, only for purposes of conquest. The Treaty of Paris, then, did not injure or humiliate Russia; it only bound her to keep the peace towards helpless Turkey. But when France was paralysed and England left alone, Russia announced her intention to tear up the Treaty. For a moment it seemed that England would be roused by this outrageous insult, and the English Ambassador used high language to Count von Bismarck. But our Government saw that resistance might mean war, and non-resistance could only injure Turkey; and our interest in Turkey is a remote one, and depends on whether we are to keep India permanently or not. So Mr. Gladstone rose in the House of Commons, and explained away Lord Odo Russell's words by a quibble exactly resembling the hopeless attempt of some cowardly schoolboy to sneak out of a challenge he

has rashly given, and Lord Granville contented himself with persuading the Conference assembled to give Russia all she desired, to begin by declaring that Russia had no right to take it without leave! Was ever such a miserable spectacle? An English Ambassador declaring that the quarrel is one in which England may be driven to fight "with or without allies;" the English Premier trying to prove that the Ambassador never said so; and England, finally, leaving Turkey in the lurch, throwing cold water on Austrian displeasure, and then trying to make out that it was Turkey and Austria, not she, who shrank from fighting. Why, Turkey expressly declared that she only gave up the Treaty of Paris because England would not back her, and she could not maintain her rights by her own strength. Such is Liberal jealousy for English honour; such the "policy" of a Liberal Ministry.

Look, again, at what has taken place further to the East. Russia is gradually, but not slowly, closing down on India; and it is plain to every Indian statesman that the proximity of Russia would be most dangerous, if not fatal, to our Indian Empire; not merely because Russia might come down upon it with a more or less powerful army, but because her vicinity would keep India in a constant ferment, would excite hopes in the mind of every disaffected Prince or discontented sect, and destroy the main security of our rule, the belief that resistance is impossible, and that no power capable of coping with us can be brought into action in Hindostan. The mere fact that a Russian army was within a march of our frontier would destroy this belief, though it never stirred or could stir. Well, it is not till Russia is closing in upon Persia on one side, and Affghanistan on the other, that our statesmen move at all; and then they only bargain that she shall not occupy territory actually and notoriously Affghan. Down to that frontier line she is welcome to do as she pleases; she may conquer every tribe that lies north of the Oxus, and cut a military road from Moscow to the Hindoo Koosh. More than this she may occupy Khiva, and so overlap Persia, and hold her, as it were, with a pair of pincers, may bully or bargain as she pleases for the cession of Persian territory, and finally establish herself on the Persian Gulf, waiting till a convenient occasion offers to absorb Persia altogether, and thus cut off for ever that land route to India which foresight impels all courageous Anglo-Indian thinkers to recommend, on which our Indian Empire will probably in the long run depend, yet in which our rulers cannot be induced to take the slightest interest. And if Persia is absorbed, and the gigantic empire of the Czars stretched from the Arctic Sea to the Indian Ocean, what will be the effect on the susceptible imaginations and restless ambition of the warrior-races of Northern India! Can those be said to have a foreign policy who, even when negotiating with Russia as to her Asiatic conquests, leave this point out of

consideration, and are content to keep Affghanistan and the sea between the present frontier of British India, and the proximate boundary of the Russian Empire?

Such is the manner in which the most vital interests of the nation—its interests in the wide domains secured to it by the skill, the daring, and the wisdom of past generations of Englishmen, in the vast regions of our colonial dominions the splendid heritage of the British people, in which any labourer who can save money for his passage may secure a share, and die rich and honoured—its interest in the magnificent Eastern Empire which affords such unrivalled opportunities of beneficence and of utility, such chances for the improvement and happiness of two hundred millions of Asiatics under English rule, such prospect of advantages to all the world by bringing the Asiatic plethora of labour to bear under the direction of British enterprise, and with the aid of British capital—are mismanaged, trifled away, allowed to drift from us, by the party which imputes to Conservatives, that *we* have "no policy!' In such fashion have Liberal Ministers dealt with the inheritance of honour and influence, of glory and of power, bequeathed to us by the generation which laboured with Pitt and Canning, and fought under Wellington and Nelson; an inheritance in which not only every Englishman, but every lover of order and liberty, of right and justice throughout Europe, every weak State threatened by a strong neighbour, every people striving for Constitutional freedom, had a precious and an abiding interest. And, what have they given us in return? Not economy, but a contant revulsion from petty savings to frightened prodigality; not security, but a constant sense of weakness and peril; an alternation of parsimony and panic, combining the meanness of the one extreme with the lavish costliness of the other. This, if they have a foreign policy, is the policy of the Liberals. What is that of the Conservatives? To maintain the integrity of the Empire at all hazards and at every cost; to make that integrity as dear to Englishmen at the Antipodes as to Englishmen in England, and to fight for Canada as for Kent; to maintain the strength of England at a steady level, sufficient to render panics impossible, and their waste and hurry—costing more than is saved by years of parsimony and cheeseparing—needless; a firm assertion of England's position as a great Power, with no European interest save in the maintenance of public law and the encouragement of political freedom. If this be not a policy, then perhaps that Liberal system we have done our best to describe with accuracy may better deserve the name; but if the recent administration of the Foreign Office have proceeded on a policy, it has been a policy not indeed, like Lord Russell's, of meddle and muddle, but of craven prudence cloaked under Christian professions, of weak irresolu-

tion marked by occasional outbreaks of misdirected energy ; a policy in which the highest questions are decided on the lowest grounds, in which the problem of the moment is solved without reference to precedents in the past or probabilities in the future ; a policy which has nothing of Justice but her blindness, and nothing of Fortune but her instability.

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SPEECH

OF THE

RT. HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.,

TO THE

CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION

OF

GLASGOW,

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SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.,

AT GLASGOW.

Mr. Disraeli, on rising to address the meeting, was received with the most enthusiastic cheers. He said : Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, —I am not using merely conventional language when I express to you the high honour that I feel in receiving this address from the Conservative Association of Glasgow. The gratification is increased by the chair being filled this day by one who was formerly a colleague of mine in Parliament, and whom, with others around me, I learnt to respect, and more than respect, for he gained the heart of the House of Commons while he sat there.* Gentlemen, I will not conceal from you, and, indeed, many and most of you know it, that when it was first suggested to me to receive this distinction and to meet you here, after great reflection, I felt it my duty—though with pain—to refuse the honour which was intended for me. I did so because I thought that, upon the whole, as my visit to Glasgow was an academic or neutral visit, it would be better that nothing should occur that might in any way make an exception to that general sentiment of respect which it is my pride and pleasure to say I have received from all classes and all parties in this city. And I must take this opportunity, as it may be the last I shall have, without reference to any political opinions, of expressing to the citizens of Glasgow my lively sense of the kind and considerate manner in which they have received me, and I must say the too great indulgence even of those who do not generally agree with me in political opinion. But, gentlemen, when I had been here some little time it was represented to me by those who spoke for a large body of my fellow countrymen that it seemed very hard upon them who, from their pursuits and other reasons, could take no part in august, academical functions or in the splendour of civic banquets that, feeling deeply as they did on political subjects, one whom, however unworthy he may be of their confidence, they still regard as their chief, should be resident for nearly a week in this great city, in communication, apparently, with all but his humbler friends, who perhaps looked on him with not less confidence and affection ; and I

* Mr. James Baird of Auchmedden.

confess to you that although it had been my original hope that not a word should have fallen from these lips during my visit to Glasgow which should have been discordant to any individual in the city, I could not resist this appeal. It did appear to me to be so unfair, I would say so unkind and ungenerous, that I assented at once, though after due consideration, to receive this address and meet you as we meet to-day, on terms which will permit me to make some observations to you on the present state of public affairs. And I will here say, that there may be no misunderstanding with reference to some paragraphs I have seen in the public papers, that I never was asked and never assented to meet any separate body particularly styled "Conservative working-men." I have never been myself at all favourable to a system which would induce Conservatives who are working-men to form societies confined merely to their class. In the Church and at the polling-booth all are equal—and all that concerns Conservative working-men and interests them concerns and interests the great body of Conservatives of whom they form a portion. Therefore, it is to the Conservative Association I see before me, of whom a very considerable majority consists of working-men—it is to that Association that I address myself.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I believe I may describe the position of this country as one of very great prosperity. There is no doubt that during the last three years prosperity has been generally acknowledged. There are some who suppose that it may have received a check at the time when I paid my visit to Glasgow. If it has received a check it will increase, I hope, our circumspection, but I must express my own opinion that no substantial diminution in the sources of the prosperity so apparent during the last three years has occurred. I think we may fairly say the state of this country is one of great prosperity, and although I believe and know that it is a prosperity for which we are not indebted either to Whigs or Tories, although I know that it has been occasioned in a considerable degree, under Providence, by fortuitous though felicitous circumstances, I am perfectly ready, speaking to-day, as I hope to speak, in the fairest terms on public affairs, which I believe to be quite consistent with the position of the leader of a party—I am ready to give to her Majesty's Government credit for the prosperity we feel and acknowledge. With regard to her Majesty's Ministers themselves, I will be equally candid, equally fair—I will take them at their own estimate. They have lost few opportunities of informing the country that they are men distinguished for commanding talent, admirable eloquence, and transcendent administrative abilities. I disput[e] none of these propositions any more

than I do the prosperity of the country. They also tell us that the country being so prosperous, and they having all these personal advantages, they have taken the opportunity during the last few years of passing measures of immense magnitude, only equalled by the benefit they have conferred upon the people. Now, gentlemen, I will not question their own estimate of their ability, or even for a moment their own description of their achievements : but I ask this question,—What is the reason, when the country is so prosperous, when its affairs are administered by so gifted a Government, and when they have succeeded during five years in passing measures of such a vast character and beneficence—what is the reason that Her Majesty's Ministers are going about regretting that they are so unpopular ? Now, gentlemen, I beg you to observe that I did not say Her Majesty's Ministers are unpopular. I stated their own case and their own position ; I say that under the circumstances I have put fairly before you, it is a remarkable circumstance, and the question must be inquired into—why persons in the position of Her Majesty's Government should on every occasion deplore the unpopularity they have incurred. Now my opinion, gentlemen, is that that is not a question of mere curiosity—it is one that, as I think I shall show you, concerns the honour and the interests of the country. If the country is so prosperous—if Her Majesty's Ministers are so gifted—if they have had such an ample opportunity of showing the talents which they possess—if they have done all this good—if they have availed themselves of this signal opportunity to effect such great results, then the only inference we can draw from the unpopularity which they themselves deplore is that the people of this country is a fickle and ungrateful people. Therefore, it is not a question of mere curiosity. It is a question that ought to be answered. If there be those who suppose that the people of this country, as I hold, are not a fickle or ungrateful people—that they are a people who may be mistaken—that they may be misled ; but that they are a people who, on the whole, are steadfast in their convictions, and especially in their political convictions, I cannot myself for a moment doubt. I say, then, that as this question, if left unanswered, would show that Her Majesty's Ministers have placed a slur on the character of the people of this kingdom, it ought to be answered ; and a short time since, some two months ago, I answered it. It appeared to me, at that moment especially, when all those circumstances to which I have referred were clearly before the country, and when Her Majesty's Government, by their ablest and most powerful representatives, were deploring their unpopularity, and asking the reason why, or rather intimating by

inference that it was the fault of the people, not of the Government, that someone should give an answer to that question. I gave it, and in a very brief form—in the most condensed and the most severely accurate form. There is not an expression in that description of the conduct of the Government which was not well weighed ; there was not a word for which I had not warranty, for which I could not adduce testimony ample and abounding. There was only one characteristic of that description which was not noticed at the time, and which I will now confess—it was not original, for six months before in the House of Commons I had used the same expressions and made the same statement—not in a hole or corner, but on the most memorable night of the Session, when there were 600 members of the House of Commons present, when on the debate that took place avowedly the fate of the Ministry depended. It was at midnight that I rose to speak, and made the statement almost similar in expression, though perhaps stronger and more lengthened than the one which has become the cause of recent controversy. The Prime Minister followed me in that debate. The House of Commons knew what was depending upon the verdict about to be taken, and with all that knowledge they came to a division, and by a majority terminated the existence of the Government. Gentlemen, it surprises me, then, that, having made that statement six months after, with the advantage of six months' more experience and observation, it should have so much offended Her Majesty's Government. The Ministers sighed and their newspapers screamed. The question I have to ask, and in this your interests are vitally concerned—the question is, was the statement I made a true and accurate one? You cannot answer statements of this kind by saying, "Oh, fie! how very rude." You must at least adduce arguments in order to prove that the statement which you do not sanction is one that ought not to have been made. And therefore I ask you to-day, in the first place, is it or is it not true that the Irish Church has been despoiled? Is it or is it not true that the gentlemen of Ireland have been severely amerced? Is it or is it not true that a Royal Commission has been issued which has dealt with the ancient endowments of this country in so ruthless a manner that Parliament has frequently been called upon to interfere, and has addressed the Crown to arrest their propositions? Are these facts or are they not? Well, I did then venture to say that they had "harassed trades and worried professions," as reasons why men naturally become unpopular. Was that true or was it not? Because, after all, everything depends on the facts of the statement. I won't enter into a long catalogue of trades, commencing with the

important trade of which we have heard so much, and which has made itself felt at so many elections, down to the humblest trade—the lucifer-match makers—who fell upon their knees in Palace-yard. I suppose there are some Scotch farmers present, or, at least, those who are intimately connected with them. I want to know whether trade was harassed when a proposition was brought before the House of Commons to tax their carts and horses, and all the machinery of their cultivation? I know how the proposition was received in England, and I doubt not the Scotch farmers, like the English, felt extremely harassed by it. I want to know what is the reason why there is this crusade throughout the country against Schedule D of the Income Tax. The Income Tax has been borne for thirty years with great self-sacrifice and with great loyalty by the people of this country. It is at this moment at the lowest pitch it has ever reached; how is it, then, that it is at this moment more unpopular than it was at any time during the long period we endured it at a much higher figure? It is on account of the assessment of the trades of England under that schedule. It is the vexatious and severe assessment that has harassed tradesmen, who like all those who come under that Act are not particularly pleased, when they are paying five quarters of Income Tax in the year, to learn also that they are in arrears. Then, have the professions been worried? Ask the military profession—Is it not true that at this moment a Royal Commission is examining in London into the grievances of six thousand officers? Ask the naval profession whether they have not been worried. During the course of the present Government the whole administrative system of the Admiralty, the council that had always great influence in the management of the navy, and the peculiar office of the Secretary were all swept away; and in spite I may say of the nightly warnings of a right hon. friend who is now lost to us all and his country, the ablest Minister of the Admiralty during the present reign—notwithstanding his nightly warnings that they were so conducting the administration of the navy that they would probably fall into some disaster, his remonstrances were in vain, till soon the most costly vessel of the State was lost, and the perilous voyage of the Megæra had been made, when the country would stand it no longer. They rescinded the whole of this worrying arrangement, and appointed a new First Lord to re-establish the old system. Is that worrying a profession, or is it not? Well, gentlemen, I can speak of another profession—a profession the most important in the State—the Civil Service profession. Has it been worried? Is it now in a process of worrying, or is it not? There are many even in this room well acquainted with the

position of the Civil Service in all its departments. I might say the same of the legal profession, for I have heard lawyers on both sides of the House in the debates of last session agree in imploring the Government not to continue propositions which would infallibly weaken the administration of justice in this country. It is not only these professions and trades who are directly attacked, but it is every one that is harassed, because no one knows whose turn will come next. Well, I did say to the House of Commons—and I afterwards expressed it in another form—I said they had attacked every class and institution from the highest to the lowest in the country. Is that true or is it not? Is it not a fact that her Majesty's Government on every occasion of which they could avail themselves during the last three years attacked the authority of the House of Lords, scoffed at the existence of its high functions, and even defied its decisions, until the result proved that the House of Lords was extremely popular in the country, and her Majesty's Government were obliged to confess that they themselves were exceedingly unpopular? But you must remember this, that the same body who attacked the House of Lords also brought in a Bill which would have attacked the poor inheritance of the widow and the orphan. Now, I think I have shown from the highest to the lowest the same system prevailed. What occurred in the interval? The Churches of England and Scotland have been threatened. It has been publicly said by the highest authority in the House of Commons that he did not believe that the House of Commons would sanction the views of those who wished to pull down the venerable establishments, but he recommended them to agitate out of doors and endeavour to excite public opinion against them. Then, again, I said jobs were perpetrated that outraged public opinion. Is that true, or is it not? Is it not a fact that two years ago the whole country was outraged by persons being appointed to important offices in Church and State in direct violation of the language of Acts of Parliament?—that the Ministry in that respect exercised that dispensing power which forfeited the crown of James II. Was not public indignation roused to the highest degree upon the Collier appointment and a similar one? Were these acts perpetrated, and did they outrage public opinion? Every one knows from his own individual experience that public opinion was outraged. I have said, also, that they stumbled into errors which were always discreditable and sometimes ruinous. That was called violent language. Gentlemen, I never use violent language; violent language is generally weak language; but I hope my language is sometimes strong. Now, let us look at this statement. I said that they stumbled into errors which were always discreditable and sometimes ruinous. Was the Zanzibar contract not an

"error," and was it not "discreditable?" Was the conduct of the Treasury in allowing a subordinate officer to misappropriate nearly a million of the public money not an "error" and was it not "discreditable?" When the Government had referred the Alabama Claims to the arbitrament of a third State, was not the change of the Law of Nations by the Three Rules an "error?" Was that not "discreditable" and in its consequences was it not "ruinous?"

I have now given an answer to the question why the Government, with transcendent abilities, as they tell us, with magnificent exploits which they are always extolling, and with a country whose prosperity is so palpable—they ask us why they are unpopular, and I tell them why. They have harassed and worried the country, and there was no necessity for any of the acts they have committed. I have put it in condensed and, I am sure, accurate language. There was an illustrious writer, one of the greatest masters of our language, who wrote the history of the last four years of the reign of Queen Anne, which was the duration of an illustrious Ministry. I have written the history of a Ministry that has lasted five years, and I have immortalised the spirit of their policy in five lines. And now, gentlemen, I will tell you what is the unfortunate cause of this political embarrassment, why, with such favourable circumstances as the present Government have encountered; why, with the great ability which no man is more conscious than myself that they possess; why, with the most anxious and earnest desire, for which I give them entire credit, to do their duty to their Sovereign and their fellow-countrymen, the result has been so mortifying. I told it two years ago to the assembled county of Lancaster, when I met not only the greatest proprietors of the soil, but deputations and delegations of the choicest citizens from every town and city of that great county. I told them, speaking with the sense of the deepest responsibility, which, I trust, also animates me now—I told them that the cause was that this Government, unfortunately, in its beginning, had been founded on a principle of violence, and that fatal principle had necessarily vitiated their whole course. And what have we gained by that principle of violence? Let us consider it, here even, with impartiality and perfect candour. I am now referring to the Irish policy of the Ministry. I say it is quite possible for public men, with the view of obtaining some great object advantageous to the country, to devise and pass measures which may utterly fail in accomplishing their purpose, and yet, however mortifying to themselves, however disappointing to the country, there would be no stain upon their reputation. We cannot command, but we must endeavour in public life to deserve, success. If, therefore, it is said that the Government proposed the large measures which they did with respect

Ireland in order to terminate the grievances of years and the embarrassment to England, which the state of Ireland certainly was, although they may have failed, their position was one which still might be a position of respect. That they have failed in this instance no one can doubt. A great portion of Ireland at this moment is in a state of veiled rebellion. But what I charge upon the Government is this, not that their measures fail—for all measures may fail—not that their measures fail to prevent or to suppress this veiled rebellion in Ireland, but that their measures, which they brought forward to appease and settle, to tranquillise and consolidate Ireland, are the very cause that this veiled rebellion is taking place. For, gentlemen, what was the principle upon which the whole of their policy with respect to Ireland was founded? What was the principle upon which they induced Parliament to confiscate and to despoil Church and private property in Ireland? It was that Ireland must be governed on Irish principles—the administration of Ireland must be carried on with reference to Irish feeling. If that is a sound principle and a sound sentiment in politics, it is a perfect vindication of what is occurring in the city of Dublin at this moment—viz., an assembly of men whose great and avowed object is to dissever the connexion between the two countries. If we are not to legislate for Ireland with reference to Imperial feelings and general and national interests—if we are only to legislate with reference to Irish feelings, it is perfectly evident that if there is a majority of the Irish people who may take any idea in the world into their heads, however ruinous to themselves and however fatal to the Empire, that policy must be recognised by this country. It is, therefore, to that principle, avowedly and ostentatiously brought forward by the Ministry as the basis of their Irish policy, that I trace the dangerous condition in which Ireland is now placed. Well, then, I say this policy of violence for which such sacrifices were made, for which institutions and interests which were, at least, faithful to Britain were sacrificed—this policy of violence has led only to a state of affairs, unfortunately, more unsatisfactory than that which prevailed before.

Now, gentlemen, I observe in the paper that the day is fixed for the re-assembling of Parliament. The time is not yet very near, but when you find her Majesty has appointed the day for our re-assembling, it is an intimation that we must begin to consider the public business a little, and, therefore, it is not altogether inconvenient that we should be talking upon these matters to-day. Now, when we meet Parliament, I apprehend the first business that will be brought before us will be the Ashantee war. Upon that subject my mouth is closed. I will not even make an observation upon the railway which I believe has been returned to England. Whenever this

country is externally involved in a difficulty, whatever I may think of its cause or origin, those with whom I act, and myself, have no other duty to fulfil but to support the existing Government in extricating the country from its difficulties and vindicating the honour and interests of Great Britain. The time will come, gentlemen, no doubt, when we shall know something of the secret history of that mysterious mess of the Ashantee war, but we have now but one duty to fulfil, which is to give every assistance to the Government in order that they may take those steps which the interests of the country require. I should, indeed, myself, from my own individual experience, be most careful not to follow the example which one of the most distinguished members of the present Administration pursued with respect to us when we had to encounter the Abyssinian difficulty. Mr. Lowe thought proper to rise in Parliament when I introduced the necessity of interference in order to escape from difficulties which we had inherited and not created. Mr. Lowe rose in Parliament and violently attacked the Government of the day for the absurdity, the folly, the extreme imprudence of attempting any interference in the affairs of Abyssinia. He laughed at the honour of the country, he laughed at the interests of a few enslaved subjects of the Queen of England being compared, as he said, with the certain destruction and disaster which must attend any interference on our part. He described the horrors of the country and the terrors of the climate. He said there was no possibility by which any success could be obtained, and the people of England must prepare themselves for the most horrible catastrophe. He described not only the fatal influences of the climate, but I remember he described one pink fly alone, which he said would eat up the whole British army. He was as vituperative of the insects of Abyssinia as if they had been British workmen.

Now, gentlemen, there is a most interesting and important subject which concerns us all, and which it is not impossible may be submitted to the consideration of Parliament by Her Majesty's Ministers, because I observe a letter published in a newspaper by the authority of the Prime Minister, which is certainly calculated to arrest public attention. That is a letter respecting the subject of Parliamentary Reform. I think it is not undesirable that at a moment when letters of this kind are circulated, and when there is a good deal of loose talking prevalent in the country on the subject, that I should take this opportunity of calling your attention to some considerations on this subject which may occupy you after my visit to Glasgow has terminated, and may not be, I think, unprofitable. Her Majesty's Government are not pledged, but after the letter of the Prime Minister announcing his own opinion, and the indication of the probability

of the Government considering the question of further Parliamentary Reform, there are two points which the Government ought to consider when they come to that question. The first is the expediency of having any further Parliamentary Reform. They will have to remember that very wise statesmen have been of opinion that there is no more dangerous and feeble characteristic of a state than perpetually to be dwelling on what is called organic change. The habit, it has been said in politics, of perpetually considering your political constitution can only be compared to that of the individual who is always considering the state of his health and his physical constitution. You know what occurs in such circumstances—he becomes infirm and valetudinarian. In fact, there is a school of politics which looks at the English Constitution as valetudinarian. They are always looking at its tongue and feeling its pulse, and devising means by which they may give it a tonic. The Government will have to consider that very important point, first of all whether it is expedient. I am not giving any opinion upon it—being only a private member of Parliament, that is quite unnecessary—but I am indicating the consideration that would occur to a responsible statesman. They will also have to consider this important point, that whatever Minister embarks in a campaign of Parliamentary Reform must make up his mind that he will necessarily arrest the progress of all other public business in the country. I will show you to what extent that consideration should prevail. Parliamentary Reform, as a new question, was introduced in the House of Commons in 1852 by Lord John Russell, and from 1852 to 1866, or the end of 1865, it was introduced annually; four Prime Ministers had pledged themselves to the expediency of Parliamentary Reform; the subject made no progress in Parliament, but took up a great deal of time; a great portion of the Parliamentary Sessions for these twelve or thirteen years was taken up by discussions on Parliamentary Reform; and the country got very ill-tempered, finding that no reform was ever advanced, and other and more important subjects were neglected. At last it was taken up by men determined to carry it—first by Lord Russell, who did not carry it, and afterwards by others; but, observe, the whole of 1866, 1867, and 1868 were entirely absorbed by the subject of Parliamentary Reform. Therefore, you will observe that when important subjects in legislation are neglected you must be prepared to discourage any further demand for Parliamentary Reform unless you feel an insuperable necessity for it, because if you want Parliamentary Reform you cannot have any of those great measures with regard to local taxation or other subjects in which you are all so much interested. That is the first consideration for the Government.

present day to determine, whether they shall embark in the question of Parliamentary Reform. Is it necessary? Is the necessity of such a character that it outweighs the immense inconvenience of sacrificing all other public and progressive measures for the advancement of this particular measure? Then there comes another subject of consideration. I dwell upon these subjects because I apprehend that one of the reasons of our meeting this evening is that upon questions which are likely to engage the public attention so far as those whom you honour with your confidence can give you any guidance, it is as well that I should indicate to you briefly my general views of the situation. The next point, therefore, that Government will have to consider if they make up their minds to bring forward a measure of Parliamentary Reform, is the character of the measure, and that will be a most anxious question for them to decide. I think I may say without conceit that the subject of Parliamentary Reform is one that I am entitled to speak upon at least with some degree of authority. I have given to it the consideration of some forty years, and am responsible for the most important measure on the subject that has been carried. I would say this, that it is impossible to go further in the direction of Parliamentary Reform than the Bill of 1867-68 without entirely subverting the whole of the borough representation of this country. I do not mean to say that if there was a place disfranchised to-morrow for corruption, it would not be possible to enfranchise a very good place in its stead; but, speaking generally, you cannot go beyond the Act of 1867 without making up your mind entirely to break up the borough representation of this country. The people of Great Britain ought to be aware that that is the necessary consequence. So far as I am concerned I never could view the matter in a party light. If I were to accustom myself to view it in a party light, I might look with unconcern on this difficulty, for the smaller boroughs of the country are not, on the whole, favourable to our views. I am proud to think our party is supported by the great counties, and now to a great extent by great towns and cities; but I do not consider the smaller boroughs favourable to Conservative views. It is the national sympathies and wide sentiments of those who live in our great cities that are much more calculated to rally round the cause in which we are deeply concerned—the greatness and glory of our country. This ought to be known, that if those who intend to have a further measure of Parliamentary Reform, and have digested that large meal which they had a few years ago, they should remember that there is no borough in England with under 40,000 inhabitants that would have any claim to be represented even by one member. Now that is a very important consideration if, as we are told, the small boroughs of between ten and

fifteen thousand nhabitants are the backbone of the Liberal party. They may be, and I think they are, but I should be very sorry to see them disfranchised, for they are centres of public spirit and intelligence in the country, influencing very much the districts in which they are situated, and affording a various representation of the mind and life of the country. But it is inevitable that that would occur, and I think, therefore, it ought to be well understood by the country when you hear persons without the slightest consideration saying they are prepared to vote for this, or in favour of that, whereas they have not really mastered the question in any degree whatever. So far as I am concerned, any proposition to change the representation of the people brought forward by her Majesty's Government will receive my respectful and candid consideration. But I say at once that I will vote for no measure of that kind, or of that class which is brought forward by some irresponsible individual who, on the eve of a General Election, wants to make a clap-trap career. I think it is perfectly disgusting for individuals to jump up in the House of Commons without the slightest responsibility, official or moral, and make propositions which demand the gravest consideration of prolonged and protracted Cabinets, with all the responsibility attaching to experienced statesmen. Now, gentlemen, although I have rather exceeded the time I had intended, there are one or two more remarks I should like to make on subjects which interest us all. And first, as the only feature in our domestic life that gives me uneasiness, are the relations at present between capital and labour, and between the employers and employed. I must say one word upon that subject. If there are any relations in the world which should be those of sympathy and perfect confidence, they always appear to be the relations which should subsist between employers and employed, and especially in manufacturing life. They are, in fact, much more intimate and more necessary relations than those which subsist between landlords and tenants. It is an extremely painful thing that of late years we so frequently hear of misunderstandings between the employers and the employed—that they look upon each other with suspicion—with mutual suspicion—as if each were rapaciously inclined either to obtain or retain the greater share of the profits of their trade; and those incidents with which you are all acquainted, of a very painful nature, have been the consequence. I am not talking of demands for an increase of wages when men are carrying on what is called a roaring trade—I believe that is the classical epithet taken from the Manchester school. When a roaring trade is going on, I am not at all surprised that working men should ask for an increase of wages. But a trade sometimes ceases to roar, when

wages naturally, on the same principle, assume a form more adapted to the circumstances. No doubt, during the last twenty years there appears to have been, not a passing and temporary cause of disturbance like the incidents of trade being very active or reduced, but some permanent cause disturbing prices, which alike confuses the employer in his calculations as to profits and embarrasses the employed from the greater expenditure which they find it necessary to make. Now, I cannot but feel myself—having given to the subject as much consideration as I could—I cannot help feeling that the large and continuous increase of the precious metals, especially during the last twenty years, has certainly produced no inconsiderable effect—not only in trade, but no inconsiderable effect in prices. I will not, on an occasion like this, enter into anything like an abstruse discussion. I confine myself to giving my opinion and the results which I draw from it; and this moral, which I think is worthy of consideration. If it can be shown accurately and scientifically that there is a cause affecting a prominent class, reducing the average remuneration of the employed, and confusing and confounding the employer in his calculations as to profits—if that can be shown, and if it is proved to be the result of inexorable laws, far beyond the reach of legislation, and of circumstances over which human beings have no control—I think if that could be shown, and employers and employed had sufficient acuteness and knowledge—and I am sure that in Scotland both will have to acknowledge that result—it would very much change those mutual feelings of suspicion and sentiments of a not pleasant character which occasionally prevail when they find that they are both of them the victims, as it were, of some inexorable law of political economy which cannot be resisted. I think, instead of supposing that each wanted to take advantage of the other, they would feel inclined to put their shoulders to the wheel, accurately ascertain whether this be true, and come to some understanding which would very much mitigate the relations which subsist between them, and I have little doubt the effect would be to increase the average rate of wages, with my views as to the effect of the continuous increase of the precious metals. But, at the same time, I have not the slightest doubt the employer would, in the nature of things, find adequate compensation for the new position in which he would find himself. There is one point before I sit down to which I wish to call your attention, because if I am correct in saying that the question of the relations between the employer and employed is the only one that gives me anxiety at home, there is a subject abroad to which, I think, I ought, on an occasion like this, to draw your notice; and that is the contest that is commencing in Europe between the spiritual

and temporal powers. Gentlemen, I look upon it as very grave, as pregnant with circumstances which may greatly embarrass Europe. The religious sentiment is often and generally taken advantage of by political classes who use it as a pretext ; and there is much going on in Europe at the present moment which, it appears to me, may occasion us soon much anxiety in this community. I should myself look upon it as the greatest danger to civilisation if, in the struggle that is going on between faith and free thought, the respective sides should only be represented by the Papacy and the Red Republic ; and here I must say that if we have before us the prospect of struggles—perhaps of wars and anarchy, ultimately—caused by the great question that is now rising in Europe, it will not easily be in the power of England entirely to withhold herself from such circumstances. Our connection with Ireland will then be brought painfully to our consciousness, and I should not be at all surprised if the visor of Home Rule should fall off some day, and you beheld a very different countenance. Now, gentlemen, I think we ought to be prepared for those circumstances. The position of England is one which is indicative of dangers arising from holding a middle course upon those matters. It may be open to England again to take a stand upon the Reformation which 300 years ago was the source of her greatness and her glory, and it may be her proud destiny to guard civilisation alike from the withering blast of atheism and from the simoom of sacerdotal usurpation. These things may be far off, but we live in a rapid age, and my apprehension is that they are nearer than some suppose. If that struggle comes we must look to Scotland to aid us. It was once, and I hope is still, a land of liberty, of patriotism, and of religion. I think the time has come when it really should leave off mumbling the dry bones of political economy and munching the remainder biscuit of an effete Liberalism. We all know that a general election is at hand. I do not ask you to consider on such an occasion the fate of parties or of Ministers. But I ask you to consider this, that it is very probable that the future of Europe depends greatly on the character of the next Parliament of England. I ask you, when the occasion comes, to act as becomes an ancient and famous nation, and give all your energies for the cause of faith and freedom.

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NATIONAL UNION

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CONSERVATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE,

HELD AT THE

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,

AND OF THE

BANQUET AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE,

ON MONDAY, JUNE 24TH, 1872,

TOGETHER WITH THE

SPEECHES

OF

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN,

THE RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.,

ETC., ETC.

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WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

The sixth annual Conference was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Monday, June 24th, 1872, at twelve o'clock, Lord George Hamilton, M.P., in the chair.

There were present, among others, the Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Denbigh, Lord Wharncliffe, Viscount Sandon, M.P., W. T. Charley, Esq., M.P., R. N. Fowler, Esq., M.P., C. H. Mills, Esq., M.P., H. C. Raikes, Esq., M.P., W. H. Smith, Esq., M.P., Sir J. E. Eardley Wilmot, Bart., Captain Bedford Pim, R.N., J. T. Agg-Gardner, Esq., James Ashbury, Esq., Howel Gwyn, Esq., and the following members of the Council: E. Clarke, Esq., Augustus Goldsmid, Esq., J. E. Gorst, Esq., Morgan Howard, Esq., F. Montgomerie, Esq., Hon. W. F. Massey, Campbell de Morgan, Esq., E. Pinches, Esq., Leonard Sedgwick, Esq., B. B. Sapwell, Esq., Mr. Bennett, Mr. Cotter, and Mr. Ross.

The following delegates from the various Associations were present:— Bedworth Conservative Association, J. Stevens; Birmingham Liberal-Conservative Association, E. Kirby and J. Houghton; Bolton Conservative Association, J. Ramsbotham; Brighton Conservative and Constitutional Association, M. D. Scott and D. Smith; Bristol Working Men's Conservative Association, P. J. Davies and C. T. Evans; Brompton and South Kensington Conservative Association, R. A. Aspinall and W. F. Powell-Moore; Cambridge Conservative Club, C. Balls and S. Peed; Cambridge Junior Conservative Club, W. B. Redfarn and

W. P. Spalding; Cardiff Constitutional Association, Colonel Hill; Castleton (Rochdale) Conservative Burgess Association, R. Mattley; Chatham Conservative Association, H. J. Hare and W. Stunt; Chelsea Working Men's Conservative Association, E. O'Connor and M. Walbrook; Exeter Working Men's Conservative Union, E. T. Fulford and J. E. Gregory; Fulham Conservative Association, Colonel Nicolls and J. F. Steward; Gateshead Conservative Association, R. Forster and J. Pattison; Gosport Working Men's Conservative Association, A. Taylor and J. Tandy; Gravesend Conservative Association, T. Troughton, J.P., and C. P. Lampen; Heckmondwike Conservative Association, T. Whitehead and — Bennett; Hereford Conservative Association, T. Maund and P. Ralph; Hull Conservative Association, W. Leetham and C. Kelsey; Ipswich Working Men's Conservative Association, A. B. Beavan and J. Cooke; North Kensington Conservative Association, S. Sawyer and R. H. B. Macmullen; Lambeth Constitutional Association, A. J. Murray and F. Bruton; Lewes Conservative Association, A. H. Browning and R. H. Ellman; Liverpool Working Men's Conservative Association, G. Thomas and C. Wardell; City of London Conservative Association, R. N. Fowler, M.P., and J. Campbell Smith; London and Westminster Working Men's Constitutional Association, G. D. Laycock and W. J. Cooper; Metropolitan Conservative Alliance, A. Beddall and E. Brookes; Newark Constitutional Association, E. M. H. Riddell and J. G. Branston; Norwood and South Penge Conservative Association, R. G. Glenn, LL.B., and R. Chandler; Nottingham Working Men's Constitutional Association, Saul Isaac and W. S. Becket; Oxford Conservative Club, A. W. Hall and J. Ryman; Oxford Constitutional Association, W. C. C. Bramwell; Paddington Conservative Association, R. H. B. Macmullen and M. S. Myers; Radford (Nottingham) Constitutional Association, F. C. Smith, M.P., and the Hon. G. E. M. Monckton, M.P.; Rochdale Conservative Association, W. W. Schofield, J.P., and J. Leach; St. Marylebone Conservative Association, F. Higgins and H. Pigot; St. Pancras District Conservative Association, S. Hill, M.D., and Mr. Serjeant Robinson; Staffordshire Potteries Constitutional Association (Hanley Branch), W. Hall; Southampton (All Saints') Conservative Association, J. Harle; Southampton (St. Mary's) Conservative Association, P. Warren; Stalybridge Constitutional Association, F. S. Powell, M.P., and T. W. Mellor, M.P.; Torquay Conservative Association, W. H. Kitson; Tynemouth Working Men's Conservative Association, Dr. Stephens; Wigan Working Men's Conservative Club, W. H. Cadman and J. Hilton; Windsor, Eton, and Clewer Working Men's Conservative Association, G. W. Plumridge; Wakefield Working Men's Conservative Association, J. R. Jordan and H. Gilbert; York Working Men's Conservative Association, J. Burrill.

The minutes of the last Conference having been read and confirmed, the

Chairman called upon Major the Hon. C. Keith-Falconer (Hon. Secretary), to read the report and balance sheet for the past year. The following report was then read:—

"The Council, in presenting their Sixth Annual Report, have every reason to congratulate the members of the National Union on its continued prosperity and increased political value.

"Since the last Conference, an arrangement has been made by which the work of the Union has been more closely incorporated with that of the party generally, and its offices have been removed to the headquarters of the party in Parliament-street. This arrangement has been productive of the most satisfactory results, not only by having brought the Union into more direct contact with the leaders of the party, and thereby enhancing the value of its operations, but also by greatly reducing its working expenses.

"The Council have to regret the loss they have sustained by the resignation of their late Secretary, Mr. Leonard Sedgwick, and they avail themselves of this opportunity to testify to the valuable services rendered by him from the formation of the Union to the date of his resignation.

"The duties hitherto performed by Mr. Sedgwick are now undertaken by the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Union, Mr. John Eldon Gorst and Major the Honourable Charles Keith-Falconer.

"The Council are happy to state that the following Associations have become members of the Union during the past year, viz.: Portsmouth Working Men's Liberal-Conservative Association; Taunton Working Men's Conservative Association; Portsmouth Conservative Club; Northampton United Operative Conservative Association; Sunderland Conservative Association; Gosport Working Men's Conservative Association; Peterborough Working Men's Conservative Club; Royton Working Men's Conservative Association; Swansea Constitutional Association; Hanley Branch of the Staffordshire Potteries Constitutional Association; Salisbury Constitutional Union and Working Men's Association; Brecon and Llywel Working Men's Conservative Association; Tiverton Working Men's Conservative Association; Wigan Working Men's Club; Radford Branch of the Nottingham Working Men's Constitutional Association.

"The total number of Associations now affiliated is 151.

"As to the general operations of the Union, lectures were delivered or deputations have been received at the following places:—Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Crewe, Dover, Halifax, Ipswich, Newport (Monmouthshire), Northampton, Portsmouth, St. Pancras, Scarborough, Taunton, and Whitby.

"Upwards of 42,000 new pamphlets have been printed during the past year, which, together with donations of books, &c., have been distributed among the various Associations: the most important of these were the speeches delivered by the Earl of Derby at Liverpool and the Right Hon.

B. Disraeli at Manchester, and pamphlets on the Alabama Claims and the Truck Acts, the latter written by Mr. W. T. Charley, M.P.

"In the Plymouth election, which resulted in the triumphant return of Mr. Bates, the Constitutional candidate, a deputation, composed of members of the National Union and of the Metropolitan Conservative Alliance, rendered good service by advocating the Conservative cause among the working classes in that Borough, and thus contributed much to Mr. Bates' success.

"The total number of Vice-Presidents is now 365, among whom are 66 noblemen and 143 past and present members of the House of Commons. The numbers of honorary members on the books is 219.

"In conclusion the Council cannot too earnestly impress upon the supporters of Constitutional principles the necessity of creating and maintaining Conservative Associations throughout the Kingdom.

"The existence of a strong Conservative feeling, coupled with loyal attachment to the Crown and Constitution, among the working classes, is now a fact admitted even by the bitterest enemies of the Conservative party, and in view of the possible passing of the Ballot or Secret Voting Bill, and the consequent inevitable creation of secret political societies throughout the Kingdom, the demoralising effects of which it is not difficult to estimate, the Conservative party, while convinced that it has nothing to fear from any change which may increase the independence of the voter, must still recognise the duty of stimulating and fostering organisations which afford the most efficient means of counteracting revolutionary opinions, and of inculcating an honest and manly political policy.

"The series of election victories during the past year which in nearly every instance have resulted in a Conservative gain, should be a proof of what union and organisation can do, and considering the extremely critical position of political affairs, and the probability of an early appeal to the country, the Council earnestly hope that there may be no falling off in the zeal and energy which have led to those results, and that they may continue to count on the support and good will of all those who have the good of the country at heart."

The Balance Sheet was also read.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, in moving the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet, expressed the very great pleasure he felt in being asked to preside, in the unavoidable absence of the Duke of Abercorn, over so large and influential a gathering. The National Union had only been established since 1867, and since that time it had done much to consolidate and strengthen the Conservative party; but he questioned whether at any time its success had been so signal as during the past year. In every recent election, with the exception of Dover, where, unfortunately, local jealousies had led to defeat, the Constitutional candidates had been triumphant.

There were a few points in the Report to which he wished to direct attention. He thought that the Council had taken a wise step in amalgamating the offices of the Union with the headquarters of the party. The Union was established, not to restrict or fetter local action, but to endeavour to stimulate and assist country Associations, and to promote the circulation of opinion between them and the leaders of the party. Nobody could be in a healthy state who had not a free and rapid circulation; and it seemed to him that rapidity of communication between the local Associations and the leaders of the party would be most effectually secured by the step which had been taken. The Union had sustained a severe loss by the resignation of Mr. Leonard Sedgwick, whose zeal and activity had done such good service in past years; and he (the Chairman) wished him hearty success in the new sphere of action to which he had been called. He was glad to find that Mr. Sedgwick's duties had been undertaken by Mr. J. E. Gorst and Major the Hon. C. Keith-Falconer, under whose guidance the Union would be effectively and economically managed. It was most satisfactory to notice that among the Associations which had been affiliated during the past year were many connected with the working men of the large towns of England. Previous to the Reform Act of 1867 any Conservative candidate who dared to contest a large town had generally met with signal disaster. That a great change in this respect had taken place was shewn by the result of the recent elections in Oldham, Plymouth, and the North West Riding, the latter of which was a collection of towns of great size and importance. The next point of importance in the Report was the large number of pamphlets which had been disseminated through the country. It seemed to him that the Conservative Party were blameable for not having attached more importance to the Press. The result had been that every action of a Conservative candidate had been misrepresented. The extensive publication of pamphlets would do much to obviate this evil, as it would, in the absence of cheap weekly Conservative newspapers, shew the working classes that the Conservative party had been persistently traduced, and that many measures of the highest benefit had been passed through their instrumentality. There were many who held that should the Ballot be thrust upon them it would be useless to pay any attention to the registration of voters. He did not concur in these views, and he would remind those who held them that under the Ballot there will be the grossest forms of corruption, and one of the greatest evils to be contended with will be the facility with which personation will be carried on. In Middlesex, for example, there were such large numbers of non-resident voters that unless the register was in the most perfect condition it would be quite possible for personation to be resorted to to such an extent as to carry the election.

He congratulated the members of the National Union on the favourable auspices under which they now met. Never had the Conservative party stood in a better position than at the present time. It was not necessary to enumerate the long and interminable catalogue of blunders which the Government had perpetrated. He did not know which was worse, their home or their foreign policy. The only result of the latter had been the rebuilding of Sebastopol. The Liberal party was much dissatisfied with their leader, and was rapidly falling to pieces ; and if an election were now to take place, many of those who called themselves Liberals would come over to the Conservative side. But we must rely upon ourselves. He had great respect for the Whigs, but it seemed to him that they were people who, though they spoke Conservative, always voted Radical. Burke's definition of a party was "a body of men united for promoting national measures upon principles upon which they are agreed." There was not a single principle upon which the Liberal party was agreed. The Conservatives are agreed and united, but they could not give effect to their principles unless they had a majority in the House of Commons, and they could only obtain that by organized action. The National Union was a most effective means for promoting Conservative feeling and organization, and it was for that reason that he solicited for it their support.

The Earl of DENBIGH said that, as one of the earliest members of the Union, and a most sincere and firm Conservative, he had the greatest possible pleasure in seconding the resolution for the adoption of the Report. He advised the maintenance of the Union on the broad basis of Conservatism and Constitutionalism. They had a very great and important battle to fight, and it was most important that no petty differences should hamper their action. By these means, in former times, many of his co-religionists had been driven into the Liberal ranks, but he rejoiced to say that they were gradually coming round to the Conservative side. He adopted that definition of a party which the noble chairman had quoted, and he earnestly hoped that no private feeling or religious differences would be allowed to interfere with their political unity.

Mr. E. BROOKES (Metropolitan Conservative Alliance) spoke in favour of the adoption of the report, and, having been one of the deputation which had represented the National Union at the late Plymouth election, described the reception it had met with there, and the gratifying evidence it afforded of the gradual spread of Conservative feeling among the working classes.

Mr. W. H. PETERS, of Harefield, Exeter, in supporting the resolution, spoke as to the progress which was being made in the South-West of England.

Mr. HALL (Representative of the Portsmouth Working Men's Conservative Club) said that in that town they had enrolled no less than 3,000

members. He had great pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Report, and impressed upon the members the necessity of bringing to bear all their powers of union and organisation in order to defeat their opponents.

The Report and Balance Sheet were then adopted *nem. con.*

The CHAIRMAN then invited suggestions as to the most suitable place for holding the next Annual Conference.

Mr. BURRILL (York) proposed that the Conference should be held at some large town in the north, such as Leeds or Bradford. Conservatism was making rapid strides in those places, and he thought it would be an advantage that the gathering should take place at one of them.

Mr. H. GILBERT (Wakefield), supported the proposition, and stated that he was sure there would be a large attendance if either of these towns were decided upon. The Conservatives had now a majority in the Town Council at Wakefield, were well represented on the Board of Guardians, had established a Conservative newspaper, and were fully confident of being able to return members holding their views for both the borough and the county.

Mr. BEAVAN (Ipswich) thought that it was desirable that the Conference should be held at Ipswich or some town in the Eastern Counties.

Mr. COOKE (Ipswich) concurred.

Mr. MATTLEY (Rochdale) suggested that Manchester should be selected as the place of meeting, and instanced the reception lately given to Mr. Disraeli as a proof of the strength of Conservatism in that town.

Mr. FORSTER and Mr. PATTISON (Gateshead) recommended that the Conference should be held at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Mr. H. C. RAIKES, M.P., advised that the matter should be referred to the Council for decision. He detailed the course adopted on previous occasions, and said that the choice of a place of meeting must depend in a great measure upon the political circumstances of the time. The places suggested would be carefully considered by the Council, and he thought it would be best to leave the matter in their hands.

Mr. A. BEDDALL (Metropolitan Conservative Alliance) supported this view, and the matter was consequently referred to the Council for their consideration, as was also the question of the choice of President for the ensuing year.

Viscount SANDON, M.P., moved the re-election to the Council of the following gentlemen :—H. Cecil Raikes, Esq., M.P., Lord Colchester, J. E. Gorst, Esq., Major the Hon. C. Keith-Falconer, Captain Armstrong, Mr. W. Bennett, W. T. Charley, Esq., M.P., E. Clarke, Esq., Mr. W. Cotter, R. N. Fowler, Esq., M.P., Augustus Goldsmid, Esq., H. A. Greig, Esq., Morgan Howard, Esq., Hon. W. F. B. Massey, W. A. Mayne, Esq., Campbell de Morgan, Esq., C. S. Mainwaring, Esq,, F. Montgomerie, Esq., E.

Pinches, Esq., Mr. J. Ross, B. B. Sapwell, Esq., Leonard Sedgwick, Esq., Mr. M. Walbrook, and J. A. Willis, Esq. He said that in his opinion there was nothing more important than to keep up a connection between country branches and the centre in London, so that the current of popular feeling might be constantly known. By that means they would in the end be able to checkmate the Liberal party, whom they all distrusted. The Liberals laughed very much at the alarm expressed by the Conservatives at the progress of revolutionary principles. They asked who wanted to destroy the Church and upset the Monarchy? But had not the revolutionary changes which they all lamented been proposed in the first instance, very stealthily, by insignificant members of the Liberal party, until they had at length been adopted by the leaders, and unfortunately carried into law? Unless, therefore, they were watchful, their birthright, the Constitution, would be stolen. It was utterly impossible that the Government of the country could be carried on long while the Liberal party were so disunited. They were in search of a new bond of union, and he advised the Conservative party to be united and be determined to wait and watch in defence of the glorious Constitution.

Mr. DAVIES (Bristol) seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. W. H. SMITH, M.P., said that the Liberal party were reduced to look out for a policy. He could not endorse too strongly the necessity of vigorous action which had been advised by the noble Lord. He had no doubt whatever that measures would be proposed in time to come which would imperil the Constitution and all that they held dear in the institutions of the country. United and sustained action in their defence was the only means of counteracting such attempts.

Mr. COTTER moved the re-election of the Vice-Presidents, which was seconded by Mr. THOMAS (Liverpool), and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. HOWEL GWYN having proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair, which was seconded by Mr. DOLMAN (Gosport) and carried unanimously, the proceedings terminated.

THE BANQUET AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

The room in which the Saturday afternoon concerts are given was set apart for the dinner, and about 1,500 persons were collected round the tables. The Duke of Abercorn, K.G., presided ; next to him, on his right, was Mr. Disraeli, and on the left the Lord Mayor ; and among the other guests at the head of the table were—Earl of Shrewsbury, Earl of Abergavenny, Right Hon. Lord Claud Hamilton, M.P., Lord George Hamilton, M.P., Lord Sussex Lennox, Viscount Holmesdale, M.P., Viscount Mahon, M.P., Viscount Sandon, M.P., Lord A. E. Hill-Trevor, M.P., Lord Colchester, Lord Skelmersdale, Lord Borthwick, Hon. Algernon Egerton, M.P., Major Hon. C. Keith Falconer, Hon. F. Walpole, M.P., Hon. H. Roper-Curzon, Hon. Wilbraham Egerton, M.P., Hon. Mark Rolle, Colonel Right Hon. T. E. Taylor, M.P., Sir Henry Edwards, Bart., Sir John C. D. Hay, Bart., M.P., Sir J. E. Eardley Wilmot, Bart., Sir H. J. Selwin-Ibbetson, Bart., M.P., Sir F. M. Williams, Bart., M.P., Sir H. Drummond Wolff, K.C., M.P., Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Belcher, K.C.B., Sir Robert Carden, Admiral Eden, Admiral Elliot, Colonel Gray, M.P., Colonel Hogg, M.P., Major Waterhouse, M.P., A. P. Arkwright, Esq., M.P., W. T. Charley, Esq., M.P., G. Cubitt, Esq., M.P., E. B. Eastwick, Esq., C.B., M.P., G. Elliot, Esq., M.P., H. M. Feilden, Esq. M.P., R. N. Fowler, Esq., M.P., J. Hardy, Esq., M.P., W. Lowther, Esq., M.P., T. Meyrick, Esq., M.P., C. H. Mills, Esq., M.P., F. S. Powell, Esq., M.P., H C. Raikes, Esq., M.P., J. G. Talbot, Esq., M.P., W. Tipping, Esq., M.P., J. Watney, jun., Esq., M.P., J. L. Wharton, Esq., M.P., Rowland Winn, Esq., M.P., J. A. Arbuthnot, Esq., M.P., Montagu Corry, Esq., Hardinge Giffard, Esq.,Q.C., Morgan Howard, Esq., P. F. Robertson, Esq., John Taylor, Esq., Philip Twells, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

The CHAIRMAN : My Lords and Gentlemen,—The first toast which I have the honour to propose to you is one which, at an assembly of Conservatives, is always received with the utmost loyalty and enthusiasm—" The Health of the Queen." Gentlemen, we live in times when attempts have been made by men, of whom better things might have been hoped, to impugn the sanctity and question the propriety of the devotion which we pay to the Sovereign and to the Monarchy. But these disloyal and un-

manly suggestions have been met during the past year by the most unmistakable signs of disapproval and contempt by the people of England. The Conservative reaction has sunk too deeply into the heart of the country to allow such license or such visions of the Republican or the Revolutionist; and, I believe, at no period has there been a more genuine attachment and loyalty felt and exhibited towards the Queen and the Royal Family than during the eventful time last winter of the Prince of Wales's illness. Gentlemen, to you as Conservatives, and as such necessarily among the most loyal of her Majesty's subjects, it is needless for me to preface the toast I am about to give with any further comment than to ask you to drink with all the enthusiasm with which you are accustomed to receive that honoured name—the toast of "The Health of the Queen."

The CHAIRMAN: My Lords and Gentlemen,—In proposing the next toast, of "The Prince and Princess of Wales and the rest of the Royal Family," I need not remind you of the gratitude we owe to Providence for having spared a life so valuable as that of the Prince of Wales. The Prince himself, in the words that he spoke a few days ago at Yarmouth, shewed his deep sense of gratitude both for that life preserved and also for that genuine and most remarkable expression of sympathy and anxiety felt by the whole nation for him and his illustrious and amiable Princess. Gentlemen, when we stood face to face with the danger of a death so disastrous to our Royal Family, it was then that the genuine loyalty of the people of England and heir dislike and abhorrence of those deluded men who wish to uproot that monarchical principle which has made England the freest and the greatest Empire in the world—it was then that this general feeling of loyalty could be appreciated and realised to its full extent and value. Gentlemen, I give you "The Health of the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Rest of the Royal Family."

The Earl of SHREWSBURY said—My lord duke, my lords and gentlemen,—I rise with pleasure to offer to your notice a toast which is always significant, and which is of special significance to the Conservative party. I mean the toast of "The Army, the Navy, the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers." Perhaps I am hardly the man to offer to you this toast, as I have had the honour to be a soldier and have still the honour to be a yeoman. I am anxious not to detain you, but I must express to you my hearty congratulations on this assembly. The duty of a soldier is obedience, and discipline is the great characteristic of the army and navy, and I may also say that in a like manner it is characteristic of the Conservative union. Coupled with the toast there are names which give me great pleasure to offer to your notice. First, there is my old friend, Colonel Hogg, not only a good and brave soldier, but a Conservative, who has fought many a gallant battle in the Conservative interest. Next is Admiral Elliot, who also put on the

Conservative sword, and did good service to the cause; and next is Sir Henry Edwards. I have great pleasure in offering this toast to your notice, first, because Sir Henry Edwards is a brother yeoman, and next because, from long intercourse with him, I know he has the Conservative cause at heart. I have much pleasure in being here on this great occasion, and can only tell you that the feelings which I see growing rapidly in the metropolis are moving in the midland districts. Constitutional associations are there, and if need be they are prepared to fight, and I think with success.

Colonel Hogg responded for the Army, Admiral Elliot for the Navy, and Sir Henry Edwards for the Reserve Forces.

The Lord Mayor, who was received with loud cheers, said—My lords and gentlemen: I feel quite sure that the expression of your kind enthusiasm which you have shewn at this moment is not attributable to myself, but to the office which I have the honour to hold at this moment. You are all of you aware of the political opinions that I hold. It is most gratifying to me that on this occasion I am allowed to propose the "Constitutional Cause." I am convinced that the habits and interests of this country must ever be associated with the Constitutional party, and I believe most firmly and completely that if a Conservative Government had existed in a neighbouring kingdom, we should not have heard of those fearful events that have appalled us so much, which have so recently taken place across the Channel. What we pride ourselves on in this country, is our regard for the Constitution in which every individual in the kingdom has an interest. We must have a Government, and we believe our Government may be altered, made more efficient than it has been, but we do not like sudden changes. What changes are made should be such as the requirements of the age present to the mind of the Legislature as necessary to effect; but while our party are willing to make such changes, we must protest against making changes merely for the sake of alteration. Now, my lords and gentlemen, I am desirous that some one far more efficient than myself had this most important toast to propose; and when I tell you that I am to be followed by Mr. Disraeli, you will at once see how imperfect any remarks I could make would be on this occasion. But you have placed me in a position of honour. I must respectfully acknowledge the compliment, and shall always endeavour to support, maintain, and extend those principles of Constitutionalism which we are met here to-night to uphold. In asking you to drink the "Constitutional Cause," I am asking you to drink that which is important to yourselves, and to the country at large. I do not believe that France would be in the wretched condition that she is had she had a truly Conservative Government at her head. Let us promote a Conservative feeling in this country, and we shall avoid those evils which occur in countries which are not so well governed. I feel that any observations of my own can

inadequately convey to you the importance of Conservatism, and shall, therefore, refer you at once to the right hon. gentleman who is to follow me. I have to propose the "Constitutional Cause," and I beg to couple the toast with the name of Mr. Disraeli.

My Lord Duke and Gentlemen,—I am very sensible of the honour which you have done me in requesting that I should be your guest to-day, and still more for your having associated my name with the important toast which has been proposed by the Lord Mayor. In the few observations that I shall presume to make on this occasion I will confine myself to some suggestions as to the present state of the Constitutional cause and the prospects which you, as a great Constitutional party, have before you. Gentlemen, some years ago—now, indeed, not an inconsiderable period, but within the memory of many who are present, the Tory party experienced a great overthrow. I am here to admit that in my opinion it was deserved. A long course of power and prosperity had induced it to sink into a state of apathy and indifference, and it had deviated from the great principles of that political association which had so long regulated the affairs and been identified with the glory of England. Instead of the principles professed by Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, and which those great men inherited from Tory statesmen who had preceded them not less illustrious, the Tory system had degenerated into a policy which found an adequate basis on the principles of exclusiveness and restriction. Gentlemen, the Tory party, unless it is a national party, is nothing. It is not a confederacy of nobles, it is not a democratic multitude ; it is a party formed from all the numerous classes in the realm—classes alike and equal before the law, but whose different conditions and different aims give vigour and variety to our national life.

Gentlemen, a body of public men distinguished by their capacity took advantage of these circumstances. They seized the helm of affairs in a manner the honour of which I do not for a moment question, but they introduced a new system into our political life. Influenced in a great degree by the philosophy and the politics of the Continent, they endeavoured to substitute cosmopolitan for national principles ; and they baptized the new scheme of politics with the plausible name of "Liberalism." Far be it from me for a moment to intimate that a country like England should not profit by the political experience of Continental nations of not inferior civilisation ; far be it from me for a moment to maintain that the party which then obtained power and which has since generally possessed it did not make many suggestions for our public life that were of great value, and bring forward many measures which, though changes, were nevertheless improvements. But the tone and tendency of Liberalism cannot be long concealed. It is to attack the

institutions of the country under the name of Reform, and to make war on the manners and customs of the people of this country under the pretext of Progress. During the forty years that have elapsed since the commencement of this new system—although the superficial have seen upon its surface only the contentions of political parties—the real state of affairs has been this : the attempt of one party to establish in this country cosmopolitan ideas, and the efforts of another—unconscious efforts, sometimes, but always continued—to recur to and resume those national principles to which they attribute the greatness and glory of the country. The Liberal party cannot complain that they have not had fair play. Never had a political party such advantages, never such opportunities. They are still in power ; they have been for a long period in power. And yet what is the result? I speak not I am sure the language of exaggeration when I say that they are viewed by the community with distrust and, I might even say, with repugnance. And, now, what is the present prospect of the national party? I have ventured to say that in my opinion Liberalism, from its essential elements, notwithstanding all the energy and ability with which its tenets have been advocated by its friends — notwithstanding the advantage which has accrued to them, as I will confess, from all the mistakes of their opponents, is viewed by the country with distrust. Now in what light is the party of which we are members viewed by the country, and what relation does public opinion bear to our opinions and our policy? That appears to me to be an instructive query ; and on an occasion like the present it is as well that we should enter into its investigation as pay mutual compliments to each other, which may in the end, perhaps, prove fallacious. Now, I have always been of opinion that the Tory party has three great objects. The first is to maintain the institutions of the country—not from any sentiment of political superstition, but because we believe that it embodies the principles upon which a community like England can alone safely rest. The principles of liberty, of order, of law, and of religion ought not to be entrusted to individual opinion or to the caprice and passion of multitudes, but should be embodied in a form of permanence and power. We associate with the Monarchy the ideas which it represents—the majesty of law, the administration of justice, the fountain of mercy and of honour. We know that in the Estates of the Realm and the privileges they enjoy, is the best security for public liberty and good government. We believe that a national profession of faith can only be maintained by an Established Church, and that no society is safe unless there is a public recognition of the Providential government of the world, and of the future responsibility of man. Well, it is a curious circumstance that during all these same forty years of triumphant Liberalism, every one of these institutions has been attacked and assailed—I say, con-

tinuously attacked and assailed. And what, gentlemen, has been the result? For the last forty years the most depreciating comparisons have been instituted between the Sovereignty of England and the Sovereignty of a great Republic. We have been called upon in every way, in Parliament, in the Press, by articles in newspapers, by pamphlets, by every means which can influence opinion, to contrast the simplicity and economy of the Sovereignty of the United States with the cumbrous cost of the Sovereignty of England. Gentlemen, I need not in this company enter into any vindication of the Sovereignty of England on that head. I have recently enjoyed the opportunity, before a great assemblage of my countrymen, of speaking upon that subject. I have made statements with respect to it which have not been answered either on this side of the Atlantic or the other. Only six months ago the advanced guard of Liberalism, acting in entire unison with that spirit of assault upon the Monarchy which the literature and the political confederacies of Liberalism have for 40 years encouraged, flatly announced itself as Republican, and appealed to the people of England on that distinct issue. Gentlemen, what was the answer? I need not dwell upon it. It is fresh in your memories and hearts. The people of England have expressed, in a manner which cannot be mistaken, that they will uphold the ancient Monarchy of England, the Constitutional Monarchy of England, limited by the co-ordinate authority of the Estates of the Realm, but limited by nothing else. Now, if you consider the state of public opinion with regard to those Estates of the Realm, what do you find? Take the case of the House of Lords. The House of Lords has been assailed during this reign of Liberalism in every manner and unceasingly. Its constitution has been denounced as anomalous, its influence declared pernicious; but what has been the result of this assault and criticism of forty years? Why, the people of England, in my opinion, have discovered that the existence of a second Chamber is necessary to Constitutional Government; and, while necessary to Constitutional Government, is, at the same time, of all political inventions, the most difficult, not to say the most impossible. Therefore, the people of this country have congratulated themselves that, by the aid of an ancient and famous history, there has been developed in this country an Assembly which possesses all the virtues which a Senate should possess—independence, great local influence, eloquence, all the accomplishments of political life, and a public training which no theory could supply. The assault of Liberalism upon the House of Lords has been mainly occasioned by the prejudice of Liberalism against the land laws of this country. But in my opinion, and in the opinion of wiser men than myself, and of men in other countries beside this, the liberty of England depends much upon the landed tenure of England—upon the fact that there is a class which can alike defy despots and mobs, around which the people may always

rally, and which must be patriotic from its intimate connection with the soil. Well, gentlemen, so far as these institutions of the country—the Monarchy and the Lords Spiritual and Temporal—are concerned, I think we may fairly say, without exaggeration, that public opinion is in favour of those institutions, the maintenance of which is one of the principal tenets of the Tory party, and the existence of which has been unceasingly criticised for forty years by the Liberal party. Now, let me say a word about the other Estate of the Realm, which was first attacked by Liberalism. One of the most distinguishing features of the great change effected in 1832 was that those who brought it about at once abolished all the franchises of the working classes. They were franchises as ancient as those of the Baronage of England ; and, while they abolished them, they proposed no substitute. The discontent upon the subject of the representation which has from that time more or less pervaded our society dates from that period, and that discontent, all will admit, has now ceased. It was terminated by the Act of Parliamentary Reform of 1867-8. That Act was founded on a confidence that the great body of the people of this country were "Conservative." When I say "Conservative," I use the word in its purest and loftiest sense. I mean that the people of England, and especially the working classes of England, are proud of belonging to a great country, and wish to maintain its greatness—that they are proud of belonging to an Imperial country, and are resolved to maintain, if they can, their empire—that they believe, on the whole, that the greatness and the empire of England are to be attributed to the ancient institutions of the land. Gentlemen, I venture to express my opinion, long entertained, and which has never for a moment faltered, that this is the disposition of the great mass of the people ; and I am not misled for a moment by wild expressions and eccentric conduct which may occur in the metropolis of this country. There are people who may be, or who at least affect to be, working men, and who, no doubt, have a certain influence with a certain portion of the metropolitan working classes, who talk Jacobinism. But, gentlemen, that is no novelty. That is not the consequence of recent legislation or of any political legislation that has occurred in this century. There always has been a Jacobinical section in the city of London. I don't particularly refer to that most distinguished and affluent portion of the metropolis which is ruled by my right hon. friend the Lord Mayor. Mr. Pitt complained of and suffered by it. There has always been a certain portion of the working class in London who have sympathised—perverse as we may deem the taste—with the Jacobin feelings of Paris. Well, gentlemen, we all know, now, after eighty years' experience, in what the Jacobinism of Paris has ended, and I hope I am not too sanguine when I express my conviction that the Jacobinism of London will find a very different result. I say with con-

fidence that the great body of the working class of England utterly repudiate such sentiments. They have no sympathy with them. They are English to the core. They repudiate cosmopolitan principles. They adhere to national principles. They are for maintaining the greatness of the kingdom and the empire, and they are proud of being subjects of our Sovereign and members of such an Empire. Well, then, as regards the political institutions of this country, the maintenance of which is one of the chief tenets of the Tory party, so far as I can read public opinion, the feeling of the nation is in accordance with the Tory party. It was not always so. There was a time when the institutions of this country were decried. They have passed through a scathing criticism of forty years ; they have passed through that criticism when their political upholders have, generally speaking, been always in opposition. They have been upheld by us when we were unable to exercise any of the lures of power to attract force to us, and the people of this country have arrived at these conclusions from their own thought and their own experience.

Let me say one word upon another institution, the position of which is most interesting at this time. No institution of England, since the advent of Liberalism, has been so systematically, so continuously assailed, as the Established Church. Gentlemen, we were first told that the Church was asleep, and it is very possible, as everybody, civil and spiritual, was asleep forty years ago, that that might have been the case. Now we are told that the Church is too active, and that it will be destroyed by its internal restlessness and energy. I see in all these efforts of the Church to represent every mood of the spiritual mind of man, no evidence that it will fall, no proof that any fatal disruption is at hand. I see in the Church, as I believe I see in England, an immense effort to rise to national feelings and recur to national principles. The Church of England, like all our institutions, feels it must be national, and it knows that, to be national, it must be comprehensive. Gentlemen, I have referred to what I look upon as the first object of the Tory party—namely, to maintain the institutions of the country, and reviewing what has occurred, and referring to the present temper of the times upon these subjects, I think that the Tory party, or, as I will venture to call it, the National party, has everything to encourage it. I think that the nation, tested by many and severe trials, has arrived at the conclusion which we have always maintained, that it is the first duty of England to maintain its institutions, because to them we principally ascribe the power and prosperity of the country.

Gentlemen, there is another and second great object of the Tory party. If the first is to maintain the institutions of the country, the second is, in my opinion, to uphold the Empire of England. If you look

to the history of this country since the advent of Liberalism—40 years ago—you will find that there has been no effort so continuous, so subtle, supported by so much energy, and carried on with so much ability and acumen, as the attempts of Liberalism to effect the disintegration of the Empire of England. And, gentlemen, of all its efforts, this is the one which has been the nearest to success. Statesmen of the highest character, writers of the most distinguished ability, the most organised and efficient means have been employed in this endeavour. It has been proved to all of us that we have lost money by our Colonies. It has been shewn with precise, with mathematical demonstration, that there never was a jewel in the Crown of England that was so truly costly as the possession of India. How often has it been suggested that we should at once emancipate ourselves from this incubus. Well, that result was nearly accomplished. When those subtle views were adopted by the country under the plausible plea of granting self-government to the Colonies, I confess that I myself thought that the tie was broken. Not that I for one object to self-government. I cannot conceive how our distant Colonies can have their affairs administered except by self-government. But self-government, in my opinion, when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of Imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an Imperial tariff, by securities for the people of England for the enjoyment of the unappropriated lands which belonged to the Sovereign as their trustee, and by a military code which should have precisely defined the means and the responsibilities by which the Colonies should be defended, and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the Colonies themselves. It ought, further, to have been accompanied by the institution of some representative council in the metropolis, which would have brought the Colonies into constant and continuous relations with the Home Government. All this, however, was omitted because those who advised that policy—and I believe their convictions were sincere—looked upon the Colonies of England, looked even upon our connection with India, as a burden upon this country, viewing everything in a financial aspect, and totally passing by those moral and political considerations which make nations great, and by the influence of which alone men are distinguished from animals. Well, what has been the result of this attempt during the reign of Liberalism for the disintegration of the Empire? It has entirely failed. But how has it failed? Through the sympathy of the Colonies with the Mother Country. They have decided that the Empire shall not be destroyed, and in my opinion no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible our Colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land. Therefore, gentlemen,

with respect to the second great object of the Tory party also—the maintenance of the Empire—public opinion appears to be in favour of our principles—that public opinion which, I am bound to say, thirty years ago, was not favourable to our principles, and which, during a long interval of controversy, in the interval had been doubtful.

Gentlemen, another great object of the Tory party, and one not inferior to the maintenance of the Empire, or the upholding of our institutions, is the elevation of the condition of the people. Let us see in this great struggle between Toryism and Liberalism that has prevailed in this country during the last forty years what are the salient features. It must be obvious to all who consider the condition of the multitude with a desire to improve and elevate it, that no important step can be gained unless you can effect some reduction of their hours of labour and humanise their toil. The great problem is to be able to achieve such results without violating those principles of economic truth upon which the prosperity of all States depends. You recollect well that many years ago the Tory party believed that these two results might be obtained—that you might elevate the condition of the people by the reduction of their toil and the mitigation of their labour, and at the same time inflict no injury on the wealth of the nation. You know how that effort was encountered—how these views and principles were met by the triumphant statesmen of Liberalism. They told you that the inevitable consequence of your policy was to diminish capital, that that, again, would lead to the lowering of wages, to a great diminution of the employment of the people, and ultimately to the impoverishment of the kingdom. These were not merely the opinions of Ministers of State, but those of the most blatant and loud-mouthed leaders of the Liberal party. And what has been the result? Those measures were carried, but carried, as I can bear witness, with great difficulty and after much labour and a long struggle. Yet they were carried; and what do we now find? That capital was never accumulated so quickly, that wages were never higher, that the employment of the people was never greater, and the country never wealthier. I ventured to say a short time ago, speaking in one of the great cities of this country, that the health of the people was the most important question for a statesman. It is, gentlemen, a large subject. It has many branches. It involves the state of the dwellings of the people, the moral consequences of which are not less considerable than the physical. It involves their enjoyment of some of the chief elements of nature—air, light, and water. It involves the regulation of their industry, the inspection of their toil. It involves the purity of their provisions, and it touches upon all the means by which you may wean them from habits of excess and of brutality. Now, what is the feeling upon these subjects of the Liberal party—that Liberal party who opposed the

Tory party when, even in their weakness, they advocated a diminution of the toil of the people, and introduced and supported those Factory Laws, the principles of which they extended, in the brief period when they possessed power, to every other trade in the country? What is the opinion of the great Liberal party—the party that seeks to substitute cosmopolitan for national principles in the government of this country—on this subject? Why, the views which I expressed in the great capital of the county of Lancaster have been held up to derision by the Liberal Press. A leading member—a very rising member, at least, among the new Liberal members—denounced them the other day as the "policy of sewage." Well, it may be the "policy of sewage" to a Liberal member of Parliament. But to one of the labouring multitude of England, who has found fever always to be one of the inmates of his household—who has, year after year, seen stricken down the children of his loins, on whose sympathy and material support he has looked with hope and confidence, it is not a "policy of sewage," but a question of life and death. And I can tell you this, gentlemen, from personal conversation with some of the most intelligent of the labouring class—and I think there are many of them in this room who can bear witness to what I say—that the policy of the Tory party—the hereditary, the traditionary policy of the Tory party, that would improve the condition of the people—is more appreciated by the people than the ineffable mysteries and all the pains and penalties of the Ballot Bill. Gentlemen, is that wonderful? Consider the condition of the great body of the working classes of this country. They are in possession of personal privileges—of personal rights and liberties—which are not enjoyed by the aristocracies of other countries. Recently they have obtained—and wisely obtained—a great extension of political rights; and when the people of England see that under the constitution of this country, by means of the constitutional cause which my right hon. friend the Lord Mayor has proposed, they possess every personal right of freedom, and, according to the conviction of the whole country, also an adequate concession of political rights, is it at all wonderful that they should wish to elevate and improve their condition, and is it unreasonable that they should ask the Legislature to assist them in that behest as far as it is consistent with the general welfare of the realm? Why, the people of England would be greater idiots than the Jacobinical leaders of London even suppose, if, with their experience and acuteness, they should not long have seen that the time had arrived when social, and not political improvement is the object which they ought to pursue. I have touched, gentlemen, on the three great objects of the Tory party. I told you I would try to ascertain what was the position of the Tory party with reference to the country now. I have told you also with frankness what I believe the position of the Liberal party to be. Notwithstanding their proud position, I believe they

are viewed by the country with mistrust and repugnance. But on all the three great objects which are sought by Toryism—the maintenance of our institutions, the preservation of our Empire, and the improvement of the condition of the people—I find a rising opinion in the country sympathising with our tenets, and prepared, I believe, if the opportunity offers, to uphold them until they prevail.

Before sitting down, I would make one remark particularly applicable to those whom I am now addressing. This is a numerous assembly; this is an assembly individually influential; but it is not on account of its numbers, it is not on account of its individual influence, that I find it to me deeply interesting. It is because I know that I am addressing a representative assembly. It is because I know that there are men here who come from all districts and all quarters of England, who represent classes and powerful societies, and who meet here not merely for the pleasure of a festival, but because they believe that our assembling together may lead to national advantage. Yes, I tell all who are here present that there is a responsibility which you have incurred to-day, and which you must meet like men. When you return to your homes, when you return to your counties and to your cities, you must tell to all those whom you can influence that the time is at hand, that, at least, it cannot be far distant when England will have to decide between national and cosmopolitan principles. The issue is not a mean one. It is whether you will be content to be a comfortable England, modelled and moulded upon Continental principles and meeting in due course an inevitable fate, or whether you will be a great country,—an Imperial country—a country where your sons, when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen, but command the respect of the world. Upon you depends the issue. Whatever may be the general feeling, you must remember that in fighting against Liberalism or the Continental system you are fighting against those who have the advantage of power—against those who have been in high places for nearly half a century. You have nothing to trust to but your own energy and the sublime instinct of an ancient people. You must act as if everything depended on your individual efforts. The secret of success is constancy of purpose. Go to your homes, and teach there these truths, which will soon be imprinted on the conscience of the land. Make each man feel how much rests on his own exertions. The highest, like my noble friend the chairman, may lend us his great aid. But rest assured that the assistance of the humblest is not less efficient. Act in this spirit, and you will succeed. You will maintain your country in its present position. But you will do more than that—you will deliver to your posterity a land of liberty, of prosperity, of power, and of glory.

The Duke of ABERCORN said : After the admirable and eloquent speech of my right hon. friend, I should feel diffident in addressing you were it not that the toast I have to propose is one which needs all your sympathies, and requires no eloquence from me to recommend it. Gentlemen, in proposing this toast—I will not say the toast of the evening, for I think the honour my right hon. friend has done us by his presence here on this occasion is undoubtedly the event of the evening—but, in proposing the toast of "The National Union," I may congratulate you upon the great precedents these words have had these last few years. We have been nobly and ably supported in former times, but it has been the especial merit and function of the National Union to unite and consolidate our various societies throughout the land. By means of the National Union, and with the able assistance of our late secretary, we have been able to cement and connect all the most powerful Conservative societies into one organised form, and the co-operation of the National Union has been a most important instrument in effecting the spread of Conservative opinions. There is no doubt that the victories we have gained in the elections of Truro, East Surrey, Plymouth, the West Riding, and elsewhere have been owing to the experience the country has had of the Liberal policy of the last three years ; but great as that reaction has been, and much more extensive as we believe it will become, we must not forget that it is due to the exertions of the National Union that we have been able to secure so many triumphs to the Conservative cause. We have been taunted by the Liberal party with the question, "What is the Conservative object, and what is the Conservative policy ?" My right hon. friend, in his most able and admirable speech, has told you what the Conservative policy and what the Conservative objects are, and let me ask, in return, of you what the Liberal policy has been during the past three years ? It is now three and a half years ago since Mr. Gladstone announced the two great measures on which he would rely for the confidence of the country. These measures were the destruction of the Irish Church and the Irish Land Bill, in which the most exaggerated expectations were held out to the tenantry of Ireland. But what, I ask, has been the result of these measures ? Take first the Irish Church Bill. Have we found the Roman Catholics willing to acquiesce in and accept the message of peace ? Have we not rather witnessed the too successful attempt to establish in the place of the old Protestant ascendancy, an ascendancy far more injurious to the liberty of the people ? Gentlemen, we cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that as one of the chief results of the Church Bill a Roman Catholic priest, the Cardinal Archbishop, is without doubt at this moment the arbiter of Ireland. Well then, gentlemen, turn to the Land Bill, and what do we see ? In addition to those just rights and claims which every honest man would have given measures were carried which cut deeply into the property

of the landlords. I ask, after making those concessions, after giving up so large a portion of the fee simple of the soil to the occupiers of it, have we found more peace? Have we not found, on the contrary, more of the old agrarian crimes? Such have been the results of the two great Irish measures on which Mr. Gladstone asked for the confidence of the country. One would have thought that Mr. Gladstone, having made every concession, would at least have been able to accomplish this for his Government, that it should command respect and popularity. I need not tell you how little he has been able to do this. If we look into the state and condition of Ireland, we shall have reason to regret the rashness which could believe in such things. Under these rash promises, which acted as a stimulant to disaffection—a party has sprung up under the name of "Home Rule." No one has a greater affection or regard for the Irish people than I have, and I say that he was no true friend to Ireland who would hold out to an excited people the expectation that they were likely to receive most unlimited and most hazardous concessions. Such has been the conclusion of Mr. Gladstone's policy in Ireland. If we turn to the results of his administration at home, in the colonies and abroad, we shall see that he has been no more fortunate. He has created discontent in the three great services of the country—the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service. As regards the colonies, my right hon. friend has alluded to the spirit of parsimony which has been in danger of alienating some of our most valuable colonies from the mother country. Then as regards our foreign relations, the result of the Crimean War has been abandoned in consequence of an insolent message from Russia, and there is the great question of the Alabama Claims, shewing the inability of the Government. Can we wonder that with such reasons and such misgivings the country should awake from what Mr. Gladstone endeavoured to impress upon it in 1869, and that there should be an extensive reaction against him on all sides. But, gentlemen, it is not to the distrust of the Liberal party or to the failure of their leader, but to the renewed exertion of the Conservative party that we must look for the succesful maintenace of our Constitutional principles. When I say the Conservative party, I do not mean Parliamentary leaders and party alone; I mean every man who values the blessings of our institutions, every tradesman who desires safety to doubt and distrust, every working man who prefers a healthy home to the visionary promises of Democracy, and gentlemen, as a humble member of the Conservative party, I may say that what we want is not place but power, power successfully to uphold Constitutional views, power to enforce the solution of the problem by which the working classes may be improved. My right hon. friend has alluded to the talk which has been thrown out that Conservative policy is one of sewage. Let me state that there are yet other things we want except

sewage—we want a Government that commands respect at home and abroad. We wish the institutions that have been handed down to us to be preserved inviolate. We ask for security of property, and certainty from disastrous changes for the rights of the working man as well as for security of property. We deprecate the idea that these great social and political problems which only grow with a nation's growth should be forced into an unnatural growth by a political leader to reunite a political party or oppose a political opponent. We ask for the well-balanced rights of classes as well as the security of property. You well know how these things have failed in the hands of Mr. Gladstone, and we know not, neither does Mr. Gladstone himself know, what disturbance of our Constitution he may yet think necessary for any future hour of his party emergency. Gentlemen, it is for you, and such as you, with the strength of the Conservative party—strong in the soundness of its principles and in its organisation by the consolidiation of the principal Conservative societies—to shew how great and complete is the reaction from the Liberal policy ; and I believe that the hour is at hand when you will be able, with irresistible force, to enforce those principles of Constitutional Government for which your Association have so nobly struggled.

Mr. Cecil Raikes said : My Lord Duke, my Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—About five years ago we met in this very room to celebrate the first important step which had been taken to bring about a union of the Conservative and Constitutional Associations of this country, and at that dinner there was read a remarkable letter from the right hon. gentleman, who has honoured us by being our guest to-day. I do not pretend to quote that letter verbatim, but I remember one sentence which must, I am sure, dwell in the memory of all those who were here on that occasion, in which the right honourable gentleman said that the rich and powerful may always be expected to defend themselves ; but that the privileges of the people required the support of national institutions. Just as that pregnant sentence has developed into the great exposition of national policy to which we have just been listening, so has this small commencement of the union of Conservative Associations grown until it has borne the great fruit which we may say we have reaped here to-day. Throughout the length and breadth of England we have Conservative and Constitutional Institutions. Wherever can be found persons who take an interest in that national prosperity which we endeavour to uphold, there we find the nucleus of the Conservative and Constitutional Association, and where we find the nucleus there we find the elements of future success. The movement set on foot in 1867 was scarcely in time to catch the public feeling before an appeal was made to the country, and it was only in constituencies where all the working classes have for years been practical politicians that its effect was immediately

seen; but in the City of Westminster and the great constituencies of Lancashire we had the first great example of what can be done by Conservative Associations. Since that day every election has afforded us an opportunity of teaching our opponents over and over again the same lesson; and whenever the time comes—and I suppose it is not far distant—when we shall have the opportunity of teaching them that lesson on a larger scale, you will, I hope, see that the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations is not a society formed for mutual admiration and agreeable banquets, but that it will tell its own tale in the altered complexion of the House of Commons. A few years ago we heard that remark on everybody's lips which has become almost stale, and certainly ridiculous, that if a Conservative working man could be found he ought to be put in a glass case. We have found for him the largest glass case in England to-night. It has scarcely been able to contain the two thousand representatives of the working men's associations which have thronged to this place to welcome the leader of the National party; and I will venture to say that by the time another banquet comes round which has to be celebrated in London you will find that it is necessary, as it was in Manchester, the other day, to limit to the smallest possible per centage the number of tickets that can be given to each Conservative Association. I am not going to detain you at this hour of the evening, but I am glad to think that our name, which was adopted from obvious and natural reasons in the first instance, because it specially expressed our purpose, will gather somewhat fresh significance from the assurance of our leader to-night, and that the public will come to understand that the National Union of Conservative Associations is a band which holds together the active forces of the national party.

Viscount HOLMESDALE said: My Lord Duke, and gentlemen, in the absence of Sir John Pakington, it has unexpectedly fallen to me to propose the next toast. After the good speakers whom you have heard I am sure but very few words on my part will be necessary to secure your cordial approval of the toast entrusted to me, and the more especially as it is, in fact, "Our Noble Selves." In asking you to drink "Success to the Constitutional Conservative Associations of the Country," I am asking you to drink success to Associations of which all of you, or nearly all of you, are members, and Associations, the good work they are doing you are all familiar with—so that in drinking this toast we shall be drinking our own healths and nothing else. Whilst we endeavour to extend the useful work they are doing let us not forget the good work they have done in various parts of the country; and let us not forget that the gentleman (Mr. J. Taylor) whose name is coupled with this toast, and who, as hon. Secretary of the Association in the North-west Riding of Yorkshire, fought the last election against

tremendous odds ; he fought as canny Yorkshiremen alone can do, and fought successfully. Let that be a lesson to us on future occasions, and let us all give him our hearty cheers and determine to become worthy followers of our noble chief.

Mr. JOHN TAYLOR : I feel considerably embarrassed at having for the first time in my life to address an assembly so distinguished and so influential, but when I know that the National Union selected me to respond to this toast simply and purely because I was connected officially with the Conservative Association of the North-West Riding of Yorkshire, how much soever my natural diffidence would have led me to decline the honour of responding, I felt, as you have been reminded by a preceding speaker to-night, that a Conservative ought not to neglect his duty, and I felt that that duty was imposed upon me to-night, and that I ought to fulfil it. And, gentlemen, allow me to say that the Council of the Union were not inappropriate in alluding to the North-West Riding this evening, when the Conservative and Constitutional Associations were the subject of our meeting, because if ever an election was won by the Conservative party, and won through the instrumentality of Conservative and Constitutional institutions, that election was the one for the North-West Riding of Yorkshire. I am not forgetful that we had on that occasion the assistance of another party—what we call in Yorkshire the Moderate Liberal party ; but, if I might allude to the character which has been given to you by the right hon. leader of our party, of the great Liberal party—a party who view those men with mistrust and repugnance. Gentlemen, three years ago the town in which I reside was considered the most Radical borough in England, but at the late election the Bradford revision district gave to Mr. Powell a clear majority of 312. In the town of Bradford, three years ago, every municipal office was in the possession of the Radical party. To-day they are in the possession of the Constitutional party. These things, gentlemen, I attribute in a very large measure to the influence of the Bradford Conservative Association. Three years ago we commenced with some 20 members ; we now number 2,500, each of whom pays his small subscription to sustain the Association. I think that such facts as these are worthy of note by those who uphold this Association, and I would venture very humbly to suggest that if the policy which we have pursued in Yorkshire were general, we should very shortly add largely to our party. I mean that we should in all our parochial and municipal matters endeavour, not to make them purely party matters, but to select from the moderate Liberal party gentlemen who should have part of the power and part of the influence in our several towns. In that way, I believe, and by that policy I believe we have gained an interest with the Moderate Liberals in Yorkshire, and I am of opinion that the assistance which they rendered us

in the late election was brought about by the policy thus carried on by our Association. There is only one other point I would venture, with great respect to all of you, to suggest, but which I fear is much neglected by our party, and that is to cultivate more closely intercourse with the working classes. That was part of the policy which was laid down, and I can assure you with no small satisfaction that there is an interest raised between different classes in our district which is worthy of imitation throughout the country. I believe that it is daily gaining ground, and, therefore, interest and influence for the Conservative party. I will only make one more remark, and it is this : that I believe Conservative and Constitutional Associations, if carried on with vigour, will do much good. The lassitude and indifference which have been alluded to are sadly too prominent among the Conservative party. I believe that the carrying on of the organisation and of the work of the Conservative and Constitutional Associations will keep alive that interest which is of the first importance in order that the ends may be obtained which we all seek, namely, the deposition of the present Government, and the substitution of the right hon. gentleman to whose words we have listened this evening.

Lord COLCHESTER next proposed "The Health of the Chairman," adverting to the successful *régime* of the noble Duke in Ireland.

The noble CHAIRMAN, in responding to the toast to his health proposed by Lord Colchester, said : My Lords and Gentlemen, I beg to return you my sincere and grateful thanks for the honour you have done me, and for the flattering manner in which you have received the toast with which my name is associated. I have only one subject of regret, and that is, that you have not had on this occasion one more competent than I have been to preside over you. My noble friend has been pleased to speak in favourable terms of the manner in which I have filled the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. I had the advantage at that time to be connected with my late illustrious friend, Earl Mayo ; and it is impossible for me to over-estimate the assistance he afforded me by his information, his sagacity, his moderation, which great qualities he brought to bear on the government of Ireland ; and I believe that of all the acts of pre-eminent wisdom which distinguished the Premiership of my right hon. friend (Mr. Disraeli), there were none more judicious than his selection of my late lamented friend—and that, too, in the face of the calumnies of a large portion of the Liberal party—to that great government of India where he was so illustrious and where he is so lamented. Gentlemen, if we were fortunate enough to leave Ireland in a state of far greater peace and content than we received it, and in greater peace and security than it has been from that time, it was because we endeavoured to govern that country in accordance with those Constitutional views which we are here to-day to advocate and uphold ; it was because we endea-

voured to dispense equal justice to all parties—not setting one party up to pull down another, not exalting one Church by the degradation of another, not conceding to the disaffected what we withheld from the loyal. Gentlemen, at this late hour I can detain you no longer than again to reiterate to you my thanks for the honour you have done me, and for the support which you have given me in the chair this evening, as well as for the great assistance you have given the great Constitutional Conservative cause by your presence here to-night.

The proceedings were then brought to a close.

[Publication No. XIX.]

THE

MINISTERIAL CRISIS.

SPEECHES

OF THE

RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.,

AND THE

RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.

(THE LATTER REVISED BY AUTHORITY).

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, MARCH 20TH, 1873.

MR. GLADSTONE :—I am now able to acquaint the House that those who were my colleagues in the Cabinet until the vote of Wednesday morning last, have consented, and have received Her Majesty's gracious permission, to resume the administration of the offices which they respectively held (cheers), and that we are prepared to carry on the work of the Government as before. But, Sir, a desire was naturally felt and expressed in many quarters, after the very succinct statements which were made to the House by myself, and subsequently by the right hon. gentleman opposite, for some further information as to the manner in which the time was occupied between Thursday afternoon in last week, when the right hon. gentleman, as he has stated, declined to undertake the formation of a Government, and Sunday evening, when I felt it my duty to place any services I could render at the disposal of Her Majesty. I will endeavour, very succinctly, but I hope, very clearly, to explain both the facts and the causes connected with the lapse of time. On Friday morning I had the honour to receive from Her Majesty, in writing, the reply which had been submitted to Her Majesty by the right hon. gentleman; and Her Majesty was pleased to ask for my advice thereupon. Upon examining that reply I doubted whether I could collect its effect with all the precision which was obviously requisite before I could proceed to tender advice to Her Majesty founded upon it. I, therefore, answered Her Majesty's reference to the effect that I did not feel quite certain as to the purport of that reply. On Friday evening I received a communication from Her Majesty, which, as I stated on Monday, completely put an end to any doubt I might have entertained, and satisfied me that that reply was an unconditional refusal on the part of the right hon. gentleman to take office. Thereupon, I thought it my duty to submit a statement to Her Majesty, the nature of which I will presently explain. That statement I prepared on Friday evening, and sent to Her Majesty on Saturday, and it was made known by Her Majesty to the right hon. gentleman opposite. Her Majesty received the reply of the right hon. gentleman at Windsor early in

the evening of Sunday, and at ten o'clock on the same evening Her Majesty transmitted to me that reply, together with Her Majesty's inquiry whether I was prepared to resume my office in the Government. Having read the reply, I believed its nature to be perfectly unequivocal. It removed from my mind the last vestige of expectation I had entertained that a Government might be formed by the efforts of the party opposite ; and, therefore, without any delay whatever, on the same evening, I returned an answer to Her Majesty to the effect that I would endeavour to arrange for the reconstruction of, or the resumption of office by the Government which had previously served Her Majesty. That task I undertook on Monday, and it has now been completed. (Hear, hear.) I have given thus far merely what I may term the chronology of the case. I said that, on learning that the reply tendered by the right hon. gentleman on Thursday amounted to an unconditional negative, I felt it my duty to prepare and submit to Her Majesty a statement upon that subject. There was a difference of opinion, in truth, between the right hon. gentleman and myself as to the precise measure of what might be expected from a party in Opposition under the circumstances in which the overthrow of the Government had occurred. I do not consider that I am here to assert the correctness of my own view of the case or to enter into any discussion whatever with regard to it. It may be a perfectly proper and legitimate subject for the consideration of Parliament should Parliament be disposed to take it into consideration. But my duty now is simply historical, and I do not wish, so far as it depends upon me, to say anything which can by possibility lead to controversy on this occasion. I will, therefore, state the opinion I entertain, which differs from the opinion of the right hon. gentleman, simply by reading, with Her Majesty's permission, an extract from the statement which, as I have said, I submitted to Her Majesty on Saturday. The statement contained a rather lengthened reference to what had occurred on the occasions of previous changes of Government. To all those references I shall now make no allusion, but shall read the passage in which the view I took of the case is set out :—

"It is in Mr. Gladstone's view of the utmost importance to the public welfare that the nation should be constantly aware that the Parliamentary action certain or likely to take effect in the overthrow of a Government, the reception and treatment of a summons from your Majesty to meet the necessity which such action has powerfully aided in creating, and again the resumption of office by those who have deliberately laid it down, are uniformly viewed as matters of the utmost gravity, requiring time, counsel, and deliberation among those who are parties to them, and attended with serious responsibilities. Mr. Gladstone will not and does not suppose that the efforts of the Opposition to defeat the Government on Wednesday morning were made with a previously formed intention on their part to refuse any aid to your Majesty, if the need should arise, in providing for the Government of the

country ; and the summary refusal, which is the only fact before him, he takes to be not in full correspondence, either with the exigencies of the case or, as he has shewn, with Parliamentary usage. In humbly submitting this representation to your Majesty, Mr. Gladstone's wish is to point out the difficulties in which he would find himself placed where he to ask your Majesty for authority to inquire from his late colleagues whether they, or any of them, were prepared, if your Majesty should call on them, to resume their offices, for they would certainly, he is persuaded, call on him, for their own honour, and in order to the usefulness of their further service if it should be rendered, to prove to them that according to usage every means had been exhausted on the part of the Opposition for providing for the Government of the country, or, at least, that nothing more was to be expected from that quarter."

Sir, the conclusion at which I arrived on Sunday evening was distinctly and definitely this—that nothing more was to be expected from that quarter, and consequently I thought the time had arrived when it was my duty unequivocally and at once to tender to her Majesty my humble services. It has been remarked by many, and probably by impartial observers, that the delay which occurred between Thursday and Sunday was due to my reluctance to resume office. I can only say it was not consciously due to such reluctance. I should never think that a sentiment of this kind, whatever might be its value, was a reason for delay in settling a question material to the interests of the country. (Hear, hear.) At the same time I do not disguise the fact that I felt reluctance, and I may have been unconsciously influenced by it. I felt it personally, from a desire for rest (cheers), the title to which had possibly been in some degree earned, so far as it can be earned, by labour. (Cheers.) I felt this reluctance also because I do not think that, as a general rule, the experience we have had in former years of what may be called returning or resuming Governments has been very favourable in its character. There was a case in 1832 when the Government of Lord Grey, after a crisis in the House of Lords, returned to office, and returned even with augmented vigour, to pursue their task. But that was a case in which the Government returned to take up again the Bill upon which the crisis had occurred and carry it to a successful conclusion. Since that time there have been similar cases in which Governments after resigning have returned to office. I do not wish to refer to them in particular, but I think that the subsequent fortunes of such Governments lead to the belief that, upon the whole, though such a return may be the lesser of two evils, yet it is not a thing in itself to be desired. (Hear, hear.) It reminds me of that which was described by the Roman General according to a noble ode of Horace :—

" Neque amissos colores
" Lana refert, medicata fuco ;
" Nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
" Curat reponi deterioribus."

(Hear, hear.) And I am bound to say that there is a special consideration

which likewise aided to inspire and strengthen the same feeling in my mind on the present occasion, because we must all feel that the relations of the party in Opposition to the party in Office, after what has occurred, and after the negative answer given to Her Majesty—I am not now insinuating any opinion as to the propriety of the negative, but am simply refering to the fact—the position even of the Opposition itself relatively to the Government is to some extent modified ; and I greatly doubt whether that modification is of a character likely to contribute to the efficient and satisfactory working of our system of Parliamentary Government. (Hear, hear.) Such, Sir, are the views which undoubtedly I entertain and which possibly may have influenced my conduct in a manner more decided than I have been myself aware of. But we have resumed our offices and, having resumed our offices, we shall endeavour fully and honourably to discharge the duties appertaining to them. (Cheers.) We have resumed our offices with the belief that there is nothing in the events which occurred last week to warrant us in arriving at any conclusion whatever—any special conclusion whatever—with regard to the duration of the existence of the present Parliament, as connected with any particular course of business or any particular limit of time. (Cheers, and some murmurs.) In that respect we stand now as we stood before, prepared to abide the course of events and to act as they may require. (Hear, hear.) But I have felt it my duty to say this much upon the subject because nothing can be more inconvenient and more injurious to the country than the prevalence of a floating, indefinite opinion (cheers) of an intention—not avowed by the Government, and not distinctly disavowed—to bring the present Parliament as soon as possible to a conclusion. (Cheers.) Such an intention is, I trust, now distinctly disavowed (hear, hear), but of course I need not say that we retain the liberty which is at all times essential to the discharge of the functions of a Government. (Hear, hear.) We shall endeavour to proceed, both with respect to legislation and administration, in the same manner and upon the same principles as those which have heretofore governed our conduct, and we shall address ourselves to the discharge of our arduous public duties, relying stedfastly upon the continued confidence and support of the House of Commons. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. DISRAELI :—Before I refer to the allusions which the right hon. gentleman has made to some controversial elements which during the last few days may have arisen between him and myself, with respect either to the conduct of this side of the House in reference to the recent vote, or my own in declining the high responsibility which Her Majesty graciously suggested to me to undertake, I think it may be convenient that I should as clearly as I can place before the House exactly what

part I have taken in these recent transactions, and give fully the reasons for the counsel which I presumed to offer Her Majesty under the circumstances. It was on this day week, when I was about to enter the House of Commons, that I had the honour of receiving a letter from the Queen informing me that Mr. Gladstone—I am correct in mentioning the right hon. gentleman's name (Hear, hear)—had just then quitted the Palace, having offered his own resignation and that of his colleagues to Her Majesty in consequence of the vote at which the House of Commons arrived on the preceding Tuesday, and that Her Majesty had accepted those resignations. The Queen inquired from me whether I would undertake to form a Government, and commanded my attendance at the Palace. When I was in audience I inquired of Her Majesty whether she wished that I should give a categorical answer to the question asked in Her Majesty's letter, or whether she desired that I should enter fully into the political situation. Her Majesty was graciously pleased to say that she should like to have an answer to that question, and that afterwards she wished me fully and freely to speak upon the present condition of affairs. The question being whether I would undertake to form a Government, I at once said that I believed I should have no material difficulty in forming an Administration which could carry on the affairs of this country with efficiency, and be entitled to Her Majesty's confidence, but that I could not undertake to conduct Her Majesty's affairs in the present House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) After that I proceeded, with Her Majesty's permission, to lay before the Queen the reasons which had induced me to arrive at this conclusion; and I will now, in as succinct a manner as I can, give these reasons to the House. I called Her Majesty's attention to the fact that although the course of the public elections during the last two years had shewn, in a manner which I think must be acknowledged by all impartial persons, that there was a change, and even a considerable change, in public opinion and in favour of the party with whom I have the honour to act in Parliament—(Hear, hear)—still it was a fact which ought to be placed clearly before Her Majesty that the right hon. gentleman opposite, notwithstanding all these gains by the Conservative party, was supported by a very large majority, and that I could not place that majority at a figure which could be accurately expressed unless I stated that it approached more nearly to 90 than 80. I believe I was correct in saying the majority of the right hon. gentleman was 88. Then I called the attention of the Queen to the fact that the recent division indicated no elements to which I could look with any confidence to obtain subsidiary or extraneous aid which would in any considerable degree, or perhaps in any degree whatever, modify the numerical position of the right hon. gentleman (Hear, hear); that the discomfiture of the Government was caused,

and the majority against them created, by the vote of a considerable section of the Liberal party, consisting of Irish members, who might fairly be described as representing the Roman Catholic interest, and that there was no common bond of union between myself and that party. (Loud Opposition cheers.) I stated that they would act, and most honourably act, with a view to effect the object which they wish to accomplish, namely, the establishment of a Roman Catholic University ; that in my opinion that question had been definitively decided by the nation at the last General Election ; but that, totally irrespective of that national decision, events had occurred in Parliament since which rendered it quite impossible for me to listen to any suggestions of the kind, because, since the last General Election, the endowments of the Protestant Church of Ireland had been taken away from it (cheers)—a policy which I entirely disapproved, which I had resisted, and which they had supported (Hear, hear), and which, having been carried into effect, offered in my mind a permanent and insurmountable barrier to the policy which they wished to see pursued. (Hear, hear.) Under these circumstances, I had to place before Her Majesty that I with my colleagues should have to conduct her affairs in a House of Commons with a most powerful majority arrayed against us. I had to point out to Her Majesty that this was a position of affairs of which I had some personal experience (laughter and cheers) ; that I believed it to be one detrimental to the public interest (hear, hear) ; that it permitted abstract resolutions on political affairs to be brought forward by persons who had no political responsibility, and that those resolutions were referred to afterwards, and precipitated the solution of great public questions which were not ripe for settlement. I represented to Her Majesty that this was a state of affairs which diminished authority, weakened Government, certainly added no lustre to the Crown, but, above all, destroyed that general public confidence which is the most vigorous and legitimate source of power. (Hear, hear.) Under these circumstances I felt it my duty to ask Her Majesty graciously to relieve me from the task which she had suggested to my consideration.

Now, Sir, it will be asked, and has been asked, no doubt, in every street and every chamber in this town, why, when being able to form an efficient Administration, and having been summoned to the Councils of Her Majesty deprived of the assistance of her previous advisers, the only obstacle before me being that I had to encounter a hostile majority in the House of Commons—it will be asked, I say, why, under these circumstances, I did not advise Her Majesty to dissolve Parliament. To that point, with the permission of the House, I will now address myself. Sir, a Dissolution of Parliament is a political function respecting which considerable misconception exists. It is supposed to be an act which can be performed with great promptitude, and which is a resource to which a Minister may

recur with the utmost facility. But the fact is that great mistakes prevail respecting this important exercise of the Prerogative. A Dissolution of Parliament is a very different instrument in different hands. It is an instrument of which a Minister in office, with his Government established, can avail himself with a facility of which a Minister who is only going to accede to office is deprived. (Hear, hear.) A Minister in office, having his Government formed, with many indications probably of the critical circumstances which may render it imperative on him to advise the Sovereign to exercise this Prerogative, has the opportunity of disposing of the public business preparatory to the act which he advises. But the position of a Minister who is only going to accede to office is in this respect very different. In the first place, he has to form his Administration, and that is a work of great time, of great labour, and of great responsibility. (Hear, hear.) It is not confined merely to the construction of a Cabinet, which, when you are honoured by the confidence of many companions in public life, is often the least difficult part of the task; but it requires communication with probably more than fifty individuals, all of them persons of consideration, with whom you must personally confer. The construction of a Ministry falls entirely on the individual entrusted with its formation. It is a duty which can be delegated to no one. All the correspondence and all the interviews must be conducted by himself, and, without dwelling on the sense of responsibility involved, the perception of fitness requisite, and the severe impartiality necessary in deciding on contending claims, the mere physical effort is not slight. As a matter of time it materially affects the position of the Government. Now, in the present case it would not have been possible for me to have formed a Government and to have placed it on that bench and in the other House in working gear until Easter. Well, the holidays would have intervened. After the holidays it might have been possible, by having recourse to methods I greatly disapprove—namely, provisional finance, by votes of credit, or rather votes on account, and by taking a step which, for reasons I will afterwards give, I highly reprobate—namely, accepting the Estimates of our predecessors—it might have been possible to have dissolved Parliament in the early part of the month of May. But when the month of May arrived, this question would occur—what are you going to dissolve Parliament about? (Cheers.) There was no particular issue before the country. (Cheers.) At least it cannot be pretended for a moment that there was any one of those issues before the country that have previously justified extraordinary Dissolutions of Parliament—questions which the country wished passionately to decide, and when in a political exigency of that kind a Minister is perfectly justified in having recourse to provisional finance, or any other means by which he can obtain the earliest decision of the country. (Hear, hear.) I wish the House for a moment to consider impartially what

was the real position of affairs. Her Majesty's Ministers had resigned. Her Majesty had called on the leader of the Opposition to form a Ministry, while he had nearly a majority of ninety arrayed against him. It was in his opinion necessary, of course, in the circumstances to appeal to the country, in order that that majority might be changed, probably into one, though perhaps not of that amount (a laugh), in his favour. (Cheers.) But if that be the real state of the case—if there were no issue before the country—for I do not suppose any one would maintain that the Irish University Bill was a question on which we could dissolve—the right hon. gentleman, by dissolving, might have wished to punish those who voted against him, but I could not take that course, for I was one of the criminals (cheers and a laugh)—if the case be as I state, that we could not carry on affairs without an appeal to the country upon grounds which would justify the constituencies in giving us a majority, is it not quite clear that we could not appeal to the country without having a matured and complete policy? (Cheers and counter cheers.) Hon. gentlemen opposite may laugh at the word "policy;" but I would suggest that it is impossible for those who sit on the Opposition bench suddenly to have a matured policy to present to the people of this country in case Parliament is dissolved. (Cheers.) An Opposition, of whatever party it may be formed, is essentially a critical body: it is not a constructive one, and it cannot be. Upon all the great subjects of the day, no doubt, gentlemen sitting on this side of the House have certain views and principles which guide them in dealing with the circumstances and measures before Parliament; but they must know that on all these questions they cannot for a moment rival the information possessed by a Government. However they may wish to do their duty to this House and offer their views and arguments for discussion, there is a degree of information which it is impossible to obtain by any but a Minister. Take a case illustrative of this. There is the question of our relations at this moment with Central Asia. No one will deny for a moment that this is a question of the highest importance—(Hear, hear);—it is one in some degree of instant interest, but still more grave from its ultimate consequences. If there was a discussion of the Central Asian question I myself, or my friends around me, might presume to offer our opinions to the House; but, so far as I am concerned, I should speak, as I trust I do on all matters of foreign policy, with reserve and unaffected diffidence, because I know very well that, were I to cross the floor of this House and enter the archives of Downing-street, I should find information there which I do not now possess, which might modify, nay, entirely change, my views, which might render it even necessary that, after much deliberation, we should place ourselves in communication with agents and authorities, and that we might even have to shape a particular course. All this cannot be done in a moment. And yet, how could we dissolve Parliament,

and appeal to the country for its confidence, without guiding it on a subject which, although the English people are not fanatically anxious to interfere in foreign affairs, unquestionably much occupies the public mind, and especially of those thoughtful classes who influence opinion. (Hear, hear.) And yet until we were in office, and had the means of considering and maturing our policy on the subject, the House must feel that would have been impossible. We should have had to go on that and other matters with a blank sheet of paper to the constituencies. Would that, I ask, have been an appeal becoming us to make to a sensible people like the English nation? (Cheers.) Take another question. My right hon. friend the member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Gathorne Hardy) has given notice of a motion, upon a subject infinitely more important than any Irish University question—(Hear, hear),—which concerns the highest interests of the country—one on which it is, in my opinion, the duty of a Minister to take a decided course, and arrive at a precise resolution—I speak of those three rules which Her Majesty's Government are attempting to introduce into International Law, which touch most intimately the rights of neutrals, and if misinterpreted must injuriously affect this country. (Hear, hear.) How would it be possible to appeal to the people of England so to exercise their suffrages that they should convert the large majority of the right hon. gentlemen opposite into a majority in favour of those who sit on this side of the House if we blinked giving our opinion on that vast question? (Cheers.) They would say, you appeal to the country, you ask for our confidence—what do you mean to do about that mysterious and perplexing question of the three new rules proposed to be introduced into International Law which affect all the rights of neutrals, and on which the position of this country may ultimately depend? It is clear that on such a matter we must speak with decision and act with energy. (Cheers.) How are we to do that unless we have the opportunity of investigating affairs with the information which is only at the command of a Minister who can then come forward with a policy for which he is ready to be responsible? (Cheers.) I do not wish to push the case with regard to foreign affairs farther, but I would remind the House that there is also the question of the mode of payment of the compensation money awarded by the Tribunal of Geneva. (Hear, hear.) That also is a question in which the country wants to be guided and instructed by a Ministry. (Cheers.) There is, however, one other point I cannot help noticing, and that is the French Treaty of Commerce. I have endeavoured to follow the negotiations with respect to that Treaty, but I confess I feel somewhat at sea with regard to them. I really do not know the engagements into which the Government are about to enter, but it is a subject of vast interest to the country. (Hear, hear.) Judging from

the communications made to me within the last week from the great seats of industry, no Minister could dissolve without speaking on that subject in a precise and definite manner. (Cheers.)

I mentioned to the House just now the necessity, in case we dissolved Parliament in the month of May—which would be the earliest possible period—of accepting the Estimates of our predecessors, which are on the table. As a general rule, and at all times, I highly reprobate that course. Nothing but a political exigency, nothing but the existence of a question on which the country is passionately determined to have an instant decision, can justify a Minister in taking that course. But look to our particular position with respect to this subject. You must remember that at the last General Election the country was particularly appealed to on the head of Expenditure. (Cheers.) The Expenditure of the Government of which I was the head was denounced as "profligate;" and the manner in which it was so held up to the people of this country greatly influenced the Elections —(cheers)—quite as much as the question of that unfortunate institution, the Irish Church, the spoliation of which, I believe, is not now so popular as it was at that time. (Cheers.) I speak with due diffidence on the point; there are alterations made in the mode of keeping the accounts since the Election of 1868; but, making all the deductions I can on this head, it does not appear to me that the expenditure of the country at the present moment is less than it was when it was denounced at the Election of 1868. I certainly do not wish on this occasion to make any charge against the present Government; but this I may say, it is a subject most important and interesting to the people of England, and one which, if I were a responsible Minister to-morrow, it would be my first task and effort to scrutinize with a view to find out whether there was any ground for the denunciation of the expenditure of 1868, and whether there are adequate grounds for the expenditure which at present prevails. This is a most grave business, which cannot be done in a moment. The Estimates of this country cannot and ought not to be settled by a few Treasury clerks. I have endeavoured to impress upon the House more than once—and generally speaking the principle has been accepted—that Expenditure depends upon policy; and, therefore, before we could decide what was the fitting expenditure of the country, especially in armaments, we must be minutely and accurately informed what are our engagements and relations with the various Powers of the world. If it be true that Expenditure depends upon policy, I beg the House to remember that, since I was at the head of public affairs, the greatest Revolution has happened in Europe since the first great French Revolution at the end of the last century. Much greater changes have occurred in Europe since the Government of 1868 than were effected by the Congress and the Treaty of Vienna. The Congress and Treaty of Vienna left

the boundaries of France untouched ; they left Germany divided among a variety of Princes and Potentates ; they left a divided Italy ; and they left Rome in the possession of the Pope. All these conditions have changed ; and many of the most important considerations that the Government of the day had to enter into when they decided upon our armaments in 1867 and 1868 are entirely changed. I do not mean to say there may not be new quarters in which it may be necessary to take precautions ; but the House will, I think, on reflection, agree with me that all the data upon which the expenditure for our armaments was calculated in 1868 are entirely changed. The consideration of these subjects would be a task which a new Government must enter into heartily, sincerely, and thoroughly. It would be impossible to go to the country, especially upon this subject of Expenditure, in perfect silence, and offer only a blank sheet. It is quite clear, if that be the case, we have first of all to consider the engagements and relations of this country with foreign Powers ; secondly, whether our armaments are efficient and sufficient for the purpose ; and, thirdly, whether that efficiency and sufficiency have been attained in the most economical manner. Is this an affair that can be accomplished with the facility with which, sitting on an Opposition bench, you can write an address to your constituents ? The House will see that, before making an appeal to the country, it would be necessary that we should encounter preliminary duties of the gravest responsibility. I go further on this head. However anxious a Government may be, in the contemplation of a Dissolution of Parliament, to wind up public affairs, however anxious they may be to discharge only those duties which seem absolutely necessary for carrying on the public service, I have observed that there is always some large question which cannot be shelved or shunted, either from the peculiar interest which the country takes in it, or the engagements of successive Ministers, and sometimes, and not uncommonly, from its indirect influence upon Imperial finance ; and there is one of those questions now —there is the question of Local Taxation. It would be impossible for a Ministry formed from the benches on either side, certainly from these benches, to go to the country and to be silent on the question of Local Taxation. It is no light matter to grapple with. It is possible, I give no opinion on that head now, that in attempting to settle it, you may have to interfere with your Imperial finance, and that a Budget may be affected by it. Well, what is the upshot ? (Hear.) The upshot is that if we had accepted office we should have had to conduct the affairs of Her Majesty's Government in Parliament for the whole Session, and for a Session of no ordinary length, and I was not prepared to take a step of that kind. I know from experience, as I mentioned before, what is the consequence to a party and to the public interest, of endeavouring to

carry on the Government of the country in a House in which a large majority is arrayed against you. I am not referring to the period when I had the honour to introduce and conduct through the House a Bill to amend the Representation of the People. I said then, and I say now, I think that the conduct of the House to Her Majesty's Ministers was independent, generous, and spirited. To that Bill the right hon. gentleman opposite, as the leader of the Opposition, offered an uncompromising opposition. I had the assistance of the House, and that Bill was triumphantly read a second time; and after the Easter holidays, when the right hon. gentleman rallied his forces and himself brought forward a motion which, if carried, would have been fatal to it, the right hon. gentleman was singularly defeated. Therefore, it is a perversion of terms to say that at that time we were carrying on the Government with a minority, because on critical occasions we had a majority, and the leader of the Opposition was defeated. (Hear, hear.) But, Sir, I have had some experience of conducting the Government really in a minority. I take the case of the Government of 1852. It is well known that Lord Derby was most disinclined to take office. He had declined it in 1851 under circumstances most painful to himself. The Queen was left for forty-eight hours without a Government. In 1852 Lord Derby was obliged to take office; yet before he took it he made overtures to Lord Palmerston to construct a Government with him; and Lord Palmerston, who seemed not unwilling to assist my noble friend, declined, on the ground that he had no friends. (Laughter.) A man whom we all remember as the most popular Minister in England gravely, and I believe sincerely, gave that as his reason. I believe Lord Derby on that occasion made overtures also to the right hon. gentleman opposite. [Mr. Gladstone: "No."] At all events he spared no pains, and I know that to many gentlemen who were not in political association with him he made overtures. Lord Derby was obliged to take the reins of Government. He formed a Cabinet of individuals who had never been in office; and the leadership of this House, for the only time, I believe, since the days of Lord Shelburne, was entrusted to an individual who had not the slightest official experience. If ever there was an occasion, one would think, for generous treatment on the part of the House of Commons, however great the majority might be, that was the instance. But what happened? The moment he took office the supplies were voted for six months only, forcing him to call Parliament together in November, when he was obliged to bring forward remedial measures essentially financial, and when the permanent officers of the Government declared that the Estimates could only be imaginary. I know well, and those who are around me know well, what will occur when a Ministry takes office and attempts to carry on the Government with a minority during the Session with the view of ultimately appealing to the people.

We should have what is called "fair play." That is to say no vote of want of confidence should be proposed, and chiefly because it would be of no use. There would be no wholesale censure, but retail humiliation. A right hon. gentleman will come down here, he will arrange his thumb-screws and other instruments of torture on this table—(laughter)—we shall never ask for a vote without a lecture, we shall never perform the most ordinary routine office of Government without there being annexed to it some pedantic and ignominious condition. ("No, no," and cheers.) I wish to express nothing but what I know from painful personal experience. (Laughter.) No expression of the kind I have just encountered could divest me of the painful memory; I wish it could. I wish it was not my duty to take this view of the case. In a certain time we should enter into the Paradise of abstract resolutions. One day hon. gentlemen cannot withstand the golden opportunity of asking the House to affirm that the Income Tax should no longer form one of the features of our Ways and Means. Of course a proposition of that kind would be scouted by the right hon. gentleman and all his colleagues; but then they might dine out that day—(laughter)—and the resolution might be carried, as resolutions of that kind have been. Then another gentleman, distinguished for his knowledge of men and things, would move that the Diplomatic Service be abolished. While hon. gentlemen opposite were laughing in their sleeves at the mover, they would vote for the motion in order to put the Government into a minority. (Renewed laughter.) For this reason:—"Why should men," they would say, "govern the country who are in a minority?" totally forgetting that we acceded to office in the spirit of the Constitution, quite oblivious of the fountain and origin of the position we occupied, and it would go very hard if on some sultry afternoon some member should not "rush in where angels fear to tread" and successfully assimilate the borough and the county franchise. (Loud cheers.) And so things would go on until the bitter end—until at last even the Appropriation Bill has passed, Parliament is dissolved, and we appeal to those millions who perhaps six months before might have looked upon us as the vindicators of intolerable grievances, but who now receive us as a defeated, discredited, and degraded Ministry whose services can be neither of value to the Crown nor a credit to the nation. (Hear.) Well, Sir, with these views, I think the House cannot be surprised that I should have felt it my duty, in concurrence with all those with whom I have acted in public life, humbly to represent to Her Majesty that I did not think it would be for the public advantage or for the honour of the Crown that under such circumstances—namely, the existence of a powerful majority against us—we should attempt to conduct Her Majesty's affairs.

Having announced that, I did not feel it my duty to recommend

Her Majesty to dissolve Parliament. I might, so far as Parliamentary precedent is concerned, here drop this subject; but there have been misconceptions on this head which I wish to remove, and therefore I may be allowed to say that Her Majesty on this occasion—with that judicial impartiality which she displays to all who serve her—(hear, hear)—when, after the enumeration of these difficulties, I hesitated in accepting the offer that was so graciously made to me, did impress upon me that if I undertook the task I might count upon her most cordial support, and that if a dissolution could at all assist me I might depend upon the exercise of the Royal Prerogative for that result. (Hear, hear.) However, I was obliged to represent to Her Majesty, by means of the details which I have given you, though not, perhaps, at so much technical length—(a laugh)—that a dissolution of Parliament would not remove the obstacles to which I have referred.

I ought not to pass unnoticed the observations with which the right hon. gentleman commenced his address. The right hon. gentleman has, with candour and temper, referred to the delay which elapsed between Thursday and Sunday in forming a Cabinet, and I think the House will agree with me that he has acquitted me—at least I understood him to do so—of being the cause of that delay. The right hon. gentleman seems to have misapprehended the decision which, on my part, I thought was singularly precise and definite. The right hon. gentleman has referred to a controversy between us which has not appeared before the House on the conduct of the Opposition in the course which they took on the motion for the second reading of the University Bill. I have no wish to enter into any discussion on this subject. The right hon. gentleman will bear me out that in my letter to Her Majesty I at least did not shrink from arguing the question and vindicating on constitutional grounds the course which we took. I refrain from further alluding to this subject, but I must say, in passing, I thought it was a most gracious condescension on the part of Her Majesty, to deign to become the medium of communications in order, to use Her Majesty's language, "to prevent, if possible, misconceptions." (Cheers.) As to the charge against myself that I did not take sufficient pains or exhaust the means of forming a Cabinet on the occasion, and which appears to have been the cause of the hesitation in the right hon. gentleman's mind, I hope that, as the right hon. gentleman has read a passage on that head, I may also read a passage from my letter to Her Majesty on the subject. In it I say :—

"The charge against the Leader of the Opposition personally, that by 'his summary refusal' to undertake your Majesty's Government he was failing in his duty to your Majesty and the country, is founded altogether

on a gratuitous assumption by Mr. Gladstone, which pervades his letter, that the means of Mr. Disraeli to carry on the Government were not 'exhausted.' A brief statement of facts will at once dispose of this charge. Before Mr. Disraeli, with due deference, offered his decision to your Majesty, he had enjoyed the opportunity of consulting those gentlemen with whom he acts in public life, and they were unanimously of opinion that it would be prejudicial to the interests of the country for a Conservative Administration to attempt to conduct your Majesty's affairs in the present House of Commons. What other means were at Mr. Disraeli's disposal? Was he to open negotiations with a section of the late Ministry—(loud laughter)—and waste days in barren interviews, vain applications, and the device of impossible combinations? Was he to make overtures to the considerable section of the Liberal party who had voted against the Government—namely, the Irish Roman Catholic gentlemen? Surely, Mr. Gladstone could not seriously contemplate this? Impressed from experience, obtained in the very instances to which Mr. Gladstone refers, of the detrimental influence upon Government of a crisis unnecessarily prolonged by hollow negotiations, Mr. Disraeli humbly conceived that he was taking a course at once advantageous to the public interests, and tending to spare your Majesty unnecessary anxiety by at once laying before your Majesty the real position of affairs."

(Cheers.) I spoke particularly from the experience which I, then myself inexperienced in public affairs, obtained when acting with Lord Derby and witnessing the course he took with reference to the Government of 1852, and if it be, as I hold, one of the greatest disadvantages of these political crises that so much public time should be wasted, that Parliament should become dislocated, that public business should be postponed or measures given up, and that the public mind should be disturbed, I consider I was doing my duty when I took every possible means to make the period during which the right hon. gentleman was absent from office as short as possible. While upon this subject, I beg to say that although I did not presume to give any advice to Her Majesty as to whom she should send for, as this is a peculiar right of the Crown with which no one ought to interfere, yet, in speaking of the difficulties of the position in which Her Majesty was placed, I did give my opinion that I thought the cause for the resignation of the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues was hardly adequate to the great event which had occurred. It appeared to me that, under the circumstances of the case, the right hon. gentleman was scarcely justified in the course he pursued, because we must remember that the unfortunate University Bill had been unpopular in this House from the beginning, and that a large section of the Liberal party opposed it on the same grounds on which it was opposed by gentlemen on this side of the House—namely, that it sacrificed the educational interests of Ireland to the claims of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. When we took that line in debate, it was with a complete anticipation that every gentleman connected with the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland would support Her Majesty's Ministers. (Ironical cheers and laughter from the Ministerial

side.) But I said it was possible that the right hon. gentleman, in consequence, I will not say of a hasty, but, as I think, of an unfortunate, expression he used a month ago when he introduced the Bill, might feel his honour concerned so far as to be obliged to resign office. As regards his honour a statesman cannot be too nice and scrupulous; but I thought the right hon. gentleman's honour was vindicated by the act of resignation, and that he might return to office without the slightest difficulty. (Hear, hear.)

I am quite aware that the counsel I humbly recommended to Her Majesty in these negotiations may have been disappointing to some of my supporters in this House—(cries of "No, no," from the Opposition)—and to many of my supporters in the country; but I would fain believe that, when they have given a mature and an impartial consideration to all the circumstances, they will not visit my conduct with a verdict of unqualified condemnation. (Cheers.) I believe that the Tory party at the present time occupies the most satisfactory position which it has held since the days of its greatest statesmen, Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville. It has divested itself of those excrescences which are not indigenous to its native growth, but which in a time of long prosperity were the consequence partly of negligence, and partly, perhaps, in a certain degree, of ignorance of its traditions. (Laughter from the Ministerial side.) We are now emerging from the fiscal period in which almost all the public men of this generation have been brought up. All the questions of trade and navigation, of the incidence of taxation, and of public economy, are settled. But there are other questions not less important, and of deeper and higher reach and range, which must soon engage the attention of the country. The attributes of a Constitutional Monarchy, whether the aristocratic principle should be recognised in our Constitution, and if so in what form—whether the Commons of England shall remain an estate of the realm, numerous but privileged and qualified, or whether they should degenerate into an indiscriminate multitude—(a laugh, and "Hear, hear,")—whether a National Church shall be maintained, and if so, what shall be its rights and duties; the functions of Corporations, the sacredness of endowments—(cheers)—the tenure of landed property, the free disposal and even the existence of any kind of property—(cheers and laughter)—all these institutions and all those principles, which have made this country free and famous, and conspicuous for its union of order with liberty, are now impugned, and in due time will become great and "burning" questions. (Cheers.) I think it is of the utmost importance that when that time—which may be nearer at hand than we imagine—arrives there shall be in this country a great Constitutional Party, distinguished for its intelligence as well as for its organisation, which shall be competent to lead the people

and direct the public mind. And, Sir, when that time arrives, and when they enter upon a career which must be noble, and which I hope and believe will be triumphant, I think they may perhaps remember, and not perhaps, with unkindness, that I at least prevented one obstacle from being placed in their way, when, as the trustee of their honour and their interests, I declined to form a weak and discredited Administration. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

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THE

GLADSTONE ADMINISTRATION.

FROM THE YEAR 1869 TO THE CLOSE OF THE SESSION OF 1872.

SECOND EDITION.

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THE GLADSTONE ADMINISTRATION.

Few Ministries since 1832 have survived, even by a few months, the period of six years; none have attained to seven. The present Government has disposed of all those great questions which, at its entrance into office, it undertook to settle. A quiet, unobtrusive session in 1873 will almost certainly be followed by a general election in 1874. And the moment, therefore, appears ripe for a general estimate of what the last four years have brought forth. It is time to inquire whether the encomiums lavished on Mr. Gladstone's Administration by the admirers of that gentleman are justified by results, and it becomes the duty of the Conservative party to present the people of England with such a summary of its fruits as may enable them to judge for themselves. The following analysis has been prepared with some care, though, of course, is not meant to be exhaustive. The writer has striven to be impartial, and not to withhold credit where credit was due. But at the same time he has seen no reason to disguise the sentiments which are notoriously entertained, not only by the Conservative party, but by thousands who have always been opposed to it, both on the means employed by Government for the acquisition and retention of power, and the peculiar circumstances which have distinguished their official conduct. It has been said so often as almost to have passed into a proverb, that whenever a change of principles happens to coincide with a man's worldly interests, he will, if he is wise, forbear, for the time, to take advantage of it. Mr. Gladstone has neglected this golden rule, and he cannot complain if the natural result follows. He changed his opinions both on the Church and the Ballot just at the moment when such a change was necessary to unite under his banner the extreme Radical party; and if he is accused of gratifying his personal ambition, in defiance of his own convictions, and careless of the public good, he has no one to censure but himself. If, among the readers of the following pages, any shall be found who have hitherto been supporters of the present Administration, we can only beg them to reflect in an earnest and candid spirit on the facts here presented to them. When they measure the amount of success which may fairly be attributed to its policy, with the injuries confessedly inflicted by it, and the long train of evils with which, seemingly, it is pregnant; when they remember that of the good which it has effected, a considerable amount is due to its political opponents, may we not hope that

they will pause ere they again contribute to the return of Ministerial candidates? May we not hope they will recognise that the first duty of an Englishman is to uphold the greatness of this Empire, and to secure the safety of the Constitution, to which we owe our glory and prosperity?

IRELAND.—The salient points in Mr. Gladstone's Administration will, doubtless, always be recognised in his Irish policy. On the disestablishment of the Irish Church he came into office. An Irish Land Law loomed in no remote distance. It would, however, answer no purpose at the present moment to reconsider these measures on their merits. To those who believe that the ancient Ecclesiastical system and the ancient Territorial system which still prevail throughout the greater part of Christendom are fundamentally erroneous, these measures must have been eminently satisfactory, had they been far more defective than they are. To those, on the other hand, who believe that the union of Church and State is a national blessing, and that the existence of a landed gentry is one of the best guarantees which we possess against some of the worst evils with which modern society is menaced, these measures would have been equally disagreeable had they been drawn up by the hand of Solon. But, now that more than five years have elapsed since this policy of generosity was announced—a policy which embodies nearly the reverse of the old apophthegm, and consists in robbing Paul to pay Peter—it is much to the purpose to inquire whether the consequences which were expected to flow from these two measures have accrued or not? This question the Government has answered for itself.

On the 17th of March, 1870, it had become necessary to enact another Peace Preservation Act, to meet the fresh crop of crime which had everywhere sprung up in Ireland. The rapid growth of agrarian outrage in the autumn of 1869 had not, it would appear, been mitigated by the promise of one Cabinet Minister that the peasantry should have "free land," or by the assurance of another that the conduct of their landlords was "felonious." The disestablishment of the Church had acted, it would seem, as a stimulant rather than a sedative; and though it was urged, in the interest of the Government, that these renewed outbreaks were but the last expiring efforts of Fenian desperation—the last resource of agitators who feared that by the Government policy their occupation would be cut from under them—subsequent events have scarcely been of a nature to sustain this theory. Another year passed away; and, with the Session of 1871, we were told that "the condition of Ireland presented a gratifying contrast with the state of that island in the preceding winter." Recent legislation was beginning to bear fruit. The generous feelings of the Irish people had responded to the Fenian amnesty. It was unfortunate that, in less than a month after the meeting of Parliament, the new Irish Secretary should have been heard giving notice to

the House of Commons that he was about to move for "a Select and Secret Committee" to inquire into the state of certain Irish counties, and the best means of suppressing the disorders which prevailed there. In the debate which followed, it was contended that crime in Ireland had diminished, and that the "intolerable state," on which Lord Hartington laid so much stress, was confined to the specified localities. Had this been all, it would have been too ridiculous in Government to ask for these extraordinary powers. But, though true to some extent in the letter, the assertion was false in the spirit. Where crime slumbered, it was only because it was triumphant. Its end was accomplished. Murder was reposing from its labours; and examples were no longer wanted when resistance was completely cowed. Government was blamed, on this occasion, for proposing an inquiry by committee, when Parliament would have taken their word for the necessity of the case, and have granted them what powers they asked for without a moment's hesitation. Mr. Gladstone was understood to thank Providence that these times were not as other times; that he was not as other Ministers; and that it was both his duty and his pleasure to take Parliament into his confidence, and consult with the House of Commons on this and similar emergencies. But as such a theory of his position is irreconcileable with circumstances of a later date, it may be presumed that he was misunderstood. But whatever dissatisfaction had been kindled in the public mind by the original proposal was evidently changed into a feeling bordering on contempt when Government stooped to shuffle out of it, and to cast the whole blame on their subordinate, who, they said, had misconstrued his instructions. A Committee, which was really secret, and was charged with the duty of devising corrective measures, however objectionable, might certainly have done something which an ordinary Committee could not. There would have been some meaning in it, though the precedents for secret Committees were not auspicious, and the transference to the House of Commons of a duty which belonged to the Executive was both a feeble and dangerous expedient. But when it became known that both the secrecy of inquiry and the power of suggestion were withdrawn, and that a proposal, introduced with so much pomp and ceremony, had dwindled to the dimensions of an ordinary committee which was seen to be totally superfluous, the position of the Ministry, ceasing to be odious, became at once simply ridiculous. Mr. Bernal Osborne described the request for a Committee as "a screen for Ministerial debility." And it seems reasonable to conclude that Ministers must have been conscious of standing in a somewhat embarrassing position, when their policy of conciliation had so soon to be followed by a policy of coercion. Under these circumstances, it may, not improbably, have occurred to them that the delegation of their own duties to a Select Committee might have the effect of distracting public attention, and, in surgical phrase, of dispersing any

public irritation which their want of success might have generated. The Committee, however, was, of course, granted ; and on the 2nd of May Lord Kimberley introduced a measure founded on its recommendations. The evidence given disclosed a frightful state of things : a deeply organised confederation against the laws of property, whose murderous edicts were executed with unerring promptitude, and attended by absolute impunity. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended and other precautions were adopted ; and it was fondly hoped that, by a firm and vigilant administration of the law, local disaffections which the Church Act and Land Act had failed to reach, would at last be trampled out. Vain hope ! a third year has passed away ; and we find ourselves more mistaken than ever. The disaffection is not local : while it is discovered that the very class whom we fondly believed we had secured by the Act of 1869 continues to display even more than its former rancour against English rule. The condition of Galway, as laid bare in Justice Keogh's judgment ; the condition of Westmeath, as laid bare before Lord Hartington's committee ; and other facts of the same kind may be explained away as isolated evils, or, as the lingering embers of an expiring animosity. But an isolated evil which roams freely over half the island ; and an expiring animosity which shews itself in efforts more audacious, more lawless, and more thoroughly well concerted than before, to sever the Parliamentary connection between the two countries, are phenomena which we cannot understand. We have dwelt on these topics longer than we otherwise should have done, because between 1868 and 1872 time enough has elapsed to justify us in asking for the result of Mr. Gladstone's policy. It is now certain that it has failed to reach the root of the mischief. As symbols of English ascendancy, the Irish Church and the Irish aristocracy were, doubtless, to some extent unpopular. But it is clear that, except as stepping-stones to the abolition of that ascendancy, and the establishment of Home Rule, not an Irishman would have thanked us for the Bill of 1869 or the Bill of 1870. He was glad, no doubt, to see the visible signs of an ancient grievance abated, but if he had known that we were to stop there he would have thanked us for nothing. Finding that we did stop there he is more exasperated than if we had never moved. And the ultimate result of Mr. Gladstone's vaunted legislation has been to write more deeply than ever on the Irish brain the very sorrow which, with premature vainglory, he promised to erase.

EDUCATION—English, Scotch, Irish—The next great measure of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet was the Education Act ; and it marks a distinct epoch in the history of his Administration. The Education Act was his first compromise. Compelled to choose between the hostility of the Secularists, and the hostility of the Liberal Denominationalists, backed up by the

whole strength of the Conservatives, there was but one course for Mr. Gladstone to adopt; and we gladly acknowledge that, probably, the same course was the one most agreeable to his feelings. The bill which finally became law is a mixture of the compulsory principle and the voluntary principle. Districts, parishes, or unions, that will not educate themselves, the State will educate; and in the State schools religious teaching will be purged of all distinctive doctrine. But where the population is willing and able to provide for itself, the old machinery will be left in force, and denominational schools will continue to receive State assistance. To judge by results, this measure, which its enemies attribute in great part to the efforts of the Conservatives, is everywhere working well, both for the Church of England and the Constitutional Party. Throughout the country the establishment of School Boards has been much less general than was perhaps anticipated by a section of the Ministerial supporters. The Church of England has not only held her own, but has advanced in popularity and influence since the bill was passed. She is rapidly recovering to herself that portion of the working classes whom she had allowed to wander from her pale; and the spectacle, no doubt, is gall and wormwood to that class of politicians who fancied that through the Education Bill they were dealing a fatal blow to the Anglican Establishment. The efforts of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Dixon during the present Session to alter the provisions of the Act, attest the consternation of Dissenters at a result so unlike what they expected. They invoked the Bill in order to curse the Church of England; and lo! it has blessed her altogether.

Nor is there any more reason for being disappointed with the Scotch Education Bill than with the English. Ministers, no doubt urged on by the Scotch Radicals, did, in this case, lend themselves to proposals of a more or less dangerous character. But, on May 6, Mr. Gordon moved a resolution in favour of maintaining intact the Scotch system of religious education, and carried it against Government by a majority of seven. And on the 12th of June, the Duke of Richmond carried an amendment in favour of a Scotch Board of Education to sit in Scotland, instead of an Imperial one to sit in London. With these two safeguards, which have been forced upon Ministers by the Conservatives, the Bill may be regarded as not, on the whole, unsatisfactory.

The subject of Irish Education has been a source of infinite disquietude to the Ministry ever since its first formation. Mr. Gladstone, unfortunately for himself, in his excessive eagerness to impugn the policy of Lord Mayo, committed himself to statements in regard to Trinity College, Dublin, which he has subsequently found it difficult to reconcile with his opposition to Mr. Fawcett's proposals. We all remember the sneers against "levelling up," yet, as was pointed out at the first introduction of Mr. Fawcett's Bill, the

only other alternative was the same in principle as Lord Mayo's.* Consequently, resistance to Mr. Fawcett's plan must mean either leaving things as they are, or adopting some other scheme equivalent at the bottom to the one which, in 1868, had been the butt of Mr. Gladstone's ridicule. This was the position into which the Prime Minister had betrayed himself, by lending too attentive an ear to the whispers of the Ultramontane party ; and he has never been able to recover his first false step. Mr. Fawcett, on the 3rd of August, 1869, first moved his resolution in favour " of freeing the fellowships and scholarships of Trinity College, Dublin, from all religious disabilities."

Dr. Ball rose immediately afterwards to announce that the authorities of Trinity College, Dublin, no longer offered any opposition to the plan. Every obstacle in the way of the Government seemed smoothed down. But it was not so. A secret influence was at work to which, for four sucessive Sessions, Government has been obliged to succumb. Mr. Chichester Fortescue replied on this occasion that Mr. Fawcett's scheme would not satisfy the Roman Catholics, who objected to members of their Church being unable to attain University degrees except through a course of mixed education. Mr. Fawcett, in reply, said that by parity of reasoning the right hon. gentleman was bound to support the scheme of Lord Mayo for the establishment of a Roman Catholic University. This was in 1869. In 1870 the subject was revived at an earlier period of the Session. Mr. Fawcet moved the second reading of his bill on the 1st of April. Mr. Gladstone replied to him in person; and now it was found necessary to treat the carriage of the bill as equivalent to a vote of want of confidence. Government, said Mr. Gladstone, had been commissioned by the country to deal with the condition of Ireland ; of the three branches into which this naturally divided itself, education was one ; and the transference to any private member of a function which had been confided to Government, would imply that Ministers had lost the confidence of the House. He refused to state what were the intentions of the Cabinet, and he left the language which had been used by Mr. Chichester Fortescue in the previous August still unpurged of the suspicions which it had inevitably generated. In 1871 Mr. Fawcett was again deferred to a late period of the Session, and it was not till the 2nd of August that he obtained a day. Mr. Gladstone criticised the details of the Bill, and made numerous professions of adherence to the same opinions which he had announced in 1868. But, as Mr. Plunkett pointed out, not a word did he utter to allay the apprehensions which subsequent statements had aroused, and while disavowing the design of establishing a Roman Catholic University, left himself perfectly at liberty to propose, whenever it should be convenient, the endowment of a Roman Catholic College, to be supported by, and affili-

* *Times*, August 5th, 1869,

ated to, the University of Dublin. In the Session of 1872 the revival of this subject disturbed the equanimity of Mr. Gladstone even more than on any previous occasion. Mr. Fawcett moved the second reading of his Bill on the 28th of March, when Mr. Gladstone announced the intention of Government to support the motion, because they could not oppose that portion of the Bill which provided for the Abolition of Tests, but he refused to adopt the "re-construction" clauses, which embodied a new scheme for the government of the University. Even this modified support of the measure was loudly condemned by the representatives of the Ultramontane party, but the second reading was carried on the 26th by a large majority, and the motion for going into Committee came on upon the 23rd of April. Previously to that date, however, Mr. Gladstone had given notice that Lord Hartington would move an instruction to the Committee to divide the Bill into two parts, the Abolition of Tests, and the Reconstruction of the Governing Body; Ministers to support the former, but resist the latter; and the day before the debate was expected to begin, it was announced in a morning paper that Government would make Lord Hartington's motion a Cabinet question, and resign if they were beaten. The confident tone of the announcement sufficiently betrayed its source; and it exercised, no doubt, considerable influence on the House. The propriety of the resolve was doubtful. The power possessed by Government of averting disagreeable motions by proclaiming them questions of confidence, if strained too far, is fatal to freedom of discussion; and must gradually sap the authority to which it imparts for the time an appearance of vigour. Still the House of Commons might have been to some extent prepared for such a step by language which had fallen from the Prime Minister on previous occasions. What it was not prepared for was that his intentions should be made known to Parliament through the columns of a newspaper, and that, having made them known, he should evade the legitimate result. The first, as was said by an independent supporter of the Government, was inconsistent with the dignity of the Sovereign; was disrespectful to the House of Commons; and disclosed altogether a system of manœuvring repugnant to the feelings of gentlemen. Still that it was due only to gross indiscretion and exceedingly bad taste, is a supposition which a very liberal charity may perhaps be capable of entertaining. Not so with the other. First of all to declare that a given motion involves a question of confidence, and then to use every means at your disposal to prevent it from being brought to an issue, is to act like one who resents an injury by a challenge, and at the same time gives secret information to the constables. Yet this is virtually what occurred. Mr. Fawcett's motion was staved off on the 23rd by the usual expedients, and Mr. Gladstone afterwards positively refused, though he had made it a Government question, to give him a Government day. From

that time to this the motion has been kept at bay by tactics in which the present Ministry surpasses all its predecessors. And the contempt for the opinion of his party which Mr. Gladstone has evinced by his neglect to ascertain it on so important a point as the above, is not one of the least striking phenomena of the recent session. It was generally suspected that a majority of the House of Commons disapproved of the Government position, and if Ministers chose to assume that the existence of such a feeling was equivalent to a want of confidence they should have put it to the test without a moment's unnecessary delay. To continue to conduct the administration with such a slur upon their credit unremoved is not only contrary to usage, but is especially unbecoming to Ministers whose nominal majority at all events exceeds a hundred.

ARMY BILL.—Next in order among those leading measures on which Government, we suppose, intends to stake its reputation, is the Army Bill. The Army Re-organisation Bill was the name it bore, but its proper designation was a Bill for the Abolition of Purchase. Reorganisation is still, we are sorry to say, in the womb of time. The original proposal, which has still to be carried into practice, was decidedly judicious, though it was not for the first time broached by the Government. To seek in the county designations of our various Regiments of the Line the basis of an amalgamation between the Line, the Volunteers, and the Militia, had already been suggested in the columns of an evening newspaper. But Ministers adopted the suggestion, and it being represented that the Abolition of Purchase was an essential preliminary step to the consummation aforesaid, the House was induced to abolish it, though without any clear idea of what system was to follow. Of course there were those who would have supported the Abolition of Purchase, and supported it greedily, for its own sake; men, who, like a late eminent economist, "did not feel at home in the society of Officers in the Guards;" who spoke of purchase as an aristocratic job; and sincerely believed that the Army was a snug little monopoly farmed by a small class, the members of which were generally bloated, often profligate, and always ignorant. Peace to all such! But there were men of sense and information who were so hostile to purchase in the abstract that they did not, perhaps, allow due weight to its practical advantages; and so eager to see it abolished either by this, or by any other Bill, that they did not stop to count the cost with sufficient deliberation. No one can defend purchase in the abstract, yet there was some inconsistency in those who urged that the purchase system operated against men making the Army a profession, while at the same time objecting to the vested interest which it conferred upon Officers. Scripture tells us that where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. And it would seem that

a man who had invested £5,000 in his profession was at least as likely to try and make the most of it as he who had invested nothing. Certainly such a deposit of caution money was most favourable to the good conduct of officers. Honour, let us hope, will always stand first with gentlemen. But still a man would hardly be less careful to avoid dismissal or disgrace when his whole worldly fortune was at stake too. If the officers of the British Army were exceptions to this rule, it is a pity that we made any change, for so generous, so chivalrous, so delicate and disinterested a class of men we are not likely to meet with again. Suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that on its merits we abandon purchase altogether, we have still to consider what are its relative advantages by the side of any known substitute. There is promotion by seniority, the results of which we see in our scientific corps. There is the *bonus* system, in which seniority and purchase were mingled together, as in our old Indian Army. But it is scarcely to be supposed that this system would ever be recommended for adoption by the British Army. There is, thirdly, promotion by a mixed system of selection and seniority, coupled with forced retirement, and a highly augmented scale of pensions. What this would cost the country *per annum* was calculated once upon a time by a gentleman whose authority in such matters stood so high that he was subsequently advanced to the post of Financial Secretary to the War Office. Captain Vivian, "before he was debauched by office and corrupted by the Secretary of State" (Lord Elcho's speech, March 9th, 1871), computed this at no less a sum than one million. The preliminary cost of buying out the purchase officers will be about ten millions, or £500,000 a year for twenty years, and besides this a million a year will be required ever afterwards for retirements. But whether the country will or will not endure to be saddled with this permanent annual expenditure is just the question which the present Ministers have managed to evade asking. As long as purchase officers remain to be bought out, so long will the stream of promotion flow on and no difficulty arise. But as these are gradually removed the real magnitude of the difficulty will begin to disclose itself, and twenty years hence we shall be engaged in devising a substitute for what Mr. Cardwell has destroyed. This has not been sufficiently observed. Her Majesty's Ministers have calmly left to other people the practical solution of the problem which themselves have created. Till the purchase officers are nearly all bought out of the Army the difficulty of keeping up promotion will not be felt. This, the great difficulty which lay at the bottom of Army Reconstruction, the present Government has evaded. They have discounted the bill, and left posterity to meet it. They have reaped all the credit which could be reaped by gratifying a popular prejudice, and shifted to others the odium of that appeal to the purse

which is the remote but inevitable consequence. Such is the history of the Army Bill.

BALLOT.—The fifth distinction of the present Ministry is the Ballot The reason assigned by Mr. Gladstone for supporting now what he had yesterday condemned is one of the curiosities of logic. He was willing, he said, to accept the doctrine which had always been used against the Ballot, namely, that the franchise was a trust to be exercised openly by the trustee before the face of those for whom he acted. But Lord Derby's Reform Bill had, he said, entirely changed those conditions. The voter was no longer a trustee, but acted only for himself; consequently the argument for publicity was gone. Now it was not true that the Reform Bill of 1867 made the suffrage appreciably less a trust than it was before, for the proportion of enfranchised to unenfranchised is still very small; it is doubtful whether the franchise is properly described as a trust; and it is still more doubtful whether the vice of secret voting depends upon its being so or not. But granting all Mr. Gladstone's assumptions, does he not see that the only inference to be drawn from them is exactly the contrary of what he has drawn himself, and is in favour of absolute non-interference with the voter? He once exercised a trust, and you made him do it openly. Good. The trust is extinguished, and he acts for himself. You therefore interfere with him no longer, but let him do exactly as he likes. That is the correct syllogism. And whatever we may think of optional secrecy in practice, Mr. Gladstone's argument is manifestly fatal to compulsory.

With so little earnestness or with so little consideration had the theory of secret voting been handled by its advocates, that the necessity for enforcing secrecy by stringent penalties had never occurred to them. When it did it was too late. They had gone too far to recede. And the real position of affairs was fully exposed by Mr. Vernon Harcourt in his speech on Mr. Leatham's amendment, on the 8th of April, when Government was defeated by a majority of twenty-eight. The Bill introduced by Lord Hartington in 1871 contained only very gentle provisions on the subject of compulsory secrecy, which were afterwards struck out as "immaterial;" and the Bill as originally introduced in 1872 contained none at all. Moreover Mr. Gladstone himself scarce six months previously had described the Ballot Bill as a measure for enabling every man "to vote secretly if he liked," for these were his real words. He was represented as having said "enabling every man to vote as he pleased," and this was unfortunate, because to vote as you please may mean liberty to vote for which candidate you please. But to vote secretly if you like can by no possibility mean anything else than the much-derided optional secrecy. Why, then, should Mr. Gladstone now say that without the compulsory

enactments the measure was a farce? The suddenness as well as the unsuspected nature of this discovery is beyond dispute. Yet it changed the whole character of the Bill, and abundantly justified the assertion that the question of secret voting never *had* been submitted to the constituencies. It never really had been in its old shape, and its best friends would not have known it in its new one. What they in their innocence had been used to call secret voting turned out after all to be not secret at all. What they had long demanded and what the Government were now proposing were two different things, and yet it was coolly maintained that it was idle to suggest a doubt of what the country thought upon the subject. Why, they had never thought at all about it before last April.

As the question came to be examined it was soon made to appear that the old theory of the Ballot was a practical absurdity, and that the new one was an absolute novelty. Had the opponents of the measure in conformity with this conclusion, rejected both, it is difficult to see where they would have been at fault. What the House of Lords may have intended, perhaps, was that optional secrecy, whether an absurdity or not, had always been meant by the Ballot. As to the force of public opinion, so far they had some evidence to guide them. Beyond it they had none. In adhering to optional secrecy they might be supporting a delusion. But whatever popular demand existed for the Ballot existed for it in that shape; and if it was found to be fallacious, it was no business of theirs. We can imagine men reasoning in this way, and it is, perhaps, to be regretted that those who did so should have shrunk from putting its soundness to the test of popular opinion. Public feeling on the subject, as far as late elections could be trusted, was, to say the least, evenly divided, and we have no proof at all, that in any shape whatever, or at any time whatever, has the Ballot ever commended itself to the common sense of the majority. Secrecy itself is repugnant to multitudes. The means by which alone secrecy can be ensured is repugnant to very large multitudes. And though the provisions for a scrutiny and the limitation of the Act to eight years are steps in the right direction, we are inclined to believe that the Peers might have gone further, not only not to the disgust, but much to the satisfaction, of the people.

If we may be allowed to moralise for a few moments on this subject, the history of the Ballot is certainly one of the most startling chapters in our recent political annals; startling, we say, advisedly, because it has revealed to us the hitherto unsuspected power which may lurk in a political fiction. Had any one ventured to assert ten years ago that an important legislative change, to which two-thirds of the House of Commons, nine-tenths of the nation, and all the most intelligent organs of public opinion, were confessedly adverse, must nevertheless be carried out, either

in deference to some blind necessity which nobody could understand, or because influential politicians had allowed themselves to be inextricably entangled in it, he would have been laughed to scorn. The practical English people, we should have been told, would soon cut *that* knot. It was ridiculous to suppose that both Parliament and the people would look helplessly on in a state of temporary paralysis while a measure, which few loved and millions loathed, was deliberately carried out before their eyes. Yet we have lived to see this ridiculous conjecture verified. And it is sincerely to be hoped that patriotic politicians of every shade of opinion will take the lesson to heart. The supply of autumnal novelties is bound to keep pace with the demand, and herein lies the root of the evil. Statesmen who ought to know better treat the people to political fireworks till the national eyesight is bewildered, till each coruscation seems a real meteor, and every floating spark a fixed star. The result is a perpetual uncertainty and confusion in the public mind, which prevents men from estimating things at their real virtue, and leaves them an easy victim to every confident minority, however small, who insists upon it that the merest illusion is a national want, and the merest bombast of a debating club a popular threat.

Other great changes, beneficial or otherwise, have at least been attended in their progress by a constantly accumulating force of public opinion. It is the unique distinction of the Ballot that it never had a chance of being carried till public opinion was deserting it. Then, at the eleventh hour, Ministers rushed in and espoused it for fear they should be robbed of it. The Premier, said Mr. Disraeli, had embraced a corpse. If, without presumption, we might vary the metaphor selected by so great a master, we might say that he married the Ballot for its money when in the last stage of consumption, reckless of the miserable offspring which must surely result from such a union. But metaphor apart, the conduct of Ministers is not wholly unintelligible. To have abandoned the Ballot would have been a worse disgrace even than not to have succeeded in passing it. To have abandoned the Ballot would have been a tacit confession that on a question of primary importance, which had been freely discussed for many years, they had misinterpreted the opinion of the country, and had shewn themselves destitute af sagacity. This must be avoided at all risks. And so the measure was forced through Parliament long after the discovery of its latent properties had alienated half its friends, and justified all its foes.

COLONIES.—The key-note of the Colonial policy which was to be expected from her Majesty's Government was struck by Lord Granville in a correspondence with the Colony of New Zealand during the latter part of 1869 and the beginning of 1870. It was a matter of common remark at the time that

the tone of Lord Granville in these despatches was extremely unlike himself, and certainly the frigid curtness of his language and the repellant stiffness of his attitude in reply to as loyal and reasonable a petition as was ever presented to the Crown, might have furnished a model to another member of the Government who has subsequently signalised himself by importing into the correspondence of gentlemen the tone of a despotic foreman. The Colony of New Zealand petitioned this country for a loan, which was granted at last, though accompanied by taunts which must have robbed it of all its grace; and they begged at the same time that a regiment of infantry might be left among them, a request which was positively refused. Lord Granville said that it was England who ought to ask money from the Colony rather than the Colony from England; and that as they chose to govern themselves they must be prepared to defend themselves. Why, surely, this is not the tone in which a great and ancient monarchy should reply to a loyal Province. This is rather the tone we might have used towards a selfish ally, towards the Dutch or the Austrians in the last century, than towards a loyal and faithful daughter. This is not the view to take of a great Colonial Empire. We ought only to be too happy to enjoy the privilege of "defending" those noble dependencies, from which every soldier has been now withdrawn, and where no symbol of imperial authority is still visible. Canada has been treated in the same way. And we cannot doubt for a moment the literal accuracy of the words used by Mr. Torrens on the 25th of April last, that "a belief had been induced in the Colonies that it was the deliberate purpose and fixed intention of her Majesty's present advisers to sever the connexion between this country and the Colonies." And what do those deserve whose conduct has engendered this belief? In the summer of 1869, and at intervals throughout the Session of 1870, this subject was brought before both Houses of Parliament by members of both the great parties in the State, and men of unquestioned ability, experience, and liberality, by Lord Grey, Lord Russell, Lord Carnarvon, and Mr. Torrens. But all in vain. The sordid nature of their Colonial policy has been pressed upon Ministers by journals of conspicuous ability otherwise devoted to their interests. But all in vain. In 1871, however, on the occasion of a motion being brought by Mr. Macfie, something akin to the motion of Lord Russell the year before, for an inquiry into the best method of improving our relations with the Colonies, the Under-Secretary, to the surprise of many who heard him, made quite an enthusiastic speech on the glories of our Colonial Empire. It was not before it was wanted. And let us hope that, for the time, it produced the effect that was intended, and mitigated the unfavourable impressions which had been engendered by previous circumstances. In 1872, however, the question reappeared in connection with the policy of the Colonial Office in regard to our settlements in South Africa. On the 8th of

March the Marquis of Salisbury, in pursuance of given notice, inquired of the Colonial Secretary whether it was his intention to press upon the Cape Colony the system of "responsible government" instead of the system by which it is at present governed. That system is one that lies half-way between a Crown colony and a self-governed colony. It possesses two Chambers, of which one is elective, but the Ministers are nominated by, and responsible to, the Crown only, and are not removable by the Legislature. Under this system the black and the white races, and the English and the Dutch settlers have been ruled with impartiality, have lived in harmony, and their lurking rivalries have been kept in due check; whereas, if the Executive Government became the creature of the popular Chamber, it would become also the tool of the stronger party, and a war of extermination must ensue. Government declares, on the other hand, though not offering any proof of the assertion, that under present arrangements the Government of the Cape is at a dead lock; that *some* change was inevitable, either backwards or forwards, and that the Colonists desire the latter. But there is as yet no evidence of this. The narrow majority by which the vote in favour of it was carried in the Lower Colonial House is attributed to a species of "management" on the part of Ministers with which Englishmen were more familiar under the Stuarts or the first two Georges than they have been of late years. Lord Salisbury renewed his inquiry on the 29th of July, but with no more definite result. There is too much reason to fear it is all part of one system. A colonial agitation for "responsible government" is secretly encouraged by the English Ministry. The opinion of the Colony is then appealed to as an irresistible reason for granting it. The concession is made and Ministers boast of their liberality. A few years pass, and the Colonists are informed that as they are self-governed they must now be self-protected. Ministers withdraw the troops, and then boast of their economy. The most reckless expenditure ever lavished by Chatham or his son would be economy itself compared with this crafty and ignoble policy. If in the public service the best economy is efficiency, so in a great empire the best economy is greatness.

THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR—BELGIAN TREATY—NEUTRALISATION OF THE BLACK SEA—THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.—An opinion has been carefully circulated since the suspension of the Alabama difficulties, that to whatever other charges Ministers are obnoxious, they have, at least, been successful in their conduct of foreign affairs. We do not begrudge Government the utmost amount of credit which the most liberal charity can award them for their conduct of foreign affairs; yet it can escape no one that their successes, if successes there be, in this department belong exclusively to that peculiar species in which the end is not

indebted to the means. Events have favoured Mr. Gladstone. *Carior est illis homo quam sibi.* But in the three principal transactions with foreign States, by which the diplomatic reputation of Her Majesty's Ministers must stand or fall, it is difficult to perceive in what respect our interests have been advanced either by their spirit or their wisdom. How far it may have been within the power of the British Government, by more energetic and decisive remonstrances, to have prevented the Franco-German War is a matter of speculation. It is easy to advance such charges, and impossible to refute them. It was said that Lord Aberdeen might have prevented the Crimean War, Lord Malmesbury the Italian War, and Lord Russell the Danish War. But, whatever our Government might have done before the war, there is no doubt what they ought to have done afterwards. Without waiting for the compulsion of Parliament, they should at once have reminded both belligerents that England would abide by the Treaty of 1839, guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium, and have invited the other two signatories to that Treaty, Russia and Austria, to have joined us in the act. No fresh Treaty was required. But what did Ministers do? War was declared on the 16th of July. Yet it was not till the 2nd of August that any member of the Cabinet spoke out and proclaimed the resolution of England to fulfil her obligations. During the interval Mr. Gladstone had expressed himself with painful hesitation and embarrassment, leaving a general impression upon all who heard him that he was undecided what to do, and that the obedience of England to the solemn engagements which bound her was likely to be made conditional. A powerful speech delivered on the 1st of August by Mr. Disraeli, backed up by the indignant protests of the press, and especially of the leading journal, were probably not without effect. On the following day a very different tone was adopted by Lord Granville in the House of Lords; and the ultimate result was that notorious and now happily defunct Treaty, by which the fulfilment of our duty towards Belgium, instead of being made either simpler or safer than it was before, became positively more complicated, more hazardous, and fraught with more embarrassing contingencies. In case of the violation of neutrality by one belligerent, we bound ourselves to co-operate with the other in the expulsion of the intruder; thereby constituting ourselves for the remainder of the war the ally of one of the two, and inalienably associating ourselves in the mind of either France or Prussia with the cause of her adversary. Suppose, moreover, that both belligerents were to march into Belgium simultaneously. What were we to do then? However, this triumph of diplomacy was never put to the test. The war was concluded without any chance being offered of demonstrating the brilliancy of the conception. Events saved it. But how far such an instrument is entited to the name of "a success" is an inquiry which can only raise a smile. It need not, perhaps, surprise us

that the Belgian Treaty was completed without the contents of it being communicated to the Belgians themselves. Want of courtesy is often due to conscious weakness.

In October, 1870, the political world of Europe was startled by the sudden announcement that one of the leading provisions of the Treaty of Paris was about to be abrogated, and this by the sole action of that Power whose schemes it was designed to check. Sir Andrew Buchanan, our representative at St. Petersburg, was coolly informed by Prince Gortschakoff that his Imperial master did not intend to hold himself bound any longer by the article of the Treaty which secured the neutralisation of the Black Sea. Sir Andrew replied that as soon as the intelligence reached England he should expect an order to demand his passports. In this expectation Sir Andrew Buchanan was deceived. Instead of sending such an order, Government sent a friend to Count Bismarck to solicit his advice or mediation. Mr. Odo Russell was the selected Envoy, a gentleman of considerable experience, and in close and confidential intercourse with the Foreign Office. He went straight from London to Versailles, and he told Count Bismarck, within a very few hours that the question "in its present state was of such a nature as to make it necessary for England, with or without allies, to go to war with Russia. To avert this disaster, Count Bismarck recommended a Conference; and the Conference averted the disaster by conceding the demands of Russia. In all this there was nothing very wonderful. Mr. Gladstone is a Peelite, and Peelites "don't fight." But what was rather extraordinary was Mr. Gladstone's novel interpretation of the Treaty of Paris, and his very ingenious explanation of the words of Mr. Odo Russell. Mr. Gladstone said that the neutralisation of the Black Sea was a subordinate provision of the Treaty, and that neither Lord Clarendon nor Lord Palmerston had ever attached much importance to it. On these last two points he was obliged to confess himself mistaken: a dignified position, truly, for the First Minister of the Crown, but only another instance of the desperate recklessness with which Mr. Gladstone will make assertions when they serve his purpose at the moment. As to the importance of the article, it was shewn to Mr. Gladstone that England had protracted the war for another year, and spent infinite blood and treasure —no less, in fact, than £60,000,000 of money, and upwards of 20,000 lives— for the exclusive purpose of securing that article; and that now to give it up at the first threat, when it was beyond all dispute that Russia would have withdrawn from her position had she found the British Government firm, was no less a misconstruction of the facts of history than a woeful sacrifice of the national honour. But the case of Mr. Odo Russell was even more characteristic of Mr. Gladstone. He denied that the Cabinet had ever taken the view which was implied in Mr. Russell's words. He said that Mr.

Russell had received no instructions to express himself in that style, and he added that in his opinion the words were the words not of Mr. Odo Russell, but of Count Bismarck. This astounding statement, made with all the grave audacity of which Mr. Gladstone is master, took the public so completely by surprise that no one knew what to say. The hush, however, was not of very long duration. Within three weeks a despatch arrived from Mr. Russell, expressing his surprise at the Ministerial gloss, declaring that the words were his own, and that he conceived himself to have had excellent reasons for using them. And this despatch was intrepidly described by the Prime Minister as "perfectly satisfactory ! ! "

In the case of the Alabama Claims, England was extricated from the pitfall into which she had tumbled with her eyes open by the contempt which the Arbitrators entertained for her own definition of their duties. Had these gentlemen been guided by the same theory of their functions for which our Ministers had always contended, England would have been there still. Our readers may remember that in this whole transaction two points stood prominently forward :— First. Were the Claims known as the Indirect Claims understood to be included among those which by the Treaty of Washington were referred to arbitration? Secondly. Was this a point which it was competent for the Arbitrators to decide? It was natural that those who denied the first should likewise deny the second—natural and logical—and so far her Majesty's Ministers acted with perfect consistency. Unfortunately for them, it turned out that the prior negation, on which everyting else depended, could not be sustained. When the American "Case" reached England, Mr. Gladstone—who seems, by-the-bye, to have been the last man in the country to acquaint himself with its contents—professed boundless surprise and indignation at the introduction of the Indirect Claims. The words of the Treaty could bear, he said, but one plain grammatical meaning ; and he worked himself into such a passion in the House of Commons while he was delivering these opinions that one might have thought a declaration of war, or a cessation of diplomatic intercourse, at the very least, was about to follow. Mr. Gladstone had forgotten that when the Treaty of Washington was discussed by the House of Lords, in the previous August, Lord Cairns had distinctly pointed out that there was nothing in the language used to exclude the Indirect Claims. Had he condescended to profit by this warning, he might, by applying to the American Government in good time, have escaped running on the rock which all but wrecked the negotiation. However, he did no such thing, and in the month of February he raved at the Americans in good set terms. It must not, could not, should not be. It soon became apparent that language of this kind was calculated to heighten materially the difficulties of the situation. The United States might have

consented to acknowledge that the Treaty was ambiguous. To be told that their own construction of it was monstrous, ludicrous, and ungrammatical they could not endure. They might have admitted that the English Commissioners had grounds, perhaps, for reporting of the Treaty as they did. But that they were led into doing so by the deliberate knavery of the American Commissioners they could hardly be expected to admit, not even tacitly. Yet this, apparently, is what Mr. Gladstone *did* expect. The result was a protracted fencing match between the two Governments, which, but for the resolution of the Arbitrators, would probably have come to nothing—our last hope being based on the Supplemental Treaty. This was an instrument by which, on condition of the Americans "not pressing"—the words are important—the Indirect Claims, both sides undertook never to make such claims on each other for the future. But not pressing was not the same thing as "withdrawing," and left it open to the Arbitrators to take cognizance of such claims if they chose. However, the Americans got tired of the negotiations, Congress broke up, and England was left to herself, with the unfinished Treaty in her hands, in a position of pitiable perplexity. Never was intelligence more welcome than that which arrived in this country about the middle of last June. The Arbitrators themselves had cut the Gordian knot. They pronounced an opinion, which we had always denied them the power of pronouncing, upon the Indirect Claims, and luckily it was an adverse one. What would have happened had it been a favourable one it is now needless to conjecture. But it is plain that her Majesty's Ministers cannot plume themselves on this happy release from our difficulties. It was effected by the judgment of a Court, whose jurisdiction on the point in question they had invariably denied, and could never have been effected had their own arguments not been treated with contempt. Even now congratulations are premature. Can any man feel certain that we have yet heard the last either of the Indirect Claims or the Supplemental Treaty?

MISCELLANEOUS.—We have now passed in review the most conspicuous events of Mr. Gladstone's Administration at home and abroad. It remains only to enumerate certain measures and transactions, of a less striking, but scarcely less important nature, which have filled up the intervals, and to glance at certain peculiarities in the conduct of her Majesty's Ministers, which greet the eye, as it scans the history of the last four years, with almost the same effect as the discovery of a new colour.

THE BANKRUPTCY BILL—HABITUAL CRIMINALS BILL—MINES BILL—PUBLIC HEALTH BILL—LICENSING BILL—MATCH TAX—INCOME TAX—ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT—THE NAVY—EPPING FOREST BILL—ENCLOSURE BILL—THAMES EMBANKMENT — LAW REFORM — LOCAL TAXATION.

The Bankruptcy Bill and the Habitual Criminals Bill, passed in 1869,

and the Mines Bill and Public Health Bill, passed in 1872, may be set down, upon the whole, to the credit of Government, though they smack of maternal legislation more than is consistent with the original principles of Liberalism, and exhibit centralising tendencies at variance with the spirit of Toryism. Of the Licensing Bill we can speak in only very mixed terms. The ridiculous measure of last year, which seemed to be an effort on the part of Mr. Bruce to outdo in absurdity the memorable Budget of Mr. Lowe, met the fate which it deserved, and will be long quoted to prove what grotesque and fantastic legislation may proceed even from powerful governments, veteran statesmen, and persons of solid, rather than shining parts. The measure of this year, though a manifest improvement upon that—an improvement which is mainly due to the provisions which it borrowed from the Bill of Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson—is still one of those halting measures which do more harm than good, which excite irritation without ensuring prevention and annoy the innocent without reforming the guilty. We have no faith in compulsory virtue of any kind, be it temperance, soberness, or chastity; but if we are to have it, let us at least be in earnest about it. What is the use of closing up one avenue to drinking if you open another by the side of it? Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson's amendment on the 67th Clause was a step in the right direction. But it has been neutralised by Mr. Bruce's corollary. Who and what is a grocer, that we can trust him so implicitly not to encourage drinking to his own profit, when we cannot trust the publican? Why should not the magistrates have a control over the one as much as over the other? And is it not all but certain that the restrictions now imposed on public-houses will call into existence an inferior class of gin-dealing grocers who will take possession of the vacant space, and make it a worse hell than ever? The promotion of domestic sobriety, by means of new facilities for disguising the consumption of liquor, is one of those happy thoughts vouchsafed only to the wise and good!

That in an Administration, composed, undoubtedly, of able men, two Ministers should be found capable of proposing such absurdities as the sale of licences by auction, and the tax upon lucifer matches, is in itself wonderful. But that the proposer of the last should be a member of the Cabinet, who has usually been considered the most hard-headed, business-like, and matter-of-fact member of the whole number, is, indeed, marvellous, and only shews how the strongest heads may be turned by the intoxicating effects of a large majority. Mr. Lowe and his cherished Latin motto met with so cool a reception, that in a vindictive spirit he fell back upon the income tax—the income tax which he had condemned a fortnight before as a most unstatesmanlike mode of raising money—threatening the country gentlemen at the same time with a new impost upon

farmers ! This recurrence to the income tax drew a powerful and eloquent speech from Mr. Fawcett on the ominous connection between direct taxation and democracy.

The Endowed Schools Act of 1869, had its operation been confined within those limits which its advocates in Parliament declared to be impassable, might have been added to the list of measures for which the present Government is entitled to take some credit. But its authors have not kept faith with with the public, and it has been converted into an instrument for confiscating the endowments of the poor, on the ingenious hypothesis that we know the intentions of the donor better than he did hid himself. The case of Emmanuel Hospital, in Westminster, is the most flagrant instance in which the Commissioners have sought to take advantage of the terms of the Act in order to transfer a most useful and well-conducted charity from those to whom it was bequeathed, to a class which is no more entitled to it than the Commissioners themselves are to the benefit of the Dogs' Home. But it is not a solitary instance, and we are happy indeed to find that the Conservative party has at least been strong enough to arrest this nefarious system, and to obtain from Her Majesty her most gracious assurance that the Royal Assent will not be given to this, and other schemes, for the inexcusable appropriations of charitable estates. We say inexcusable, because in these cases the Commissioners have not had even the excuse on which alone the authors of the Bill declared that its application must depend. Its provisions were to be applied only to grossly ill-conducted schools and charities. Emmanuel Hospital, it was clearly proved, was almost a model of good management.

Of our Naval Administration it might be almost sufficient to say, with the *Times*, that "There is no shutting our eyes to the growing discontent of the country with our Naval and Military Administration." —*Times*, August 9th, 1871. The popular sentiment was embodied by the Duke of Somerset in the well-known epigrammatic sentence, which has now become historical, "Armies that cannot march, and ships that cannot swim." Nor had the sentence less truth in it than point. All must remember the ridiculous collapse of the proposed Berkshire manœuvres ; but at that we could afford to laugh. The case of the Megæra, the case of the Captain, and the maladroit reconstitution of the Board of Admiralty by Mr. Childers, were matters of deeper importance, and revealed a mixture of incapacity, negligence, and egotism in this Department which would have sealed the fate of any other Administration. The report of Mr. Reed upon the condition of the Megæra was denied by Mr. Goschen. But it was proved by Lord H. Lennox that it was received by Lord Derby's Government, who at once acted on its suggestion, and placed the Megæra at the bottom of the list of troop-

ships. There she remained, even during the Abyssinian expedition, when transports were so much wanted ; and yet this was the very vessel which the new Government, on its accession to office, immediately selected to carry troops and stores to Australia ; the result being that ship, cargo, and crew, all but went to the bottom of the sea. Again we quote the language of the *Times* :—"Enough has transpired to shew that from undue economy, or negligence, or simple stupidity, a vessel was sent to sea under conditions which filled people at the time with apprehensions that the warnings given to the Admiralty were disregarded, and that there is good reason for supposing the disaster to be the direct and almost necessary consequence of the state of the ship." A similar amount of negligence and blundering preceded the loss of the Captain with 500 picked men. It was clear that Mr. Childers's confidence in his own resources, which had induced him to dispense with the assistance of a "Professional Council," had been misplaced, and that the elimination of the naval element from the consultative action of the Board was, as the *Times* called it, a great mistake. But when Mr. Corry, Sir John Hay, Lord Henry Lennox, and others, shewed symptoms of a disposition to make all these matters the subject of a very serious inquiry, Government had recourse to the device of postponing the navy estimates to the very last moment of the session, in order to burke investigation.

In the Epping Forest Bill, the Enclosures Act Amendment Bill, and the Thames Embankment Bill Ministers have contrived with curious felicity to threaten both the rights of property, the convenience of the people, and the sanctity of contracts. To see one of these sacrificed to the other is nothing new. But to jeopardise them all at once marks a fresh era in the progress of acrobatic politics, which we hope will be appreciated on the hustings as well as it was in the House of Commons. Mr. Lowe's blindness to public feeling, which led him to certain defeat on the Embankment Bill, where he confidently reckoned upon victory, no less than his folly in the match tax, shews that ignorance of the country we live in is not confined to the House of Lords.

Government, usually so forward to meddle where interference is purely vexatious, has shewn a singular reluctance in grappling with two questions which have, nevertheless, been long pressing for solution : we mean legal reform and local taxation. On the first subject the language of their spokesman in the House of Commons resembles in spirit the language of the Duke of Wellington in 1830 on Parliamentary Reform. He declared that the public did not want it, and that Ministers would have nothing to do with it. On the second subject Ministers sustained a severe defeat at the hands of Sir Massey Lopes, whose object is to relieve the owners of real property from a part of that burden of taxation which has been gradually accumulated upon them, much of it for objects which are inde-

pendent of local control. It had long become apparent to those who had observed this branch of our financial system that while real property no longer afforded that criterion of a man's position which it may have done in former times, it was still treated exactly in the same way ; and that charges, consequently, which ought to be defrayed out of reality and personalty together, fell exclusively on the former. Seeing, however, that a man's personal property is not local, it cannot well be made the subject of a local rate. And, accordingly, it was represented that such proportion of the sum now raised by local rates as ought fairly to fall upon personal property should be defrayed out of the Imperial Exchequer. Government met this demand first by indefinite postponement ; secondly, by a delusive Blue-book ! and thirdly, by a futile bill. Mr. Goschen's statistics, on which he relied to refute the case of the county members, have been carefully examined, and shewn conclusively to be worthless. And his proposed remedy, the division, namely, of the votes between owner and occupier, is simply juggling with the question, not settling it, for in the rural districts, where the injustice is chiefly felt, it would effect no change at all. The diversion of the house tax to the equalisation of the burden in question is conceived in a more practical spirit. But it is open to the objection that the remedy would be least efficacious where the burden is most oppressive : and though a step, perhaps, in the right direction can never be accepted as a satisfactory settlement of the question. Mr. Gladstone's argument against Sir Massey Lopes that real property is not unjustly treated under the present system, because it pays so much less than personal in the shape of indirect taxes, is one of those ingenious subterfuges for which the Prime Minister of late has gained an evil notoriety. If it does pay so much less, it can only mean that the income derived from it, and the consequent expenditure warranted by it, is so much less too. The crushing defeat, by a majority of one hundred, which Government sustained at the hands of Sir Massey Lopes, may stimulate them to do something. But it is more likely that this is one of those important questions of which the settlement is reserved for their successors.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT.—All governments are liable to be charged with error, with supineness, with the exaggerated estimate of some questions and the undue depreciation of others. All this is only a question of degree ; and, to a great extent, a matter of opinion. But if, turning from questions of policy and legislation, we allow ourselves to dwell for a moment on the moral aspect of the present Administration, we find ourselves in the presence of phenomena which do not admit of argument, and for which the common frailty of

THE ROYAL WARRANT—SIR R. COLLIER—SIR S. ROBINSON—EWELME RECTORY—AYRTON AND HOOKER.

Ministerial humanity cannot be pleaded in excuse. Ministers, in the first place, have developed quite a new species of "officialism" in their mode of replying to questions which are asked by private members. Nor is this the style which the late Lord Palmerston sometimes carried to excess. His was Club banter. This is bureaucratic impertinence. Secondly, may be observed in them a very remarkable combination of indiscretion and taciturnity which is, as far as we can remember, peculiar to themselves; a wanton indulgence in discursive and even menacing intimations, when there is no call for them, a rigidity of reserve which no appeal can penetrate, when frankness is imperatively demanded by the public interests. The contrast betrays a very defective judgment if not even some moral obliquity. Mr. Gladstone, as cross-questioned by Mr. Bouverie, Mr. Bernal Osborne, or Mr. Disraeli, during the progress of the Alabama question, or the discussion of the Dublin University Tests Bill, presented a remarkable contrast to Mr. Gladstone on the House of Lords, or Mr. Bruce upon the Church of England. The Premier has gone out of his way to say things about the House of Lords which may well serve as mottoes for every hostile "Conference" in the kingdom. Now the House of Lords were up in a balloon—totally ignorant of the country in which they lived. Now he was going to bring them to their senses by "knocking at their doors" with his Ballot Bill. Now he was going to take a little time to think before he would agree to abolish them. And the worst of it was that in all this language the element of spite was so conspicuous. There is not only a want of discretion, but a want of dignity, in such language wholly, utterly unbecoming a Prime Minister of England. When the itinerant demagogue whose business it is to inflame the passions of the ignorant indulges in a similar strain, we know that the creature, being permitted, for some wise purpose, to exist, is fulfilling his destiny. We may laugh at such a man as that, but not "if Atticus were he." As for poor Mr. Bruce, he probably merely floundered into his unhappy expression about the Church of England—"he would not propose a Bill for the disestablishment of the English Church unless he was certain to carry it." Most likely not. But if any one was to say to Mr. Bruce that he would not propose a vote of want of confidence in him unless he was certain to carry it, would the Home Secretary accept such an assurance as a mark of deep attachment to himself? Vague hints of reopening the whole question of Parliamentary Reform, of plunging the whole country into confusion by some "comprehensive" measure of agrarian revolution, of disturbing all settled arrangements, and unsettling all our great leading interests, have been plentifully circulated during the last six months. For the present Government has improved on its predecessors. Their harvest of indiscretion, as Mr. Disraeli calls it, comes not only in Autumn, but in Spring too.

Bis gravidæ pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbos.

But Mr. Gladstone's native irritability, combined with the necessity under which he lies of producing startling effects, have betrayed him into worse than this: into conduct at least more directly offensive than what we have above recorded. We have already noticed his behaviour to his own party on the question of the Dublin University. The imperious character of his behests was only equalled by the channel through which they were conveyed, communications of a delicate nature, involving questions of confidence and respect, not being usually transmitted from one gentleman to another by the mouth of an upper servant. But the one illustration of Mr. Gladstone's singular propensities which towers above all the rest was his use of the Royal Warrant for the abolition of purchase in the army. The Peers were invited to discuss the subject with all due ceremony; long debates followed; the greatest authorities on each side delivered their opinions; considerable eloquence, great acuteness, and great earnestness were brought to bear upon the subject; the public looked on with the deepest interest and excitement, and felt that the debate was worthy of a great Senate and a free aristocracy; and lo! at the last it turned out to be a mere farce. The Lords decided against him, and Mr. Gladstone walked down to Parliament with the Royal Warrant in his pocket, and told the House of Lords they had only been wasting their breath, and that their consent had never been required. A more carefully devised insult not only to the Peers of England, but to the whole system of Parliamentary Government, cannot be imagined. We should be the last to deprecate the exercise of the royal prerogative, which is deservedly popular with the English people. And had Government superseded the purchase system in the first instance by royal authority, the means employed at least would have been free from all objection. But to keep it in reserve to the last, to allow the House of Lords to debate a foregone conclusion, and then to bring them into contempt by imparting to their proceedings all the colour of impotence and unreality, was conduct equally unworthy of a constitutional statesman and a man of honour.

Unfortunately, other circumstances remain behind which only confirm the impression created by this notorious transaction—an impression that, be the causes what they may, Mr. Gladstone either does not comprehend, or considers himself privileged to neglect, the rules of conduct which govern ordinary men. When a law officer of the Crown is smuggled into a legal position of the first dignity on the strength of a sham qualification given him for that express purpose; when a personal friend of the Prime Minister is presented to a rich living, in open defiance of the law which limits the right of presentation, being at the same time prompted by his patron to invest himself as quickly as possible with the outward semblance of the person required by the statute, though it was impossible he could ever be the real one; when an able and honourable public servant

is dismissed from an office assigned to him in return for the sacrifice of his professional prospects, which he had abandoned at the instance of the Government, no reason given, and every request for permission to explain his case repelled abruptly, the utmost indulgence conceded to him being leave to publish the correspondence, provided he will "change the dates;" when circumstances of this nature become comparatively common in the career of a Minister, and, however they may kindle indignation, cease to create surprise, it is not wonderful that we regard him as either above or below the average standard of morality. Yet all these cases have occurred during the last two years. The names of Sir Spencer Robinson, Sir Robert Collier, and Ewelme Rectory will not readily be forgotten by any one who was a member of the present House of Commons, or by anyone outside of it interested in our political life. On the second, indeed, of these scandals, the feeling was so strong in Parliament, that only the forbearance of the Conservatives saved the Government from a vote of censure, and in all human probability, from the loss of office.

The case of Mr. Ayrton and Dr. Hooker is a little different from the above. That is to say, we are willing to believe it is free from the Jesuitical element which characterises the other three. Mr. Ayrton may have been, and probably has been, guilty of what seemed to Dr. Hooker to be evasions and misrepresentations. But we do not suppose they were intentional. Mr. Ayrton's fault has been sheer stark insensibility to the feelings which ought to regulate the intercourse of the Head of a Department with the gentlemen who perform the work. No doubt his natural gifts in this way have been much developed by the constant contemplation of Mr. Gladstone, whose peculiar style of rudeness he has clearly been trying to imitate. But of Mr. Gladstone's *finesse* he has no share at all. As it is, however, it is a case of the ox and the frog; and we fear that sooner or later, should he persevere in this ill-starred ambition, the First Commissioner of Works will share the fate of that historic reptile.

CONCLUSION.—To sum up—the Irish measures of Government have not been successful, for they have not attained their end. Of the Army Bill it is premature to speak, for as yet it is only an idea. The practical problem which it raised still remains to be solved, and the solution is left to posterity. On the Ballot Bill we find the Prime Minister supporting an obsolete doctrine by an argument which refutes itself, and compelling us to swallow the fruit which he has allowed to rot upon the tree. Our Colonies have been taught to believe that their loyalty is only a burden to us, and foreign nations have begun to expect that our wit and our will are both on the decline together. Our national greatness, that Empire on which the sun never sets, are fast drifting into danger. What

may be called our subaltern domestic legislation has been sometimes useful, sometimes ridiculous, and sometimes alarming. When nothing has been done much has been said, and scarce an interest or institution in the country but has in its turn been made the object of menacing intimations calculated to disturb its welfare, and agitate all who are connected with it. Our domestic ties, our political institutions, our social fabric, ancient and legitimate immunities, popular and beneficent charities, have all in turn been threatened. In the distribution of patronage, and the management of public departments, the laws of the land and the courtesies of society have been equally disregarded. Great injustice has been done to distinguished individuals, and persons, doubtless, will be found to say that even the sanctity of truth has not been invariably regarded. With our national disposition to make the best of things, we have already ceased to criticise legislation which we cannot reverse. But, in summing up the history of the last four years, we can but record our conviction that among so many violent and unnecessary changes we have lost much that was valuable, and sown the seeds of much that may be ruinous.

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MR. GLADSTONE'S "SURPLUS"

EXPLAINED

BY HIMSELF.

SOUTHPORT:
G. W. CROMPTON, COMMERCIAL PRINTER, 109, LORD STREET.
1879.

Finding that considerable misapprehension existed with reference to the "Six Millions Surplus" referred to by Mr. Gladstone on the dissolution of the last Parliament, I determined to apply for information to gentlemen versed in the subject of National Finance. My letter of enquiry and the replies I received are printed on the subsequent pages. In reading these it may be desirable to bear in mind that the present Parliament assembled for the first time on the 5th March, 1874, and that on the 16th April, 1874, Sir Stafford Northcote remitted taxation for the year ending 31st March, 1875, to the amount of £4,600,000, and granted out of the National Revenue £1,000,000 in aid of Local Rates.

J. J. C.

SOUTHPORT,
10th March, 1879.

I.—Letter to Mr. Gladstone.

Southport,

14th February, 1879.

Sir,

As the subject of National Taxation and Expenditure is now obtaining much attention, I venture—though a stranger—to ask if you will solve for me (and many friends), a difficulty we have in understanding what is meant in finance by a "Surplus."

When Parliament was dissolved in 1874, you announced a "Surplus" of Six Millions. Some of my friends think that this meant that you had that sum in hand after defraying the expenses of the financial year, 1873-4. But on referring to "The Statesman's Year Book, 1878," I find it stated (p. 215), that there was in "the year 1873-4 a surplus of £869,147." I reconcile the seeming discrepancy in this way, viz.:—That you proposed to spend during the year 1874-5 the sum of Six Millions less than had been expended in 1873-4, and therefore intended to remit taxation for the year 1874-5 to the extent of Six Millions.

I shall esteem it a favour if you will say whether I am right or wrong. I do not intend to have any reply you may favour me with inserted in the newspapers.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. J. COCKSHOTT.

2.—Mr. Gladstone's Reply.

Sir,

Your letter is not far from the mark.

1.—The "Surplus" of which you speak is prospective and matter of estimate.

2.—The chief *data* are:

(*a.*) The Income of the foregoing year.

(*b.*) The Expenditure of ,,

(*c.*) The probable increase or diminution in each.

Such was my basis in January, 1874.

3.—The *actual* surplus of 1873-4 was reduced by about Three Millions, in consequence of the award at Geneva. The rest of the difference was made up on the basis above described.

Your faithful and obedient,

(Signed) W. E. GLADSTONE.

February 21, 1879.

A similar enquiry made to Mr. John Noble, a lecturer on National Finance and Taxation, elicited the following reply:

3.—Letter from Mr. Noble.

45, Mornington Road,

Regent's Park, N.W.,

17th February, 1879.

Dear Sir,

The surplus upon which remissions of taxation are made is the estimated surplus for the coming year. It does not necessarily arise from reduced expenditure, but may also be produced by an elastic revenue. It is consequently not cash in hand, but the estimated result of the new year's finance.

The actual surplus is the amount left in hand at the close of the financial year: in 1873-4 it was £869,147. That surplus is applied by Act of Parliament to the reduction of debt, and not to any other purpose.

It is a matter about which considerable confusion exists, but I trust I have made it clear.

P.S.—The £6,000,000 was the estimated surplus for the year 1874-5. The £869,147 the actual surplus for the year 1873-4.

The following answer was also received from Frederick Martin, Esq., Author of "The Statesman's Year Book:"

4.—Mr. Martin's Letter.

7, Fortess Terrace, London, N.W.,

February 22, 1879.

Dear Sir,

I am very sorry that illness has prevented me, not only from answering earlier your letter of the 14th inst., but of entering now on a proper investigation of the subject which you desire to have explained. All I can say is, that I believe you are perfectly right in explaining the "seeming discrepancy" in the Budget Statements of 1873-4. Mr. Gladstone would, probably, give you the fullest information if applied to.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) FRED. MARTIN.

J. J. Cockshott, Esq.

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Liverpool Financial Reform Association.

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THE LIVERPOOL FINANCIAL REFORM ASSOCIATION

WAS

INSTITUTED IN LIVERPOOL ON THE 20TH OF APRIL, 1848,

FOR THE FOLLOWING

OBJECTS:

1. To use all lawful and constitutional means of inducing the most rigid economy in the expenditure of the Government, consistent with due efficiency in the several departments of the public service.

2. To advocate the adoption of a simple and equitable system of direct taxation, fairly levied upon property and income, in lieu of the present unequal, complicated, and expensively collected duties upon commodities.

Political partisanship is distinctly disowned, the Association being composed of men of all political parties.

ROBERTSON GLADSTONE, PRESIDENT.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Every person contributing Five Shillings per annum, or upwards, shall be a Member; Subscribers of Ten Shillings, or upwards, per annum, are entitled to all the Publications of the Association, including the back numbers, of which a list is subjoined, postage free.

The following is a list of the subjects discussed in these publications:—

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The Civil List and the Pension List	1, 2.
Amount and Sources of Taxation	3.
Army, Ordnance, Commissariat, Navy, & Colonies.	4, 5, 7, 9.
Cobden's National Budget	6.
Woods, Forests, and Estates of the Crown	8.
Ship building and Engine making	10, 13.
Colonial Expenditure and Government	11, 12.
Miscellaneous Abuses	14.
Direct Taxation	15, 27.
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Evils of Indirect Taxation	17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26.
Civil Service	18.
Patent Laws	22.
Stamp Laws	25.
Historical Review of the Fiscal System	28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35

NEW SERIES.

The Aristocracy and the Public Service	1, 2.
Income and Property Tax	3, 4.
Cost of Customs and Excise Duties	——
Turkey, Russia, and English Interference	5.
Ecclesiastical Courts of Record	6.
The Way the Public Money Goes	7.
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Administrative Reform	10, 11.
Decimal System of Currency and Accounts	12.
Governmental Improvidence	13.
The Royal Household	14.
The Army and the Income Tax	15.
Fiscal Doings of the Session, 1856	16.

Post-office orders to be made payable to JOHN SMITH, Esq., Commerce Court, 11, Lord Street, Treasurer of the Association.

6, YORK BUILDINGS, DALE STREET,
LIVERPOOL, SEPTEMBER, 1856.

FISCAL DOINGS OF THE SESSION.

INTRODUCTION.

If it be true that "praise undeserved is censure in disguise," and, also, that the severity of the censure is to be measured by the degree in which there is want of desert, then never was there irony more bitter, or condemnation more complete than that implied in the opening sentence of the speech from the throne, with which Lords and Commons were recently dismissed from their labours. The Lords Commissioners, addressing the members of both Houses then said "My Lords and Gentlemen,—We are commanded by Her Majesty to relieve you from further attendance in Parliament, and, at the same time, to express to you her warmest acknowledgments for the zeal and assiduity with which you have applied yourselves to the discharge of your public duties during the session."

It is not, of course, in royal speeches that we are to look for sincerity, especially when these are concocted by persons giving an account of their own stewardship,—still less when they do not actually proceed from royal lips, but are spoken by deputy. Considering, however, that such an address as that in question, whether uttered personally or by proxy, is supposed to be a solemn communication from the Sovereign to the People, it surely ought to be distinguished by at least so much regard for truth, as might be inferred from the absence of positive misrepresentation. As a mere matter of policy, setting morality aside, undeserved commendation should not be allowed to run into the realms of romance. But what particle of truth is there in the passage cited? Was there ever a session of Parliament in which a less amount of "zeal and assiduity" was displayed in "the discharge of public duties?" In nought save the reckless voting away of the public money were the Commons of the United Kingdom either zealous or assiduous. In this, the main point perhaps, in *ministerial* estimation, there was certainly a superabundance of zeal; but it is greatly to be doubted whether such zeal was either advantageous to the country or creditable to its representatives.

The Session was, in sober truth, one of much talk and little work, —of great promises and small performances. The royal summary of its results is limited to just half a dozen measures, amongst which the act for centralizing the control of the police takes the front rank, whilst that for transferring the coast guard from the Customs to the Admiralty brings up the rear. This, it must be confessed, is but a scanty crop

from half a year's *zealous* and *assiduous* legislation; but looking to the quality of it, and considering the character of two measures passed, but not enumerated in the royal list, viz, the Hereditary Pension Act, by which the Duke of Grafton, along with others similarly situated, has been placed beyond the reach of justice,—and the Episcopal Retirement Act, putting Bishops who have, or may have, accumulated the wealth of Dives, on the level of pensioned sinecurists,—it is scarcely to be regretted that the legislative harvest was not more abundant; whilst, to all who have considered the nature of the measure, the virtual rejection of the Appellate Jurisdiction Bill, after repeated divisions in its favour, must be a subject of congratulation.

In point of fact, notwithstanding the credit for zeal and assiduity given to both Houses of Parliament, neither of them was disposed to work to any good purpose. During the first portion of the Session both were too fully absorbed with the question of peace or war to attend to ordinary matters of legislation. That question decided and the supplies voted, the common object of ministers and members seems to have been to get released as soon as possible. With this view various "important measures,"—at least measures so described in the opening speech from the throne,—which had been introduced with great parade, and pressed to a certain point with great energy and perseverance, were withdrawn, on the groundless pretence of want of time for their discussion. Amongst these discarded bantlings may be mentioned the bill relating to the Corporation of London, which body, though more than twenty years have elapsed since the passing of the Municipal Act, still remains unreformed.

The Session commenced on the 31st of January, and closed on the 29th July, thus embracing a period of six calendar months; but the interruptions were frequent, and some of them of quite a novel character. Besides the usual suspensions of business at Easter and Whitsuntide,—four days on which there was "No House," seven "Count-outs,"—and "the Derby Day,"—Her Majesty's Ministers treated both Houses to four special holidays, to see the reviews and the fireworks, making the public bear all their expenses to and from Spithead and Aldershott. With these deductions the Commons had 106 working days, on which they sat 838 hours, 88 of them after midnight, giving an average of about 8 hours a day. Of these 106 sittings, portions of nineteen were employed in the voting of supplies, considerably more than the usual proportion of time allowed for the transaction of this part of the national business, in consequence of there having been double sets of naval and military estimates.

Of the work done, attempted, and abandoned during this period, there have been reviews innumerable. Almost every newspaper has tried its hand at them. But very few of them have bestowed much attention on what mainly concerns the taxpayers, that is to say the whole community above the condition of actual paupers,—namely the disposal of the public money. The principal exceptions are the *Atlas* and the *Illustrated News*, especially the former, which, with the able aid of Mr. Henry Lloyd Morgan, has endeavoured, with as much success as the nature of the case will admit,—to unravel the mysteries of Government book-keeping,—to draw something like order from an all but inextricable mass of confusion,—in short to exhibit as clearly as may be that which it seems to be the object of ministerial accountants to con-

ceal,—the real amount expended on and by the different departments.* The "leading journal" has had sundry articles on the session, and has given a diary of its proceedings extending over nearly three columns. But of this diary scarcely a dozen lines are devoted to financial matters, nearly all that is said about them being that on such and such a day the House had such and such estimates under consideration. Something more than this is requisite to arouse that degree of public attention which is necessary to enforce the amendment of a most faulty system. It has appeared to the FINANCIAL REFORM ASSOCIATION, that a most likely means of promoting this object, will be a consecutive record of the doings of the Commons in Supply, such as is not to be found in any of the ordinary sources of information, since, in their opinion, nothing can be more calculated to show the necessity of a thorough reform in the transaction of the national business, than an exhibition of the manner in which that business is now performed.

The existing abuses and the effective remedy, are both indicated in the following petition:—which will form an appropriate preface to the intended *resumè*,

To the Hon. the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The petition of the undersigned members of the FINANCIAL REFORM ASSOCIATION, and other inhabitants of Liverpool,

HUMBLY SHEWETH,—

That your Hon. House is, in constitutional theory, the guardian of the public purse.

That no taxes can be imposed, and no portion of the produce thereof disbursed, without your sanction.

That the power of granting or withholding the supplies, properly exercised, affords your Hon. House the means of securing good government, and has, in times past, been used effectively to enforce a redress of grievances.

That your Hon. House, having suffered this most salutary power to fall into abeyance, seems to have become, in all money matters, little better than an instrument for registering the behests of the Ministers of the Crown.

That the effect of this neglect of one of the most important functions of your Hon. House has been to create enormously expensive establishments,—to encourage reckless waste in all directions,—and to incur a monstrous load of debt, the interest of which swallows up annually one half of the ordinary revenue of the country.

That whilst Town Councils, Boards of Guardians, Parish Vestries, Highway Commissioners, and nearly all similar bodies entrusted with the management of public funds, find it necessary to appoint Special Committees for the transaction of financial business, your Hon. House appears to deem it prudent and wise to confide such matters entirely to paid officers of the State, leaving them to decide how much money is wanted and how it shall be spent, and exercising over them, both as to amount and appropriation, a sort of control which your Hon. House must feel to be nominal and suppositious only.

That the head of each department, or his deputy, now presents to your Hon. House the Estimates for that department, of which Estimates, either as to propriety of amount or distribution, he knows little more than does your Hon. House, these being questions left to his subordinates; that the items of these estimates are often spread over many pages in a manner requiring careful and diligent attention for their disentanglement and investigation; and that when members of your Hon. House, wishing to perform their duty conscientiously, complain that they cannot understand, off-hand, estimates so presented, and ask even a day's delay for their examination, they are almost invariably told that this most reasonable request cannot be granted without prejudice to the public service.

That in this manner your Hon. House votes away millions of the public money, sometimes in an hour or two,—occasionally in a few minutes,—often after midnight, when your Hon. House has been exhausted by long debates on other subjects,—and always without proper investigation.

* Of the valuable labours of Mr. Morgan in this way, a striking specimen will be given in a future Tract.

That such a mode of conducting the public business is, in the opinion of your Petitioners, most derogatory to the character of your Hon. House,—a virtual abrogation of its functions,—a direct encouragement to extravagance in all branches of the Executive,—and a dereliction of the duty which your Hon. House owes to the country.

That with regard to Private Bills, Public Petitions, Election Disputes, Printing, and other things comparatively unimportant, your Hon. House has found it advantageous to depute its powers to Special Committees,—and that an extension of the same principle to money matters (into the details of which your Hon. House cannot enter satisfactorily in its aggregate capacity) would be attended with great benefit to the nation.

That as nearly all political convulsions in this and other countries have originated in Financial Abuses, it is incumbent on your Hon. House to devise remedies for the evils aforesaid, and to become in practice what it is now only in theory,—a safeguard against all mal-administration of the public funds.

That your Petitioners believe that these objects can best be accomplished by the appointment of a permanent FINANCE COMMITTEE of your Hon. House, which should consist of members most eminent for practical business habits and general knowledge, should be authorised to employ experienced clerks and accountants, and empowered to call for persons and papers,—to investigate thoroughly every item of the estimates before its presentation to the House collectively,—to examine into the application of moneys previously voted,—and to see that they have been properly expended, or are duly accounted for.

That any neglect or delay in providing this remedy, or some other, which to the wisdom of your Hon. House may seem equally efficacious, will serve to strengthen the rapidly growing conviction that, for any useful purpose, the fiscal control of your Hon. House over the acts of the Executive is little better than a delusion.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray,

That your Hon. House will be pleased to appoint a standing FINANCE COMMITTEE for the investigation of all financial business, and to invest such Committee with all the powers necessary for the discharge of its important functions.

And your Petitioners, &c.

The foregoing petition was presented by Mr. J. C. Ewart on the 2nd of April. A circular address from the President of the Association, strongly urging the same views, had been sent, before the opening of the Session, to nearly every member of the House of Commons, and to upwards of 200 of the Lords. The FINANCIAL REFORM ASSOCIATION may therefore conclude, without presumption, that if rather more attention than usual was paid, during the Session, to financial business, to their exertions the fact was, in some degree at least, attributable, That the results amount to little more than symptoms of improvement is no fault of theirs. They submit the following diary of financial proceedings, in the hope that the exposures it contains may be conducive to substantial alterations for the better.

Tuesday, February 5.

STOPPAGES FROM THE REVENUE.

MR. W. WILLIAMS moved this day for quarterly returns of the gross income and expenditure in 1855-6, specifying the cost of collection in each department,—crown lands included. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Gladstone) had, he said, promised such returns, but left office before the promise could be fulfilled. The present Secretary to the Treasury made a similar promise, but had not performed it. Last year a quarterly return had been furnished, but it was the most confused account he had ever seen, especially with regard to Crown lands expenditure. It proved, however, that in 1854 the Crown revenues produced £383,760, of which only £272,000 found its way into the Exchequer, the rest being expended without authority of Parliament. In

the same year the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster amounted to £42,000, of which Her Majesty received £18,000, leaving £24,000, or about 60 per cent. as the cost of management. The Duchy of Cornwall yielded £63,000, of which £39,000 were paid in, leaving £24,000 or about 40 per cent. for expenditure. In addition to this there was upwards of £16,000 paid annually by the public to the Duchy, in consideration of certain duties on tin, formerly paid by the producers, but abolished many years ago. He accounted for official backwardness in producing the information required on the supposition that the gentlemen of the Treasury were afraid of letting the country know how much money they actually expended.

Mr. Wilson (Secretary to the Treasury) admitted that the measure alluded to was one of the very greatest importance, but said that its importance was not of the kind supposed, because the expenses of collection had been for many years past stated in the Finance Accounts. The great object of the Bill was to bring that expenditure annually under the review of the House in detail. This had been done for the last two years. He intended to propose similar estimates this year, and therefore hoped the motion would be withdrawn. He observed that, during the passage of Mr Gladstone's bill through the Lords, it was denuded of one of its most important elements, the pensions and superannuation allowances charged on Customs, Excise, and Post Office being struck out of the Schedule; but if the Honourable member moved for the rectification of that defect he would receive ample support from the Government.* As to the Woods and Forests, that department was considered to be exceptional, inasmuch as Government only held the revenues in trust for the Crown, and they had never been dealt with in the same manner as other branches.

Sir H. Willoughby contended that the accounts could not be considered complete unless the Department which now expended upwards of £100,000 a year, without any control whatever, were subjected to the same rules as other departments.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made two singular statements, which may be added to the many proofs he has given that, whatever his qualifications as an antiquarian, he is, though in office, entirely out of place as financial minister. The first was that, inasmuch as the collection of the revenue was thought to be part of the royal prerogative, the Executive did not feel bound to propose an annual vote to cover the charges thereby incurred,—a declaration made in utter ignorance or forgetfulness of the fact, that this is exactly what the Executive has been, and is now doing,—the Crown Revenues always excepted. The second oracular announcement had reference to Mr. Gladstone's Bill. Of this measure he said that, however sound its principle with regard to Departments in which all the officers were paid by regularly fixed salaries, it could not be made applicable to the Crown

* This promise has been more than fulfilled. By a Government Bill, which received the royal assent on the 21st of July, it is provided that "in order to bring the gross Income and Expenditure under the more immediate View and Control of Parliament," the charges "upon certain parts of the Public Revenue" shall be transferred to the Consolidated Fund or the annual Supplies; but as the hereditary Revenues are not included in the schedule, it is to be presumed that the charges upon them remain at the discretion of the department as heretofore.

Lands, the expenses in the management of which varied much, and could not be calculated beforehand with any certainty.

There is no ground, at least no proper one, for this special exception; but the official explanations and assurances seem to have been deemed satisfactory, for the motion was withdrawn.

Monday, February 11.

The Navy Estimates, 1st Edition.

These estimates, amounting altogether to £19,876,665, were ordered to be printed on the 7th of February. As the details, comprising about 2000 items, cover 114 folio pages, they could hardly be in the hands of members on the 11th, and, in fact, they were not. There had, therefore, been no opportunity whatever for investigation, and yet the "national stewards" were content to set to work with them completely in the dark, or with only such light as was afforded by ministerial assurances that the immense sums demanded were really wanted, and would be properly expended, or honestly accounted for. Before going into committee, however, some remonstrances were made.

Sir H. Willoughby called attention to a great excess in the expenditure of last year for naval stores, beyond the sum voted, and observed that if Government were thus allowed to spend more than was granted, the utility of going into the estimates at all was very questionable. The custom of exceeding votes was most dangerous. The House had, at best, very little control over the expenditure; and if such checks as it did possess could thus be rendered nugatory, it might as well abandon that control altogether.

Mr. W. Williams protested against saddling the country with a war expenditure at a time when peace was all but certain, contending that the estimates ought to be postponed until the result of the pending negociations was known. Commenting on naval expenditure, he observed that there were on the list 314 admirals, or nearly one for every vessel afloat, though only eighteen of them were employed. Such a system as this was, he thought, perfectly monstrous.

The House having resolved itself into Committee,

Sir C. Wood said the very first vote he had to propose, viz. one for excess of expenditure, was "a complete refutation of the assertion that expenditure could be incurred without the sanction of the House."* Having achieved this easy and *unquestioned* triumph, the Right Hon. Baronet observed that, though the Conferences at Paris might terminate in peace, it was necessary and politic, even with a view to produce that result, to make vigorous preparations for war; and that even if the negociations were brought to a satisfactory conclusion, he could hold out no hopes of any material reductions in the first year of peace. With regard to some of the votes, however, he should only ask for sums on account, for the present.

* The alleged "complete refutation" is a rare specimen of ministerial logic. The objection was that Government had spent more money than was voted. "No," says the First Lord of the Admiralty, "that is not so. Here is the bill for what we did spend beyond your vote; and it is a complete answer to your charge that we spent more than we were warranted in spending!" Such reasoning suffices for the House of Commons, but will hardly pass current out of doors.

After commenting on the various votes in detail, he gave a glowing description of the immense preparations made and making for the next naval campaign, and took great credit for having now (in the third year of the war) provided the only species of vessels suitable for service in the shallow waters of the Baltic.

CAPT. SCOBELL remarked that if there were to be 350 pennants in the Baltic, and 100 in the Black Sea, as the Rt. Hon. Bart. had stated, when there was not a single Russian cock boat afloat in either, this seemed to be rather overdoing the thing. He asked why men of war were not employed in conveying troops, stores, &c., observing that the French thus saved a great deal of money, which we squandered most extravagantly on transports.

There was no reply to either observation or question, and the sums asked for, amounting altogether to upwards of £16,000,000, were granted without opposition. The details, as ultimately arranged, will be given tabularly.

Friday, February 15.

THE REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

The estimates for these Departments, filling 76 pages with details of upwards of 500 items, split into numberless subdivisions,—were ordered to be printed on the 7th of February, delivered on the 14th, and the house was required to vote them the very next day. The order of the day being met by an amendment for the production of papers relative to the misunderstanding with America, and this question having been discussed and withdrawn, MR. W. WILLIAMS said he should move "that the Revenue Estimates be referred to a Select Committee."

This most rational suggestion was defeated on a mere point of form, the SPEAKER deciding that, inasmuch as one amendment on the question of Supply, (which had nothing whatever to do with it), had been disposed of, it was not competent for any Hon. Member to propose another.

MR. WILLIAMS expressed his regret and disappointment at the decision, because he thought it most desirable that the Revenue Estimates should be thoroughly investigated. Only two years had elapsed, he said, since this branch of expenditure was subject to any parliamentary revision at all. The aggregate charge for the three departments was no less than £4,588,744.* This large amount was divided into hundreds of items, some of which comprised the salaries of as many as a thousand clerks, all lumped together, without any statement of particulars, in a single sum. The expenditure had undergone an increase of £333,000 in the year 1855, and this year there was a further increase of £202,000, making a total augmentation of £535,000 within two years. Surely, then, an investigation of the circumstances which had led to so large an addition, was imperatively demanded, in order to ascertain whether any portion of it was absolutely unavoidable, or whether waste and extravagance were not practised somewhere. For this purpose the day and a half that had been allowed for examination was manifestly insufficient. Reference to a Select Committee would alone enable them to check the different items. He

* Including the superannuations, retired allowances, &c., it is very considerably *more*, as will be seen further on.

was exceedingly sorry that he could not take the sense of the House on the question; but the empty state of the benches showed both the little interest taken in public business, and the little chance of such a motion being carried, if it were made.

Mr. Wilson asserted that the investigation suggested had already been made by numerous commissions and committees; and he attributed the increase complained of, almost exclusively, to the expenses incurred owing to the additional facilities afforded by railways, the establishment of packets, and the extension of district posts in every part of the United Kingdom.*

Sir H. Willoughby thought the House ought to have some means of ascertaining whether a vote of nearly £5,000,000 was well applied or not, and he could not understand why these estimates were not to be investigated. Last year they were passed in eight minutes, and this year they would probably be disposed of in ten. They ought to be referred to a Select Committee.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gravely assured the House that this branch of expenditure had undergone the most searching investigation on the part of the Executive. Scarcely any part of the estimates, he affirmed, had been more thoroughly sifted and scrutinized, for a series of years, especially since the peace. He held a confident opinion that no part of the public expenditure would bear, without discredit, a more searching, strict, and jealous,—nay he would say a more hostile investigation, than the expenses of collecting the revenue. He entertained no apprehension as to the result of an impartial inquiry. If the House could satisfy itself that any good would result from the appointment of a committee, he should not object; but in the absence of any proof of this, and of the possibility of producing any such proof, † he thought that no advantage could be derived from such a proceeding.

A few minutes subsequently this glowing picture of perfection received an awkward dash from the hand that drew it. Mr. Henley, having put certain questions as to the poundage allowed to assessors and collectors of Property Tax, and having stated that one of them (Mr. Richard Till, of London,) was in receipt of between six and seven thousand pounds a year from this source alone, besides a per centage on Land Tax and considerable emoluments from private sources, the Right Hon. Bart. admitted the anomaly, and said he had under consideration a plan for altering the system, but found considerable difficulties in the way.—[At a later period of the session he introduced and passed a bill, limiting the emoluments of commissioners' clerks, &c., to £500 a year, but with special provisions in favour of persons so fortunately situated as the gentleman whose name is in such admirable keeping with his position.]

The anticipation of Sir H. Willoughby, as to the rapidity with which the business would be dispatched, proved perfectly correct. The House having resolved itself into Committee, the various votes, five in number, were passed in a few minutes, with scarcely an observation. There

* An examination of the charges for mail conveyance during the two last years, and of the estimates for the current year under the same head, only accounts for £153,923 out of the aggregate increase of £535,000; moreover, a separate vote of £756,487 for the *Packet Service* had been taken on the Tuesday preceding, in connection with the Navy Estimates.

† Another precious specimen of Parliamentary logic which will deceive no one *out* of the House.

was also voted £80,000 to meet a deficiency in the sum granted last year for the Medal Service at the Mint, the expense having just doubled the estimate. The following is a statement of the sums voted in comparison with those for the two preceding years :—

REVENUE DEPARTMENT ESTIMATES.

		Amount voted for 1856-7.	Do. for 1855-6.	Do. for 1854-5.
		£	£	£
CUSTOMS.	Salaries and Expenses.....	840,001	835,182	840,785
	Coast Guard	486,028	483,238	479,320
INLAND REVENUE.	Salaries and Expenses ...	1,459,207	1,365,950	1,154,594
	Revenue Police (Ireland)	63,025	62,720	52,769
POST OFFICE.	Salaries and Expenses ...	1,740,483	1,638,861	1,525,335
		4,588,744	4,385,951	4,052,803
	Add Pensions, &c.	494,183	484,694	446,321
		5,082,927	4,870,645	4,499,124

It is to be observed that, according to the Finance Accounts for those years, the amount voted exceeded the expenditure by £253,082 in 1855, and by £138,602 in 1854;—also, that the above totals do not include the charges for the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues Department, or the expenses of the Post Office Packet Service.

Monday, February 18.

GOVERNMENT BOOK-KEEPING OFFICIALLY DESCRIBED.

On the bringing up of the report respecting the votes passed on Friday, Mr. W. WILLIAMS again commented on the omission of the charges for pensions, superannuations, and retired allowances in the Revenue Departments.

Mr. WILSON repeated the explanations he had previously given as to the alterations made in Mr. Gladstone'sBill, and stated the results to be that the accounts now presented *are not accounts either of net or gross proceeds of the Revenue*, but are MORE CONFUSED THAN EVER!

Friday, February 22.

THE FIRST BUDGET.

On this day the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER delivered his first financial statement for the session, elaborately contrasting his Budget calculations of last year with the actual receipts and expenditure. As this statement was, however, to a great extent, suppositious only, the financial year having still upwards of a month to run, it will not be necessary to notice it in detail. The Right Hon. gentleman stated the receipts as follows,—Taxes £67,567,000,—Loan £15,995,000,—Exchequer Bills and Bonds £6,997,000,—total £88,539,000, being £1,600,000 less than he had anticipated. The expenditure he calculated at £90,002,000, being £1,960,000 beyond his estimate, and making the total deficiency to be provided for £3,560,000. He stated that the naval and military expenditure during 22½ months preceeding the war, that is to the 16th of February, 1854, was £30,984,955,—and that during the succeeding 22½ months, to the 16th of February, 1856, it was £74,549,329; alleging that the difference between the two sums, viz. £43,564,374, represented as nearly as could be calculated, the actual cost of the war. This estimate was ridiculously below the mark, as will be seen hereafter. The Chancellor

having concluded a very long speech, which was abundantly bestrewed, as usual, with historical reminiscences, tedious elaborations, and citations of precedents, the House was introduced to

THE ARMY ESTIMATES, 1ST EDITION.

These consisted of 21 votes, sub-divided into upwards of 3000 items, the details occupying 140 pages. They amounted altogether to £34,998,504, an increase of £6,328,007, proposed under the immediate prospect of peace.

SIR DE LACY EVANS urged two unanswerable reasons for allowing the House a few days more for consideration,—the first that the estimates were framed differently from all former ones, the second that they had only just been delivered.

LORD PALMERSTON said that although the Estimates were so far new in form that one body of papers contained what was formerly in many, yet each part was very nearly what it had always been. As to any postponement he said that, money being required for the public service, Ministers intended to take several votes on account only, and he therefore hoped that they would be allowed to proceed.

SIR DE LACY EVANS again pressed for a few days delay.

LORD PALMERSTON said the estimates had been prepared for the whole year on the supposition that the war would continue; but as negociations which might terminate favourably were pending, Government would only ask for a portion of such grants as related to matters depending on the question of Peace or War. These sums being voted on account, they would, in any case, be obliged to come to Parliament again, and thus there would be ample opportunity for discussion hereafter.

A third appeal having been made by the gallant General, and Ministers continuing inexorable,

COLONEL DUNNE said there was great cause to complain of the unintelligible manner in which the Estimates were drawn up. Every thing was jumbled together in the greatest disorder, and he had great doubts whether the Clerk of the Ordnance himself could unravel the confusion. This year the war Department was to cost the country £169,026, which was about £67,000 more than it cost before the consolidation, although the work was better done under the old system. He commented on various items of expenditure, alluding more particularly to the vote of last year for an army of 216,000 men, though nothing like that number had been enrolled; to the money spent uselessly on the German Legion; to the vote of £475,000 for the Turkish contingent, which had not been of the slighest use; and to that of £1,250,000 for the Land Transport Corps as most extravagant. He complained, moreover, of the incompetency of the general officers employed in the Crimea, and mentioned as a fact showing how blindly Government had entered upon the war, that when he himself had expressed to the late Lord Raglan a desire to go out with the army in order to see service, his Lordship assured him that it would be of no use, for, if he did go, he would not see a shot fired. The gallant Colonel moved as an amendment that the Estimates be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. MONSELL said he could give the most emphatic contradiction to the charge of incompetency advanced against general officers. This he did by asserting roundly that every one of them had been selected

solely on account of his peculiar fitness and qualifications; and, furthermore, that nothing had occurred to lead Ministers to suppose that their choice, in any particular instance, was not perfectly justified!

Sir De Lacy Evans once more entreated the Noble Lord to recollect that these Estimates were very complicated; that they were nearly three times the amount of ordinary Estimates; and that they had only been circulated within the last thirty-six hours. This, he said, was certainly very sharp practice. He did not believe that a single member not belonging to the Government understood the Estimates. He appealed to the Treasury Bench, because he knew it was of no use appealing to the House. The leaders of the Opposition had abandoned their posts. He believed, indeed, that the Noble Lord had only to ask for a vote of twenty millions at once, and get it.

Mr. W. Williams declared that he had not had time to read the Estimates; and even Mr. Spooner complained of "sharp practice," adding an apprehension that, having once agreed to any of these votes, the House would afterwards be precluded from entering into any examination of the details.

Several other members urged objections, but none of them could muster courage, in the face of ministerial dictation, to put the question, either of postponement or inquiry before a Select Committee, to the vote. The House having, accordingly, resolved itself into Committee,

Mr. Monsell made a long and laboured statement, which consisted of little more than tedious recapitulations of items in detail. In the course of it he assumed great credit on behalf of the Government, because it had allowed an extra sixpence a day to the troops in the Crimea. The expense of this liberality (incurred without troubling Parliament before hand, and known to have been attended with prejudicial results to the army) he calculated at £639,000.

The statement being concluded, four supplementary votes, amounting in the aggregate to £1,346,013, for excess of expenditure beyond the estimates of last year, were proposed, and agreed to without division or question. It was next agreed that the number of effective land forces for 1856-7 should be 246,716, an increase of 30,378 compared with last year. Lord Palmerston then proposed to take on account a vote for the payment of the army for three months; but, at the instance of Sir W. Jolliffe and Mr. Miles who ventured on another appeal for delay, his Lordship, though deaf to the solicitations of his own supporters, graciously consented to postpone the matter for a week.

Friday, February 29.

Army Estimates.

The order of the day for going into Committee of Supply, was met by Mr. Roebuck's motion, condemnatory of the appointment of the Crimean Board of Inquiry. This led to a long and exciting debate, the report of which occupies upwards of sixteen columns of the *Times*. The amendment having been withdrawn shortly before midnight, the House resolved itself into Committee, and a vote of £7,000,000 on account, for the payment of the troops was forthwith proposed.

Mr. Miles trusted that it would not be pressed at so late an hour, observing that there were many items which he could not understand, and which might be much better discussed on Monday.

Lord Palmerston hoped the house would agree to the vote, because it was necessary as the foundation for a Ways and Means Bill, which ought not to be longer delayed. Any discussion, he said, might be raised when the residue of the grant was proposed; and he suggested that, if the vote were now passed, the whole of Monday evening might be devoted to the discussion of the remaining estimates.

Mr. W. Williams said this particular vote extended over forty-two closely printed pages, and it was impossible that it could be properly discussed that evening.

Mr. James McGregor also urged delay.

Mr. Wilson said that if the vote were not then agreed to, it could not be included in the Ways and Means Bill, of which he had given notice for Monday; that if that Bill were not proceeded with on Monday it could not be passed before the Easter recess; and that, in that case, Government would have no money to pay the army.

Colonel Dunne asked whether, if the vote were agreed to, the items might afterwards be discussed.

Lord Palmerston said they might, when the balance was asked for.

Mr. Stafford—On Monday next?

Lord Palmerston—No.

Mr. Stafford—Then the discussion may be put off indefinitely.

The ministerial determination was, however, slightly relaxed, Mr. Wilson announcing that he would take £6,500,000 then, and the other half million on Monday, when the whole vote might be discussed. This course was adopted, and,—a fact well worthy of the consideration of all taxpayers who are electors,—the entire business was dispatched by their representatives in less than ten minutes.

Monday, March 3.

Army Estimates.

The postponed vote of £500,000, towards payment of the land forces having been proposed,

Colonel Boldero said it was impossible to master in a week the contents of a volume relating to a vast number of items which had no relation to each other, and which were spread over 142 pages. The difficulty of understanding them was proved by the facts that the Secretary to the Ordnance (Mr. Monsell) took nearly three hours to explain them, and that when he had ended his speech those who had listened to him knew just as little about them as when he began it. In 1827, when Lord Palmerston was Secretary at War, the Army estimates were divided into 48 votes; but now there were only 21 votes for more than double the amount. They ought to be divided into sections, each section embracing one subject, and all explained by such members of the Government as were best acquainted with them.

Mr. F. Peel maintained, as in duty bound, that the estimates had been arranged in a very lucid and intelligible form by the gentlemen of the War Office.

Sir H. Willoughby contended, on the other hand, that it was

utterly impossible for the House to check properly the innumerable items contained in these Estimates, many of which required explanation. For instance, the late Lord Hill, a distinguished General, received only £3,458 as Commander-in-Chief, whilst for Lord Hardinge, in virtue of his Field Marshalship, £6,000 was asked, though the duties were more onerous formerly, and were now principally confined to the distribution of patronage.

Mr. F. Peel said that though the pay entered on the Estimates was that of a Field Marshal it was not intended to take a vote for any such sum.* Within a few days of his appointment Lord Hardinge intimated to Government that it was not his intention to take any other pay than that of a general officer.

Mr. W. Williams wished to know why, if this were the case, the larger sum was set down in the Estimates.

Mr. F. Peel—"It was a mistake—a mis-print."†

Sir H. Willoughby—"A mistake that ought to have been corrected."

Colonel Dunne described the Estimates as more confused than ever he had seen them, and declared that the ministerial explanations had thrown no light whatever upon them. He observed that in the Land Transport Service vote 24,000 animals were charged for, though at no period had there been half that number. The supply had always been insufficient;—yet it had cost the country £1,250,000. There was also a very large sum charged for waggons; yet Colonel Gordon stated in his evidence before the Chelsea Commissioners, that there was not a good waggon in the Crimea.

Mr. F. Peel affirmed that 24,000 animals had been collected.

Colonel Knox said it did not appear that there had ever been more than 400 available at one time.

Charges of favouritism in the distribution of honours and medals,—of want of merit in many of the recipients,—and of gross neglect towards many most deserving officers,—having been advanced by Admiral Sir C. Napier and Colonel North,

Mr. F. Peel took it upon himself to lecture Honourable Members on the impropriety of criticism of this kind; and he had the assurance to affirm that Government was the best and only judge as to what should be done in all such matters.

This offical impertinence escaped unrebuked, and the vote was agreed to. There was then a discussion on the fact that Dr. Andrew Smith still remains at the head of the Medical Department, although, after the Sebastopol Committee revelations of last year, Lord Palmerston positively announced, as one of the reforms contemplated, that Dr. Smith only

* A most gross mis-representation:—the money for the pay of the Army is voted in the lump, not item by item, and the money so voted would have included £5,999 13s. 9d. for Lord Hardinge, that being the yearly pay of a Field Marshal, at £16 8s. 9d. per day.

† As if the Printer, supposing that *he* had substituted £5,999 13s. 9d. for £3,458 7s. 6d. would also have altered the total accordingly in the addition of items. Supposing the *misprint* to have remained undetected, and the money to have been voted, it is exceedingly problematical whether any thing would ever have been heard of the "mistake." It is also very much to be doubted whether if the higher pay had been awarded to him, Lord Hardinge's determination not to receive it would have been irrevocable. The almost accidental discovery of this "mistake," and of one or two others, shows the necessity of strict investigation by a Finance Committee.

held office until his successor was appointed. It appears that, like the tenacious incumbrance of Sinbad the Sailor, the Doctor has contrived, by some means or other, to maintain his post, in defiance of the expressed determination of the head of the Government,—but, as to the how or the why, not a syllable of explanation was given.

On the vote of £169,026 for salaries and contingencies in the War Department,

Colonel Dunne again commented on the great increase of expenditure under this head, accompanied with what appeared to him to be decreased efficiency. The affairs of the Department, he said, appeared to him to be in perfect confusion.

Mr. Monsell (taking example from his superiors, who seem to miss no opportunity of snubbing the House of Commons) begged to assure the hon. and gallant gentleman that the confusion existed only in his own mind. There was no confusion in the War Department. The effect of the alterations had been to substitute entire simplicity for a system which was difficult to be understood.

Sir H. Willoughby urged, as a point that required reform, the perfect irresponsibility of the Horse Guards. He contended that the army ought to be under the direction of the House of Commons,—that is, of a minister, responsible to the House for the management of all affairs connected with it.

The vote was agreed to, as were several others, which will be given in a connected form hereafter.

Friday, March 7.

Army Estimates.

Mr. W. Williams said that £3,435,000 had been granted last year for the Militia. As nothing like the number of men voted had been embodied, he assumed that only about half of this sum had been expended on the Militia, and he wished to know what had become of the balance.

Mr. Wilson facetiously informed the querist that if the full number had been embodied the expense would have been £1,500,000 more than it had proved to be. He further said that, under the Appropriation Act, any excess in the vote for one branch of a department might be applied to meet a deficiency in any other branch of the same department; and that in this manner the money was expended.

This was all the explanation given, but it appears to have been satisfactory to the House, which immediately resolved itself into Committee. On the first vote,—£450,000, on account for civil establishments abroad,

Mr. W. Williams complained of the absence of any statement of particulars. There were 55 of these establishments, he said, scattered over the world; but details were given only as to three of them, so that the House had no means of judging as to the rest. The estimates were, in fact, drawn up in such a manner that they were quite useless. There was an increase of £112,000 on the vote as compared with that of last year,—a very small portion of which was for establishments at the seat of war. He saw no necessity for such an increase, and contended that the vote ought not to be allowed to pass without further explanation.

No such explanation being vouchsafed, the money was granted without it.

The next vote,—£450,000 on account of artificers' wages, gave rise to a discussion on the Government Rifle Manufactory at Enfield, in which Messrs. Newdegate, Miles, Williams, Muntz, Col. Dunne, and others took part. From the statements made by Mr. Monsell in reply, it appears that the building and machinery had already cost £150,000; that it had not then turned out a single musket, but might probably commence operations in July or August; and that the Birmingham manufacturers (whom he complimented as working admirably) charged £3 4s. for each piece, whilst Government expected to be able to make it at a cost of £3 only. He contended that, in addition to the advantage of such a saving, it was most important that Government should have this check on the manufacturers, especially in times of pressure. On this statement the commentary of Col. Dunne was that the establishment might be ready for work, when the war was over and extra supplies of muskets were no longer wanted, in which case the expensive machinery would soon fall into disrepair.—The vote was agreed to.

The next vote,—£4,000,000 on account for clothing, barrack furniture, &c., having been proposed, Col. Gilpin, and other members commented on the worthless trash furnished to the army in the shape of clothing, boots, shoes, and children's socks; and Mr. Henley observed that, notwithstanding all the alleged improvements, more and better clothing was furnished both to the British and allied troops during the last war, and that, too, at less expense, than recently. To all these complaints Mr. Monsell seems to have thought that he gave a sufficient reply when he stated that, up to that time, not a single suit of clothing had been ordered, inspected, received, or issued by the Clothing Department (which, it will be remembered, was established last year, with a staff of highly paid officials);—that, within the last few days, inspectors had been organised;—and that, after the 1st of April, all cloth would be delivered for inspection at Weedon, and then given out to the different regiments, either to be made up by the men, or by contract, as to which nothing had yet been decided. The vote was passed.

On the next vote,—£2,500,000 on account for ordnance stores,

Col. Dunne observed that it was drawn up in so confused a form that it was almost impossible to understand what it was for; and Sir W. Jolliffe said that, as this was the first time the estimate had been presented in such a manner, so it ought to be the last.

The vote was, nevertheless, agreed to without further elucidation.

The next vote,—£1,794,069 on account of works, buildings, and repairs, produced a discussion on the policy or impolicy of Government undertaking the manufacture of iron ordnance.

Mr. Monsell defended it on the ground that no reliance could be placed on private manufacturers,—mentioning in proof of this wholesale and most unfounded charge, that a certain firm had plugged five mortars, to conceal flaws in the manufacture.

Lord Palmerston admitted that it would be absurd for Government to undertake the manufacture of cloth, shoes, belts, and things of that kind; but he contended that implements of warfare necessarily formed an exception to the general rule, even in point of economy; and that if the principle that Government was to manufacture nothing

were to be established, then the dockyards and the building of ships ought to be abandoned.*

The vote was agreed to, and the House resumed.

Friday, March 14.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

On the motion for going into Committee,

MR. H. BAILLIE observed that last year pay had been voted for 212,000 men; but, throughout the year, the number embodied had been less by 45,000, and the money granted for the pay and maintenance of that number of men had, he supposed, been diverted to other purposes. With an acknowledged deficiency of 45,000 men, the contemplated addition of 23,000 beyond the number voted last year,—and an allowance of 30,000 for losses by wear and tear, during a year of warfare, it would seem that Government proposed to raise nearly 100,000 men within the present year; but, as not more than half that number could be obtained, it was obvious that there would be an enormous surplus on the estimates. The Militia Estimates were for 127,000 men; but as half that number would not be raised, there would be, on the vote of £3,000,000, a further surplus of a million and a half at the disposal of Government. This was a very loose mode of conducting public business, and any estimates framed on such principles must be a mere delusion.

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY considered the ministerial power of transfer to be a complete nullification of the functions of the House of Commons as guardian of the public purse.

SIR F. BARING said the control of the House of Commons was certainly very much weakened by the power of appropriation. He suggested the propriety of appointing a committee to consider in what way, without interfering with the efficiency of the public service, Parliament might retain, or recover, what it really ought to possess, some check on the public expenditure.

The House having resolved itself into Committee, and a vote of £238,404 for the Educational and Scientific branches having been proposed,

Lord PALMERSTON contended in reference to the objections previously urged, that some latitude must be allowed to Government in such matters, for if it were not, the public service might suffer. He also sought to evade any present explanation by suggesting that, as they were now only taking votes on account, and as the whole of these estimates would have to come under consideration again, there would be ample opportunity for discussion hereafter.

Mr. S. HERBERT reminded the noble Lord that this was not a vote on account, but the whole sum required. He wished the discussion to be postponed until the question of peace or war had been decided, as there were several items to which he objected:—he therefore proposed that a vote on account only should be taken.

* A perusal of two tracts of the FINANCIAL REFORM ASSOCIATION on Government ship-building and engine making (Nos X. and XIII. of the Old Series), will show the value of his Lordship's *reductio ad absurdum*. If the same system still prevail,—and there is reason to believe that it does, though not, perhaps, to so flagrant an extent as heretofore,—the change which he ridicules as a thing impossible, and not to be dreamt of, ought to be immediately accomplished.

Mr. F. Peel said Government could have no objection to accede to this proposition. They would therefore take £200,000 on account.

This course was adopted, and, after a discussion on the mismanagement of Sandhurst College, the sum named was voted. On the next vote,—£25,400 to defray rewards for distinguished services,

Mr. Layard moved its reduction by £100, the sum to be awarded annually to the Quarter Master General, Sir Richard Airey, to which he objected, on the ground that the report of the Crimean Commissioners attributed the greater part of the miseries endured by the troops before Sebastopol to gross neglect in this particular department. He did not mean to express any opinion as to whether Sir Richard Airey was guilty or not guilty; but he thought the House would egregiously stultify itself if, whilst the Quarter Master General lay under any imputation, it voted to him a good service pension.

Mr. F. Peel opposed the amendment, contending that the House could not adopt it without prejudging the whole case;—prejudicing the public mind against all the officers referred to by the Commissioners,—and possibly influencing even the Board of General Officers appointed to inquire into their allegations.

There was no one to suggest, in answer to these official pleas, that, on the other hand, the House could not reward Sir Richard Airey without predjudicing the Crimean Commissioners, or treating their report as unworthy of the slightest consideration; but reward him it did—the amendment being negatived by 82 to 9. The remaining votes were agreed to, the only division taking place on that for Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals, which Mr. Spooner proposed to reduce by £50, the allowance for a Roman Catholic Chaplain at Kilmainham. His amendment to that effect was rejected by 89 to 15.

Monday, March 31.

The Civil Service Estimates.

These estimates are divided into eight separate classes, amounting altogether to £6,643,984. This, however, is exclusive of the Revenue Departments, of the War Office, and also of large sums not dependant on annual votes but defrayed from the Consolidated Fund. These additions being made, the actual cost of the Civil Service is more than double that which appears from the Government classification, or upwards of £13,000,000, a fact worthy of consideration, especially in conjunction with the following statement of its quinquennial increase:—In 1834 the expenditure on the Civil Service was £1,845,312; in 1839 £2,862,469; in 1844 £3,091,968; in 1849 £3,925,731; and in 1854 £10,580,198. Immediately after the Easter holidays the House proceeded with

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

The estimates under this head amounted to £895,336, comprising upwards of 500 items, and occupying 30 pages. On the first vote,—£195,141 for Royal Palaces and Public Buildings,

Mr. W. Williams complained of the great increase in this branch of expenditure. The items for Hampton Court he thought particularly objectionable, as it was not a royal residence, but simply an asylum for poor and decayed members of the Aristocracy. He observed that, since her Majesty's accession, more than £200,000 had been expended on the repairs of Buckingham Palace alone.

Sir B. Hall admitted that there was an increase this year, but suggested a curious topic for consolation. If, he said, an average of years were taken it would be found that the expenditure had been considerably reduced! The increase was £40,189; but only a very small portion of it, about £3,000, was for royal palaces partly in the personal occupation of her Majesty. As to appointments at Hampton Court, they rested with the Queen, he said, and he named, amidst loud cheering, two or three widows of officers killed in the Crimea who had recently received such appointments.

Mr. W. Williams did not think the explanation satisfactory. Amongst the items were £5,288 for stables, £496 for a stud house, and £873 for farm buildings. How could such expenses benefit the widows? If £200 a year each were given to the inmates, to find apartments for themselves, the country would save £10,000 a year by the arrangement.

Mr. Adderley said that last year £17,000 had been voted for a carriage entrance to Grosvenor Place, which had not cost more than £4,000 or £5,000. He wished to know what had become of the balance.

The reply was inaudible.

Mr. Wise mentioned other instances of excess, and thought it very desirable that the House should know what was done with the money which remained unexpended. During the last six years there had been voted £156,000 for furniture for public departments; during the last two years £57,000; and in the present estimates there was a seemingly extravagant item of £19,000 for "*lamps, candles, and towels.*"

Mr. Wilson stated that in the Civil Service works money voted for one particular purpose could not be applied to another, as was the case with the Army and Navy votes. The department entrusted with the work made arrangements with the tradesmen, then asked an issue from the Treasury; and if, when the work was done, the expense incurred was less than the sum voted, the surplus never left the Treasury.

Sir H. Willoughby asked how it was then, if such were the system, that in three instances, which he named, such transfers had been made.

Mr. Wilson was not aware that they had taken place, but he would inquire into the matter, and give an answer on a future day.*

On the next vote, £91,684 for Royal Parks and Gardens,

Mr. Blackburn said it was all very well to keep the London Parks in good order; but it was hardly fair to the rest of the community that there should be such lavish expenditure upon them.

Mr. Spooner thought those who enjoyed the advantages of the parks ought to pay for them. They were taxing the whole community for the benefit of the inhabitants of London.

Mr. Bowyer moved, as an amendment, a reduction of £22,140, that being the amount of the increase as compared with last year.

Mr. W. Williams said there would be no end to these extravagant estimates, unless the House of Commons did its duty. They were at present required to vote large sums without any explanation whatever. For instance, the public were called upon to provide winter quarters for the deer, food for the birds, powder and shot for the keepers, and even tackle for fishing. These were amongst the items which required investigation.

Mr. Drummond observed that for filling up a hole opposite Devon-

* The answer, if ever made, is not recorded.

shire House, the sum of £1,400 was demanded. It seemed to him that if the notice "Rubbish may be shot here" were put up, the thing would be done without expense.

The amendment was negatived by 119 to 35. A second amendment, proposed by Colonel Dunne, on the ground that it is unjust to spend public money in embellishing and improving the metropolis, in matters which the inhabitants of provincial towns have to provide for themselves, was defeated by 97 to 28; and a third proposed by Mr. Bowyer, by 83 to 19. An item of £2,570 for making a road through Holyrood Park was objected to by several members, as a job for the improvement of private property. It was ultimately postponed for further inquiry, and the vote, *minus* this sum, was agreed to. On a subsequent evening, however, the deferred item was allowed without further discussion.

A vote of £99,383 for works and expenses connected with the new Houses of Parliament, occasioned much discussion on that apparently interminable job. From the explanations of Sir B. Hall, it appears that the architect (Sir C. Barry) is of opinion that the sum named in his report of June, 1855, viz. £280,270 (of which a portion was voted last year) will be sufficient for the completion of the works then proposed; but that Sir Charles has since recommended additional works, not yet sanctioned by Government, the cost of which he estimates at *from five to eight hundred thousand pounds more*. From other explanations, given by Mr. Wilson, as to disputes between the Treasury and the architect, it further appears that, according to the original agreement, when the whole estimate was £700,000 only, Sir Charles was to receive £25,000 for discharging all the duties of an architect; and that he now insists on being paid 5 per cent commission on the whole expenditure, (which more than thrice exceeds the original estimates) he having already received £59,000. Government proposed to give him £30,000 more, which he refuses. The vote was agreed to.

On the vote of £41,211 for public buildings in Ireland, Mr. Blackburn, says the report in the *Times*, "pointed out an error in the accounts connected with Dublin Castle, and, at his suggestion, Mr. Wilson consented to reduce the vote by £200."*

Two more votes concluded the class of which the following is a comparative summary:—

Public Works and Buildings.

	Amt. voted. 1856-7. £.	Amt. voted. 1855-6. £.	Amt. voted. 1854-5. £.
1. Public Buildings and Royal Palaces	195,141.	154,952.	135,863.
2. Buckingham Palace	7,868.	——	19,437.
3. Royal Parks, Pleasure Gardens, &c.	91,684.	69,544.	66,585.
4. New Houses of Parliament	99,383.	122,209.	141,294.
5. Holyhead Harbour, Roads, &c.	207,305.	122,841.	155,486.
6. Harbours of Refuge	233,000.	234,000.	237,000.
7. Port Patrick Harbour	384.	375.	676.
8. Public Buildings (Ireland)	41,221.	30,963.	26,118.
9. Kingstown Harbour	19,350.	5,876.	13,370.
10, Repository of Public Records	.....	6,000.	10,000.
	895,336.	746,760.	805,829.

* The extent of Mr. Wilson's condescension may be surmised from the fact that the error consisted in *adding* a "credit sale of old stores, estimated at £100," to the sum demanded for Dublin Castle, £6365 19s. 3d., instead of *subtracting* it from that amount. Whose error was it? Who would, or might have profited by it, if undetected by the chance examination of an individual member?

Civil Services.—Class II.

The Committee next proceeded with the second class of these estimates, including the salaries and expenses of Public Departments. the War Office and Land Revenues Commission excepted. They amounted to £1,513,903, divided into 35 votes, subdivided into nearly a thousand items, and occupying 41 pages. The first fifteen votes were agreed to with very little question, the most important fact elicited being that of the charge for short-hand writers, Mr. Gurney gets exactly a moiety, the other half being paid to the persons who do the work—an arrangement which could hardly have occurred to any but governmental ingenuity. On the 16th vote—£5964 1s. 4d. for Scotch Exchequer and other officers,

Mr. W. Williams pointed out various items,—such as charges for "Her Majesty's Clockmaker,"—"Her Majesty's Limner,"—"Her Majesty's Historiographer,"—"Her Majesty's Royal Company of Archers," &c., &c., which, he thought required explanation.

Mr. Wilson said that these were ancient charges on the hereditary revenues now transferred to the annual votes. He could not say that there was any intention to discontinue them.

On the next vote,—£6,431 for the household of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Mr. W. Williams called attention to charges for "the Master of the Horse,"—"two gentlemen at large,"—"a kettle drummer,"—"three state trumpeters," &c., and defied any one to defend these ridiculous paraphernalia of mock royalty.

The challenge was not accepted, nor were any of the objections pressed to a division. On the vote of £30,361 for the Audit office,

Mr. Bowyer charged Government with the neglect of two important objects. In 1831, he said, a Committee presided over by Dr. Bowring, recommended uniformity in the keeping of the public accounts, and the adoption of the system of double entry. Neither recommendation had been attended to. Since 1849, when it was greatly in arrear, there had been no return of the state of business in the Audit Office.* Dr. Bowring's committee reported that in France and Belgium there were no arrears, the accounts there being audited by Chambers, which had ample power to compel their production by all the Departments; whilst here the Audit Commissioners had no such power. All they could do, in case of neglect or refusal, was to represent the matter to the Treasury, which might be itself in fault.

In answer to a question from Mr. Macartney, who observed that 36 audit clerks had been transferred to the War Department, and thence inferred that that department was to audit its own accounts,

Mr. Wilson said "the War Office will audit its own accounts,"

Mr. W. Williams having protested against such a system as most objectionable,

* Such a return has since been furnished, on the motion of Mr. Bowyer. From this official statement it appears that on the 6th May, 1856, of 638 accounts for audit annually, there were 512 unaudited. The Government seems to take some credit to itself for the fact that this is not quite so bad as the state of affairs in 1849, when there were 878 accounts for audit in arrear. But of the accounts now unaudited there are many two, three, five, seven, and some even nine years in arrear,—eight of them having been last audited in 1847! To none but defaulters and peculators can such a system be satisfactory.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER somewhat qualified the broad statement of his colleague, first by admitting that, as a general rule, no department ought to audit its own accounts, and then by saying that the accounts to be audited by the War Department were, for the most part, accounts of expenditure in foreign countries, not of expenditure by the persons who made the audit.

MESSRS. WILLIAMS AND HENLEY having expressed their dissatisfaction with this explanation,

LORD PALMERSTON offered another, to the effect that the accounts audited at the War Office were details of regimental expenditure by the paymasters, amounting to very large sums in the aggregate, but consisting of very minute items, which could not possibly be audited by persons not familiar with regimental regulations.

MR. HENLEY asked how, then, these accounts had hitherto been audited?

LORD PALMERSTON replied that it had always been done by persons acting under the Secretary-at-War.

MR. WILSON said he would endeavour to explain the matter *so far as he understood it.* It had been the practice for commissariat officers abroad to send their accounts direct to the Audit Board; but when the commissariat was transferred from the Treasury to the War Department, it was thought more proper that the latter department should receive and audit these accounts in the first instance, though they would, finally, come before the Audit Board.

MR. HENLEY thought it most extraordinary that one-fourth of the staff should be removed to another department at a time when a strict and proper audit was more than ever necessary. The public would certainly infer that something was going to be hushed up. He urged the postponement of the vote.

MR. D'ISRAELI thought the failure in the attempts at explanation presented a *primâ facie* case for postponement. The system of audit had always been imperfect; yet now, when the expenditure was greatly increasing, the strength of the Board was greatly reduced.

MR. WILSON having consented to the postponement,

MR. W. WILLIAMS said this was a wise decision, inasmuch as the noble Lord at the head of the Government, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Secretary to the Treasury had all three broken down in their attempts to explain the system.

With the exception of a suggestion that the Copyhold Commission ought to be paid for by landholders, whom it benefited,—not by the public, who derived no advantage from its labours, the next dozen votes were agreed to without objection. On the vote of £458,275 for Printing and Stationery,

MR. WALPOLE objected to its amount as most extravagant, and attributed it to the fact that all reports laid before both Houses, with all the evidence and appendices, however voluminous and unimportant, were printed indiscriminately. He thought it most desirable that some person or department should be made responsible for the mass of useless matter constantly printed, and as constantly unread. For example, in the second volume of the Wine Duties' Report there were tables occupying 234 pages, describing the vattings of wines at different docks, of which Mr. McCulloch said "There is not, I believe, a sane person in

the empire who ever read a line of it, or ever will." No fewer than 1750 copies of it were, however, printed at the public expense.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that it would be very useful if either the Printing Committee, or some other, would exercise some control over the documents inserted in the reports, which were often not worth the expense of printing.

With this official admission that something ought to be done by somebody to prevent the needless swelling of the bill of the printer, to whose discretion the matter seems entirely left at present, the Committee was satisfied, for it voted the money in the lump, without the slightest examination. The following is a summary of the votes passed, including that postponed, which was agreed to on a subsequent evening :—

SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS.

		Amount voted. 1856-7. £	Do. 1855-6. £	Do. 1854-5 £
1	Houses of Parliament	83,680	82,140	83,076
2	Treasury	52,095	51,900	55,146
3	Home Department	24,204	24,595	27,552
4	Foreign Do.	68,241	71,849	72,372
5	Colonial Do.	28,452	28,431	40,550
6	Privy Council, Board of Trade, &c	61,067	60,733	68,600
7	Lord Privy Seal	2,700	2,700	2,700
8	Paymaster General	24,594	24,586	23,850
9	Exchequer (London)	6,483	7,314	7,295
10	Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings	23,313	21,445	20,124
11	,, Woods, Forests, & Land Revenue	21,664	21,512	22,846
12	Public Records and State Paper Office	16,447	14,098	15,482
13	Poor Law Commissioners, &c	208,993	202,383	210,902
14	Mint, including Coinage	43,829	38,222	82,504
15	Inspectors of Factories, &c	23,145	15,530	15,115
16	Exchequer, &c. (Scotland)	5,964	5,156	1,700
17	Household of Lord Lieutenant (Ireland)	6,431	6,431	6,283
18	Chief Secretary, (,,)	15,164	15,032	16,744
19	Paymaster of Civil Services (,,)	6,924	6,789	6,704
20	Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums (,,)	2,555		
21	Commissioners of Public Works(,,)	22,216	22,289	24,218
22	Audit Office	30,361	39,421	47,736
23	Copyhold, Tithe, and Inclosure Commissioners	17,710	16,270	15,332
	,, ,, Imprest Expenses	11,710	12,190	12,130
24	Registrar General (England)	38,234	35,500	45,000
25	Do. (Ireland)	3,388	3,368	3,722
26	Do. (Scotland)	6,665	5,455	
27	National Debt Office	13,880	14,986	13,400
28	Public Works Loan Commissioners	2,840	3,260	4,520
29	West India Relief Do.	1,570	1,570	1,720
30	Lunacy Commissioners' Expenses	1,310	820	750
31	Superintendent of Roads, South Wales	984	984	984
32	Registrar of Friendly Societies	1,405	1,360	1,565
33	Secret Service	32,000	32,000	32,000
34	Printing and Stationery	458,275	360,470	255,560
35	Postage of Public Departments	140,410	55,386	
		£1,513,903	£1,306,175	£1,238,182

Having thus got through two classes the committee went on merrily with the third, headed "Law and Justice." There were in it 40 votes amounting to £2,257,083 (exclusive of £397,509 charged on the Consolidated Fund) composed of some 1600 items spread over 58 pages. These would seem to have required some little examination; but not so thought the "national stewards," for they dispatched 35 of the 40 votes post-haste, as the fag end of a night's work with the public money.

Friday, April 4.

After the discussion of various matters, including the American embroglio, and a long wordy duel between Sir James Graham and Admiral Napier, touching the conduct of the latter at the siege of Acre, in 1840, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, and granted forthwith the five remaining votes of Class 3, amounting to nearly a million, for prison and convict services. The following are the votes in detail:—

Civil Services—Class III.

	Amount voted 1856-7 £	Do. 1855-6 £	Do. 1854-5 £
ENGLAND.			
1 Law Charges, and Mint Prosecutions	36,041	35,941	29,561
2 Prosecutions at Assizes and Sessions	250,000	250,000	250,000
3 Chancery, Crown Office	1,100	1,100	1,100
4 Queen's Bench, Do.	2,050	2,050	2,050
5 ,, Deficiency of Fee Fund	nil	nil	650
6 Exchequer, Queen's Remembrancer's Office, and Sheriffs' Expenses	16,340	15,900	17,079
7 Registrar High Court of Admiralty	6,418	6,000	4,500
8 Insolvent Debtors' Court	8,215	8,415	8,415
9 County Court Treasurers' Salaries	13,850	13,850	13,850
10 Police Courts (Metropolis)	29,348	23,254	21,226
11 Metropolitan Police	102,306	101,218	100,611
12 Queen's Prison	3,615	4,226	4,266
SCOTLAND.			
13 Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General	3,342	3,342	
14 Court of Session	17,551	17,526	
15 Do. Justiciary	9,568	9,568	
16 Prosecutions under Lord Advocate	6,400	6,355	
17 Exchequer, Queen's, and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer	1,415	1,593	
18 Sheriffs and Procurators Fiscal, and Prosecutions in Sheriffs' Courts	57,000	57,000	*126,631
19 Salaries of Procurators Fiscal	12,167	11,530	
20 Sheriffs' Clerks	12,594	4,318	
21 Tithe Expenses	2,300	2,250	
22 General Register House, &c.	12,249	11,166	
23 Commissary Clerks' Office	1,124	1,119	
IRELAND.			
24 Law Charges and Prosecutions	51,720	51,720	
25 Court of Chancery	1,294	1,294	
26 ,, Queen's Bench	1,338	1,338	
27 ,, Common Pleas	1,421	1,311	
28 ,, Exchequer	1,580	1,320	
29 Taxing Officers of Law Courts	200	200	
30 Registrars to Judges	5,232	5,232	
31 Consolidated Writ Office	nil	nil	*759,483
32 Registrar of Judgments	1,766	1,906	
33 High Court of Delegates	300	300	
34 Insolvent Debtors' Court	3,066	3,146	
35 Clerk of Court of Errors	267	267	
36 Police Justices, Dublin	1,600	1,600	
37 Dublin Metropolitan Police, Grant in Aid	35,000	31,000	
38 Constabulary of Ireland	639,100	538,511	
39 Four Courts, Marshalsea Prison	1,832	1,942	
40 Prison & Convict Services at Home & Abroad	906,374	917,450	988,321
	£2,257,083	£2,246,258	£2,327,703

Civil Services—Class IV.

The Committee then proceeded with the estimates for "Education Science, and Art," which amounted to £876,937, and were divided into 15 votes, comprising upwards of 500 items, spread over 59 pages. Of the

* Not specified in Finance Accounts for 1854-5.

first vote proposed,—£451,213 for public education in Great Britain, a sum of £300,000 was granted, on the understanding that the reasons urged by various members for its postponement should be discussed when the remainder was asked for. The Irish Education vote occasioned much discussion, many of the items being objected to, particularly one of £1000 for "premiums to teachers for the encouragement of neatness and cleanliness," and several members urged postponement for further consideration.

Mr. W. Williams moved an amendment to this effect. He particularly objected to an item of £5,175 for "the Albert Agricultural Establishment, at Glasnevin," observing that he always found the name of Albert accompanied with profuse expenditure, and contending that there was no reason why agricultural improvements for the benefit of Irish landowners should be paid for by the public.

Lord Palmerston contended that, inasmuch as the people of Ireland were mainly dependant upon agriculture, and were greatly deficient in agricultural knowledge, the public money could not be better employed than in teaching them how to cultivate the soil.

Mr. D'Israeli maintained that it was no more the business of Government to teach agriculture than to teach any other trade or profession. It appeared to him that the principle on which these votes were based was substantially false; and he regretted to find that during the last two years, when circumstances required the greatest confidence in Government with the least possible scrutiny of public expenditure, Ministers had fallen into an easy habit of spending money, which ought to be checked.

Mr. J. G. Phillimore called the vote a most transparent job.

Mr. Horsman (Secretary for Ireland) said he was not prepared to vindicate all the items, many of which he admitted were somewhat objectionable; but he gravely asserted that it was for those who objected to them to show that the money was not beneficially spent! Having thus enunciated one very novel principle, the Right Hon. gentleman was delivered of another, in the shape of a hope that Hon. members would be content with having elicited the opinion of the House, which he thought would be a warning to the Commissioners that they must modify the estimates to be presented hereafter.

Mr. Stafford wished to know who was really responsible for the estimates. He objected to these agricultural establishments as partaking of class legislation, and he thought it rather singular that he should have to teach Free-trade principles to Hon. members on the Treasury Benches. He declared, as a proprietor of land in Ireland, that he never could understand what advantage was to be derived from these agricultural training establishments; and that he should witness their abolition without the slightest alarm.

Mr. Barnes protested against such establishments as taxing the people generally for the benefit of a class.

Lord Palmerston said that the Right Hon. gentleman had broken a lance against his own shield, inasmuch as, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had himself proposed precisely similar estimates. He contended that Ireland must be considered an exception to general principles, since she had been suffering for ages from mis-government. It was quite new to him to hear that, in teaching the people industrial

occupations Government abused its powers. He was quite ready to admit that the vote was a fit subject for revision ; but he was for leaving such revision to the Commissioners themselves, who, he said, would be urged by Government to consider whether these establishments were not conducted on too extensive a scale.

Mr. D'Israeli, in reply to the charge of inconsistency, reminded the Noble Lord that, in order to expedite an appeal to the country, the Government of Earl Derby had proposed the estimates which they found prepared by their predecessors. The objection of the Noble Lord had, therefore, no weight whatever, and his triumph was imaginary. As to the misgovernment of Ireland, how could that be a justification for these unhappy model farms? The Noble Lord had himself, for nearly half a century, been responsible for the government of Ireland, and therefore his appeal *ad misericordiam* was somewhat inopportune.

The amendment of Mr. Williams was negatived by 144 to 38, and another amendment against particular items by 126 to 41. In reference to a charge of £5,175 for the model farm of 178 acres, Sir J. Shelley asked whether a debtor and creditor account were kept, and also whether the farm yielded no return. No answer was given to either question, and, amidst ironical cheering, the vote was declared to be carried.

Monday, April 7.

After a long debate, and a defeat of ministers on the question of billetting soldiers on private dwellings in Scotland, the Civil Service Estimates, Class 4, were proceeded with. The first half dozen votes were rapidly disposed of. On the next,—£2,975 for the Belfast Presbyterian Institution, Mr. L. Heyworth moved its reduction by £1,500, and, after a polemical discussion, was defeated by 85 to 31.

Mr. Spooner (who had voted in the majority) then moved a reduction of £300, that being the amount asked for two "non-subscribing" Professors of Divinity, because he understood that they were Unitarians.

Mr. Hadfield seconded the amendment, not for the reason stated by the Hon. Member, but because the two Professors had only three pupils between them.—The amendment was negatived by 88 to 42.

Mr. Cheetham moved a reduction of £250 asked for as "incidental expenses of the General Assembly College at Belfast."

Mr. Wilson said this sum had formerly been voted for a professorship which had fallen vacant, and it was now thought desirable to apply the money to the payment of incidental expenses.

The amendment was negatived by 108 to 36. On the vote of £17,639 for the National Gallery, there was a long discussion on the services of Sir E. Eastlake,—who was appointed Director last year, at a salary of £1000, and on the merits or demerits of a painting of the Adoration of the Magi, attributed to Paul Verronese, which the Lords of the Treasury had purchased, at the Director's recommendation, for £1,977.

Mr. C. Otway referred to the universal condemnation of this painting by the newspaper critics, and said no appraiser would value it

at more than £100. He moved a reduction of £650, the amount of the picture agent's travelling expenses.

Mr. Bowyer had heard that the painting was actually offered for £50 a short time ago.

Mr. Wilson declared, on the other hand, that he had seen a letter from Paris, the writer of which offered 50,000 francs for it.

The amendment was negatived by 152 to 72. Of the remaining votes only one, viz., £2,000 for the Royal Society was opposed, but the objection that the Society was well able to pay for its own experiments was not pressed to a division. The following is an account of the votes as ultimately passed, the postponed grants being agreed to on a subsequent evening:—

Education, Science, and Art.

	Amt. voted. 1856-7. £.	Amt. voted. 1855-6. £.	Amt. voted. 1854-5 £.
1. Public Education, Great Britain	451,213.	396,921.	263,000.
Science and Art Department	64,675.	79,364.	79,845.
2. Public Education (Ireland)	227,641.	215,200.	193,040.
3. „ „ Office Expenses	605.	605.	598.
4. University of London	3,879.	3,858.	3,875.
5. Universities, &c. in Scotland	7,510.	7,952.	7,710.
6. Queen's University (Ireland)	2,415.	2,366.	2,259.
7. „ Colleges „	4,800.	9,552.	.....
8. Royal Irish Academy	533.	647.	300.
9. „ Hibernian „	300.	300.	300.
10. Belfast Theological Proposers, &c.	2,975.	2,600.	2,600.
11. British Museum Establishment	60,000.	56,180.	55,225.
Ditto Buildings	25,643.	27,520.	101,142.
Ditto Purchases	.....	4,000.	1,500.
12. National Gallery	17,639.	17,696.	7,490.
13. Scientific Works and Experiments	4,609.	6,409.	2,020.
14. Royal Geographical Society	500.	500.	500.
15. Royal Society	2,000.	.....	.....
	£876,937.	£831,670.	£721,404.

Tuesday, April 8.

Audit of Public Accounts.

There was this day a discussion on the utter inadequacy of the existing system of auditing the public accounts. The great importance of the subject was admitted by Lord Palmerston and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but, as a proof of the little interest taken in it by the guardians of the public purse, it may be mentioned that, during a most able exposure of the system by Mr. Bowyer, there were only about a dozen of them present. Ministers promised "consideration" and the matter dropped.

Monday, April 14.

This was truly a remarkable day, nearly a whole sitting of nine hours having been devoted to financial business:—unfortunately, however, it was only on minor matters that this extraordinary diligence was displayed, after millions had been voted without investigation. Operations were commenced with the

for the Colonial, Consular, and other Foreign departments. They amounted to £320,265 (exclusive of pensions, &c., charged on the Consolidated Fund); were divided into 14 votes, comprising upwards of 500 items, and covering 19 pages. On the second vote, £7,397 for ecclesiastical establishments in British America,

MR. W. WILLIAMS thought it most objectionable that the people of England should be called upon to pay the Bishop of the rich and flourishing City of Quebec, the Rector of Montreal, Missionaries for the propagation of the Gospel, and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Newfoundland.

MR. LABOUCHERE said that these votes were the remains of a system which had been abolished; that clergymen had accepted offices in Canada on the faith of these grants, which would cease on their death; and that to throw them on the Colonial Assembly would be to add insult to injury, inasmuch as the Assembly had resolved not to pay the clergy of any denomination.

The vote was agreed to. On the next,—£24,728 for Colonial Governors,

MR. W. WILLIAMS moved its reduction by £5,300, contending that the Colonies ought to pay their own Governors, and contrasting the salary of the Governor of Jamaica (£3500) with that of the Governor of the State of New York, which was £800 only. The estimates generally, he said, were the most extravagant he had ever known; and he felt so strongly on this subject that he should take the sense of the House upon it.

This was done, and the result, 3 votes to 269, was hailed with derisive cheers and shouts of laughter. The same gentleman protested strongly against the next vote—£24,300 for Stipendary Magistrates, but, discouraged by his last experiment, said he should not give the Committee the trouble of dividing. On the vote of £167,498 for Consular establishments,

MR. WISE inquired why the suggestion of the Committee of 1850, which reported on the diplomatic establishment, and recommended that an inquiry into the consular branch should be pursued next session, had not been acted upon. He described the salaries and duties of Consuls in various parts of the world, the former being generally very high the latter often next to nothing,—as for example, at Madrid, where there is no commerce, and at Lisbon, where there are a Consul and a Vice-consul, one of whom, he was told, did nothing for his £600 a year but smoke all day and play cards at night.

LORD PALMERSTON maintained that the services of the Consuls were most important, and assured the House that it was an object of great solicitude with him to appoint none but proper and efficient persons. He stated that a system of examination would shortly be established; and that it was the intention of Government to appoint a select committee on the Consular system next session.

MR. WISE expressed his satisfaction at these announcements.

The vote was agreed to, as were also the rest in the list of which the following is a summary :—

COLONIAL, CONSULAR, AND OTHER FOREIGN SERVICES.

	Amt. voted. 1856-7. £.	Amt. voted. 1855-6. £.	Amt. voted. 1854-5. £.
1 Bermudas	4,050	4,050	4,049
2 Clergy, North America	7,397	7,397	7,547
3 Indian Department, Canada	4,713	7,010	9,438
4 Governors, &c., W. Indies, & W. Australia	24,728	24,728	25,321
5 Justices, West Indies	24,300	24,750	28,875
6 Western Coast Africa	10,230	10,630	14,110
7 St. Helena	10,856	11,057	11,276
8 Heligoland	960	976	976
9 Falkland Islands	2,901	2,807	3,023
Hong Kong	nil	3,300	4,400
10 Emigration	14,582	16,720	16,840
Distressed Emigrants, Canada	nil	10,500	.....
11 Captured Negroes, &c.	12,000	10,000	20,000
12 Commission for Suppression of Slave Trade	11,050	11,250	11,250
13 Consuls abroad	167,493	157,669	156,365
14 Ministers at Foreign Courts, extraordinary expenses	25,000	25,000	18,500
	320,265	328,344	332,470

CIVIL SERVICES—CLASS VI.

The Committee next proceeded with the estimates for superannuations and other allowances, which comprised 17 votes, upwards of 1000 items, and occupied 52 pages. On the first vote,—£146,537 for superannuations,

MR. W. WILLIAMS criticised several of the items. It appeared, he said, that one person had been in the receipt of a retiring pension for 65 years. Another, Sir A. Spearman, had retired from the Assistant Secretaryship of the Treasury at the age of 46 with a pension of £1000 ; and as that gentleman now filled the office of Secretary and Comptroller General in the National Debt Office, he wished to know what salary was paid to him in addition to the pension.

MR. WILSON said the rule was that an officer retiring on a superannuation, and afterwards returning to the public service in an office of less emolument, was only entitled to such portion of the retiring allowance as would make his salary equal to that which he formerly received.*

MR. WILLIAMS next asked how it was that four persons lately employed in the Metropolitan Buildings Office, and now receiving £2000 in the shape of retiring pensions, had not been transferred to the new Metropolitan Board of Works?

MR. WILSON said it had been impossible, after every effort, to find employment for them, and therefore they were entitled to retiring pensions. Being pressed to explain the impossibility of employing these experienced persons, under the new Board, he said it was because Government had no control over that Board.†

SIR F. BARING wished to know why a person who had served nine

* Then the rule has been violated in this instance. From the explanation furnished in the printed estimates, p. 4, it appears that Sir A. Spearman's salary in his former office was £2000, and that he was entitled to a retiring pension of £1350; in the estimates class ii. p. 3, his present salary is stated to be £1500; with his pension of £1000 he is now, therefore, in the receipt of £2500 per annum, or £500 more than he ought to have according to "the rule."

† Of the persons thus snugly provided for three were official Referees, the other a Registrar.

years at a salary of £500 was allowed £333 as a retiring pension, when, according to the Superannuation Act, it required 20 years service to entitle him to half the Salary.

Mr. Wilson said that rule only applied to persons retiring *from ill health, old age, or incapacity.* On the Abolition of an office it was the practice to give two thirds of the salary.

After objections to various other items, and replies from Mr. Wilson equally vague and unsatisfactory,

Mr. Hildyard said the rage now was to abolish every thing, to give ample compensations to all concerned, and then call into existence a new institution, which was soon found to work no better than its predecessor. For the reason alleged in the fable of the Fox and the Flies he thought the officers employed under the old system should be continued under the new.

Captain Scobell said there were about 300 "flies" included in the list,—in other words 300 holders of retiring pensions, most of whom were neither aged nor disabled, and therefore ought to be made to work for their pay.

Mr. Bowyer urged improvements in the preparation of the estimates, contending that their present complexity and confusion rendered a revision by the House little better than an idle farce.

The vote for the Dublin Foundling Hospital was carried by 187 to 32, that for the Dublin House of Industry by 180 to 33. The other votes, with the exception of two, were passed.

Friday, April 18.

After discussions on various matters, including the Indian Budget, the Government Pyrotechnics, and the Hereditary Pension Job, the House resolved itself into Committee, and proceeded with the two remaining votes of Class 6. On the first of them, £39,004 for Dissenting Ministers in Ireland,

Mr. Pellatt proposed a reduction of £37,639, being the amount of allowances to 529 ministers, which he considered to be opposed to all principles of reason and justice.

Mr. Hadfield was convinced that, sooner or later, these odious grants must be abolished.

The Amendment was negatived by 230 to 60.

Mr. Hadfield then proposed a reduction of £3,097, the amount asked for 42 Dissenting Ministers, all having incomes of £100 and upwards from other sources. There were, he said, thousands of ministers of the Church of England who did not receive £100 per annum. He could not understand why the Rev. Dr. Morgan, who had £350 a year from his congregation should also receive £92 6s. 2d. of the public money, or why the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, with £130 a year, should also be paid a similar sum.

Without a word of explanation from any person connected with the Government, a division was taken, and the amendment negatived by 214 to 39.

Mr. Kershaw protested against these grants, and also against the manner of their distribution. Dr. Cooke, he said, distributed £23,345

amongst 323 ministers, and was allowed £1 each for his trouble, though a banker's clerk would do it at 5s. per cent. A still more glaring case was that of Dr. Montgomery, who was allowed about £6 per head for distributing £2,900 to 39 Unitarian ministers. Dr. Cooke had also £250 as Professor of Calvinistic Theology, and Dr. Montgomery £200 as Professor of Unitarian Theology. He moved a reduction of £500, the amount of agents' salaries, and was defeated by 198 to 41.

Mr. Barnes moved the rejection of an item of £346 for five ministers of new non-conforming congregations, both as unjust, and as damaging to the Christian religion.

Mr. Hadfield having pointedly called for some expression of opinion from the Treasury bench,

Mr. Labouchere said the question had been so frequently discussed, and the arguments for the voluntary as opposed to the endowment principle were so hackneyed that he thought the members of the Government had exercised a wise discretion in abstaining from taking any part in the discussion.

This cavalier defiance of the House, and of public opinion, only elicited a laugh; but it seems to have cowed Mr. Barnes, who withdrew his amendment.

The vote was then agreed to, and the House resumed. The following is a summary of the

Superannuation and Retired Allowances and Gratuities for Charitable and other Purposes.

	Amt. voted. 1856-7	Amt. voted. 1855-6	Amt. voted. 1854-5
	£	£	£
1 Superannuation and Retired Allowances...	146,537	138,609	135,772
2 Toulonnese and Corsican Emigrants, &c., and American Loyalists	2,270	2,270	2,561
3 Vaccine Establishment	2,000	2,000	2,210
4 Refuge for the Destitute	325	325	325
5 Polish Refugees and Distressed Spaniards.	4,000	4,200	4,200
6 Miscellaneous Charges	4,371	4,371	4,469
7 Public Infirmaries, Ireland	2,985	2,985	3,252
8 Foundling Hospital, Dublin	1,295	1,295	1,352
9 House of Industry ,, ...	11,790	11,790	11,859
10 Female Orphan Asylum, Dublin	500	500	500
11 Westmoreland Sick Hospital ,, ...	1,215	1,215	1,215
12 Lying-in Hospital, ,, ...	500	500	500
13 Dr. Steeven's ,, ,, ...	795	795	795
14 Fever Hospital ,, ...	1,900	1,900	1,900
15 Meath ,, ,, ...	600	540	250
16 Non-conforming Ministers (Ireland)	39,054	38,953	38,745
17 Concordatum Fund, and other Charities and Allowances, Ireland	6,062	6,094	6,426
	£226,199	£218,342	£216,331

☞ *The review will be concluded in the next Tract. The reader cannot possibly have proceeded thus far without seeing that the House of Commons has, in reality, no check upon either Estimates or Expenditure; and he can hardly help feeling disgusted at the fact that, up to the present day, not a single member of that Honorable Assembly has ventured to suggest the only real remedy—a permanent* Finance Committee.

J. R. Williams and Co., Machine Printers, Church Lane, Liverpool.

A FEW WORDS

ON

THE FINANCES.

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ON

THE FINANCES.

One of the most common and one of the most effective methods of attacking the Conservative Government is to say, "See what a terribly extravagant and unbusiness-like lot you are. We, the Liberals, held office for five years, we remitted so many millions of taxes, we paid off so many millions of the national debt, and at the end of our office we handed over to our successors a surplus of five and a half millions, and yet you, you wretched Conservatives, at the end of your five years of office, you have hardly paid off any of the national debt, you have increased the taxes, and so far from handing over a surplus to us, who trust to be your successors, we expect you will present us with a bill for a deficit of eight millions." Now, I wish to investigate and answer that charge, and although I shall have to deal with things which are very wearisome and tiresome—namely, figures—I will ask you, my readers, as practical, business-like men, to say at the end whether I fairly investigate and fully answer these charges. A Chancellor of the Exchequer has been defined to be a surplus-getting animal. But his functions in the matter are almost purely mechanical. He is in this position—he must spend what is necessary, and he can only save part of what he receives. That seems to be rather an elementary truth, but a truth which is almost invariably forgotten. Peace and prosperity are the two fairies which smile upon a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Every time they open their lips they drop gold and diamonds into his lap. War and adversity are the two demons that mock at all his efforts—they touch him with a wand, his surplus fades away into a deficit, and his calculations are frustrated and defeated. A period of prosperity fills the exchequer, for this obvious

reason—when profits are high the income tax increases; when business is good the stamp tax increases; when every one's pockets are full every one puts his hands into his pockets and spends money, and the customs and the excise revenues increase; but when there is adversity, falling profits and diminished wages, exactly the reverse process takes place. Now, if you will compare the two periods of Mr. Gladstone's ministry and Lord Beaconsfield's ministry, each of them being a period of five years, you will find that one has been a cycle of unparalleled prosperity and the other has been a cycle of unparalleled adversity. You, as men of business, know that prosperity and adversity succeed each other in cycles. Prosperity causes overtrading, and overtrading is always punished by collapse; collapse produces caution, caution produces sound business, and sound business in its turn is rewarded by prosperity. Mr. Gladstone took office at the end of 1868, just when the wheel of fortune was beginning to rise to the summit. You will remember that the year 1866 had been a period of collapse. Overend and Gurney's came down and brought countless houses down along with them. In 1868 matters began to revive, and in 1869 a fresh era of prosperity commenced. In December, 1869, the Suez Canal was opened; that revolutionised the whole form of the eastern trade, the old sailing vessels were dismissed, quantities of new, fast iron steamers were made by every nation in the world, and the iron trade received enormous advances, as also the coal trade. Then as to 1870; it was at first supposed that the outbreak of war between France and Germany would be a great misfortune to us, but exactly the reverse happened; the shutting up of all the cotton and silk and iron industries of France brought enormous success and benefit to trade in England. Then came 1871; the war came to an end, France started up again, and with her wonted energy resumed business. The enormous indemnity which she paid to Germany caused a spirit of speculation in Germany, and so an immense business commenced again in that part of the world. 1871 was also the period in which all the nations of the world seemed to assemble in London for the purpose of collecting loans. These loans, as we all know now to our sorrow, were—the majority of them—swindles, but

at the time and until they were found out they paid enormous interest, and this money and the ill-gotten gains it represented were scattered broadcast over the world in every conceivable commercial transaction, generally hollow but very productive for a time to those who received the profits.

Then came 1872, when the world seemed to have gone wild—no one seemed able to demand enough, for he found some one else who could purchase at any price. 1873 represents the greatest period of inflation of English commerce that ever existed, for English commerce which in 1869 represented 532 millions had in 1873 increased to 682 millions. England had taken 400 years to build up a commerce of 532 millions, and in four years she added 150 millions to it. She added 25 per cent. in four years to the labours of 400 years, an achievement unparalleled in the history of the world. But it was too good to last. England, which had for five years been indulging in a debauch of brandy and champagne, awoke one morning to soda-water and cold tea. And it was at this particular time the present Government took office.

Now, let me make a contrast. In 1873 the first note of coming calamity was struck from three different parts of the world. In 1873 came the crash in Vienna; in 1873 Jay Cooke's house crashed and tumbled in America, and brought down half the American banks after it; in 1873 was the Bengal famine, which cost ultimately ten millions of money. Then in 1874 the fall in iron and coal set in, and the fall singularly enough was accelerated by one of the greatest discoveries of the present day—namely, the Bessemer process for making steel, because it enables you to make steel with half the amount of labour and half the expenditure on coal, and when made it is infinitely more lasting than iron. In addition to that, and which was doubly unfortunate, this Bessemer process was incapable of being applied to some of the most valuable iron mines in England, and the result was that incalculable loss and adversity fell upon the coal and iron miners. About this time the great foreign loans began to be found out; this brought a collapse. They had been paying interest out of the principal—the only principle, I believe, there was in the transaction from

beginning to end—and when they failed those who had lent found themselves ruined. 1875 was the first of three years of bad harvests, three years in which the corn crop is calculated to have fallen short to the extent of 25 per cent., causing what is calculated to be a loss of 25 millions in each year to the agricultural population of the country, and that lasted though 1876 and 1877. In 1876 came the repudiation by Turkey, and I need hardly remind you of the enormous loss which resulted from that. In addition to that Egypt began to totter, and those who had lent their money there found they were in a difficulty. In 1877 there was the famine in China and Madras, and the fall of silver, which made the rupee, which at one time was worth 2s., represent only 1s. 8d. and 1s. 6d. This, of course, affected the whole of the Indian trade, because it was impossible for any one to speculate with any confidence, for he did not know when he made a bargain whether, when paid, the rupee would be at the price he calculated upon. Then in the beginning of 1878 the City of Glasgow Bank fell, the Rochdale Bank and the West of England Bank fell. All the banks which traded in Indian securities got into difficulties. Their shares, which used to represent £45, now represent £12 to £15. Trade, which rose in the five years of Mr. Gladstone's rule from 532 millions to 682 millions, fell in the second five years to 614 millions.

Now let me ask attention to these respective cycles of prosperity and adversity, and consider what effect they have upon the fortunes of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone used the famous phrase, that during his term of office the revenue advanced not by steps but by leaps and bounds. It seemed as if it was absolutely impossible to keep the revenue back. The Government might remit a tax one year and next year find the revenue larger than before. They might estimate any branch of produce at as much as they thought it was possible to realise, and next year find it two or three millions more. The result was that, although the Liberals were able to reduce taxation to the extent of nearly 12 millions, they found the revenue had advanced from 1869 to 1874 to the extent of four millions and three-quarters; not only that, but they found from year to year that whatever they estimated the revenue to be it turned out something

enormously larger, and in five years the difference between what they estimated it would produce and what it actually did produce was as nearly as possible 15 millions of money. Now, a financier must be a fool if he hasn't a surplus when he can't keep back his revenue, or who, having given away as much as he wishes, finds his pockets full to bursting for the next year. Let me compare the fortunes of the succeeding Chancellor of the Exchequer, and first of all let me recall what was really the character of the five-and-a-half millions surplus left by Mr. Gladstone. Probably some who are not familiar with this matter have visions of Sir Stafford Northcote paying his first visit to the Treasury, and being handed round by an obsequious permanent official, showing him bundles of sovereigns in one direction and piles of notes in another. Nothing of the sort took place. What is meant by saying that Mr. Gladstone left five-and-a-half millions surplus is that if the next year had gone on producing the same income, and the expenditure had not exceeded the estimate, there would have been a surplus of that amount at the end of that next year. The actual balances when Sir Stafford Northcote came into office were not greater than they ordinarily are, and the actual difference between the expenditure and the income for the last year was only £869,000. Now, Sir Stafford did what every Chancellor of the Exchequer does whenever he finds he has more money than he wants—namely, remits taxation to get rid of it. Accordingly Sir Stafford Northcote dealt with the five-and-a-half millions in this way: he at once remitted the whole taxation on sugar, and from that day no spoonful of sugar that anybody consumes has been touched by the exciseman. He remitted a penny of the income tax; he remitted several taxes as to post horses and other things, and he transferred a number of claims formerly made on ratepayers to the taxpayers—this of course made no difference to the taxpayer; only formerly a collector came in the name of the municipality, and now he comes in the name of the Queen. In this way Sir Stafford Northcote got rid of the anticipated surplus and brought himself down to the ordinary working balance. That was the last year in which Sir Stafford Northcote was able to perform any feat of this sort, because distress and adversity told its tale rapidly on the

Chancellor's balances. So far from every item of revenue increasing, year after year progress became diminished, then it stopped, and retrogression commenced. So far from there being an enormous surplus income over the estimates each year, the surplus became smaller, and in the last year, cautiously as the revenue had been estimated, it was actually smaller by a considerable amount than the estimate. The result, therefore, is that whereas Mr. Lowe, in his five years of office, obtained 15 millions more than was expected, Sir Stafford Northcote only got £2,659,000—so that in their five years of office the Conservatives were about 12½ millions worse off than the Whigs. If the Conservatives had had the same financial luck as the Liberals, by this year they would not only have paid all the costs of the expected war with Russia, the war with Afghanistan, and the war with the Zulus, but they would have had a surplus in their hands of five millions. Therefore, when we are asked what became of Mr. Gladstone's surplus, the answer is that there never was a surplus at all, and when asked why Sir Stafford Northcote hadn't a surplus, the answer is, because the people were not good enough to pay sufficient taxes into the exchequer.

Now, as to the expenditure. Mr. Grant Duff was recently making a speech to his constituents, and in an airy sort of way he said the Liberal expenditure during five years averaged 70 millions, whereas the Tory expenditure averaged 80 millions. In the first place let me give you one caution—whenever you hear a person talking to you of averages, don't believe a word he says. There is no such thing in reality as an average—the items of which an average is made up exist, but there is nothing in nature corresponding to an average itself. There are perhaps in a room 400 genuine Conservatives, and if any one wanted to make up an average Conservative he would measure all of them, or he would weigh all of them, or he would take the length of all their noses, and then he would divide it all by 400, which would produce his average Conservative, but I need hardly say that that individual would not represent any one in the room nor in the whole world. The reason Mr. Duff makes his statement in this way is that he may compare five years of unparalleled peace and prosperity

with five years of unparalleled adversity, the last two containing the cost of three wars. Mr. Duff is one of the Liberal party's good young men. I suspected there was something wrong in his figures, and I have taken the precaution to look into the official records and work out an average myself. This is the strict arithmetical result. Mr. Duff says the expenditure of the Liberal party's five years of office averaged 70 millions. I find the exact average to be £71,416,000; so that the good young man is out to the extent of £1,416,000 on one side. Then I find that the average of the expenditure of the Conservatives was not 80 millions but £79,377,000, so that the good young man was out £623,000 on the other side; in other words, whereas he made out there was an average difference of ten millions of expenditure, there really was an average difference of eight millions, which for a Liberal good young man I think is an important mistake, especially when addressing his constituents. Now, as to detail. I have compared the actual ordinary expenditure of the last Liberal year of office with that of the last Conservative year of office, and I find the difference to be £7,363,490 up to the 31st March. That seems an important difference. Let us perform a dissecting operation upon this. In the first place two millions a year of this arose from the fact that the Conservatives had made increased provision for the payment of the national debt, partly by means of a sinking fund, and partly by means of converting the permanent debt into terminable annuities which expire in 1885. It may be an expensive thing to pay off debts, but no one can call it extravagant. In the next place two millions of this money is money which, as I said before, is transferred from the ratepayer to the taxpayer. Half of the cost of the county police, lunatic asylums, and the whole of the cost of the county prisons have been transferred from the ratepayer to the taxpayer, but it makes no difference to the country. The only difference is that by the transfer of prisons we have been able to diminish the number of local prisons from 113 to 68, and reduce the expenditure to the extent of £80,000 a year.

Another item of this apparent expenditure is £643,000 a year for interest upon loans to municipalities, School Boards, sanitary

authorities, town councils, and so forth—the Government pays an interest of three per cent., and receives from the bodies to whom it lends three and a-half per cent., so that the £643,000 is only an apparent expenditure, because it is balanced by a much larger receipt which comes in under the head of "miscellaneous revenue." That explains away £4,643,000 of this seven millions. Now the rest is undoubtedly due to growth in the cost of Government, partly in the cost of the civil service, and partly in the cost of the Army and Navy. This growth is a thing that goes steadily on from year to year just as much under a Liberal Government as under a Conservative Government, and the reason is that every year we insist on having things better managed, and if they are better managed, it means they are managed more expensively. We would no more consent at the present day to submit to the way in which things were managed (most economically no doubt) fifty years ago than we should consent to cover our drawing-rooms with carpets of rushes which Queen Elizabeth considered good enough for her own palace. Now, as to the source of this growth—it is popularly supposed that the House of Commons is the great check on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is exactly the reverse. It is the House of Commons which is perpetually imploring him to increase his expenditure, and perhaps the Liberal party are the greatest offenders in this respect. A Chancellor's greatest enemies are philanthropists—one person wants ships inspected, another person wants factories inspected, another person wants mines inspected; one person is crotchety for prisoners, and is indignant that the last new-caught burglar has not got a chaplain and a schoolmaster all to himself. Another has a weakness for paupers, and is indignant because every pauper has not got lump sugar in his tea. As I said before, all these things cost money.

Now as to the growth of one particular item, the item of education, and it should be borne in mind that any growth upon this item is due to one of the great measures of the Liberal Government. In the first year of Mr. Gladstone's Government the expenditure on education was £840,000; in the last year it was £1,424,000; and for the present year it is £2,733,000, so that you easily can see how the

items grow; and if it is remembered that the cost of prisons and reformatories and police and so forth grow in the same ratio, it will be understood that this growth in the expenditure is something absolutely necessary and absolutely unavoidable. If you choose to diminish this growth you can only do it by having things (to use a common expression) cheap and nasty.

Another large element of expense is that upon the Army and Navy. There are various causes for that increase, which I will not now enter upon. One of these causes is, that under the system of Army organisation introduced by the Liberals, we have to pay for two armies instead of one: for an effective Army in the ranks, and also for a Reserve Army in their own homes. Another cause is, that in order to compete with the general rise in wages, we have to raise the allowances of the rank and file, and the pay of the non-commissioned officers and the Reserve forces.

But I ask this question. Does any man in his senses think that in the past and present crisis we have had a soldier or a sailor too much, or that any soldier or sailor is paid more than the market price for his services? When in 1871 Mr. Lowe, in consequence of the panic arising from the Franco-German war, increased the estimate for the Army, he made one of the noblest and most patriotic speeches ever made. He said we should not grudge the expenditure on the Army and Navy, for it represents what we pay in insurance upon the life of the nation. But no man, however parsimonious he may be, would attempt to save expenses by insuring in a rotten or insolvent office. During four hundred years England has engaged in many wars, and she has emerged from every war ultimately victorious. And I ask you to consider what would be the result if England emerged from a war defeated. When the great Marshal Blucher came to London in 1815, after the battle of Waterloo, in going round the city, he was observed to become suddenly depressed. His companions thought he had received bad news, but after a while he suddenly broke out with the words, "Ach, Gott, what a beautiful city to sack!" I ask you what would be the consequences to the interests of the Empire if the Cossacks had three

days' loot in the City of London? But modern nations have invented a mode of sacking a city they have never seen, and that is by a new-fangled system of indemnities. When the Germans defeated the French they imposed upon them an indemnity of two hundred millions sterling, and it is said that Prince Bismarck has never since recovered his temper because he didn't make it four hundred millions. When the Russians defeated the Turks they imposed upon them an indemnity of one hundred and seventy-six millions. No doubt they took the greater part of that out in land, because they could not get anything else. Just upon the principle that a young spendthrift, when he is contracting his second or third loan, has to take part of it in pictures and sherry, and is very lucky if he hasn't to take it out in paving-stones and coffins. We find the money balance left against the Turks is thirty-seven millions. I would like to ask what amount of indemnity rich, wealthy England would be asked to pay in such an eventuality as I have alluded to? What figures in millions do you suppose that indemnity would be put down at? Don't you think that as part of the indemnity they would kindly offer to take over India, Canada, Jamaica, or the West Indian Islands? That is a subject which I will leave to you for your consideration, and I would ask you, for the future, when you are told that the Conservative Government has been an extravagant Government, that they have spent more than they ought, that they have wasted what they have spent, to put the question in reply, "Will you be so good as to give me chapter and verse, and name the particular figures upon which you rely, and refer to the official documents by which they are supplied?"

Upon a recent occasion Mr. Grant Duff was making one of his attacks upon the Government, and he said, "Compare us two parties. We were in office five years, and we diminished the National Debt by 25 millions. You have been in office five years also, and you have reduced the National Debt by not quite one and a-half millions." Mr. Grant Duff is a very superior young man. He is, for a human being, as nearly as possible omniscient, and therefore anything he says, at all events as regards facts and figures, invariably carries a great deal of weight with it. Now, in reference to this statement of

Mr. Grant Duff, in the first place, as regards the actual fact, it is strictly true. Mr. Grant Duff could not be indicted for perjury before a British jury for anything he said, and still the statement he made conveys an impression as false as any statement which any man, statesman or otherwise, could advance. Let me explain this matter, which I can do in a few sentences. The national debt consists of three items—permanent debt, terminable annuities, and unfunded debt. The Conservative Government during its five years of office has reduced the funded debt and terminable annuities to the extent of £22,625,000; it has increased the unfunded debt to the extent of £21,420,000. The difference, therefore, is £1,205,000, and that is the exact sum Mr. Grant Duff gives us credit for having reduced the National Debt. Now, how far does that convey a correct impression as to the facts of the case? One would be led to suppose from this that the £21,420,000 which we had added to the unfunded debt was an addition to the burdens of the Empire exactly of the same class as the £22,625,000 which we deducted from the National Debt, and therefore that the only balance remaining in our favour was the £1,205,000. As a matter of fact, the actual additional burden to the resources of the Empire in consequence of this £21,420,000 is the astonishing sum of £4,000 yearly—not a penny more. In the last year of the Whig Government the unfunded debt was four and a-half millions, and the charge on the resources of the Empire in respect of it was £134,400, and a few odd shillings and pence. Last year the unfunded debt was twenty-five and three-quarter millions, and what was the actual charge upon the resources in respect of it?—£138,000, and a few odd shillings and pence. That seems like a conundrum, but I will explain it. The only part of that twenty-five and three-quarter millions which is actually charged upon the resources of the Empire is the sum of five and a-half millions which we have raised to pay the current expenses of the last two years' war. The whole of the remainder of that amount is money which we have invested in other securities, and which return us a higher interest than we are paying for it. £3,800,000 has been invested in the purchase of the Suez Canal shares. We pay a little over three per cent. and the Khedive

pays us five per cent., which not only returns the whole of the interest we have to pay, but also forms a sinking fund, by means of which in about thirty-three years the whole cost of the Suez Canal shares will be paid off. About eighteen millions of the remainder is money which has been advanced to municipalities for sanitary purposes, to School Boards, for harbours of refuge, and the like, and which pays back to the Government a larger sum in interest than the Government pays for it. And therefore, so far from these twenty-five millions being a burthen upon the resources of the Empire, the greater part of it is actually a benefit to the revenue. Now, I think when a superior young man like Mr. Grant Duff makes a statement to his constituents, and through them leads the British public to suppose that the Government raised the unfunded debt from five millions to twenty-five millions without any redeeming circumstance, Mr. Grant Duff is making a statement which, if it were made by an advocate at the bar, I should say was characterised rather by ingenuity than ingenuousness. I have one other remark to make in reference to Mr. Grant Duff's speech, and that is, that almost the whole of the eighteen millions I allude to has been advanced by the present Government under the operation of statutes which were passed by the Liberals themselves. £16,500,000 of that amount has been advanced by the Government under the operation of statutes the Liberal Government passed, and upon the passing of which they excessively prided themselves; so far as I know, the only sums of money that have been advanced under statutes passed by the Conservative Government is the money they have advanced for the purpose of improving the dwellings of the working classes under the Artisans' Dwellings Act. I think, therefore, I have made a tolerably successful defence as regards that part.

The last point to which I should wish to draw attention is the comparative weight of taxation during the Liberal and Conservative periods of office. When you are told that the Conservatives have raised and spent so many millions last year more than their predecessors, you naturally imagine that you have been more heavily taxed. This is the purest delusion. Part of the growth of the revenue arises from the growth of the population. The population is growing

at the rate of nearly 1,000 a day, and each year the amount of the taxes must increase, because the number of the taxpayers has increased. But no single taxpayer contributes more than he had previously done. Again, the profits on the Post Office and Telegraph Services represent, not taxes, but payment for work done. These brought in £573,000 in the year just ended more than they had done in the last year the Liberals were in office. But no one supposes that he is being taxed when he sends a telegram, or puts a postage-stamp on a letter. Another large part of the revenue is raised by stamps on commercial transactions, and this again varies according as the number of such transactions increases or decreases. The only real way of comparing the weight of taxation in two different periods is to see what taxes have been taken off and what taxes have been put on in each period, and to strike a balance between them.

Now let us see how the account stands between the two Governments on this principle :—

In 1874 the Government wholly abolished the duty on sugar, which brought in nearly £2,283,000 yearly. Against this we may put an increase to the tobacco duty in 1878, which brings in a trifle more than £500,000. This exactly represents the different burthen of the two taxes. Take a family of four: the man and his wife, and his two children, all use sugar, but it is only the man who smokes. So the tax has been taken off an article of necessity which is consumed by all the members of the family, and placed upon an article of luxury which is only consumed by one.

Again, in 1874 the Government took off various duties on horses, amounting to £480,000 a year. These duties pressed heavily on the means of travelling, especially in the neighbourhood of railway stations. In 1876 they took off duties on the employment of boys and men on casual jobs, which checked the free use of labour, and which brought in £32,000 yearly. Against these we may place an additional tax upon dogs—not farmers' or shepherds' dogs—imposed in 1878, and which produces £70,000. Here again we find that taxation to the amount of £512,000 yearly has been taken off matters of commercial im-

portance, while taxation to the amount of £70,000 has been placed upon objects of mere amusement.

The balance of revenue has been made up out of the Income-tax, and I observe in a recent speech that the Conservatives have been taunted with raising this to 5d., as if that sum had never been reached before. Now the actual state of the case is as follows:—During the five Liberal years the Income-tax was levied at the following rates, in pence:—5, 4, 6, 4, 3 = 22. During the five Conservative years the rates were 2, 2, 3, 3, 5 = 15. So that in Income-tax alone each person assessed has paid 7d. in the pound less during the Conservative than the Liberal period. During all the difficulties of the last two years the Income-tax has never yet reached the figure to which it was raised by Mr. Lowe in 1871, when he got into a fright in consequence of the war between Germany and France. But even this does not represent the whole state of the case. In 1876 the Conservatives enlarged the exemptions from Income-tax to an extent which benefited those who were then subject to it to the extent of £390,000 a year. Under the Liberal Government only persons with a smaller annual income than £100 were wholly exempt from the tax. The Conservatives raised the limit of exemption to annual incomes of £150. Under the Liberals the tax was assessed with an abatement of £80 on incomes under £300. The Conservatives raised the abatement to £120, and extended it to incomes under £400. The result is that the Income-tax, as it is now levied, touches no working man nor clerk, while its pressure upon persons of small incomes has been greatly reduced. So far from any class being more heavily taxed by the Conservatives than by the Liberals, the exact reverse is the fact. Taking the five years together, every class has been much more lightly taxed, and even at present the whole of the working classes, and the class immediately above the working class, are much more lightly taxed than they ever were under Mr. Gladstone's administration.

FOURTH EDITION.

LIBERAL

AND

CONSERVATIVE FINANCE.

BY

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These pages contain the substance of one of my speeches at Sheffield. I could not, in a public address, detail the processes of calculation, but I undertook to justify my statements by printing the tables which I had framed, and on which my conclusions were founded. The publication of subsequent returns has enabled me to include another year, and has thus modified the results, and has thereby strengthened the argument.

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE FINANCE.

THE rapid approach of a General Election seriously affects the relative importance of political questions. Many which have aroused a fierce but transitory passion have burnt themselves out, or, for other reasons, are comparatively useless in an engagement "all along the line;" while thoughtful men will turn to others because they exhibit principles or habits of action, and, therefore, indicate the probable conduct of a Government. These gain their main force from the survey of several years. Our judgments on them are affected, not by occasional mistakes or failures, but by the visible issues of a completed or, at all events, a fairly tried policy. The tendency is strong to say in a spirit of excuse on the one hand, or of disgust on the other, "The past is dead. "Bury it! But how about the future?"

On this account the financial policy and acts of those who at present "strive for mastery" are daily assuming greater prominence and attracting more thought and inquiry. Malta and Isandhlwana are past recall, but there must be a Budget every year. Moreover, taxes have a simple, direct, and vigorous influence on every man. Cyprus is a long way off, and Cabul farther still; but twopence more in the pound on the Income-tax tempts the Briton to exclaim, with the Governor of Tilbury Fort, "Ha! thou hast touched me nearly!" Of course, economy is not all we demand from the Government, nor, indeed, is it the *summum bonum*. There are things dearer far than gold. But the importance of the financial question is recognised by both parties. It has been the subject of frequent comment in the hostile criticisms of the Liberals, and the strength of some of the best Tory advocates has been exerted, both in Parliament and out of it, in defence of the existing state of affairs. On the one hand, it is alleged that Her Majesty's present Ministers have been extravagant; on the other, the fact of the excess is sometimes denied, and sometimes justified. I do not propose, in the first instance, to deal with any of the excuses or reasons for an increased expenditure. It seems to me most important to ask and answer simply two questions: Have the present Government exceeded the average and reasonable national expenditure? and if so, to what extent? If some writers and speakers are correct

there has been no excess at all, or, at all events, one so trifling that it is absurd to ground upon it a serious charge of mismanagement. If, however, it has been as large as other authorities suggest, its magnitude is a short but terribly complete answer to small excuses. The force of this inquiry will be much affected by the fulness and accuracy with which the details are given. The comparison of one or two years with others has frequently been made, and general results have also been often stated, but it seems desirable to give the figures for a longer period of time than is generally adopted; and to set them out in such a form that the results can be tested by any careful inquirer. It is only when this has been done fairly and fully that we are prepared for the next step, which is to examine the defences suggested, and to appreciate their weight or their insufficiency.

The only practicable mode of forming an opinion on this subject, and the mode which has been adopted by both sides, is to compare the results achieved by Liberals and Conservatives respectively during their tenures of office. And the first point to be settled is this: How far back should our investigations extend in order to afford a fair and adequate test? It has been urged on behalf of the present Government (though tables have been published intended to prove their economy as compared with the last Administration) that such a limited comparison is unjust to them, because the country has lately passed through exceptionally "bad times." I do not think this is a valid defence. It would be more relevant if we were inquiring into *income*. Greater national poverty may excuse a falling *revenue;* but so far from justifying an increased *expenditure*, it should surely have called for more rigid economy. When, however, a fault so serious as that which we charge is alleged, it is not seemly to narrow the ground of defence too harshly. And I propose accordingly to extend the field of inquiry. It is obviously undesirable, in the interests of truth, to take *too* wide a range. As a matter of fact, I believe that we should arrive at practically the same results whatever limit we fix within the present century. But such an inquiry would involve an unwieldy mass of figures, and after all would be of no real use.

The ultimate point of controversy is this: Is it for the national benefit that the finances of Great Britain should be left in the control of the Conservatives of *to-day?* No practical good would arise from shewing that a different set of statesmen

(whether Tories or Whigs) were economical or wasteful in past generations, under widely different circumstances, and with different prices for every article obtained.

Mr. W. H. Smith put this fairly enough in his speech in the House on the 24th April, when he complained of a comparison of the "expenditure now with what it was sixty years ago, thereby comparing two periods which were under totally different conditions."

What then should be our just limit?

I fear that no period that can be named will be satisfactory to those who may be condemned by the result. But I believe that I am dealing fairly with the question when I select the years from 1857-58 to the present time.

My reasons for fixing on this date are as follows:—

1. The period that has elapsed since the 31st March, 1857, embraces an adequate variety of circumstances, both as to changes of Ministries and as to flunctuations in commercial prosperity—a variety so wide, and on the whole so equally distributed, that it disposes to a great extent, if not altogether, of the plea of "exceptional difficulties," by the simple process of establishing a fair average for both sides.

2. It is the period covered by the latest returns which are within the reach of all who desire to verify my figures, and which record the facts in a simple and indisputable form.

3rd, and chiefly: It embraces the whole time during which those who are now in power have exercised any sensible influence on our national history. None of the members of the present Government, except Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Malmesbury, and Lord John Manners, were ever in office before 1858; and they for about nine months only—viz., from March to December, 1852. It would therefore be unjust to attach to them either praise or blame for any acts before March, 1857.

We must observe *in limine* that the national accounts are made up to the 31st March annually, and therefore the bulk of the expenditure of each year appears under the date of the year following. Thus the expenditure of nine months of the year 1878 appears under the date of 1879, the accounts having been made up from the 31st March, 1878, to the 31st March, 1879.

Having fixed on an adequate range of years, the next step is to ascertain to which party the credit or discredit of the finance of those years respectively should be assigned; in other words,

for which years are the Liberals responsible, and for which the Conservatives.

We have to consider two elements, the Budget proposals and the mode in which those proposals have been carried out during the year. The first affects the amount of taxation, the second the actual expenditure.

Where the same Government has brought in the Budget and has continued in office during the whole of the next twelve months, no difficulty can of course occur in appropriating the praise or blame. But a question may arise where the Budget has been brought in by one Government, and where another has succeeded to its responsibilities and has had to carry out its arrangements. It so happens, however, that in all these cases since 1857 the result has been favourable, and I have accordingly given the benefit of every such advantage to the Conservatives. And in most of those "Conservative years" which shew good results it will be found that they had the good fortune either to inherit a Liberal surplus, or to share the management with their political rivals. Their worst years, on the other hand, are those in which they have been entirely dependent on their own resources.

The following memoranda will, I think, justify the allocation of years which I have made in the tables I am about to present.

1857 to 1858 was a Liberal year, for Lord Palmerston was in office in March, 1857 and remained in power until the 25th February, 1858, so that only one month of that year was attributable to his successors, and the whole machinery of the year was framed by his Government.

1858 to 1859 was entirely Conservative. On the 18th June, 1859, Palmerston returned to power, and that year, 1859-60, was, therefore, divided between the two parties—the Liberals working a Tory Budget; but, as the year turned out favourably, I have assigned it to the Conservatives, although the Liberals were in office for five-sixths of the year; and this allocation credits the Conservatives with a decrease of five millions on the National Debt, and a surplus of a million and a-half.*

From this time the Liberals were in office until the 6th July, 1866. The year 1866 to 1867 was worked by a Tory Govern-

* It shews, however, an addition to taxation of four millions, but as this is the direct fruit of the Budget proposals, for which the Conservatives alone were responsible, it was naturally and justly their achievement.

ment on a Liberal Budget; but as this again was a successful year I have credited it to the Conservatives, who thereby have the benefit of a surplus of two and a-half millions, a remission of taxation of more than half a million, and a decrease of the National Debt of nearly two millions.

The Tories held the reins of power from July 6th, 1866, to the 9th December, 1868, and the year 1867-68 is, therefore, solely attributable to them, and 1868-69 for more than two-thirds of the time was also theirs, and is fairly allotted to their account.

The subsequent years need no comment, and the division of time (of which certainly the Conservative advocates cannot complain, and which, indeed, gives them every advantage in the argument) is as follows:—Liberal years—1858, 1860 to 1866, 1870 to 1874—or twelve in all. Conservative years—1859 and 1860, 1867 to 1869, 1875 to 1879—or ten in all; a nearly equal division of the time, and each year ending on the 31st March.

I now propose to shew that during the whole of this time the results of a Conservative Government have been disastrous when compared with those of their opponents, whether we refer to the gross annual expenditure—the "ordinary" expenditure, after deductions of all extra expenses—the increase or decrease of the National Debt, unfunded and funded, the surpluses or deficits, at the end of each financial year, the imposition or remission of taxation (the incidence especially of the Income-tax), or the average burden borne per head by the population of Great Britain.

I shall give the figures in support of these contentions in detail, and shall add the authorities from which they are derived and which anyone can obtain for a few pence. And if I have made any error in my calculations, which is quite possible (although I have taken great pains to be accurate and fair), it will be within the power of any doubter to correct the mistake.

It must be borne in mind that any one of the following tables would be inconclusive if not absolutely misleading, if taken *alone*. An advantage might be gained in one direction by incurring an undue burden in another. Taxes might be remitted by the simple process of allowing an accumulation of debt, or *vice versâ;* debt might be reduced, or a surplus obtained by an unnecessarily harsh increase of taxes. And I shall therefore try to

complete the argument by presenting a summary of the united results, and thus shewing the real effect of the whole policy pursued. I give in the first instance a table shewing the expenditure of each year.

It has become the fashion to talk of "ordinary" and "extraordinary" expenditure, and it is alleged on behalf of the present Government, that in order to arrive at a fair basis of comparison all "extraordinary" payments should be eliminated from the account. However true this might be if only one or two years were selected, the contention loses most (if not all) of its force when an average is taken over so many successive years. Moreover, it is not easy to draw a satisfactory line between ordinary and extraordinary expenditure; because opinions may differ as to the class to which certain items should be assigned; some items, too, which might be deemed exceptional are "lumped" under "ordinary" headings; but as this does not occur to any very great extent, and as the same course is uniformly adopted in the accounts, it does not disturb the justice of the conclusion. A more important observation is that if one side of the House habitually indulges in an increase of "extraordinary" expenses, that fact alone would form a very valid ground of reproach.

Still, where a grave charge is made against a Government it is right to follow them if possible into any excuse which has even a show of reason. I have accordingly made as impartial and accurate a division as I can. I have eliminated all those unusual charges which have been considered from time to time of sufficient importance to appear in the Annual Balance Sheet under distinctive headings; and as the accounts are annually prepared in the same form, and by the same staff of permanent officials, the result will be on the whole fair.

Those extras comprise the following charges:—Abyssinian War, Alabama Claims, Army Purchase Commission, Ashantee War, China War, Drawback (in 1861), Fortifications, Kertch, &c., Prize Money, Localisation of Forces, New Zealand, Persian, and Russian Wars, Scheldt Toll Redemption, Suez Shares, and Votes of Credit for the Russo-Turkish War, the War in Europe (Franco-German), and in South Africa. These figures, as well as the gross totals, have been taken from the Return of Public Income and Expenditure, No. 366 (2nd part), of the year 1869, pages 123 to 145, which gives the years 1857 to 1869 inclusive. The subsequent years are taken from the Annual Return of the "Gross Public Income and Expenditure Account."

The result is given in Table A, where the first and fifth columns give the gross total copied from the returns; the second and sixth give the extras ascertained as above stated; and the third and seventh, the net "ordinary" expenditure.

TABLE A.

LIBERALS.				CONSERVATIVES.		
Total Expenditure.	Extras.	Ordinary Expenditure.	Year ending 31st Mar.	Total Expenditure.	Extras.	Ordinary Expenditure.
68,240,053	2,615,899	65,624,154	1858			
			1859	64,802,872	782,523	64,020,349
			1860	69,610,791	858,057	68,752,734
72,939,247	3,382,114	69,557,133	1861			
72,267,656	2,253,430	70,014,226	1862			
70,345,101	1,050,000	69,295,101	1863			
67,849,379	1,060,523	66,788,856	1864			
67,075,299	794,598	66,280,701	1865			
66,467,449	1,324,829	65,142,620	1866			
			1867	67,223,489	450,000	66,773,489
			1868	71,759,335	2,530,000	69,229,335
			1869	75,490,909	5,525,000	69,965,909
69,064,751	1,500,000	67,564,751	1870			
69,698,539	1,500,000	68,198,539	1871			
71,860,020	811,096	71,048,924	1872			
71,022,448	1,254,500	69,767,948	1873			
76,966,510	5,210,847	71,755,663	1874			
			1875	74,928,039	1,304,114	73,623,925
			1876	80,871,773	5,308,353	75,563,420
			1877	78,125,227	1,125,159	77,000,068
			1878	82,403,495	4,769,544	77,633,951
			1879	85,407,789	2,151,740	83,256,049
843,796,452	22,757,836	821,038,616	Totals	750,623,719	24,804,490	725,819,229
70,316,371	1,896,486	68,419,884	Annual av'rage	75,062,371	2,480,449	72,581,922

Dealing in the first instance with the GROSS EXPENDITURE, it appears, from this table, that under Tory management it not only exceeds that of the Liberals in the average of years, but that it has alarmingly increased during their present tenure of office Dividing the total amount spent by the number of years—twelve in the one case and ten in the other—the average annual expenditure of the Liberals has been £70,316,371; that of the Conservatives has been £75,062,371, *shewing an average annual advantage to the nation of* £4,746,000 *under the management of Liberal financiers.*

A very similar result is obtained from a consideration of the "ORDINARY" EXPENDITURE. Under the Liberals it has been £821,038,616 in twelve years, or £68,419,884 per annum; while that of the Conservatives has been £725,819,229 in ten years, or £72,581,922 per annum, shewing *an annual excess under Conservative management of more than four millions in the ordinary expenditure alone.* And the frightful increase of the last few years does not encourage the hope of any amelioration under present management. These figures are in themselves sufficiently

striking, but they do not convey the whole charge against the Government. They are subject to modification from the fact that the accounts for each financial year do not contain all the items for the year, while they do include arrears unascertained at the close of the two years preceding. The calculation to which this gives rise is too complicated for our present purpose, but as Conservative Governments have almost invariably left much larger arrears than their rivals, the figures, as above given, present the case in a form unduly favourable to them. One comparison will be sufficient to illustrate the bearing of this.

The year 1870, for which the Liberals are responsible, was burdened with the payment of £774,428, deficiencies from the year 1867-68; and £3,731,884, supplementary payments for the year 1868-69;—*making a total arrear of* £4,506,263 *for which they became liable, but were not in principle responsible.* On the other hand, they bequeathed to the present Government, in 1874-75, a liability of £1,422,797 only, *shewing a balance in their favour of* £3,083,466, *money spent by the Tories, but debited in the foregoing table against the Liberals.* And an analysis of the various Appropriation Acts of late years indicates pretty clearly that when the present Government retires from office it will leave a similarly unsatisfactory legacy for its successors. Having thus ascertained that the distinction between an ordinary and extraordinary expenditure does not practically affect the conclusions to be drawn from the figures, and is, in fact, simply the feeble suggestion of an excuse by people who "must say something," I discard it in the remaining calculations, and proceed on the only reasonable basis—*the real and entire expenditure of the nation.*

But it *may* happen that circumstances call for an exceptional outlay. In such a case an honest and firm Government will spend what is necessary, and boldly call on the nation to endorse its policy by paying the bill. A cowardly and time-serving Administration, on the other hand, will spend money and *not* pay its bills, but will "run up a score" for others to pay; careless of economy, regardless of principle, reckless as to the future, and scrupulous only as to present popularity. This renders it necessary for us to ask: What has been the progress of the National Debt?

This is shewn by Return No. 309, of 1879, and on page 22 of the Statistical Abstract (1879). The first column of the Return is unfortunately made out with reference to the 1st April each year, instead of the 31st March, and the totals of the National Debt, as there given, appear to be in every case one year wrong.* A moment's reference, however, to the table given in the Statis-

* The explanation (not altogether logical, I think) of the discrepancy which is given to me by the Department.

tical Abstract will correct any possible misapprehension, and the first branch of the seventh column of the Return shews the increase or decrease simply and clearly.

The analysis of that column is shewn in

TABLE B.

PROGRESS OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

LIBERALS.			CONSERVATIVES.	
Increase.	Decrease.	Years ending 31st Mar.	Increase.	Decrease.
	6,168,731	1858		
		1859	.....	2,593,403
		1860	.....	5,064,420
	1,085,313	1861		
	471,066	1862		
498,661	.....	1863		
	3,344,225	1864		
	4,937,856	1865		
	8,789,050	1866		
		1867	.....	1,896,986
		1868	905,946	
		1869	.....	1,092,719
	4,073,603	1870		
	5,302,406	1871		
	3,443,024	1872		
	6,899,370	1873		
	6,478,516	1874		
		1875	.....	3,934,559
		1876	921,858	
		1877	.....	396,831
		1878	1,907,883	
		1879	297,244	
Total decrease	50,993,160		4,032,931	14,978,918
Deduct increase in one year	498,661		Deduct increase of 4 years	4,032,931
Net decrease in 12 years	50,494,499		Net decrease in 10 years	10,945,987
Average annual decrease	4,207,874		Average annual decrease	1,094,598

The result is that under Liberal care the National Debt decreases annually to the extent of £4,207,874; while the Conservatives relieve us at the rate of £1,094,598 only; *leaving a balance in favour of the Liberal financiers of £3,113,276 annually.*

It is curious to observe that far more than half of the decrease with which the Tories are credited in this table, arises in two years, 1860 and 1875. In the former of those years the Liberal

Government was in power for five-sixths of the year, and in the latter the present Government entered upon the heritage of Mr. Gladstone's finance. Very different results follow from their unaided exertions, and how sad would their account have been but for these lucky windfalls. Their annual *decrease* of debt would have been a heavy annual *increase.*

But even with this correction these figures do not disclose the whole truth. In order to apprehend the position of things accurately, we must distinguish the various classes of which the National Debt is composed. It consists of the funded debt, (including the permanent and terminable annuities) and the unfunded debt, including Treasury Bills, and the Exchequer Bills and Bonds. The gradual decrease of the funded debt is effected partly by the conversion of consols into terminable annuities, and then steadily extinguishing them by lapse of time. A fixed amount of £28,000,000 is annually voted for the interest and management of the permanent debt, and this includes the payment of the sums becoming annually due on the terminable annuities.

For this gradual decrease of the estimated capital of the terminable annuities no Chancellor of the Exchequer can legitimately claim any credit. It results from the operation of causes practically beyond his control.*

There is an additional decrease by the absolute purchase of permanent annuities, which is now effected partly through the operation of the New Sinking Fund, and in this one item of the accounts, *and in this only*, the Conservative finance compares favourably with that of the late Government, but the result is unfortunately very insignificant. The decrease of the funded debt during the late Administration was £21,780,419 in five years; that effected by the present Government being £22,594,905 in a similar period, or an apparent annual advantage under Lord Beaconsfield's Administration of £162,897, if the funded debt only is taken into account. But this illusory balance, as I have shewn, is, in fact, more than swallowed up in the total increase or decrease of the Debt; and the point of real and vital importance is the condition of the *floating* or *unfunded* debt. The terminable annuities may be safely left in the hands of any sane man. They will gradually run out by lapse of years, but the unfunded debt is the true test of the economy or extravagance of any Ministry. The history of this debt is given in Table C, and is sufficiently appalling.

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* This is very fairly indicated by the present Chancellor in 233 Hansard, page 1002. The practical result may be well illustrated by observing that during the last Gladstone Administration the terminable annuities disposed of £16,448,322, whereas during the last five years they have cleared away £21,863,892, and the Tories get the benefit therefore in these calculations of five millions and a-half of debt extinguished by this process alone.

TABLE C.

UNFUNDED DEBT.

LIBERALS.	Years ending 31st March.	CONSERVATIVES.
25,911,500	1858	
	1859	18,277,400
	1860	16,228,300
16,689,000	1861	
16,517,900	1862	
16,495,400	1863	
13,136,000	1864	
10,742,500	1865	
8,187,700	1866	
	1867	7,956,800
	1868	7,911,100
	1869	8,896,100
6,761,500	1870	
6,091,000	1871	
5,155,100	1872	
4,829,100	1873	
4,479,600	1874	
	1875	5,239,000
	1876	11,401,800
	1877	13,943,800
	1878	20,603,000
	1879	25,870,100

These figures are taken from Table No. 10 of the Statistical Abstract, published annually. The first year presents a very heavy account against the Liberals (largely caused by the Russian War). Lord Derby reduced the amount laudably during his short tenure of office in 1858-9. But, since that time, the invariable result of Conservative influences has been to increase, and of Liberal efforts to decrease, this debt. From 1861 to 1866, the Liberals *reduced* it by £8,040,600; from 1867 to 1869, the Tories *added* to it £708,400. From 1870 to 1874, the Liberals again steadily *reduced* it by £4,416,500, and the present Government has with equal steadiness, but with frightful rapidity, *added to it* £21,390,500 *in five years, or* £4,278,100 *per annum!*

One cause of this disastrous state of things is obvious enough. It is a cause which might very easily have been avoided, and I will at once point it out.

We have seen that there is reason to denounce the expenditure of the Tories as systematically excessive; but even this vice does not necessarily involve debt. Honest and brave finance, backed by the mighty resources of the nation, would at all events minimise the mischief by providing adequate supplies. But if there be either incompetence to grasp the necessities of the case, or recklessness in the management of affairs, or cowardice in asking

the country to meet its engagements, or *if all three faults combine*, there will be constant deficits instead of surpluses, and the nation will be involved in gradually increasing difficulties.

A statement of annual surpluses and deficits is therefore a necessary factor in our comparison, and is as instructive as those already given. This is supplied by Table D, which is obtained from Return No. 242 (1879), and which shews that the Conservatives have not even the ability to provide for their own schemes, and that their extravagance seems to take even themselves very frequently by surprise.

TABLE D.

SURPLUSES AND DEFICITS.

LIBERALS.			CONSERVATIVES.	
Surplus.	Deficit.	Years ending Mar. 31st.	Surplus.	Deficit.
	247,000	1858		
		1859	813,000	
		1860	1,588,000	
	2,508,000	1861		
	1,442,000	1862		
1,301,000	.....	1863		
3,152,000	.....	1864		
3,851,000	.....	1865		
1,896,000	.....	1866		
		1867	2,654,000	
		1868	.....	1,636,000
		1869	.....	2,380,000
6,569,000	.....	1870		
397,000	.....	1871		
3,218,000	.....	1872		
5,894,000	.....	1873		
869,000	.....	1874		
		1875	594,000	
		1876	10,000	
		1877	440,000	
		1878	.....	2,640,000
		1879	.....	2,292,000
27,147,000	4,197,000		6,599,000	8,948,000
4,197,000	Deduct total deficits.		Deduct total surpluses.	6,599,000
22,950,000	Total surpluses in 12 years.		Total deficit in 10 years.	2,349,000
1,912,500	Average annual SURPLUS.		Average annual DEFICIT	234,900

The net result of this table is that on the average the Liberals provide an annual surplus, and the Conservatives an annual

deficit; and adding the two together we find that *the difference to the nation between the two managements is on the average £2,147,400 a year.* A few years of this treatment combined with similar causes may well account for the gradual deterioration of our financial position.

To escape from the force of these figures, it has been desperately suggested that the Liberals must have imposed unnecessary taxation in order to secure undue surpluses, and I therefore proceed to examine into the truth or untruth of this defence. The two next tables, E and F, will shew the practical result to the taxpayer in the increase or remission of taxation.

TABLE E.

INCOME TAX.

Liberals.	Years ending March 31st.	Conservatives.
7	1858	
	1859	5
	1860	9
10	1861	
9	1862	
9	1863	
7	1864	
6	1865	
4	1866	
	1867	4
	1868	5
	1869	6
5	1870	
4	1871	
6	1872	
4	1873	
3	1874	
	1875	2
	1876	2
	1877	3
	1878	3
	1879	5

The tax which probably fills the largest space in public attention is the Income-tax, and the annexed table shews its course, giving the number of pence per pound sterling imposed in each year. Until 1863 differential rates existed; and various allowances and exemptions have been allowed at different times. But these would only confuse the table and do not affect the main question. We have to inquire what is the effect on the whole nation and not on any particular class whom it may suit a Chancellor to favour for electioneering or other purposes. The financial year in the official tables begins with the 5th April, but

the few days between the 31st March and 5th April cannot affect the results, and I have therefore taken the tables as they stand. When the Liberal Government succeeded in 1860-61 to the serious liabilities which had been incurred by their predecessors in power, they grappled with them at once. The charming idea of not paying your debts, but postponing them bodily for a year to "see what will turn up," had not then been invented. And though Mr. Gladstone found that the Tories during their brief tenure of office had raised the Income-tax from 7d. to 9d. (much more onerous than the fivepence with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to struggle last April), he boldly raised it at once to 10d., the highest amount during the twenty years. With this exception, *optimi exempli*, the result of Liberal finance has invariably been to decrease, and that of Conservative finance to increase the tax.

In their lease 1861-66, the Liberals brought it down from 9d. to 4d.; the Conservatives then raised it a penny per annum, from 4d. to 6d. Then the Liberals reduced it again from 5d. to 3d., and now the Conservatives have restored it once more to 5d. What next year will bring forth we dare not anticipate. The year 1872 broke the harmony of the Liberal decrease, in consequence of increased expenditure which the Franco-German War in Europe was supposed to justify. Its necessity may be doubted, but at all events, when the expenses were incurred they were honestly met, and then the normal career of economy recommenced. This money was spent by Liberals; but if it had been in the balance-sheets of the Tories we should probably have heard the nonsense to which we have lately been accustomed about a previous "starving of the national establishments" having caused the advance.

The preceding figures have established these unpleasant facts: That the Tory financiers have unduly increased the National Debt—particularly the unfunded debt, which should have been specially the subject of vigilant repression; and that they have had frequent and serious deficits in their accounts.

We should expect to find as the only (but very unsatisfactory) explanation of these awkward facts that the taxpayer had at least benefited by the remission of his present burdens.

If we are plunging into debt we ought at all events to have the wretched consolation that we are keeping our money in our pockets! We ought not to pay our money and owe it too! But the last table shews that this has been the case as far as concerns the Income-tax, and the next table, which is prepared from Return No. 309, will shew that the entire taxation of the kingdom tells the same tale.

It is right to observe that in the last issue of this Annual Return, the figures for 1875, 1876, and 1877, have been altered from

the amounts given in the issues of previous years. But as the alteration gives the Conservatives a total benefit of about £220,000, I am happy to accept the latter figures.

TABLE F.

TAXATION INCREASED AND REMITTED.

LIBERALS.			CONSERVATIVES.	
Increased.	Remitted.	Years ending Mar. 31st.	Increased.	Remitted.
	10,753,490	1858		
		1859	.....	1,643,220
		1860	4,340,000	
	55,027	1861		
	2,609,558	1862		
	101,171	1863		
	4,615,508	1864		
	3,235,384	1865		
	5,343,405	1866		
		1867	....	601,462
		1868	1,285,000	
		1869	1,450,000	
	3,735,556	1870		
	4,497,343	1871		
3,050,086	.....	1872		
	3,895,105	1873		
	3,373,380	1874		
		1875	.....	4,272,000
		1876	.....	66,000
		1877	1,383,050	
		1878	.....	6,000
		1879	4,339,850	
3,050,086	42,214,927		12,797,900	6,588,682
Remissions in 12 years	3,050,086		6,588,682	Deduct total Remissions.
	39,164,841		6,209,218	Net Increase in ten years.
Average Annl. Remission	3,263,736		620,921	Average Annl. Increase.

This table shews that in one year only (1872) have the Liberals increased taxation. I have already explained in connection with the Income-tax (Table E), that special expenses were incurred in that year, in consequence of the Franco-German War. On the other side, it is observable that the Conservatives always remit taxation in their *first* year of office, when they are still under the

influence of the arrangements of their rivals, but are less successful when thrown on their own resources. The remission in their first year, 1859, is speedily reversed in their second, 1860. The remission in their first year, 1867, is speedily reversed in their second and third, 1868 and 1869. Their handsome remission in their first year, 1875, drops to a puny sum in 1876, and an altogether insignificant one in 1878, while 1877 and 1879 have furnished good Conservative increases to the burdens of the people.

I do not believe that any candid and intelligent Conservative would have the courage or the conscience to claim for his party the remission in 1875, which had, as everybody remembers, been earned before Mr. Gladstone left the Treasury, which had been promised by him, and on materials the accuracy of which Sir Stafford Northcote acknowledged with characteristic frankness and courtesy. If Mr. Gladstone had remained in office a few weeks longer the remission would have been announced by him. But in this, as in all other cases in these calculations, I have given the Conservatives the benefit of every doubtful item, and of some which, like this, can hardly be called doubtful. This, I think, however, illustrates fairly the principle on which, and the spirit in which I have framed these tables.

It is only fair to observe that this item positively forms nearly two-thirds of the whole amount of the remissions which are credited to the Conservatives since 1858. Without it their account would be pitiable indeed, for even with this help the figures shew that the Liberals *decrease* taxation at the average rate of £3,263,736, while the Conservatives *increase* it at the average rate of £620, 921 annually, *an annual difference in favour of the Liberals of* £3,884,657. Nor is this all. We must remember that with this increased taxation there is also a swelling debt, and that the taxation does not adequately represent the extravagance of the finance.

Mr. Gladstone, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, referred to the fact that Tory journalists and speakers have relied on a table of the comparative *taxation* per head of the population by the late and present Governments. There is much to be said about that table, but I have not time to deal with it exhaustively now. It will suffice for the present to say that it is not, as far as I know, extracted from any Government document. No responsible person has ever been mentioned as the author of it, and I have patiently and carefully tried to work out the figures from the official returns. I believe it to be totally incorrect. For the present, however, it is more material to follow out the obvious reply of Mr. Gladstone. The question is not what you have had the courage and honesty to raise and pay, but how much have you recklessly *spent?* And as the principle of a reduction to an

average per head of the population has been adopted, I will follow its propounders "to the last ditch." The calculation is done ready to our hand in Table No. 1 of the Statistical Abstract. It is difficult to check the figures there given, as the population tables do not coincide with the results there worked out. And my own independent calculations put the proportion somewhat higher than it appears in the table. I am told, however, by the authorities that the difference arises from a careful estimate of the population being taken midway between the dates given in the returns, and that the proportion as given is substantially correct. I confess to some doubt as to its entire accuracy, but I believe that the variation, whatever it may be, runs fairly throughout the column; and for purposes of comparison, therefore, it is satisfactory. It is, moreover, so much better to rely on official figures that I prefer to adopt them rather than to substitute my own.

The result of this last inquiry, then, is shewn in

TABLE G.

Proportion per Head of Population in the United Kingdom.

LIBERALS. Payments.	Years ending Mar. 31st	CONSERVATIVES. Payments.
£ s. d.		£ s. d.
2 8 5	1858	
	1859	2 5 8
	1860	2 8 8
2 10 8	1861	
2 9 11	1862	
2 8 2	1863	
2 6 0	1864	
2 5 0	1865	
2 4 2	1866	
	1867	2 4 0
	1868	2 6 6
	1869	2 8 6
2 4 0	1870	
2 4 3	1871	
2 5 0	1872	
2 4 5	1873	
2 7 7	1874	
	1875	2 5 10
	1876	2 6 10
	1877	2 7 2
	1878	2 9 3
	1879	2 10 6
Total Payments in 12 years 27 17 7		Total Payments in 10 years 23 12 11
Average Annual Payment 2 6 5½		Average Annual Payment 2 7 3½

Which shews that every person in the United Kingdom pays annually 10d. additional taxation for the privilege of being governed by a Conservative Administration.

But the table will repay a closer analysis. It will be seen that the Liberal average for the year 1874 was swollen by the payment of £3,197,000 for the Alabama Claims; but with that exception, the figures are such as to gladden the heart of the taxpayer. On the Conservative side, at each accession to power there is an invariable and persistent increase.

Let me now summarise the results at which we have arrived. I have already pointed out that, although they are individually serious, their real force is only seen when they are combined, and I therefore present the whole in a connected form to shew that they all tell one tale, and they tell it trumpet-tongued.

The following table collects the annual averages, and displays the annual difference which the preceding tables have proved to exist in favour of Liberal finance.

	Liberals.	Conservatives.	Annual difference in favour of Liberals.
Gross Expenditure	70,316,371	75,062,371	4,746,000
Ordinary ,,	68,419,884	72,581,922	4,162,038
Decrease of National Debt	4,207,874	1,094,598	3,113,276
Surplus at the end of Year	1,912,500	.....	2,147,400
Deficit ,, ,,	.....	234,900	
Taxation Remitted	3,263,736	.....	3,884,657
,, Increased	.....	620,921	
Payments per head of Population	£2 6 5½	£2 7 3½	£0 0 10

Up to this point I have accepted the excuse pleaded by Conservative writers and speakers, who claim that comparisons of finance should not be confined to the doings of the last Government and this. But it is unreasonable to leave the matter there. The important question, after all, is: What may *this* Administration be expected to do if the country should give it a further lease of power? And a short space must be devoted to shewing what the foregoing figures prove that *it* has done in the past. Former Tory Governments have been surprisingly open-handed, but it was reserved for the present Cabinet to shew to what lengths they COULD go! It is said that the late Government had exceptional advantages. I do not admit it; but, for the sake of argument, I accept the plea; and I take, therefore, the Liberal averages for the whole period, from 1857-58, for the purpose of the comparison. This period covers the time when heavy charges were incurred for the Abyssinian and other wars, and the Alabama Claims; and when there were bad times, both with commercial panics and failing crops. And, without further

comment, I place in juxtaposition the Liberal average, and the average of the present Government.

	Liberal Average.	Lord Beaconsfield	Annual difference in favour of Liberals against Lord Beaconsfield
Gross Expenditure	70,316,371	80,347,264	10,030,893
Ordinary ,, ...	68,419,884	77,415,482	8,995,598
Decrease of National Debt...	4,207,874	240,881	3,966,993
Annual Deficit	.....	677,600	2,590,100
,, Surplus.....	1,912,500	.....	
Taxation Increased	.....	275,780	3,539,516
,, Remitted	3,263,736	.....	

Remember that these figures shew, not the total results of the five years, but the average outcome of each year of office. It is obvious that to talk of *comparing* the finance of Mr. Gladstone's Government with that of Lord Beaconsfield is almost an abuse of language; but the *contrast* between them may easily be shewn in a clear and striking form.

MR. GLADSTONE.

Reduced Debt (See Table B)	£26,196,919
Remitted Taxation (See Table F)	12,451,298
Left Balance in the Exchequer (See No. 96 of 1874) ...	7,442,854
	46,091,071
Found Balance in Exchequer on taking office (See No. 200 of 1869)	4,707,258
	£41,383,813

The result gives what may be intelligibly called the PROFIT to the nation, by its business being conducted for five years by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues.

Lord Beaconsfield's account stands thus :—

Balance in Exchequer on taking office (No. 96 of 1874)	£7,442 854
Taxation increased (Table F)	1,378,900
Total	£8,821,754
Debt reduced (See Table B)	£1,204,405
Balance in Exchequer at close of last Financial Year (Return 156)	6,915,755
Total	£8,120,160

Deduct the latter total from the former and it gives us £701,594 as the LOSS to the nation during the five years' administration of Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues.

In addition to this, Mr. Gladstone had to undertake the payment of Conservative arrears (as shewn by the Appropriation Acts of 1869 and 1870), amounting to £4,883,174, whereas the arrears he left were less than £1,140,000. And what amount of arrears the next year or two will have to bear on account of this

and the last, we cannot guess. But without taking note either of these ascertained debts at the beginning, or the unascertained debt at the end—simply adding the Conservative loss to the Liberal gain—it is clear that we have paid in hard cash *forty-two millions—or, more precisely,* £8,417,081 *per annum*—which Liberal finance would have saved. *And this in a time of commercial distress!*

Add the one fact already deduced that under this Government the unfunded debt has increased by £21,390,500, and we shall be prepared to consider with much interest any facts that may be adduced of sufficient weight to deal seriously with an indictment so grave. I must repeat that in all these calculations every advantage has been invariably given to the Tories. If a harsher criticism had dealt out to them stricter justice the result would have been far more deplorable. But I have preferred to present figures with which, as I believe, no thoughtful and honest man can find cause for complaint. They are all the more conclusive from their moderation, and the quiet repose of the vacation may be varied by the study of results which (if I am not greatly deceived) the nation, gradually coming to its senses again, will ere long call on the Government to explain and justify.

I know the various excuses that have been desperately made by the Tory advocates. They are to be found mainly in the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary to the Treasury, and also in papers published by the Central Conservative Association, and in a memorandum, No. 106, presented to the House of Commons. A careful analysis of them has convinced me of their unsubstantial character, but it does not come within the scope of my original purpose to deal with them in detail *at present.* My object has been to clear the ground by formulating definitely the real charge that we make against the Government. I do not think that even well-informed Liberals are generally aware of the immense strength of the case against it, and it is well that we should state clearly what has to be answered. If these figures and results can be modified or denied, by all means let us ascertain the fact, and settle that point first. When that is done I think we shall not find much difficulty in dealing with arguments in explanation, mitigation, or excuse. At present I will anticipate so far only as to say that they may all be answered, I believe, by a patient and accurate examination of the figures themselves, and that the allegation of exceptional difficulties, and the partial suggestions of increased local and educational charges, and so forth, are insufficient when the average extends over so long a period, when the stream is so persistent and regular, and when the total differences are so immense.

Bad as all this is, considered only with reference to the past, the outlook for the future is worse still. I have not referred to the £2,000,000 which we are supposed to have lent to insolvent India without interest, and which does not come into the preceding tables. It will, nevertheless, come into the accounts of the current year. No sane man, I verily believe, expects that India *can* repay it,—and no reasonable and honourable man can seriously wish that she should.

And when to this we add the yet unascertained charges for the Zulu War and for the revived Afghan War to which we are helplessly committed, and the heavy burdens which our inevitable victories must entail, the accumulation of responsibilities is one which even the most careless must regard with extreme dissatisfaction, and from which, unfortunately, the most careful will probably suffer the most.

I conclude with a table shewing the financial results of the late Government and the present one in those particulars to which our attention has been directed. Comment upon it is needless.

	5 Years under Gladstone.	5 Years under Beaconsfield.	Difference in favour of Gladstone.
Expenditure Gross	358,612,268	401,736,323	43,124,055
,, Ordinary	348,335,825	387,077,413	38,741,588
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
,, per head of Population	11 5 3	11 19 7	0 14 4
National Debt Decreased	26,196,919	1,204,405	24,992,514
Unfunded Debt Decreased ...	4,416,500	... ...	25,807,000
,, ,, Increased	... ...	21,390,500	
Net Surplus	16,947,000	... ...	20,335,000
Net Deficit	... ...	3,388,000	
Taxation Increased	... ...	1,378,900	13,830,198
,, Diminished	12,451,298	... ...	

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THE TABLES TURNED:

AN EXAMINATION OF MR. WADDY'S PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED,

"LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE FINANCE."

BY

PHILIP B. CHADFIELD,

HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE DERBY AND DISTRICT WORKING MEN'S CONSTITUTIONAL ASSOCIATION.

"Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted with your manner of wrenching the true cause the false way."

2 *Henry IV., Act ii., sc.* 2.

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PREFACE.

If "coming events cast their shadows before," it is not difficult to understand why Mr. Waddy's pamphlet, entitled "Liberal and Conservative Finance," has been so extensively circulated. The manner in which it can be made use of at a contested election has been recently exemplified at Sheffield. Many of the palpable fallacies contained in it had been exposed both in speeches delivered by Mr. Wortley, Mr. Harold Thomas, and others, and also in articles published in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, during the earlier part of the election, and it was pretty generally thought that very little more would be heard of Mr. Waddy's tabular puzzle. But just at the last, when too late for contradiction, the phœnix arose from its ashes, and the walls of Sheffield were covered with placards containing unblushing repetitions of deceptive statements that had been previously exposed, but not in such a thorough and complete manner as to deprive them of their sting. In referring to the various causes supposed to have contributed towards Mr. Wortley's temporary defeat, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of December 23rd, says.—"He at least has not to reproach himself with having inundated the town with artfully-penned electioneering fictions—struck off by the hundred thousand—fictions in which figures are trickily manipulated to puzzle and mislead plain men." "Without the prodigal expenditure by which the most illusory statements were distributed from house to house all through Sheffield—statements never to this hour checkmated by counter-statements distributed with the same mechanical completeness—Mr. Waddy would not to-day have been in the seat which it is now painful to remember was recently held by John Arthur Roebuck."

It is hoped that sufficient reasons have now been given for attempting to supply, in the shape of "The Tables Turned," an antidote to the political poison contained in Mr. Waddy's pamphlet, and that those patriotic Englishmen who prefer vital national interests to merely selfish party considerations, will co-operate with the author in giving it a wide circulation. "Truth is established by scrutiny and deliberation; falsehood thrives by precipitation and uncertainty."

In venturing to criticise the financial critic of the present Government, the author pleads guilty to a certain amount of presumption, but he hopes Mr. Waddy's example will be accepted as a satisfactory apology. Similar presumption is frequently veiled by the use of a *nom de plume*, but such a prejudice exists against anonymous answers to acknowledged publications, especially when dealing with figures, that the author has felt compelled to make himself personally responsible for the statements contained in the following pages.

MR. WADDY'S PAMPHLET
EXAMINED AND REFUTED.

"Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day."
HAMLET ACT. V. SCENE I.

AT a time when all the energies of the so-called Liberal party are being put forth in order to turn their successful rivals out of office, it is not surprising that such intemperate electioneering speeches as those recently delivered by the recognised leaders of the party, should be supplemented by equally intemperate pamphlets written by less responsible politicians. An effusion of this character, entitled "Liberal and Conservative Finance," by S. D. Waddy, M.P., Q.C., has within the last few weeks been very freely distributed in most parts of this country. Of all subjects the question of finance undoubtedly offers the greatest scope for mystification; the art of "cooking accounts" being well understood, and easy of application. So easy, indeed, that many men of very ordinary ability have succeeded in deceiving both public companies and private individuals. It would be doing great injustice, therefore, to Mr. Waddy to suppose that he is not able to prove black is white by a skilful manipulation of figures. Nothing seems so free from guile and deceit as carefully prepared financial tables, while in reality nothing is easier than to make them apparently prove the most opposite conclusions.

So much ability may be safely accorded to Mr. Waddy. His long experience in convincing juries has no doubt rendered him an adept in the art of making the best of a bad case; and from the fierce political zeal he has shown in relinquishing his seat at Barnstaple, in order to contest Sheffield, it might have been supposed that his great ability would have been used for the benefit of his own political party. It is highly gratifying, therefore, to find that he is more intent on benefiting his political opponents. He professes to have drawn up his financial tables in a spirit of the greatest impartiality. Nay, he goes further than that, for from being impartial he becomes liberal, and from being liberal he becomes even generous. After having referred to several instances where he has given the Conservatives credit for items almost "too numerous to mention," he credits the Conservatives in one paragraph with five millions on the National Debt, and a "surplus" of a million-and-a-half! This is followed by another act of generosity, by which the Conservatives get the benefit of a remission of taxation of more than half-a-million, and a decrease of the National Debt of nearly two millions! We are particular in drawing attention to these proofs of Mr. Waddy's earnest desire to give his opponents every

possible advantage, in order to show that he really professes to give a fair and impartial statement of Liberal and Conservative finance. This respect for truth and love of fair-play are both highly creditable to Mr. Waddy, and, taken in combination, form a gratifying proof that, however mistaken he may be in his calculations, or erroneous in his conclusions, a long course of "special pleading" has not dimmed the natural lustre of his moral sentiments, or warped the calm and judicial character of his intellect. If Mr. Waddy can only keep up this magnanimous frame of mind through all the excitement of a second contest at Sheffield, it will not surprise us if on his next circuit he adopts the system of sending two or three of his best witnesses out of court, and refrains from cross-examining the witnesses on the opposite side. With this brief reference to the fairness and impartiality claimed by Mr. Waddy, we will now proceed to consider the financial tables so generously compiled in *favour* of Conservative administration.

The subjoined table of figures is an exact reprint of Mr. Waddy's Table A, without which it would be difficult to understand the references we shall have to make to it. Upon this table all Mr. Waddy's financial conclusions are really based; for if it can be proved to demonstration that the term of years over which it extends is unjust and unfair; that the Conservative excessive expenditure, even during the period included, can be satisfactorily explained; and that Mr. Waddy's plan of taking an average of the years included in that table would be discreditable to any intelligent school-boy, the conclusions drawn from the other tables all fall to the ground together.

TABLE A.

LIBERALS.				CONSERVATIVES.		
Total Expenditure.	Extras.	Ordinary Expenditure.	Year ending 31st Mar.	Total Expenditure.	Extras.	Ordinary Expenditure.
68,240,053	2,615,899	65,624,154	1858			
			1859	64,802,872	782,523	64,020,349
			1860	69,610,791	858,057	68,752,734
72,939,247	3,382,114	69,557,133	1861			
72,267,656	2,253,430	70,014,226	1862			
70,345,101	1,050,000	69,295,101	1863			
67,849,379	1,060,523	66,788,856	1864			
67,075,299	794,598	66,280,701	1865			
66,467,449	1,324,829	65,142,620	1866			
			1867	67,223,489	450,000	66,773,489
			1868	71,759,335	2,530,000	69,229,335
			1869	75,490,909	5,525,0.0	69,965,909
69,064,751	1,500,000	67,564,751	1870			
69,698,539	1,500,000	68,198,539	1871			
71,860,020	811,096	71,048,924	1872			
71,022,448	1,254,500	69,767,948	1873			
76,966,510	5,210,847	71,755,663	1874			
			1875	74,928,039	1,304,114	73,623,925
			1876	80,871,773	5,308,353	75,563,420
			1877	78,125,227	1,125,159	77,000,068
			1878	82,403,495	4,769,544	77,633,951
			1879	85,407,789	2.151,740	83,256,049
843,796,452	22,757,836	821,038,616	Totals	750,623,719	24,804,490	725,819,229
70,316,371	1,896,486	68,419,884	Annual average.	75,062,371	2,480,449	72,581,922

THE TERM OF YEARS.

The reasons Mr. Waddy *gives* for commencing his financial tables in 1857-8 occupy about half a page of his pamphlet; but the reasons he does *not* give would probably have filled three or four pages. A brief historical sketch of the four years immediately preceding 1858 will perhaps throw a little light upon the subject, as well as explain the real character of Mr. Waddy's "impartiality" and generosity.

In March, 1854, war with Russia was declared, while a Liberal Ministry was in power; and so unprepared for such an emergency were the Government, that when our soldiers, after considerable delay, reached the theatre of war, they were soon reduced to the greatest straits for want of provisions and clothing. In fact, the management, or rather mismanagement, was so bad that in the following winter a motion, censuring the Government, was brought forward in the House of Commons by Mr. Roebuck, the late lamented member for Sheffield. This motion taxed the Liberal Ministry, in no uncertain terms, with having mismanaged the war, and it was passed by a majority of 157 votes. This vote led to the resignation of the Earl of Aberdeen, and Lord Palmerston became Premier. We need not dwell upon the "cheap and nasty" Liberal policy which left our British soldiers exposed to the rigours of a Crimean winter, without sufficient food or proper shelter, while the French soldiers were both well fed and comfortably housed. We need make no comment upon the value of that financial policy which was condemned by a majority of 157 in a Liberal House of Commons, and which led to such a tremendous expenditure in 1855-6. It might perhaps be beside the question of finance to refer to the lamentable loss of nearly forty thousand of our British soldiers and sailors; to the hundreds of thousands of aching hearts at home; to the countless widows and orphans who had reason at that time to rue the false economy of a Liberal Ministry. But even looking at the matter in Mr. Waddy's light, through the medium of a financial table, the death of every soldier or sailor means a pecuniary loss to the nation. We are almost ashamed to refer to it, but that is the only way in which the loss of human life can be dealt with in financial tables. In Table A, for instance, a life would be written off for about £50; and a political party which could lose the lives and save the pounds might come out "twenty years." afterwards as successful financiers. But, unfortunately, the lives and the pounds go together, and that is precisely one of the reasons why Mr. Waddy does not commence his tables till 1858.

In 1856, war was declared with China, and soon afterwards British forces entered Persia, not only with the sanction of the Liberal party, but under the direction of a Liberal Ministry. Herat and Bushire were taken, and then the Persian Court sued for peace. Of course these wars were not conducted without the

shedding of blood and expenditure of money, but, as the Liberals were then in office, it is naturally kept out of Mr. Waddy's "impartial" Table A.

In 1857, the mutiny of the Sepoys broke out, principally in consequence of the Government disregarding their religious feelings, and compelling them to bite greased cartridges. This led to the deplorable massacre of Cawnpore, the siege of Delhi, and the relief of Lucknow. Of course tragedies like these could not be understood in Table A, although they *did* cost a very great deal of money, so 1857 is judiciously omitted. After these terrible national catastrophes, the close of 1857 was marked by great commercial distress, far more serious to the taxpayers than anything to be found in Table A. Old established houses failed, and weaker ones collapsed in rapid succession. Sanguine men, trusting to paper wealth and financial tab'es, dreaming that they were rich, found themselves involved in ruin. It was not a question of twopence more or less in the Income Tax, but a question of solvency or insolvency—of bankruptcy and the workhouse, or a narrow escape from starvation. Under these circumstances it was not surprising that the country gladly shook itself free from Liberal finance, and that Lord Palmerston's Cabinet had to give place to a Conservative one, of which the Earl of Derby was Premier, and Mr. Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now it is a singular fact, and one which proves that Mr. Waddy's writings, like his speeches, are more remarkable for "smartness" than for depth, that according to the principle he has himself laid down, Lord Beaconsfield, as Mr. Disraeli, was the best and most economical Chancellor of the Exchequer we have had during the last twenty years. In page 10 of his pamphlet, he makes the following statement :—

"Having thus ascertained that the distinction between an ordinary and extraordinary expenditure does not practically affect the conclusions to be drawn from the figures, and is, in fact, simply the feeble suggestion of an excuse by people who 'must say something,' I discard it in the remaining calculations, and proceed on the only reasonable basis—*the real and entire expenditure of the nation.*"

The italics in the last line of the above paragraph are Mr. Waddy's, and he cannot therefore complain if we apply the principle he thus emphatically lays down to Conservative, as well as to Liberal finance. In 1859, (according to Mr. Waddy's Table A), Mr. Disraeli, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, reduced *the real and entire expenditure of the nation* from £68,240,053 to £64,802,872, being considerably the largest reduction in the total expenditure shown in Table A. But this was by no means all that Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli did for the country. Not only did they reduce the total expenditure of 1859-60, but they reduced the National Debt in those two years (see Mr. Waddy's Table B) to the enormous amount of £7,657,823, and the

Unfunded Debt to the extent of £9,683,200 (see Mr. Waddy's Table C). In spite of all Mr. Waddy's ingenuity, he cannot hide the fact that, judged by the principle he has himself advanced, the Conservative Government of 1859-60 was the most economical Government during the last twenty-six years. Even the "surpluses" were not forgotten, for in 1859 Mr. Disraeli had a surplus of £813,000, and in 1860 of £1,588,000.

And now, with respect to the particular period included in Mr. Waddy's Table A, let us ask our readers what would have been the result if Table A had included the four years preceding 1858, and not included the last four years? The figures would have been just as correct, but they would have entirely reversed all Mr. Waddy's financial conclusions. Nay, it would have done more than reverse them. It would have turned them upside down and inside out. It would have shown a Liberal war expenditure of a hundred millions of money in five years, it would have proved, according to Mr. Waddy's principle, that the Liberals had squandered the taxpayers' money, in the most shameful manner, and that the Conservatives were the only true economists. And, with all deference to Mr. Waddy, that would have been a great deal nearer the truth than the conclusions he has so unsuccessfully laboured to prove.

HOW THE MONEY HAS BEEN SPENT.

The manner in which Mr. Waddy has dealt with his "extras" is as *generous* as his dates and his averages. In the annual returns from which these items have been taken, they would naturally appear in chronological order. But as even *that* would have afforded some clue to the character of recent Conservative expenditure, they have been muddled together in alphabetical order. Mr. Waddy must know that in such a charge as he has made against the present Government, the NATURE of the extraordinary expenditure is the true test of extravagance or economy. And that is just the reason he says nothing about it. The fact that Mr. Waddy shirks this important subject is a clear proof of one of two things. Either he knows that too much light upon "How the money has been spent" would be damaging to his party, or that it would be too "generous" to give his opponents their fair due. However this may be, it is desirable that a little light should be thrown upon this obscure portion of Mr. Waddy's financial calculations. Table A shows that in the year 1858 the extra expenditure of the Liberals was only £2,615,899, no doubt a very modest sum considering that the Crimean war had so recently been concluded. But in Table B, Mr. Waddy gives the Liberals credit for *reducing* the National Debt, in 1858, to the extent of £6,166,731. Now in reference to this statement, we ask our readers to consider attentively the following outburst of forensic eloquence from the pen of S. Waddy, M.P., Q.C. :—

"But it may happen that circumstances call for an exceptional

outlay. In such a case an honest and firm Government will spend what is necessary, and boldly call upon the nation to pay the bill. A cowardly and time-serving administration, on the other hand, will spend money and *not* pay the bills, but will 'run up a score' for others to pay; careless of economy, regardless of principle, reckless as to the future, and scrupulous only as to present popularity. This renders it necessary for us to ask what has been the progress of the National Debt?"

Such clap-trap as this is only worthy of a debating club in the dingy smoke-room of a third-class pot-house. Words without either sense or meaning, for who for one moment can suppose that any English Government, Conservative or Liberal, ever existed to which such a tirade could be fairly applied. It reminds us of the inflated utterances of Charles Dickens' character of Simon Tappertit who, from the damp recesses of an underground rendezvous, denounced the Government of the day, and succeeded in winning the noisy applause of a few half-tipsy and wholly ignorant admirers. But if such expressions as "A cowardly and time serving administration" are to be imported into impartial and even generous political pamphlets, it is only fair to consider to which party they most properly belong. In deciding this question, we cannot do better than accept Mr. Waddy's authority. And, according to the principle he lays down, it was the Government of Lord Palmerston, with Mr. Gladstone, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, that was "cowardly" and "time-serving" enough to "run up a score for others to pay; careless of economy, regardless of principle, reckless as to the future, and scrupulous only as to present popularity." No doubt Simon Tappertit—we really beg pardon—Mr. Waddy, meant these slight expressions of disapproval for the present Government, but the cap does not fit, as we shall easily prove.

"Change but the name, the tale is told of thee."

In 1858, the Liberal Government decreased the National debt to the extent of more than six millions, and remitted taxes to the extent of ten millions. That this was a bid for "present popularity" is proved from information kindly furnished by Mr. Waddy himself. In Table C, his figures show that the Unfunded Debt then amounted to something *more* than at the present time, after such dreadful Conservative mismanagement. But that is not all. Mr. Waddy cannot entirely ignore such an astonishing fact as this. He says: "The first year presents a very heavy account against the Liberals (largely caused by the Russian War). Lord Derby reduced the amount laudably in 1858-9." So that Mr. Waddy himself declares that the heavy Unfunded Debt in 1858 was "largely caused by the Russian War," which was concluded in the spring of 1856, and was "laudably reduced (to the extent of nearly eight millions) by Lord Derby." Now we ask, was not this "running up a score" for others to pay; careless of economy, &c., &c. ?

Let us now consider the *nature of the items* which swelled up the Unfunded Debt under so-called Liberal economy, in 1858, as compared with a rather smaller amount in 1879, as the result of so-called Conservative extravagance. That of 1858 was "largely caused" by the Russian War, brought about by Liberal timidity and "masterly inactivity," and cost the nation at least sixty millions of money and forty thousand lives. A war so miserably mismanaged, that national indignation drove Lord Aberdeen from office. This debt of 1858, then, "largely caused" by the Russian War, was principally a debt without assets, a debt owing for money wastefully spent on a war foolishly incurred, and left as a "run-up score" for Lord Derby's administration to pay.

In striking contrast to the deplorable character of the Unfunded Debt in 1858, is the condition of it now, when Mr. Waddy describes it as "appalling." True, the amount is as large, but the purposes for which it has been spent are as different as light to dark, as peace to war, as wisdom to folly, and as Conservatism to Liberalism. A very large proportion of the money which the Unfunded Debt of 1879 represents has *not* been spent over a war badly managed at the time, and the fruits of which have been since thrown away by Mr. Gladstone's Liberal Government. It has been spent in National Education; in loans for sanitary works, and various forms of local improvements in almost every part of Great Britain; in securing a large interest in the Suez Canal; in increasing the efficiency of the postal and telegraphic systems, and in relieving local taxation. Perhaps if Mr. Waddy enquired from the local authorities at Sheffield, they could give him some little information on the subject; for no doubt that town, as well as almost every other large town in the kingdom, has been glad to borrow some of the money. But, however that may be, a Return, moved for by Mr. Childers, shows that the present Government have expended, during their five years of office, no less than £12,041,549, in the promotion of national education, and in the reduction of local taxation, *more than was spent on the same objects by Mr. Gladstone's administration.* This is a far more satisfactory way of *expending* the public money than the way in which it was *spent* in the four years preceding Mr. Waddy's Table A. But it is still more satisfactory to know that, with the exception of £5,064,000, the whole of the present Unfunded Debt has been *profitably invested*, and is now bringing in to the national exchequer a higher rate of interest than is paid for it to the National Debt Commissioners. Not only do these investments *pay*, but they are supposed to assist in raising the moral and intellectual condition of the people of England, and in removing that deplorable amount of ignorance and depravity which has but too long filled our workhouses with paupers, and our prisons with criminals; vice, which has too long been a disgrace to a civilised country like Great Britain;

and ignorance, which has made it only too easy for electioneering pamphleteers to throw dust in the eyes of the people.

We now come to figures which deal with financial questions of a more recent date, and which have a more direct bearing upon the "great crisis" that is approaching. We refer to the last ten years of Table A, the first five years of which relate to Mr. Gladstone's term of office, and the last five years to Lord Beaconsfield's. A glance at Table A will show that although Mr. Gladstone stumped the country prior to his last term of office on a cry of Liberal economy and Tory extravagance, he only succeeded in effecting a temporary reduction in the expenditure of the nation. How that reduction was effected is soon told. Fifteen thousand skilled dock-yard labourers were discharged on a very short notice; Government stores were reduced to an alarming extent, while every financial manœuvre was made use of to effect an unreal and deceptive financial reduction. But this penny wise and pound foolish policy did not last long. Surplus stores could not be sold off at an "alarming sacrifice" year after year, and, therefore, this deceptive decrease in 1870 was followed by an increase in 1871; a still greater increase in 1872; a slight decrease in 1873, and a very great increase in 1874. In fact, the total expenditure under Mr. Gladstone's administration rose from £69,064,751 in 1870, to £76,966,510 in 1874—*an increase under Liberal economy of nearly eight millions in five years!* It is somewhat singular that this striking fact does not appear to have attracted the attention of Mr. Waddy, although it seems to have had a considerable effect upon the people. Election after election in different parts of the kingdom soon showed that the electors began to understand Liberal finance. The majority of one hundred and fifteen, with which Mr. Gladstone commenced his administration, was gradually reduced to sixty. This might have been sufficient warning to most men, but Mr. Gladstone's imperious temper was not satisfied with ruling the House of Commons with a majority of sixty. In a fit of pique and mortification he advised Her Majesty to dissolve Parliament, and appealed to the country. It is a startling comment upon Mr. Waddy's references to the Gladstonian epoch, to remind the public that *no less than one hundred and twenty-eight of the Liberal Members* LOST THEIR SEATS! In point of fact, the five years of Gladstonian rule, to which Mr. Waddy so complacently refers, was emphatically condemned by the nation.

It is quite true that a large increase in the total expenditure of the country has taken place during Lord Beaconsfield's administration; but the real question for the electors is not the mere amount of the expenditure, *but how it has been expended.* That question we have already answered in referring to the Unfunded Debt, and proved that while the increased burden has been laid upon the wealthier classes of society, it has been spent

for educational and other purposes beneficial to the whole community.

One feature in the Conservative policy ought not to be lost sight of. Through all the dangers and difficulties the present Government have had to contend against; with wars, and rumours of wars; with an unprecedented depression of trade extending throughout the manufacturing and mercantile world; with constantly increasing demands upon the public purse for educational and sanitary purposes, and a large outlay incurred in relieving local taxation, not a single farthing has been added to the burdens of the working classes during the last five years. On the contrary, the gross amount received from "Customs," that is to say, from duties levied upon consumable articles such as tobacco, tea, coffee, spirits, beer, &c.—and to which the working classes contribute very largely indeed—has been less during the last five years, by £5,318,795 than in the five years of Mr. Gladstone's term of office. To understand the full force of this reduction of the "people's" taxes, it must be remembered that during the last five years the population of Great Britain has increased to the extent of at least a million and a half! Thus, a larger number of people have paid over five millions *less* in the way of Customs duties in five years of Conservative rule than during five years of Liberal finance!

It would be well for Mr. Waddy and his friends if they could give as good an account of *their* stewardship. We cannot say that they actually placed additional burdens upon the people, but they most certainly tried to do so, as for example, Mr. Lowe's proposal to impose a duty upon matches. This was only frustrated by a popular demonstration that could not be ignored, and matches escaped scot-free. But we need say no more on this subject. The Liberals have been tried in the balance and found wanting, and the truth of the old couplet has been fully established:—

> "As bees on flowers alighting, cease to hum,
> So settling into places Whigs grow dumb."

MR. WADDY'S ANNUAL AVERAGES.

It seems that with all the advantages arising from his selection of dates, and profound silence upon the vital question of whether the increased expenditure of late years has been wisely incurred, Mr. Waddy is not satisfied with the figures he has paraded before the public in Table A. He has chosen his own term of years; he has had his own way in allotting years, in which both political parties have held office, to either the Liberals or Conservatives, and he has exhibited his "bogey" of "increased expenditure," and "still he is not happy." The case against the Government will *not* look black enough, so he resorts to the ingenious device of making out "annual averages." As we have already said, such a method of arriving at a rational conclusion

would be discreditable to any intelligent schoolboy. With but slight exceptions, Table A shows that, during the whole period over which it extends, there has been a constant and considerable increase in the national expenditure. It therefore follows that those who were in office principally in the earlier years would spend the least money, and *vice versa*. An annual average could only be fairly taken if the normal expenditure was stationary, and yet, Mr. Waddy coolly proceeds to make out his "annual" averages, when he *must* know that they are as absurd as they are unjust. During the first and therefore the lightest ten years, the Liberals were in office *seven* and the Conservatives only *three* years; while during the last twelve, and consequently the heaviest years, the Conservatives have been in office *seven* and the Liberals only *five* years. But, besides this, the Conservatives have been in office during the *last five*, and consequently the heaviest of all years. But not only does Mr. Waddy make use of averages which are grossly unfair, but he entirely ignores well-known and important items of expenditure over which the present Government have had little or no control. Let us take, for instance, the item of compulsory National Education, the blessings of which have furnished subject matter for many a Radical oration. But while Mr. Waddy and his political brethren claim all the *credit* for this particular kind of national education, Mr. Waddy, with his usual impartiality and generosity, *debits* the Conservatives with the expense of it; aud, by his peculiar method of striking averages, the heavy expenditure now paid by *any* Government for the purposes of compulsory education, is made a part and parcel of Tory extravagance. And this is done by the same generous person who has so recently, in his pamphlet, been handing over hundreds of thousands of pounds, and even millions of pounds, to the credit of the Conservative party! We could say more, but there is a limit to everybody's patience, and ours is entirely exhausted.

THE NATIONAL DEBT.

Very few people really understand what is meant by the term National Debt; but it is a comfort to think that Mr. Waddy does, for he has favoured the public with a financial table entirely devoted to it and a few more "annual averages." In this table he credits Lord Beaconsfield's administration with having diminished the National Debt to the amount of only £1,205,505 in five years. On the other hand, Mr. Gladstone's Government, during a similar period, is credited with a decrease of £26,196,919! This result of Liberal finance is so startling that we cannot help asking, with Macænas :—

> "Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast,
> And but twelve persons there! Is this true?"

Well, that depends upon circumstances. It is true that it is in Mr. Waddy's pamphlet, which is something, although not much;

and that is the only thing true about it. If Mr. Waddy's Table B had included the unfunded debt, and also shown, as it ought to have done, the amounts *lent* and *invested*, as well as *borrowed*, it would have given a very different result. It would have shown that nearly four millions had been invested in shares in the Suez Canal, and that £12,460,000 had been lent at interest to local authorities. To these two sums must be added the £1,205,505 so kindly credited to the Conservatives by Mr. Waddy, making a total of £17,530,000, instead of £1,205,505! And now with regard to Mr. Gladstone's reduction of £26,000,000. If we had not Mr. Waddy's authority for it, we should really have some doubts about the statement. We have heard something said about nearly six millions of money having been "appropriated" from the suitors' fund—not from the Irish Church—and handed over to the National Debt Commissioners. We suppose this is a new way of paying off the National Debt with other people's money. Then there was a trifling sum of £4,417,000 of outstanding Exchequer bills and bonds owing at the expiration of Mr. Gladstone's term of office. If these sums are deducted from Mr. Gladstone's imaginary decrease of £26,000,000, the actual amount will be about fifteen millions and a-half, or nearly two millions LESS than the amount by which it has been *reduced*, in the same number of years by the present Government.

IS MR. WADDY'S PAMPHLET TRUE?

This question is one which cannot be answered by a direct negative or affirmative. It may be considered true or not, according to various opinions of what truth really is. There is an old fashioned school of Englishmen, by no means yet extinct, which believes in "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." That is the kind of truth supposed to be still required in the Courts of Justice so familiar to Mr. Waddy. There is another school, too much favoured by political partisans, which says that so long as you tell nothing but the truth, half of the truth may be kept out of sight. Now, in our poor judgment, this kind of truth is nothing more nor less than a cowardly kind of falsehood. It is, to all intents and purposes, intended to deceive, and it is all the more dangerous because it is varnished over with a thin coating of truth. Not the real straightforward kind of falsehood, which may be met by a flat contradiction; but a smooth plausible kind of deception, which hides itself behind a quibble, and too frequently escapes detection by appealing to the letter instead of the spirit of truth. Now, we are not going to set ourselves up as judges of the kind of truth contained in Mr. Waddy's pamphlet. We shall merely set before our readers the statements he makes, and the conclusions he arrives at, together with statements and conclusions contained in various Parliamentary Returns and papers, or derived from responsible statements

made by those who are in as good a position as Mr. Waddy, in having access to Parliamentary records. We shall endeavour, therefore, in the following summary of Mr. Waddy's tables, to set before our readers the trifling discrepancies between the truth as he states it, and the truth as it appears to others.

MR. WADDY'S FINANCIAL TABLES, 1858 TO 1879.

The Truth as stated by Mr. Waddy.	The Truth as derived from other sources.
TABLE A.	TABLE A.
"The average annual expenditure of the Liberals has been £70,316,371; that of the Conservatives has been £75,062,371, showing an average annual advantage to the nation of £4,746,000 under the management of Liberal financiers."	This conclusion is arrived at by taking an average extending over a period of years which excludes a very heavy Liberal expenditure from 1854 to 1858, and debits the Conservatives with the greatly increased cost of National Education during the last five years, the relief given to local taxation, and the £17,630,000 *profitably invested!*
TABLE B.	TABLE B.
"The result is that under Liberal care the National Debt decreases annually to the extent of £4,207,874; while the Conservatives relieve us at the rate of £1,094,598 only; leaving a balance in favour of the Liberal financiers of £3,113,276 annually."	This result is also arrived at by excluding the years 1854 to 1857. Under Lord Beaconsfield's administration the National Debt has been reduced in five years to the extent of £17,530,000, or at the annual rate of £3,506,000, or £392,724 annually *more* than under Mr. Gladstone's Government.
TABLE C.	TABLE C.
"From 1870 to 1874, the Liberals again steadily reduced it (the Unfunded Debt) by £4,416,500, and the present Government has with equal steadiness, but with frightful rapidity, *added to it* £21,390,500 in five years, or £4,278,100 per annum."	In 1858 the Unfunded Debt left by the Liberals was £25,911,500, for which there were no assets. The present Conservative Unfunded Debt is £25,870,100, or £41,400 less than in 1858, while there are assets, profitably invested, to the amount of £17,530,000, leaving a net Unfunded Debt of only £8,340,000!
TABLE D.	TABLE D.
"The net result of this table is that on the average the Liberals provide an annual surplus, and the Conservatives an annual deficit."	In 1858, 1861, and 1862, the Liberals had deficits, while in 1859, 1860, 1867, 1875, 1876, and 1877, the Conservatives had surpluses.
TABLE E.	TABLE E.
"In their lease 1861—66, the Liberals brought it (the Income Tax) down from 9d. to 4d.; the Conservatives then raised it a penny per annum, from 4d. to 6d. Then the Liberals reduced it again from 5d. to 3d., and now the Conservatives have restored it once more to 5d. What next year may bring forth we dare not anticipate."	It will be seen that with regard to this table Mr. Waddy has neglected his "annual averages." We will supply the omission. During twelve years of Liberal Government the Income Tax averaged *more* than 6d. in the pound. During ten years of Conservative Government the Income Tax averaged *less* than 4¼d.

TABLE F.

This table professes to show the amount of taxes remitted and imposed by Liberal and Conservative Governments. Mr. Waddy's conclusions are not very clear, but he asserts that "there is *an annual difference in favour of the Liberals of* £3,884,657."

TABLE G.

This table, according to Mr. Waddy, "shows that every person in the United Kingdom pays annually 10d. additional taxation for the privilege of being governed by a Conservative administration."

TABLE F.

The only years in which taxes have been "increased" by the Conservatives are 1860, 1869, 1877, and 1879. Those are precisely the years in which they increased the INCOME TAX! And, as Table E. shows, that tax has averaged 1½d. in the pound less than during Liberal administration.

TABLE G.

The greatly increased cost of National Education, the extension of the postal and telegraphic systems, and the great relief afforded to local taxation, during the last *five* years more than make up for this addition to taxation; but the Conservative Government have not charged *one farthing* of it on taxes paid by the *working classes*, or even by *small tradesmen*. It has been charged on *incomes of over* £400 *per annum*.

We believe we have now proved to demonstration that Mr. Waddy's charges against the financial policy of the Conservative Government are entirely groundless; that after a prodigious effort the mountain in labor has only brought forth a mouse, and that all Mr. Waddy's indignation has wasted "its sweetness on the desert air." And nothing is more certain than this: if there had been any "case" against the present Government, Mr. Waddy would not have been driven to the shallow expedients we have endeavoured to expose. A few more pamphlets like that of Mr. Waddy's, which must of necessity injure his own party, and the honour and prestige of Great Britain will be safe for a few years longer under a Conservative Government.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In conclusion, we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Waddy's pamphlet is not what it professes to be. It is not a fair and impartial comparison of Liberal and Conservative Finance. It is in no sense calculated to give the public reliable information upon an important and interesting subject. On the contrary, it is calculated to mislead the uninformed; to do gross injustice to one political party, and give undeserved credit to the other. This may or may not be Mr. Waddy's intention; but we are sadly afraid that while he assumes the pose of a judge, the spirit of the advocate is too strong for him. That while he imagines he is holding the scales of justice blindfold in the most impartial manner, he is winking hard with one eye at the electors of Sheffield, and looking earnestly for professional and political promotion with the other. That while he fondly imagines he is weighing evidence, he is distorting it; that the only bandage over his eyes is that of political bigotry and prejudice, and that so far

from his being fit to be a guide to others, he is the latest living illustration of the blind leading the blind.

But whether Mr. Waddy has his eyes open or shut we hope, on a future occasion, the electors of Sheffield will have theirs open. They have just lost in Mr. Roebuck, a representative who was the soul of honour, the personification of a truthful, upright, and independent English gentleman. In honouring him, the electors of Sheffield honoured themselves. He was not only a credit and honour to Sheffield, but to all England. His love of country was only equalled by his love of truth and justice. The petty trammels of party never clouded his intellect or subdued his voice. He lived as he died, honest, fearless, faithful unto death. By a very small majority the electors of Sheffield have paid a poor compliment to his memory; but the time is again fast approaching when they will have an opportunity of retrieving their error, and doing justice to the judgment and independence of their late honoured representative. There is a great crisis approaching which will intimately affect the future welfare and prosperity of this country. It is not a question of Liberal and Conservative finance, or of Whig and Tory, of Conservative or Liberal. It is a question of national progress or national degradation; of national greatness or national decadence; and, singularly enough, it is the so-called party of progress which, for the sake of a temporary and trumpery financial saving, would not only limit the empire but even curtail it. Would hand over Turkey to Russia in order to prevent a deficit; would jeopardise our Indian possessions for the sake of securing a surplus; and would leave tens of thousands of British colonists in danger of their lives sooner than add a penny in the pound to the income tax. That is not the party a true Englishman ought to support, even though Mr. Waddy belongs to it. Let us trust to the bridge that has carried us safely over; to the good ship that has weathered the storm; to the party which has preferred the real interests of the nation to selfish considerations, and let us maintain those old and time honoured institutions which have secured to us for so many centuries an amount of liberty and prosperity unknown in any other part of the world.

"And be those juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense."

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THE NATIONAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

A

COMPARISON OF TAXATION

UNDER THE

GLADSTONE & BEACONSFIELD

GOVERNMENTS.

MR. GLADSTONE'S "SURPLUS" EXPLAINED.

Reprinted, with additions, from the MANCHESTER COURIER.

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A

COMPARISON OF TAXATION

UNDER THE

GLADSTONE & BEACONSFIELD GOVERNMENTS.

Considerable interest is very naturally felt by all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the financial condition of the country. The official papers and statistics from which an accurate knowledge of the subject may be gleaned are not within the reach of everybody, and, even if they were, the number of persons who would take the trouble to examine them carefully would not be very large. It is with the view of affording materials for forming a sound judgment on matters relating to the income and expenditure of the nation that a series of articles which have recently appeared in the columns of the *Manchester Courier* are reproduced in the following pages. The assertion is so repeatedly made by opponents of the Government that the burdens and taxation of the country have been very greatly increased by the present Government that it cannot be without interest to determine from parliamentary documents, the general accuracy of which is admitted by both political parties, whether such an assertion is well founded, and, if so, to what extent. In considering the statistics relating to the two Governments it ought to be remembered that while Mr. Gladstone had the advantage of a period of peace and extraordinary commercial prosperity, during which, as it was said, trade increased by "leaps and bounds," the present Government have had to contend with complications of the most serious kind abroad, and continued bad trade—resulting from the failure of the crops in India and China, and from over-

production and over-trading by manufacturers and merchants—at home, and, to some extent, to the progress of foreign competition. Bearing these things in mind, it will no doubt astonish many people to learn that in 1877-8 the proportion of the gross taxation of the country per head of the population was only £2 7s. 8d., while in 1873-4, Mr. Gladstone's last year of office, it was £2 8s. 2d.;* and that, though it is constantly stated that the Government have increased the national debt, it is actually several millions less now than it was when Mr. Gladstone left office. After all, it is not an uncommon thing to hear some such expression as this:—"Look how the present Government have increased the taxation and burdens of the country; see with what reckless extravagance they squander the national wealth, and how rapidly the public expenditure has increased since they have been in office." This has been the burden of a good deal of Radical oratory of late, and in some cases the allegation has been supported by figures said to have been obtained from official sources. The reference made to statistics is however invariably of a character which, while likely to satisfy the heated partisan, whose limited means of arriving at the facts for himself makes him an easy dupe, is too cursory to be satisfactory to more intelligent persons who are not blinded by partisan prejudices. Some of the Radical gentlemen who declaim so excitedly against the present Government found all their conclusions upon statements published in a party almanac, and when they have committed to memory some of the figures, they pose as great statistical authorities, ignoring altogether the fact that the source of their information is tainted, and that the whole compilation has no other *raison d'être* than the promotion of purely party purposes. In order to steer clear of this figurative sandbank, we shall confine our attention to Parliamentary papers issued during the past year, the accuracy of the figures contained in which has in no single instance been challenged.

TAXES ACTUALLY RECEIVED.

First of all we will refer to a return obtained by Mr. Childers, the Liberal member for Pontefract, ordered by the House of Commons in July last. Under the head "taxes actually received, less stamps in lieu

* See Appendix C.

of fees," we find that in 1857-8 the amount was £62,948,000, and 20 years afterwards, namely, in 1877-8, it was £66,098,000, an increase which bears no reasonable proportion to the increase in the population and resources of the country, and which may fairly be described as nominal. But though twenty years ago the taxes actually received amounted to £62,948,000, only eighteen years ago, 1859-60, the sum amounted to £65,491,000, and in 1869-70, when Mr. Gladstone was in office, the "taxes actually received" reached £66,563,000, or £465,000 more than was received last year by the present Government. Mr. Gladstone's Government certainly reduced the amount of "taxes actually received" below that we have quoted for 1869-70, and it never again reached that total; but even in 1873-4, his last year of office, the amount "actually received" was £65,353,000, or only £745,000 less than was received in 1877-8, notwithstanding the serious difficulties and foreign complications through which the country has during the last three years been passing. It may be contended by some that Mr. Gladstone's Government ought not to be held responsible for the taxes received in 1874, but even in 1872-3 the "taxes actually received" amounted to £65,905,000, which is only £193,000 less than the taxes received in 1877-8. Let us take another test. During Mr. Gladstone's five years of office the total amount of the "taxes actually received"—according to this return issued by Parliament on the motion of a Liberal member—was £320,933,000, and in the succeeding five years, for which the present Administration is responsible, the sum reached £324,736,000, or an increase of £3,803,000, which, under the circumstances of the case, would seem to show either that for a time of profound peace and prosperity Mr. Gladstone was extracting from the pockets of the people taxes far in excess of his legitimate requirements, or that the present Government have managed to discharge their onerous and difficult duties with extraordinary economy. In examining the Parliamentary paper from which these figures are obtained we notice that the present Administration is credited with having paid large sums for the abolition of purchase, the Ashantee expedition, the Alabama Claims, the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, and the Russo-Turkish War, and that "the net total charge on taxes" for "imperial and consolidated fund" purposes amounted during Mr. Gladstones period of office to £28,804,363, and, during the present Administration, to £28,618,726, which is a reduction of £185,637; and also that the return contains other evidence, to which we shall hereafter refer, that the allegation so freely indulged in, that the present Government is enormously increasing the taxes and burdens of the people, is founded mainly upon imagination. "Imagination" is about as mild a term as it is possible to apply.

HOW THE MONEY HAS BEEN SPENT.

Having shown from a return published by Parliament at the request of Mr. Childers, Mr. Gladstone's First Lord of the Admiralty, that the amount extracted from the pockets of the people in the shape of taxes was relatively greater during the late than during the present Administration, and that, notwithstanding that Mr. Gladstone had the advantage of a period of profound peace and commercial prosperity, the "taxes actually received" were more during one or two of his years of office than they have ever been under the present Administration, we propose now to see how the money has been spent. National education costs the country more to-day than it ever did before, and the expenditure under this head is gradually increasing year by year. This gradual increase is no innovation introduced by the present Government, but was inherited by them. Thus we find from Mr. Childers's return, that in 1868-9 the sum expended on public education was £1,008,826; in 1869-70 £1,205,918; in 1870-1 £1,255,388, and so on until 1872-3, when it reached £1,788,735, the total charge on taxes for public education during Mr. Gladstone's term of office being £6,787,291. Last year the charge on taxes for national education alone had increased to £3,032,247, the total sum for the whole period of the present Administration being £12,178,193, or £5,390,902 more expended by the Beaconsfield Administration for the promotion of education than was expended by their predecessors in the same length of time.

We will take another important department of national expenditure—grants made "in aid of local taxation," in which are included allowances towards the cost of police forces, &c. During Mr. Gladstone's term of office the amount expended out of the national taxes in aid of local taxation increased year by year from £2,262,250 in 1868-9 to £2,390,479 in 1872-3, the total for the five years being £11,639,865. During the five years of office of the present Administration the grants in aid of local taxation have increased more rapidly. In 1873-4 the amount was £2,737,764, in 1877-8 it had reached £4,234,002, the total for the whole period being £18,290,512, or more than the total in Mr. Gladstone's premiership by no less than £6,650,647, in aid, or, in other words, in reduction, of local taxation. We have already pointed out that, according to the return obtained from Parliament by Mr. Childers, there had been an increase of £3,803,000 in the "taxes actually received" by the present over the preceding Administration in the same period, and now we have shown from the same return that in the same periods of time the present Administration have made grants to the extent of over £6,600,000 in reduction of local taxation, and of over

£5,390,000 for the purposes of public education more than their predecessors in office, though Mr. Gladstone had the advantage of a period of peace and of unexampled commercial prosperity; and that the total charge on taxes under the present Government for "imperial, including civil consolidated fund charges," was less than that during Mr. Gladstone's term by £185,637, proving, as clearly as figures can prove, that the present is by far the more economical and financially successful Administration. This return of Mr. Childers's demonstrates that the Beaconsfield Government have expended £12,041,549 in the promotion of public education and in reduction of local taxation more than Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues. The taxation of the country during Mr. Gladstone's premiership was certainly not less than it is now, so that Radical enthusiasts who wish to show their ingenuity may find abundant exercise for it in proving that the ex-Premier devoted the £12,000,000 to anything like so useful and beneficial a purpose as the promotion of education and the reduction of local taxation.

THE REVENUE—WHAT IT CONSISTS OF.

On the 15th of August last a Parliamentary paper was issued, on the motion of Mr. Hubbard, giving "an account of the public expenditure for the year ending on the 31st March, 1878." In that document the total taxation of the country is put down at £65,952,824. A return obtained by Sir Thomas Bazley, on the 14th of August last, gives the amount at £66,944,511, and another, obtained by Mr. Childers, at £66,098,000. The difference is no doubt to be accounted for by miscellaneous receipts not always included in the taxation papers. Mr. Hubbard's total is thus made up:—Customs, £19,969,000; excise, £27,464,000; land tax, £1,074,000; house duty, £1,596,000; property and income tax, £5,820,000; probate stamps, £2,236,000; legacy stamps, £3,722,000; "various," £4,071,824. This sum is increased by "services undertaken by the Crown," including net rent of Crown lands, &c., to £69,354,227. It will no doubt be useful to inquire what is comprised under these several heads of "taxation." First of all, let us take "customs." In Sir Thomas Bazley's Parliamentary paper we find the various items of customs and their yield set out at length. The impost upon tobacco amounted during the year to £8,100,153; taxes on tea, coffee, sugar, and cocoa, £4,330,413; on spirits, and articles containing spirits, £5,546,368; on wine, £1,630,887; and the revenue from dried fruit, &c., go to make up the total. The charge against the Government of having enormously added to the burdens of the people cannot be said to apply to any of the articles mentioned in this list.

Now let us refer to the tables dealing with "excise." The gross amount of revenue received from this source, according to Sir Thomas Bazley's return, was £28,380,578. This sum is obtained from taxes or imposts upon chicory, malt, spirits, sugar, railways, brewers, maltsters, the manufacturers of tobacco and snuff, spirit distillers, dealers, and

rectifiers, wine retailers, refreshment houses, hawkers and pedlers, appraisers and house agents, auctioneers, pawnbrokers, dealers in plate, gun and game licences, dogs, male servants, carriages, armorial bearings, &c., not one of which, except the dogs and the retailing of tobacco—and even in those cases the duty was created by a former Administration, and only increased by this to the extent, in the one case, of half-a-crown a year, and in the other 1d. per quarter of a pound. By far the largest item in the whole list is the excise duty on spirits, from which the gross amount of revenue received last year was £15,557,514; after which we have the item of £7,940,545 for malt duty, the further items of £1,219,456 from publicans, beer retailers, &c., and £433,216 for brewers' licence duties; and we are not aware of any great demand on the part of the people for the removal of these imposts, nor can we see how their existence reflects any greater discredit upon this than upon former Governments.

The revenue from "stamps" cannot be called a burden upon "the people," and, even if it could, the present Government have simply inherited and not imposed it. The stamps referred to yielded, in the year ending March last, £11,250,931, and to show how little the working classes have had to do with them we may mention that they were attached to deeds, probates of wills, letters of administration, bills of exchange, bankers' notes, receipts, drafts, marine insurances, legacies, and successions, patents for inventions, &c.

The "taxes" proper apply to the land, inhabited houses, shops, warehouses, farmhouses, and to various forms of income, the incomes derived from trades, professions, &c., contributing £5,913,365 of the total sum realised. According to Sir Thomas Bazley's return, these comprise the various sources of revenue upon which the Government have to rely for the means wherewith to carry on the affairs of the nation. There is really nothing in it in any way to justify the serious and reckless charge against the Administration of having "enormously increased the taxation of the country," and it will be better if, instead of indulging in generalities, their accusers or traducers will in future put their fingers upon the particular items to which they object, and which the present Ministry have imposed, and point out in what better method the revenue could be raised.

SIR THOMAS BAZLEY'S RETURN.

The gentlemen who delight in accusing the Government of having enormously increased the taxation of the country will do well to avoid the return issued by Parliament on the motion of Sir Thomas Bazley, "of all taxes and imposts from which the imperial revenue of the United "Kingdom was raised, together with the gross revenue, in the year "ending the 31st day of March, 1878," and "of the aggregate revenue "collected in each of the previous ten years." It is said that "a man "convinced against his will is of the same opinion still," and as it would be impossible to study Sir Thomas Bazley's return without being convinced that the charge against the present Government of having

enormously increased the taxes of the people is a mere invention, those who did not want to be convinced of the error of their ways would be all the worse for the operation. On page nine there is a table in which the net amount of revenue derived from excise, stamps, inland revenue, and taxes, from 1868 to 1878, is set out in separate columns. The table is interesting and instructive. It shows that the produce of excise—that is to say, the revenue derived from licences to brew and sell beer, to manufacture and sell malt, tobacco, snuff, to deal in spirits and wine and plate, to keep refreshment houses, to carry guns, kill game, to follow the trade or profession of auctioneer, appraiser, or pawnbroker—has been greater year by year during the existence of the present Government than during the existence of Mr. Gladstone's. The highest sum realised from excise in any one year by the late Government was £25,904,450, in 1873; the lowest received by the present Government was £27,115,970, showing either that during the Administration of Mr. Gladstone there was a sad want of buoyancy in the callings we have named, or that there was singular negligence in the collection of the duties, which is not very likely. In the matter of stamps, too, the yield during the present Administration is largely in excess of that during the Administration by which it was preceded. The revenue derived from stamps on probates of wills, letters of administration, bills of exchange, bankers' notes, &c., can hardly be called a tax upon "the people," and we should, perhaps, not be wrong in saying that "the working classes," to whom the opponents of the Government are fond of pretending to appeal, would not object to be liable to the impost. Here, then, are two departments of revenue, not taxes, in which the present Government have received far more than their predecessors, no doubt by more efficient management and the adoption of a less harassing home, and less pusilanimous foreign policy. In the case of the inland revenue the same remarks apply, the net produce being substantially to the advantage of Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues.

"TAXES."—THE INCOME TAX.

Now let us turn to the column headed "taxes" in this return moved for by Sir Thomas Bazley. As Mr. Gladstone became Premier only in December, 1868, it would not be fair to hold him responsible for the taxes of that year, which amounted to £9,634,485; and leaving that item by itself, we will give the figures just as we find them under the head "net produce, after deducting repayments, &c.":—

1869	£12,107,673	1874	£7,966,247
1870	14,629,612	1875	6,774,265
1871	9,014,729	1876	6,553,340
1872	11,680,283	1877	7,822,265
1873	9,742,770	1878	8,543,585

It will be seen at a glance that in no single year during the present Administration, which took office in February, 1874, has the highest net

produce of "taxes" reached the lowest net produce during Mr. Gladstone's term of office, and that the "taxes" received in 1869 and 1870 amounted together to very nearly as much as those received by the present Government in the first four years of office, notwithstanding the serious depression in trade and the gravity of foreign affairs during the last three or four years.

According, therefore, to the Parliamentary return issued on the motion of Sir Thomas Bazley, the "taxes" obtained from the country were far heavier during Mr. Gladstone's term of office than they have been since. From a table in the same return, in which the details of the taxes are given, we find that the income-tax is the chief source of revenue under that head, and we proposed to institute a comparison of the operations of the income-tax during the two Administrations, showing its bearing on the working classes in the two periods, and the groundlessness of the accusation against the present Government that they are enormously increasing the taxation of the country. It may be as well to give the reader an idea of the sources of incomes chargeable to the impost, and we cannot do it in a clearer form than the following:—

	Amount.		Amount.
Real Estates	£65,112,000	Quarries	£1,064,000
Houses	95,875,000	Gas, Railways, and Canals	50,637,000
Farms	36,170,000	Public Companies	23,655,000
Public Dividends	39,968,000	Trades and Professions	136,359,000
Fisheries	190,000	Offices, Salaries, &c.	24,281,000
Mines and Ironworks	16,878,000		

These figures are derived from the official income-tax returns, and they demonstrate pretty clearly that it is not the artizan, the clerk, shopkeeper, warehouseman, or what is generically called "the working man" from whom the income-tax is even mainly derived. And the property subjected to the tax is not all in England, as is shown by a return issued from the Inland Revenue Office in March last, and ordered by the House of Commons on the motion of Mr. Hubbard. This return gives the annual value of property assessed to the income-tax under schedule C, "distinguishing the amounts assessed on dividends from British, Indian, colonial, and foreign stocks in the year 1866-7." The total amount of British dividends and annuities charged to the income-tax under schedule C is £20,829,281; Indian, £7,068,327; colonial, £3,755,106; and foreign, including Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, £8,315,463. When the income-tax was increased in the last Budget by 2d. in the pound, there was a great cry raised in the country about the extravagance of the Government. Mr. Goschen, a distinguished Liberal, objected to it because it did not apply to "the whole country," that is to say, because it did not include that portion of the working population whose incomes did not reach £150. He thought all classes, including the poorest, should be made to pay their quota of the additional burdens which the exceptional and temporary condition of national affairs created. Let us examine the progress of this income-tax from the date of Mr. Gladstone's premiership to the present time, and see whether it is true that Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues have increased the burdens of "the

people." In 1868, the year in which Mr. Gladstone took office, the income-tax was 6d. in the pound. In 1869 it was reduced to 5d., and in 1870 it was further reduced to 4d., but in 1871 it was increased to 6d., a penny more than it is now, notwithstanding the terrible foreign complications and troubles through which the present Government have had to pass. In 1872 it was 4d., and in 1873, the last year for which Mr. Gladstone was responsible, it was reduced to 3d. The present Government reduced the income-tax to 2d. in 1874, increased it to 3d. in 1876, and left it at 3d. until March, 1878, when it was increased to 5d. so that in his five years of office Mr. Gladstone imposed income-tax to the amount of 1s. 10d. in the pound, and the present Government have imposed it in their five years of office to the amount of only 1s. 3d., or sevenpence in the pound less than their predecessors. As bearing upon the question of taxing "the people," it ought also to be mentioned, that whereas in Mr. Gladstone's premiership, all incomes from £100 a year were liable to assessment, a deduction of £80 being made from incomes up to £300 in the last two years of office, and of £60 on incomes up to £200 in his first three ; the present Government have abolished the tax altogether on incomes below £150 a year, thereby actually protecting the pockets of "the people," and, in addition to that, have made a deduction of £120 from all incomes up to £400. The persons who say Mr. Gladstone's taxation of the country compares favourably with Lord Beaconsfield's must have either short memories or powerful imaginations.*

In a report of Her Majesty's Commissioners of Inland Revenue, recently issued, a variety of interesting details are given in reference to the income-tax under schedule D—trades, professions, employments, &c.—which it is desirable everybody should possess. The return comes down to 1876–7, and shows that the Government have had to submit to large decreases of revenue from this source which, under different circumstances, would have accrued to them. In England alone there was a decrease in the assessments, in 1876–7, as compared with the preceding year, of £13,810,451, and, in the United Kingdom, of £15,064,868. The principal falling off occurred in Middlesex, then come Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Durham, the more agricultural counties being the lowest. In the five years in which Mr. Gladstone was in office there was an increase in the assessments of £75,206,000 ; in 1874–5 and 1875–6 there was an increase of £21,986,000 and in 1876–7 a decrease, as we have stated, of £15,064,868. This decrease is the result mainly of the extension of the limit of exemption in that year from £100 to £150, which caused a considerable diminution in the number of persons liable to be charged. In 1875–6 there were, we are told in the report, 568,229 persons charged under this head, "and if the limit of exemption had not been altered, the number of persons liable to be assessed in 1876–7 would probably have exceeded 600,000, but the number actually charged for that year was little over two-thirds of that number, viz., 401,137, and it may be observed that an average assessment of only £100 on 200,000 additional persons would have represented £20,000,000 of gross profits." In 1876-7 310,803 claimed the abatement of £120 under schedules A, B, D, and E, and the amount of income relieved from the tax by the allowance was

* See Appendix A B

£36,844,068. It will be seen from this that persons with small and precarious incomes have been greatly relieved by the present Government, and that the amount of revenue derived from the poorer classes of income-tax payers has been much smaller under the present than under the preceding Government.

TAXES ON FOOD AND OTHER NECESSARIES.

In the preceding pages we have, with the aid of Parliamentary papers, demolished the chief portion of the fabric of fallacies constructed by Radical enthusiasts in reference to the taxation of the country. We have shown, from returns obtained by Liberal members of the House of Commons, that the sums raised by "taxes" were much larger during Mr. Gladstone's premiership than they have been since the present Government took office in 1874, and yet we find Mr. R. N. Philips, in an address to his constituents at Bury, venturing upon the assertion that the Government had, during the last session, devoted nearly the whole of its time to dipping its hands into the pockets of the people. There has been no attempt on our part to deny that the gross revenue of the country has been larger since the present Government have been in power than it was before; just as it would be folly to attempt to deny that the revenue of the country during the late Administration was greater than during a similar period preceding it; but we do deny that the "taxes of the people," or the "burdens of the people," as they are called—the direct imposts levied by the Government for the purposes of revenue—have been "enormously increased" during the Beaconsfield Administration. The present Government have received more from excise, that is to say from the malt duty, the spirit duty, from brewers, maltsters, and tobacco manufacturers' licence duties, and from the licence duties of publicans, beer and refreshment house keepers, pawnbrokers, dealers in plate, &c., than their predecessors, but these can hardly be called "taxes" imposed on "the people" by the present Government. In the same way the amounts received by the present Administration under the head "stamps," which is an important department in the revenue of the conntry, have been greater, but stamps on deeds, probates of wills, letters of administration, bills of exchange, bankers' notes, &c., cannot be called taxes imposed on "the people," and even if they could the present Government were not the authors but only the inheritors of them, just as they have been the inheritors of the consequences of an emaciated foreign policy and of a home policy that was rotten and ruinous.

But when we come to the matter of "customs," in which everybody is more or less indirectly interested, things assume a different aspect. The net produce of customs was less in 1878 than in any of Mr. Gladstone's five years of office, and the net produce of the five years beginning with 1869 and ending with 1873, was £100,036,568, against £94,717,773 received in the same period by the present Administration.

In order that there may be no mistake on the matter we will give the figures, as we find them in Sir Thomas Bazley's return for each year of the two Governments :—

1869	£21,306,668	1874	£19,284,093
1870	20,380,566	1875	18,331,001
1871	19,154,607	1876	19,174,298
1872	19,231,821	1877	18,878,274
1873	19,962,906	1878	19,050,107

The tax called "customs" is levied on tobacco, tea, coffee, chicory, cocoa, spirits, dried fruit, beer, vinegar, pickles, &c., things consumed by "the people," so that to Mr. Gladstone must be given the palm for heavy taxation affecting the inhabitants of the country generally. That the "taxes" proper were very much higher in Mr. Gladstone's premiership than during the present Administration we have abundantly demonstrated, and all we need do now is to point out that notwithstanding the increase in the revenue from stamps and excise, and the increase in the population and rateable value of the country, the increase in the aggregate amount of revenue in 1877-8 was only about four millions more than in Mr. Gladstone's first year of office, and only about one million higher than in his last. Sometimes we hear it said that the revenue of the present Government goes on increasing year by year. Considering the times through which we have been passing during the last four or five years, it cannot be gainsaid that there has been every reason for a growing increase in the expenditure, which it would require an increasing revenue to meet. But this increasing aggregate amount of revenue is not peculiar to the Beaconsfield Administration. The net produce of excise, stamps, taxes, customs, and post-office, in 1867-8, was £60,826,974. In his first year Mr. Gladstone received £62,982,903, in his second £65,907,767, finishing in his last year with £65,741,177, or nearly five millions more than "the people" were called upon to pay when he took office. In their first year the aggregate revenue of the present Government was £65,169,990, and in their last £66,944,511, or considerably less than two millions of an increase during a similar period, so that to talk about the enormously increased taxation of the people by the present Government is, judging by the comparative results, as set forth in a Parliamentary return obtained by a Liberal member, to put it mildly, rather presumptuous.

THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

People who fly to party almanacs for their "facts" as to the income and expenditure of the Government are not unlikely to be biassed one way or the other—for party purposes. The superficial observer, who examines the figures duly prepared for him in those publications, jumps abruptly to conclusions which will not bear any kind of fair and intelligent investigation. And yet Radical speakers go on repeating assertions about the present Government increasing the taxation of the country and the burdens of the people, though they have within their reach official returns which distinctly demonstrate the contrary. We

have no reason to expect any amendment on their part, and we can only hope that the assertions are the result of ignorance, and not of a wilful determination to mislead. Excited politicians, in their anxiety to say something damaging against the existing Administration, will exclaim, presuming upon the want of information on the part of their audience, "See how they have gone on increasing the expenditure of the country; and remember how Mr. Gladstone reduced the national debt." Well, let us see. We have already pointed out that the national revenue has gone on increasing year by year, and that it increased more than twice as much while Mr. Gladstone was premier than it has done in the same period under the present Government. Now let us turn to the national expenditure. Even if the conditions of the two Administrations had been equal, it could not fairly have been expected that the expenditure would be less now than it was then. The obligations of the Government could be no fewer than they were, and no less difficult to discharge. But the conditions of the two periods are not similar. Mr. Gladstone had the advantage of a time of peace and prosperity; the present Government the disadvantage of a great war between two nations, in the prosecution of which the interests of this country were seriously imperilled: and the further disadvantage of a prolonged season of commercial depression. The altered state of the circumstances would have warranted an unusual and important increase both in taxation and expenditure, and yet we have shown from Sir Thomas Bazley's return that Mr. Gladstone received far more than the present Government in the shape of taxes.

It will be well to remember what the principal items of expenditure are. First, in amount, comes the interest, &c., of the national debt, then the army and navy, then law and justice, and then education, science, and art. Let us take these items in their order. The highest amount paid for interest, &c., of the national debt during Mr. Gladstone's term was not equal to the lowest amount paid in any one year by the present Government. In order to make it clear we will give the actual figures, and to avoid cavilling in reference to them on the part of captious politicians, we will quote them from the "Financial Reform Almanac" :—

1869	£26,618,326	1874	£26,706,725
1870	27,053,560	1875	27,094,479
1871	26,826,437	1876	27,443,750
1872	26,839,691	1877	27,992,835
1873	26,804,853	1878	28,412,750

From these figures it will be seen that, notwithstanding the wars and rumours of wars, and the consequently necessary expenditure to arrive at a state of preparedness to meet eventualities, the present Government have actually paid over £3,500,000 more than Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues paid in the same period of time towards the interest, &c., of the national debt, which is now, even according to the admission of the "Financial Reform Almanac," no less than £7,980,256 lower than it was when Mr. Gladstone left office. If we turn to the expenditure on

the army and navy we find it larger during the present than during the preceding Administration, and no wonder, when we recollect the shockingly dilapidated and impaired condition in which the navy was left, and the expense which it has been necessary to incur to put the army upon a proper footing. But even the extraordinary difficulties with which the present Government have had to deal in the matter have not resulted in such an outrageous increase as certain Radical enthusiasts would lead their friends to imagine; for in Mr. Gladstone's first year of office the expenditure on the army amounted to £15,000,000, in his fourth year (1872) it was £15,521,589, and in his fifth £14,466,700; while the largest sum expended on the service in any one year by the present Government was £15,607,445, namely, in 1878. In the same way with the navy, Mr. Gladstone's highest expenditure was in the year 1869, when it reached £11,366,545, and his lowest was in 1871, £9,456,641; while the highest and lowest amounts of expenditure on the navy by the present Government were £11,364,383 (1877) and £10,279,899 (1874) respectively. At the same time, for the reasons we have given, the expenditure on the army and navy during the last five years exceeded that of the preceding five years.

Now let us take law and justice. To this department of the national expenditure the late Government devoted in five years £22,819,266, and the present Government, in the same period, £26,548,816, or an increase of £3,729,550. In the other great department of national expenditure —education, science, and art—we find the figures equally striking. In Mr. Gladstone's first year of office the amount was £1,380,962; in the first year of the Beaconsfield Government, £2,426,251; in Mr. Gladstone's second year, £1,635,212; Lord Beaconsfield's second year, £2,603,802; Mr. Gladstone's third year, £1,755,489; Lord Beaconsfield's third year, £3,033,527; in Mr. Gladstone's fourth year, £1,938,630; Lord Beaconsfield's fourth year, £3,182,920; and in Mr. Gladstone's fifth year, £2,223,216; and in Lord Beaconsfield's fifth year, £3,581,837; showing that the present Government have expended on public education, science, and art, £5,894,828 more than their predecessors in the same period. As we have pointed out, the revenue of the country, that is to say the proceeds of the taxes and other imposts, increased by nearly five millions during Mr. Gladstone's premiership, whilst the increase during the present Administration amounted to less than two millions, and, as will be seen, an examination of the expenditure of the respective Governments is equally flattering to the present.

The persons who content themselves by looking at totals as presented in party almanacs, may very easily and innocently fall into error on this matter. It is not an uncommon thing, for instance, to hear half-informed politicians of the Gladstonian order refer in triumph to the tables of the "Financial Reform Almanac" to prove that the present Administration have increased the expenditure of the country from £71,102,896 in 1873 to £83,292,584. Superficial inquirers, and easy-going people generally, will no doubt take these figures as proving enormous extravagance on the part of the present Government, and as confirmatory evidence of the charge that the burdens of the people have been scandalously increased. No allowance is made for the increased population, the increased and

extraordinary demands upon the present Government, which their predecessors were not called upon to meet, nor is any attempt made to find out in what manner the money has been spent. If they took that trouble they would ascertain that in addition to several millions in aid or reduction of local taxation, as shown in a previous page from a return obtained by Sir Thomas Bazley, the present Government have, according to the "The Financial Reform Almanac," an admittedly unwilling witness, paid during the five years £3,729,550 for law and justice, £3,507,672 for interest and management expenses of the national debt, £7,980,256 in reduction of the national debt, and £5,894,828 for public education, science, and art, more than Mr. Gladstone paid in the same period. These payments alone go a long way towards satisfactorily accounting for the difference in the expenditure of the two periods, and we have never yet heard intelligent members of the Opposition contend that the money spent in the matters we have enumerated is unprofitably or foolishly bestowed.

MR. GLADSTONE'S BUDGETS.

Mr. R. N. Philips told his constituents the other day that the Government employed themselves in dipping the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer into the pockets of the people. Other Radicals have sung the same song to a different tune, one choosing as his tune that the Government are levying additional taxes upon the country, another that they are increasing the national debt, and its burdens generally, and another that the Conservatives always increase and the Liberals always diminish the financial responsibilities of the people. There is an official Parliamentary paper issued annually called the "Statistical Abstract." From that Blue-book we find that Mr. Gladstone invariably under-estimated the revenue and over-estimated the expenditure, and that by that means he obtained large sums from the country for which he had no need, and which ought never to have left the pockets of the people. As soon as they took office, and saw how things stood, the present Government repealed customs on sugar, molasses, &c., to the amount of £2,282,903; excise duties on horses, home made sugar, &c., to the amount of £489,000, and they also reduced the income tax by £1,840,000; imposing in place of all these an increase of excise duty on sugar used in brewing to the extent of only £57,000.*

In 1869 Mr. Gladstone had a large "surplus," and with it he reduced the customs by £865,687, repealed excise duties and licences to the amount of £366,000, reduced the income-tax by £1,450,000, and repealed assessed taxes to the amount of £53,000 on "hair powder, armorial bearings, carriages, horses, servants, and horse dealers." It would perhaps have been better had these taxes been left untouched, and other burdens which more or less directly affected the working classes dealt with, and it required a little manœuvring to bring about this removal of unoppressive assessed taxes, from which none

* See Appendix D.

but the rich could possibly derive any advantage. The assessed taxes upon these luxuries amounted altogether to £1,166,983, and with the large balance in the Exchequer Mr. Gladstone, with a great flourish, announced his intention to repeal them. But in the same budget that he repealed assessed taxes to the amount of £1,166,983, he imposed excise licences for the very same things to the amount of £1,113,000, thus leaving the real remission of taxes at £53,000, from which the labouring population derived not a farthing of advantage.

Let us see what the taxes really are which the present Government have imposed upon the country, and compare them with the remissions which they have made. That will be the fairest method of deciding whether the alleged enormous increase has actually taken place. In order to do this accurately we will turn to the Blue-books for information upon the subject. In 1874 the taxation of the country was increased by an addition to the duty on sugar used in brewing to the estimated amount of £57,000; and since then the income-tax has been twice increased, once by a penny and on the second occasion by 2d. in the pound; 4d. a pound has been added to the tobacco duty, and half-a-crown has been added to the tax upon dogs. That is all that has been done by the present Government, and it will puzzle the ingenuity of their critics to point out in what way these imposts are "grindingly oppressive" to the working population. But, though these taxes have been imposed by them, the present Government have done something in the way of removing burdens which pressed more or less upon all classes. For instance, when Mr. Gladstone left office all incomes from £100 upwards were liable to assessment; the present Government abolished the income-tax entirely upon all incomes up to £150. Mr. Gladstone remitted from assessment £80 of all incomes between £100 and £300; the present Government remitted from assessment £120 of all incomes up to £400 a year, thus in a very substantial manner improving the position of artizans and others with moderate incomes, and throwing the burden upon shoulders better able to bear it.* In addition to this they repealed, as we have already pointed out, taxes to the amount of £4,611,903 in their first year; £66,000 in their second year; £416,950 in their third year; £6,000 in their fourth year; and last year, amid all their trials and difficulties, they imposed merely the additional burdens we have named, so that the inflated talk about the enormous increase in the taxation of the country, and the scandalous additions to the national debt are figures of speech better adapted to make those who use them look foolish than to enlighten the people.

THE "ENORMOUS INCREASE" OF THE BURDENS OF THE PEOPLE.

What we have learnt from the examination of official statistics is that though the "taxes actually received, less stamps in lieu of fees," amounted in 1877-8 to £66,098,000, in 1869-70, when Mr. Gladstone was in office, they were more than that by £465,000. In 1872-3 the amount was £65,905,000, and in 1873-4, £65,353,000, or only £745,000

* See Appendix A B.

less than last year. The period of the present Administration has been one of almost unexampled national difficulty and danger, and yet, according to a return obtained by Mr. Childers, the total amount of "taxes actually received," not in any one year, but in the whole five years, was simply £3,803,000 more than was received in the same period of time by Mr. Gladstone, who had the inestimable advantage of peace, and for the greater portion of the time, extraordinary commercial prosperity. We have shown that the present Administration have spent on public education, £5,390,902, and in aid of local taxation, £6,650,647 more than their predecessors, and, from a return obtained by Sir Thomas Bazley, that while the three important items of revenue, customs, excise, and stamps, have gone on increasing year by year during the last ten years, the greater increase has been during the present Government, and also that the items given under the head "taxes" all tell against Mr. Gladstone. In no single year has the highest amount received by the present Government reached the lowest amount received by the late Government, who in their first two years obtained in the shape of "taxes" £26,737,285, which is nearly as much as the present Government received from that source in their first four years of office. We have also pointed out that during Mr. Gladstone's Administration the income-tax alone was much heavier than it has been since, that the receipts from customs, which affect necessaries of the people, were less in 1878 than in any of Mr. Gladstone's years of office; that the increase in the aggregate amount of revenue was only about £4,000,000 more in 1877-8 than it was in Mr. Gladstone's first year of office, and only about £1,000,000 more than in his last; and that the net produce of the various taxes and duties imposed increased during Mr. Gladstone's premiership to the amount of nearly £5,000,000, while the increase during the period of office of the present Government has not reached two millions. Since the Government imposed an additional 2d. in the pound very hard things have been said of them, and imputations of "extravagance" and "recklessness" have been freely indulged in, the censors forgetting altogether that during Mr. Gladstone's premiership the income-tax was as high as 6d. in the pound,* and that the remissions were far less liberal than they are now.

In order to be within the mark in reference to the income-tax we turned to the pages of the "Financial Reform Almanac," a Radical publication, and found from it that the present Government had paid £3,500,000 more than Mr. Gladstone for interest and management charges of the national debt, and that in addition to this the debt is now less by £7,980,256 than when Mr. Gladstone left office. In order to leave no doubt upon the matter we will quote the figures as we find them in the "Financial Reform Almanac." "Interest and management of national debt, &c."—what the "&c." means is not explained, but that it cannot mean the collection and management of the revenue departments is evident by their being separately dealt with :—

1869	£26,618,326	1874	£26,706,725
1870	27,053,560	1875	27,094,479
1871	26,826,437	1876	27,443,750
1872	26,839,601	1877	27,992,835
1873	26,804,853	1878	28,412,750

* See Appendix A B.

If we turn to the total amount of the debt at the end of each financial year we find the following figures :—

1869	£805,480,164	1874	£779,283,245
1870	801,406,561	1875	775,348,386
1871	796,104,155	1876	776,970,544
1872	792,661,132	1877	775,873,713
1873	785,761,762	1878	777,781,506

These figures speak for themselves, and are so far favourable to the present Government that we do not care, for the mere sake of making out a better case, to compare them with the official papers. Law and justice has cost the present Government £3,729,550 more than they cost their predecessors; and in public education, science, and art the total amount expended by the Gladstone Administration was less than that of their successors by no smaller a sum than £5,894,828. But perhaps the most striking fact revealed by the Parliamentary papers in connection with the national revenue and expenditure is that the proportion of receipts per head of the population to make up the gross revenue of the country was only 1s. 10d. more for the whole five years of the present Administration, or a fraction over 4d. per head per year, than during Mr. Gladstone's premiership,* "But," says the captious critic, "what is the proportion of the expenditure? as it is in the expenditure that the recklessness of the present Government is shown." Well, even on that ground it is not much worse. The proportion per head of the population to make up the expenditure for the two periods is as follows :—

1869	£2	8	6	1874	£2	7	7
1870	2	4	0	1875	2	5	10
1871	2	4	3	1876	2	6	10
1872	2	5	0	1877	2	7	2
1873	2	4	5	1878	2	9	3
Total	£11	6	2	Total	£11	16	8

So that notwithstanding the Indian famine, the grave complexion of foreign affairs, and the prolonged depression of trade the present "wasteful" Government, said to be always dipping its hands into the pockets of the people, have extracted the small sum of only a fraction over 2s. 1d. per head of the population per year over that extracted by Mr. Gladstone, with a period of peace and commercial prosperity in his favour. This is surely a very ridiculously small mouse to make so terrible a wail about. We have entered upon this comparison of the two régimes with reluctance. In prosecuting it, we have been compelled to leave out of consideration matters of principle and policy in which Mr. Gladstone's real weakness more prominently appears. Mr. John Bright is reported to have said that had the Liberals been in power during the Eastern crisis the country would have been at war with Russia. To have been consistent with themselves that must necessarily have been the case, or the country must have lost its prestige and influence in the world and have become the laughing stock of other nations. In either event the British people would now have been in a sorry plight from which it would have required herculean efforts and enormous sacrifices to escape. From being laughed at, the nation would soon come to be kicked at, and from

* See Appendix C.

all this, and from the consequent tremendous increase of taxation and debt which it would have entailed, the present Ministry have saved the country, and all for the nominal sum of 2s. 1d. per head per year on the total expenditure, and the more insignificant sum of 4d. per head per year on what actually comes out of the pockets of the people—the revenue.

SIR THOMAS BAZLEY AND THE "SURPLUS" IN 1874.

At a meeting held on the 14th of January, 1879, at the Free Trade Hall, Sir Thomas Bazley made a statement in reference to the "surplus" of 1874, and Mr. William Lord of Rochdale addressed to him the following letter asking for further information: —

46, Lord-street, Rochdale, 16th January, 1879.

Sir Thomas Bazley, M.P.

Sir,—At a Liberal meeting, held in the Free-trade Hall, Manchester, on the 14th instant, you are reported in the newspaper to have made the following assertion, viz.: "When Mr. Disraeli came into office he found an accumulation of £6,000,000, the savings of the previous Government."

By this assertion do you imply that at the end of Mr. Gladstone's last financial year (terminating 31st March, 1874) he left in the treasury a surplus of £6,000,000? If so, will you kindly furnish me with a substantial proof that this was the fact, because I find by referring to the "Financial Reform Almanack," 1878, page 150, that the gross expenditure for that year (and for which Mr. Gladstone was responsible) amounts to £77,044,852
And the gross income 76,788,167

Leaving a deficiency in the Treasury of..... £256,685

Therefore proving that your assertion was a gross misrepresentation. Enclosed please find stamped envelope for your early reply,—Yours obediently,

(Signed) WILLIAM LORD.

To this Sir Thomas Bazley sent the following reply :—

Eyford Park, Stow-on-the-Wold,
Gloucestershire, 18th January, 1879.

Sir,—In reply to your inquiry of the 16th inst., which I have received to-day, I beg to remind you that the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone was not in office on the 31st March, 1874, having some time before sustained a Conservative defeat.—Your obedient servant, (Signed) THOS. BAZLEY.

Mr. W. Lord.

Regarding the reply as an evasion, Mr. Lord wrote again to Sir Thomas in the following terms :—

46, Lord-street, Rochdale, 20th January, 1879.

Sir Thomas Bazley, M.P.

Sir,—The note just received from you, dated 18th January, 1879, is not a reply to mine. I desired you to furnish me with a proof of your assertion, instead of this you have entirely evaded the question at issue: therefore it must be perfectly evident that your statement was a gross misrepresentation of the facts, and your withdrawal of the assertion is fairly due.—Yours obediently,

(Signed) WILLIAM LORD.

No further explanation being afforded by Sir Thomas, Mr. Lord forwarded the correspondence to the *Manchester Courier* for publication, and in commenting upon it that paper observed: "Sir Thomas Bazley M.P., has had a very plain and proper question submitted to him in reference to a statement publicly made by him, and he has not answered

it. The statement was that the present Government came into possession of the sum of £6,000,000 which Mr. Gladstone's Government had saved and left in the national treasury. Sir Thomas Bazley is not the only Radical who has ventured to make the statement, and it cannot be denied that it is a very effective one for Radical purposes. The only drawback to it is that it is distinctly and unequivocally untrue. There is not a member of the House of Commons—even including Sir Thomas Bazley—who is not aware that Mr. Gladstone's "surplus" never had an existence. Not only was it never realised, but the taxes which would have realised it were never levied, and not one penny piece in cash of that "surplus" ever reached the Exchequer, or left the pockets of the people. Sir Thomas Bazley knows this perfectly well, and that is the reason he has answered the question put to him on the subject with a shuffling evasion. The correspondence will be found in another column, and is deserving of perusal. At a meeting held in the Free-trade Hall Sir Thomas said that when the present Government entered office the Premier "found an accumulation of £6,000,000, the savings of the previous Government." Mr. Lord, of Rochdale, wrote to him for some proof of the truth of the statement, and the only reply he has vouchsafed is that "Mr. Gladstone was not in office on the 31st of March, 1874." Had he been capable of intelligently defending his assertion, it is not likely that he would have had recourse to a quibble. In a return which Sir Thomas himself obtained, the net revenue of the country in 1873-4, Mr. Gladstone's last year of office, is put down at £65,169,990. The expenditure is not given, but we find from another parliamentary paper, "The Statistical Abstract," that it amounted to £64,644,250. Does this show a surplus of £6,000,000? The fact is that the alleged "surplus" is nothing better than Radical sophistry, and it is employed for no other purpose than to mislead the ignorant. Had the taxation existing in Mr. Gladstone's last year of office been continued intact in the following year, it was estimated that it would have realised five or six millions more than were required. That is the only foundation there ever was for the vaunted "surplus." Everybody knows that the taxation was not continued as Mr. Gladstone left it. As soon as they entered office, the present Government removed customs to the extent of £2,282,903; excise duties on home-made sugar, &c., to the amount of £489,000; and reduced the income-tax by £1,800,000.* Had they not reduced the taxation in that way, but continued it at the rate Mr. Gladstone left it, they would have realised the estimated "surplus," but instead of realising it they left it in the pockets of the people. The burdens removed by the present Government were borne by the entire community, so that the entire community were benefited by the change; what Mr. Gladstone proposed to do with the estimated "surplus" was to give it to the comparatively well-to-do by entirely repealing the income-tax. Bearing this fact in mind, it is a little surprising that the Radicals dare refer to the "surplus" at all. What they dare not do is—"tell the truth about it."

This was followed by the publication of the following:

To the Editor of the Manchester Courier.

Sir,—In your article on the £6,000,000 surplus of the late Government you say "the fact is that the alleged 'surplus' is nothing better than Radical sophistry, and

* See Appendix D.

it is employed for no other purpose than to mislead the ignorant." Will you allow me space to show, from the speech of the most eminent financial authority in the Conservative Government, that the surplus of £6,000,000 was a great fact? Sir Stafford Northcote, in his speech on the Budget, April 16, 1874, says: "The *net* result is that the estimate for this year amounts to £77,995,000, against £77,335,657 last year, and as compared with our expenditure of £72,503,000, *this leaves a surplus of no less than* £5,492,000." Again, when he is showing how the various items had increased, he says: "And therefore the *surplus*, which I have taken at £5,492,000, will be as nearly as possible £6,000,000." The italics in the above quotations are mine. I leave it to your readers to say who is "misleading the ignorant," merely remarking that if it is the "Radical agitators" they have the authority of Sir Stafford Northcote for their figures. I would recommend Mr. Lord and others like him to study the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer before committing themselves again.—Yours, &c.,

TRUTH.

February 1, 1879.

In a footnote to the letter the Editor of the *Manchester Courier* says: "We invited our correspondent to append his own name and address, but, for reasons best known to himself, and which our readers will be able to conjecture, he has declined. It is against our rule to admit such effusions under anonymous signatures, but as the subject is one of general interest we make an exception in this case."

So that there is one person, at all events, in Manchester, who has swallowed Mr. Gladstone's "surplus" bait—hook and all. The letter is a very fair specimen of Radical wriggling, but it is not easy to decide whether it is the result of shallowness or of depth. It is either ludicrous in its simplicity or dangerous in its craft and subtlety; which of the two we shall make no effort to determine. Our correspondent attempts to prove that the "surplus" was "a great fact" by quoting a passage from Sir Stafford Northcote's budget speech in 1874, which, however, really goes far to establish that the surplus was more in the nature of a vision. The words which "Truth" has culled from the speech are certainly very ingeniously separated from the context, but instead of supporting his case they support ours. Had there been six millions in "hard cash" in the treasury, as some venturesome gentlemen have declared, Sir Thomas would not have declined to answer the question submitted to him, nor would he have needed the assistance of so powerful an advocate as the *soi-disant* "Truth." The great offence appears to be in describing the Radical references to the "surplus" as nothing better than "sophistry." What "Truth" wants to perpetuate is the foolish deception that Mr. Gladstone accumulated five or six millions of money in his last year of office, locked it up in the treasury, and handed over the key to his successors. Even if it were true, it would only show that Mr. Gladstone had taken that amount from the people unnecessarily. But, as we have already explained, it is not true. The "surplus" never had an existence except as an estimate, arrived at in this way. When Mr. Gladstone left office in the beginning of 1874, there were taxes, and other sources of income, which, it was estimated, would realise in the first year of the present Government £77,995,000. In his budget speech Sir Stafford Northcote stated that the estimated expenditure of the year was £72,503,000; so that, if Mr. Gladstone's scale of taxation had been continued by the present Government, the estimated surplus would, in all probability, have been realised. But Mr. Gladstone's scale of taxation was not continued. As soon as they entered office the present Government remitted taxes to the amount of over

£4,000,000,* which, with £1,010,000 to be devoted in aid of local taxation, would absorb the whole of the estimated surplus. This course was taken in order to leave in the pockets of the people money which was not needed for the government of the country, and it had the desired effect. That being so, the estimated "surplus" could never have been realised, nor could it have taken the shape of "hard cash," or been deposited in the treasury by the late Government before leaving office. If our Radical friends would content themselves with saying that had Mr. Gladstone's scale of taxation been adopted by the present Government, it would, in its first year of office, have realised a large surplus, no objection could be taken; but when they talk about a merely estimated surplus being "hard cash" and "savings," sophistry is obviously the most euphonious and inoffensive term which can be applied. "Truth" quotes Sir Stafford Northcote to show that the estimated "surplus" was actually lying in the till when the present Government took office. If the money had been there, neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor the Government which so placed it, would have been uncertain as to the amount, and yet, as "Truth's" quotations show, Sir Stafford Northcote was not at all certain whether his estimate of five millions might not even reach six. Why did "Truth" finish his first quotation where he did? The words which follow are quite as important, though not, perhaps, from his point of view. They are to this effect—"The Committee will bear in mind that *the estimate* has been framed upon a principle which has gradually been acted upon in the framing of estimates, and which has not been fully adopted until this year, and that is taking into account, or the discounting of *the expected increment of revenue.*" Why this reference to "estimates," and what possible connection could there be between the "expected increment of revenue" and five millions of realised assets in the till? Is it not a little remarkable that "Truth" was unable to adduce any stronger proof of the existence of a realised surplus of £6,000,000 than the meagre sentences he has quoted? Had there been "savings" to that amount, is it not likely that they would have been distinctly mentioned? It cannot be contended that "Truth's" quotation is a clear and explicit admission of the existence of the sum in money, and if it did not exist in money or its equivalent, it could not have been either "savings" or "hard cash." But an even more remarkable circumstance still is that Mr. Gladstone makes no claim in the speech which he made during the debate, to any such accumulation as is claimed by his admirers on his behalf. He never once mentioned either £5,000,000 or £6,000,000, or any other "surplus," but what he said was, commenting on the figures "Truth" has reproduced—"There is, first of all, the *estimates* which have been submitted to us by her Majesty's Government of the *probable revenue* of the fiscal year now recently commenced, then there is the subject of the probable expenditure of the same financial year; and next there is the comparison resulting from the juxtaposition of the two sets of figures, and the proposals which may be submitted by the advisers of the Crown, either for making good the *deficit*, if deficit there be, or for disposing of the *surplus*, in the

* See Appendix D.

happier alternative which it has been the fortune of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take up." And again, after dealing in detail with the proposals of Sir Stafford Northcote for disposing of the probable surplus, Mr. Gladstone said, looking at the position in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer stands, "I think he has approached the whole subject of the financial arrangements of the year in a spirit of equity and sound discretion, and that the proposals which he has made fairly demand as a whole, the approval and sanction of the House as proposals that are worthy of the position he holds, and are at the same time conducive to the general interest of the country." It is only because we are anxious to assist "Truth" and any friends of his who may be labouring under a similar delusion to a clearer insight into national finance than his perhaps close attention to business occupations has hitherto enabled him to obtain, that we have taken the trouble to discuss this matter. One of the things "Truth" will do well to remember is that it is not wise to place implicit confidence in the assertions of people who fill their mouths with figures and statements from party almanacs, and then go about discharging them in the face of everybody they meet. He is, no doubt, one of their victims. How he can have remained in such blissful innocence all this time is certainly surprising, and the Radical party in the city might very well show their appreciation of his stolid credulity, and his determination not to understand, either by placing him under a glass case at the Reform Club, or by presenting him with a library of blue-books. The *nom de plume* which he has adopted is a good one. It has obviously been selected for the purpose of concealing his identity, and, with such a mask, the writer of the letter will certainly never be found out.*

Mr. Peter Rylands, M.P., an ardent Radical and a determined opponent of the Government, in a speech at Warrington on the 5th of February, dealt very summarily with the "savings" and "great fact" theories in reference to the "surplus." We will reproduce his words:—

> You have been told—and told quite correctly—that when the late Government went out of power they left behind them a surplus of £5,000,000, but I hear that a statement has appeared in the *Manchester Courier*—I understand it was that paper, but certainly it has been published in some Tory organ during the last few days—to the effect that there never was any surplus left by the late Government. The article in question said it was altogether a delusion to suppose that Mr. Gladstone left any surplus—in fact that there was any such thing as a surplus. Now, if by that the writer of the article means to say *that the 5½ millions was not left in the form of gold in the Bank of England for disposal by the members of the Cabinet in whatever way they might think fit, the statement is quite correct.* There is no doubt whatever that *the amount produced by taxation in the year* 1873-4 *had been disposed of almost to its fullest extent upon the present Government taking office,* because in that year Mr. Gladstone's administration out of the revenue of the country had paid the Alabama claims, the cost of the Ashantee War, and certain other extraordinary charges. But the point is, and I shall try to put it before you, because this is a matter that you will see repeated again and again. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the time being, lays before Parliament his budget he always takes what would be the produce of the taxes *if they continued to be taxes of the same character as in the previous* 12 *months,* and he then shows what he estimates the expenditure of the year; and if there is any deficiency between the expenditure and the amount of the taxes he has to lay on new taxes; but if there is a surplus, *any evidence of an amount of money coming from the taxes over and above the expenditure,* then he takes off taxes. I refer to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech, which he made at the beginning of 1874, when

* See Appendix E.

he was laying before Parliament his first budget, and I will just give you the amount which he stated to be *the sum which would have been received from the taxes if he had allowed them to remain as in the previous year*—the last year of the Gladstone Government—and how much surplus there *would have been* if the expenditure had remained the same. He said in his speech that *if the taxes in the previous year were to be continued*, he estimated the revenue at £77,995,000; and taking the expenditure to be the same as in the previous year—that is to say that Mr. Gladstone had incurred in his extraordinary expenditure—there would have been £72,503,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer therefore said "I have a surplus of £5,495,000 to deal with."

Instead of continuing Mr. Gladstone's taxes the present Government immediately removed taxes* to the amount of the estimated surplus, so that instead of being "savings" or "hard cash" or "a great fact" it was never realised at all.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE.

In addition to returns bearing on the national revenue and expenditure, Parliament issues statistics relating to the monetary affairs of municipalities. From an abstract of the accounts of 233 boroughs we find that in one year, from August 31st, 1876 the rateable value increased no less than £2,222,168, the total for 1877 being £28,807,228. We are constantly being told that it is the peculiarity of Conservative Governments to increase the taxation and burdens of the people. So vehemently and, apparently, seriously is this allegation made, that people who have no opportunity of investigating the matter for themselves might very well be excused for being mislead by it. It is tolerably evident from the municipal borough accounts that even municipal corporations composed mainly of Liberals have been guilty of the very thing which, for want of a better memory or better information, is alleged to be the distinguishing peculiarity of Conservative rule. In the year ending August, 1877, the local taxation of the 233 boroughs was increased by no smaller a sum than £195,608, notwithstanding that during that year the Imperial Government had contributed largely, as we have pointed out, in aid of the local rates. It might very reasonably be expected that newly incorporated boroughs would steer clear of those quicksands into which older municipalities and the Imperial Government have plunged, and, profiting by the experience of others, that they would keep their expenditure well within the compass of their income, and scrupulously avoid debt. There are four boroughs mentioned in this return for the first time. They are Cheltenham, Bury, Blackpool, and Conway, and according to the summary of their accounts for 1876-7 the total receipts were £5,902 while their expenditure actually reached £8,494. It may be said that Blackpool is notoriously Conservative, and that its corporation is composed almost exclusively of members of that party. That is no doubt true, and it is also true that though the four newly incorporated boroughs, taken together, have exceeded their income to the amount named, the expenditure of the borough of Blackpool exceeded the income by exactly £15 only. Radical Bury was the great offender, its total receipts being stated at £417, while its expenditure reached the respectable sum of £3,450. Let us look at the returns of some of the older corporations. Take Oswestry and Birmingham, a moderate Liberal and an ultra-Radical constituency. Oswestry is a comparatively insignificant agricultural

* See Appendix D.

town, and its total receipts from all sources, including an allowance from her Majesty's Treasury, amounted in 1877 to £948; its expenditure in that year being £1,141. Birmingham had a total income that year of £1,374,020, of which the Government contributed £25,395, and the total expenditure was £1,220,419. It requires no great effort of imagination to be able to see the enthusiastic Radical metaphorically throwing up his hat in a delirium of ecstacy as soon as he perceives that the expenditure of Radical Birmingham was £153,601 less than the income, and that even if the amount granted by Government in aid of the local rates were deducted, there would still be a balance of £128,206. "Its all right up to now," but what will be said when we mention that £962,490 of the total income was money borrowed during the year on the security of the rates? Deduct £962,490 from the income, and there remains the sum of £411,530, which, being deducted from the expenditure shows an excess of expenditure over income for the year of £1,205,921, or, leaving the borrowed money as part of the income a loss on the year of £243,431, a state of things rather different from that which the mere contemplation of the total income and the total expenditure would suggest. Municipal corporations may not inaptly be styled the ocal parliaments of the districts to which they are attached, and it would appear from these returns that they get into debt, and at times allow their expenditure to exceed their income, just as the Imperial Government does. The Radicals of Birmingham would no doubt say that they have borrowed money, pledged the rates of the borough, allowed the expenditure to exceed the income, and the total debt to grow until now it amounts to upwards of £2,000,000, for the good of the community. May it not be that when the Government last March put 4d. a pound upon tobacco, 2s. 6d. each upon dogs, and 2d. in the pound on the income-tax, they were promoting the interests of the whole community? The National Debt is several millions less now than at any other time during the last ten years, and last year the Government contributed several millions more for the promotion of popular education and in aid of local rates than has ever been contributed by any preceding Administration. Are not these things for the good of the community?

LOANS TO MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

A return, which is interesting as showing how local governments incur debt, and increase their liabilities, was recently published by Parliament in the shape of a Blue-book. It was prepared by the Public Works Loan Board, and refers to 1877-8, a comparison being made in some instances with the loans granted during the preceding year. The advances are made for the purposes of the Elementary Education Acts, the Public Health Act, Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act, parochial boards, police commissioners, burial boards, &c. For 1876-7 the total amount of loans granted for these several purposes was £3,279,360; last year the amount was £4,386,440. We learn that for some years past there has been a progressive increase in the amount of sanitary loans, that is to say, loans for the execution of works considered necessary for the promotion of the public health. In 1877-8 there were 204 such loans granted, 11 of them for periods ranging from three to 11 years at 3½ per

cent; 166 for periods ranging from 21 to 30 years at the same rate; and 27 for periods of 50 years at 4 per cent. In the last financial year Birmingham, Liverpool, and Wolverhampton obtained grants of loans to the amount of £1,000,000, £500,000, and £25,000 respectively. The sums advanced for public improvements in each year since 1869 have increased in amount surprisingly, owing, to a great extent, to the purely domestic character of much of the legislation of recent years. For instance :—

1869	£773,887	1874	£2,071,848
1870	896,904	1875	2,320,359
1871	561,585	1876	3,320,411
1872	371,829	1877	3,249,622
1873	560,937	1878	4,306,524

The total sums outstanding for principal and interest are formidable in each year, and far higher last year than in any year preceding, as will be seen from the following :—

1869	£7,787,198	1874	£9,585,901
1870	8,042,411	1875	11,448,468
1871	8,045,633	1876	14,378,267
1872	7,836,371	1877	16,891,050
1873	7,924,011	1878	20,582,677

The enormous increase of late years is partly explained by Parliament having sanctioned the advance of money by the Public Works Loans Board for certain purposes at rates of interest below those upon which loans could be effected in the open market, and by the further fact that the powers under the Public Health Act, 1872, and the Education Act hardly came into operation before the 31st of March, 1873, less than £300,000 having been advanced thereunder up to that time, while during the five succeeding years the advances under the Acts referred to were in 1873-4 £1,688,887; in 1874-5, £2,137,153; in 1875-6, £2,952,802; in 1876-7, £3,128,772; and in 1877-8, £3,219,901. These figures are sufficient to show that the public welfare cannot, in the opinion of even local parliaments, be promoted without large and increasing expenditure, involving gradually-increasing debt, so that the Imperial Parliament ought not to be subjected to unmeasured abuse for having got into debt for the very same reason. In these matters, as well as in others, what is sauce for the goose ought to be sauce for the gander.

"RECKLESS EXTRAVAGANCE."

In almost every speech which Radical orators make now-a-days the Government is charged with reckless extravagance. No attempt is ever made to substantiate the charge, and the only increased items of expenditure to which exception is taken are those for the defences of the country. The war which the Liberals waged against Russia cost the country scores of millions and an enormous sacrifice of human life; the outlay by which the present Government have managed to prevent war has amounted to a few millions only, and for that money there is something to show, in the improved state of the army and navy, and the greatly increased influence of the empire in the council of nations. The total expenditure of the country being larger now than it was years

ago is taken as sufficient evidence of the reckless extravagance of the Government, ignoring altogether the fact that the "extravagance" of the Liberals while in office has, according to that test, been much more glaring. The Tory Duke of Wellington brought his budgets down to less then £50,000,000. The Liberals have never done this, but have greatly increased the budgets; therefore, according to their method of reasoning, they have been guilty of reckless extravagance. Lord Derby accepted the Premiership in 1866, and the gross revenue estimated in the budgets during his term of office and that of Mr. Disraeli which followed was, for the first year, £66,392,000; for 1867, £67,613,000; and for 1868, £69,970,000, which included an addition to the income-tax on account of the Abyssinian War. The budget estimates during Mr. Gladstone's "peace, retrenchment, and reform" Parliament were :—

1869	£73,150,000
1870	73,515,000
1871	67,634,000
1872	72,315,000
1873	71,846,000

The estimated expenditure for that year (1873) was £71,663,000, and the actual "payments out of the Exchequer (excluding fortifications and military barracks)" were £70,714,448. It will be seen from these figures, which are taken from a Parliamentary return,* that the grounds upon which the charge of extravagance is now founded were decidedly more glaring during Mr. Gladstone's premiership than during the existence of the Conservative Cabinet which preceded him. Much of the additional expenditure during the present Administration is distinctly traceable to the reckless indifference of their predecessors to the interests of the country. They were like a board of directors of a commercial undertaking who took no account of depreciation of plant and machinery, and made no effort to keep the concern in a sound and satisfactory condition. That may be "retrenchment and reform" according to the Liberal judgment, but it must inevitably lead to bankruptcy and ruin. From these calamities the present Government have rescued the country, and the additional outlay by which they have attained this result is simply insignificant.

APPENDIX.

A.

PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX.

(From "The Statistical Abstract.")

In 1862-3, on incomes from £100 to £150, 6d. in the £.
" " of and above £150, 9d. "

On incomes of and above £100, with abatement of £60 on incomes under £200—1864-5, 6d.; 1865-7, 4d.; 1867-8, 5d.; 1868-9, 6d.; 1869-70, 5d.; 1870-71, 4d.; 1871-2, 6d.

On incomes of and above £100, with an abatement of £80 on incomes under £300—1872-3, 4d.; 1873-4, 3d.; 1874-5, 2d.; 1875-6, 2d.

On incomes of and above £150, with abatement of £120 on incomes under £400—1876-7, 3d.; 1877-8 3d.; 1878-9, 5d.

* "The Statistical Abstract."

B.

(From the 21st Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue.)

The produce of income tax for each penny in the pound, according to the net amount of assessments for each of the last ten years, after deducting sums discharged on various grounds or irrecoverable, is as follows, viz. :—

	£	Rate of Duty.
1867-8	1,451,232	5d.
1868-9	1,456,500	6d.
1869-70	1,499,351	5d.
1870-1	1,614,761	4d.
1871-2	1,674,342	6d.
1872-3	1,757,537	4d.
1873-4	1,871,800	3d.
1874-5	1,945,600	2d.
1875-6	1,963,800	2d.
1876-7	1,892,800	3d.

The falling off of £71,000 in 1876-7 is due to the extension of the limits of exemptions and abatements.

C.

PUBLIC REVENUE.

(From "The Statistical Abstract.")

Proportion of receipts per head of population of the United Kingdom.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1869	2	6	8	1874	2	8	2
1870	2	8	4	1875	2	6	3
1871	2	4	5	1876	2	7	1
1872	2	7	3	1877	2	7	6
1873	2	8	2	1878	2	7	8

The total amount raised by *direct and indirect Local Taxes* for the purpose of Local Expenditure, in the year 1873-74, was—

For England and Wales	£23,879,029
„ Scotland	2,372,557
„ Ireland	2,996,009
For the United Kingdom	£29,247,595

Which is in the proportion of 18s. 3d. per head of the population of the United Kingdom. According to the return No. 252 of Session 1876, the total taxes actually received at the Exchequer (less stamps in lieu of fees) amounted in 1873-4 to £65,353,000. Adding this sum to the above £29,247,595 of local taxation, the Total Taxation of the United Kingdon in 1873-4 would be £94,600,595, or £2 18s. 11d. per head of the population.

D.

AMOUNT OF TAXES REPEALED OR REDUCED, AND IMPOSED.

(From "The Statistical Abstract.")

Years	REPEALED OR REDUCED.	Estimat'd Amount.	IMPOSED.	Estimat'd Amount.
	Customs:—		Customs:—	
	Repealed:	£	Nil.	£
	Sugar and Molasses	2,276,690		
	Succades, Confectionery, and Articles preserved in Sugar ..	6,213		
	Total Customs.....	2,282,903		
1874	Excise:—		Excise:—	
	Repealed:		Sugar used in Brewing:—Duty increased	57,000
	Licence Duty on Horses and Mules, Horse Dealers' Licence Duty, and Race Horse Duty..	480,000		
	Sugar Duty, Home made	9,000		
	Total Excise.....	489,000		
	Income Tax, reduced	1,840,000		
	Total	4,611,903	Total	57,000
	Customs:—		Customs:—	
	Nil.		Nil.	
	Excise:—		Excise:—	
1875	Reduced:		Nil.	
	Brewers' Licence Duty	60,000		
	Stamps:—			
	Repealed:			
	Duty on Appointments and Deputations	6,000		
	Total	66,000		
	Customs:—		Customs:—	
	Nil.		Nil.	
	Excise:—		Excise:—	
	Repealed:		Nil.	
1876	Licence Duty of Boys or Men casually employed	26,000	Taxes:—	
			Income Tax increased	1,966,000
	Land Tax:—			
	Repealed:			
	Duties on Offices and Pensions..	950		
	Income Tax:—			
	Reduced by extension of exemption.....	390,000		
	Total	416,950	Total	1,966,000
	Customs:—		Customs:—	
	Nil.		Nil.	
1877	Stamps:—			
	Duty on Appointment to Benefices	6,000		

E.

MR. GLADSTONE'S "SURPLUS."

To the Editor of the Manchester Courier.

Sir,—"Truth" evidently cannot discern the difference between a "statement of figures for the purpose of framing an estimate" and a "surplus after the income and expenditure ended." Neither can "Truth" distinguish the difference between the financial year 1873-4 and the year 1874-5, for, according to "Truth's" showing, it was Sir S. Northcote who realised the surplus, and not Mr. Gladstone. If "Truth" will refer to the "Financial Reform Almanac" for 1878, page 150, he will find that at the end of the year 1873-4 (Mr. Gladstone's last financial year) there was a deficiency of £256,685, and at the end of the year 1874-5 (Sir S. Northcote's first financial year) there was a deficiency of £17,789. Where, then, is the surplus? Again, if "Truth" will himself study the budget speech of Sir S. Northcote throughout he will find that the introductory statement of estimated income was (later on in the same speech) reduced from £77,995,000 to £72,965,000 by a remission of taxation equivalent to the difference of those amounts. Why has "Truth" concealed this fact but to mislead the ignorant?

I challenge "Truth" to prove by any authentic publication that there was a surplus of £6,000,000 at the termination of either the year 1873-4 or the year 1874-5. The boasted surplus never had any existence, never was levied upon the taxpayer, and never entered the Treasury. By giving me space for the foregoing in an early impression you will oblige.—Yours, &c., WILLIAM LORD.

46, Lord-street, Rochdale, February 6, 1879.

To the Editor of the Manchester Courier.

Sir,—May I be allowed to give your correspondent "Truth" a few facts that may enable him to see his error. Mr. Gladstone resigned February 17, 1874. Mr. Disraeli was installed February 21, 1874. The last financial year of the Gladstone Government ended March 31, 1874—six weeks after the present Government assumed the reins of office, but for which Mr. Gladstone was fairly responsible.

"Truth" is perfectly right in saying "Sir Stafford Northcote, in his budget speech, April 16, 1874, says 'the net result is that the estimate for this year amounts to £77,995,000.'" But Sir Stafford's "this year" meant the year that had commenced 16 days previously, namely, April 1, 1874, and would end March 31, 1875, and which was the first year of the present Government. The facts contained in the budget speech are:—

Estimated income for year commencing April 1, 1874, and ending March 31, 1875	£77,995,000
Reduction of taxation, April 16, 1874, in budget speech	5,030,000
Estimated income after reduction of taxation	72,965,000
Estimated expenditure for year ending March 31, 1875.....	72,503,000
Balance of estimated surplus	£462,000

"Truth" says, "I would recommend Mr. Lord and others like him to study the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer before committing themselves again." Being one of the "others" referred to, I thank "Truth" for his advice, and in return beg of him not to mind the "mote" that may be in our eyes, but to remove the "beam" from his own eye.—Yours, &c., THOMAS PERCIVAL.

106, Greengate, Salford, Feb. 7, 1879.

T. SOWLER & SON, PRINTERS, 24, CANNON STREET, MANCHESTER

LIBERAL EXTRAVAGANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST."

Sir,—The present Ministry came to office pledged to economy. The estimates for their fourth year of power are now before the public, and, with your permission, I shall compare them with those issued in 1880, for the extravagance of which the late Ministry were condemned. It is necessary to point out that in every financial comparison like must be compared with like, original estimate with original estimate, final estimate with final estimate, and actual expenditure with actual expenditure. In the case of the Civil Serviceestimates, a system is adopted by which the present estimates issued in March are compared with those sanctioned by the Appropriation Act passed in August, and the result is unduly favourable because it is assumed there will, in the year about to commence, contrary to all experience, be no additions for unforeseen expenditure. My intention is to compare the estimates left by the Conservative Government in the month of March, 1880, with those which are now laid before the country in March, 1883, inserting also the estimates for the current year, so that the increase of charge may be shown to be progressive :—

	1880-81.		1882-83.		1883-84.
Civil Services	£15,436,000	...	£16,502,000	...	£17,253,000
Revenue Departments	8,158,000	...	8,789,000	...	9,155,000
Army	15,541,000	...	15,458,000	...	15,606,000
Navy	10,492,000	...	10,483,000	...	10,757,000
Extra receipts now absorbed by the services and no longer paid into the Exchequer	nil	...	809,000	...	889,000
	£49,627,000		£52,041,000		£53,660,000

There is thus an increase in three years on—

Civil Services	£1,817,000
Revenue Departments	997,000
Army and Navy	1,219,000
Total increase	£4,033,000

This sum of £4,033,000 is an increase not—in the language of Mid-Lothian—upon a just and moderate, but upon "an extravagant scale of expenditure" which the Ministry were placed in office to reduce. It is an increase under the hand of the same statesman who thought it a fair electoral weapon to charge the Chancellor of the Exchequer who then held office with being careless of extravagance, hardly ever having in his six years of service spoken "one resolute word in behalf of economy."

There is one stock answer put forward by Government apologists for the excessive expenditure which they are unable to deny, viz., that the Conservatives left a legacy of debt for their successors to pay. In anticipation of this argument I have not made any mention of those heads of expenditure under which these charges would appear. The amounts which Liberal critics allege to be payable on account of Conservative policy are as follow :—

Charge for six millions annuity expiring 1885.....	£1,350,000
Interest on Two millions loan to India annuity	120,000
Grant in aid of the Afghan war, expiring 1885.....	500,000

The whole of these charges appear either as official votes or as part of the charges for debt. The only item in the sets of figures which I have quoted for which the late Ministry is in the remotest degree responsible is a sum of £45,000 for the government of Cyprus. Having regard to the importance of a clear perception of the rapid and alarming growth of expenditure shown in these figures, I do not hesitate to ask you to publish this letter. The year about to open is the fourth year of the present Ministry. They are strong enough to govern according to their conception of right. The sums thus asked for are not swelled by unforeseen misfortune, but represent the charge which they think it just and proper the people of this country should bear for the ordinary service of an ordinary year. They may be right, but if so, they attained office on a false cry and they remain in it on false pretences.

I remain, sir, yours,

REGINALD MACLEOD

March 17, 1883.

[No. 76]

"A PERENNIAL LEGACY."

UNDER this heading the following statement is being freely circulated by Liberal newspapers and speakers :—

"Mr. Gladstone would have been able to make a very handsome remission of taxation if he had not had to pay the post-obits of Jingoism. This was equally the case in 1880 and in 1881. In 1880 the charges incurred by the policy of the late Administration cost us £2,347,000; in 1881 they rose to £3,842,000. This year they amount to £2,170,000, made up as follows :—The six millions war vote, £1,460,000; the Afghan war, £500,000; the Indian loan, £120,000; Cyprus, £90,000. Altogether Mr. Gladstone has had to find £8,359,000 to meet the bills incurred by the spirited foreign policy of his predecessors."

The statement is glaringly inaccurate, as will be seen from the following figures showing the charges falling due in the 3 years ending 1883, and alleged to be incurred in consequence of Conservative policy. The figures are taken from authoritative sources.

1880—1.

Charges for the six millions annuity ..... (See Parl. paper 387. Session 1881.)	£1,129,000	
Interest on loan of 2 millions to India ... (See Parl. paper 196. Session 1881.)	61,000	
Grant to India—Afghan War ..... (See Parl. paper 169. Session 1881.)	500,000	
		£1,690,000

1881—2.

Charges for the six millions annuity ..... (See Parl. paper 302. Session 1882.)	£1,350,000	
Interest on loan to India ..... (See Financial Statement, April 24, 1882.)	88,000	
Grant to India—Afghan War..... (See Parl. paper 155. Session 1882.)	500,000	
Final Charge for Zulu War .... (See Parl. paper 155. Session 1882.)	135,000	
		2,073,000
Carried forward...		£3,763,000

Brought forward...		£3,763,000
1882—3.		
Charge for the six millions annuity ..... (See Financial Statement, April 24, 1882.)	£1,350,000	
Loan to India – interest and sinking fund (See Finance Account for 1881—2.)	115,000	
Grant to India—Afghan War.....	500,000	
Cost of Government in Cyprus ..... (See Financial Statement, April 24, 1882.)	90,000	
		2,055,000
Total charge in three years		£5,818,000
Deduct receipts from Natal in part payment of the cost of warlike operations in South Africa, undertaken by Lord Beaconsfield's Government ..... (Parl. Paper, 155—Session 1882.)		250,000
Net amount paid and to be paid up to March 31, 1883, on account of the policy of the Conservative Government		~~£5,568,000~~

Dr Transvaal War 150.000

5.418.000

In the above figures the charge for redeeming the loan to India and the grant for six years of £500,000 in aid of the Afghan war are accepted as due to Conservative policy, but neither of those payments was left as a burden upon the Home Exchequer by the late Government, as they were incurred in defence of the frontier of India, and thus were properly chargeable to that country. The payments were, however, imposed upon England by Mr. Gladstone on the plea of justice to India, and yet, to satisfy present political exigencies, he is now forcing the Indian Government to pay a large share of the cost of the war in Egypt, thousands of miles away.

Again, is it true that Mr. Gladstone could have made "a very handsome remission of taxation if he had not had to pay the post-obits of Jingoism"? Certainly not. Besides enjoying the fruits of the increased probate duties imposed by Sir Stafford Northcote in March, 1880 (which will have produced £1,862,000), he will have collected in the three years *new taxes of his own imposition* to the amount of £6,863,000. He has thus received *nearly nine millions in increased taxation*, a sum more than sufficient to have paid off the charges, principally incurred by Lord Beaconsfield in those precautionary measures which averted a European War. Yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer is at this moment face to face with a deficiency which cannot be estimated at less than from one and a half to two millions.

Jan., 1883.

OBSTRUCTION AND THE CLÔTURE.

MR. GLADSTONE proposes to alter the procedure of the House of Commons by passing New Rules for the conduct of business, the first of which provides for the introduction of the clôture. It enacts that the Speaker or Chairman may at any time declare it to be the "evident sense of the House" that a debate should close: the motion to close it is then to be at once put to the vote and decided by a bare majority, provided not less than 200 members support it. When less than that number vote for the clôture, it cannot be carried if 40 members, at least, are opposed to it. A majority of 100, however, may silence a minority of anything *less* than 40.

The following are the principal objections to the proposal:—

1. THE CLOTURE IS ARBITRARY AND DESPOTIC.

It recognises the principle of giving power to a majority to close the mouths of a minority, a principle which is essentially despotic. Rules passed now will form precedents for the future. Majorities in Parliament may be more tyrannical and overbearing than at present, and the minority may be altogether silenced. There is no security against such a contingency.

2. IT IS UNPARLIAMENTARY.

The most important function of the House of Commons is to criticise the administration of the Executive Government and the expenditure of public money: its right to criticise the details of proposed laws is, so far as the preservation of liberty is concerned, of only secondary importance.

If the majority of the House of Commons, which practically means the Executive Government, can at any time suppress discussion, the administration of the Government will soon become arbitrary and despotic. In the case of any new question to which public attention has not previously been directed, and upon which full discussion might be inconvenient to the Government, debate could always be stifled by the exercise of such power. Thus the character of the House of Commons as a place in which the grievances of the subject can be freely brought under discussion would be totally altered and destroyed.

The rapidly increasing expenditure of the present Government renders it more than ever necessary to secure the right of criticism, in the interests of the people at large.

3. It is Un-English.

Only one of the English colonies (South Australia) has adopted the clôture, and then only as an experiment. It does not exist in Canada, the Cape, New South Wales, New Zealand or Victoria. In the two latter it has been tried, has failed, and has been discarded. The colonies who reject the clôture number 7,000,000 of population. South Australia numbers only a quarter of a million.—*The Contemporary Review*, Oct., 1882.

The hostility with which it is regarded in England was shown on June 14th, 1880, when Mr. Gladstone attempted (illegally) to apply the clôture to Mr. O'Donnell; after a long and excited debate the motion was withdrawn under pressure.

4. Foreign Experience is Against it.

Clôture by a bare majority is contrary to the practice of ten out of the thirteen Lower Houses of Parliament in Europe. In those countries where it is adopted, such as Germany, Ministerial responsibility does not exist, and the Press is under severe censorship. In most of the Continental Legislatures the clôture can only be carried by majorities of two-thirds or three-fourths, and further debate is allowed.

The clôture, it is true, exists in the United States, but there the representatives are elected by manhood suffrage, receive payment from the taxes, and as a class are held in small estimation as compared with the members of the House of Commons. The power of clôture has been frequently abused in the American Congress, on one occasion being voted after ten minutes' discussion.

5. It is Demanded by the Liberals for Party Purposes Only.

Lord Hartington has declared that "the question is simply whether the country cares to have any of those great legislative reforms for which it voted at the last election carried into execution during the duration of the existing Parliament or not. . . . Do you care still, as you cared two years ago, about a thorough reform of the Land Laws? . . . that the county franchise should be assimilated to the borough franchise, and that that measure should be accompanied by a redistribution of seats?"—*Speech at Nelson, Dec. 17th, 1881.*

6. It will Endanger the Authority of the Speaker.

The Speakers and the Chairmen of Committees must have extraordinary powers of perception to be able to say what is "the evident sense of the House," many members of which may be absent from the Chamber at the time, but would vote in the division. If the Speaker or Chairman's decision were challenged and defeated, his authority and position would be at once destroyed. How is the sense of the House to be ascertained? If by clamour, it will be met by clamour, and the noisiest will win. Is this desirable?

Again, if he resisted the pressure to close the debate at any period, he might afterwards be charged with having influenced the result of a division on the question then under discussion, should the result prove contrary to expectation.

7. It will be Ineffective.

The clôture as proposed will not effect its purpose. 201 members will be able to silence 200; if, however, 200 vote for the clôture and 41 against it, the motion cannot be carried; or, if 100 vote for the clôture and even but 2 against it, the debate cannot be closed, the requisite quorum in each case not being present. Obstruction has been seldom practised in a "full House."

8. It is Unnecessary.

The subsidiary rules proposed are sufficient without the clôture. They will restrain motions for adjournment, prevent abuses at question time, as well as curtail tedious and irrelevant speeches, &c.

The rules of urgency already in force have proved effective against obstruction.

Recent cases of wilful obstruction have been confined to the Irish party, and cannot be cured by any alteration of rules, but should be put down by proceedings against the individual guilty of such obstruction. The late Conservative Government passed rules of this character, which ought, if necessary, be made more stringent and severe. Such rules do not in any way interfere with the freedom of Parliament itself.

Sir Erskine May, the greatest authority on Parliamentary law and practice, has stated that "by judicious regulations it would be quite possible to get through the business *without any interference with the rights of members.*"—(*Evidence before Select Committee*, 1871.)

OBSTRUCTION.

A. Obstruction has been Defended and Justified by Mr. Gladstone.

"There can hardly be a greater outrage than to prolong debate for the purpose of discrediting the Government in its transaction of public business, or of disparaging the dignity of Parliament. But to prolong debate even by persistent reiteration on legislative measures is not necessarily an outrage, an offence, or even an indiscretion. . . . If a great party may obstruct, it is hazardous to award a narrower discretion to a smaller one. . . . It is precisely in the class of cases where the party is small and the conviction strong that the best instances of warrantable obstruction might be found. . . . *The House of Commons is, and it may be hoped ever will continue to be, above and beyond all things, a free assembly. If so, let it be content to pay the price of freedom.*"—(*Nineteenth Century, August, 1879.*)

As far back as 1857 Mr. Gladstone expressed his intention to be present "night after night, and week after week, to debate line by line, and word by word, the details" of the Divorce Court Bill, to which he was opposed.—*Hansard, vol. 147, p. 1,075, Aug. 4th, 1857.*

B. It was First Practised by the Liberals.

Instance the conduct of Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Fawcett and others, allied with the Home Rulers, on the following occasions :—

Education Bill	1876
Factories Bill	1878
Supply	May, 1878
Cattle Diseases Bill	June, 1878
Army Estimates	Feb., 1879
Army Regulation Bill	May, June, and July, 1879
Customs Bill	June, 1879
Public Works Loan	Aug., 1879

Mr. Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons—"We can get nothing from the Ministry except by what is commonly called obstruction."—(*Hansard, vol. 247, p. 207, June 17, 1879.*)

C. The Liberal Party are Mainly Responsible for Wasting the Time of the House.

Proofs :—

Length of Speeches 1880 and 1881.

	Cons.	*Lib.*	*Home Rulers.*
1880.	2086	4171	1548½
1881.	3285	6315	4440½
	5371	10486	5989

The figures relate to the number of *columns* in "Hansard's Debates."

Time occupied in Irish Debates 6th Jan. to Feb. 2nd, 1881.

Liberals	30	hours	21	minutes
Conservatives	10	,,	35	,,
Home Rulers	91	,,	8	,,

Time occupied in the House of Commons when going into Committee of Supply and when in Committee, Session 1882.

(These occasions under present rules afford the largest opportunities for wasting time.)

Liberals	58	hours	28	minutes
Conservatives	29	,,	34	,,
Home Rulers	45	,,	38	,,

The accuracy of these figures can be proved if questioned.

Conservative Central Office,
Westminster, October, 1882.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY MR. GLADSTONE.

(Putting the Question.)

1. "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith; Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."

(Motions for Adjournment before Public Business.)

2. That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made, except by leave of the House, before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon.

(Debates on Motions for Adjournment.)

3. That when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be strictly confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having spoken to any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate, or during the same sitting of the Committee.

(Divisions.)

4. That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the "Ayes" or "Noes" have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and, if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee.

(Irrelevance or repetition.)

5. That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his Speech.

(Postponement of Preamble.)

6. That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses without Question put.

(Chairman to leave the Chair without Question.)

7. That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put.

(Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule.)

8. To add to the Standing Order of the 18th February 1879, the following words :—

"But this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee.

(Order in Debate.)

9. To amend the Standing Order of the 28th February, 1880, as follows —

That whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding the authority of the Chair, or abusing the rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a motion being made, no amendment, adjournment,

or debate being allowed, "That such Member be suspended from the service of the House;" and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and, if the motion is carried, shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee, and report the circumstance to the House, and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended under this Order, his suspension, on the first occasion, shall continue for a week, on the second occasion for a month, and on the third occasion for the remainder of the Session: Provided always that nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages.

(Debates on Motions for Adjournment.)

10. That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair.

(Consideration of a Bill, as amended.

11. That, on reading the Order of the Day for the Consideration of a Bill, as amended, the House do proceed to consider the same without Question put, unless the Member in charge thereof shall desire to postpone its consideration, or notice has been given to re-commit the Bill.

12. That the seven first and the three last of the said Resolutions be Standing Orders of the House.

II. Standing Committees.

(Standing Committees on Law and Courts of Justice, Trade, &c.)

1. That two Standing Committees be appointed for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice, and to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures, which may be committed to them respectively.

(Nomination by Committee of Selection.)

2. That the Standing Committee do consist of not less than sixty, nor more than eighty, Members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, who shall have regard to the classes of Bills committed to such Committees, to the composition of the House, and to the qualifications of the Members selected; and shall have power to add and discharge Members from time to time, provided the number of eighty be not exceeded.

(Commitment and Report of Bills,)

3. That all Bills comprised in each of the said classes shall be Committed to one of the said Standing Committees, unless the House shall otherwise order, and, when reported to the House, shall be proceeded with as if they had been reported from a Committee of the whole House.

THE COST OF THE

MONARCHY IN ENGLAND

COMPARED WITH THAT OF A

REPUBLIC.

A QUESTION FOR TAXPAYERS.

The Radicals who would overthrow the Monarchy in England, in the hope of picking up something for themselves in the scramble that would ensue, often try to obtain the support of economical citizens by stating that a Monarchy is a very expensive sort of Government, and that the English Monarchy is a very expensive one of its kind. What are the facts? The truth is that there is no Monarchy or Sovereignty in any first-rate State which costs so little to the people as the Monarchy in England.

If the Civil List—that is, the money paid out of taxes for the support of the Monarchy in England—is compared with that paid in other European Empires, it will be found that they cost three and four times as much as the English Monarchy. For instance, the Civil List of Germany, so far as it figures in the Budgets, amounts to £615,964, excluding a vast revenue from private property, comprising castles, forests, and landed estates, the revenue of which is received by the Emperor.

The income of the Imperial family in Russia is estimated at a net amount of £2,000,000, the Crown domains being also considered the private property of the Imperial family.

The Emperor of Austria has a Civil List amounting to £930,000.

The Italian Civil List amounts to £650,000, the large Crown estates having been given up to the State.—*Statesman's Year Book*, 1882.

But let us compare the cost of the Monarchy in England with the cost of the Sovereignty or ruling power in the two great Republics, France and the United States.

THE COST OF THE MONARCHY IN ENGLAND.

1. The Civil List annually voted by Parliament to the Queen	£385,000
2. The annual grants to other members of the Royal Family	171,000
3. Viceroy of Ireland.....	20,000
	576,000
Deduct the amount of revenue from the Crown Estates paid back into the Exchequer	390,000
Annual cost of the Monarchy to the Taxpayers	£186,000

THE COST OF THE SOVEREIGNTY IN THE UNITED STATES.

1. The President's salary.	£10,000
House rent, servants, light, &c., also provided out of the taxes, equal to.....	5,000
2. Vice-President's salary.	1,600
3. 66 Senators (the American House of Lords), at £1,000 each per annum.....	66,000
293 Representatives in Congress (the American House of Commons), at £1,000 each per annum	293,000
Travelling allowances for Senators and Representatives at 10d. per mile (say)	15,000
Allowance for Stationery and Newspapers, £25 per annum	8,975
	£399,575
In addition, the 5,010 members of 38 State and 8 Territorial Legislatures are paid an average of 240 dollars each per annum and mileage allowance at 8d. a mile, amounting to (say)	250,000
The Salaries of the Governors of States	33,700
Minimum Total...	£683,275

Members of Government Commissions in America are also paid for their services, whereas in England a very large amount of work is done by Royal Commissions, without any cost to taxpayers. So that the cost of the supreme power in the great American Republic is about four times as much per annum as that of the Monarchy in England.—*The American Almanack, New York*, 1882.

Let us turn to

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

The cost to the French taxpayers is :—

1.	President's salary	£24,000
	House allowance	12,000
2.	Paid Senators (French House of Lords) ...	154,000
	Paid Deputies (French House of Commons)	260,000
	Minimum Total per annum...	£450,000

The Deputies are now clamouring for an increase of salary, and they also cost their country a considerable sum in their travelling expenses, being entitled to a free railway ticket all over France for about £5 a year, the expense of which falls on the taxpayers.

The Republic, therefore, is nearly three times as costly to the French taxpayers as the British Monarchy is to the British taxpayers.—*Statesman's Year Book*, 1882.

It may further be remarked that the expenditure of France is 128½ millions sterling a year, whereas the ordinary expenditure of England, even under Mr. Gladstone's extravagant management, was last year but 85¼ millions (and this was the highest ever incurred). The population of the two countries being about the same (United Kingdom, 35¼ millions; France, 37 millions), it follows that the Imperial taxation in Republican France is about £3 9s. per head of the population, as against only £2 2s. per head for the taxation of Great Britain under a Monarchy. *(See Mr. Gladstone's Budget Speech*, 1882.*)*

Therefore, my fellow-taxpayers, you may see clearly that a Republican form of Government is not necessarily a cheap one, and in any case that the French and American Republics cost much more to the taxpayers than the English Monarchy. If ever we were unfortunate enough to lose that form of Government in England, we should find that under a Republic we should have more taxes to pay for Government, and that the work would be much less efficiently done.

The above facts are commended to the intelligent consideration of British taxpayers by

ONE OF THEMSELVES.

London, Oct., 1882.

[No. 71.]

CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES

AT

ELECTIONS.

It is generally known that many of those members of Parliament who were deprived of their seats by the Election Judges after the last General Election suffered from the acts of enthusiastic supporters who were ignorant of the laws relating to bribery and corrupt practices and the serious consequences which would follow the breach of them. It is thought useful, therefore, to state in simple and clear language the chief provisions of these laws, in order that members of Election Committees, and others interested in the return of Conservative candidates, may be able in future to prevent the serious consequences as well as discredit and scandal which might otherwise be unwittingly incurred.

As the members of Ward Committees and canvassers if actively engaged at the election might probably be held to be "agents" of the candidate, and the latter would be responsible for their acts, the absolute necessity for most carefully observing the provisions of the law cannot be too strongly urged upon them.

The corrupt practices referred to are classed under four heads, viz., bribery, treating, undue influence, and personation.

1.—Bribery.

It is bribery to give, lend, promise, or try to obtain money or money's worth in order to induce an elector to vote or abstain from voting. It does not matter whether the payment is made directly or indirectly, whether before or after the election, the consequences are the same.

It is bribery to give, procure, or promise any situation or employment for a voter, or anyone connected with him, in order to induce him to vote or refrain from voting. The fictitious employment of messengers, watchers, runners, &c., who are absolutely necessary for the ordinary work of the election, would be considered as bribery.

Gifts or promises to any third person to secure the vote of any elector will have the same effect.

Any person who pays money to be spent in bribery or who repays it afterwards is himself guilty of bribery.

No elector can vote who has been employed for reward within six months of the election; if he votes he is guilty of a misdemeanour.

The employment of voters at municipal elections as paid canvassers is prohibited under a penalty of £10 upon employer and employed.

It is bribery to pay the day's wages of any voter living at a distance, or to give him money for railway fare, &c., all payments for loss of time are bribery within the meaning of the Act.

The elector who receives any money or other valuable consideration for his or any other person's vote, or who bargains his vote for a promise of employment or reward of any kind, is equally guilty of bribery and subject to the same penalties. It is immaterial whether payment is made before or after the election.

The *penalties* for the above offences are :—

Imprisonment for misdemeanour.

Fines—to the briber £100, to the person bribed £10 (with costs in both cases).

The votes of both are void.

Disqualification to vote in future or to hold any public office.

The candidate on whose behalf any corrupt practices are committed loses his seat, and cannot be again elected for the same place during the existing Parliament.

2.—Treating.

Treating is also a corrupt practice, and the *penalties* are somewhat similar to those provided for bribery.

The offence of treating is committed if any meat or drink is

corruptly provided, paid for, or given to any person *at any time* before, during, or after an election, in order to influence the election or to induce any elector to vote or abstain from voting.

Treating the wives or relations of voters will constitute an offence.

The gift of tickets for refreshments of any kind for voters on the nomination day or on the polling day subjects the giver to a penalty of 40s. for each offence, to any person who likes to sue for it.

Breakfasts to voters are illegal.

3.—Undue Influence.

This offence consists—

(a) In using or threatening force or restraint to induce any elector to vote or not to vote.

(b) In inflicting or threatening injury, or in any way intimidating a voter with the same purpose.

(c) In abducting or fraudulently preventing or interfering with any elector in giving his vote freely.

The withdrawal of custom or employment is undue influence, if done with the view of affecting the elector's vote.

A threat to evict a tenant with the same object comes within the definition of undue influence.

The consequences to the candidate are the same as in the case of bribery and treating, and any person using undue influence is liable to forfeit £50 (with costs) to any person suing for the same.

4.—Personation.

Personation is a corrupt practice, and is committed if anyone applies for a ballot paper in the name of some other person, whether living or dead, or of a fictitious person. Voting twice at the same election also constitutes the offence of personation.

The offence of personation renders the person guilty of it liable to a prosecution and punishment for felony.

Forging or counterfeiting ballot papers is a misdemeanour.

Actual payment or promise of money to induce a person to vote in the name of another is subject to the same penalties as bribery.

Illegal Practices.

There are also certain offences defined as "illegal practices"

which have not the same serious effect as "corrupt practices," but which must also on every account be avoided. They are as follows :—

1. Conveyance. Any payment of expenses for travelling outside the limits of the borough is illegal.

Any person providing cockades, ribbons, or other marks of distinction is liable to forfeit 40s. and costs to any person who shall sue for the same.

All payments for these purposes or for bands or flags are illegal.

2. Candidates at municipal elections or their agents are also prohibited from paying any money for conveyance under a penalty of £5.

JUNE, 1881.

[54.]

THE GREEKS AND THEIR BETRAYERS.

RASH PLEDGES AND BROKEN PROMISES.

The history of the negotiations set on foot by the Cabinet of Mr. Gladstone for the transfer to Greece of territory previously forming part of the Ottoman Empire, presents a mixture of rashness and cowardice, of self-assertion at the beginning and surrender at the end, which we should have to pronounce unparalleled were it not strictly in keeping with the policy of the men who vowed to "vindicate the authority of the Queen" against the Boers and then allowed the Boers to vindicate their authority against the Queen, and absolutely conformable with the spirit of the politicians who tardily passed a Coercion Act for Ireland, and then shrank from applying it with vigour and effect.

At the Congress of Berlin, the plenipotentiaries of England assented to the proposal that a rectification of frontier should be arranged between Turkey and Greece. They then proceeded to indicate in a general manner what line the new frontier should take; and they offered the good services of England, in conjunction with the other Powers, in case Turkey and Greece did not succeed in coming to an agreement. Finally, in the Treaty of Berlin a clause was inserted, reserving to the Powers the right to mediate between Turkey and Greece, in case they should not agree to the rectification of frontier suggested in the 13th Protocol of the Congress.

Accordingly, negotiations were opened between Greece and Turkey, for the purpose of ascertaining what the boundary of the two countries was henceforward to be. As, however, Greece insisted upon receiving an increase of territory greatly in excess of the amount indicated by the Congress as answering the necessities of the case, these negotiations ended in failure.

Meanwhile a change of Government had taken place in England;

and one of the first things insisted on by the Cabinet of Mr. Gladstone was that a Conference should be held for the settlement of this question. To this proposal no objection could reasonably be taken; and the Powers again met, at Berlin, for the purpose of arranging it. Turkey asked to be allowed to be represented; but owing, in great measure, to the resistance of England, the request was refused. Imagining themselves to be seconded by France, Mr. Gladstone and Earl Granville instructed the English plenipotentiary to propose a boundary which, though not giving Greece all the exorbitant increase of territory the Greeks themselves had asked for, assigned them new provinces considerably in excess of what had been suggested at the Congress. Turkey, aware of what was being done, wrote two separate despatches, pointing out that she could not and would not grant what was being demanded of her. Utterly ignoring these despatches, and still fancying it could count on French support, the English Government adhered to the monstrous suggestion; and the other Powers either wishing to be rid of a tiresome question, or not unwilling to let Mr. Gladstone fall into a trap of his own digging, endorsed his proposal, and communicated it in the shape of a Resolution to Turkey.

Turkey at once met the demand with a flat refusal, and insisted that the question should be re-opened. Lord Granville, obeying the instructions of the Prime Minister, replied that the "decision" of the Conference was "*irrevocable.*"

Encouraged by this announcement, the Greeks, an exceedingly poor people, began to spend all the money on which they could lay their hands upon the formation of an army which they confidently and naturally believed would receive the moral, if not the material, assistance of England; and, with the assent of the English Cabinet, they collected 80,000 soldiers, and spent six millions of money, in the hope rather of intimidating or forcing Turkey into submission.

Turkey refused to be intimidated. What then, occurred? It may seem incredible; but it is a fact, which even Sir Charles Dilke will not have the courage to deny, that the decision which England had declared to be "irrevocable" was revoked; the question was entirely re-opened; the amount of territory assigned to Greece by the Conference was very considerably curtailed, and the Greeks were informed this was all they were to hope for. The King, the Government, and the people of Greece, loudly protested that they

had been betrayed. But Lord Granville, disregarding their just remonstrances, and flinging to the winds the encouragement he had previously given them, addressed a despatch to the Court of Athens, in which he told them in the bluntest terms that the English Government washed its hands of the Hellenic claims, and furthermore informed them that if they used the army he had abetted them in forming, for the purpose of obtaining the territory he had previously told them was irrevocably theirs, they would not only incur the displeasure of England, but they would be left in the lurch.

In ordinary times, this mean betrayal of a weak people by a strong Government would have been treated as a scandal of the first magnitude, and it is only because the Cabinet of Mr. Gladstone has involved itself in yet greater blunders and committed yet more heinous faults, that its shameful treatment, first of Turkey, and then of Greece, has escaped the notice and reprobation it deserves.

JUNE, 1881.

FRUITS OF LIBERAL POLICY IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Within a month from the evacuation of Kandahar by British troops, the country of the Tekke Turkomans, recently conquered after some hard fighting by General Skobeleff, has been formally annexed to the Russian Empire, and the Tekke chiefs, received with honour by the Emperor Alexander III. at St. Petersburg, have sworn to serve him as faithfully as they have hitherto gallantly opposed the progress of the Russian arms. There is no reason to doubt that this promise will be kept well; for the Turkomans, while always ready to fight bravely for their independence against an invader whose strength they have not tried, can yet accept a defeat as final, and obey without shame a master who has proved in the battle field his right to govern them. Russia has thus, then, at length succeeded in beating down the last obstacle which the valour of the tribes in the deserts of Central Asia interposed to her advance on Herat. No other tribe is left to renew the resistance offered by the Tekkes. The inhabitants of the district of Merv, terrified by the fate of their neighbours at Geok Tepe and Askabad, have sent representatives to St. Petersburg along with the Tekke chiefs to ask for Russian protection; and it is plain that the Russians now can take Merv whenever they want it, although the strategical importance of that position has been done away with, so far as they are concerned, by that complete subjugation of the Tekke Turkomans which has opened for them a new and easier line of approach to Herat.

This is the practical commentary of Russia on the statement with which, in the debate on Mr. Stanhope's motion deprecating the withdrawal from Kandahar, Sir Charles Dilke beguiled a too confiding House of Commons into a belief in the moderation and magnanimity of the Emperor Alexander III. According to Sir Charles Dilke, the first act of the Emperor on succeeding to the throne had been to recall General Skobeleff, the victor of Geok Tepe; and, encouraged by the cheers which greeted this announcement of what might be regarded as the cessation of Russia's rivalry with England for supremacy in Asia, the English Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs went on to argue that Russia had on several occasions dared to retrace her steps; for had she not conquered Khiva and given it back to the Khan of that State, refrained from keeping permanent possession of Bokhara, and surrendered Kuldja to the Chinese after having occupied it for many years? Why then, he urged, should England hesitate to reverse her policy in Afghanistan? Sir Charles Dilke can hardly be so ignorant of his business as not to know that Russia has kept her troops in such positions in the territories of the titular Khans of Khiva and Bokhara as serve to make her the

absolute mistress of the whole country as far as the upper waters of the Oxus, and that she has only exchanged Kuldja for a large pecuniary indemnity; and he must therefore have presumed on the credulity of the House of Commons and the country in giving them this misleading account of Russia's action in Central Asia. The foreign policy of Russia—and herein lies her advantage over England—is invariably steadfast and unchanging. Russia has one great object in view, which she pursues with unwavering tenacity of purpose and without scruples as to the means used in gaining her end. Amongst these means not the least effective is the device of cajoling a Liberal Foreign Minister in England to amuse the British Parliament with promises that the Russian Government will discountenance all projects of further aggression in Central Asia. The letter of these promises may sometimes be kept, but Russia is never true to their spirit. One pledge of the kind was given with regard to Khiva, and all the world knows how it was redeemed. Lord Granville, who was then in office, received the news of the evasion practised in this instance with a shake of the head; but Russian diplomatists are well aware that when Lord Granville shakes his head nothing is meant by it. Emboldened by impunity, they have now practised a similar piece of jugglery with regard to the so-called disgrace of General Skobeleff. Whatever may be the fate of the General, his conquests are retained and incorporated in the Russian Empire; and it is clear that he was only recalled because his work was done. Russia has established for herself, by the annexation of the Turkoman country, a new and solid base of military operations from which she can control Persia and Western Afghanistan; and, as she had previously by her campaign against Khiva cleared the way for her armies along the more eastern line of advance to Kabul, she has practically within the last ten years gained a complete ascendency in Central Asia, and swept aside every one of the obstacles which it was said opposed an insuperable bar to her approach to the frontier of Afghanistan.

This being Russia's new position in Asia, what must be thought of the conduct of Mr. Gladstone's Government in reversing the deliberate policy of Lord Beaconsfield, and throwing away the results of the war waged for the purpose of effectually preventing the Russians from dealing with Afghanistan as they have already dealt with Khiva, Bokhara, and the country between the Oxus and the Caspian Sea? It is acknowledged on all hands to be essential to the security of our Indian Empire that Afghanistan should either be an independent State, united under the rule of a friendly Ameer, or that it should be brought within the sphere of the protected States whose foreign relations are controlled by British Residents and the strong places in whose territory are occupied by British troops. The late Government, rightly or wrongly is not now the question, determined that the Ameer Shere Ali had conceived hostile designs against British India, and it therefore made war upon and deposed him. It was still, however, reluctant to break up the Afghan kingdom, and it therefore tried the experiment of recognising Yakoub Khan as the ruler of the whole of Afghanistan. The treacherous murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari showed the hopelessness of this compromise, and

convinced the late Government that no trust could be placed in any Afghan prince, and that England must keep a force permanently stationed in Afghanistan to protect her own interests. The Indian political and military authorities were unanimously of opinion that the occupation of Kandahar would give us such a material guarantee as we required, and that, if Kandahar were held by a strong British garrison, it did not much matter what became of Kabul. Hence the readiness of Lord Lytton to listen to proposals made by the present Ameer Abdurrahman, who had entered Afghanistan with the avowed intention of becoming ruler of the country "under the joint protection of England and Russia." Abdurrahman's liking for the Russians could not do much harm so long as he only reigned at Kabul while British troops held Kandahar.

But the present English Government, bound by rash promises made to its political partisans in this country, has insisted on abandoning Kandahar as well as Kabul to the Ameer Abdurrahman, without knowing anything either of his capacity to govern or of the sincerity of his professions of good will to the rulers of British India. Its sole anxiety has been to wash its hands of the whole Afghan business and to cease from meddling in any way in Central Asian affairs. The urgent remonstrances and entreaties of the political and military officers responsible for the safety of India could not move it from this resolution. In the debate on Mr. Stanhope's motion, Sir Charles Dilke availed himself of the unfortunate miscarriage of despatches from members of the Viceregal Council of India to suggest that the weight of authority against withdrawal from Kandahar was by no means so overwhelming as it had been represented to be. But these despatches have now come to hand, and it appears that Sir Donald Stewart, although not considering Kandahar itself to be "a place of great strategical value"—the occupation of Pishin and the passes over the Khojah Amran range being, he thinks, sufficient for our purpose—and although himself an opponent of the policy of annexation, deprecates in the most earnest manner "the complete reversal" of the policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government in Southern Afghanistan as "recognising a principle, that of the subjection of the policy of British India to the vicissitudes of English parties, which must be always inconvenient and sometimes dangerous." Other members of the Viceroy's Council are strongly impressed with the political and military value of Kandahar. The Viceroy himself makes no attempt to defend the policy of withdrawal against the vehement criticism of his colleagues, and his significant silence confirms the rumour that since he went to India he has seen cause to doubt the wisdom of the course of action resolved upon by his friends in power in this country. The only member of the Government of India who heartily approves of the evacuation of Kandahar is the Finance Minister, Major Evelyn Baring; and it is necessary to remember that Major Baring was private secretary to his relative, Lord Northbrook, during that nobleman's Indian Viceroyalty, and was jointly responsible with him for the foreign policy which in 1873 made the Ameer Shere Ali throw himself in despair into the arms of Russia. Lord Northbrook has never

forgiven Lord Salisbury for condemning that policy; and it is evident that he in England and Major Baring at Simla are the most eager advocates of measures of retaliation on their political opponents. But it must be regarded as a national misfortune that motives of personal resentment should be allowed to have so great an influence in moulding the destinies of the British Empire.

The results of the change of policy that has been carried out in so high-handed a manner by the English Government are already visible in the civil war which has begun between Ayoub Khan of Herat and Abdurrahman, and which will in all probability be a long and desolating struggle. Southern Afghanistan, which we had solemnly taken under our protection, has, in fact, been given over to anarchy. The English Government hopes that Abdurrahman, whom it has supplied with arms and money, will be victorious over his opponent, but not much can be expected from a prince who at such a crisis of his fortunes lingers at Kabul to receive his wives, who are on their way from Samarcand with a Russian escort, instead of hurrying to take the command of his troops in the field. The chances are that in the end the more energetic Ayoub will gain the day, but in any case the two pretenders are to be left by England to fight it out as they can, and it is inevitable that in the long run one or the other will call in the help of Russia. Meanwhile, the Government of India has received imperative orders from its master, Lord Hartington, at home, to complete as soon as possible the evacuation of Pishin, the half-way house to Kandahar, and withdraw its troops within the old line of the Indian frontier. Lord Hartington somewhat petulantly declares that the time and manner of this final withdrawal are left to the Government of India; but he said the same thing about the withdrawal from Kandahar, and a reference to the uncompromising language of his despatch of Dec. 3, 1880, will show that the Government of India is really directed to give itself no rest until it has destroyed the last shred of that Treaty of Gandamak which made Pishin a British province.

To sum up, England has retreated before the Russian advance in Central Asia, and between the two Empires there is now nothing left but a disorganised and helpless Afghanistan which must become the prey of the more energetic and unscrupulous of the two Powers which have so long contended for the supremacy of the East. Looking at the vast strides Russia has made of late years, who can doubt that before the end of this century Afghanistan in her turn will be swallowed up by the great Northern Empire, or that a Russian army will be ready marshalled to try conclusions with us on that line of the Indus which we have deliberately chosen as the most defensible frontier of British India? No doubt, even in such a case we might rely with confidence on the well-tried valour of our troops; but no one who knows what elements of disaffection are always ready to burst into a blaze in India will refuse to admit that the mere appearance of a Russian army in the valley of the Indus would make the tenure of our Indian Empire not worth six weeks' purchase.

June, 1881. [59]

QUESTIONS FOR EVERY ENGLISHMAN TO ASK HIMSELF.

MR. GLADSTONE'S FINANCIAL POLICY.

Has the revival of trade, which had set in before the General Election, increased in consequence of the change of Government?

Has the financial policy of Sir Stafford Northcote, which was denounced by Mr. Gladstone and the Liberals *when in Opposition*, been changed in any material particular—except by increased taxation?

Is not the estimate of ordinary expenditure in this year's Budget larger by 2¼ millions than the amount spent in any one year by the late Conservative Government?

Was not 1d. additional income-tax unnecessarily levied during the first year of Mr. Gladstone's rule, and after that was taken off, has it not again been raised by 3d. in the £?

Has not the substitution of a beer duty for the malt-tax failed to benefit any class of the community, but has it not rather injured the market for English barley and encouraged the use of foreign substitutes, such as maize, &c.?

Was it not proposed largely to increase the tax upon vehicles, which are absolute necessities to farmers and professional men? and were not the Government compelled to abandon the proposal?

IRELAND.

Did not Mr. Gladstone state in March, 1880, before his accession to office, that Ireland was in such a condition of "comfort and satisfaction" as was previously unknown?

Is it not notorious that outrages and murders of the vilest character enormously increased when he came into power?

Were not Irish gaols filled with untried prisoners, arrested under a stringent Liberal Coercion Act, and was not the country brought within a "measurable distance" of civil war?

Has Mr. Gladstone not been obliged to bring in a second Coercion Act of unexampled severity in order to restore the country to its former state of quietness?

Did not Mr. Gladstone admit that the provisions of the Land Act affecting freedom of contract were not economically sound, and could only be defended as a "modus vivendi," and as a means for the pacification of Ireland?

Was not the Act met by increased agitation and disaffection in that country, and did it not therefore fail to effect the only object which it professed to serve?

Has not Mr. Gladstone carried a vote of censure upon the House of Lords for inquiring into the working of this Act?

Has he not been obliged to introduce and promise more than one Bill to amend it, thereby acknowledging the necessity for enquiry?

Did not the Government enter into a compact with Mr. Parnell (whom they had described as "steeped to the lips in treason"), by which he has been released from Kilmainham, after promising to support the Liberal Party?

Were not the details of this transaction withheld from Parliament until concealment was no longer possible, and has not the challenged enquiry been evaded?

Is not such a surrender to rebels disgraceful to any Government worthy the name?

Has not an Arrears Bill been passed by which dishonest tenants who have refused to pay their rents are compensated at the expense of the British taxpayers, while those who have fulfilled their just obligations receive no benefit?

Has not the cost of governing Ireland been increased under Mr. Gladstone's rule by over £600,000 per annum?

OBSTRUCTION.

Did the Liberals, when in Opposition, endeavour to check obstruction in the House of Commons, and give the same loyal support to the Conservative Government which they admit the Conservatives have given to them?

On the contrary, were not Mr. Chamberlain and others among the earliest to make use of these tactics to embarrass the late Government, and did not Mr. Gladstone defend and extenuate the Irish obstruction?

Did not the present Government endeavour in 1881 to abridge freedom of debate in the House of Commons, and was not that freedom successfully defended by the Opposition, with results which proved that Mr. Gladstone's arbitrary proposals were unnecessary?

Has he not forced the clôture or gagging resolutions upon the House of Commons against the wishes of many of his own party?

Has not Mr. Gladstone's unbusinesslike management of the House of Commons resulted in almost complete disorganization, and the loss of an enormous amount of valuable public time, necessitating an autumn Session?

THE BRADLAUGH CASE.

Has not the present Government outraged the religious feeling of the country by supporting the admission to Parliament of Mr. Bradlaugh, an avowed atheist and propagator of obscene literature?

Is it likely to conduce to the public interests that such a man should help to make its laws, and that the forms of Parliament should be altered for the express purpose of admitting him and others like him?

INDIAN POLICY.

Was not the retirement from Candahar carried out in opposition to the great preponderance of opinion on the part of the most eminent civil and military authorities in India?

Did not the Commander-in-Chief in India promise the Candaharis, in the name of the Queen, that England would never permit them

to revert to the rule of Cabul, and did he and others not urge that a promise made by England should be kept?

Has not the Government deceived and abandoned the friendly natives in Afghanistan; and was not the country left for a time the prey of hostile factions?

Do not the secret papers found at Cabul, and patriotically withheld by the late Government (much to their own disadvantage), clearly demonstrate that Russia contemplated using Afghanistan as a means of injuring us in India?

COLONIAL POLICY.

Was not the Transvaal unwillingly annexed by the late Government when it was in a state of anarchy and bankruptcy, and in order to put down the system of slavery which existed?

Is it not a fact Lord Kimberley (the Colonial Secretary in Mr. Gladstone's last Government), Mr. Forster, and the mass of the Liberal Party approved of the annexation?

Did Mr. Gladstone in his place in Parliament say one word against it?

Did not Sir Garnet Wolseley, as representing Her Majesty, solemnly promise that the country should never be given up?

Did Lord Kimberley, on resuming the office of Colonial Secretary, take any step to inquire into the desirability of the annexation, or the reality of any grievance on the part of any of the population, before surrendering the Transvaal?

Did not the agitation by the Boers assume large proportions after the General Election, and did they not state that they were led to agitate in consequence of Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian speeches?

Is not the Cabinet responsible for the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament, in which Her Majesty was made to say that the Boer rebellion must be put down and her authority vindicated before the wishes of her rebellious subjects could be considered?

If the Government intended, when the Queen's Speech was penned by Mr. Gladstone, to retire from the conflict, and to concede what the rebellious section of the Boers demanded, viz., the surrender of the Transvaal, has it not wasted money, and is it not amenable to the charge of "blood guiltiness" in wasting British lives by allowing military operations to commence, and sending out large reinforcements?

If, on the other hand, H.M. Government did intend to act up to the words of the Queen's Speech, and to enforce the authority of the Crown, is not their change of purpose, after the defeats which we have sustained, likely to be considered by the Boers and by foreign nations as cowardly and disgraceful?

Have not the Government deceived and abandoned the loyal subjects of the Queen and the friendly natives in South Africa, and has not the peace which has been made outraged their feelings and led to continual disturbances ever since?

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Did not Mr. Gladstone inaugurate his tenure of office by apologizing to the Austrian Minister for insulting language used by him in regard to that empire when out of office, and was not such apology by an English Premier degrading to a great nation?

Did not Mr. Gladstone and Liberals generally ridicule the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by Lord Beaconsfield's Government?

Have not events proved that the purchase of these shares was wise both as a political and commercial operation; and has not Mr. Gladstone been forced to admit that the shares have more than doubled in value, and therefore, by inference, that his opinions were the result of prejudice or want of foresight?

When the present Government came into office, was not the Eastern Question in a state of quiescence resulting from the settlement made by the Berlin Treaty?

Did not the present Government bring about a naval demonstration at Dulcigno, in which English ships were sent with orders not to land men or fire a shot; and did not such orders bring ridicule upon us as a nation?

Has not information on foreign affairs been withheld from Parliament in a manner which has provoked remonstrance from both sides of the House?

Has not Mr. Gladstone shown on several occasions an unreasonable and unstatesmanlike hatred of Turkey?

Has not his Egyptian policy resulted in the shedding of English blood, and was he not forced to appeal in the first place for military support to the Turks, whom he had formerly derided and insulted?

Was not the ultimatum demanding the exile of the rebellious Arabi completely disregarded; and was not he, the disturber of order, originally appealed to to restore it, as in the case of the Kilmainham treaty?

Has not the much-vaunted European concert been destroyed, and this country been called upon single-handed to put down the rebellion by force of arms at the cost of many valuable lives?

Has not Mr. Gladstone's policy been followed by a war which the wise measures of his predecessors had averted, and by the entire disorganization of Egypt, rendering an armed occupation necessary?

Had not England a much higher position and greater influence in Europe when Lord Beaconsfield left office than when he assumed it, or now?

———o———

Do the people of England approve of Mr. Gladstone's policy, or would the present Government have been placed in office if their action in all the above matters had been foreseen?

Is a Government which has so signally failed in every department worthy to control the destinies of a great empire, and can any patriotic Englishman vote for a candidate for Parliament who will support it?

Jan., 1883.

WHAT HAVE THE CONSERVATIVES DONE FOR THE PEOPLE?

LOOK AT THEIR ACTS, AND JUDGE FOR YOURSELVES.

Lord Beaconsfield's Government, while in office from 1874 to 1880, by promoting or assisting the following measures,

Protected the Savings of the Poor by
An Act Consolidating and Amending the Laws relating to Building Societies.

Facilitated and Cheapened the Transfer of Land by
An Act Simplifying Title to Land.

Protected Workmen against Unjust Employers by
An Act for the Payment of Wages without Stoppages in the Hosiery Manufacture.

Protected Health—the Poor Man's Capital—by
An Act for Improving the Health of Women, Young Persons, and Children employed in Factories.

Made Property Contribute More to the Rates by
An Act extending the Poor-rate Acts to Plantations, Shooting and Fishing Rights, and Mines, all previously exempt.

Encouraged the Erection of Better Homes for Working Men by
An Act Facilitating the Erection of Artisans' Dwellings.

Fenced the Public Health from Danger by
An Act Consolidating and Amending the Sanitary Laws providing mortuaries, preventing over-crowding and other nuisances.

Provided for the Reduction of the National Debt by
An Act Making a Permanent Annual Charge of £28,000,000 on the Consolidated Fund for the Reduction of the National Debt.

Protected the Rights of Brain-Workers by
An Act Putting International Copyright on a Better Footing.

Befriended Struggling Tradesmen by
An Act Amending the County Court Acts.

Successfully Maintained Order in Ireland by means of
An Act far less stringent than the former and present Liberal Coercion Acts.

First Recognised the Principle of Tenants' Compensation for Improvements by
The Agricultural Holdings Act, 1875.

Increased the Stability of Friendly Societies by
An Act Consolidating and Amending the Laws relating thereto.

Promoted Freedom between Employers and Workmen by
An Act Enlarging the Powers of County Courts in respect of Disputes between Employers and Workmen.

Protected the Health of the Poor by
An Act to Ensure the Purity of Drugs and of Food.

Protected the Skill and Enterprise of Manufacturers by
An Act Establishing a Register of Trade Marks.

Reduced the Perils of Sailors by
An Act for Effectually Empowering the Board of Trade to Stop Unseaworthy Ships.

Provided Means of Recreation for the People by
An Act for Preventing the Inclosure of Commons.

Promoted Education by
An Act to make further Provision for Elementary Education.

Protected Commercial Transactions against Fraud by
An Act Amending the Law as to Crossed Cheques.

Confirmed our Rule in India by
An Act adding to the Queen's Titles that of "Empress of India."

Encouraged Thrift among the Working Classes by
An Act Consolidating and Amending the Law relating to Industrial and Provident Societies.

Prevented Hardships on Untried and Possibly Innocent Prisoners by
An Act for holding Additional Assizes.

Protected the Interests of the Aged and Unfortunate by
An Act Amending the Law Relating to the Relief of the Poor in England.

Prevented Cruelty to Animals by
An Act Regulating and Controlling Experiments upon Animals, and by an Act Punishing the Administration of Poisonous Drugs to them.

Prevented the Contamination of one of our Food Sources by
An Act for Preventing the Pollution of Rivers.

Dealt one More Blow at Slavery by
An Act for more Effectually Preventing the Slave Trade.

Increased the National Wealth and Secured the Safety of our Road to India by
An Act for Acquiring Possession of Shares in the Suez Canal.

Decreased the Rates and Improved the Condition of Prisoners by
An Act Amending the Law relating to Prisons in England.

PREVENTED THE EXTINCTION OF USEFUL BIRDS by
An Act for the Preservation of Wild Fowl.

BEFRIENDED A POOR AND NEGLECTED CLASS by
An Act for the Registration and Regulation of Canal Boats used as Dwellings.

GAVE MEANS OF RECREATION TO THE LONDON POOR by
An Act for Affording the Public Facilities for the Enjoyment of Open Spaces in the Metropolis.

PROMOTED POPULAR CULTURE by
An Act Amending the Free Libraries Act.

PROVIDED FOR THE DEFENCE OF OUR COLONIES by
An Act Dealing with Colonial Fortifications.

PROMOTED THE USEFULNESS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND by
An Act for the Foundation of New Bishoprics.

PROTECTED THE FRANCHISE OF HOUSEHOLDERS by
An Act Empowering them to Under-let their Dwelling-houses for Short Terms without Forfeiting their Votes.

PROTECTED WOMEN AGAINST BRUTAL HUSBANDS by
An Act Giving Magistrates the Power to grant a Judicial Separation to Wives whose Husbands have Committed Aggravated Assaults upon them.

PREVENTED FRAUDS UPON THE POOR by
An Act Consolidating the Law relating to Weights and Measures.

REMOVED A LICENSED VICTUALLERS' GRIEVANCE by
An Act giving Innkeepers a Power of Sale in respect of Goods and Chattels Deposited with them.

EXTENDED THE PRINCIPLE OF THE FACTORY ACTS by
An Act Amending and Consolidating the Law Relating to Factories and Workshops.

SECURED HEALTHY AND CHEAP ANIMAL FOOD FOR THE PEOPLE by
An Act for Making Better Provision respecting the Contagious Diseases of Animals.

PROTECTED LIFE AND PROPERTY by
An Act Empowering the Board of Works to enforce Strict Regulations for Ensuring the Safety of Buildings.

REMOVED A FARMERS' GRIEVANCE by
An Act Making Penal the Adulteration of Seeds.

PROMOTED PUBLIC HEALTH AND RECREATION by
An Act Empowering the Establishment of Public Swimming Baths.

IMPROVED THE POSITION OF THE PRIVATE SOLDIER by
The Army Discipline and Regulation Act, a measure of the greatest value and importance, and one which was obstructed in every way by the Liberals for party purposes.

PROTECTED THE INVESTMENTS OF THE PUBLIC by

An Act Amending the Law Respecting the Liability of Members of Banking and Joint-Stock Companies.

PREVENTED SCANDALOUS MISCARRIAGES OF JUSTICE by

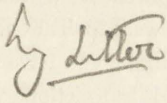
An Act for the Appointment of a Public Prosecutor.

ACCOMPLISHED THE SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL FREEDOM OF THE WORKING CLASSES by

The Employers and Workmen Act.

Thus, though it is true that the Conservatives have not imitated Mr. Gladstone's Foreign or Irish Policy, have not truckled or apologised to foreign Powers, have harassed no interests, plundered no class, and abolished no time-honoured institutions, none the less do their deeds show them to be the best and truest friends of the people. By their industrial legislation they have protected the weak against injustice, by their Sanitary Acts (decried by Liberals as a "policy of sewage") they have striven to provide comfortable and healthy homes for the people, while by their care for the welfare of Friendly Societies they have endeavoured to secure to the working classes their hard-earned savings in time of need. Let not working men, then, be led away by the loud-tongued denunciations of Radical platform orators, but remember on the day of the poll that gratitude is due not for words but for deeds, and

VOTE FOR THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE.



THE SUEZ CANAL SHARES.

—o—

The many reckless and unscrupulous assertions made by the leaders of the Liberal Party when in Opposition from 1874 to 1880 should be remembered and exposed.

Perhaps no measure of Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet more excited at the time their jealous wrath than the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares. It was the first step in Lord Beaconsfield's grand National Policy, which was approved, not only by the English people, as was shown by majorities of 100 in the House of Commons, by great popular demonstrations, and by the important elections of Liverpool, Sheffield, and Southwark, but by the English-speaking race throughout the world.

The following letter, which has appeared in the public press, shows not only how wrong Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington were upon this question, but also that their present action proves that they *feel* they were in the wrong and Lord Beaconsfield right, although they have not the political courage to say so openly :—

"Sir,—In answer to a question in the House of Commons last month, Mr. Gladstone stated that the present value of our Suez Canal Shares was £8,826,000, or, in other words, that they were worth considerably more than double what Lord Beaconsfield's Government paid for them, which was £4,076,000 ; 'consequently,' in Mr. Gladstone's own words, 'there may be said to have accrued 'a profit of about £4,750,000 on the purchase of these shares.' But Mr. Gladstone formed a very erroneous forecast of the financial

value of this purchase when he spoke at Glasgow on December 5th, 1879, for he then said, 'The purchase of the shares was a 'delusion;' and again he said, 'You were foolish enough to acquire 'a certain number of shares in the Canal; you have chosen to com- 'plicate your already too complicated transactions with a financial 'operation of a ridiculous description.'

"Now Mr. Gladstone is quite entitled to form and hold his own opinion as to what is a 'ridiculous' financial operation; but I fancy that the British taxpayer will regard an operation which shows a profit in a few years of nearly five millions as anything but a ridiculous transaction.

"Mr. Gladstone was not alone in the disapproval of the purchase of these shares, for his colleague, Lord Hartington, said in the House of Commons on February 8th, 1879: 'The shares bought 'by the Government do not tend to give us any influence whatever, 'either indirect, direct, or moral, or of any kind, in the Council of the 'Shareholders, and our interest is not identical with, but entirely 'opposed to, that of the ordinary Shareholders.' And again, the 'present value of the shares we have purchased is £1,250,000, or '£1,500,000.' According to Lord Hartington's estimate, therefore, there is now a profit of £7,326,000, being the difference between the value of the shares in 1879 and their present value.

"If all these facts and figures are true, surely these two statesmen, Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington, ought either to sell these shares and place nearly nine millions to the credit of the late Government —thus, according to Lord Hartington's estimate, more than recouping the famous six millions which the late Government were supposed to have wasted in upholding the honour of England—or else, if they elect to retain the shares, they are bound in honour to admit that the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares by Lord Beaconsfield's Government was not only a prudent and far-seeing financial operation—which the figures prove—but was also a statesmanlike measure, tending to increase the power of England, and important for the interests of the Empire.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"A British Taxpayer."

The question referred to in the foregoing letter was asked on April 8, 1881, in the House of Commons, by Baron H. de Worms, Conservative member for Greenwich, and the successor of Mr. Gladstone in that important constituency. Baron de Worms' question was whether Mr. Gladstone still adhered to the opinion expressed in his speech at Glasgow, on Dec. 6th, 1879, that the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares was a "delusion" and "a financial operation of a ridiculous description;" and whether, seeing that the present value of these shares is officially stated at eight millions eight hundred and twenty-six thousand pounds, he proposed to take steps for realizing by their sale the accrued profit (to this country) of £4,826,000.

Mr. Gladstone's evasive answer was as follows: "The object of the "question is to obtain from me a confession with which I am sorry I "cannot gratify the hon. member. I do not wish to repeat anything "I said in the important discussion that took place on the question of "the purchase of these shares, but I wish to say that my objection to "questions of this kind is that if the individual to whom they are put "is not prepared to confess, he can hardly do otherwise than go back "upon observations which he or others may have made at some "previous time. The censures I passed on the transaction at the "time or during the time of the election had no reference to it, "considered as a financial operation, conceived and executed by a "stockbroker, for I have been from the first a recommender and pro-"moter of the Suez Canal; and when M. de Lesseps came to this "country I encouraged him to persevere in his plan. The objection "I had was that the operation was a complex one, and I cannot "recede from that opinion, though I think it would be invidious "now to repeat the reasons on which that opinion was based."

Now, if any honest man will look at Mr. Gladstone's words, as quoted in the above letter, it will be seen that it was distinctly as *a financial operation* that he objected to the purchase of the shares, and that it was Lord Hartington who objected to them on political grounds.

Events have proved that Mr. Gladstone at that time was wrong, financially, to the tune of nearly five millions in this matter; and the action of the present Liberal Cabinet in retaining these shares, now

that they could sell them and relieve the heavily-burdened British tax-payer of five millions of taxation, or 3d. in the £ Income-tax, proves that a great political importance does attach to these shares, and therefore that Lord Hartington was also wrong.

The foregoing quotations are only samples of the many reckless and unscrupulous assertions by which the people of England were misled at the last General Election, and clearly prove the unreliability of Liberal statements when tried by the fire of truth and the inexorable logic of events.

It should also be borne in mind that since last year the value of these shares has enormously advanced, at one time being saleable for upwards of twenty millions.

June, 1882.

FAIR-TRADE TRACTS.

No. 17.

AGRICULTURAL BURDENS.

SPEECH to his Tenants by Mr. W. J. HARRIS, of Halwill Manor, Highampton, Devon, and 6, Crosby Square, London, E.C., delivered October 14th, 1881 :—

Gentlemen,—I have to thank you for the very kind manner in which my health and that of my family has been proposed and received. We meet here from year to year, and every year I trust we are more satisfied with one another. This is the tenth year since I bought this property. You know the state it was in when I bought it. I decline to boast of what has been done to it since, but I think it is only right to say I have never taken one farthing away from the property. Every penny I received of rents or of profits has been laid out in improvements during those ten years. When I bought this property I regarded it simply as a hobby. Some men make a yacht their hobby, others make race-horses theirs. I have made the reclamation and improvement of land mine, and a very pleasant, though very profitless, hobby I have found it to be. Ten years ago I was an out-and-out-Radical. I thought John Bright the finest man in England, and I determined from the first to treat all my tenants in the same way as I thought such a man as John Bright would treat his, if he had any.

You all know that every lease which has been made since I came into possession has had clauses which entitle the tenant to compensation on leaving, and that many of the harsher clauses that lawyers think so necessary have been expunged. Well, gentlemen, I am quite satisfied with all this. I am persuaded that it is the interest of other landlords to do the same, and I believe that most of them are quite ready to do it. It has had a beneficial influence in this parish. Ours is one of the few parishes in Devonshire that has increased in population during the decade. Our increase in numbers has been nearly twenty-five per cent. We have one of the best schools, and, if Mr. Curtis will allow me to say so, one of the best schoolmasters in Devonshire; and were it not for the great depression in agriculture, we should be able to admit that we were a thriving community in all ways.

This question of agricultural depression is coming before the country in many ways. There is no doubt about the reality of it. We may not have quite so much reason to complain here as they have in many other places; but it has been to us a very serious matter. One year (in 1879) our corn crops were almost a failure; another year we could keep no sheep, and those who did attempt to keep sheep had the mortification of seeing many of them die without chance of saving them. These are visitations, and are, I trust, exceptional ones; but I fear the evil has a deeper seated origin. I have told you that when I first bought this estate I was a Radical in politics. I, as you well know, am engaged very largely in commerce, and my business is to import foreign grain. The seasons

that bring ruin to you as farmers are profitable to me. The rain that falls on the English crops at harvest time brings a golden harvest to me. There is, therefore, every material inducement to me to continue to advocate the policy of Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone, for both of whom I entertain a great respect; but although this is my interest, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that I can do so no longer. I say deliberate, for I have been five or six years turning round, and even now I cannot unite myself with the Conservative party. When the next election comes I shall vote for the side that promises the best form of relief to the agricultural interest. Five years ago I wrote a letter to the *Western Morning News*, expressing my doubts as to the effect of this one-sided free trade which now guides our commercial policy, and everything that has since happened has confirmed me in my doubts. I will endeavour to give you my reasons.

1st. I consider that the prosperity of the farmer means the prosperity of the manufacturing community.

2ndly. I believe it means contentment and happiness to the labourer.

3rdly. It means the maintenance of the value of real property, from which the whole of our local taxation is derived.

4thly. I believe this prosperity cannot revive while the virgin soils of foreign countries have the power to flood our markets with their untaxed produce to compete with ours, while we are taxed at every point.

I will endeavour to show where taxation affects me. You know that I keep the small farm that surrounds my dwelling-house in hand. Well, that farm is a fair bullock raising farm, and if I did nothing but rear bullocks I might be able to sell from it possibly twenty-five good North Devon store bullocks each year, out of a total stock of seventy-five head. These would be three years old and would bring £16 or £17 each. Some years since they would have brought £19 to £20. Now let me see what my taxation amounts to. The outgoings in the way of rates, tithes and taxes on this farm are about £42 per annum. Therefore on every bullock I sell the charge is 34s. May I ask whether there is any other trade in England that has its receipts taxed to the extent of 11 per cent. without any tax at all being placed upon the foreign produce that comes into competition with it? If I adopted wheat as my standard it would be just the same. They have found land without limit abroad which is better than the best land in England, and which requires no renovating with manures for twenty years. The cost of manuring one acre of land in England for wheat is far more than the cost of bringing the produce of two acres all the way from the American prairies to this country. I am quite prepared for the usual reply to all these arguments, viz., "the landlord must reduce his rent." But suppose the landlord has already reduced his rent—supposing the present rent represents a capital value at which the farm could not now be made (that is to say) taking all the fields as a wide expanse of moorland worth, for argument's sake, nothing; and supposing the buildings had to be put up afresh and the fields divided by fences, and drained, and the nice little meadows around this pretty church made from the rough ground—would it not cost more at the present price of labour to make the farm than it is now worth to sell? I have carefully been through the calculation, and I find it would cost at least as much to make this farm, even if the land were

given me free, as it is now worth to sell or to let. Is not the cost of a thing the natural value? Now I think this is the measure of decline in rents—that is to say, they ought not to go below that price at which the same thing can be produced again, otherwise there can be no profitable employment of money in improving land. Some of the politicians of the present day, are bent on mending all this by enabling the landowners to cut up their property and sell it to the labourers. I wish to say that I consider any law which makes it easier for a labouring man to acquire property without heavy expenses, or which obliged the needy owners of entailed estates to reinvest in Consols, would be a good thing; but is it any advantage to the poor to buy that which cannot be improved at a profit? I have always encouraged some small tenancies on this property where I have seen that the men were industrious and likely to succeed; but let me ask the workmen who are here to-night whether they would rather give me £100 for a piece of land and call it their own, or whether they would not prefer to take it at 50s. per annum from me for their lives, and employ their £100 in the purchase of stock? The fact is, success in agriculture is a matter of the first importance to all nations, and if you admit the products of foreign labour free, the product of English labour must be free too.

Mr. Gladstone, in his speech at Leeds the other day, made use of the following words in reference to reducing taxation on farms:

"I think the time may have come when it may be very proper to make considerable alterations in local taxation, but I must endeavour to bring into view —and which it seems to be the object of Toryism to keep out of view—this, that every sixpence which you take off the rates in agricultural districts in this country, while it is an immediate relief to the tenant, is an ultimate gift to the landlord, and, taken in that point of view, the demand that some millions shall be taken off taxation by grants from the general exchequer of the country in order to be applied to the payment of rates in rural districts, while it may be very agreeable to the farmer for the moment —I don't now inquire into what ought to be done for him—is a demand that the landlords of this country and their descendants shall to that extent be quartered on the public exchequer."

I don't for one moment agree with Mr. Gladstone, and I will tell you why. Any help to the farmer would induce him to farm more largely, and consequently to employ more labour. Directly there was an extra demand for labour, agricultural wages would rise. The number of labourers has greatly decreased of late years, and wages have declined about 15 per cent. Give an impulse to farming, and the first effect would be a rise in wages; next, the farmer would feel that he had a right to rise a little in the social scale; and, thirdly, the landowner might receive some slight advantage. But how could the landowner get much benefit, when at the present time, and, probably, for many years to come, there are more farms to let than tenants to take them? Our worthy parson is present, and in speaking of rates and taxes I must also ask him to allow me to mention the tithes. I hope he will have patience to hear what I have to say. Tithes were originally a tax on food. Free trade in that food ought never to have been decreed without the legal claim for tithes being allowed on the foreign as well as the British produce. The Church has just as legal a claim for tithes as I have for rent. Notwithstanding all the Communistic talk now so fashionable, there will never, I trust, be confiscation in this country. Let the foreigners pay

their share of the tithe, and we can continue to pay ours. Let every farmer be rated for the value of his house, but not on the value of his land, which is really his stock-in-trade, leased to him instead of owned by him. If the rest of the country is not rich enough to bear the burden that is now so unfairly paid by agriculture, there must be something radically wrong in the incidence of taxation. Let us see how much those London millionaires pay in taxes, men who have their money invested in real property abroad, and do or do not (according to the elasticity of their consciences) declare their incomes as liable to income tax at 5d. in the £, while the agriculturist has to pay at least 10 per cent. on receipts in the shape of taxation of one sort or another.

Other nations take a revenue out of everything we sell to them, why should we not relieve our taxation out of their industries while they are so unfair? Depend upon it this would be the shortest road to real free trade with them.

The fact is, gentlemen, the home supply of food must be maintained for the good of the commonwealth. It is the only supply that cannot be cut off. The time may come when other supplies will be cut off, and then we shall deplore all this indifference to home industry. It is quite impossible for the English farmer to face the competition that is coming against him from abroad with these imposts staring him in the face. You may alter the land laws and your forms of leases as much as you like (some of them want altering). In this parish we have altered them long ago, but no alteration will enable the English farmer to make a living when he is taxed at the rate of 10 per cent. on his produce (which is really 30 per cent. on his supposed income), seeing that he will have to compete with imports of wheat which can be delivered in this country at 36s. per qr., and imports of beef and mutton at 5d. per lb.

There is another point I wish to bring before you as to the taxation on land. It is very wrong of the Government to allow improvements on land to be rated at their increased value. It is a distinct loss to the country. If landowners or tenants were sure that by investing money in improving the land they would not be liable to this charge, much more land might be reclaimed and improved than is now the case. I much fear, by my perusal of the Premier's speeches made last week, he does not realise the gravity of the times, so far as agricultural depression is concerned. Unless some substantial help be given to the farmers, and especially to those in the centre and East of England, the vast expenditure of the last fifty years in the improvement and reclamation of land will be lost to the nation, and no increase in trade profits, resulting from our vast imports, will ever make good the loss.

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CONSERVATIVE LAND REFORM.

THE SETTLED LAND ACT, 1882.

It is pretty well known that English land has been for generations past, and still is, to a large extent, in the hands of landlords who are merely tenants for life of their estates. A tenant for life, as such, is entitled, during his life, to the enjoyment and profit of the land; but may not open mines nor cut timber, nor in some other respects do work upon it, or the buildings on it (even though such work be for its good), as if he were absolute owner: while, if he disposes of it, his death determines the interest he has created.

The rest of the rights and powers over the land which make up complete ownership are—with a view to ensure a provision for his family—put out of his control—locked up for the benefit of some unborn child, or minor, or one of its distant branches—the land is "in settlement."

Provision for a man's family, by settlement or otherwise, should, if anything, be favoured by law; and it is of its essence that the first person to benefit by it should be debarred from beggaring his successors of a bounty which he has earned no more than they.

But when land is so settled, some hardship may result: the tenant for life, perhaps, has no skill or taste for working the land, yet he cannot sell to one that has, nor even make such a lease of it that the lessee shall have a tenure secure enough to incite him to lay out money for its permanent improvement; or he has both the taste and the skill and wishes to do his duty by the land, but has no power, by raising money on it, to make it pay for its own improvements, and is loth to lay out his own money for the good of those to whom on his death the land by the settlement must go (his eldest son it may be, to the exclusion of his other children, or some far away kinsman), and in many other ways his hands are tied to the detriment of himself, his successors, the land, and others that live by it.

It was long ago found possible to give powers which would enable the land to be properly worked during his lifetime, and yet not defeat the provision made for others by the settlement. Such powers are nowadays put in every well-drawn settlement, or could be obtained from Parliament by a Private Act. But all settlements are not well drawn, and such an Act is costly, and accordingly of late years—notably by the Improvement of Land Act. 1864, and by the Settled Estates Act, 1877—the Legislature has attempted to annex to every settlement, on behalf of settled lands generally throughout the kingdom, such powers.

But the powers so annexed by Statute either do not go far enough, or are too costly and troublesome to be set in action, and this year a measure has been passed, more thorough in design, more practical in detail, interfering with no reasonable rights of settling property, introducing no new-fangled schemes, but promoting the execution on settled

land of improvements, and extending to all land the operation of machinery, which already applied on many settled estates, has been long tried and has worked well.

A short account of the main provisions of this measure, known as the Settled Land Act, 1882, which comes into operation on the 1st January, 1883, and for which we have chiefly to thank Lord Cairns, may be of some use.

These provisions seem to fall into four groups, according as they

I. Give powers to a tenant for life.

II. Secure the continuance of the provision made for others by the settlement.

III. Provide machinery to control the working of the Act, and

IV. Ensure for it a wide and continuous working.

I. POWERS CONFERRED BY THE ACT.

I.—A tenant for life is empowered

(*a*) To *sell* the settled land (*s.* 3). Also, but not without an order of the Court, to sell heirlooms settled with the land (*s.* 37).

(*b*) To *lease* it. On a building lease for 99 years, on a mining lease for 60 years, on any other lease for 21 years (*s.* 6). Further, where expedient, with leave from the Court, he may grant building or mining leases for a longer period, or in perpetuity (*s.* 10).

(*c*) On a sale or lease for building purposes, *to dedicate land* to objects in themselves paying nothing, but doing good to the land parted with as a whole, *e.g.* streets, squares, gardens, drains, sewers (*s.* 16).

(*d*) *To cut timber.*

1. Where necessary in the course of improvements (*s.* 29).
2. Where it is ripe for cutting (*s.* 35).

(*e*) To *execute or promote the execution of the improvements* mentioned in the Act (including drainage, embanking, planting, erection of buildings and other works, such as docks, reservoirs, machinery (*s.* 29), and, on certain conditions, *to get payment for those improvements* out of money raised under the Act from the settled land.

II. SAFEGUARDS.

II.—The provisions of this group :

(1.) *Check the tenant for life* from dealing improperly with the settled property.

(2.) *Secure due application of capital money* arising under the Act.

(3.) Otherwise *watch over the rights of other parties* interested under the settlement.

(1.) *a* The tenant for life must give notice of an intended sale or lease to the trustees of the settlement (*s.* 45), who, if they differ from him, can refer the matter to the Court (*s.* 44).

b Capital money arising under the Act is not left in his control, but must be paid to the trustees of the settlement, or into Court (*s.* 22), and investments made of it are not to be in his name or under his control.

c In the exercise of his powers *he is a trustee* for those other parties, and liable accordingly (*s.* 53).

d He may be ordered *where improvements* are made with capital money arising under the Act to repair, and in case of buildings, to insure them (*s.* 28).

e He may not, without the trustee's consent or an order of the Court, sell or lease the mansion, house and grounds (*s.* 15).

f He must get the consent of the trustees before cutting timber on the ground that it is ripe for cutting (*s.* 35), and three-fourths of the proceeds *of such cutting* is to be treated as "capital money."

(2.) Capital money shall not lie idle, but shall be

a *Invested* in securities specified.

b Applied in *discharge of incumbrances.*

c Applied in *payment for improvements.*

d Laid out in *purchase of land* to be made subject to the settlement.

e Where it arises from sale of heirlooms may be laid out in purchase of similar objects, to go in a similar way (*s.* 37).

(3.) As land and money devolve by our law difficulty (*s.* 22) provides that capital money arising under the Act, and investments thereof shall go as land, while (*s.* 34) provides for the original rights of parties interested being maintained, where a sale might result in altering them. A provision of a former Act authorizing payment out of settled property of the costs of proceedings taken for its *protection*, is extended to the case of proceedings taken for the *recovery* of land *claimed* for the settlement (*s.* 36).

III. MACHINERY.

III.—The machinery to control the working of the Act is of three kinds :

1. *The Court* (in England the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, whose powers may in certain cases where the settled property in question does not exceed £500 in value be exercised by a County Court).

2. *The Land Commissioners.*

(The Commissioners now known as the Inclosure, Copyhold or Tithe Commissioners under a new name).

It is their duty, when it comes to paying, out of capital money arising under the Act, for any improvement (and the Court has not taken their duty on itself), to certify, either themselves or through an engineer or surveyor for whose appointment they are responsible, that there is good work done to show for the proposed payment (*s.* 26).

They also have power to direct the tenant for life to maintain and repair such improvement, to report on its state, and to insure (*s.* 28).

3. *The trustees of the settlement.*

To whom notice of a sale, lease or other proposed dealing with the settled land *must* be given by the tenant for life (*s.* 45), to whom capital money *may* be paid for investment on

application (*s.* 22), to whom (when it is out of capital money so paid that the cost of any improvement is intended to be met) a scheme for its execution must be first submitted for approval (*s.* 26), and who may make such payment only on proper authority from the Court or the Land Commissioners (*s.* 26).

Provision is made for the appointment of such trustees, where necessary, by the Court (*s.* 38), and for protecting them from liability (*ss.* 41, 42, 43), thus ensuring that where action of trustees is necessary it shall be readily forthcoming.

The absence from this Act of complicated machinery for setting the powers given by it in action is its great advantage ; such powers *can* be exercised more simply and cheaply, and so *will* be exercised more generally and readily than those given by former Acts ; the tenant for life wields them himself, only under such control as is briefly set out above.

IV. EXTENT OF POWERS.

IV.—This group provides that the powers of the Act—

1. Shall, in the case of a tenant for life, apply.
   (*a*) Whatever may be the date of the settlement (*s.* 2).
   (*b*) In spite of anything done by a tenant for life by which he either tries to rid himself of them, or has parted with the land to which they apply (as by assignment of his interest or his bankruptcy, but his exercise of them shall not prejudice the rights so made over to others.) (*s.* 50.)
   (*c*) In spite of attempts made by the settler to exclude the operation of the Act. (The operation of the Settled Estates Act, 1877, could be so excluded.)
2. Shall be given to other classes of persons not having complete ownership (*s.* 58).
3. Shall be exercisable where land, though not "in settlement," is in the hands of an infant, and so for many purposes tied up as much as if it were settled (*s.* 59).
4. Shall be exercisable where action is complicated by the marriage of a woman, who would, if unmarried, have had them (*s.* 61).
5. Shall be exercisable in spite of *infancy* or *lunacy* (*ss.* 60, 62).
6. Shall be extended, with slight alteration in the details of their working, to the case of land subject to a trust for sale, where there is to be no complete ownership of the money to arise from the sale, and there is consequently no complete owner of the land for purposes other than its sale ; the trustees being merely legal owners for the benefit of others, and powerless to act, except in the line marked out by the trust.

Conservative Central Office,
Westminster,
September, 1882.

INCREASED RATES:

WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE?

The rapid growth of local rates of late years is a universal matter of complaint. It is not always, however, remembered that almost every farthing of the increase is the direct result of Liberal legislation. Between 1874 and 1880, the Conservative Government lightened by £2,000,000 a year the burdens of the ratepayers, while by a better administration of the Poor Law a material check has of late been given to our growing Poor Rate. Despite all this, the latest returns show £31,000,000* of local rates levied against £20,000,000† when Mr. Gladstone first came into power in 1869, and to his Education Act, his Sanitary legislation, and his rapid Abolition of Turnpike Tolls are mainly due the augmented burdens of the present time. But for the most vigilant resistance there would also have been imposed a still heavier roll of additions to the local rates. No less than thirty-eight rate-imposing Bills were projected by Liberal Ministers or proposed by crotchetmongers between 1870 and 1874, and of these thirty-five were stopped altogether, or so far amended as to reduce their charges on the ratepaying section of the community to a minimum. Had all these Bills become law, it is easy to see how vastly greater would have been even that heavy advance in local burdens which we have such good reason to deplore. Professing to keep within bounds their claims on the Budgets of the Chancellors of the Exchequer, it has been an invariable feature in the policy of Liberal legislators to find in the local rates a convenient, and, so far as Parliament is concerned, a little heeded source of revenue whence to defray the costs of fanciful experiments and ambitious schemes.

Although the Parliament of 1869-74 was distinguished above all others for the task of rate imposition, there have been many signs that the present House of Commons is not disinclined to add when it can to the local burdens of the country.

As on the occasion of the reign of the last Liberal Government, so now, the imposition of new rates appears to be a congenial task to Her Majesty's Ministers. Despite their professions of a

* Statistical Abstract, 1882.
† Mr. Goschen's Report to the Treasury, 1870.

burning desire to redress the anomalies of local taxation, there have already been three occasions since the last general election on which the present Government are accountable for Bills which, if passed, would have made the rates heavier, and not lighter than before.

Rivers Conservancy.

(*a*) The Rivers Conservancy Bill of 1881, laudable as was its aim—the protecting of certain lands from floods—yet adopted a method of achieving this result which would have taxed areas wholly unbenefited by the works proposed. This Government Bill, therefore, directly sanctioned the charging, by way of rates, on one man's property the cost of improving the property of another. The resistance to this part of the Bill rendered it hopeless for the Government to persevere with the measure.

(*b*) In 1882 a second Rivers Conservancy Bill has been introduced by the Government, and again, with only slight modifications of detail, the objectionable principle re-appeared, involving by a general rate the taxation of unbenefited persons. The Bill has elicited strong opposition in consequence of this feature, and its progress has been stopped, and the Bill is withdrawn.

Police.

(*c*) The Police Bill of this Session is the third rating Bill introduced by the Government since their accession to office. It increases materially the liabilities of ratepayers in respect of police superannuation by conferring an absolute right to pensions where no such right has heretofore been acknowledged, and it provides the means for augmenting the present insufficient pension funds by appropriating certain fees, fines, and penalties, which at present go in relief of the county or police rate. The Bill would further increase centralization, and would give to the central authority new powers to require the expenditure of local rates on station-houses and lock-ups for police purposes.

Besides the Bills officially introduced by the Government, a dozen separate proposals to add to the local rates now levied have been proposed by Liberal members.

Licensing.

(1.) In 1880, Sir Harcourt Johnstone introduced the Licensing Laws Amendment Bill—a measure which would have involved the burdened local rates in a new liability for guaranteeing the sufficiency of the funds of the proposed new Licensing Boards.

Election Expenses.

(2.) The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Bill, introduced in the same Session by Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. McLaren, and Mr. Meldon, proposed to create a new charge on the rates for the cost of the official expenses of Parliamentary candidates.

(3.) A second attempt was made to impose a new rate for this object by Mr. Ashton Dilke, Mr. Barran, and Mr. Burt in the Parliamentary Election Expenses Bill of 1881.

(4.) The present Session has seen a third rating Bill with precisely the same object again brought in by Mr. Ashton Dilke. It succeeded, with the support of the Government, in passing its second reading, though only by a majority of two votes, but has been since withdrawn.

(5.) In another shape, and for the fourth time since this Parliament was elected, the same proposal for a new rate for election expenses is repeated by means of an amendment to be moved to the Government Corrupt Practices Bill by Mr. Broadhurst, and to this Mr. Chamberlain has declared he will give his support. The total amount of these expenses at the last election was £97,000, and the encouragement which the proposal would give to frivolous candidatures would no doubt greatly increase it.

Floods Prevention.

(6.) In 1881, a River Floods Prevention Bill was brought in by Mr. Magniac, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Biddulph, and some other members, in competition with the Government measure of that year. It contained the same fault as the Ministerial Bill, though perhaps in a modified degree, since it proposed the rating of uplands for the improvement of flooded properties in the lowlands.

Blind and Deaf Children.

(7.) The Blind and Deaf Mute Children Bill, introduced by Mr. Woodall, was a measure which, even if desirable on other grounds, could not but have enlarged the ratepayers' present liabilities in respect of a specially afflicted class of the community, in whom the whole country is interested.

Lunacy Laws.

(8.) By the Lunacy Laws Amendment Bill of 1881, introduced by Mr. Dillwyn, Sir George Balfour, and Mr. B. T. Williams, the local rates would have been added to for a matter of general interest, and an extensive augmentation made to the liabilities at present entailed on the owners and occupiers of real property in respect of the care and treatment of lunatics.

Free Libraries.

(9.) The Free Libraries Bill, brought in by Mr. Hopwood, would double the limit now chargeable on the rates for libraries and museums, and thus extend rating liabilities in this direction, while at the same time it would diminish existing safeguards against the hasty adoption of rate-paid institutions of this nature.

Commons.

(10.) The Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment Bill, which stands in the names of Mr. James, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, and Lord E. Fitzmaurice, besides other proposals, embraces one for a new rate over an undefined area, and leviable by a body which is not even a recognized local authority.

Corporation Funds.

(11.) The Municipal Corporations (Borough Funds) Bill, introduced by Mr. Dodds, repeats a frequent attempt to allow the local rates to be charged, without the direct consent of the

ratepayers, with the cost of promoting or opposing private Bills in Parliament at the discretion of the governing bodies.

The above examples are sufficient to show that if the Liberal party were able to do entirely as they pleased, the rates, at present grievously heavy, would in a few years reach an amount which would be perfectly intolerable. Even when Mr. Gladstone proposed to relieve the county ratepayers of part of the highway rates, he accompanied the promised boon by a proposal to increase the tax on the vehicles of farmers and professional men, so that the benefit would have been robbed of all its value. It should also be borne in mind that the former Liberal Government proposed to place a tax upon agricultural wagons, though, like their latest attempt in this direction, they were compelled to abandon it.

August, 1882.

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WHO ARE THE FRIENDS

OF

THE FARMER?

A SPEECH

BY

MR. JACOB WILSON

(MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE, MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND, ETC.)

AT

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WHO ARE THE FRIENDS OF THE FARMER?

Mr. JACOB WILSON, in response to the toast of "The Agricultural Interest," at a dinner held to celebrate the return of the Hon. Guy Dawnay for the North Riding, expressed his thanks for the compliment of having his name associated with so important and comprehensive a toast, and proceeded as follows: I have no reason to doubt that the recent election in this division was fought out otherwise than on the broad lines of Conservatism and Liberalism, though at one time I confess that this normal arrangement appeared likely to be upset by a novel electioneering element of a most disturbing and revolutionary character. You will readily perceive that I allude to

THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE,

an organisation which, in piscatorial language, may be described as a most alluring bait, which, in the hands of an astute angler like Mr. Gladstone, may be employed with the most deadly results. This bait was designed in Dublin, manufactured in Birmingham, and introduced to the public on the banks of the Thames. In clear water, with a cloudless sky, and a bright sun, no angler of experience would ever dream of attempting to fish with such tackle, for he must well know that even the youngest and most inexperienced "fry," would at once detect the Brummagem tinsel, and thus discover its artificial, hollow, and unreal composition, and would have none of it. But when the waters are disturbed by some exciting cause, when the sky is clouded, and the sun obscured, then the wily angler knows that his opportunity has arrived, and he dexterously drops the bait into a likely pool, where the younger fry rush at it open-mouthed, and swallow it without consideration to their ultimate destruction. Others also at first eagerly rise at it, but on reflection some of the more cautious repent in time and disgorge it; whilst the older and more experienced pass it by as something to be avoided. Now, gentlemen, in a company like the present, you will, I know, readily be able to apply this simile to the agricultural position, for when agriculture is prosperous, and when our seed times and harvests come and go with regularity, then Mr. Gladstone and his followers well know that it would be useless to attempt to make political capital out of the agricultural interest. But when, on the other hand, agriculture is suffering, as it is at present, from a series of bad harvests, unfavourable seasons, and an unwarrantable number of diseases among our flocks and herds, all combining, unfortunately, to produce

a very natural condition of dissatisfaction, ruin, and dismay throughout the agricultural classes in this country, then the Radical party and the Farmers' Alliance see their opportunity of making capital out of the situation, and immediately drop their unsavoury bait in front of the unfortunate farmer in the hope of distracting his attention and tempting him from his former allegiance by destroying those ties of affinity which have for generations bound together the landlords and tenants. I am frequently asked what the Farmers' Alliance really is?

WHAT IS ITS CONSTITUTION AND WHAT ARE ITS OBJECTS?

I cannot attempt to explain its composition otherwise than by describing to you who and what are the leaders and officials of this organisation. As far, therefore, as I can gather, it consists of a president, two vice-presidents, a secretary, and, I presume, a council or committee, but for all practical purposes the president, the vice-presidents, and the secretary form the recognised executive. The president is Mr. James Howard, the member for Bedfordshire, and a partner in a very large firm of implement makers, who have amassed a considerable fortune from this business, naturally and in a great measure out of the pockets of the British farmer. The vice-president (at least the one who is best known and most active in this work) is Mr. Barclay, the member for Forfarshire, who is, I am told, a manufacturer of artificial manures, and has made a considerable fortune, I presume, out of the pockets of the Scotch farmers. I will not refer to the antecedents of the secretary beyond saying that I believe he was formerly the editor of a Radical London newspaper, which has the good fortune to be now regarded as the organ of the Farmers' Alliance. The only other member of this self-constituted Salvation Army whom I know is also a large and influential agricultural implement maker. Now I do not for a moment desire to refer to the private occupation or business of any of these gentlemen in an offensive manner, but my object in doing so at all is to point out to you the entire absence of the tenant-farmer element from the posts of responsibility or management of this body. The programme of the Alliance contains much that is useful and of which I entirely approve; but I share the opinion of the boy regarding the powder in the spoonful of jam, that the jam contains much that is exceedingly distasteful. The most important feature in the programme of the Alliance is that the managers of that body profess to see that the farmers of England shall be better represented in Parliament. They also profess to be a non-political body, always considering agriculture first and politics afterwards; but if this be so, how do they reconcile this statement with the fact that all the leaders and officials mentioned above are extreme Radicals? It is true, I believe, that one of the vice-presidents—a Mr. Parsons—is

a so-called Conservative, but from the small share he takes in matters affecting the Alliance it is generally supposed that he is simply thrown in for appearance sake. And how is it also that the Farmers' Alliance is clearly responsible for having turned my friend Mr. Clare Sewell Read out of the House of Commons? and let me say that no more able and independent representative of the tenant-farmers' interest ever sat in that House. The only reply possible is, because he is a Conservative. Then, again, why does this agricultural caucus never support any but Radical candidates? Do you think they would ever have dreamt of supporting men like my friend Mr. Outhwaite unless he had been willing to swallow the Alliance Pill, which would have made him essentially a Radical? No, gentlemen, the more you inquire into it and watch its proceedings, the more apparent it becomes that the professions and the performances of the Farmers' Alliance do not harmonise. It is an organisation, however, the importance of which must not be ignored. I sincerely believe it to be most dangerous, mischievous, and insidious in its character. It had evidently been well considered and thought out in all its bearings by its promoters before they launched it on the public. I believe it to be far-reaching and widely comprehensive in its objects. It embraces the aspirations of the Irish Home Ruler by practically granting fixity of tenure without requiring an equivalent from one party or granting compensation to the other, which is nothing less than robbery and confiscation; whilst it, at the same time, plays into the hands of the Manchester and Birmingham schools, whose objects have ever been to destroy the bulwarks and undermine the foundation upon which the agricultural interests of this country have stood and flourished for generations past. The line of action of the Farmers' Alliance is, first to create a feud between landlord and tenant; but it will not stop here, for its next move will be to set the labourer against his employer, and having succeeded in producing this chaotic condition of things it expects to swamp the political influence of the agricultural interest and turn it in its own favour. It will be a sorry day for England when the three great interests—landlord, tenant, and labourer—become separated, for from that day will date the downfall of British agriculture. Is not, therefore, the action of the Radical party, through this instrument in their hands—the Farmers' Alliance—most unpatriotic, at a moment especially when the best endeavours of all right-minded men ought to be directed towards cementing more closely and firmly the bonds that unite the interests of landlord and tenant, and thus enabling them together to tide over this serious period of unparalleled depression, instead of turning it to their own selfish and political advantage? I see in the daily action of the present Government how closely allied it is with the Farmers' Alliance, which is a powerful lever in the

hands of Mr. Gladstone, whenever he thinks fit to make use of it, for electioneering purposes, as he did in the recent election in this division. I am fortified in this opinion by the following occurrence in the House of Commons. It may be in your recollection that about the close of last Session a question was asked of the Prime Minister by the Chairman of the Farmers' Alliance, in his capacity of member for Bedfordshire, as to the probability or intention of the Government to bring in a Land Bill during the present Session. The reply of Mr. Gladstone was both remarkable and suggestive, for he told Mr. Howard that their action in the matter must depend upon two points: First, whether the farmers desired to have a Land Bill at all, and, secondly, with what force and power they expressed that desire. Well, gentlemen, when I read this question and reply, their pre-arrangement appeared beyond a doubt, whilst never was a more glaring invitation for agitation thrown out to the farmers of this country. We had not long to wait in order to see its effects, for during the autumn we began to read of meetings of farmers taking place in the far north—in Aberdeenshire, Morayshire, and Forfarshire—delegates were sent down from the Farmers' Alliance, branches of the Alliance were formed, whilst the spark that had been lighted in the north spread with the rapidity of a rocket through the length and breadth of Scotland, touching county after county till it at last crossed the border; and having expended its force on the banks of the Tees, it went off in a grand display of fireworks to the admiration and wonder of the Quaker inhabitants of Darlington. Now, gentlemen, I have endeavoured to give you some idea of the acts and deeds of the Farmers' Alliance out of doors, where it is anxious to appear as the farmers' friend; but let me ask you for a moment to consider the action and behaviour of the leaders and representatives of the Alliance in the House of Commons. I will give you one or two illustrations. In March of last year the honourable member for Mid-Lincolnshire, Mr. Chaplin—than whom no more consistent supporter or able exponent of the tenant-farmers' interests sits in the House of Commons—brought forward a motion, calling attention to the serious outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease all over the country. He showed that by the action of

THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT,

introduced by the Duke of Richmond, the late Government had succeeded in stamping out that disease entirely, and for nine months before the late Government left office there had not been a single case of disease, and, in fact, the country was perfectly free. Within a very short time after the Liberal Government came in three cargoes of diseased animals were admitted into Deptford, and within two or three days afterwards foot-and-mouth disease appeared in the

London dairies, and from there spread rapidly all over the country. Mr. Chaplin, therefore, asked by his motion that no animals from countries where that disease was known to exist at the time should be permitted to land in this country under any circumstances whatever. To this motion, Mr. James Howard, the Chairman of the Farmers' Alliance, and his supporters in the House belonging to the Alliance, offered their most strenuous opposition. But in spite of this opposition on the part of the Farmers' Alliance and the Government combined, Mr. Chaplin's motion was only defeated by a small majority, whereas if it had received the support of the Farmers' Alliance instead of their opposition there is no doubt it would have been carried, and the country rendered free from any further risk of imported diseases. To show you the importance of this subject, however, I may mention that since March last no fewer than 78 cargoes of diseased animals have been imported into this country, so that we need not be much surprised at the frequent outbreaks of which we read. Allow me to give you one further illustration. Mr. Chaplin's

was read a second time unanimously in 1881, and although Mr. James Howard opposed it on the second reading, he withdrew his motion, and it was passed by the unanimous consent of both sides of the House. Not being able, however, to carry it through its later stages, owing to the great pressure of Irish and other business, Mr. Chaplin re-introduced it this Session. Mr. James Howard, although he dared not divide against it last Session, immediately blocked it, in the hope of stopping even its introduction. It is due, however, to Mr. Howard to say that on the following day he apologised and expressed his regret to Mr. Chaplin, saying that he had done it in a fit of temper and vexation in consequence of his own Bill having been objected to by another member. Mr. Howard, I believe, also offered to take it off, but too late, as his blocking motion was on the paper of that day, and as Mr. Chaplin's Bill could not be taken after half-past twelve o'clock by the rules of the House, consequently unless it was reached before that hour he would have been deprived of all chance of proceeding with the Bill during the present Session. By a miracle of good luck, however, the debate on the Irish question came to an end at half-past eleven, and as Mr Chaplin's Bill stood seventh or eighth on the list he was enabled to introduce it, and I am glad to say he has secured the 14th of June as the day for its second reading. It is to be hoped that if the leaders of the Farmers' Alliance in the House of Commons wish to persevere in their opposition to this and other Bills applying to agriculture, they will adopt some other course of procedure than the unusual one to which I have alluded. Again there

was a Bill in the session of 1881, brought in by Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Rodwell, and Mr. Cropper, for the purpose of exempting machinery hired or borrowed by a farmer, and all stock agisted upon the farm, from the operation of

THE LAW OF DISTRESS.

The Bill was universally approved, the agricultural journals were in its favour, and there was no opposition except by Mr. Barclay, the Vice-President of the Alliance. It passed the second reading after a short discussion, and he then blocked it, and, in spite of Sir H. Holland and Mr. Rodwell watching night after night, succeeded in his obstruction. In fact, the policy of all the Alliance men has been to stop the progress of any measure for the relief of agriculture which did not originate from themselves. Gentlemen, I have endeavoured, however inadequately, to lay before you the manner in which the Farmers' Alliance proceeds in its public duty both in and out of the House of Commons, and I leave it for you to say whether you desire your interests as agriculturists to be represented in such a manner. I venture to think that I may have satisfied you as to how far this organisation is non-political in its action, and to what extent its profession of being agricultural first and political afterwards is justified by facts. Another prominent subject in the programme of the Farmers Alliance is the total abolition of the Law of Distress, which formed a leading feature of discussion on both sides during the recent election. Standing as I do before you, gentlemen, this evening, in the varied capacity of a landlord, a representative of considerable estates, and a tenant-farmer, I feel that I may be permitted to make a few remarks upon this subject. Well then, gentlemen, I may start by saying that, from a landlord's point of view, I look upon this matter with comparative indifference, because I am aware that in letting his land the landlord can, in the event of the repeal of the Law of Distress, make such special arrangements as will secure him from loss of rent, though I believe these safeguards will be of a much more onerous nature than at present exist towards the tenant. But from the standpoint of a tenant-farmer, I regard this question far otherwise. I maintain that it is essentially a tenant's question, and especially a " small " tenant's question. The abolition or repeal of this law would entail a levelling down of all classes. The tenant of 200 acres would have to level himself down to 100 acres, while the occupier of 100 acres must revert to the position of a farm labourer, and there he must remain. This of itself would, in my eyes, be a national misfortune, for in my own county I could point to hundreds of men who, by industry, thrift, and integrity, and by the protection afforded by this law, have risen from the position of shepherds and labourers to become considerable farmers, and to occupy influential positions in the agricultural

world. I understand the Law of Distress to be one of the incidents of the Law of Real Property. Land has been bought and sold for all time subject to this law as part of the bargain, and for which money consideration has been given, and it has thus become part of the security for which the purchaser has paid his money, upon which the mortgagee has arranged his loan, and upon which rent charges have been created. Any ruthless interference, therefore, with this law, to the extent of a total repeal, would be equivalent to an unjustifiable detraction from the value of property. We are told by those who advocate the abolition of this law that it would be to the tenant's advantage by placing all creditors on an equal footing with the landlord, that it would add to his independence, and enable him to procure greater facilities from his banker by having better security to offer him. Gentlemen, there is probably not a man in this room who has not, during some period of his life, been in some measure indebted to his banker for monetary assistance. Bankers are, as a body, a very estimable class of men ready to grant you accommodation, but upon two conditions: first, that you must furnish them with ample security, and, secondly, that you must pay for the privilege you are receiving. Now I would like to ask gentlemen this evening, if there is not another body of men who are equally accommodating, especially in times of depression like the present, I refer to the landlords. Have you the smallest conception at this moment of the amount of money that the landlords have practically lent out to their tenants during the past four or five years in the shape of arrears, remissions, and reductions of rent, aye, even in hard cash, for which they will never ask for a penny as interest, and in a majority of cases will never see their principal again? Gentlemen, this is no imaginary statement; but does it not appear to you unreasonable to deprive the landlord of the partial security he possesses, and that enables him in the hour of need to lend a helping hand to a suffering tenant on more liberal terms than he can expect to receive assistance elsewhere, and, in fact, when he is not in a position to offer any security at all to his bankers? Believe me, gentlemen, you are safer in the hands of your landlords as your bankers than in those of anybody else. And when the history of the present agricultural depression comes to be written—if it ever be written by an unprejudiced pen—the conduct of the landlords of this country in generously coming forward, at the greatest sacrifice to themselves, to share with the tenant-farmer in his misfortunes and losses will deserve to be recorded in letters of gold. But, gentlemen, I do not consider that the tenant-farmers of England are responsible for this outcry against the Law of Distress. It has certainly become an electioneering cry of the Radical party; but it found its origin with the tradesmen, with the agricultural implement makers, artificial manure manufacturers, and other trades connected with agriculture. These traders now ask

to be placed on what they call equal terms with the landlord, whilst during all these years they have been selling their wares subject to the existence of this law and charging a price sufficiently high to cover their risk. What more do they require? Do you for a moment imagine they will be willing to charge the farmer one penny less for their articles if this law were abolished? No, gentlemen; I venture to think that if we depend upon such promises or hopes we are trusting to a broken reed. I have pointed out, however, that even if the Law of Distress were abolished, the landlord would be able to make such special arrangements as would secure him against loss. This may be done in various ways, but the most probable plan to be adopted would be what is called "*fore-renting*," which means depriving the tenant of that credit he now possesses. I confess I was much surprised to read during the recent election that the Radical party, who so much desire to be regarded as the farmers' friends, strongly advocated such a course. I cannot conceive that such a recommendation could come from anyone who was not in reality the small farmers' greatest enemy, and such, I venture to think, is your opinion also. But when a desire is expressed that a certain law must be abolished, it becomes our duty to look for some substitute. In this case we must look abroad to find a country in which the Law of Distress does not exist, and I find that Denmark is a country of this character. It appears that in Denmark the landlord protects himself by exacting the payment of a year's rent in advance, and the deposit of certificates for a certain amount of funded property, or, in lieu thereof, the security or guarantee of one or two responsible persons. This statement is corroborated by a letter I hold in my hand from Mr. Westenholz, the Consul-General of Denmark, a gentleman thoroughly conversant with agricultural matters, who in writing to my friend Mr. Jenkins, the secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, used these words: "With regard to distraint for non-payment of rent, I do not believe any law exists in Denmark giving landlords preference over other creditors. Hence the custom of stipulating for prepayment and sufficient securities, as alluded to by you; and the securities, I know, sometimes consist in ready money, deposited with the landlord, upon which he allows the tenant a mere interest of 4 per cent. I am of opinion that the absence of any law of distraint acts against the farmers of my country." Gentlemen, I put it to you whether such an alteration in the Law of Distress, as I have indicated as existing elsewhere, would be to your comfort, convenience, or advantage? But do not misunderstand me with reference to this matter, for, whilst I consider that the total abolition of the Law of Distress would be detrimental to the interests of the tenant-farmer, and especially to the smaller class of farmers, I am free to admit that a modification and alteration of this law is highly desir-

able. I should be prepared to advocate the limitation of its action to one or two years, and I would even go so far as to exempt labourers' wages, seed-corn, and certain defined implements of husbandry, from its operation, in order that—from a national point of view—there should be some guarantee that the land may not remain in an idle or unprofitable condition. Such an arrangement would, to my mind, meet all the requirements of those who consider this question in a practical and agricultural point of view, and who do not regard it from a political and party standpoint. Now, gentlemen, in order to treat this matter with all fairness, pray let me give you the reasons advanced by Mr. James Howard for first starting the Farmers' Alliance. In a letter written to the *Times* on Nov. 15, 1881, he says: "Widespread disappointment was now felt at the neglect of the farming interest by the Government, which had been in power for six years. Great dissatisfaction was, moreover, expressed that instead of remedial measures being introduced, the Government folded its arms and contented itself by proposing a

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY."

Gentlemen, it was quite time that Lord Beaconsfield's Government proposed a Royal Commission, fully alive to the importance of the subject and of the serious condition to which agriculture had been brought by recent disastrous seasons, and anxious to sift the matter to the very root in order to see in what way, if any, legislation could be applied to the relief and benefit of the British farmer. Upon this Commission Mr. Howard's brother sits as one of the most able and independent representatives of the farmers of this country. But if the Commission had done nothing more than furnish an opportunity to the leaders and officials of the Farmers' Alliance to air their crotchets and expose their fallacies, it would deserve the thanks of the farmers of England. The Right Hon. Mr. Dodson also, in a speech at Scarborough, as one of the emissaries sent down by Mr. Gladstone during the recent election, said that it was a mistake to call

THE TORY PARTY THE FARMERS' FRIENDS,

for they were nothing more than a party of promisers and not of performers, and had really done nothing for the farming interest. Gentlemen, do you call it nothing that the Conservative Government should have relieved local taxation to the amount of 2½ millions per annum, whilst in the year 1881 these subventions, the offspring of Conservative legislation, amounted to no less a sum than £2,972,451? Is it nothing that the taxes on agricultural horses and your favourite colley dogs were abolished by them? Is it nothing that the

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT

was passed into law by the untiring energy of the Duke of Richmond,

who above all living men has a right to be regarded as the greatest benefactor to all classes connected with agriculture? By this Act the presumption of law with regard to improvements in land was changed in favour of the tenant-farmer. I am aware that it has been denounced by our political opponents as "a sham," because of the clause in the Act which enables the landlord or tenant to make an agreement with special conditions which they may consider likely to suit their respective circumstances better than the more general conditions contained in the Act. Let me ask you what great and successful measure of legislation was ever carried in the first instance in a compulsory form, and let me further ask my friend Sir Wilfrid Lawson and his followers wherein is the great difference between local option in liquor and local option in agriculture? From my own personal knowledge, however, I can assure you that this Act—inoperative as our opponents would lead us to believe it to be—has done an immense deal of good to the farming interest of this country, by suggesting to the minds of intelligent and right-minded landlords and land agents the justice and desirability of incorporating conditions in their agreements giving security to their tenants in terms more or less in accordance with those of the Act. It is quite possible that the day may arrive when it will be advisable to make this Act compulsory, and I, for one, should be the last to object to such a course. It should, however, continually be borne in mind that a Conservative Government were the progenitors of the scheme, and that though at the time the Act was passed (mainly by the instrumentality of the Duke of Richmond), it would have been highly impolitic, nay, utterly impracticable, to make such a measure compulsory on either landlord or tenant; yet I think I may say that the minds of both these classes have been educated to see the advantages conferred by the Act. In some cases, perhaps, the Act will be unnecessary, on account of the liberal agreements already in force; but in others—I speak of those in which the tenants are not so favourably situated—it will be highly acceptable and beneficial. One more subject permit me to allude to, as an undoubted benefit conferred upon the agricultural interest by the Conservative Government, and that is the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act of 1878, better known as

THE CATTLE BILL.

It would, indeed, be a case of gross omission if I neglected referring to this matter in this particular district, for, important though it be, it was not carried without the greatest difficulty, and with the most appalling sacrifice—a sacrifice to you, a sacrifice to me, and a sacrifice to the nation at large, and that is the sacrifice of the valued life of our dear friend Mr. Tom Booth. Gentlemen, if any memorial were desired to his memory, none of a more permanent character could be erected than the successful issue of this important piece of legisla-

tion. It was not carried, however, without the greatest difficulty, and most strenuous opposition from the Radical party, and night after night did Mr. Booth and I watch its course through the House of Commons, opposed at every stage, and by whom? By men like Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Mundella, and last, but not least, by Mr. Barclay, who now poses himself before the country as the farmers' friend. Gentlemen, before I leave this subject let me for a moment allude to an article in a Scotch paper in which the writer went out of his way to call in question the remarks of my friend Mr. John Booth, who in referring to this question during the recent election took occasion to say that the opposition to the Bill was to be found in the Radical camp. The writer to whom I allude said that nobody knew better than Mr. John Booth that this was not the case, that it was not a political question, but one rather between borough and county. Gentlemen, if Mr. Booth required anybody to corroborate his statement I am now here to do so. You want no more convincing proof of the fallacy of this theory than to have pointed out to you that one of the most ardent supporters and promoters of the Bill was Mr. George Elliot, the member for the borough of Northallerton—a fact which redounds to his credit, and is worthy of lasting recollection by the farmers of this district. But you will not now be surprised to hear me repeat that one of the most determined opponents of the Bill was Mr. Barclay, the member for the county of Forfar. Gentlemen, where credit is due there let it be given. Many other matters of legislation might I refer to as having been the work of the Conservative party, but time will not permit me to do so; but in justice to the present Liberal Government I feel I must not ignore what they have done in the way of legislation for the farming interest. Immediately after coming into power in 1880, and in gratitude to the agricultural constituencies that had, to their surprise, placed them in power, they brought in *two* measures which they desired to serve as a sop to the farmer. One of these was the

HARES AND RABBITS BILL,

and the other what is generally known as the repeal of the malt tax. I never think of these two subjects without remembering an amusing incident in connection with them. It so happened that I was in the House of Commons on the evening that Mr. Gladstone introduced his Bill for the repeal of the Malt Tax, and on the same night the second reading of the Hares and Rabbits Bill was moved by Sir William Harcourt. I well remember seeing him rise in his place with that arrogant manner so peculiarly his own, and using words somewhat to this effect: "The 10th of June, 1880, will long be remembered by the British farmers as the occasion upon which two Bills were discussed in this House

as likely to confer the greatest blessings upon them." Gentlemen, after being somewhat taken aback by such a sweeping assertion, I turned to my friend near me and said, "I venture to think that the day will come when the British farmers will refer to those two Acts in the simple words of '*Thank you for nothing.*'" Gentlemen, I ask, is not that now your reply? As far as the Hares and Rabbits Bill is concerned, I am bound to admit that I see very little difference in the condition of things; but where any difference does at all exist it is seen in the fact of the farmer having been deprived by this Act of the power to claim compensation for damage done to his crops. Then as to the

REPEAL OF THE MALT TAX,

I do not regard it as a repeal at all. It is simply a substitution of one tax for another, which is no relief, whilst its practical operation is best shown by the patent fact that you and I cannot sell our inferior barley at any price. Now to what is this due? (A Voice: "To the repeal of the Malt Tax.") Yes, sir, that is my opinion also, and I will endeavour to show you why. Mr. Gladstone succeeded in inserting clauses into the Act that practically offered a premium on inferior light foreign barley and other substances to the exclusion of our own home-grown barley. He created a standard of 1,057 degrees as the specific gravity of every two bushels of malt, whilst 42 lbs. weight of malt or corn of any description, or 28 lbs. of sugar, was deemed the equivalent of a bushel of malt. If it fails to come up to the standard, then the extra duty is to be paid on the raw material. French barley, if even only 53 lbs. per bushel, will give a higher standard than our damaged barley, therefore French barley, poorer though it be in appearance, is imported to our detriment. In the years 1872 and 1878 I believe the quality of barley was as inferior as we have it this year; but during those years maltsters and brewers succeeded in converting such barley into malt and beer of various degrees of quality; whilst this year the case is far different, as the maltsters dare not attempt to make use of it for fear of not coming up to the hard and fast standard, and fearing that they may be mulcted in the payment of an extra duty on the raw material. Therefore I feel justified in saying to the present Government, in return for these two wonderful efforts of legislation—"*Thank you for nothing.*" Whether we shall have any further legislation in the direction of relief in the matter of local taxation I know not, but you will observe that Mr. Gladstone has a great dread that if he helps the tenants in this manner, the landlords will get the benefit, and this is exactly what he and his Radical supporters do not want. Far rather would they allow the tenant to continue to suffer than that the landlord should receive any benefit. But enough, gentle-

men, of the past; our attention may more profitably be directed to

THE FUTURE.

I am no alarmist. Permit me to say, that after a most careful consideration of all matters concerned, and after giving due weight to the important question of the importation of farm produce of all kinds from other countries, I have come to the conclusion that we English farmers have nothing to fear for the future of the agriculture of this country. It is quite possible that we may have to change our system of management in many respects in order to keep pace with the altered conditions of the day, but with a re-arrangement of rents, at present taking place on all sides —whether of a permanent or temporary character;—with land relieved of much of the unjust and inequitable taxation imposed upon it;—with a just scale of compensation for unexhausted improvements;—with ample and reasonable security for tenant's capital;—with consistent legislation to prevent the introduction of contagious diseases from foreign countries, and ample safeguards at home, we may yet find the earnest desires of our hearts gratified. To landlords I say, Stick by your old and tried tenants. To tenants I say, Place trust and confidence in your landlords. Permit no side issue or momentary panic to distract your attention or entice you from the political traditions of your ancestors; and, above all, stick to the great Conservative cause of this country, which is naturally so closely identified with and representative of the agricultural interest, and, whilst progressive in its action, will jealously protect and defend the institutions and the bulwarks of our constitution. Then, with a return of fine seasons, which are as sure to recur as day and night alternate, and of which I venture to think the present fine winter is a precursor, we shall once more find farming a prosperous and lucrative occupation, and we shall again live to see the agriculture of our beloved country stand out in bold relief, to the admiration and pride of Englishmen and the wonder and envy of all nations. (Cheers.)

PUBLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL UNION.—No. VI.

CONSERVATIVE LEGISLATION

FOR THE

WORKING CLASSES.

No. 1.—MINES AND FACTORIES.

BY A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

OF "THE NATIONAL UNION."

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CONSERVATIVE LEGISLATION

FOR THE

WORKING CLASSES.

I.—MINES AND FACTORIES.

Mr. Gladstone, in his manifesto at Ormskirk prior to his first accession to power, challenged Mr. Disraeli and the Conservative party generally to produce the names of 32 measures, "*the* 32 measures which had done so much good in the country in these last years, which had all of them been supported by the party with which Mr. Disraeli was associated, and had been strongly, even bitterly, opposed by other quarters of the House."

We accepted Mr. Gladstone's challenge, and passed first in review the Acts (then nineteen in number) relative to Mines and Factories.

The number of these Acts is now increased to twenty-eight, and it has become necessary to supplement our former review by fresh particulars.

What is Mr. Gladstone's first appearance as a legislator in connection with these Acts?

In the division lists of the House of Commons, silently obstructing the third reading of the Bill "to prohibit the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries, and to regulate the employment of boys" (5 and 6 Vict., cap. 99), introduced in 1842 by the present Earl of Shaftesbury —then Lord Ashley. (1) "To the great cause of Factory Legislation the Earl of Shaftesbury has sacrificed his whole political life. (2)" Yes, this nobleman, so distinguished in the House of Commons as the Conservative Lord Ashley, has for more than fifty years (3) consecrated his time and talents to the amelioration of the condition of the humbler classes of his countrymen.

In 1832-3, numerously-signed petitions "for the abolition of Infant Slavery in factories" were presented to Parliament from the working classes, who were then, as now, "anxious to reap the substantial fruits of reform." (4)

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(1) See the Division lists in "*Hansard's* Parliamentary Debates," 3rd Series, vol. 64, p. 937. The name of the late Earl of Derby—then Lord Stanley—appears amongst Lord Shaftesbury's supporters.

(2) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 189, p. 1212, per Lord Harrowby. See p. 13, *infra*.

(3) In 1828, he was pleading for "Pauper Lunatics." *Hansard*, New Series, vol. 18, p. 583.

(4) See *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 15, p. 1293, from Bradford; *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 16, p. 878, from Leeds; *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 18, p. 447, from Carlisle.

"The subject of the limitation of the hours of labour in factories," writes the historian of the French Revolution, "a most important one, and loudly calling for the interference of the Legislature, was brought before Parliament by Lord Ashley, who had long devoted the ardour of a philanthropic mind to the subject." (5) That nobleman was in a position to say that "the operatives had entrusted their case into his hands," and that "he was as much their representative as any member of the House of Commons was the representative of his constituency." (6)

How did Radical M.P.s then express themselves with reference to factory legislation? Mr. Cobbett said that "whenever a Government or whenever a Legislature attempted to interfere in the regulation of labour, to make laws between master and servant, it *always failed.*" (7) Mr. Fryer, M.P. for Wolverhampton, "was *satisfied* that the Factories Bill would prove nothing but a delusion." A repeal of the Corn Laws was the "*only* relief that could be afforded to a manufacturing population." (8) Mr. Mark Philips, M.P. for Manchester, said that "if the Bill of Lord Ashley were to pass for two years, or even for one year, at the end of that time the trade would be wholly gone from this country, and would be in the hands of foreigners." (9) Mr. Potter, M.P. for Wigan, "must repeat what he had said on a previous night, that if such a Bill were to pass into law, a blow would be inflicted on the cotton trade from which it never could recover." (10) The "party of stupidity," in this case, at least, was, *pace* Mr. Mill, the Radical party.

The provisions of this Bill, as ultimately carried, are thus summarised by the historian: "That the labour of children in factories, under thirteen years of age, should be limited to eight hours a day; that children under nine years of age should be prevented from working at all; that persons under eighteen years of age should never be obliged to work more than twelve hours on any one day, or sixty-nine hours in the week. Factory inspectors also were appointed, which was a very great improvement, to enforce the due observance of the law, and provision was made for the establishment of a system of education for children in the manufacturing districts." (11)

This Bill, the first important one upon the subject, received the Royal assent on the 29th of August, 1833; and appears in our Statute-book as the 3 and 4 Will. 4, cap. 103: "An Act to Regulate the Labour of Children and Young Persons in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom."

The next important Act is the 5 and 6 Vict., cap. 99, already referred to, which received the Royal Assent on the 10th of August, 1842.

If some inquiring mind is seeking an answer to the question, "*Cui bono* the Lords Spiritual—the first estate of the realm?" he may, perhaps, find some clue to it in the noble protests of the Episcopal

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(5) Alison's History of Europe, from 1815 to 1852, vol. 5, p. 438.
(6) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 18, pp. 307, 308.
(7) Vol. 15, p. 1294.
(8) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 16, p. 879.
(9) Vol. 16, p. 1001.
(10) Vol. 16, p. 1001.
(11) See (5).

Bench against the white slavery of our infant and female miners in 1842. (12) How different the language of "Liberals" in the Lower House! Mr. Ainsworth, M.P. for Bolton, said that "the effect of Lord Ashley's Bill would be to deteriorate the condition of the children, and to aggravate the distress which already existed among the working classes." He contended that the children were well fed, comfortably clad, and healthy. "By this Bill they would be reduced to a state of privation and suffering." (13) Mr. Stansfield, M.P. for Huddersfield, "thought that if the restrictive clauses of this Bill were put into operation, the trade in coals would be altogether annihilated." (14) "If they were to go on in this way *every* class would soon have its enactment. . . Really, they should consider what these children were to do on the days they made them idle by Act of Parliament! They did not provide education for them, and yet they refused to let them earn *an honest livelihood.*" (15) Yes, earning "an honest livelihood," "chained," as the Bishop of Norwich pointed out, "to their labour of dragging small vehicles loaded with coal through narrow passages, in which they were obliged to crawl upon their hands and knees, their garments drenched with water!" (16) Let anyone who wishes to obtain further information on this subject read the reports of the Children's Employment Commission in 1842-3, which Alison justly characterises as "startling and horrible;" (17) or, if he has not leisure for that purpose, let him read the speech of Lord Ashley, when asking leave to introduce the Bill, (18) and we feel persuaded that he will agree with the Bishop of Gloucester that it was the duty of the Legislature "to enforce morality by legislation;" (19) but yet never once in the course of the debates on this Bill did Mr. Gladstone lift up his voice in furtherance of that legislation! The effect of the Bill, as ultimately carried, is briefly stated by the historian: "The employment of females in mines was absolutely prohibited in all cases; that of boys was limited to 10 years of age and upwards; and inspectors were appointed to see the Act carried out into full execution." (20)

"Encouraged," continues Alison, (1843) "by this success, Lord Ashley brought forward a motion for an address to the Queen for a general system of religious education for the working classes, and this was followed by a Bill, introduced by Sir James Graham, for the better regulation and education of factory children. By this Bill it was proposed that no children between the ages of 6 and 13 should work more than $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours; that they should be obliged to attend schools

(12 See *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 63, p. 196, and vol. 64, p. 1166 (Bishop of Norwich); vol. 65. p. 101 (Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury); p. 122 (Bishop of Gloucester).
(13) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 64, pp. 1000-1.
(14) P. 936.
(15) PP. 1006-7.
(16) Vol. 63, p. 196.
(17) History of Europe, from 1815 to 1852: vol. 7, p. 79. Appointed, in answer to an address of the House of Commons, moved by Lord Ashley, Aug. 4th, 1840; see *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 55, pp. 1260-1279.
(18) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 63, pp. 1320-1352.
(19) Vol. 65, p. 122.
(20) Alison's History of Europe, from 1815 to 1852: vol. 7, p. 79.

appointed for the purpose; and that the children of Roman Catholics and Dissenters should be committed for so many hours in each week to religious teachers, according to the creed of their respective parents. The measure was to include pauper children at factories, and the children of all persons, whether paupers or not, whom their parents chose to send to the school, whether they were factory children or not. There were to be seven trustees to each school under the Act, three of whom were to be the clergyman of the district and two of his churchwardens; the other four to be elected by the ratepayers. The Bill, which was evidently founded on the right principles on the subject, met with very general support in the House of Commons; and the Queen's reply to the address presented to her on the subject was very cordial. But difficult in the extreme are all attempts at beneficent legislation in matters where sectarian zeal deems itself interested. The Dissenters took fright at the composition of the boards of parish trustees, even though the larger proportion of them were to be elected by the ratepayers; and such was the clamour raised on the subject, and the multitude of petitions which flowed in from the efforts of the Dissenters, that Sir James Graham, with expressions of extreme regret, was obliged to withdraw, first, the educational clauses, and, at last, the whole Bill." (21)

"On the part of the Church," said Sir James Graham, "there has been exhibited willingness to make a considerable sacrifice;" but he pointed out that it had not been met in a corresponding spirit. (22) Mr. Gally Knight uttered a prophecy during these debates, which was only too fully verified. He expressed a hope that the Dissenting body would take the modifications (proposed by Sir James Graham) into consideration, "and not take upon themselves the fearful responsibility of defeating this plan. If they did succeed (in defeating it) no other plan could be attempted." (23) "I see the Church," said Lord Ashley, "prepared to make concessions for the sake of conciliation and peace; and, on the other hand, I see the great body of Dissenters rejoicing that they have been successful in their efforts to defeat the measure. The real suffering party," he added, "are the vast body of neglected children who are now consigned to an eternity of ignorance." (24)

In view of these facts, how can Churchmen or Conservatives, with any show of reason or justice, be charged with conspiring to withhold the key of knowledge from the working classes?

The next enactment which claims our attention is the statute 7 and 8 Vict., cap. 15: "An Act to amend the laws relating to labour in factories" which received the Royal assent on the 6th of June, 1844.

At the head of a list of "noes" on the question that the Bill should pass, we find the now well-known name of "Bright, J." (25). Mr. Bright had been elected a few months previously for the city of Durham, and he thus

(21) History of Europe, from 1815 to 1852: vol. 7, pp. 79,80.
(22) See *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol.69, p. 1567.
(23) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 68, p. 1127.
(24) Vol. 70, p. 94.
(25) Vol. 74, p. 1108.

displayed his zeal for the interest of the working classes during the debates on Lord Ashley's Ten Hours Clause, and his deference to their opinions: "On the one side, they had a document prepared by persons who called themselves delegates of the operative classes of the North of England, and signed by their chairman; and they had, on the other side, a paper put forward on the authority of eight mill-owners, who were admitted to be the most respectable members of their class, whether regarded with respect to intelligence, to wealth, or to general character. . . He would ask whether the returns made from such a number of *mill-owners*, belonging to all shades of politics, were not *more to be relied on* than either the statement of the noble lord (Ashley), or his friends, the operative delegates?" (26)

How different was the language of the true friends of the operative—Mr. Ferrand, for example, "speaking," as he did, "the sentiments of hundreds and of thousands of his fellow-countrymen belonging to the working classes!" "It is a question," he said, "which belongs solely to the working classes of the manufacturing districts. . . . It is a question for which the working classes have contended for twelve years, and which they are determined to stand by and struggle for by every constitutional means. . . There is a unanimous feeling among the working classes that they have been reduced to the most abject state of misery and slavery, and that there are no means of rescuing them but the Ten Hours Bill. . . I implore the House to do justice to the working classes. . . This House has been accused of legislating for the rich and not for the poor; but now, when it has triumphantly asserted that it will legislate upon principles of humanity and of justice and protection to the working classes, fancy not that you can by a side wind to-night, or by unfair means, debar the working classes of their just rights. . . . . The working classes have a desire to endure and suffer without complaint, but you may try their patience too long; and if you refuse this measure, the day will come when you will deeply regret it, and when the working classes will exact it from your unwilling hands." (27)

Mr. Bright not only treated the operatives with contempt—he attacked the principle of the Bill. "It was admitted," said Mr. Bright, "on all hands that the noble lord's proposition violated principle—that it would reduce wages, and interfere, as many believed, with the foreign trade. When proceeding in the direction of a bad principle, too great caution could not be exercised." Mr. Bright concluded an eloquent peroration by characterising the Bill as "miserable legislation on principles false and mischievous." (28)

These attacks secured the rejection of Lord Ashley's clause to restrict the labour of young persons in factories to eleven hours per diem, or sixty-four hours per week, for three years, and at the end of that time to ten hours per diem, or fifty-eight hours per week.

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(26) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 74, pp. 1063, 1064, 1066.
(27) PP. 969, 970, 972, 975.
(28) PP. 1070. 1071.

Mr. Gladstone's name will be found in the division lists (not in the debates). In the division in which Lord Ashley carried his ten hours clause and the house by storm, Mr. Gladstone's name will be found in the list of the minority. (29) When Lord Ashley was defeated, Mr. Gladstone's name will be found in the list of the majority. (30) We need scarcely say that Mr. Bright's name will be found in both division lists side by side with Mr. Gladstone's, in opposition to Lord Ashley. Those of the Marquis of Blandford (now Duke of Marlborough), Mr. Adderley (now Lord Norton), Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Ferrand, Mr. Newdegate, Mr. Henley, Lord John Manners, and other distinguished Tories, will be found supporting Lord Ashley in his clause. (31)

And what was this measure which drew down the anathema of Mr. Bright? It enacted that females above eighteen years of age should not be employed for a longer time than "young persons" in factories, (32) *i.e.*, for twelve hours on any one day, or sixty-nine hours in one week; (33) that no child under eight should be employed in any factory; (34) that no child under thirteen should be employed more than six hours and a half in any one day, (35) except on three alternate days in the week, when he might be employed for ten hours; (36) that the parent or other person having the direct benefit from the wages of any child employed in a factory should, under a penalty for neglect, (37) cause the child to attend school; (38) and that the occupier of the factory should, also under a penalty for neglect, (39) obtain a certificate of attendance from the schoolmaster. (40)

The state of things before this enactment may be realised from the following extracts from the official reports:—

"M. S. (single) leaves home at five; returns at nine. Her mother states that she knows nothing but mill and bed; can neither read, write, knit, nor sew." "H. W. has three children; leaves home at five on Monday, does not return until Saturday at seven; has then so much to do for her children that she cannot go to bed before three o'clock on Sunday morning." (41) Women, in some cases, were obliged to work from six a.m. till midnight—eighteen hours out of the twenty-four; in other cases they worked in a temperature of from 70 to 80 degrees all night long. (42)

If grown-up women suffered from this inhuman system, what must have been the condition of the young children? The medical witnesses bear testimony to the excessive fatigue, privation of sleep, pain in various parts of the body, swelling of the feet, and, above all, the scrofulous diseases experienced by the young workers. (43)

And this is the system over which Mr. Bright spread his sheltering ægis, denouncing, in eloquent terms, any attempt to reform it!

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(29) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 73, p. 1264. (30) Vol. 74, p. 1106.
(31) P. 1104.
(32) S. 32. (33) 3 and 4 Wm. IV. c. 103, S. 2. (34) S. 29. (35) S. 30. (36) S. 31. (37) S. 57. (38) S. 38. (39) S. 56. (40) Ss. 31 & 39.
(41) Cited by Lord Ashley. *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 73, p. 1094. (42) P. 1092.
(43) P. 1081.

On the 8th of June, 1874, the Royal assent was given to "An Act to Limit the Hours of Labour of Young Persons and Females in Factories" (10 & 11 Vict., cap. 29). "A question," writes Alison, "of pressing interest to a large and interesting portion of the community was happily brought to a close during this Session of Parliament—the Factory Question." (44) The Ten Hours Bill, introduced by Mr. Fielden and Mr. Ferrand, reduced the number of hours for which females and young persons between the ages of thirteen and eighteen were to be employed in mills and factories to sixty-three hours per week (eleven hours of actual work per day for five days in the week and eight hours on Saturdays), till the 1st of May, 1848; and from that date, to fifty-eight hours per week (ten hours of actual work per day for five days in the week and eight hours on Saturdays). "I ask for the change," said Mr. Fielden, "because the people employed in factories have long wished for it, and petitioned the Legislature to concede it to them, and because the ministers of religion, medical practitioners, and, indeed, all classes who have opportunities of observing the consequences of the present system, deprecate it as destructive to the moral and physical condition of a vast and most important class of the community. It is a question which involves the very existence of thousands, who are, I am afraid, annually sacrificed." (45) Leave was given to introduce the Bill, but on a subsequent day, when Mr. Fielden moved the second reading, (46) Mr. Hume, the well-known Radical, delivered a long speech against it, on the ground that it was opposed to political economy, and moved that it be read a second time that day six months. (47) Mr. Bright again displayed his zeal on behalf of the operatives in the course of the debate on this motion. (48) "When the agitation first commenced, it was on the principle of protection for infants. Young children were then the objects of solicitude with these patriotic individuals; and at length a Minister of the Crown brought in a Bill some years ago, which took all the care of these infants that their greatest friends could desire. . . . But the friends, so called, of the infants still pressed on, and they now asked for the interference of the Legislature, and for a display of their sympathies, in favour of young persons from 13 to 18 years of age and on behalf of women of all ages." (49) This satirical tone peculiarly befitted a "tribune of the people," when speaking of the "white slavery" of women and young persons, "the results of which, in disease, suffering, and death, exceeded the horrors of war." (50) But it must be remembered that these white slaves were only operatives. "He would tell the House that *if they went on, at the bidding of the working classes*, to legislate

(44) Hist. of Europe, from 1815 to 1852, vol. 7, p. 315.
(45) *Ibid* and *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 89, p. 487.
(46) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, p. 1073.
(47) P. 1074.
(48) PP. 1136, 1137.
(49) "Instances were not wanting, before the Legislature interposed, of parents' bread having been earned by children only three years of age!"—Alison's Hist. of Europe, from 1815 to 1852, vol. 7. p. 322, citing Mr. Roebuck.
(50) Registrar-General's "Table of Deaths," cited by Alison, Hist. of Europe, from 1815 to 1852, vol. 7, p. 317; see also *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 89, p. 488.

against the capitalists, they would find a very different feeling engendered amongst the latter towards the operatives from that which they now exhibited. . . . He would warn the House that if they now armed the workmen against the capitalists by fixing by law ten hours, or any other number of hours, for the duration of labour, and thus interfered with the established custom of the kingdom, he believed it would be impossible that the feeling which hitherto existed on the part of the manufacturers towards the operatives would continue, *should the workmen think that by coming to that House*, they could fix the time of work and the amount of wages. He thought, if such a result took place, that it would be the duty of the manufacturers—nay, that it would be absolutely necessary for them—to take such steps as would prevent the ruin from coming upon them which must result from the passing of this measure. The hon. member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz) stated that he (Mr. Bright) had signed a petition in favour of a Ten Hours Bill. . . . He confessed that at one time he did get up a petition in favour of such a Bill, but then it was one of the acts of his boyhood, and he regretted extremely that the follies of his boyhood appeared to attach themselves to the mature age of the honourable member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz). A proposition had been made that, if this Bill went into committee, they should have an eleven hours clause substituted for the present ten hours clause. He believed nothing could be more unwise. . . . If they passed an eleven hours Bill, *the workmen who asked for ten hours* would . . . come with double force to ask for a ten hours bill hereafter. . . Believing, as he did in his heart, that the Bill was most injurious and destructive of the best interests of the country—believing that it was contrary to all principles of sound legislation—that it was a delusion practised upon the working classes—that it was advocated by those who had no knowledge of the economy of manufacturers—believing that it was one of the worst measures ever passed in the shape of an Act of the Legislature, and that, if it were now made law, the necessities of trade and the demands alike of the workmen and the masters would *compel them to retrace the steps* which they had taken, he felt compelled to give the motion for the second reading of this Bill his most strenuous opposition."[51] The debate was adjourned, and at its resumption "Petitions were presented by a great many hon. members from an immense number of places, in favour of the Ten Hours Factory Bill." [52] Notwithstanding Mr. Bright's threats and denunciations, the Bill passed a second reading by a majority of more than 2 to 1, the numbers being 195 to 87. [53] Amongst the majority will be found the names of Mr. Disraeli, Lord John Manners, Mr. Ferrand, Mr. Henley, Sir John Pakington (afterwards Lord Hampton), and Mr. Newdegate: amongst the minority, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. (now Lord) Cardwell, and Sir John Trelawny (who objected to the Bill because he "considered it a distinct invasion of the rights

(51) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 89, pp. 11446—118.
(52) Vol. 90, p. 126 (minutes).
(53) P. 175.

of property)." (54) Previous to the division on the second reading an obstructive motion for the adjournment of the debate was interposed, and Mr. John Bright seconded it and acted as one of the tellers! (55) Another division took place on going into committee, the numbers being—ayes 190, noes 100; majority 90. Mr. Bright was one of the tellers of the minority.(56) The House went into committee, and Mr. Bright declared that he "felt bound at every stage to vote against the clauses of the Bill." (57) He had again threatened the House with "such a formidable combination of the owners of capital, that the House could not successfully legislate against it;" (58) but the threat was of no avail. There was, as Mr. Hume lamented, (59) "a determination to carry the Bill through the House." Lord John Russell, however, suddenly went over to Mr. Bright, and declared that he should "vote *that the clause limiting the period to ten hours be omitted altogether.*" (60) Lord John put about as quickly on this as on other questions of more recent date. This new ally, however, did not much improve the position of the Radicals. They were beaten by more than two to one, the numbers being 144 to 66—majority 78. Whigs like Sir C. Wood and Sir G. Grey followed Lord John into the division lobby. Mr. John Bright again acted as teller for the minority. (61)

The Bill was reported, and on the question that the amendments be agreed to, Mr. Hume moved that the report be taken into further consideration that day six months. (62) The tactics of the Radicals were denounced by one of themselves. Mr. Sharman Crawford declared it to be his opinion that "if ever an unfair and vexatious opposition had been offered to any measure in its passage through that House, it was the opposition offered to this Bill. In every stage an unworthy attempt had been made to defeat it by manœuvre against the loudly-expressed sense of the House." (63)

The Conservatives once more voted for the Bill, and the Radicals against it. Lord John Russell, trimming his sails as usual, steered back again and voted with the majority of more than 2 to 1 in favour of the Bill (104 to 46), carrying his faithful lieutenant, Sir G. Grey, back with him. Mr. Roebuck attacked Lord John vehemently for his "faltering and wavering, and, he would not say, unstatesmanlike conduct."(64) Lord John Manners assured the House that the Conservatives had consistently supported the Bill, "from an earnest conviction of its only being an act of justice to the factory operatives" (65). And so the Bill was read a third time (66), but not without a final ineffectual attempt on the part of the Radicals to snatch a

(54) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 90, p. 168.
(55) PP. 173, 175.
(56) PP. 819-821.
(57) Vol. 91, p. 142.
(58) P. 125.
(59) P. 142.
(60) P. 144.
(61) PP. 146, 147.
(62) PP. 1122, 1123.
(63) P. 1124.
(64) P. 1130.
(65) P. 1138.
(66) Vol. 92, pp. 311-313.

victory. We need scarcely say that the name of Mr. Disraeli appears in the list of the majority. Mr. John Bright's name, which has hitherto appeared on every division, disappears from the final encounter; possibly he foresaw that, after all, his dismal prophecies might not be realised. Mr. Gladstone's name does not appear in any debate upon this Bill, nor in any of the numerous divisions. Thus, when a measure of vital moment to the working classes was carried through Parliament, Mr. John Bright bitterly opposed it, Lord John Russell voted sometimes for it and sometimes against it, and Mr. Gladstone did not vote at all!

Scarcely a year has passed since then without some successful effort to extend the principles of factory legislation. A list of no less than twenty-eight Factory Acts will be found in the APPENDIX. Mr. Bright, and the Radicals generally, have been undergoing a salutary process of *education*, and have gradually come round to the side of the working men and the Conservative party.

Thus Mr. Fawcett, Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge (now Postmaster-General), a Radical, speaking on the "Factory Acts Extension Bill, 1867," introduced by the then Conservative Home Secretary (Mr. Walpole), went so far as to deny that the Factory Acts contravened "the principle of economy." "Those who in the first instance," he said, "had opposed the Factory Acts were now the first to come forward and say that the legislation which had taken place had produced the most satisfactory results. With respect to the working classes, his own experience among them had been that the working men were glad to welcome this kind of legislation. *There was no subject* upon which he had ever addressed a meeting of working men *that excited more enthusiasm* than that of the intended extension to other trades of the same legislation." (67)

Mr. Akroyd, worsted manufacturer, Chairman of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, a Liberal, said that "his experience might possibly have some weight with those who had not the same opportunities of witnessing the beneficial results of factory legislation. . . . Having at first opposed the Act, he wished now joyfully to offer his testimony to its beneficial results. In his own neighbourhood a squalid population was succeeded by a healthy one. The operation of the Act had changed the aspect of many a once wretched district, and brought upon the scene scores of happy chubby-faced children, full of health and activity, who, but for the interference of the Legislature, would have been wearing away their young lives with premature toil. . . . The extension of the Factory Acts to mines and collieries, bleaching works, the lace works of Nottingham, and the potteries of Staffordshire, aided the work of education. . . . He was bound to admit the benefits which the country gentlemen had conferred upon the manufacturing interest by determinedly pressing the Act upon them." (68)

Sir Francis Crossley, carpet manufacturer, a Radical, said that

(67) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 189, p. 481.
68) Vol. 185, pp. 1071, 1072.

" he agreed with Mr. Akroyd in what he had stated with respect to the short-time system in factories. . . . The children were not only much healthier, but were more attentive at school, from having to work three days a week, and *more industrious* in the factory, from having a change of occupation at school. It was quite the exception in the factory districts to find boys and girls unable to read and write. . . . The Factory Acts had operated, therefore, very beneficially. Since that time the principle of those Acts had been applied to many other trades, and he was not aware of a single failure. Beneficial results had invariably followed. . . . *In the manufacturing districts the children were now receiving as much for short time as they* [formerly] *did for full time.*" (69)

Mr. Edmund Potter, a calico printer, a Radical, said he " knew not which most to admire, Mr. Walpole's talents or his industry, (70)" with reference to this question. *All* quarters of the House were *now* prepared to applaud to the echo Mr. Walpole's eloquent peroration, when introducing the Factory Extension Bill, " I believe that future generations will look back with pleasure upon this reign—this beneficent reign—in which many good things have been done—but none more gracious or just than throwing the protection of wise and considerate legislation over the women and children of this country." (71)

On the motion for the second reading of the Bill in the Upper House, Lord Harrowby paid a well-merited tribute of praise to Lord Shaftesbury. " It is now," he said, " some thirty or forty years ago since I had the pleasure of co-operating in a very small degree with my noble friend in those early struggles on the subject of factory legislation, when he had enormous difficulties to contend with. . . . To this great cause my noble friend has sacrificed his whole political life ; he has from time to time resisted solicitations to public employments that he might devote himself entirely to this great cause, and I hope that in the gratitude of the country, and the approval of a good conscience, my noble friend will find an ample reward for the exertions and sacrifices which he has made." (72)

We challenge Mr. Gladstone to show that more beneficent results have flowed from any Liberal measure than those which Lord Shaftesbury pointed to as having flowed from Conservative legislation with respect to Mines and Factories :—

" The masters engaged in textile manufactures, and the heads of great establishments, all, without exception, testified to the great social, physical, and moral blessings which had been the result of Factory legislation. I believe that we may ascribe in no small degree to that legislation the noble conduct of the *Lancashire operatives* during the cotton famine, who, supported by the feeling that they were really cared for by the Legislature, endured with unparalleled heroism the suffering to which they were subjected. . . I have been informed that in every instance, whether of textile

(69) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 185, p. 1078.
(70) P. 1281.
(71) P. 1279.
(72) Vol. 189, p. 1212.

fabrics, potteries, or fustian cutting, *the work done is both greater in quantity* and improved in quality, because the employed bring untired limbs and minds to their work ; while, simultaneously, *wages have risen* without any loss to the employers. . . . By showing this interest in the welfare of the people, and by endeavouring in this way to advance their moral, social, and physical improvement, you will be doing more for their happiness than even by the great measure of reform which you are now passing to enfranchise the great mass of the people, and you will make that reform more easy and more successful in its operation." (73)

The nine hours movement was set at rest by " The Factory Act, 1874 " (37 and 38 Vict., c. 44), the statesmanlike measure of the then Conservative Home Secretary, Mr. (now Sir Richard) Cross. Mr. Baxter, the Radical member for Montrose, characterised that measure as " wise, safe, and well-considered," and as " conferring incalculable benefits on the operative class in this country." (74) The Earl of Shaftesbury, on the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, said: " I presume to thank Her Majesty's Government (Lord Beaconsfield's) for the bold and manly way in which they have come forward and settled a dispute which might have become serious. . . It has been reserved to the present Government to give a reduction of the number of hours, and we find ourselves at last, after 41 years of exertion, in possession of what we prayed for at the first—a Ten Hours Bill." (75)

The edifice was crowned in 1878 by " The Factory and Workshops Act " of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, introduced and carried by the Home Secretary, Sir Richard Cross, which consolidated and amended factory legislation.

On the third reading of the Bill in the House of Commons, the late Mr. Alexander Macdonald, the well-known miners' representative, said he " was glad the right hon. gentleman (Sir R. Cross) had brought in and carried that Bill, a fact which would redound to his honour and credit as a statesman." (76)

The Earl of Shaftesbury, on the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, said: " I am lost in wonder at the amount of toil, of close investigation, and of perseverance which the Home Secretary must have brought to bear in the preparation of this Bill. The right hon. gentleman had to deal with 45 Acts, extending over a period of 50 years. . . . By this Bill the whole of this scattered legislation will be brought into one lucid and harmonious whole. . . . I believe that 2,000,000 of people of this country will bless the day when Mr. Cross was invited to become Secretary of State for the Home Department." (77)

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(73) PP. 1210, 1211.
(74) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 219, p. 1439.
(75) Vol. 220, p. 1330.
(76) Vol. 239, p. 266.
(77) P. 947.

APPENDIX.

3 & 4 Will. 4, c. 103 (29th Aug., 1833).

An Act to regulate the Labour of Children and Young Persons in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom.

4 & 5 Will. 4, c. 1 (2nd Feb., 1834).

An Act to explain and amend an Act of the last Session of Parliament for regulating the Labour of Children and Young Persons in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom.

5 & 6 Vict. c. 99 (10th Aug., 1842).

An Act to prohibit the Employment of Women and Girls in Mines and Collieries ; to regulate the Employment of Boys, and to make other Provisions relating to Persons working therein.

7 & 8 Vict. c. 15 (6th June, 1844).

An Act to amend the Laws relating to Labour in Factories.

8 & 9 Vict. c. 29 (30th June, 1845).

An Act to regulate the Labour of Children, Young Persons, and Children in Print Works.

10 & 11 Vict. c. 29 (8th June, 1847).

An Act to limit the Hours of Labour of Young Persons and Females in Factories.

10 & 11 Vict. c. 70.

An Act to amend the Law as to the School Attendance of Children employed in Print Works (22nd July, 1847).

13 & 14 Vict. c. 54 (5th August, 1850).

An Act to amend the Acts relating to Labour in Factories.

16 & 17 Vict. c. 104 (20th August, 1853).

An Act to further regulate the Employment of Children in Factories.

19 & 20 Vict. c. 38 (30th June, 1856).

An Act for further Amendment of the Laws relating to Labour in Factories.

23 & 24 Vict. c. 78 (6th August, 1860).

An Act to place the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children in Bleaching Works and Dyeing Works under the Regulations of Factories Acts.

23 & 24 Vict. c. 151 (27th August, 1860).

An Act for the Regulation and Inspection of Mines.

24 & 25 Vict. c. 117 (6th August, 1861).

An Act to place the Employment of Women, Young Persons, Youths, and Children in Lace Factories under the Regulations of the Factories Acts.

25 & 26 Vict. c. 8 (11th April, 1862).

An Act to prevent the Employment of Women and Children during the Night in certain Operations connected with Bleaching by the Open-air Process.

25 & 26 Vict. c. 79 (7th August, 1862).

An Act to amend the Law Relating to Coal Mines.

26 & 27 Vict. c. 38 (29th June, 1863).

An Act to amend the Act 23 & 24 Vict., c. 78, for placing the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children in Bleaching Works and Dyeing Works under the Regulations of the Factories Acts.

27 & 28 Vict. c. 48 (25th July, 1864).

An Act for the Extension of the Factory Acts.

27 & 28 Vict. c. 98 (29th July, 1864).

An Act for Extending the Provisions of the "Bleaching and Dyeing Works Act, 1860."

30 & 31 Vict. c. 103 (15th August, 1867).

An Act for the Extension of the Factory Acts.

30 & 31 Vict. c. 146 (21st August, 1867).

An Act for regulating the Hours of Labour for Children, Young Persons, and Women employed in Workshops, and for other Purposes relating thereto.

33 & 34 Vict. c. 62 (9th August, 1870).

An Act to amend and extend the Acts relating to Factories and Workshops.

34 & 35 Vict. c. 19 (25th May, 1871).

An Act for exempting Jews from Penalties in respect of Jewish Young Persons and Females working on Sundays.

34 & 35 Vict. c. 104 (21st August, 1871).

An Act to amend the Acts relating to Factories and Workshops.

35 & 36 Vict. c. 76 (10th August, 1872).

An Act to consolidate and amend the Acts relating to the Regulation of Coal Mines and certain other Mines.

35 & 36 Vict. c. 77 (10th August, 1872).

An Act to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Metalliferous Mines.

37 & 38 Vict. c. 44 (3rd July, 1874).

An Act to make better Provision for Improving the Health of Women, Young Persons, and Children employed in Manufactures, and the education of such Children, and otherwise to amend the Factory Acts.

38 & 39 Vict. c. 39 (19th July, 1875).

An Act to amend the provisions of the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, 1872.

41 & 42 Vict. c. 16 (27th May, 1878).

An Act to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Factories and Workshops.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL UNION.—No. X.

CONSERVATIVE LEGISLATION

AND

THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. II.—THE TRUCK ACTS.

BY

A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

OF

THE NATIONAL UNION.

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF CONSERVATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS,
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1877.

CONSERVATIVE LEGISLATION

AND

THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. II.—THE TRUCK ACTS.

THE system of paying wages in goods instead of money, technically known as the "Truck" System, was condemned by the Legislature more than 400 years ago. The Act of 4 Edward IV., c. 1, s. 5, (A.D. 1464) recites that "before this time in the occupations of cloth-making, the labourers thereof have been driven to take a great part of their wages in pins, girdles, and other unprofitable wares, at a price which did not extend to their lawful wages;" and enacts that "every man and woman, being clothmakers, shall pay to the carders, spinsters, and all such other labourers in any part of the said trade, lawful money for all their lawful wages." Subsequent enactments, passed in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, Queen Anne, and the Georges, imposed penalties on employers of labour "oppressing" their labourers (*a*) by this "pernicious practice" (*b*) of paying wages in goods in a great variety of trades. As that staunch Conservative, Mr. Ferrand, said when reciting these enactments in 1842, (*c*) "our ancestors, knowing that the labouring people had not an opportunity of voting in that House, came down, like upright, honourable, and honest men, feeling that the working classes were imposed upon and robbed of the just reward of their labour, and did not hesitate to assist in passing Acts of Parliament that would protect the working man." The enactments, however, usually referred to as the "Truck Acts," were passed in the reign of William IV., and it is to these last-named enactments that it is now desired to direct the reader's attention. By the Statute 1 & 2 William IV., c. 36, all the then

(*a*) 1 Ann, st. 2, c. 18, s. 3.
(*b*) 57 George III., c. 115.
(*c*) Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 62, p. 825.

existing enactments on the subject of Truck (*a*) were repealed: and by the Statute 1 & 2 William IV., c. 37, it is provided (*b*) that "the entire amount of the wages earned by, or payable to, any artificer in any of the trades hereinafter enumerated, in respect of any labour by him done in any such trade, shall be actually paid to such artificer in the current coin of this realm, and not otherwise; and any payment made to any such artificer by his employer, of or in respect of any such wages, by the delivering to him of goods shall be and is hereby declared illegal, null, and void." It is also provided that in any action brought by an artificer against his employer for the recovery of any sum of money due to him as wages, no set-off should be allowed for goods supplied by the employer to the artificer on account of wages, or for goods supplied to him at any shop belonging to the employer;—while, on the other hand, the employer was prohibited from suing the artificer in respect of such goods. (*c*) The penalties imposed by the Statute (*d*) upon employers making payments otherwise than in the current coin of the realm are, for the first offence, not exceeding £10, nor less than £5; for the second offence, not exceeding £20, nor less than £10; for the third offence, not exceeding £100, and the employer is in this case to be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour. The fourth or any subsequent offence is to be punished in the same manner as the third offence. (*e*) Two Justices of the Peace are empowered to inflict the penalties imposed for the first and second offences. (*f*) The trades to which the Act applies are very numerous, and include the manufacture of iron and steel; the working of mines of coal, ironstone, limestone, and salt-rock; the getting of stone, slate, or clay; the making or preparing of salt, bricks, tiles, and quarries; the making of any iron or steel hardwares; of any plated articles of cutlery; of any metal wares, or japanned goods; the making or preparing of any kinds of woollen, worsted, yarn, stuff, jersey, linen, fustian, cloth, serge, cotton, leather, fur, hemp, flax, mohair, or silk manufactures; of glass, porcelain, china, or earthenware; and of bone, thread, silk, or cotton lace, or lace made of mixed materials. (*g*)

(*a*) 4 Edward IV., c. 1. 8 Elizabeth, c. 7. 14 Elizabeth, c. 12. 1 Ann, c. 18. 9 Ann, c. 30. 10 Ann, c. 16. 1 George I., c. 15. 12 George I., c. 34. 13 George I., c. 23. 13 George II., c. 8. 22 George II., c. 27. 29 George II., c. 33. 30 George II., c. 12. 17 George III., c. 56. 19 George III., c. 49. 57 George III., c. 115. 57 George III., c. 122. 58 George III., c. 51.

(*b*) S. 3.

(*c*) Ss. 5-6.

(*d*) S. 9.

(*e*) S. 10.

(*f*) Ibid.

(*g*) S. 19.

These beneficent measures originated—in the House of Commons? No—in the House of Lords! The nobleman who introduced them deserves a niche in the temple of fame beside the Earl of Shaftesbury, whose good deeds to miners and factory operatives have already been detailed. (*a*) Lord Wharncliffe, the nobleman in question, had been raised to the Peerage in 1826 by the Tory Government of the day. In the first Tory Administration after the passing of the Reform Bill (Sir Robert Peel's—1834-5), Lord Wharncliffe held the office of Lord Privy Seal. He introduced the two Bills, which afterwards became law, on the 28th June, 1831, in modest terms:—"I am glad that your Lordships have power to originate propositions of this kind, while the House of Commons is occupied in other, and, perhaps, more important business." (*b*) But what business could be more important than ameliorating the condition of the working classes by beneficent legislation? On the 7th July Lord Wharncliffe moved the second reading of the Bills in an eloquent speech. (*c*) After declaring that he could only account for the prevalence of the Truck System by the love of gain on the part of the manufacturers, he proceeded to point out the enormous profits which they made out of their workmen by this system. "Some," he said, "made not less than £15,000 a year" by it, and were enabled to "sell their goods for less than what their cost without the system of truck would have been. He liked to see the workman fairly independent of his master, receiving his wages in money, and buying, at any shop he pleased to select, that which he really wanted, instead of having thrust upon him more bacon and flour than he had occasion for, and which he must necessarily dispose of at a great disadvantage. The articles which were given to him in lieu of wages were so various and ill-assorted, and frequently so perfectly useless to him, that they reminded him of the cargoes which were sent out some years ago to Buenos Ayres, when the rage for speculation existed, and individuals sent skates and warming-pans to that torrid region!" He pointed out how the system, also, ruined *the small retail shopkeepers*, who could not compete successfully with the manufacturers, who set up shops for the supply of the same articles. "The Legislature has a right to say, 'Here is the current coin of the realm; we insist on your paying your workmen in that medium.' If the workman then chooses to buy from his master, very well; but, certainly, he

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(*a*) See "Conservative Legislation and the Working Classes. No. I. Mines and Factories." Published by the National Union.

(*b*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 4 (70), p. 407.

(*c*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 4 (70), p. 922.

appointed for the purpose; and that the children of Roman Catholics and Dissenters should be committed for so many hours in each week to religious teachers, according to the creed of their respective parents. The measure was to include pauper children at factories, and the children of all persons, whether paupers or not, whom their parents chose to send to the school, whether they were factory children or not. There were to be seven trustees to each school under the Act, three of whom were to be the clergyman of the district and two of his churchwardens; the other four to be elected by the ratepayers. The Bill, which was evidently founded on the right principles on the subject, met with very general support in the House of Commons; and the Queen's reply to the address presented to her on the subject was very cordial. But difficult in the extreme are all attempts at beneficent legislation in matters where sectarian zeal deems itself interested. The Dissenters took fright at the composition of the boards of parish trustees, even though the larger proportion of them were to be elected by the ratepayers; and such was the clamour raised on the subject, and the multitude of petitions which flowed in from the efforts of the Dissenters, that Sir James Graham, with expressions of extreme regret, was obliged to withdraw, first, the educational clauses, and, at last, the whole Bill." (21)

"On the part of the Church," said Sir James Graham, "there has been exhibited willingness to make a considerable sacrifice;" but he pointed out that it had not been met in a corresponding spirit. (22) Mr. Gally Knight uttered a prophecy during these debates, which was only too fully verified. He expressed a hope that the Dissenting body would take the modifications (proposed by Sir James Graham) into consideration, "and not take upon themselves the fearful responsibility of defeating this plan. If they did succeed (in defeating it) no other plan could be attempted." (23) "I see the Church," said Lord Ashley, "prepared to make concessions for the sake of conciliation and peace; and, on the other hand, I see the great body of Dissenters rejoicing that they have been successful in their efforts to defeat the measure. The real suffering party," he added, "are the vast body of neglected children who are now consigned to an eternity of ignorance." (24)

In view of these facts, how can Churchmen or Conservatives, with any show of reason or justice, be charged with conspiring to withhold the key of knowledge from the working classes?

The next enactment which claims our attention is the statute 7 and 8 Vict., cap. 15: "An Act to amend the laws relating to labour in factories" which received the Royal assent on the 6th of June, 1844.

At the head of a list of "noes" on the question that the Bill should pass, we find the now well-known name of "Bright, J." (25). Mr. Bright had been elected a few months previously for the city of Durham, and he thus

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(21) History of Europe, from 1815 to 1852: vol. 7, pp. 79,80.
(22) See *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol.69, p. 1567.
(23) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 68, p. 1127.
(24) Vol. 70, p. 94.
(25) Vol. 74, p. 1108.

displayed his zeal for the interest of the working classes during the debates on Lord Ashley's Ten Hours Clause, and his deference to their opinions: "On the one side, they had a document prepared by persons who called themselves delegates of the operative classes of the North of England, and signed by their chairman; and they had, on the other side, a paper put forward on the authority of eight mill-owners, who were admitted to be the most respectable members of their class, whether regarded with respect to intelligence, to wealth, or to general character. . . He would ask whether the returns made from such a number of *mill-owners*, belonging to all shades of politics, were not *more to be relied on* than either the statement of the noble lord (Ashley), or his friends, the operative delegates?" (26)

How different was the language of the true friends of the operative—Mr. Ferrand, for example, "speaking," as he did, "the sentiments of hundreds and of thousands of his fellow-countrymen belonging to the working classes!" "It is a question," he said, "which belongs solely to the working classes of the manufacturing districts. . . . It is a question for which the working classes have contended for twelve years, and which they are determined to stand by and struggle for by every constitutional means. . . There is a unanimous feeling among the working classes that they have been reduced to the most abject state of misery and slavery, and that there are no means of rescuing them but the Ten Hours Bill. . . I implore the House to do justice to the working classes. . . This House has been accused of legislating for the rich and not for the poor; but now, when it has triumphantly asserted that it will legislate upon principles of humanity and of justice and protection to the working classes, fancy not that you can by a side wind to-night, or by unfair means, debar the working classes of their just rights. . . . . The working classes have a desire to endure and suffer without complaint, but you may try their patience too long; and if you refuse this measure, the day will come when you will deeply regret it, and when the working classes will exact it from your unwilling hands." (27)

Mr. Bright not only treated the operatives with contempt—he attacked the principle of the Bill. "It was admitted," said Mr. Bright, "on all hands that the noble lord's proposition violated principle—that it would reduce wages, and interfere, as many believed, with the foreign trade. When proceeding in the direction of a bad principle, too great caution could not be exercised." Mr. Bright concluded an eloquent peroration by characterising the Bill as "miserable legislation on principles false and mischievous." (28)

These attacks secured the rejection of Lord Ashley's clause to restrict the labour of young persons in factories to eleven hours per diem, or sixty-four hours per week, for three years, and at the end of that time to ten hours per diem, or fifty-eight hours per week.

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(26) *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. 74, pp. 1063, 1064, 1066.
(27) PP. 969, 970, 972, 975.
(28) PP. 1070. 1071.

When the Bill next came before the House, Mr. Hume insisted that all proceedings on it should be "delayed till the meeting of the new Parliament." Sir Robert Peel "hoped that the Bill would be allowed to go through that stage to-night, as it was highly desirable that the measure should be carried through before the close of the session." Mr. Huskisson, who had been Secretary of State for the Colonies, under the Tory Duke of Wellington, in 1828, devoted the closing hours of his life (*a*) to the advocacy of the rights of the working classes. "The principle of the Bill," he said, "was good. He thought that the House was bound to protect those who hitherto had not been free agents, and who, as the weakest part of the community, had the greatest need of the protection of the law. For this reason he thought it was incumbent upon the House to carry the Bill through before the close of the present session." After the House had gone into Committee, Mr. Warburton, the Radical member for Bridport, by dividing on a trivial amendment, revealed the fact that there were not 40 members present, and so got rid of the Bill by a side-wind for that night. (*b*)

Three days after, the Bill was again before the House. Mr. Gordon, the Radical member for Cricklade, suggested that "the Bill had better be given up at once! There was no chance of getting it through that session. He had received many applications from persons who apprehended the most injurious consequences from it." Mr. Warburton pressed the postponement of the Bill till next session. Mr. Daniel O'Connell made the ridiculous assertion that "*the Bill would be destructive to Ireland.*" Mr. Hume "finding the Government" (the Tory Government of the day) "disposed to patronise the Bill, tried to get it further postponed for a week, but the Right Hon. J. C. Herries, Master of the Mint, and a member of the Duke of Wellington's Cabinet," appealed to Mr. Hume "whether it would not be better to argue the subject calmly on Monday?" (It was then Saturday.) This was eventually agreed to. (*c*) When the debate was resumed on Monday, Mr. Robinson said that it was "only within the last few days that he had learnt that this Bill was taken up by His Majesty's Ministers" (the Tory Ministry of the day), and concluded by asserting that the Bill would, if it became law, "*inflict a great and lasting injury both on labourers and their employers.*" Mr. Herries

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(*a*) The Debate occurred July 1st, 1830. Mr. Huskisson was killed September 15th, 1830.

(*b*) See Hansard, N. S., vol. 25 (66), pp. 872-882.

(*c*) See Hansard, N. S., vol. 25 (66), pp. 946-7; also p.p. 954-988.

followed in an eloquent speech of great length. "The honourable member who last addressed the House stated that he had only lately become aware that His Majesty's Government gave its sanction to this measure, which certainly proved that the honourable member had not been very attentive to the progress of the Bill in its previous stages, or he would have heard the right honourable gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir Robert Peel) express, on a former occasion, the very decided opinion which he, *in common with the other Members of His Majesty's Government*, entertained on the principle of the Bill. *The Government approved of the object and principle of the Bill.* . . . In his opinion, the measure was in strict consistency with the soundest and best principle of legislation—that principle of civil government which said that the law should be so framed as to take care of that class of the community which was least able to protect itself. He was not one of that political school which considered that our ancestors were always wrong. . . . The law ought to secure to the labourer the exact fulfilment of the contract between him and his employer. . . . . But when the employer paid his labourer in goods what he had engaged to pay in money, it was a breach of contract. . . . . Articles subject to great variations, and therefore wholly unfit to be used in discharge of a debt, at the option and according to the valuation of the debtor, were given in payment of a debt, with great injustice and detriment to *the defenceless workman.*" Mr. Bennett, the Liberal member for Wiltshire, Mr. Gilbert, the Liberal member for Bodmin, Mr. Warburton, and Mr. Hume all spoke at considerable length against the Bill, while Mr. Huskisson and Sir Robert Peel defended it. The concluding words of Sir Robert's speech ought to put working men on their guard against the school of Joseph Hume, of which Mr. Bright is to-day the leading representative. "I hope that if this Bill be lost by the means which the honourable member (Mr. Hume) possesses and may use to defeat it, *the working classes will understand* that it is he who is responsible for the consequences." The Committee went through several clauses; but the Chairman, on the motion of Mr. Warburton, shortly after reported progress. Twenty days later, on the 24th July, Parliament was dissolved, and the victory of the Radical obstructives was complete. In reading these debates on this, the first attempt to legislate comprehensively on the subject of Truck, one is struck by the total silence of the leaders of the Liberal party. Not one of them raised his voice to denounce the system. The Bill, no doubt, was in the charge of Mr. Littleton, who afterwards held

office under Liberal Governments, but he could hardly at this time have been regarded as a leader; and had it not been for the energetic support which he received from the leaders of the Conservative party, he must have stood alone in his defence of the Bill against its Radical assailants. When Mr. Littleton asked for leave to re-introduce the Bill early in the next session, the motion was seconded by Colonel Wilson-Patten, who has so long and so honourably represented Lancashire in the House of Commons, and who subsequently became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the Conservative Government of the late Earl of Derby. Colonel Wilson-Patten said that "he was satisfied that some measure of this kind was absolutely necessary *for the protection of the workmen.*"

Mr. Hume endeavoured to shelve the Bill by moving for a Committee of Inquiry. But he was immediately met with a direct negative by Sir Robert Peel. "In no stage of the Bill would he consent to a Committee of Inquiry." The motion for the introduction of the Bill was carried by 167 votes to 27. (*a*) On the House resolving itself into Committee on the Bill (April 12th, 1831), Mr. Hume moved that "the Chairman do leave the chair," and immediately a chorus of Radical voices was heard, condemning the Bill in the strongest terms. Mr. Western, the Liberal member for Essex, "believing the principle of the Bill to be most pernicious, must decidedly oppose it. He believed that the House had never interfered between the master and the man except to the detriment of the latter." Mr. Tennant, the Liberal member for St. Albans, "thought that the only effect of the Bill would be to prevent the poor man from obtaining the best market he could for the only thing he had to sell—namely, his labour." Mr. James Morrison, the Liberal member for St. Ives, said that "in some parts of the country the Bill would throw hundreds out of employment." Mr. William Whitmore, the Conservative member for Bridgnorth, on the other hand, said that, "as he considered the Truck System to be a system of absolute compulsion upon labourers, he believed that it would be a wholesome and beneficial law which required that all such contracts should be carried into effect by means of money. The man who was employed by the Truck master fell in debt with the shop, and then, being in the master's debt, he was altogether in the master's power." Mr. Robert Gordon, the Liberal member for Cricklade, said that "*of all the absurd pieces of legislation that had ever been introduced into the British Legislature, this was, in his opinion, the most absurd!*" Lord

(*a*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 1, pp. 1133-1182.

Sandon (the present Earl of Harrowby), the Conservative member for Tiverton, afterwards Conservative member for Liverpool (now represented by his son), said that the working classes felt *the slavery* in which they were entangled, and they came to that House for relief. In his opinion it was their duty to listen to that demand, and pass the Bill. This is the only occasion on which a Liberal leader opened his lips in favour of Truck legislation in the House of Commons. Lord Althorp, the Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer, said a few words in favour of the Bill, and, in explanation of his previous silence, somewhat naïvely declared that "when this measure first came before him he had had some doubts of its policy." Mr. Hume's amendment was lost, the numbers being, "Ayes, 15; Noes, 40." The Bill passed through committee, and was reported, as amended, to the House. (*a*) Ten days after, however, Parliament was prorogued, and the Bill shared the fate of its predecessor.

Liberal opinion has changed on the subject of Truck legislation, as well as on Factory legislation.

In 1854, Mr. (now Sir Charles) Forster, Liberal member for Walsall, in moving for leave to introduce a Bill to render the provisions of the Truck Act more stringent, said that "no man could be more sensible than himself of *the great benefits which that Act had conferred* on the district in which he lived." (*b*) Mr. Bruce (the late Liberal Home Secretary, whose name was on the back of the Bill) supported the motion.

The Liberal member for Marylebone, Sir Benjamin Hall, rebuked Mr. John Bright for the speech which he made in opposition to the second reading of this Bill. "The honourable member and other honourable gentlemen, who shared in his views, had assumed a very high tone—the tone, perhaps, of certain philosophers, who found it rather difficult to reduce their conclusions to practice—and would have the world to believe that it was extremely hard, extremely tyrannical, for the House of Commons to interfere between the employer and the employed. He believed, however, that it was their duty so to interfere, when they discovered cases of oppression, which could only be met by legislation." (*c*) The key to Mr. Bright's opposition may be found in his peroration:—"It was extremely undesirable for Parliament again to stir in this question after so many failures, (*d*) and *at a time when the working population of the country were, in comparison with*

(*a*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 3 (69), pp. 1256-9.
(*b*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 130, p. 757.
(*c*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 131, pp. 839-40.
(*d*) Mr. Bright has generously confessed that he was wrong in opposing factory legislation; but he has always maintained that Truck legislation was a mistake!

their employers, more powerful and better organised than they had ever been before." (*a*) Mr. Bright has been the consistent opponent of measures for the benefit of the classes below him, whenever these measures have conflicted with the interests of the middle-class manufacturers, the class to which he belongs, and he has been the equally consistent supporter of measures for the (real or supposed) benefit of the classes below him, whenever these measure have conflicted with the interests of the class above him. Selfishness and middle-class interest are the corner-stones of his policy.

In 1870, Mr. Mundella, Liberal Member for Sheffield, in moving for a Commission of Inquiry into alleged offences against the Truck Acts, grew eloquent in describing their good effects. "When we remember that it was only in 1831 that the Truck Acts were first passed, and SEE ALL THE GOOD WHICH THEY HAVE DONE, I am quite sure I will not call in vain on the House to extend and perfect THEIR BENEFICENT ACTION. Looking at the evidence which was given before the first Committee, it is difficult to realise that we are living in the same country, so great is the change that has taken place, the Truck System being entirely unknown now in Lancashire, *where it at one time overshadowed the prosperity of the working classes.*"

Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary (now Lord Aberdare), in acceding to the motion, said, that he "had frequently had occasion to consider the Truck Acts, and they certainly appeared to him to have been *framed with remarkable skill.*" (*b*)

(*a*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 131, p. 833.
(*b*) See Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 203, pp. 137-153. The Report of the Commission has recently been published, 1871.

Fort
Brabarne
Beach
Cairns

THE TRUTH

ABOUT

THE TRANSVAAL.

BY THE

Rt. HON. LORD BRABOURNE.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TRANSVAAL.

Mr. Chamberlain's speech, recently delivered at Birmingham, and containing a defence of the Transvaal policy of the present Government, has been printed for general circulation. A defence of the same policy, by Mr. Craig Sellar, has already been circulated in Scotland, so that what may be called the Boer side of the question is fully before the British public. This being the case, it has been thought desirable that the British side should be also stated clearly and impartially, so that the public may be able to judge for itself whether the Government are really entitled to the praise which they claim for "moral courage" in their abandonment of the Transvaal, and whether "justice" really required that the flag of England should be lowered before insurgent enemies, that British soldiers should be massacred not only unavenged, but without even a word of protest on the part of the British Government, that the plighted word of that Government to loyal colonists should be broken, and the confidence hitherto placed, both by men of white and black descent, in the power and good faith of Great Britain, rudely shaken, if not entirely destroyed. Mr. Sellar, after stating with perfect truth that "the Transvaal is an enormous territory, about the size of England, Scotland, and Ireland in a ring fence," goes on to say that the Boers, "trekking from Cape Colony and Natal to escape from British dominion," crossed the Vaal, occupied this huge territory, considered that they held the Transvaal by the same right by which we hold India Canada, and other possessions, the right, namely, of conquest; and their independence was guaranteed to them by what is called the Sand River Convention, which was agreed to in 1852. With reference to these statements, it should never be forgotten that the main reason which induced the Dutch Boers to "trek" from Cape Colony in 1835 was the abolition of slavery by Great Britain, and their desire to maintain slavery as one of their institutions, which they could not be allowed to do as British subjects. This fact has been often denied by the advocates of the Boers in this country; but even if their simple denial could be accepted against the overwhelm-

ing mass of evidence on the other side, the truth may be gathered from recent publications of the insurgent Boers themselves, who may be judged out of their own mouths. In Blue Book C. 2866, presented to Parliament in April, 1881, at page 169 will be found a copy of the "Petition of Rights addressed to his Honour the President of the Orange Free State and the Honourable the Volksraad on the occasion of their special sitting on the 17th of February, 1881." This document is dated "South African Republic, Government House, Heidelberg, February 7th, 1881," and is signed "In the name of the Triumvirate, S. J. P. Kruger, Vice-President." It contains among other things a statement which every Englishman who values the Colonial Empire of Great Britain will do well to bear in mind, inasmuch as it shows that the ultimate aim of the rebel Boers is not only to possess the Transvaal, but to banish English influence altogether from South Africa, which indeed they claim to hold as "Africa for the Africanders." This statement is that "in the cession of the Cape of Good Hope by the King of Holland to England upon the fall of Napoleon I. lies the root of the evil out of which subsequent events and our present struggle have grown," and it goes on to state that "the great exodus from the Colony is of later date subsequent to 1834, when, *owing to the forced liberation of the slaves*, our old patriarchal farms were suddenly ruined." The truth is that these men, of whom Mr. Chamberlain tells us that "they are animated by a deep and *somewhat stern religious sentiment*," and that they have an "*unconquerable love of freedom and of liberty*," are not prevented by the first from loving the last only when enjoyed by themselves, and denying either "liberty" or "freedom" to those nations whom they consider born to slavery. As their love for slavery, and desire to treat the native races in a manner which British humanity could not tolerate, lay at the root of the determination of the Boers to reject British dominion, so the same feelings have prevailed amongst them ever since, and have been mainly instrumental in causing the state of anarchy, confusion, and perpetual warfare between black and white men which really brought about the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877. If their denial of slave-practices be true, whence did it arise that in the Sand River Convention of 1852, which the Boers quote as their Charter of Independence, it was thought necessary to insert a special provision that "No slavery is or shall be permitted or practised to the north of the Vaal by the emigrant farmers?" There is overwhelming proof that this provision was constantly violated by the Boers; the Blue Books presented to Parliament absolutely teem with such proof, gathered from the writings of Dr. Livingstone, the letters of Mr. Chesson (Secretary to the Aborigines Protection Society), the independent colonial press, the frequent reports of British officials in the Colonies, the solemn resolutions of the Natal Legislature in 1868, and the reiterated and piteous complaints of the native tribes themselves. This evidence was

brought to the notice of the House of Lords on Feb. 21st, 1881, when the Earl of Kimberley agreed that "irrefutable evidence has been brought forward to show that, whether or not with the direct countenance, at least without being prevented by the Government of the Transvaal Republic, the Boers did, in many instances, violate that provision of the Convention." Lord Kimberley, however, went on to say that "these transactions, for the most part, took place a considerable time ago," and that although isolated instances of slavery had doubtless occurred, he believed that of late years the Boer Government was not so much to be blamed. Being pressed, however, for the evidence upon which he made a statement so contrary to the facts disclosed by the Blue Books, Lord Kimberley simply relied upon a statement made in a letter to Lord Carnarvon by the Boer President Burghers himself, of which it may be said that to accept as conclusive, against a mass of documentary evidence, the unsupported statement *of one of the accused parties*, is a course as contrary to the procedure of a Law Court as it is repugnant to common sense. The best proof, however, of the truth of the charge against the Boers with regard to slavery is the intense hatred which is entertained towards them by the native races. This at least is a fact which cannot be denied, and a perusal of the following statements will show that for this feeling the Boers have given but too ample a justification. Mr. Sellar continues by saying that "from 1852 to 1877 the task of governing these Boers was undertaken by a central Boer authority." This is not quite correct, and it is well to be accurate upon these points. There was no recognition of any South African Republic by the Sand River Convention, nor could there have been, since no such Republic existed. All that was done by that Convention was to guarantee to the emigrant farmers, on the part of the British Government, "the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves without any interference on the part of Her Majesty's Government," "*it being understood that this system of non-interference is binding upon both parties.*" For some years after 1852 the "emigrant farmers" divided themselves into three separate Republics, and no attempt was made to establish any union until 1858. Indeed, Lord Kimberley stated, in the debate already referred to, that the so-called South African Republic continued to consist of three different portions up to 1865, and he contended that "the trade in black ivory"—that is, the enslaving of native children—was practised in one of these only to any extent. In any case, Mr. Sellar is perfectly correct when he goes on to say "the Boers would acknowledge no authority. If the law was obnoxious to any class of men, they either threatened the Legislature into rescinding it, or they defied the Executive to put it into force. *They refused to pay any taxes, or to come under the responsibility of any form of government.*" Unfortunately, this dislike to and refusal of "any form of Government"

upon the part of the inhabitants of any country produces a spirit of lawlessness, and brings about consequences which cannot be confined to their own community. This, too, is especially the case in a country situated as is the Transvaal. Unrestrained by the laws which would have prevailed among a more civilised people, the Boers from 1852 up to 1877 were constantly engaged either in civil war among themselves or in conflicts with the numerous native tribes whose children they sought to enslave and whose lands they desired to appropriate to themselves. By the continual and cruel inroads of the Boers upon these natives, the "system of non-interference" made binding by the Sand River Convention was practically violated as much as the provision against slavery. For these natives were in many instances the neighbours and kin of the native population dwelling in British territory, and, apart from all questions of justice and humanity, the British Government could not afford to tolerate the constant kindling of warlike and hostile feelings among the native tribes which might at any moment culminate in a war of races, the result of which could not but be widely disastrous to the best interests of civilisation. That such a state of things had really been reached in 1876-7 may be proved from the mouth of President Burghers himself, whose speeches to the Volksraad absolutely demolish the pretence lately put forward that the Transvaal Boers could have "pulled through" the difficulties by which they were surrounded at that time. Upon this particular point the President said with regard to England: "It is asked, what have they to do with our position? I tell you, as much as we have to do with that of our Kaffir neighbours. As little as we can allow barbarities among the Kaffirs on our borders, so little can they allow that in a state on their borders anarchy and rebellion should exist." It is beyond all doubt that "anarchy and rebellion" did exist in the Transvaal in the spring of 1877, and that there appeared no prospect of a better state of things. The taxes were not paid, the law was utterly disregarded, the treasury was empty, the administration had practically disappeared, and savage tribes were threatening the country with no doubtful voice. What, then, was the duty of England? Mr. Sellar, writing as a political partisan, tells us that our Colonial Minister, Lord Carnarvon, had a "forward policy" in South Africa, just as Lord Salisbury in India, and that "as Lord Salisbury found an agent in Lord Lytton to carry out his policy, so Lord Carnarvon found an agent in Mr. Shepstone, *who was knighted as a prospective honour attaching to the instrument who accomplished this achievement of annexation.*" The attempt here made to confound Lord Carnarvon's policy in South Africa with that of Lord Salisbury in India is as absurd as it is unfair. Lord Salisbury may have been quite right or quite wrong in India, but the circumstances of the two cases are entirely different, and each must be judged upon its own merits. Moreover, since Sir Theophilus Shepstone had been a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George since 1869, and had for *forty years*

served the British Government with zeal and fidelity, his promotion to the rank of Knight-Commander of the same Order in 1876 was a natural and well-deserved reward for past services, and to insinuate that this was given as a "prospective" honour, *i.e.*, to induce Sir Theophilus to carry out a particular policy, is both disingenuous and unjust. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent to the Transvaal not because Lord Carnarvon desired "confederation" (although such a desire had long been felt by many of the best friends of South Africa), but because the reports from the Transvaal had become so alarming, and the evil-doings of the Boers towards the natives had rendered the state of the relations between white and black so critical, that it was as if a house was on fire next door to us, in the flames of which we might have been at any moment enveloped. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was more respected by the native tribes and knew more of their habits and feelings than probably any other man in South Africa. He became aware of the increasing anxiety of Cetewayo, the great Zulu King, to "wash his spears in the blood of the Dutch Boers:" he knew that if Cetewayo should move, the signal would be given for that most terrible of all wars—a war of races—and he judged the condition of the Transvaal Government to be desperate. Not with any view to the aggrandisement of Great Britain, not from ambitious motives, but rather from motives of philanthropy and a desire to avert great and too surely impending calamity, not only from the Transvaal but from the neighbouring British Colonies, Sir Theophilus determined upon annexation, and for the same wise and just reasons the British Government approved of his determination. The affair was not done in a corner, nor was it a precipitate step. Sir Theophilus arrived in the Transvaal in January; the annexation was proclaimed upon the 12th April. It is quite true that a formal protest was made against it by President Burghers on behalf of the Transvaal Republic, but it is difficult to believe that the protest was intended to be more than formal. If the Republican Executive had possessed the smallest power or stability, they would hardly have permitted themselves to be deposed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone and twenty-five policemen, which was the amount of his force. But, being utterly paralysed and broken down, they not only submitted with something more than readiness, but large numbers of their officials continued to hold their offices under the British Government and took the Oath of Allegiance to the Queen. Among this number must be included Jorisson, who has since figured as a leader among the rebel Boers.

It is now alleged that Sir T. Shepstone deceived the Home Government, or was deceived himself, as to the amount of opposition to annexation which existed on the part of the Boers in 1877.

But it must be recollected that those who make these allegations are precisely those who are interested in justifying the Boer rebellion against British rule by showing that they had never given it their willing acquiescence. The facts are that in the towns of the

Transvaal, wherein reside the more civilised portion of the community, the desire was strong for that British rule which alone appeared likely to procure for the country order and good government. The farmers who were scattered throughout the country, and who understood by "independence" the non-payment of taxes, wished neither for British nor for any other rule, and it has been upon those ignorant and credulous men that interested agitators have been able to work with but too much success. At the time of annexation, however, there is little doubt that public feeling in the Transvaal approved of the action of Sir T. Shepstone. He himself says that every effort was at that time made to stir up the Boers against him "by inflammatory language in printed manifestoes," but in vain. His proclamation in Pretoria was received with hearty cheers for the Queen, whilst Mr. Burgher's protest was listened to with respectful silence. Moreover, within the next few weeks many hundreds of signatures were attached to addresses of approval of the step which had been taken and of loyalty to the Queen.

What, then, has caused the change, if change there has been, in the feelings of the Transvaal people? It is very probable that mistakes have been made in the administration of the province since 1877. The dislike of the Boers to military government has not been sufficiently understood and appreciated. There has also been an unfortunate delay in establishing those free representative institutions which were promised at the time of annexation, and which were delayed by the wars with the natives which the previous policy of the Boer republic had made necessary. Meanwhile, those interested agitators who always opposed that annexation, which, establishing order and obedience to law, would soon have reduced them to their proper and natural insignificance, have not only been assisted in their continuous work of disloyalty by the circumstances above named, but have received great aid from two especial sources. First of all must be reckoned this fact, that whereas at the time of annexation the Zulu power was unbroken and other native tribes were threatening the very existence of the Republic, between 1877 and 1880 Cetewayo had been subdued and the other tribes overcome by British valour and the expenditure of British money. Gratitude is not a characteristic of the Dutch Boer, and when the danger no longer hung over his head, he was the more easily persuaded to rebel against the Government whose power was at the moment no longer necessary for his protection. Yet, in all probability, had the action of the British Government been consistently firm, and due encouragement given to loyal colonists, the discontent of the Boers would gradually have passed away and a future of prosperity have already commenced for the Transvaal. Unhappily, in the second place, the disloyal agitator found powerful auxiliaries where they should least have been expected. Mr. Courtney, the present Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, who had con-

sistently opposed the annexation in his place in Parliament, is known to have been in correspondence with the disaffected Boers, but as his letters have not been published, their purport can only be surmised. But in that which is popularly known as "the Mid-Lothian campaign," Mr. Gladstone, in order to damage the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, did not scruple to condemn in strong language the annexation of the Transvaal, declaring that "we, the free subjects of a Monarchy, had coerced the free subjects of a Republic," with other language but too well calculated to encourage the disaffected Boers to persevere in their agitation. *Let this be noted. Mr. Gladstone's speeches in the winter of 1879 were printed and circulated in South Africa in 1880. In the latter part of the same year the Boers broke out into open rebellion.*

Meanwhile, the general election of April, 1880, had taken place, and the orator of Mid-Lothian had become the Prime Minister of England with a large Parliamentary majority. Is it wonderful that the expectations of the Boers were greatly raised? We know this to be the fact from their address to Mr. Gladstone, published in the blue books; and if the disappointment of those expectations was the approximate cause of their open rebellion and the consequent loss of life, can the statesman who beyond all doubt encouraged those expectations, fairly cast upon other shoulders the responsibility for subsequent events?

It should here be stated that during the Parliamentary session of 1877, many discussions took place upon South African affairs, and one debate specially upon the subject of the annexation of the Transvaal. During these debates *Mr. Gladstone never opened his mouth to say one word against annexation.* Mr. Courtney, then a very recently elected member, was only supported by two or three of the Irish Home Rule Party, whilst the step taken by Lord Carnarvon was not only unopposed by any leading member of the Liberal Party, but was deliberately endorsed and approved by those who had represented the Colonial Department under Mr. Gladstone's former government. It is, therefore, an undoubted fact that the annexation was acquiesced in by the Liberals as a party, and that it is only due to subsequent events that they have discovered objections to it which were never before in their minds. Until and after the change of Government in April, 1880, the loyal portion of the inhabitants of the Transvaal were again and again assured by British officials of high rank that the Transvaal would certainly continue to be a part of Her Majesty's dominions; upon the faith of these assurances many men invested their money and settled in the Transvaal, and as late as the 8th June, 1880, Mr. Gladstone added to the assurances already given by a letter containing these words: "Our judgment is, that the Queen cannot be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal." And even after the rebellion had broken out, as late as January in the present year, the Government put in the mouth of the Sovereign,

in her Speech from the Throne, words which declared, in a proper, English, loyal spirit, that whilst anxious to give the freest possible institutions to the inhabitants of the Transvaal, Her Majesty's authority must first be vindicated, and order re-established in the country.

What, then, has caused the lamentable change in the policy of the Government? Mr. Sellar and other advocates of the Boers calmly tell us that Lord Carnarvon and Sir Michael Beach, the authorities and the people, both in the Colony and at home, were badly informed of the true state of feeling in the country; or, to put it in the words of the Boer speakers, "the officials of the Queen have, by their untrue and false representations, closed the door to Her Majesty and Parliament." To put the matter plainly, these anti-British writers and speakers, who glorify patriotism in everybody but a Briton, and can see no virtue save in the enemies of their country and those who sympathize with them, would have us believe that our British and Colonial authorities, from the highest to the lowest grade, have been guilty of falsehood and concealment, rather than that a number of Dutch Boers, gladly availing themselves of British assistance and being ready enough to be annexed to Great Britain in a time of danger, changed their minds and became the easy dupes of interested agitators when the danger was past, their enemies destroyed, and when they were required to conform to that system of law and order to which they had so much objection, and to pay the taxes necessary to support that system.

Truth-loving Englishmen may judge between the two probabilities, but how is it that our Government has sided with the rebels and believed their statements rather than those of British officials and loyal British subjects? The reason is not far to seek. Unhappily, the democratic element which prevails in our present Government does not seek to *lead* public opinion to what is *right*, but to *follow* public opinion to what is *popular*. And so, just as in Ireland ministers refrained from that vigour of action in September or October last year which would in all probability have saved many lives and prevented much outrage in that unhappy country, because they waited until public opinion should be matured to support them, or, in other words, until the Radical section of their followers should be so alarmed by Irish agitation as to be ready for "strong measures," so, with regard to the Transvaal, they believed they had a clue to the direction of public opinion, and shaped their policy accordingly. A noisy section of "advanced Liberals"—Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Passmore-Edwards, of the *Echo*, and some others of the same stamp—set themselves to stir up an agitation in favour of restoring the Transvaal to the Boers. Public meetings were held, strong language used, the independence and patriotism of the Boers extolled to the skies, and the vindication of Her Majesty's authority in the Transvaal by her troops stigmatised as an unjust and unholy war. Forgetful of the fact

that in such a question counter-demonstrations were unlikely, because true Englishmen and loyal subjects, never doubting that the Government would stand to the words placed in the mouth of the Sovereign, and make the re-establishment of her authority the essential precursor of any peace, did not deem it necessary to raise an agitation in support of those principles of loyalty to which the Government were pledged, Her Majesty's Ministers seem to have come to the unhappy and mistaken conclusion that the voices of a few miserable demagogues expressed the real feeling of the people of Great Britain, and that the disciples of "peace at any price" had really the command of popular opinion.

A few words will suffice to show the melancholy results of this Ministerial delusion. The rebellion began by a refusal to pay taxes and the proclamation of the rebel Triumvirate that they had assumed government at Heidelberg. *Let Englishmen well note the next event.* Col. Anstruther, with a detachment of the 94th Regiment, with baggage, women, and children, was marching, as in time of peace, from Middleburgh to Pretoria upon the 20th Dec., 1880. No war had been declared, no attack was expected, when suddenly scouts appeared, and a man bearing a white flag rode up to Col. Anstruther and delivered him a letter signed by the Boer Triumvirate, Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert, saying that they "wished him to stop where he was." To prove that what followed was no fair warlike engagement, it is only necessary to quote the words of this letter, which stated that a "Diplomatic Commissioner" had been sent to the British Governor, Sir O. Lanyon, and "until the arrival of His Excellency's answer, we do not know whether we are in a state of war or not." Col. Anstruther replied that he had orders to march to Pretoria, which he must obey, but that he had "no wish to meet the Boers hostilely," and asked the messenger to "take his message to the Boer Commandant-General and let him know the result, to which he nodded assent." But, whilst Col. Anstruther was reading this letter, the Boers, *taking advantage of the flag of truce, were quietly circling round, and taking up positions from which they had already marked and measured the distances by stones, thus showing that they had planned and carried out a murderous ambuscade.* "Almost immediately the enemy's line advanced," and our poor English soldiers, completely taken by surprise, were shot down before they had time to form; every officer but one was picked off at the first volley, and 157 men killed and wounded out of a total force of under 250. Unarmed servants of officers were shot dead in cold blood, and one woman was seriously wounded. Never in the annals of warfare was perpetrated a more cruel and cold-blooded massacre, indefensible either by the rules of warfare or any code of laws in existence among civilised communities. What, then, was the duty of the British Government? Clearly, before any peace was made with the insurgent Boers, to demand a full reparation, so far as reparation

could be made, for this terrible outrage, and a surrender of those by whose orders it had been committed. Will Englishmen believe that, instead of taking this course, Her Majesty's Government have apparently treated the incident as one of ordinary warfare, and that in all Lord Kimberley's despatches hitherto laid before Parliament there occurs not only no protest, no remonstrance, no indignation at the "massacre of Bronker's Sprut," but not even a word of regret for the brave soldiers so foully and wantonly murdered? Up to this time, British soldiers, fighting in a foreign land, have known and felt that they have the sympathy of their country with them, and that if they fall by treachery or foul practices they will not fall unavenged. It has been reserved for the present Government to teach them a different lesson, but it is one which the true heart of the people of England can still unteach.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the subsequent incidents of this brief and inglorious struggle. Mr. Sellar tells us that the eyes of the Government "were *rudely opened by the disaster at Laing's Nek*," and that *then* they became aware that everybody had been deceived, and that "the annexation was not acquiesced in by the inhabitants." Was ever such a proposition penned by human hand or submitted to the credulity of human understanding? If it be worth anything, it must be equally true and just to assert that if "the disaster" at Laing's Nek had been a victory, Government would have discovered that everybody had been delighted with the annexation and that all official information had been correct?

Judging by the light of subsequent events, there can be little doubt that Sir George Colley committed an error in advancing upon the Transvaal with an inadequate force, and subsequently in yielding to the belief that a small number of Englishmen could accomplish more than it was possible for human prowess to effect in the teeth of an enemy superior in numbers and in a strong position. But, be this as it may, Sir George Colley has atoned for any mistake by dying a soldier's death, with his face to the enemy, and the question which Englishmen have to ask themselves is this: how and why should the disaster of a general and the defeat of the detachments of an army affect the policy of a Government? If we were wrong in annexing the Transvaal, we were wrong long before the rebellion broke out, and a temporary success of rebels should not have altered the matter. If, on the other hand, we were right, that right was in no way affected by a temporary disaster to our troops. The advocates of the Boers, however, and the friends of the Government (alas! that they should be identical) claim "moral courage" for this "justice-loving" Government in their abandonment to rebels of the country in which they had solemnly declared that the Queen's authority must be re-established. Mr. Chamberlain, moreover, has the effrontery to talk of the course taken by Great Britain having been "a course of oppression and wrong-doing" in which the present Government would not persist, and appeals to public

opinion to approve " the action of the Government, in preferring justice to revenge, and the best interests of South Africa to the vain pursuit of military glory." This idle declamation of course begs the whole question. No right-thinking man desires " military glory " for glory's sake, but a salutary chastisement of the rebel Boers was necessary for the upholding of that power and reputation of Great Britain which the " best interests of Africa " so much require. When you are dealing with savage and with semi-civilised races, it is necessary to appeal to feelings which they understand and appreciate, and all the " tall talk " of all the Chamberlains that ever charmed a Birmingham audience with high-flown eloquence will not come home to the minds of the Boers or of the native tribes with the same power of persuasion as the display of physical force and the proved determination of Great Britain to be supreme in South Africa. The Government actually allowed an armistice, during which, while the British troops were to remain within their camp, the rebels were permitted to remain upon British territory which they had invaded. It appeared as if the honour of the British flag, the safety of the loyal Colonists, the prestige of the British name were all as nothing to the Administration, so that they could please the advocates of " peace at any price," and put a stop to the expenditure in which they were involved by the war. Mr. Sellar tells us that there can be no doubt that Sir Evelyn Wood, at the head of 12,000 British troops, could have subjugated the Boers. But do the Boers think so? In a letter to Mankorana, a native chief, warning him not to aid the British, the acting Commandant-General of the Boers speaks of " our enemies the English Government, which we have already overthrown," and says, moreover, " we alone are able to work out the English." The plea of " moral courage " may be understood by men of education and refinement, but to the natives and Boers the change of front of the British Government seems only to have been dictated by the fear of further disasters, a fear expressed with tolerable clearness by Lord Kimberley in the debate recently brought on by Lord Cairns, when he hinted at the possible danger to our troops of an attack upon their flank by Free State Boers, who might take part against us if we continued the war.

What, then, is the position of affairs in South Africa at the present moment, and what the prospects of the future? All is dark indeed. To be an Englishman, to have been loyal, to have believed in the word of the British Government—these are deep misfortunes to any man. Englishmen and loyal Boers have lost relations, lands, and property, and their chance of obtaining restitution or compensation may be judged of by the past behaviour of the Government. British officials will be disbelieved, British evidence discredited, and the Boers allowed to have it all their own way. Then, Lord Kimberley, in his instructions to the Commission now sitting to arrange for the future of the Transvaal, suggests the taking off a slice of

territory to interpose a barrier between the Boers and the Zulus and Swazis. Does anybody believe that this, which would deprive the Boers of some of the most fertile portions of the country and of access to the sea, will be permitted by them? And if objected to, does anyone believe that Government will insist upon it? There will be more "moral courage" evinced by further yielding to the Boers. But what of the native tribes? Already comes the news of great irritation amongst them, and threats that they, *who were unanimously in favour of annexation to England*, will never again submit to the dominion of the hated Boers. If there should be a native uprising, and a war of races should come, who will be responsible but Her Majesty's Government? and what will the interests of South Africa have gained? It was for the sake of those interests that the Transvaal was annexed to England; it was for the sake of those interests that Cetewayo was dethroned and imprisoned. If it be "justice" to give back the Transvaal to the Boers, why not give back Zululand to Cetewayo? Nay, if the "majority of the people" at any given moment ought in justice to possess the country they live in, how can Mr. Gladstone shrink from evincing his "moral courage" by giving up Ireland to the Home Rulers and Land League, who claim, at least, to constitute the "majority" in a country which has been declared to have been recently "within a measureable distance" of a state of things similar to that which has occurred in the Transvaal? For the sake of pleasing the Democratic section of their party, the Government must stand convicted of having, in this matter of the Transvaal, imperilled British honour and British interests: they have no more information now of the real feeling in the Transvaal than they had when they declared that the Queen's authority should be re-established; they only know that a force of Boers, whose number has never yet been ascertained (but who were undoubtedly aided by other Boers than those of the Transvaal proper), occupied strong positions and thrice defeated small detachments of British troops; they do not know how many loyal Boers were forced either to join the ranks of the rebels or to remain quiet; they know that the loyalists in the towns held their own, and could have done so for weeks longer; but they have taken for granted all that could lead them to agree with the doctrines propounded in Mr. Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches, and in the pursuit of peace they have forgotten the faith pledged to the loyal inhabitants, upon whom they have committed a cruel injustice in the name of justice, and by again leaving the native tribes face to face with the slave-loving Boers, have in all probability done that which will once more plunge the Transvaal into anarchy and confusion, and is but too likely to lead to an effusion of blood and a conflict of races which the firm hand of a patriotic Government might happily have averted.

Having written the above statement, every word of which I conscientiously believe to be true, I cannot refuse to subscribe my

name to the same. It is with deep regret that I attack the policy of men with whom I have fought side by side in political warfare for more than a quarter of a century, of whose good intentions I am as confident as I am of my own, and for many of whom I have a personal regard. But I have no alternative. The Colonial Empire of Great Britain is, to my mind, of far greater importance than party ties or personal considerations, and I feel strongly that the very existence of that empire is imperilled by the policy of the present Government. By the course which has been taken in South Africa, loyal colonists have been taught, for the first time in our history, that engagements entered into by one Government and ratified by Parliament are not binding upon a succeeding Government and Parliament; that the solemn assurances of British officials of high rank are to count for nothing when it suits the convenience of the moment to disregard them; that the treacherous massacre of British soldiers may be suffered to pass unavenged and almost unnoticed; and that the temporary success of rebels condones rebellion and justifies concession to their demands. These are hard lessons for Englishmen, whether at home or abroad, to learn and to digest. For my part, I can do neither the one nor the other, and as the policy which teaches them has been defended and extolled as something noble and magnanimous, I desire to place before my fellow-countrymen my reasons for believing it to be the reverse and opposite.

BRABOURNE.

3, Queen Anne's Gate, July 1, 1881.

LIBERAL

DESPOTISM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"LIBERAL MISRULE IN IRELAND," ETC.

"Speech is the light, the morning of the mind."—DRYDEN.

LONDON:
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INTRODUCTION.

"At a meeting of the Conservative Association held at the Working Men's Club, Bedford, on the 18th inst., it was moved by Mr. J. H. de Ricci:—

"That this meeting, regarding the Clôture as an engine of oppression, fatal to the freedom of parliamentary speech, calculated to strangle minorities, to degrade the office of the Speaker, and impair the independence of the grand council of the nation, and the liberty of its members, solemnly protests against any procedure being adopted which shall permit the debate being closed by less than a two-thirds majority; and desires to record its high appreciation of the course hitherto taken by the Right Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote on this question."

The resolution was unanimously carried with enthusiasm, and the mover was requested to communicate it to the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, with the hope and belief that it would contribute to strengthen his hands during the coming session."*

* Extract from the *Bedfordshire Mercury*, October 21, 1882.

The remarks made by me in support of the foregoing Resolution are now published in this shape at the request of the Conservative Association of Bedford.

"Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, above all liberties."

J. H. DE RICCI.

3, Elm Court, Temple, E.C.,

23*rd October*, 1882.

LIBERAL DESPOTISM.

"Men are never so likely to settle a question rightly as when they discuss it freely."—MACAULAY.

AMIDST the clash of arms and the pomp and circumstance of war abroad, public opinion at home has been lately diverted from a question than which, perhaps, none of greater moment has occurred since the days of the Stuarts in our constitutional history.

In that Sanctuary of Liberty, Parliament, the very name of which proclaims its purpose—Debate—where for centuries Freedom of Speech has been demanded by the Speaker as a standing privilege of the House, we are now threatened that the gag will be applied; that on the altar of liberty a sacrifice will be made to despotism; that the bulwark of freedom will be shattered; that the dark spirit of tyranny will be invoked.

The occasion of the introduction of the new Rules of Procedure was an historic one, and

Mr. Gladstone spoke at length. The right honourable gentleman made no apology for not being in accord with the leader of the Opposition regarding the introduction of these rules, nor did he commit himself to the expediency of stating why he erred against that traditional and time-honoured usage by virtue of which leaders on both sides consult, and act in harmony in all matters touching Procedure. He did, however, explain that, whereas twenty-one Committees in all had sat upon this subject since the Reform Act, 1832, and had not dared to advocate the Clôture, he nevertheless ventured to do so. He freely admitted that it was during the Parliament of 1874 that the power of obstruction first developed "certain features which had not before presented themselves," but he cautiously refrained from paying tribute to the fact, that notwithstanding such obstruction, that great patriot and statesman, Lord Beaconsfield, during the Parliament in question, successfully carried on Her Majesty's Government without the Clôture.

We trust the Liberal Cabinet is not yet too old to learn, for the lesson thus conveyed is an important one. Again, the right honourable gentleman apparently desired some conclusions to be drawn in favour of stopping debate by a bare majority, from the facts, *inter alia*, that a majority of five threw out the Melbourne Govern-

ment in 1839; that a similar majority threw out Lord John Russell's Government in 1866; that a majority of one "read the Reform Bill in 1832;" and lastly, that "a bare majority of one enabled Mr. Pitt to go forward with the Act of Union." But the right honourable gentleman wholly failed to point out, that although a bare majority *may* suffice to decide questions of great gravity and moment, such majority has as yet only had effect *after the fullest debate;* nor can we avoid being irresistibly led to the conclusion that if issues of the magnitude here cited can be determined by less than half-a-dozen votes, then the *only* safeguard we have against arbitrary, unwise, or hasty decisions, consists in that very freedom of debate now endangered by the first Procedure Rule, under the provisions of which there is absolutely no limit, to the power for evil, of a weak, designing, unscrupulous, or arbitrary Minister or Speaker.

The Premier's tried experience, long services, and high character, no doubt, lent some transient weight to his appeal that the House should discard what he termed "vain fears and apprehensions of Party prejudice," in confronting "the necessities of so great a *crisis;*" but, while fully admitting that crisis, for which Mr. Gladstone is alone responsible, we must add that not even his great qualities can blind us to other con-

tingencies. *Errare est humanum! Even* Mr. Gladstone is not impeccable.

Let us pass over briefly such arbitrary acts as:

The Abolition of Purchase by Royal warrant, in 1871. A statutory power conferred by an Act of George III., to be sure, was furbished up and pressed into service for the occasion, but clearly it should have been had recourse to in the first instance, or not at all; and the insult thus offered, in overriding the views of an influential minority in the Lower House and an overwhelming majority in the Upper House—views only given expression to after long debate, will not soon be forgotten—

As the spectacle. in 1880 and 1881, of Mr. Bradlaugh being, time after time, forced on the House of Commons by Mr. Gladstone. Prior to June, 1880, two Select Committees, to which the matter had been referred by the Government, reported respectively that Mr. Bradlaugh could neither be allowed to affirm nor take the oath, which he had declared "included words of idle and meaningless character." On June 21, 1880, in the face of those decisions, Mr. Gladstone, nevertheless, supported a motion that Mr. Bradlaugh might all the same be allowed to affirm. Mr. Gladstone was defeated.

The right honourable gentleman, however, was not to be denied; another motion of a cognate

character was introduced by him on the 1st July, 1880; and on April 26th, 1881, having opposed Sir Stafford Northcote, who moved (in consequence of his having once more presented himself on re-election) that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be allowed to take the oath, Mr. Gladstone was again defeated. Moreover, on two other occasions, *i.e.*, June 23rd, 1880, and May 10th, 1881, Mr. Gladstone either declined to or did not support the authority of the chair on this question, and rather than carry into effect the "*evident sense of the House*," on the 26th April, 1881, he exposed himself to a declaration from Sir Stafford Northcote that the Premier had "abdicated" the proper functions of his position—

And, finally, as the attempt made by Mr. Gladstone on the 14th March last year to carry "Supply" under the "Urgency Rules," a step which was persisted in, notwithstanding Sir Stafford Northcote had urged on the Friday previous, that the Prime Minister's proposals were "serious" and "alarming." The question was put to the vote, and *decided against* Mr. Gladstone; subsequent events proved the wisdom of this decision.

This proneness to arbitrary and dictatorial procedure should make us, therefore, chary of confiding the power of stopping debate, even to Mr. Gladstone; and if a so well-proved public

servant cannot be entrusted with it, we may well ask : " Who can ? "

So much for the argumentative side of Mr. Gladstone's speech on the first Rule. The facts of the right honourable gentleman's speech, we fear, can scarcely be termed more happy. In referring to the power of stopping debate in foreign assemblies—having stated that the Clôture existed, *inter alia*, in the United States—he said :

" The only considerable country, so far as I have seen, where it is doubtful whether there is a real power of the kind is Spain."

Actually, it does not exist in Hungary, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, or the United States. It is true that, by a motion for the previous question in the last-mentioned country, the " House " can cut off all debate, and bring the question to a direct vote, but this is also the case in the Spanish Chambers. What the right honourable gentleman did not mention, is the strictly accurate and important fact, that in the legislative Chambers of all European countries (excepting Servia and Switzerland, the joint population of which does not exceed that of London), the right of secret voting in some form or other exists.

In the United States, where there is open voting, the *Caucus exists !*

Then the right honourable gentleman made this remarkable statement :

"The colonies, in which the British character is reflected, and which value British freedom not less than we value it, have felt it necessary to go into the system to some considerable extent. I believe it exists in Canada, in Tasmania, in New Zealand, at the Cape, in South Australia, and in Victoria." *

Now, this is exceedingly categorical, but what are the facts? Why, that absolutely in no one of these colonies (and we may add to them the important colonies of New South Wales and Queensland) is the Clôture to be found, saving in South Australia. But the population of this last-mentioned colony is only 225,677 (*vide* Census 1876), whereas the population of the other colonies named, amounts to not less than 6,214,631 !

This is not all. The right honourable gentleman went on to say:

"These are all colonies greatly similar as to their political ideas, and certainly they are not behind us in the value they set upon liberty of speech. And what is more remarkable, I am bound to say, is this, because on this occasion we shall, perhaps, be intimidated, I will not say terrified—for that I hope we shall not be—by vague anticipations of mischief and alarm. Well, Sir, these anticipations, if a power of this kind in the hands of a deliberative assembly were a new thing, might be very formidable. But I have recited all these cases, and I have never heard of a single instance in which it has been found that this power, varying perhaps in the form it takes, but running through the whole of them, has worked badly. ('Hear, hear,' and some expression of dissent). The hon. member expresses astonishment at this statement.

* After the Speaker had put the question, Mr. Gladstone again rose and said: "I am aware that I am taking a great liberty in again rising, but I desire to state that I do not wish to adhere closely to my statement as to the closing powers of the colonial assemblies. I should prefer making an examination into the matter before insisting upon details."

Yes; but this does not in any manner account for the grave inaccuracy we call attention to, and the pernicious effect of which, doubtless, yet remains.—J. H. de R.

I did not say there never has been a single case in which he did not think it has worked badly. (A laugh.) That is a different proposition from the one I advanced :

"*But if he will point out to me that there is a case where this control has been introduced, and where, after experience, it has been abandoned, then I shall give due weight to it.*"

Here it is pointed out :

"ENCLOSURE 1 IN No. 5.

"Legislative Assembly Chambers, Melbourne, *Dec.* 23, 1880.

"SIR,—I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of the Right Honourable the Earl of Kimberley, a copy of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, and also a statement respecting the *working of the 'Clôture,'* or Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly *adopted in the session of* 1875-76 *for summarily terminating discussion. No standing order having a similar object has since been adopted by the Assembly.*

"In preparing this statement all reference to the political complications that gave rise to, or followed, the standing order has been carefully avoided.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PETER TALOR, *Speaker.*

"To his Excellency the Governor of Victoria."

[Extract from Miscellaneous Reports on Practice and Regulations of Legislative Assemblies in Colonies possessing Responsible Government, presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1881.]

Let us hope that "*due weight*" will be given "*to it.*"

While on the subject of the Colonies, this further extract from the same Parliamentary Report may be, perhaps, quoted with advantage; the author of it is Mr. John Noble, clerk of the House of Assembly, at the Cape, and it is taken from enclosure No. 2 in No. 2.

"The rules and practice of the House of Assembly being substantially the same as those adopted by the House of Commons, there is no authorized mode of procedure for directly interfering with the freedom

of debate, or for abridging or terminating a discussion by clôture. In the protracted session of 1865, what is known as 'obstruction' tactics were adopted and so determinedly carried on, that the sittings of the House on one occasion lasted 17 hours, during which 162 motions were made to accomplish a 'count out;' and on another occasion, during a continuous sitting of 21½ hours, the House was counted 145 times.

"*This course of obstruction, however, failed in its object, and was acknowledged to be an unwise, as well as an undignified, mode of procedure. It has never been repeated, and on any appearance of an approach to it the good sense of the House has always asserted itself, and checked any undue exercise of the inherent powers of a minority.*"

It would perhaps be difficult to imagine a more terse or scathing comment on the "First Rule" than the last paragraph of this excerpt. We commend it to the notice of those whom it may concern.

We now arrive at a consideration of the new Rules themselves. Here is the text as laid on the table of the House of Commons on the 20th of February last, with the modification then referred to by Mr. Gladstone.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

I.—PROCEDURE.

Putting the Question.

1. That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the question be now put, he may so inform the House; and, if a Motion be made "That the question be now put," Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such question; and, if the same be decided in the affir-

mative, the question under discussion shall be put forthwith: provided that the question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty members, and supported by more than 100 members:—

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT BEFORE PUBLIC BUSINESS.

2. That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made, except by leave of the House, before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motion, have been entered upon.

DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

3. That when a Motion is made for the adjournment of a debate, or of the House during any debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do report progress, or do leave the chair, the debate thereupon shall be strictly confined to the matter of such Motion; and no member having spoken to any such Motion shall be entitled to move or second any similar Motion during the same debate or during the same sitting of the Committee.

DIVISIONS.

4. That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the "Ayes" or "Noes" have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee.

IRRELEVANCE OR REPETITION.

5. That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committee, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance, or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his speech.

POSTPONEMENT OF PREAMBLE.

6. That in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put.

CHAIRMAN TO LEAVE THE CHAIR WITHOUT QUESTION.

7. That when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put.

HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE.

8. To add to the Standing Order of 18th February, 1879, the following words:—"But this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee."

ORDER IN DEBATE.

9. To amend the Standing Order of 28th of February, 1880, as follows:—"That whenever any member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding the authority of the Chair, or abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate being allowed, 'That such member be suspended from the service of the House;' and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and, if the motion is carried, shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee, and report the circumstances to the House, and the Speaker shall

thereupon put the Question without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any member be suspended under this order, his suspension on the first occasion shall continue for a week, on the second occasion for a month, and on the third occasion for the remainder of the Session, provided always, that nothing in the Resolutions shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages."

DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

10. That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the adjournment of a debate, or of the House during any debate, or that the Chairman do report progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair.

CONSIDERATION OF A BILL AS AMENDED.

11. That on reading the Order of the Day for the consideration of a Bill as amended, the House do proceed to consider the same without Question put, unless the member in charge thereof shall desire to postpone its consideration, or notice has been given to re-commit the Bill.

MOTIONS ON GOING INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

12. That whenever the Committee of Supply appointed for the consideration of the ordinary Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates stands as the first Order of the Day on a Monday, Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, unless an Amendment be moved or question raised relating to the Estimates proposed to be taken in Supply, on first going into Committee on the Army, Navy, and Civil Services respectively.

II.—STANDING COMMITTEES.

STANDING COMMITTEES ON LAW AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, TRADE, &c.

1. That two Standing Committees be appointed for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice, and to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures, which may be committed to them respectively.

NOMINATION BY COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

2. That the said Standing Committee do consist of not less than sixty nor more than eighty members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, who shall have regard to the classes of Bills committed to such Committees, to the composition of the House, and to the qualifications of the members selected, and shall have power to add and discharge members from time to time, provided the number of eighty be not exceeded.

COMMITMENT AND REPORT OF BILLS.

3. That all Bills comprised in each of the said classes shall be committed to one of the said Standing Committees, unless the House shall otherwise order; and when reported to the House shall be proceeded with as if they had been reported from a Committee of the whole House.

The putting down of obstruction was the alleged object in view, and the first Rule is the one which principally and professedly deals with it. Let us see how it works.

First of all it makes the Speaker, or Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, sole judge of "*the evident sense of the House*," or, in other words, sole judge of when the debate shall be closed; nor is there any limitation or definition as to what shall be understood as "*the evident sense of the House.*" It may mean, of course, a very large majority; on the other hand, it may mean not more than *one* majority. This is admittedly an enormous power to place in the hands of any one man. It really amounts to handing over to the Speaker or Chairman an absolute control and veto on Parliamentary debate, without check or guarantee of any kind that it will be judiciously, or even efficaciously used. Who shall determine that "*the evident sense of the House*" is not the clamour of faction; that it is not a demonstration to snatch a purely party advantage; that it is not a mere expression of force by the party in power; that it is not a concession to mere wire pulling; in a word, that it will not be used as an *engine of oppression* for silencing "the Opposition," individual members, or minorities? The Speaker!

In other countries this power is well understood by leaders of parties, and the consequence is that the Speaker is generally a strong party man. Naturally no *model* Prime Minister would bring pressure to bear on a Speaker

possessing such powers, but the temptation will be a strong one.

Hitherto the fittest man, regardless of all party considerations, has been elected by general consent to the Speakership; but in the future, should the Clôture become law, we must expect not only to see envenomed party contest on the occasion of the election of a Speaker, both sides striving to obtain the advantage of having a man upon whom they can *depend* in the chair, but we must be prepared to see the choice fall either on some ready tool, or on a party representative so strong that in him will concentre the functions of Speaker, Prime Minister, and possibly Dictator!

Can anything be imagined more degrading the office of Speaker? Yet one or other of these alternatives is the certain outcome of the First Rule. If ever they be possible it will be an evil day for England! These powers may be necessary for creating a despotism, but surely not for overcoming obstruction, as it has hitherto obtained in St. Stephen's. The remainder of the rule may be thus expressed: although avowedly only introduced for the purpose of dealing with obstruction, we find that in a full House, 330 members may silence 328, and that in every other instance when there are more than 200 members, the debate may be sum-

marily stopped, the minority strangled, and the independence and liberties of the Grand Council of the nation, and its members scattered to the winds by a bare majority, or *one vote!* Is it possible to conceive any greater engine of oppression? But we are told in the same breath it will never be enforced, and that it has only been invented to prevent obstruction!

This paradoxical casuistry is disposed of by insisting, that if it is not to be enforced, it is not necessary; and that if it is to be enforced, no such dangerous weapon has been proved needful to dispose of obstruction.

As regards the other mystical numbers set forth in the Rule, it remains yet to be adequately explained—Why it requires a majority of 161 to silence 40 members (or 201 — 40), and only a majority of 62 to silence 39 members (or 101 — 39). We leave the solution of this confusion of figures to the fertile genius responsible for its creation!

For the rest, it may be observed that the Obstructives have hitherto averaged under 30, and that whereas, even supposing they touched this figure, they could only be silenced under this Rule by at least 71 votes, Her Majesty's Opposition on all important occasions might be silenced by *one* vote! Thus it is, that under the insidious pretence of "obstruction," it is sought to intro-

duce into our constitution of British freedom, a most deadly instrument of tyranny and oppression.

These are no mere empty phrases. We have already referred to the Caucus. This is the action they have so far taken on this question.

In February last the "Birmingham Federation" issued a circular pointing out, in effect, that if the Rules were passed the Liberals (?) might carry measures of a character that would shed such refulgence and radiant glory on their Party, that they might certainly calculate on the sweets of office for—well, a considerable time!

Mark the effect, as stated in the adjourned debate on the 27th March last by Mr. Anderson, Liberal member for Glasgow, the second largest city of the United Kingdom:—

"He should like to know what the Clôture would do for private members except obliterate them altogether. ('Hear, hear,' and laughter.) The Clôture was never intended to do anything for the private members; indeed, the noble lord the Secretary for India had indicated how it was intended to deal with private members after the Clôture was passed, and had actually given them a proscribed list. ('Hear, hear,' and laughter.) To be sure the name of the hon. member for Aylesbury was not upon it at this moment, but if, at any future time, he should venture to have sufficient courage to act an independent part, and not always slavishly follow his party leaders, he would very soon find his name on the proscribed list. (Hear, hear.) Another thing that he had to complain of was that the members of the Liberal party were not allowed to consider this question on its own merits. (Hear, hear.) He had shown what the opinion of the majority of that House was in reference to it, and if they were allowed to vote as they thought right in the matter, the Clôture would be ignominiously kicked out of that House. (Cheers.) They, however, were not allowed to consider it on its own merits; they were told that they must consider it on the merits of the Ministry who

had brought it in. That was the point of view from which he had to consider it, from which he was bound to consider it, and it was with very great regret that he realized the fact. He had always been an admirer of the present Government, whose reign of power he believed would be for the good of the country, and he deeply regretted to see them depart from old principles in this matter.

"He had been told that he must vote with the Government under pain of losing his seat, of bringing about a dissolution, or of the country losing the services of this great and wise Government. This put him in a great difficulty, and had put many other hon. members in a great difficulty likewise. (Hear, hear.) He had been told the other day, and he believed that there was some truth in the assertion, that no fewer than 100 members of the Liberal party disliked the Clôture ('Hear, hear,' and cries of 'Oh!') and would, if it were placed before them simply on its own merits, have voted against it. (Hear, hear.) They had, however, to consider the situation."

This is plain speaking—let Englishmen give it heed. Let them take warning from the fact, that notwithstanding Mr. Anderson, on this occasion, denounced the Clôture, or the First Rule, in the most determined and uncompromising fashion, *he* did not *dare* vote against it, and when the time for division on Mr. Marriott's Amendment arrived, only three Liberals, out of the 100 members referred to, had the courage of their convictions.

Neither space nor time will permit of us dealing adequately on this occasion with the other Rules—suffice it to say, we believe that, while there is much in them open to grave exception, they also contain sufficiently little leaven to warrant the hope, that both sides of the House may succeed in modifying them in the interests

of the efficient transaction of the affairs of the Empire and the Nation.

A mode of dealing with obstruction (if indeed any further power be necessary than that which the House already possesses, just as much as the House of Assembly at Cape Colony) was suggested by Mr. Gibson in June last, and having been adopted by Sir Stafford Northcote, we believed was accepted by the Prime Minister. We were mistaken. *Circumstances have merely altered.*

At the time that Mr. Gladstone agreed to debate being closed by not less than a two-thirds' majority, stirring events were happening in Ireland! dark clouds hung thickly over the Cabinet!

Since then, we have been told, that we were at war and *not at war!* and we have seen some of the clouds of bungling at home, temporarily dispersed by clouds of gunpowder abroad. Consequently Mr. Gladstone considers himself no longer bound to the two-thirds' majority proposal. Might not the leaders of the Opposition also, in these *altered circumstances*, reconsider *their* position?

Since the advent of the present Liberal Government it must not be forgotten that the powers of Mr. Speaker have been considerably enlarged. Sir Henry Brand's view on this point is well expressed in one of the Urgency Rules, in which, having deprived himself of the powers originally conferred on him, he provides, that the debate can

only be closed by a majority of three to one. Again, I say, this proneness, by the Government, to arbitrary and high-handed procedure, should make us doubly chary and cautious in consenting to any further concession in this direction.

For my own part, I venture to hold that, with the ample light we now possess on the subject, whether it proceed from our knowledge of the fatal consequences of the Clôture abroad, or the timely indications we have of how detrimentally it might be applied at home, the House of Commons may well pause, before it consents to surrender one jot or tittle more of those privileges, it has taken so many centuries to build up.

REMEDY.

At present, the quorum of the Representative Chamber of the greatest Empire in the world is incongruously, if not dangerously, small—viz., 40 ~~20~~. Increase it to 100, and make a rule to the effect that whenever it shall be the opinion of the majority that the debate should be closed, such majority shall go into the "lobby," and if the House then can be "counted out," or, in other words, if the members remaining in the House be less than a quorum, it shall be competent to the majority to make a "House," and move, that the

question shall be put forthwith without further debate. No question thus "counted out" to be debated again during the same session.

By adopting some such procedure as this, it is submitted, that the House would alike consult its dignity, retain absolute control over its procedure and its business, and continue to be the repository of that freedom and liberty on which our constitution is based.

The following reasons may further, finally be summed up against the Clôture:—

1. It is inimical to *full debate*, the safety-valve of all agitators and grievance-mongers, and will debar those who wish to speak, from having the solace and contentment of their *say*.

2. It is an embargo on self-reliance, fertility of resource, and independent action.

3. It is opposed to the deliberation best calculated to ensure finality and perfection in legislation, and which permits of that popular discussion and outside expression of feeling by the people, so necessary to the moulding of our laws.

But here are Mr. Gladstone's own words when speaking as leader of a defeated party on the Endowed Schools Act, in 1874:—

"If you will consult the political writers who adorn the literature of foreign countries, you will find their language respecting us uniform. When they look at our political constitution they are struck by the multitude of obstructions which, for the purposes of the minority, we allow to be placed in the way of legislation. They are struck by observing the slowness of the steps we take, but when they refer to the con-

sequences of that slowness, they find one great and powerful compensation, and it is that in England all progress is sure."

4. It would render impossible *such legitimate obstruction* as that which led to the repeal of the Corn Laws and gave us Free Trade. This, Mr. Gladstone himself fully emphasized in a contribution to the *Nineteenth Century* of August, 1879, wherein he said that often obstruction is the only means which minorities possess for giving effect to their opinions!

5. It would alienate that sense of responsibility on the part of the Opposition which has hitherto actuated its invaluable co-operation and support in the conduct of public business.

6. It would only render more bitter the struggle between parties, and provoke retaliation by the "ins" upon the "outs," to the inevitable degrading of Parliament and the detriment of the affairs of the nation.

7. It would confer absolute power on the majority, without control or check.

8. It is a direct negation of the precious doctrine, that "Force is no remedy."

9. In lieu of the Constitutional Government we now have, by a party possessing a responsible head, it would saddle us with a despotism of faction possessing an irresponsible "tail."

10. It will give greater power of interference to the House of Lords, who will not fail to avail

themselves of it, and rightly so, on the ground of tyrannical majorities stifling debate and preventing full discussion; and the danger of the two Houses being brought into collision will accordingly be seriously enhanced.

And lastly, it is a foreign importation, from lands yet struggling for liberty, that it is now sought to engraft on our British constitution—a constitution that has not only served as a model for those very countries, but which has ever been a leader in the van of freedom.

Mr. Gladstone has proclaimed the session already passed, of this year, to have been one of "disaster," and, rather than confess unskilfulness in the management of a Parliamentary machine which has worked perfectly for centuries, he has preferred thus to nerve his submissive followers to a measure of autocratic coercion!

Within a few hours the House of Commons will be engaged in the solution of the issue. The Prime Minister has described it as one of "unapproachable gravity."

Once more the brazen "Federal" trumpet from Birmingham has sounded a withering blast against Liberty.

There are times when conscience, and principle, and patriotism must prevail, and soar high above all consideration of Party.

The birthright of every Englishman is free-

dom, and freedom in its most noble sense is, at this very time, assailed and imperilled, for are we not told, we shall no longer have liberty of speech or debate.

In this supreme crisis let us not, then, be unmindful of that glorious heritage which our forefathers have fought and suffered for.

To use the words of one of the most famous martyrs in the cause, Bunyan, let us wage a "holy war" against this "*Diabolus*" of oppression, and "beat ope" the "*ear-gate*" of the stronghold that gives it shelter.

Englishmen, make your voices heard by

MASS MEETINGS;
BY RESOLUTIONS;
BY PETITIONS;
AND BY THE PRESS,

in favour and in support of those who are fighting for your liberties, if you would not be crushed by this *LIBERAL DESPOTISM.*

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THE

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WHO ARE THE FARMER'S FRIENDS?

The time cannot be very remote—and it may be very near—when a General Election will again summon the British farmer to the polling booths. Rival Candidates will solicit the favour of his vote, and the honour of promoting his interests in Parliament. They will be alike profuse in promises and lavish of sympathy, and—in their desire to become members of "the best club in the world"—alike sincere. But the House of Commons is something more than the best club in the world. For the farmer, individually, it is the assembly in which are determined the conditions, so far as they are artificial, under which he pursues his industry. That industry has fallen upon critical times. It is to raise no false cry of "wolf!" to say that British agriculture is in danger. In the opinion of some it is even doomed: whilst others, taking a less pessimist view, hold that by timely and wise legislation its ruin, otherwise inevitable, may be averted. The occasion, then, of the next General Election will be one of no ordinary moment to the farmer. Upon his vote then given will depend his legislative prospects over another and, it may be, lengthened period. Looking to this, and having regard to the results obtained by his subordination in the past of his own interests to general political considerations, the time seems to demand that the farmer should take stock of his position, and reconsider his relations to the two great parties in the State. Hitherto he has mainly attached himself to that party whose guiding principle is to maintain, as far as possible, the existing order of things. Shall he continue that attachment; or, in view of changed conditions, transfer his allegiance to that party which is in accord with change, and which looks to progress as the only source from which to expect improvement?

The sympathy which exists between the dwellers in towns and a progressive policy naturally allies them to the Liberal party; and the bonds of this alliance were still further strengthened by the Free Import legislation of 1846. That legislation was entirely due to the unceasing efforts of the Liberal party—efforts maintained in the face of the strongest Tory opposition—and its effects were wholly calculated to benefit the town at the expense of the country. There, in the town, the manufacturer had his factory and the mechanic his workshop; and there in greatest force was found that curious being to whom by modern statemanship the highest honour is paid. The Consumer, whatever else he may be, is before all things a consumer. The doctor practising his art—the dawdler who suns himself on the sidewalk—are both, the one in his profession and the other in his pastime, of little political account: but regarded as beings who consume something that

another produces, they at once become invested with a new and singular importance in the eyes of the modern politician. And the reason is not far to seek. The Consumer votes. As a professional man—as a fund-holder—he is only a social feature : at the polling booths he is a political power. In the hollow of his hand he holds victory or defeat to whom he will.

All the interests that centre in the town—the manufacturer's, the artisan's, and the consumer's generally—were served by the Free Import legislation of the fifth decade of this century. The manufacturer and the artisan were benefited by the indirect cheapening of the cost of labour through the cheapening of the cost of food ; and the consumer was directly benefited by the cheapening of all the articles he consumed. Thus the borough constituencies became bound by ties of gratitude as well as interest to the political party to whose exertions they owed these benefits ; and, generally speaking, the borough constituencies from this time returned Liberal representatives. There were, of course, exceptions. Notably the smaller boroughs, whose interests might be chiefly rural, or in which the territorial influence of a Tory family preponderated, elected Conservatives ; but the rule obtained in the great majority of instances.

As the restless activity, both mental and material, that characterises the crowded inhabitants of towns naturally inclines them to a policy conformable to visions of the future rather than moulded after the facts of the past, does the disposition to contentment of the widely spread inhabitants of the country disincline them to change, and make them view with suspicion any ideas that lack the hall mark of experience and proof. It would be contrary to all we know of human nature if the owner of broad acres, whose rent-roll affords him the means of a more than comfortable existence, and who enjoys a consideration and an influence that no other possession than land can give, were not fairly satisfied with things as they are. No possible change could conduce to his good : it might, and probably would, to his harm. The farmer, who tills the fields his forefathers tilled, and who at night when labour is done rests in the same chimney corner as they before him, feels the contenting influence of his associations. What was good enough for his father and grandfather is good enough for him. The intimations he gets through his weekly newspaper of the doctrines proclaimed in great towns—the rights of man, the sovereignty of the people, the co-ordination of classes—move him nothing. The respectful touch which he gives his hat in response to the careless nod and 'nice day' of the squire is marred by no thought of any natural equality of his with the man to whom he thus acknowledges his social inferiority. Nor is the labourer more in sympathy with modern progress. The advance of science, bringing with it new means for abridging, or dispensing with, labour gets no welcome from him. In his eyes agricultural machines are only so many instruments to snatch the bread from his empty mouth to cram it into the sufficiently filled mouth of the manufacturer. To his dull intellect—dull by inheritance through generations of unlettered ancestors—the theories of modern thought have not even a meaning. The language of the pigs, grunting in their

narrow sty, is more intelligible. And to both—farmer, hind—there comes the contenting influence of their surroundings and their daily life. The peaceful toil, begun in the grey of morning and gently carried on through the sultry heats of day, till it is laid aside in the still air of evening: the pleasant chatter over the haycock, among the sheaves, and by the hop bin: the plough followed in silence by the lulling sound of waters and the rustle of breeze-stirred leaves—the lowing of the herd as it "brings home at night increase of milk," and the "drowsy tinklings" in the fold—these all furnish the opiate-food their minds daily feed on.

This natural Conservatism of the rural population was still further emphasised by the action of the Conservative party in resisting legislation hostile to rural interests; and from the time of the abolition of the corn laws the Tory party was known emphatically as the "country party." As in the case of the Liberals and the boroughs, the rule was not without exceptions; and wherever Whig influences predominated, county constituencies were found returning Liberal candidates. But for more than thirty years the great bulk of English farmers gave their support to those who claimed it as their friends. It may be that many looked to obtain little substantial benefit from their professed advocates. There are not a few people who hold that between political parties their is often little difference beyond that of name. Between Marius and Sulla, they say, there is not much to choose. The impromptu massacres of the one are only a whit less dreadful than the proscribed slaughters of the other; whilst the simples of Tweedledum are practically indistinguishable from the bread pills of Tweedledee.

During these thirty years what did the Conservative party do to justify their claim to be regarded as the farmer's friends? They could not be expected to labour for the reversal of Sir Robert Peel's legislation. The attempt would have been hopeless. Moreover, the farmer for a considerable period shared to some extent in the benefit of that vast increase of wealth which followed, if it was not caused by, the establishment of our Free Import system. That increase of wealth gave to the consumer generally increased power to consume such and so much food as is conducive to health; whilst to individual consumers, whose means went beyond this, it gave increased power to consume the luxuries of diet. Also, the full effect of the new policy as it affected the farmer was slow in making itself felt. Food from abroad had to traverse long distances in order to reach our markets, whilst the means for its conveyance were few. The cost of conveyance was consequently great; and this cost prevented the price of British farm produce from immediately and greatly falling. There were few railways in America to bring the produce from the western prairies, where it could be cheaply grown, to the Atlantic seaboard for shipment; the mercantile marine available for its transport across the ocean to these shores was of very limited extent and capacity; and here in England the railway system necessary for its distribution throughout the country was yet in its infancy. In respect to live animals and dead meat, the difficulty and consequent cost of their

conveyance from America almost prohibited their importation. While these obstacles were being removed, there arose that prolonged and desolating civil war which paralyzed during its continuance the industries of America, and compelled her to be only a borrower in the markets of Europe where she would else have been a trader. But the war over, the process of recovery began. With a vast country of practically inexhaustible resources, and with a people of extraordinary energy and enterprise, this process presented comparatively little difficulty. So, at least, the Americans thought, and the event has justified their expectations. They braced themselves to the task. They had a great debt to pay interest upon and by degrees to clear off, and these purposes they could accomplish by means of their agricultural produce. They brought vast areas of virgin soil—areas vast as continents—into cultivation; they constructed railroads; and they invited immigrants from all parts of the world to supply the labour needed for these undertakings. At the same time the shipyards of Great Britain were not idle. They responded readily to the appeal made to them from the other side of the water. Steam vessels of unprecedented capacity were rapidly turned out, and the growth of the mercantile navy is not the least remarkable feature of modern times. To complete the chain of communication, railways were everywhere laid down in these islands, and our country is now traversed by a network of iron roads which distribute easily and cheaply the food the foreigner sends us. But only of late years have all these circumstances, so favourable to the American farmer, obtained: it is only since the close of the American civil war that the pressure of American competition has been steadily and greatly growing. And even during this period there have been circumstances at times to mitigate its pressure upon British agriculture. The wars that have taken place in various parts of Europe, by withdrawing the people of those parts from the cultivation of the soil, have compelled them subsequently to import food which they would else have produced for themselves. There has been so much less at these times to throw into the British market.

For many years then, the farmer did fairly well, getting warmth in the sunshine of the general prosperity, and freely picking up of the crumbs that fell from the rich manufacturer's table. During this period it was not to be expected that his political friends would exert themselves to procure a return to the former protective system. Moreover the attempt would doubtless have alienated those boroughs which, for whatever reason, were attached to the Conservative cause. One grievance, however, of the farmer they did take up. In season and out of season—provided they were out of office—the Conservative leaders, and Conservative politicians following their lead, never failed to denounce the Malt-tax and to demand its removal. This was when they were in opposition: whenever the whirligig of events brought them into place the denunciations suddenly ceased and the removal was not attempted. In justice it must be allowed that this was not always their fault. Taxes are difficult to deal with. They can only be removed in periods of redundant prosperity, or when a substitute can be found in a more convenient source of revenue. It must be confessed that the cir-

cumstances under which the Conservatives generally acceded to office were not favourable to their dealing with a controverted question. In seeking to abolish the Malt-tax they would have been opposed by the whole Liberal party—their masters. They were in place not power, holding office on the sufferance of a Liberal majority ; and only acting as stopgaps until such time as it should be convenient to the Liberals to return to the direction of affairs. In 1874, however, these adverse conditions did not obtain. In that year the Conservatives came not merely into place but into power. They were masters of the situation, with a commanding majority and a magnificent surplus ; and it was then clearly in their ability, if they were minded, to abolish the unjust impost.

More valid proof, perhaps, of friendship to the Agricultural interest did the Conservative party give when, owing to the introduction into this country of the rinderpest and its rapid and devastating spread, necessity arose for legislation in order to stamp it out. Also, in Mr. Gladstone's former Administration Sir Massey Lopes introduced a resolution condemning the incidence of Local Taxation, and in this he was supported by the whole of the Conservative party. The resolution, by the assistance of the moderate Liberals—chiefly those who sat for county constituencies—was carried : and the promise thus held forth to the farmers the late Conservative Government to some extent redeemed. By Imperial subventions they granted some relief to the local taxpayer ; but the relief thus granted was wholly inadequate to the need. To the overburdened farmer it was litttle more than what a drop of water is to a man famishing.

In this matter of taxation the farmer has clearly a grievance whose reality is beyond dispute. Not only is the burden excessive, but its incidence is most unjust. When this taxation was first imposed there was no property but real upon which to put it. Manufactures had not arisen to create that great personal property that exists to-day. Personal property now is manifold the value of the landed. Under the changed conditions, therefore, of to-day, it is but just that the incidence of local taxation should be re-adjusted to meet them. Moreover, the abolition of the Corn Laws was so entirely to the benefit of the manufacturer and to the hurt of the agriculturist that it was but fair that compensation in some form should be given the injured interest. If for the benefit of another industry you take away an industry's high profits, take away also its high expenses. But this was not done. On the contrary not only were the old burdens left, but owing to the demands of recent legislation they have been many times increased. In demanding, therefore, a considerable relief from the pressure of Local Taxation, the farmer takes his stand upon firm ground.

Thus in respect to the Malt-tax—in respect to legislation affecting live stock—and in respect to the incidence of Local Taxation, the Conservatives claimed to justify their title to be regarded as the farmer's friends ; and though the justification might appear, when examined, a little weak, the farmer, so long as things went fairly well with him, was not disposed to contest it. And if he left the Conserva-

tive party, to whom else should he go? It would have seemed unnatural at that time to ally himself with the authors of the anti-corn law legislation—that worm which if as yet it had no teeth had still a nature "that in time would venom breed." Moreover, the farmer is by habit a patient man. His industry teaches patience as no other does. No man is so liable as he to become the prey of deluding hope. He pursues his industry at the apparent caprice of the elements. The "inconstant moon" is constant in her changes; but for the changes of the weather and the variations of the seasons there are no known laws. And in this uncertainty there is always room for hope. Genial weather in the coming month may repair the damage done by the adverse skies in this: the abundant products of the coming year may make up for the deficient products of the passing year. Thus the farmer is ever hoping; and hope induces patience. In consequence he often holds on to his business long after a man in any other would have quitted it. Also, it is not an easy matter to quit farming. The nature of his business more or less unfits the farmer for any other. The quiet culture of the field—often intermitted in consequence of the weather—has incapacitated him for the pushing pursuits of the town that no weather stops. He is too slow by habit to compete with the keen intellects of the streets. If he has sufficient capital left, he may take a public-house; and this he sometimes does. Or he may transfer his capital and his acquired skill to another land, and carry on his business where the influences that affect it are less adverse. But to either of these courses there are obvious objections. If—as probably he is—he is a family man, he will not care to expose his daughters to the not altogether healthy influences of tavern life; whilst to transport himself and his family, and to set up his household gods afresh in a strange land, is no easy matter and no inviting prospect. It is virtually beginning life anew. The exceptional legislation which has been passed in favour of the Irish tenant is justified on the ground that in Ireland there is no industry but farming to which he can apply himself. It is farming or nothing. But this difficulty obtains in other countries as well as in Ireland, though not from the same cause or to the same extent. For the farmer, born and brought up to his business, and having spent perhaps more than half his lifetime in it, there are few alternative industries to the one he follows.

During those thirty years of comparative prosperity the British farmer pursued the even tenour of his way. If he did not greatly rejoice, neither did he sorrow. He was doing fairly well—in exceptional instances, exceedingly well—and he did not complain, at least loudly. A little he grumbled—British farming would hardly be British farming if it were not continuously accompanied by an undertone from the double bass of discontent. There was a grain of truth as well as a bushel of fun in *Punch's* caricature of the British farmer who, when assisting in stacking his abundant hay crop in excellent order, could not forbear the expression of a regret that there "would be no nice mouldy hay for the cows" that winter. Occasionally during this period, at the market dinner, the farmer heard his Parliamentary representative hold forth upon the leading questions of the day. He listened attentively;

and if he failed to understand, or failed to take an interest in what was said, that was of little consequence on an occasion so eminently convivial. Also, when the fulness of time was come and the honourable or right honourable gentleman again solicited the favour of his vote and interest, he unhesitatingly gave it. He voted for Church and State, as he had always done : to have voted for anything else would have seemed political heresy.

These halcyon days, however, for the relations of the farmer to the Conservative party were not to last for ever. Bad seasons came and the prosperity departed. The result of competition between an island of small extent and a vast continent, whose agricultural resources are practically unlimited, began at length to display itself. The worm was attaining its full growth and getting teeth and venom. No longer now in bad seasons could the farmer get for his diminished products enhanced and compensatory prices. And bad season followed bad season. The farmer saw his capital disappearing. At the same time he saw the foreigner, with an excellent sample, freely moving about in his market, whereto he had obtained entrance without payment of the heavy tolls—in the shape of local rates—which he himself had had to pay before he could enter. He felt that his candle was being consumed at both ends. The price obtained by his products was being diminished, whilst the cost at which they were raised was being increased. He was less able to compete with foreign competition now, when it was in its manhood, than he was when it was in its infancy. Local burdens were now four or five times what they were then.

These were dark days and the outlook was dark. What should the farmer do ?

It is in times of adversity that friendship is needed, and that friends are tested "whether they be current gold indeed." The farmer began to ask himself what that party whom he had faithfully supported, and who had professed themselves his friends, had done for him. It was not easy to answer satisfactorily. Certainly, the roll of their good deeds was not a very long one. In return for his steady devotion to the Conservative party the farmer had not much to shew. He could point to the Cattle Plague Acts, and to some small grants in aid of Local Taxation ; but beyond this the record was mainly one of professions. And this party, for which he had done so much, was now in office, and had been for some years. They had attained office with exceptional advantages—a national purse full to overflowing, wherefrom to dispense justice or favours to whom they would, and a majority to support them in doing so. Had they in the farmer's interest abolished the Malt Tax which they had been loud in denouncing as an injustice to him ? Well, no. There had been a claimant for the bulk of the national surplus less patient—more exacting—than the farmer. The claims of the patient farmer had been elbowed aside by those of the great Consumer. The budget of 1874 was drawn up with a view to his interests. I know that these interests are called " the interests of the community." But " community " is a euphemism.

And now at a time of great trial for the farmer, and when they had enjoyed for some years the sweets of office, he saw these friends of his,

not engaged in devising remedies for his suffering, but busy about foreign affairs and the general pursuit of glory. Glory, certainly, was an admirable thing, but it was hardly a first necessity. A shirt should always be provided before a scarf pin is even thought of. It is pleasant to think we have a commanding voice in the councils of Europe, and can say effectually to the tide of Russian invasion, "thus far and no farther." But the thought of our national greatness brings little comfort if we are thinking by a fireless hearth. The glow of enthusiasm will not boil a pot, or warm one's toes. This glory, too, would not raise the price fetched by the farmer's wheat, nor lessen the tax-gatherer's demand. Rather it would increase the demand. Glory is expensive. It is even worse than philosophy. Philosophy bakes no bread, but it consumes none: glory does. After this manner reasoned farmer Wheatear what time the men presented themselves for their wages, and rent and taxes were owing; and he had only an inferior sample to take to market, and dared not look his banker in the face.

Such was the position of affairs, and such the mood of the farmer during the closing days of Lord Beaconsfield's administration. Of a conjunction of circumstances so fortunate the Liberal party were not slow to avail themselves. They fanned the growing discontent of the farmer with his Conservative friends, and by promises more or less alluring sought to insinuate themselves into their place. These endeavours were far from unsuccessful; and the general election of 1880 witnessed what has been called "the revolt of the counties." A number, not great perhaps but still considerable, of county constituencies rejected their former Conservative representatives, and chose Liberals in their stead. It was not surprising. Lord Beaconsfield dissolved Parliament, and appealed to the country on the questions of Ireland and foreign policy. Important as these questions were, they were not of immediate importance to the farmer. His prime need was a return to prosperity; and in these endless subjects put to the front he saw only insuperable obstacles to the consideration and curing of his ills. He might go on suffering, whilst the doctors he engaged were occupied in attending to incurable patients in Ireland, or in parts still more remote. It was not surprising that, despairing of help from his friends of old, he should turn to others who promised him help, however little he might fancy the shape in which it would be presented.

The Conservative Government was thrown out, and the Liberals, with an enormous majority, came into power. The farmer's new friends lost no time in seeking to make good their title. They removed the tenant's long-standing grievance in respect to ground game; and by another measure at once raised in him the highest hopes, and sent dismay and confusion into the Conservative camp. That very grievance, which his Conservative friends had all along denounced and never attempted to remove, the tenant farmer now saw removed by those whom he had considered responsible for its maintenance. The late Lord Derby once boasted that his party had "dished the Whigs": the Whigs might now boast that they had dished Lord Derby's party. The Malt Tax was abolished; and the stock theme for thirty years of

Tory candidates seeking the farmer's suffrage was unkindly taken from them.

Nevertheless, these measures, neither singly nor together, availed to bring back strength to the declining industry. Agricultural depression, as it was mildly called, went on—and grew. It had not been merely the nibbling of hares and rabbits among his crops that had eaten the great hole which the farmer saw in his capital; and in the results of the abolition of the Malt Tax, from which he had hoped so much, he was grievously disappointed. Owing to the mode in which it had been effected, he had lost rather than gained by the operation. The fact was, a great master in the art of finance had juggled with him. With one hand Mr. Gladstone had put three shillings into the farmer's pocket, and with the other he had taken three-and-sixpence out.

Still the farmer's store of patience was not exhausted. The genial spring and summer of 1881 were favourable to his business. The hay might be a light crop and fly might destroy the turnips, but his main crop promised well. Seldom of late years had the wheat made so fair a show; and as he saw the golden grain ripening as it waved in the sun's beneficent light, the farmer took heart of hope and looked forward to the time when he should put the sickle in and reap a full reward for all his labour and his patience. The time came—but not unaccompanied. Such an August and September as last year gave us had few precedents. Downpour followed downpour with brief intermissions. Morning after morning the farmer woke—if he had been able to sleep—to hear the foe beating against the window panes. He looked forth to see a sky covered with rain-charged clouds as far as eye could reach. He tapped his "glass"—there was no comfort there. The high hopes that he had nursed were all dashed to the ground. The harvest of 1881, it was clear, would repair very little, if at all, the losses he had previously sustained.

Many farmers now quitted their holdings. All over the country farms were to let, and there was great difficulty in finding tenants. Owners were compelled to accept greatly reduced rents; in some cases the old tenants were allowed to remain, paying none; and many farms the owners had to cultivate themselves or suffer to go out of cultivation.

The condition of agriculture was now sufficiently serious, and compelled attention. The columns of the *Gazette* were weekly filled with the names of bankrupt farmers; and outgoing ships were crowded with agricultural emigrants. Members of Parliament who were in any way connected with agriculture, and some who were not, made the agricultural depression the burden of their autumn speeches. The Prime Minister discussed it at Leeds. At meetings held in the metropolis experts in economic science delivered addresses upon it, and, generally, throughout the country, on platforms and in pamphlets, the woes and needs of the farmer received abundant notice. Various were the opinions given. By some the responsibility for the evil was laid at the doors of our Land Laws. Essentially bad—it was alleged—their inherent vice was now being brought to the surface by the pressure of bad seasons and foreign competition. By their operation the hands of

the owner were tied and the proper cultivation of the soil interfered with. They were remnants of a system whose essential properties had passed away; and when the essence has flown, what is left is generally worse than worthless. To forms belonging to the old order, which had changed, the new order was unable to fit itself. The removal of these crippling forms, and the substitution of rational laws both for landlord and tenant, would enable and encourage the application of more capital to the cultivation of the soil, whose productiveness would be thereby proportionately increased. So, it was contended, would British agriculture be made to resume its old position of prosperity. It militated somewhat against the truth of this view that where all these desirable conditions obtained—where the owner possessed his land in fee simple and the occupier enjoyed the fullest security for his outlay with the utmost freedom of cultivation—farming was yet carried on at a loss. Local Taxation was made another potent cause of agricultural depression. Its heavy burden exhausted the farmer's strength; and if it were lightened he would be better able to contend with his foreign competitor. By some the evil influence of bad seasons extending over a series of years was held to be the chief, if not the sole, cause of agricultural distress. For a diminished and deteriorated produce, the farmer had obtained a diminished price, and to this diminished price, long maintained, the loss of his capital was owing. No doubt this was true, but it would not have been true but for the pressure of foreign competition. But for that, the farmer would have obtained for his diminished supply a largely increased price—the demand, owing to the growth of population, constantly increasing. And even for inferior wheat—provided it were not too bad to be ground into flour—he would have commanded a sufficient price, bread being a prime necessity of life. Lastly, there were those—and they were, probably, not a few—who saw in this overwhelming pressure of foreign competition the great cause of agricultural depression, and who looked to "a wholesome duty upon foreign corn"—to use a phrase of Mr. Lowther's—as the most effective medicine to restore British agriculture to a state of health.

Thus, various causes were assigned to the farmer's ill, and the remedies proposed varied with the causes; except in the case of weather influences for which no direct remedy could be found. Science has not yet enabled us to control the clouds, or to regulate the variations in the seasons. Science, however, can often invent correctives for what it cannot discover preventives; and it has been suggested to the farmer that by availing himself of apparatus for rapidly drying his crops when stacked he may render himself independent of the weather. Such apparatus exists and, it is said, has been used with success.

Besides these several specifics, there were some of the many doctors gathered about the sick man's bedside whose profound acquaintance with the nature of agricultural depression enabled them to suggest remedial agencies which might usefully be employed to aid in the patient's recovery. Tallow, it is well known, rubbed into the nose at bedtime will not cure a cold, but its action upon the mucous membrane will be beneficial. In like manner there were minor curatives for the farmer's complaint which might well be had recourse to whilst the

greater remedies were being prepared; and might afterwards be continued as supplementary. Mr. Gladstone, for one, "looking to the great power of the community to consume luxuries and to the probable increase of that power," thought that the farmer might derive some benefit from the cultivation of strawberries. Another suggested the rearing of poultry. The hen of fable, who daily laid a golden egg, might in a sense become a living fact for the farmer. A third prescribed the keeping of bees, and from his acquaintance with cottagers' depression, dilated upon the value of honey as a remedial agent in such cases. Kitchen-garden culture also contained latent properties, which only needed to be developed to be of the utmost service to agriculture. These, of course, are not very heroic forms of farming, but in an age when we find a bankrupt gazetted as "milk dealer, dairyman's agent, and general in Her Majesty's army," it is no time to be squeamish and to stand upon dignity. Another physician, who had consulted the American pharmacopœia, suggested pisciculture. It is well known that a taste for eels is widely spread, and prevails especially in the less fashionable parts of the metropolis. It is true that eels are not particularly wholesome, especially for weak stomachs; but unwholesomeness is a quality that neither in the case of eels nor of many other forms of food, both mental and material, operates much to their non-employment. Tons of this savoury edible are annually imported from Holland to supply the demand for it. Why, it was asked, should this considerable trade be in the hands of the foreigner? The unused pits that are found upon every English farm might at little cost be made to turn out abundant quantities of silver eels of excellent flavour. Lastly, physical science brought its ray of hope into the sick chamber. The greatest of modern naturalists bade the farmer be of good cheer. Earthworms are his unfailing allies.

Thus strawberry beds, hen coops, kitchen gardens, beehives, and fishstews were all recommended as styptics to aid in stanching that flow of capital blood which had already drained agriculture of one hundred and twenty millions, or more, sterling.

It happened that at this time—in the autumn of last year—several seats fell vacant in Parliament. They were seats for constituencies chiefly agricultural, and were, therefore, to be won by those candidates who could most commend themselves to the farmer's favour. Thus the farmer had again an opportunity to reconsider the question of his political alliance. The legislation of his new friends had not availed to bring back prosperity to his industry; and in the further devices they proposed for that purpose he was unable to feel much confidence. On the other hand, his old friends were making strenuous efforts to be restored to favour. They promised him—as a result of that restoration—a large relief from local burdens, and a duty upon foreign corn. These were the places—the farmer knew well—in which the shoe pinched; and relief there would enable him at once to move more freely. So, induced by these promises and believing in their good faith, the farmer once more transferred his vote and sent to serve him in Parliament those who had given him solemn assurance of their doing so.

Thus the year closed in for the farmer gloomy enough, but not without gleams of hope lighting it up here and there. His condition

was at least getting consideration ; he had no lack of advice ; and he had golden promises. Also the weather—that necessary but unreliable factor in all the farmer's calculations—was singularly favourable. He was able to clean his ground and get his winter wheat in under excellent conditions ; whilst, for the live stock side of his business, the season was equally propitious.

So, with more hopefulness than he had felt for some time, the farmer entered once more upon a new year and looked forward to the time when Parliament should meet, Now at last his case would receive at the hands of the Legislature the attention it deserved, and get justice, in some measure, done it. Its claims to consideration were well known and admitted, and he had just sent advocates with new credentials to plead and enforce them. And of these advocates, more or less capable, one possessed at least the volubility necessary for his task.

Parliament met on the 7th of February. The Royal Speech was an unusually long one, containing as many as twenty-three paragraphs. Of these, six were devoted to foreign affairs and four to Irish ; whilst the interests of agriculture received attention in a portion of two. In these last, allusion was made to the mildness of the winter season and its suitability for farming operations. "Better prospects were, it was trusted, thus opened for the classes immediately concerned in agriculture." Also, Parliament "would be invited to deal with proposals for the establishment in the English and Welsh counties of local self government, which had so long been enjoyed by the towns together with enlarged powers of administration, and with financial changes which would give them an opportunity of considering, both as to town and country, what might be the proper extent, and the most equitable and provident form, of contribution from Imperial taxes in relief of local charges." It needed no ghost to come from the grave to tell the Danes that "there was ne'er a villain in all Denmark but he was an arrant knave ;" and, perhaps, it hardly needed the assurance of a Royal Speech to certify the British farmer that he had had a mild winter, and that a mild winter is eminently suited to farming operations. We must not, however, be too critical with Royal Speeches. They are of necessity only bundles of self-congratulatory phrases, of commonplace statements of facts sufficiently familiar, and of projects of legislation, most of which—as their authors very well know—there is not the least probability the session will see passed. They are pegs upon which to hang the debate upon the Address ; not much care is consequently taken with them, and it has even happened that a Queen's Speech has not by any means been a good example of the Queen's English.

As was the length of the Speech, so was the length of the debate upon the Address drawn up in answer to it ; and the amount of it devoted to the farmer's interests was also proportional. The debate extended over a week, being abruptly and unexpectedly concluded on the 14th, and it had not been till the 12th that the condition of British agriculture engaged the attention of the House. Part of a single sitting was given to it. The subject was introduced by Sir W. Barttelott, one of the members for West Sussex. Sir Walter Barttelott has some

qualifications specially fitting him to stand up for the interests of the country. He is a landowner who understands farming; he represents an agricultural constituency; and he is the head of a family whose tenure of their estate at Stopham dates back to the time of the Conquest. The debate initiated by him was continued by twelve other members, exclusive of Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Hartington. Of these, ten represented English constituencies, and three Scotch; eight sat for counties and five for boroughs; six were Conservatives and seven were Liberals. The severity of the agricultural distress was universally recognized and the usual causes were assigned to it: but with some variety from previous declarations. Whilst it has been generally maintained that the farmer has suffered from low prices, Mr. McLagan is of opinion that prices have been high enough. The evil influence of bad seasons was generally insisted on, but by Mr. Barclay agricultural distress was held to be due not so much to this cause as to low prices, the rise in rents, and the increase in wages. With regard to the rise in rents it was contended by Mr. McLagan and Mr. Heneage—both Liberals—that to a large extent it only represented the interest due on the capital invested during the last thirty years by the landowners in permanent improvements. In the opinion of Mr. Arnold rents were not too high: it was only a defective system of agriculture made them seem so. Thus, though much that was conflicting, there was little that was new, that was said on the cause of agricultural distress. The cause, however, is not the main thing: the remedy is the kernel to the nut, of which all else is but shell. If our doctors will but set about at once to effect our cure, they may wrangle afterwards as much as they will about the origin of our disease. What were the Conservative remedies for the farmer's distress? The Conservatives could suggest but one remedy, and that only a partial one. By a readjustment of Local Taxation the farmer might get some relief; but it would not be much. The extent to which he could expect to see his local burdens lightened was very slight. On their side the Liberals advised him to seek his cure in a reform of the Land Laws and in a reduction of rents. Also, with this advice was coupled the assurance that he was really in a worse way than he supposed. The diminution which he had experienced last year in the pressure of American competition was, he was assured, only temporary. It could not be relied upon for the future. It was due to bad weather over a great part of the States; and whilst the exports from the Atlantic ports had been consequently less, there had been a considerable increase in those from the Pacific ports. In California and the corn bearing districts west of the great mountain chain, adverse weather influences had not prevailed. Also—owing to favourable seasons—several European countries, and India especially, had been able to send us large supplies of grain. British India, indeed, promised ere long to take the first place in grain production; and, generally—the farmer was told—he must look for a great increase of foreign competition in the future.

All this was not very cheering; and as the farmer laid down his newspaper, his mind could have been engrossed by but one thought—the gloom of his prospects. Soon, however, another thought must

have struck him. Was it not somewhat remarkable that in the whole course of that debate not one word had been said in advocacy of that remedy to which he had been told to look last autumn? On the strength of certain promises he had voted for certain candidates; and now when an opportunity was offered them to give proof of their good faith, none was forthcoming. Stating his intention—on March the 21st—to support Mr. Arnold's resolution on the Parliamentary franchise, Mr. Gladstone justified a proceeding, otherwise inexpedient, on special grounds. "It was not generally convenient," he said, "for a Government to commit itself to an abstract resolution which it saw no immediate prospect of being able to put into practical form." But in this case there were special circumstances that overrode this inconvenience. At the last General Election an extension of the franchise and a re-distribution of seats was made a cardinal item in the Liberal programme; on the strength of it many electors had voted for Liberal candidates; and it was but just that they should now have an assurance that their vote had not been obtained on false pretences. The people had a moral right to know that the Government were not unfaithful to the declarations which were made at the time of the elections. "It was a very dangerous thing"—Mr. Gladstone went on to say—"to endeavour to live upon promises instead of prompt performances." This reasoning seems just enough, and to have equal application to those candidates who last year obtained their seats on the strength of the import duty they promised the farmer on foreign corn. Surely it was incumbent upon them now, when the opportunity offered, to give evidence of their political honesty. They did not, however. Of those advocates whom the farmer had specially retained to plead his cause not one raised his voice in his behalf. The new member for North Lincoln was silent. He was, it is true, present in body during a portion of the debate; but he was absent in mind. He slept. Why now, when his constituents' cause seemed to call for his championship, did Mr. Lowther hold his peace and withdraw to the cave of slumber? Was it from fear that his advocacy of a duty upon foreign corn would imperil his party's chances of a return to office, and so his own? Certainly for his silence he could not plead the becoming modesty of a maiden member. He had sat in the House before. Only the previous night he had been verbose and vehement in his denunciation of the Government policy in Ireland; and on another occasion he could be animated enough about a railway bill.

On the 22nd of February Mr. Paget moved a resolution on the subject of Local Taxation, which was seconded by Mr. Duckham. Its terms were:—"That, in the opinion of the House the injustice of the present incidence of Local Taxation on owners and occupiers of real property should without further delay be remedied by an adequate increase of contributions from general taxation." No member of Cabinet rank on the Conservative side spoke, the few words uttered by Sir Stafford Northcote towards the close of the debate being directed merely to the vagueness of the announcement in the Queen's Speech on the subject. The most prominent speakers on the Opposition side were Sir Massey Lopes and Mr. Sclater Booth. Mr. Lowther, Mr.

Dawnay, and Sir George Elliott were silent. The usual admission was made as to the injustice of the present incidence of local charges; but nothing new was advanced. Mr. Paget asked that in the event of a surplus, instead of the Income-tax being reduced, the surplus should be utilized for the benefit of the local tax-payer. There were plenty of precedents, he contended, for such a course: notably the change of the Malt-duty into a tax upon beer. But Mr. Paget forgot that the present Government have no grudge against the Income-tax payer: against the brewer they had. The liquor interest had largely contributed to the Liberal defeat in 1874; and at the late General Election it had used its influence mainly against Mr. Gladstone. Sir Massey Lopes advocated the further development of the principle of State subventions; that the maintenance of the police and of lunatics should be charged on the Imperial Exchequer; and that licenses locally raised should be handed over to local authorities. On the part of the Government Mr. Gladstone reiterated the statement in the Queen's Speech by which, he said, the Government had solemnly pledged themselves to open up the question of the incidence of Local Taxation. But he declined to commit the Government to the ambiguous Resolution before them. Mr. Paget, however, determined to take the sense of the House by a vote, and Mr. Dodson, accordingly, on the part of the Government, moved the previous question. This was carried by 110 to 105, and Mr. Paget's motion was consequently not put.

On the 24th of February Col. Harcourt had the first place on the paper for a motion—"That in the opinion of this House immediate relief should in some form be afforded to ratepayers from the present unjust incidence of rates appropriated for the maintenance of main roads in England." But before the motion was called, Mr. Gladstone rose and, stating that he accepted everything in it—except, perhaps, the one word "unjust" which was a strong and, in his opinion, an unnecessary word—undertook* that the Government should deal with the question, as indeed they had already promised they would in the Queen's Speech. This declaration, conceding everything which it had been desired to elicit, took away all ground for persevering with Col. Harcourt's motion, and it was accordingly withdrawn. Some attempts, however, were made to extract a distinct promise that the question of highways should be treated independently of the general question of local taxation, and not be involved in the doubtful fate of a measure upon such a controverted subject as County Government. But they were not successful. Mr. Gladstone would only say that the "Government would do their best to detach the subject from legislation of a difficult or embarrassing kind. Their desire was most earnestly to proceed with the whole matter, and they had done their best so far by giving it the very first place among the subjects with which they hoped to deal."

On the 22nd of March Mr. Blennerhassett moved the second reading of his Bill for the Total Abolition of the Law of Distress. The landlord would, by the operation of this bill, be put, as regarded the recovery of his rents, in exactly the same position as every other credi-

* This undertaking Mr. Gladstone has carried out in his Budget proposals.

tor of the tenant. The motion was met by an amendment moved by Mr. Salt, "That it was inexpedient to proceed further with the bill until further evidence had been taken as to the working of the law of distraint." Ultimately the bill was talked out. It was a somewhat crude measure, taking no account of existing contracts and arrangements entered into on the strength of the Law of Distraint, and could not possibly become law in its existing shape. In the course of the debate the most conflicting opinions were given expression to. By Conservative speakers the law was generally upheld, but even they were in favour of its limitation to a shorter period. Six years was too long: one or two would be ample. The working of the law is now, at the instance of Mr. Heneage, the subject of an enquiry by a Select Committee; but as probably everything that can be said for or against it has been urged over and over again, it may be as well to give a summary of the arguments.

The Law of Distress is defended—as are other laws—on one or both of two grounds—justice and expediency. It is contended by the advocates of its justice that as land constitutes property of an exceptional character it demands exceptional privileges. Not only may the landlord lose his rent but he may get back his land greatly deteriorated by bad farming. The virtues of the soil may have been freely extracted and none returned to it by proper dressing; or from want of due tillage it may have been suffered to become overrun with weeds. But in opposition to this it is contended that whatever exceptions attach to property in land as distinct from other property are wholly in its favour. Whatever loss the owner may sustain in respect to rent or damage to his article, the article remains. No tenant can consume the land, or take it away. The banker, on the other hand, is exposed to the danger not only of losing the consideration for which he lends his commodity, but the commodity itself. Both principal and interest may go. And the general trader may find, when he demands payment for his goods, that not only is there no payment forthcoming, but that the goods themselves in some way have disappeared. It is argued, however, that the banker and general trader stand on a different footing from the owner of land. They can refuse to part with their commodities except on prepayment, or on satisfactory assurance of future payment. If they cannot obtain either of these, they need not part with their goods. Their goods will keep. But with the owner of land it is different; his commodity will not keep; it will injure by lying idle; and the landowner is consequently often compelled to accept a tenant without adequate security for his future solvency. This drawback to property in land only obtains, of course, owing to the unsatisfactory character of farming as a business. Were farming in this country profitable, plenty of men, with abundant capital to insure their meeting their obligations, would be found to engage in the most delightful of all occupations. On the whole it must be conceded that there is not much force in "the justice of the plea" advanced on behalf of the Law of Distraint. The feudal system did not look much to abstract justice: its eye was mainly directed to securing concrete advantages for the ruling class.

Instead of being regarded as creditor and debtor, in the view of some landlord and tenant stand in the relation of partners. The landlord contributes the raw material and the necessary buildings: the tenant brings the capital and the labour and the skill necessary for the working of the raw material, that is the cultivation of the soil. This partnership is certainly of a rather irregular nature. In ordinary partnerships the partners share in both the profits and the losses of their joint undertaking. The landlord, however, agrees to forego this advantage or disadvantage; and in lieu thereof accepts a moderate fixed charge on the produce of the soil. He has no share in the exceptional profits made in exceptional years; nor does he share in the exceptional losses, save of his own charitable choice. Perhaps it would be better if this principle of partnership—granting that there is one—were made more real; and if, looking to the uncertain character of British agriculture in our day, rents, instead of being a fixed charge, varied with the results of the year. Of course there would be difficulties in the way of such an arrangement. There would have to be unanimity between the partners as to the best mode of cultivating the land. It would not be agreeable to one partner to feel that he was out of pocket any year owing to the wrong mode of culture insisted on by the other.

It is mainly, however, on the ground of expediency that the Law of Distraint is upheld. It enables—its advocates say—a landlord to extend to his tenants a consideration which he could not otherwise. Thus, it operates as a protection to the small farmer, enabling him—by the forbearance of his landlord—to hold on in hard times. In other words—in the words of its opponents—it bolsters up insolvency. In opposition to true commercial principles, it artificially keeps upon the land men who are incapacitated from properly cultivating it. Thus it works a wrong to the community, who, by its operations, are defrauded of that larger quantity of food which the soil would otherwise have produced. Again, its defenders allege that it advantages a tenant by enabling him to hold his produce till he can get a favourable market. This he could not do, if he were called upon—which he would be if there were no Law of Distraint—for prompt payment of his rent. He would be compelled to dispose of his produce at once and possibly at a disadvantage. On the other side it is maintained that the law raises rents by inducing landlords, on the strength of the privilege it gives them, to accept as tenants incapable and unsubstantial men who offer rents which the land cannot really afford. Thus it operates to the disadvantage of genuine farmers, but who are not at the same time fools: whilst it favours those who if they are not fools are probably knaves.

The subject, it is apparent, is sufficiently controversial. Whatever its merits or demerits, the Law of Distress is purely a tenant farmer's question, and the community's. As a landlord's question—that is, on the ground of its justice—it need not be considered. The ground is insufficient. For its interest in the matter, the community does not care. So long as there is a sufficient and cheap supply of food, it does not concern itself about the quarter from which it comes. Whilst the produce of foreign lands is available, the community is

indifferent whether the land of this country is or is not made productive to its full capacity. The community will go on eating, drinking, sleeping, and—more or less—marrying. As regards tenant-farmers, they are divided in opinion. Probably a majority favour the retention of the law: though it should be remembered in connection with this that the law of Hypothec—the analogous law in Scotland—was abolished entirely at the instance of the Scotch tenant farmers, who were unanimously opposed to it. Perhaps the tenant farmers of England would do well—supposing they make up their minds for the law's abolition—not to give it the first place in their legislative programme. So long as the law exists, it secures for them the friendship and staunch advocacy of all those—agricultural implement makers and others—who by its operation are placed at a disadvantage in the recovery of their debts. It might be, when the law was abolished, the farmer would see these friends drop away. When we have obtained for a cause all that can immediately benefit ourselves we are apt to become at least lukewarm for the rest.

The abolition of the Law of Distress would probably work adversely to the small farmer. With no special powers for the recovery of his rent, the landlord would require prepayment, or he would so assure himself of his tenant's means as to be in no fear of incurring loss. Thus the small capitalist would have to give way to the large capitalist. If, however, farming is not to be a more paying business in the future than it is now, where will the large capitalist be found to enter upon it? "Looking to the great power of the community to consume luxuries and to the probable increase of that power" he may think it wise to invest his capital in something that gives exercise to that power. And by luxuries are meant, of course, not luxuries only of diet. He may 'run' a theatre, rent a gin palace, or travel with an interesting elephant. These are all luxuries—to say nothing of hundreds of others—that in the present day "are most tyrannically clapped for."

In Sir H. Holland's Law of Distress Bill it is proposed to reduce the period of six years to two, and provisions are made to exempt from distraint, in certain cases, the live stock and machinery found on the farm which are not the farmer's own. With respect to the limitation of time, it is held by some to be wholly mischievous. It would take away the only virtue—if it be a virtue—which the Law at present possesses, whilst leaving all its vices. Better not touch it at all than touch it to that extent.

Such is an "abstract and brief chronicle" of Parliamentary proceedings this year so far as they have reference to agriculture. It must be conceded by those most indifferent to the farmer's cause that no exorbitant portion of the legislature's time has been given to the consideration of that interest which is the interest of one-fourth of the capital and of one-fourth of the inhabitants of these isles. That interest has lately been, and still is, suffering from distress of the severest kind. The loss to agriculture of late years has been calculated by Mr. Gladstone at not less than one hundred and twenty millions sterling; and it may be, he says, much more. Yet while Parliament has been sitting two months that interest has only engaged its attention on three nights,

and even on those occasions the earnestness displayed was of the most meagre kind. It is within living memory when a sentimental grievance has been made a Cabinet question—when the predominance of this or that Church has involved the fate of a Ministry. And in this session, when the affairs of distant peoples or of Ireland, or some matter like the Clôture or the action of the House of Lords, have been under discussion, there have been earnestness and heat enough. Parliament could wax excited over a "Bradlaugh incident" or a "great Hat question," but it could only rouse itself to a languid debate when the threatened ruin of our most important industry was under its consideration. In this respect, perhaps, it only resembles the outside public who shower sweetmeats and sympathy upon a pampered pachyderm while human beings everywhere around are hungering in hovels. And perhaps the conduct is as old as the human race. In all ages some Nero is seen fiddling while the homes of his people are blazing about him.

The fact is, the present condition of agriculture is a source of embarrassment to both political parties. The Liberal party is restrained by its Whig contingent, which is largely landowning, from seeking relief for it in Radical measures; and the Conservative party is prevented from applying reactionary remedies by its following in the towns, and by its fear of the consumer generally. It is wonderful what awe that creation of civilization inspires. Ireland, on the other hand, is a safe party question—that is, it is a good means of getting into office. It affects the material interests of no Englishman or Scotchman, nor does it divide the town voter from the country.

Still, the question remains—Who are the farmer's friends, and from what section of politicians is he likely to get most help? It is clear, only too clear, that the reed upon which he leant last autumn is a broken reed. Not the least support has it given him thus far, though it has had abundant opportunity for doing so. And sooner or later—and probably sooner; a parliamentary crisis may be provoked at any moment—he will again be called upon to delegate his legislative powers, and to surrender his right of self government. Like the horse of fable he will give his back to a rider who will afterwards control him. And it may be seven years before he can regain his self-command. His vote will be solicited on various grounds. He will be asked to stand up for this or that fad. "Freedom of debate" may be sounded in his ears; though it is difficult to see how it can matter much to the farmer under what rules the House of Commons conducts its proceedings if those proceedings bring him no good. In that case so far as he is concerned Parliament may be what it promises to become—a conversazione. Also, his vote will be asked on the sacred ground of religion. Not the Church merely, this time, but religion itself is in danger. It is to be hoped, however, that the fate of Christianity is not involved in the admission into the House of one more Agnostic—and he an avowed one. The junior member for Northampton is certainly not the best of company, but in the opinion of many he is good enough for the present House of Commons. The shameful condition of Ireland may also be made a ground for soliciting the farmer's vote for Conservative

candidates; though, so far as they have told us, the would-be occupants of the Treasury Bench have no better plan for dealing with it than those who at present sit there. Possibly the existence of the monarchy may be declared to be at stake; though it is not easy to see how monarchy can be more endangered when republicanism is muzzled in office than when it is free in opposition. I say nothing of Foreign Policy—though that also may be made a ground for his vote—since the difference between the two parties in respect to it has arrived almost at the vanishing point. The Conservative party has withdrawn from the heights to which a political Cæsar had led it, and now lies encamped in the plains below. On the other hand, the Liberal party having effected its retreat, under cover of the Transvaal and Afghanistan, from its former untenable position, has proceeded to take up safer ground. By the practical annexation of North Borneo it has given—to change the metaphor—hostages for its future behaviour. The policy of neither party may be exactly worthy of the country of Elizabeth and Cromwell; but the consumer—it must be remembered—in those days was not the being that he is now. There was a Cecil then as there is a Cecil now, and perhaps there is not much difference in their intrinsic merits. We must allow, however, in appraising their deeds for circumstances—unspiritual, most controlling circumstances. The England of to-day, whose greatness is counted by coins, and whose prosperity is computed by the value of her imports, is scarcely the England of Elizabeth and Cromwell. Then an English Queen might think and express "foul scorn" of foreign threats, however fearful: now the occupant of her throne grants grace to rebels. A puritan protector saw sovereigns dread his power and court his alliance: now it is in the capacity of a handful of Irishmen to knock the Government of England into a cocked hat.

Experience is a very good teacher, and its lessons should not be lightly forgotten. The British farmer has had experience of the Parliamentary advocates of a duty upon foreign corn and how they keep their promises. With this experience it would be strange if he again suffered himself to be juggled with by men

> Who palter with him in a double sense;
> Who keep the word of promise to his ear
> And break it to his hope.

Looking at the constitution of our two great political parties, and what a bundle of heterogeneous interests either is, united only by a common desire—it is called "an honourable ambition"—to have the direction of affairs, the farmer may be disposed to think that in neither has he a true friend. Just as virtue is its own, and often only, reward, is the farmer, he may hold, his own and only friend. If this be so—and there are good grounds for thinking that it is—he labours under a serious disadvantage in being without any political organization. He has seen what has been done for other interests by organization; how labour has effected its objects; and how the Irish party, united and independent, has forced from the Legislature concessions to Irish feeling which ten years ago would have been deemed impossible. If there were a British farmer's party, as there is a Home Rule party, in the

House—a party, which placed agriculture before general politics and made its interests its first object—agriculture would not long want for practical attention. Such a party, holding the balance between the two purely political sections of the House, would be master of the situation and able to dictate its terms to either leader. Then would quickly come bids for its favour, and the alarming condition of agriculture would be made a Cabinet question. Parliament would be dissolved and ministers would go to the country on the cry of "Justice to the Farmer." But no such party has existed. The farmer has more or less divided his vote, and subordinated his own interests to general political considerations. In consequence, his wants have received serious attention from neither party. When there have been so many interests importunate in their demands and refusing to be put off with vague promises, it was not likely that the subdued appeals of the British farmer would get attention. His vote might be relied upon. Not so the vote of the others.

If the farmer has had no real friend in either political party, neither is he likely to find one in—what is called—public opinion. He has hardly the attributes calculated to excite the interest of that nice tribunal. Public opinion took up the cause of the merchant seaman and compelled from the Government of the day the redress of his grievances.* But John Barleycorn is not the interesting figure in the public eye that Jack Tar is. Jack Tar is associated with ideas of wild nights and tempestuous seas; or he is pictured leaning on the bulwarks and dreamily gazing into a plane of waters "glassing softest skies." Romance has enshrined him in countless volumes; and in spite of his habit of chewing and a certain unæsthetic way he has of hitching up his trowsers, poetry has shed its sweet perfume about him. John Barleycorn, on the other hand, is endued with none of these æsthetic attributes. No halo of romance surrounds the head that is dried, in pauses of labour, with a cotton handkerchief. In the public mind John Barleycorn is associated with firm undangerous earth; prosaic fields, unlovely fallows, and lumbering waggons are his surroundings; and instead of the perfume of poetry he moves in the odour of ammonia. Also his life and language, like his garments, are less loose than those of the ploughman of the sea. And the British public, though it is dreadfully shocked, likes a little looseness. Moreover the seaman had the advantage of a telling phrase. The ear, it is true, is a less ready way to the feelings than the eye, but still it is a way. "Coffin ships" is a telling phrase; and perhaps if the agriculturist could be associated in the public mind with the appearance of the Mantuan apothecary and be known as "the Skeleton Farmer," great ladies would prattle about him and a storm in a tea-cup be aroused on his behalf. Then might the rosy, round-faced, much-paunched tiller of the soil see himself the pet of the public, occupying the proud position lately occupied by a distinguished native of Africa. It is well in these days to be a "magnificent beast"—a "grand brute." Being that, no penniless girl need starve—commit suicide—or lead a life of shame.

* In Mr. Plimsoll, too, the merchant seaman had in the House a champion who was earnest in his cause.

The Press is a powerful advocate for any cause that it takes up. It can influence public opinion in a remarkable degree. But it would be preposterous to expect the Press to take up the cause of British Agriculture. It would not pay. "Bradlaugh in the House"—"The Fearneaux Frauds"—"Jumbo, latest"—receive exhibition on the placards of the daily papers in the largest of letters; whilst the presence of "law of distress"—"local taxation"—"the land question" on the same bills is apologised for by giving them the smallest of type. Nor could one expect the street hawkers of newspapers to shout themselves hoarse in proclaiming "agricultural depression." They strain their lungs to the utmost to make known the news of a murder; but the ruin of an industry is not the matter of general interest that the death —under exciting circumstances—of an individual is; nor does it sell the papers so well.

It will hardly be contended by any reasonable mind that the farmer has not been patient long enough. Indeed it might not seem absurd to contend that he had trusted to the magic of patience beyond the limit when trust becomes folly; and if he determines now to try the resources of some other virtue, no one will blame him. "God helps those who help themselves" is an old saying; and there may be a good deal of truth in the poet's dictum—"who would be free themselves must strike the blow." And perhaps there was some force in a remark made last autumn by a farmer of North Devon who for ten years had carried on his farm at a heavy loss. He was no kid glove farmer riding to hounds, and whose daughters strummed the piano or read novels in bed; but a farmer of the old school, a man of means, who yet laboured in the field and whose "maidens minded" the dairy. Speaking in a market company of the condition of agriculture, he said —"We farmers be the biggest asses living: we bear whatever they put upon us." It was not quite clear to me which of the qualities popularly attributed to the ass was most in his mind's eye at the moment.

And what now is the farmer's position and what are his prospects? His position is much what it has been for a considerable period—one of dire distress. And what are his prospects? Have they undergone any sensible improvement? And may he look forward with reasonable hopefulness to the future? It would be absurd to say that he may. It is true that weather influences still continue most favourable for him, but he will hardly listen to the siren voices of the skies; though many are trying to induce him to do so, and to lull him into a false security. He has probably not forgotten last year. Moreover the mild winter, which has favoured us, has equally favoured the rest of Europe. Thus, if the British farmer's crop is abundant and good, it will still have to meet in competition crops equally abundant and good grown over the great wheat growing areas of continental Europe. A poor country like Russia will hardly hold back her enormous surplus if she can get for it the lowest paying price. Already she has sent us from her last harvest five times as much wheat as she sent us from her harvest of 1880. And the proportion of our supplies from Pacific ports to our total wheat importation has largely increased. This, which in the six months, September to October, 1880-1881, was only

7 per cent., in the corresponding months of 1881-1882 was as much as 19 per cent. From India and Egypt the proportion, which for the former period was 10½ per cent., for the latter was 20 per cent. Last year the harvest in the United States over that area which exports its produce by way of the Atlantic ports was very deficient. The wheat crop was 22 per cent. less than it was in 1880, although it was grown upon a largely increased acreage. Since 1877 the wheat area of the United States has been increased by 11,432,000 acres. As Mr. Bright might say, one can hardly imagine it. Eleven million, four hundred and thirty two thousand acres is four times the wheat area of the whole of the United Kingdom ; and it has been brought into cultivation in less than four years. Last year the yield per acre of wheat was the lowest ever reported in the United States, being no more than 10 1-10th bushels. The maize crops showed a reduction of 31 per cent., rye of 27 per cent., barley of 9 per cent. below the crops of 1880 ; and altogether, taking all cereals, there was a reduction of 655,163,931 bushels, or 24 per cent. Yet this vast deficiency was more than made up by the increased produce over a great part of Europe. Thus the area from which competition reaches the British farmer is so extensive that it can never be more than partially affected by adverse weather influences. From near Europe, from distant Australasia—from both the Americas—from India and from Egypt—the grain rolls into this country and takes the farmers' market. From all quarters it comes. It pours upon him much as the barbarians poured upon the Roman Empire. If the storm of invasion fails for a space from one side, it "trebly thunders" from another. And the area from which the invasion comes is constantly growing. The agricultural resources of British North America—a country exceeding in size the United States—are incalculable. So also are those of British India. In Australasia, in three colonies alone—Victoria, S. Australia, and Tasmania —the present area under wheat cultivation is nearly three million acres to feed a population of little over one million. What a surplus should there be here to dispose of! The acreage is only a little less than the total acreage of the United Kingdom, and it is being constantly added to. The resources, too, of New Zealand as a wheat producing country are highly spoken of. France, owing to the ravages wrought by the phylloxera among the vineyards, has ploughed up a large portion of land hitherto devoted to the culture of the vine, and intends to devote it henceforth to the production of wheat. Altogether there is nothing to look forward to but a great increase of foreign competition—Liberals and Conservatives alike allow it—and though of course at the same time population will also be increasing, this increase will not be enough to neutralise the other. Population, indeed, advances at a rapid rate, but the time is indeterminately distant when the food resources of the world will be no more than sufficient to furnish the supply needed by its inhabitants.

In the face of such a prospect it is hardly a wonder that the British farmer stands dazed. And as though the sting of the venomous worm were not enough, he has also gnat bites to annoy him. To effect a saving of £5,000 a year, American beef is henceforth to be wholly used

in the navy here. It is as good or better—says Mr. Trevelyan—than our own, and costs 27 per cent. less. Also several companies have been formed, with what appear to be excellent prospects, to increase the import into this country of American meat. Moreover, the United States continue to consume all the iron and steel that we can send them, besides what they can produce for themselves. Thus the means of conveyance for their agricultural products are ever increasing. In the activity, also, of our shipbuilding industry last year was the most extraordinary known. In the Clyde yards alone seventy thousand tons were turned out above the maximum previously attained. Nor is the demand exhausted by this enormous supply. The present year promises to surpass even the last in ship production. It is true that the great majority—about six-sevenths—of the vessels are built to home orders, but it is difficult to see that that makes much difference to the farmer. Who it is that brings the foreign corn that spoils his market matters little to him. Fellowship in bonds—as a poet says—does not make slavery sweet ; nor is a bitter cup appreciably less bitter because it is administered by those of our own household. It may gratify Mr. Chamberlain to know that five-sixths of the United States' foreign trade is carried in foreign bottoms, and that the majority of these fly the English flag. But to the British farmer, who knows that the foreign supply which he is told is on its way to these shores will take away his market, the assurance gives small comfort that it is being brought in British bottoms.

The future prices, then, of British farm produce must depend upon the cost at which the foreign supply can be grown and delivered on these shores. The question what that cost is likely to be, I need not here go into, as I have already elsewhere* given at length all the evidence available upon the subject. It will be enough to say here that that cost, low as it is at present, is likely to become still lower.

The lowness of price fetched by the British farmer's produce in consequence of the low cost at which American farm produce can be brought into competition with it is clearly the great cause of agricultural depression. The British farmer cannot profitably dispose of his products at the prices to which they are driven by the foreign supply. Evidently, then, either the cost of his cultivation must be diminished or the price which his products command must be enhanced ; or both these means in conjunction might be had resort to. The cost of his cultivation would be diminished by taking off a large portion of those local burdens which oppress him ; and the prices fetched by his products would be enhanced by the imposition of a duty upon foreign corn. Let us consider the latter of these expedients first.

The conviction had been long growing that the unrestricted pouring into this country of foreign corn was at the bottom of the farmer's distress, when in the summer and autumn of last year it gathered such strength as to force itself into expression. It happened that at the same time an opinion began to obtain that the beneficial effects of our Free Import system were showing signs of exhaustion even for the manufacturer. Trade was dull, and had been for a long period. Nearly

* "Justice to British Farming."

every branch of industry was depressed. Foreign manufacturers, to whom we gave free entrance into our markets, to a greater or less extent, kept our products out of theirs by hostile tariffs ; whilst in some branches of industry, in which we were pre-eminent at the time of the Cobden legislation, foreigners had now learnt to equal or excel us. Thus our manufacturers seemed to be losing to some extent their foreign market at the same time that they found that their home market, in consequence of the legislation which they themselves had forced, was nearly ruined. To the artisan this untoward aspect of affairs presented itself with even greater force. Out of employment, or working at diminished wages, he saw his own countrymen consuming goods whose fabrication had given no employment to his labour. The foreign artisan was practically taking his wages ; and whilst this alien freely encroached upon his ground, he diligently strove to keep him out of his own. It was difficult to see the advantage to British labour in this ; still more difficult to see its fairness. The rural shopkeeper, who knows that the local doctor and parson and lawyer get their goods down from some co-operative store in London, is tolerably sure that this proceeding, however beneficial to them, is a little harmful to him. The greater cheapness at which these gentlemen are able to make their purchases in Town may leave so much more money permanently in their pockets, or allow them so much more to expend on pleasure ; but it contributes nothing to the fund from which he has to pay his rent, rates, and taxes, It helps nothing to feed and clothe himself, his wife, and children. The drawing out his lease has given employment to the lawyer ; the several advents of his children "into this breathing world" have given occasions for the doctor's services ; and towards the parson's maintenance he takes a share in contributing. There is no co-operative store in London from which he can obtain legal or spiritual advice, nor can his wife be delivered "by correspondence." Something analogous to this position of the rural shopkeeper seemed the position of the British artisan ousted from his own workshop by the foreign artisan and not allowed to enter his. At the same time that affairs wore these untoward aspects to the manufacturer and the working man, the retail traders of our vast metropolis were also feeling the pinch of diminished trade. The nobility and rural gentry who came to town for the season had to contract their expenditure to their contracted income. Agricultural depression had diminished seriously their rent receipts, and they had so much less to lay out with West-end tradesmen. Thus a combination of circumstances seemed to favour a return to a policy at once more national and more natural. Charity is not the only virtue that should begin at home ; and it certainly seems that we ought to do justice to our own industries before we show favour to those of others.

From this conviction sprung up the Fair Trade movement. A commercial policy, having in it the elements of durability, was proposed to be substituted for one in which the germs of speedy decay were visibly inherent. Granted that the marvellous development which our commerce has seen has taken place in consequence of our Free Import policy—are hot-house growths the longest lived? Is it not, in the long run, bad policy to force ? We cannot live a year in

a week of the calendar, and yet spin out our lives to three score and ten. It is better generally to go surely even if at the same time we have to go slowly. Be this, however, as it may—let our commercial prosperity be the prosperity of the mushroom or of the oak—it failed last year to give satisfaction. War was declared against our Free Import system; and with more or less strength of utterance the cry was taken up and repeated throughout the land. Conservative candidates, in their assaults upon parliamentary seats, unfurled the new —which was really the old—flag: and it was also flaunted—with some exceptions—by the Conservative Press. A duty upon foreign corn was proposed, and a retaliatory duty upon the manufactures of those countries which sought to keep ours out by prohibitive tariffs. At the same time that the foreigner thus received his dues, the bonds that bind our colonies to their mother country were to be strengthened; and among all the parts of the British Empire there was to be a mutual exchange of commodities on terms fair to all.

The movement seemed real, and seemed to gain ground; and great was the consternation in the Free Import camp, and—it must be added—the indignation. That this despicable foe which had been so utterly crushed years agone should dare again to lift up its vile head! Armour was refurbished; weapons, which had been long "hung up for monuments" and which had done good service in '46, were taken down and again brandished. Liberal leaders, like the chieftains of Homeric days, stepped forth to encounter single foes or to drive the rabble in ignominious rout before them; and, generally speaking, the fury of their onset and the vigour with which they slashed about them afforded some testimony to the strength of their foe. We are not usually moved to violent language by insignificant things; nor is it necessary to denounce a harmless imbecile as either "a fool or a knave." Only weak women shriek at the sight of a mouse.

It had been the object of Lord Beaconsfield—apparent throughout his whole career—to build up the Conservative party upon a national basis, and he had carefully laid down its policy upon patriotic lines. Speaking at the Crystal Palace he had—some ten years ago—defined the Conservative party as the National party; and he had willingly conceded to the Liberal party their exclusive right to cosmopolitanism as a guiding principle. The Fair Trade programme was eminently national. By its adoption the different parts of this great empire—more or less loosely held together—would be consolidated, and the widely spread peoples of England be bound together by a community of interests and the joint possession of an illustrious past. An Englishman is not necessarily the victim of overweening vanity who sees in his race characteristics that place it above others; and in the proposed Confederation of English States it was possible to see an element of stability in an otherwise uncertain future—a rock standing amid stones that are rolled hither and thither about it; a nation holding up the torch of Liberty with Law; an empire by its polity affording an example to all other empires about it. By those, therefore, over whom the glamour of our apparent prosperity has not been able to throw its spells, and who see much in the existing order of things to displease

and not a little to alarm, the Fair Trade movement was hailed as a light shining in darkness.

It is quite possible to be sensible of the material advantages of our modern progress and of the comforts given to life by its mechanical aids and at the same time not to be blind to their drawbacks. It is quite possible to regard the enormous increase of wealth that has attended our present commercial policy and yet to feel that it is a blessing not wholly unmixed. The growing tyranny of capital, which drives from the field of trade the man of small means, can scarcely be regarded with entire admiration. The fineness to which profits have been cut down by the great growth of competition has rendered business except on a large scale insufficiently remunerative. Formerly it was a maxim "to live and let live;" and the man in one branch of trade was content to leave other branches as means of livelihood to others. But now the draper takes up the ground of the stationer; and, after that, of the grocer; until he has at last absorbed all trades into his own, and their profits with them. This is not altogether admirable.

Still less is it a source of unalloyed satisfaction to see the blood gradually drained from the healthy veins of the country, where it flows calmly, to pulse at fever heat in the congested arteries of the town. This, however, is what our commercial system is effecting. Every year the population of the country grows less and that of the town grows greater. Men and women are drawn from the natural associations amid which they have been brought up and suddenly thrown among others to which in their artificiality they are strangers. Surroundings that are certainly simple and probably innocent are exchanged for others that are always complex and often criminal. The yokel leaves his plough, and attends the packing case or patrols the streets; he forsakes the company of his rude mates, and mingles in that of clever thieves. "Honest Maudlin," quitting her milkpail and her song among the cowslips, comes to town to take service in some "fine house" as housemaid: nay, it may be no maid's work at all that London gives her to do. And this determination of blood from the trunk and its limbs to the head is constantly going on, and there is no return flow to adjust the balance. What follows? So long as trade is inflated—when it is progressing by "leaps and bounds"—and employment is plentiful and wages are good, all goes merrily as a marriage bell. But trade cannot be always inflated—always cutting capers—and when the collapse comes, when trade is depressed and employment is scarce—then? For a time, whilst the savings of the inflation period last, the idle bodies may drown care and keep away hunger; when that is no longer possible, they may emigrate—few, however, care to do that—or they may take to vicious courses and earn a living by immorality or crime. And for those who still retain certain foolish scruples, well nigh exploded now, about vice and crime—who have not yet emancipated themselves from the influence of lessons learnt perhaps about a mother's knee—there is still a way left out of their difficulty. The knot, which cannot be untied, can always be cut: the weary travellers on the journey of life, who have worn out their shoes

and will not get others—anyhow—can always fall out. Though trade may be stagnant and prosperity be dried up, the Thames still flows for the Relief of the Poor. In that Union, which costs the ratepayer nothing, wretchedness finds ready refuge from cold and hunger ; and there there is no Bumble to make the soul of the sensitive shrink from the whips of his high-minded scorn. Thus, in one way or another, the period of depression is tided over. Then, haply, comes a revival of trade : the clouds roll away, and the sun shines forth again. At once into the fair weather come forth the commercial songsters that have been moping in the thickets, and proceed to sing incontinently. The Chancellor of the Exchequer chirps from behind a prosperity Budget. He has in his lap a Christmas pudding ; and, like the hero of nursery rhyme, he puts in his finger, pulls out a plum, and says—"What a good boy am I!" Statisticians chant in unison the volume of our trade : the increase in our exports being marked by an allegro movement, that in our imports by a crescendo. Meanwhile the manufacturer has reopened his factory, or his hands no longer work at short time. The mills are once more busy. The face of Mr. Silkmercer has doffed its nighted look, and now wears a pleasant smile when he enters his rented pew. Heavy and golden is the piece he drops into the collection plate. The working man, too, drops his piece, bright and silvern, upon the counter of the public-house, and loud is his laughter. All—politicians, economists, manufacturers, tradesmen, working men—bask in the sunshine of the new prosperity, and exult in a fool's paradise.

So long as there are these resources—vice, crime, suicide—for those who are victims of "a temporary depression in trade," our statesmen are not arrived at their wits' ends. It is a good thing for them in such times that there are pursy people from whom the indigent can obtain—forcibly or by allurement—the means of life. But as population in our towns goes on naturally increasing, and as this natural increase is still further augmented by large additions from the country, it is possible to see that a time may come when "a temporary depression in trade" may be so great and so long sustained as to exhaust the resources of ordinary vice and crime. Competition in villainy will have the same effect as competition in other industries. Though the volume of the rogue's trade, owing to the depression in other trades, may show a remarkable expansion, yet the profits of individual rogues will be cut down so fine as to be practically valueless. What will our statesmen do then ? It is clear that it is only the sensitive few who in any age care to have recourse to the magic of oblivion to end their difficulties. And as our moral decadence goes on, as the principles of the Venetian ancient more and more prevail, it is certain that drowning will go "clean out of the way." Why kill oneself for the sake of a society that is not one's friend ? It will seem preferable to run the slight risk of being hanged in maintaining one's life than to drown oneself and incontinently go without it. Drowning will be reserved for cats and blind puppies, and for those who having the wherewithal of life unreasonably decline to part with it on demand to Bill Sykes

and his pals. What will our statesmen do when the industries of vice and crime are reduced by excessive competition to the present condition of our agricultural industry, and when suicide is out of fashion? Will they have resort to compulsory emigration? Compulsion, except for the few and the weak, belongs to the past. Our statesmen no longer compel the many even for their good: the many compel our statesmen. Will they have recourse to old expedients, having classical authority; and shall we see our Prime Minister with one hand dispensing bread from the public treasury whilst with a stick in the other he directs the performances of an interesting elephant? The idea seems absurd enough in connection with our present Premier, but it is quite reconcilable with a Premiership—considered a possibility of the future—of the Right Hon. Member for Derby. But if our statesmen in their devotion to the principle of progress decline to have recourse to expedients, which stand condemned by the sanction of the past, it will devolve upon the people themselves to find a solution for the difficulty. That solution will not be far to seek. Ireland has taught the inhabitants of English towns "bloody instruction." The isolated action of a widely spread peasantry has paralyzed the arm of Government. In face of the persistent revolt against the law of an unarmed people, Mr. Gladstone confesses his impotence. The power which is so prevailing in its war upon life and property over a thinly peopled district is ten times more powerful when it is put into action in a great and crowded town. The lives and property at the mercy of one miscreant are there manifold what they are in the country. And science—which makes no distinction of persons—has come to the aid of the miscreant and supplied him with new and improved means of mischief. The barricade and the lamp post are features of an unenlightened past, when Europe was yet in barbarism. No need now in contending for the blessed watchwords of progress to expose oneself to be shot down in the streets by a hireling soldiery. The Gospel of Equality can be spread and the sacred torch of License be carried without the aid of arms to clear a passage. A hundred men, now, in a great city can effect more than a hundred thousand a century ago. Dynamite and electricity have wrought a revolution in the means for promoting revolutions.

These are dangers "remote enough from the habits of thought of our public men, but which may force themselves on their attention at any moment in the most unexpected fashion."

Let us grant—and we know that, if we do not grant, we shall lie under the painful imputation of feeble-mindedness—that our free import system and our extended trade stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect—what then? Is extended trade everything? Is our life wholly lived in the shop? Has our progress in other respects gone hand in hand with our material progress? One hardly likes to allude, even in the most subdued whisper, in these days of uttermost enlightenment, to such an exploded superstition as National Greatness. One gets called a name which—however one may take it—is intended to be offensive. Where the trumpet was once sounded

to command peace, peace is now purchased by a note from the pipe of submission. Our sovereign no longer points to her flag as a symbol of her power—the right honourable member for Birmingham waves an invoice. We have ceased to control for good the policy of Europe: the arbiter of peace and war is protective and National Germany. No Ramillies, Trafalgar, Waterloo are inscribed upon our banners as deeds of these enlightened days. We have Isandula, Rorke's Drift, Coomassie, Magdala, and other glorious victories or defeats. It is hard to say which is considered now-a-days the more glorious, victory or defeat. If a Napoleon now arose to throw over the extent of Europe the iron fetters of his tyranny it is tolerably certain that England would not resist him to the death. Not in one campaign, not in two, not in three, did she weary of her struggle with the Corsican. It is doubtful if she would enter upon a campaign now. She might, perhaps, for British interests—that is, British trade. Birmingham would not forbid that.

But if we turn from what is called false glory to the realm in which true glory is held to be enthroned—the realm of the domestic and social virtues—do we find that our moral progress has been commensurate with our material? Is crime, for instance, less prevalent and more sure of detection than it was in the dark days preceding 1846? Has not the ingenuity of the criminal outpaced in progress the ingenuity of the officer? In spite of enormously increased appliances at the service of the law, crime is more rife and less sure of detection than ever it was. The Thames, perhaps, could tell some tales could it be given the power of speech. Mr. Bright points to the great increase in our population since 1840. "Look," he says, "you have added in Great Britain alone more than 10,000,000 in 40 years. It is hardly conceivable. It is a population equal to that of London and a very great deal more. And what is London? It is a place so large that nobody knows anything about it. I have myself spent six months of every year for nearly 40 years there, and I know nothing about it. Nobody knows anything about it. You have 4,000,000 people there. Then, if you take eight other cities as big as Glasgow or Liverpool, or Manchester and Salford united, you may add them all to London to make the increase of the population in the last 40 years. Or, to put it in another shape, it would take 20 cities as large as Glasgow or Liverpool, or Manchester and Salford united, to make the whole increase of populalation we have seen in this country in the last 40 years." That is, no doubt true; and it is very startling. But one need not be a Malthusian to be unable to see in a simple increase of population an unmixed good. It is hardly an unmixed good to bring 10,000,000 living beings into this "breathing world" of England, if there is not room for them to breathe freely. Mr. Bright seems to think that there is nothing wanting in the present condition of the people of this country—that improvement has gone along, and kept pace, with progress. "They must be blind," he says, "absolutely blind, more than blind, who cannot see and will not acknowledge that the great mass of the people in physical condition are enormously better than they were forty years ago." That may be; but it is to take only one view and to exclude

others. And even into that one view there is probably a good deal of rose colour introduced, which the facts hardly justify. Mr. Bright should not look merely at the wages earned individually by a rover, a slubber, or even a doffer, for convincing evidence of our national prosperity. There are other things to be considered. Let him regard the ever increasing number of those female traders who find the market for their wares in the midnight streets. Is it the irresistible force of innate viciousness that has driven them to an occupation from which there is no return to another? Is it not, rather, the want of that "steady employment, with better wages, and shorter hours," which Mr. Bright says has been brought about by our Free Import legislation? Let him consult also the authorities in Scotland Yard for information as to our social well-being. And let him ask employers of labour what number of applications they receive when they have the meanest place to be filled. Another than Mr. Bright—a Mephistopheles—might also point to our vast metropolis, of whose inmost life, indeed, no one knows, and his bosom might swell with pride as he counted her gin-palaces and marked well her bagnios. "Look," he might say, "at this vast city and her population counted by millions! If you took the populations of the Cities of the Plain, of Sybaris, of Corinth, of Lampsacus—of all the cities most famous in the past for the volume of their trade and their power to consume luxuries—and put them all together, you would not make up the population of this one city of modern times! Look at the almost innumerable refuges —at every corner and between corners—that invite with their many lights the care-distraught to come and dispel their cares, and to make themselves as gods! Look at the thousands of other haunts, where luxuries in some form or other are nightly consumed—and paid for! Look at the thousands of ministering angels whom the dark brings out with no other object than to offer love to whosoever can buy it! Their conversation is tainted by no cant: no hypocrisy whitens their sepulchre. And look at the number of those who compose what proprietors call the 'dangerous classes.' In the small crowd there before you there are at least ten charitable souls who would gladly relieve you of the root of all evil, and would not want much pressing to induce them to bestow upon you the gift the gods give only to those they love."

It was necessary to dwell at such length on some of the ugly features of modern urban life and to point out the rocks that in consequence lie ahead, in order to show the momentous importance which the welfare of agriculture has for the national welfare. That importance lifts the question of agriculture above all others. Conservatism is more than the interest of the twelve or more individuals who may compose a Conservative Cabinet: the cause of agriculture is more than the cause of a political party. Political forms, which are but the clothes in which the body of order is dressed, may be changed in accordance with a change of taste or in adaptation to the needs of the times: but the law of labour remains eternal—a law of the Medes and Persians. There is no labour so natural as that sweat of the brow

whereby a man wrings from the soil the bread he needs. A nation's well-being is involved in the well-being of its agriculture. To arrest, therefore, agriculture in a process of decay and to restore it to sound health warrants—nay calls for—recourse to any means that promise to effect the object.

The tendency of life to centralise—of human beings to congregate rather than to spread—is, it may be contended, inevitable: it is the civilizing process. That may be: still it is no reason why we should aid the movement—why by artificial stimulants we should promote still further the natural tendency. Rather should we seek to arrest it. It is, however, just the opposite to this that we actually do. By our commercial system we starve the country that the town may thrive: we deny to the agriculturist the just reward of his labour in order that the manufacturer may receive an enhanced reward for his. Cheap food is dearly purchased which is bought at the cost of a natural industry's decay; and even a free breakfast table might not be without its drawbacks if it left the consumer increased means to feed his unhealthy appetites and generally to promote vice. Answering Mr. Hoyle's complaint that so vast a sum is annually spent upon drink, *The Times* says—"Wealth was amassed to be spent." No doubt. It matters, however, somewhat in what way it is spent. Talents were given us to be used; but a talent that is devoted to compassing an ingenious crime is hardly desirably employed. It had been better, perhaps, had it been suffered to lie idle in a napkin. And "the man must be absolutely blind, or more than blind, who cannot see and will not acknowledge" that the great bulk of the money spent on drink is not laid out to the best advantage; even if it be laid out to advantage at all.

It was therefore to many a pleasant feature in the politics of last year when there appeared a prospect of our returning to a juster and more natural commercial policy. Hope was thereby held out to that industry which is perishing in consequence of the policy we now pursue. In the face of the fact that the revenue derived from the sale of intoxicating liquors exceeds by two millions the expenditure upon our national forces; that our annual consumption of alcoholic drinks amounts in value to £136,000,000; and that we every year spend nearly twice as much to destroy our bodies as we do to roof them from the rain and cold—it is the purest nonsense to talk about our inability to pay a little more for the necessaries of life. In the last ten years, it appears, we have spent upon drink £1,364,818,357, or nearly twice the amount of our national debt! Will Mr. Bright point to this fact as one of the blessed fruits of our legislation of 1846? He is fond of drawing attention to the magnitude of our national debt and of dilating with all the power of his wonderful eloquence upon the iniquity of the wars to which it is due. But in the opinion of some—and they, neither feebleminded nor absolutely blind—war that gives occasion to our courage is hardly more ignoble or demoralising than drink "that steals away our brains." "Happy whom he finds in battle's splendour," it is possible to hold; but by no possibility can he be held happy who is found by the all-seeker in the ravings of delirium.

The fair promise, however, given by the political sky of last year quickly faded away. A cloud came over it—the cloud of a revived trade—and the light of commercial fairness is hidden behind it. No matter whether the revival be temporary and illusive, there it is ; and it has wrought its effect. "When the devil was sick," &c. The Fair Trade cry has been nearly silenced. When it is raised by Mr. Storer in the House of Commons there is a count out. The Conservative leader, who at one time seemed disposed to adopt it, will now have nothing to say to it. What in the autumn was no worse than a "pious opinion," in the spring of this year is damnable heresy. The other leader is silent : he is not, perhaps—whatever his own views—a perfectly free agent. When two horses run abreast one has to accommodate his pace to the other's.

But whatever the prospect of Fair Trade for the manufacturer and the artisan, there is absolutely none for the agriculturist. He is bidden to dismiss that hope for ever from his breast. Every statesman, who can look for a place in a future Conservative cabinet has hastened to declare his innocence of any wish to raise by a halfpenny the cost of the people's bread. It is a thing not to be heard of—they cry, one and all. One and all except, indeed, Mr. Lowther. He can hardly do so : so he is silent—the next most convenient thing. There can be no doubt that the Conservative leaders would like to reimpose a duty upon foreign corn ; but they are afraid. They are in the position of the "poor cat i' the adage :" they have to let "I dare not wait upon I would." The revival of trade has called up the spectre of the great consumer. He stands between them and Office ; and the apparition must be laid. Not more readily does the clown of pantomime, when he finds the eye of the officer upon him, conceal the string of sausages he has stolen than the leading members of the Conservative party have hastened to put away before the consumer awake the policy they flourished so boldly when for a moment he slept. He is a sort of many-headed dog, keeping guard at the entrance to Downing Street. A cake must first be thrown him before one can pass. The cake in this instance is the agricultural interest.

It may suit the convenience of Sir Stafford Northcote and others to proclaim that no one wants a return to Protection ; but the convenience of Sir Stafford Northcote and others is not everything. Whatever anyone else may want, the British farmer wants a return to prosperity ; and if the Conservative leaders will not give it him by way of Protection, let them point out, and give it him by some other way. If they will not do that, they must not be surprised if he turns to other leaders for the thing he wants. It is of no use to cry for the moon. If an import duty upon corn is by no means to be had, let us cease to strive for it. Let us strive for something that is attainable.

There remains for consideration the other direct means of relief for agricultural distress to which I have alluded.

A large remission of Local Taxation is, as we have seen, no more than what is justly due to the British farmer. Justice, however, is a force of little efficacy in modern politics. It is not, therefore, surpris-

ing that the agriculturist gets little attention paid him when he urges the demands of justice as a reason for conceding him relief from the undue pressure of local burdens. Justice in these days does not demand, it pleads: other qualities demand: and to the demand vigorously urged the plea humbly raised must of course give place. The farmer is told that he can expect but little relief in the matter of local taxation. Liberal estimates put the relief at the most at a shilling per acre; nor are they outdone by Conservative estimates. Conservatives, however, tell the farmer that he will find the relief exceedingly agreeable. "Little fish," they tell him, "are sweet." That is no doubt true. But they are hardly satisfying: and to offer the farmer a remission of local taxation to the extent of a "little fish" as a "practical remedy for all his sufferings seems a good deal like mockery."

In respect, therefore, to relief from the pressure of local charges, the farmer has no more to hope from the one party than from the other. Between their respective professions of friendship there is not a pin to choose. The Government are pledged to deal with the subject this session, and they promise as liberally in the matter as their opponents. The truth is that in dealing with local taxation the party of the landlords stands at a disadvantage. Any large concession, such as they might feel disposed to make to the agricultural interest, would at once be made the occassion of a cry against the landed interest. Landlords, it would be clamoured, were endeavouring to benefit themselves at the expense of the community. Remission of rates to the tenant would be held to mean increase of rent to the landlord. Whereupon would spring up an agitation against the landed interest; which it is desirable for the landed interest by all means to avoid. Our territorial aristocracy, under the changed conditions of to-day, rests upon a precarious basis. It exists—not to try to escape a disagreeable fact by refusing to face it—upon suffrance; and an institution, that has suffrance for its basis, cannot be bold to do what it is bold to think. It enjoys its existence not on the tenure of good conduct, but of that view of good conduct which may be agreeable to popular prejudice.

It is determined, then, that the cost at which the British farmer's products are brought into market is not to be sensibly diminished by a diminution of his taxation. And we have seen that there is not the least chance of the foreign competitor being handicapped by the imposition of an import duty. Nevertheless this cost of the British farmer's production must be made less if he is to continue to compete. Is there, then, no other element besides that of rates which enters into the composition of this cost? There is the element of rent, and there is the element of wages.

The element of wages may be at once dismissed from consideration. Any considerable reduction of wages below their present level is obviously out of the question.

"It comes to this," said Mr. Bright, at Rochdale, "so far as I am able to judge, that unless by some means you can stimulate greatly the production of the soil by increased capital, increased skill, and increased industry, there is no remedy whatsoever for the embarrassed

condition of the farmer, except by a great and permanent reduction of the landlord's rent." This is the Radical programme for the relief of the farmer's ill, and to this, in the absence of any Conservative remedies, there appears to be no alternative for the farmer but to look. It is folly to shut one's eyes to facts and to refuse to accept the inevitable. The farmer cannot have—he is told—foreign corn taxed ; he cannot have his own local taxation sensibly reduced—beyond, at least, a sense of sweetness: he must have, then, what he can have. Order may be Heaven's first law, but self certainly is man's. The cause of the farmer, however, is not merely a selfish cause ; it is the cause of the nation. The distressed state of agriculture drives labour from the country into the towns ; makes the o'er-gorged town a hot-bed of vice, and the possible source of woes unnumbered. To arrest this exodus—to make field labour once more remunerative—and by restoring health to the natural industry give relief to the industries that minister to our comfort or our luxury—is an object that warrants us in looking to a large reduction of rent, or even—if it be impossible without—to the entire abolition of landlordism. If the land, in the altered circumstances of our time, can no longer afford the three returns—the rent of the owner, the reward of the cultivator, and the wages of the labourers—one must be given up. It is not difficult to say which that one must be. The claims of the working bee are always to be considered before those of the drone.

A return has been lately issued by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, from the abstract of which published by *The Times* it appears that the fall in rents during the three years 1877—1880, throughout England, was only one-seventh per cent., whilst in Wales there was actually an increase of 3 per cent., and in Scotland of 1 per cent. These figures, it is clear, do not give a just account of the landlords' loss from the agricultural depression. They only come down to the financial year 1879—1880, and it is since that time that the bulk of the reductions of rent have been made. Moreover they do not refer to purely agricultural districts only ; and it is probable that they take no account of temporary abatements of rent or of rents unpaid. It is certain, therefore, that the landlord has shared with his "partner" more than these statistics appear to prove of that loss of 120 millions or more sterling which agriculture has of late years sustained. An analysis of the figures for England shews that in 20 counties—containing nearly half the cultivated area of England—rents fell during the three years ending March 31st, 1880, rather more than $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., in 3 counties they were stationary, and in 17 they increased rather more than $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.* During the seven years ending March 31st, 1880

* The greatest decrease in rent during the three years 1877—1880 was in Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire where it was respectively 3·5 and 3·4 per cent. The smallest decrease was in Worcestershire, where it was 0·1 per cent., or less than a farthing in the £. The absolute decrease was only £1,371, whilst in the four previous years there had been an increase of £32,273. In four other counties the decrease was only 2 per cent., or less than a halfpenny in the £. The absolute decrease in these four counties—Lincolnshire, Somersetshire, Shropshire, and Rutland—was only £17,266 as against an increase of £486,427 in the four previous years. The greatest increase in rent during the years 1877—1880 was in Westmoreland, where it was 4·2 per

there was an increase in the rental of all England of a little less than 5½ per cent., and it is certain that the British farmer pays a considerably higher rent now than he paid before the era of foreign competition. The rent paid by his American competitor represents for the most part only the "prairie value" of the land, and he has not the heavy local burdens of the British farmer. It is true that labour is dearer in America, as also the manufactured articles that the farmer needs: and there is the cost of transporting his produce to these shores. But these disadvantages do not countervail his advantages; and if the British farmer is to be put on a level with him, he must have his rent largely reduced.

In placing agriculture before politics, and in consequence shifting his political allegiance, the farmer is fully justified by the grave interests at stake. But, indeed, political turn-coating needs little to justify it in these days. It is the fashion; and as such finds favour with both parties. The Liberals on their part have lately adopted in Ireland a remedy which not long since they declared to be no remedy at all; and the Conservatives, on theirs, are about to advocate for Ireland that peasant proprietorship which they have hitherto denounced. This change of front on the part of the Conservatives may be explained in two ways. They may have come to see that it is desirable for its security that property in land should rest upon as wide a basis as possible; though it is evident that this principle is of very wide application, and may be made hereafter to apply to other property than land. Or, foreseeing the time when land in Ireland will be reduced to its prairie value, they may be desirous to get rid of their property before that evil time comes. With that object there is nothing for them to do but to induce the British taxpayer to take the land at its present value. On his shoulders then will fall the ultimate loss. Mr. W. H. Smith, accordingly, who is not associated in the public mind with the ownership of land, and whose selection therefore disarms suspicion, has been selected to pluck the chesnuts out of the fire. The fact that he not long since denounced the very course he is now about to advocate makes his selection quite in keeping with the inconsistency of the movement.†

In consulting his own interest and the interest of that rural life and that rural industry which are the true life and the true industry of a country, the farmer will also be consulting the interest of the consumer, for whose sake he has been hitherto sacrificed. The consumer "has ventured—like little wanton boys that swim on bladders—these

cent. The absolute increase was £14,763; and there had been an increase in the previous period of £26,149. The smallest increase was in Leicestershire and Norfolk, where it was only 0.3 per cent., or less than three farthings in the £. The absolute increase was—for both counties—£10,399; and for the previous period, £100,498.

In the four years 1873—1877, when there was a general increase, it was greatest in Sussex, where it was as much as 9·0 per cent., and least in Monmouthshire where it was only 0·7 per cent.

The rental of no northern county suffered reduction during the seven years.

† Mr. Smith has since withdrawn his motion on the alleged ground that the Government action has rendered it unnecessary.

many summers on a sea of" cheapness. A thorn pricks the bladder and down the boy goes. The consumer—"good easy man"—floating on his summer sea sees only the summer sky above. He has no eyes for the gathering clouds that edge the horizon. This summer sea, this summer sky, will be perennial. There is a fable of classic antiquity which tells of a maiden—careless, happy—who wandered about among fields rich with flowers and glad with streams, where birds sang as they breasted the bosom of the lake, and the groves that echoed their songs gave coolness to a perpetual spring. There the maiden wandered drinking in at every sense the delights supplied to sense. Intently she gathered the blue violet, the white lily—intently she filled her bosom with the fair flowers—and vied with her companions who should be first in gathering. Suddenly a dark hand is laid upon her ; she is seized and borne off. In vain now her shrieks and cries for help ; soon they are lost in the distance ; and in dark and dread abodes she mourns the sunny meadows now of memory. This fable is of universal application ; it is for all time and all place ; and it is peculiarly appropriate to the British consumer of to-day. Wandering in his garden of cheap and plentiful food, intent upon consuming luxuries, and anxious only to see to what extent his power to consume them will go, he is blind to everything else. Yet at any moment the rude hand may be laid upon him which will snatch him from all his pleasant pursuits. War is in the air, and a great European war would inevitably draw England into it. In every State there is seething and commotion. In some men have attained knowledge, but not liberty ; they are conscious of their natural equality, and see their artificial inferiority. Already we have a social revolution in Ireland ; there is social war in Russia : and in Germany it is ready to break out, being with difficulty kept under. Foreign war is the statesman's remedy for this condition of things—the most politic vent for pent-up domestic passions. Hatred for one's own countrymen is best transferred into hatred for aliens : since throats must be cut let them be those of our national foes rather than our own. And since some one must be plundered to satisfy the money-hunger of the unmonied many, let it be a stranger. There is a good deal of national jealousy of England's fame in the past and of the extent of her empire. There is little love borne her for any good deeds she has done of late for any foreign nation. She has been a friend in need to no one, and no one owes her a debt of gratitude. Where she has acted apparently in the interest of other peoples, the action has only earned her contempt. It has been attributed to pusillanimity or parsimony. Also, there is envy of her supposed wealth, her maritime supremacy, her carrying trade. To destroy the fame of success in the past by the disgrace of defeat in the present, to break up that empire upon which she boasts the sun never sets, to draw from the pockets of "the great shopkeeper" some of that gold by which alone he is now great, to shatter that "wooden wall" which has been her bulwark and her dread, and to cripple her carrying trade—would give pleasure in more than one quarter. As agriculture in this country ceases to pay, as land goes out of cultivation, and we

become more and more dependent upon the foreigner for food, the gravity of a foreign war becomes more and more momentous. "This danger," says *The Times*—the danger of allowing oneself to become dependent upon another for food, with war in the near or far distance —"however remote it may be from the habits of thought of our public men may force itself on their attention at any moment in the most unexpected fashion." It is painful to imagine the British consumer, with his great power to consume luxuries and his great love of them, coming down some morning to a free breakfast table of boiled eggs and honied bread ; and with nothing subsequently on his *menu* for dinner but stewed eels, vegetables various, and strawberries. To save him from such a fate as this it were charity in the farmer. He is thoughtless for himself ; let the farmer think for him. Delighted with the cheapness of his food purchases, and beside himself with joy at the extent of his imports—"all which," Mr. Goschen tells him, "he has consumed"—the consumer—the god of the statesman—

> plays the fool with the time ;
> And the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds
> And mock him.

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STRAY LEAVES

FOR THE

WORKING CLASSES.

[From the Speech of Mr. Disraeli, June 20, 1848.]

"It is the same movement that has always resulted, by their own confession, in disaster and disappointment. But the remarkable circumstance is this, that the present movement has not, in the slightest degree, originated in any class of the people. Even if the people be misled, it is possible that there might be a popular movement, and yet erroneous; but this is erroneous, and not popular. But the moral I draw from all this—from observing this system of organized agitation—this playing and paltering with popular passions for the aggrandizement of one too ambitious class—the moral I draw is this: Why are the people of England forced to find leaders among these persons? *The proper leaders of the people are the gentlemen of England. If they are not the leaders of the people, I do not see why there should be* GENTLEMEN. Yes—it is because the gentlemen of England have been negligent of their duties, and unmindful of their station, that the system of professional agitation, so ruinous to the best interests of the country, has arisen in England. It was not always so. My honourable friends around me call themselves the country party. Why, that was the name once in England of a party who were the foremost to vindicate popular rights—who were the natural leaders of the people and the champions of everything national and popular; and you must blame yourselves alone if you have allowed the power that has been entrusted to you by the Constitution to slip from your hands, to be exercised for other interests than the general good

of your country. When Sir William Wyndham was the leader of the country party, do you think he would have allowed any chairman or deputy-chairman, any lecturer or pamphleteer, to deprive him of his hold on the heart of the people of this country? No, never! Do you think that when the question of Suffrage was brought before the House, he would have allowed any class who had boldly avowed their determination to obtain predominance, to take up and settle that question? Read what Sir T. Hynde Cotton, in the days of Walpole, said on the question of the Suffrage? He was one of the greatest gentlemen in the country; he did not run away every night from the House and pair till half-past eleven, and let the country go to the dogs. If it be true that we are on the eve of troublous times —if it indeed be necessary that changes should take place in this country—let them be effected by those who ought to be the leaders in all political and social changes. Then we shall not find changes carried into effect for the unblushing purpose of securing a Middle-class Government, but an English and a National Government, the pride of the people, and in which confidence can be placed. Then, if you are called on to make changes, it will be in your power to make them within the scope and according to the spirit of the English Constitution; because, notwithstanding the sneers of the hon. gentleman and his friend to-night, I am not ashamed to say that I wish to maintain the Constitution; and I do not mean, by the term Constitution, merely the House of Commons, and still less a particular party in the House, which some hon. gentlemen opposite seem always to consider the English Constitution. But I would effect these changes, if necessary, according to the spirit of the Constitution. It is a capacious spirit—it will allow you to do all that is required, and yet maintain the institutions of the country. And indeed, sir, I would maintain that Constitution, not merely because it has secured to us the benignant sway of an ancient monarchy, mitigated in its operation by the co-ordinate authority of popular estates—not merely because it has planted English liberty broadly and deeply in the land, and not made it

a dependent on the breath of an individual, or the caprice or passions of some great city—not merely because it has secured to us the due administration of justice, safety of person, respect for property (though those are all considerations doubtless of vast import)—but I would maintain that Constitution because I firmly believe that, of all existing polities, it is that system which most tends to secure the happiness and elevate the condition of the great body of the people."

[From Speech delivered July 9, 1850.]

"We have been told to-night by the hon. and gallant member for Westminster * to look at France, and make that our model. He tells us that Paris has 74,000 electors, and that he only represents 7,000. But does the hon. gentleman recollect that for every Parisian elector there are two bayonets to keep him in order? And, when we remember that 7,000 electors have sent him to deliver these unworthy sentiments, we cannot forget that they are the electors who for centuries sent men to this House fully capable of maintaining the liberties of the country —that it was they who sent Mr. Fox, and Sir Francis Burdett, and others, who were the life and leaders of this country for more than 200 years, to maintain the great society of which we are all proud to be members. To compare such a system and such a country with France—to compare it with a country from which the next telegraph may bring a fresh combination of anarchy, is a degradation I did not think a reformed House of Parliament would have tolerated. Sir, I leave the question in the hands of the House. I have been told that it would be a good thing to leave the Government to fight it out with its usual supporters. Probably, in Parliamentary tactics, that would be the wisest course; but with such tactics I will have nothing to do. I respect the verdict of the nation upon this subject, notwithstanding the pettier details and arrangements of the Reform Act may have been intended to consolidate Whig power and gratify the passion for Whig patronage, I think it yet

* General Sir De Lacy Evans, K.C.B.

a settlement accepted by the great body of the people; and in a country which has attained to so much political power and material prosperity, we ought not idly, for the gratification of any personal or factious feeling, to disturb it. You disturb it. But what is the real secret of all these July motions for Parliamentary Reform? You know very well that if an appeal to the privileges of the Commons of England was made, as they have been enlarged by the Reform Act, not one in ten of you would be returned to this House. And you think that by some patching up of the constituency, some altering, and botching, and varnishing, and veneering, you may still remain members of Parliament. There is not the slightest chance of it. Have universal suffrage to-morrow—do what none of you dare—propose that every full-grown man shall have a vote, and I believe most sincerely you would be *swept from the House. I do not believe that the artizans of this country*—I do not believe that constituencies, however qualified, or however constructed, would support you; but, on the contrary, *that, under such circumstances, the great interests of the country would have the influence they ought to have—that the great body of the people would be faithful to the traditionary interests of Englishmen*, and declare that whatever the political form—whatever the franchise—whatever the system you adopt, they would be for the monarchy and the empire, for that polity which has made Englishmen eminent, and that they would give a *national verdict* against the scheme of *national degradation*, of which you are the friends."

[From Speech delivered April 2, 1851.]

"For my own part, sir, I entirely protest against what is understood as the principle of finality."

[From Speech delivered March 25, 1852.]

"But the sovereignty of the people is not the Constitution of England, for, wisely modified as that monarchy may be, the Constitution of England is the sovereignty of Queen Victoria."

WORKING MEN'S CONSERVATIVE CLUB AND UNION ASSOCIATION.

The objects of this Association are to unite the friends of Conservatism, to resist the encroachments of Democracy and other unconstitutional movements, and to return to Parliament men of Conservative principles. Its members are assumed to be loyal to those constitutional bulwarks of our country—the Throne, Church, and State, as by law established.

At a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association, it was resolved unanimously :—

"That the Members of this Association have noticed with unfeigned sorrow a proposal to hold a Parade, in Hyde Park, more especially on Good Friday next, and also a meeting afterwards at Trafalgar-square."

"That as this parade and this meeting have been proposed to be held ostensibly in the interest of the working classes, an immense majority of whom, it is believed, are loyal to the Queen, obedient to the laws, and attached to the religious institutions of the country, the Metropolitan Working Men's Conservative Club and Union deem it due to their members to protest against such an employment of that day as in the manner proposed; and as they do not wish to become a nuisance to the Nobility, Gentry, and Tradesmen of London, hereby pledge themselves to hold aloof from such parade and such meeting."

[From the "John Bull," April 6.]

It is amusing to find the credit claimed for Mr. Gladstone by his friends for his having induced the Reform League to abandon their proposed demonstration on Good Friday. We are, of course, delighted that it is not to take place on that solemn fast, and shall rejoice if incidentally, as is thought, the circumstance of its abandonment may tend to its being less desecrated than usual; but what amuses us is that

Mr. Gladstone could not have made so simple and reasonable a proposition on his own account, without calling in the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, and Mr. Stansfeld, the friend of Mazzini, to be sponsor for those Radical members who are not very scrupulous as to religion. Mr. Gladstone, however, was not the first to move in the matter; for on the previous Thursday, to their great honour, the Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Working Men's Conservative Association (who deserve the warm support of all Conservatives) had passed a resolution on the subject, which appears elsewhere. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, however, and other journals, in reporting the weekly meeting of the Reform League, intimate that great dissatisfaction was felt at the acquiescence of Mr. Beales in the suggestion that the Reform Demonstration should not take place on Good Friday, the Reformers believing that Mr. Gladstone's reverence for the day had been induced by Lord Shaftesbury, who, unfortunate man, is called to task by the *Record* for having interfered in the matter. This is really hard lines on the noble Earl after the manner in which he buttered the working classes by saying that he never addressed any of their members who did not act like gentlemen.

[From "The Imperial Review," April 20, 1867.]

Although there is, perhaps, no public man who has been more systematically and more persistently and bitterly assailed than Mr. Disraeli by self-satisfied clever critics, as devoid of thorough belief and penetrative principles of political action, we do not scruple to maintain that few public men of our own or any other time have been more fundamentally consistent with themselves, or more steadily animated by certain leading convictions, based upon and tutored by close and careful reasoning. Fundamental consistency is often tolerant of superficial or merely apparent inconsistencies, but we challenge any of Mr. Disraeli's critics to indicate any policy or public act of his which conflicts with his ever-vigilant jealousy of the efforts of narrow factions and self-assertive oligarchies to curtail the prerogative of our ancient monarchy, and to diminish the privileges of the people of England. In the first assembly of his countrymen which he ever addressed, Mr. Disraeli indicated and partially developed the convictions of his life—convictions now embodied in a practical measure designed and fitted to remedy the defects of the Reform Bill of 1832, which took from rather than added to the privileges of the

English nation. Upwards of twenty years ago Mr. Disraeli wrote "that we may live to see England once more possess a free monarchy and a privileged and prosperous people, is my prayer;" and there is every prospect that it will be his great honour and glory to have been instrumental in fulfilling this prayer. Holding such principles, and cherishing such sentiments, he is not afraid of the people; and the present Reform Bill will go far to convince the unprejudiced that Tory principles are in truth national principles.

The *Morning Advertiser* affirms that some of the leading members of the Reform League now admit in private, and will before long confess in public, that the Reform Bill of the Government is far better than the Russell-Gladstone measure of last year, and is preferable to anything which Mr. Gladstone proposed to substitute in the event of his defeating the Ministerial scheme. "The parties to whom we allude," says our contemporary, "as playing a prominent part on the Reform League platform, will first intimate the renunciation of their allegiance to Messrs. Gladstone and Bright by declining to be present at further 'Reform demonstrations' of the kind of which we have of late had so large a crop." The same paper states that Mr. Gladstone has resolved not to press his next amendment.

[From the "John Bull," April 13.]

"I place myself *now* in direct communication with working men and their representatives," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day, in presence of a large and enthusiastic deputation of working men and working men's representatives. "I have heard from them a sincere "expression of their convictions and opinions on the most important "question of the day. I much lament that my noble chief and "colleague is not present." The ringing cheers which greeted the first announcement, the subdued silence which indicated the sympathetic feelings of regret at the allusions to the noble Earl's absence, and the chorus which again broke forth when the progressing convalescence of Lord Derby was made known, proved that the working classes and their representatives had at last realized the fact that it was the Whigs who had robbed them of their rights in '32, that the Conservatives had struggled for their rights and their children's rights in the Factory Acts, *and that Lord Derby had worked in their service on the Lancashire Committee just like any other bonâ fide working man.* No marvel, then, that the convictions and feelings of working

men have at length burst their bounds; and it will be well if those convictions and feelings are at once embodied in Associations which shall permanently express the principles which have lain dormant so long, only because no particular occasion has seemed to call them into action.

Messrs. Bright, Beales, Bradlaugh, and Dickson, have had rope enough and hung themselves. The Conservative working men of England have stuck the head of Earl Russell on a pole, with the cry, "Here's the head of a traitor—a traitor to the cause of the working man." The late Government lost, by sheer obstinacy, the golden opportunity to pass a Bill last year, which they were pledged to do indeed when they so disreputably turned out Lord Derby seven years before; and we cannot doubt that the deputation of Monday strengthened the nerves of the independent Liberals over their cup of tea in the afternoon, and so made piquant the chaff of the lobby in the evening, "Well, Coleridge, so you've let us off, you good fellow." It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of developing these Working Men's Conservative Associations, and we may well thank Mr. Beales, M.A., and others for having unintentionally evoked the real feeling of the working men, which we have always believed to be Conservative.

It is because tens of thousands of working men desired the franchise, and were quite willing to exercise it openly like men for the real benefit of their native country, that the agitation of the Reform League has survived its birth; while Beales, Bright, Bradlaugh, and Dickson were taken to be the champions of their views, only because no one else spoke—and very wisely, perhaps—till the League had gone to the length of its tether. Working Men's Conservative Associations, however, only embody and express the principles carried out into practice in the homes of thousands of them daily. The man coming home from the Savings Bank, with a lighter pocket than when he left, may be, according to that great authority on political economy, Mantle, of the Reform League, a selfish man—but the Savings Bank man, as a representative of his class, was at Downing-street last Monday. The man who sits in the little Baptist chapel on the Sunday, because he is welcomed there, and who would sit in his Church in preference, if he had his birthright of equality within the Church's gate given to him, was there also; the wearied labourer, who though poor would help his poorer neighbour at a pinch lest his home should be broken up, was there too; and all were there, or

represented by others, who determine to make the best of things, because they find it high time to speak for themselves, lest it be taken for granted that the noisy agitators who have traded on the good nature of their fellows should be accepted by the public as the acknowledged leaders of the Working Classes. Let but Conservative working men enrol themselves in associations, let them quietly determine to use their political privileges in aid of measures rather than of men, and in the time of England's trial "they may not only support a Ministry but save a nation." The rampant democracy of the last two years has been breached. Conservative working men must follow the leaders of the Forlorn Hope without wavering, and the Battle of the Constitution, though it may have to be desperately fought, will be nobly won.

The triumphs of the Conservative party, if it be but true to itself, are, in our opinion, only just beginning; and so far from fearing a contact with the masses, it will be assuredly found that the Conservatives will gain far more than they will lose by an extension of the franchise. It is not a little gratifying to us, as proving how in the long-run old principles, if true, reproduce themselves, that the Conservative Working Men's Association, which deserves all possible encouragement, should have adopted of their own accord the old-fashioned and somewhat despised motto of *John Bull*, "For God, the Sovereign, and the People."

[From "The Day," April 16.]

The members of the Reform League are evidently very much disconcerted just now at the appearance of the Conservative working man. They had all along cherished the belief that such a being did not and could not exist—was as much opposed, indeed, to ordinary experience as the unicorn or the sea-serpent. The deputation that waited on Mr. Disraeli on Tuesday last has, however, opened the eyes of these gentlemen to the terrible fact; but which, nevertheless, they are unwilling to acknowledge. It is not to be endured, of course, that Mr. Beales and his coadjutors should be disturbed in their monopoly to represent the working classes. The celebrated tailors of Tooley-street would have resented a similar interference, and why not the magnates of the Adelphi? So long as the question of Reform could be kept in the position of a grievance of the lower, as against the middle and upper classes, the course of the League ran smooth

enough, and no end of sermons could be preached on the agreeable text of the contrast between the wrongs and much-enduring patience of the industrial class, and the selfishness and tyranny of those above them. But this Conservative element among working men themselves has disturbed the calculations of the League, and places its pretensions to represent "the people of England" in a very ridiculous light. To those well acquainted with intelligent operatives, the existence of Conservative views among them is no secret. Working men differ in political opinion just as men of other classes do, and no more than these are they to be trimmed down to the pattern which it may suit the Reform League to adopt. The Conservative deputation has done good service in placing this fact clearly before the public, and thus applying an antidote to the poisonous nonsense of the League orators, who have taken advantage of the Reform agitation to gain a little cheap and temporary notoriety, without being very scrupulous as to the means of getting it.

[From "The Standard."]

THE REFORM MEETING IN HYDE PARK.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—I am just from Hyde Park, where I went to witness the reform meeting convened by the members of the Fitzroy, Edgware Road, Bryanston Ward, and other branches of the Reform League. The chair was occupied by Mr. Henwood, and Messrs. M'Gregor and Golding and others spoke. I stood quite outside the meeting, and spoke to no one. Suddenly I heard my name mentioned, coupled with the words "Traitor," "Government Spy," "Tory," "*Times*," "*Standard*," and so forth; and, looking round, recognised Mr. Mantle, a prominent member of the Executive of the Reform League, and several of the Edgware Road Branch. I was then set upon by the crowd, who abused me most foully, pelted me with missiles, smashed my hat, struck me with knives, and otherwise maltreated me, and this under the shade of the red cap of liberty. Possibly Mr. Mantle and his friends will receive medals from the League for their manliness; but will any one believe they really represent the working classes or spirit of England?

I am, Sir,

William G. de Gruyther.

1, Old Church Street, Edgware Road,
April 19 (Good Friday).

[Letter from "The Standard," April 22nd.]

Mr. Bass, M.P., in a letter to his constituents at Derby, justifying his vote, says that *he did so to save the Reform Bill;* and that he shall never regret an honest vote. He says—"Every Liberal member I have conversed with who voted with Mr. Gladstone has expressed to me that they were delighted they were outvoted. Now, there was one Liberal who said to me, 'Bass, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.' Mind, he was in high office under the last Government, and wants to get back again with the least possible delay. These people cannot patiently endure to be kept out in the cold."

[From the "John Bull," April 16.]

THE REFORM LEAGUE AND INFIDELITY.

Sir,—Mr. Bradlaugh is reported to have said at the meeting at Mr. Gladstone's, in reference to the proposed gathering on Good Friday, that "he considered that it was necessary to remember that if the working men held demonstrations on other occasions it would be a pecuniary loss to themselves." This, in other words, is tantamount to placing the business of the Reform League on an equality, in importance, with the religious feelings of tens of thousands in London, to say nothing of the duty of maintaining the law. But it will be seen from the enclosed paper that there is a section of the working classes, happily a very small section, who have no objection to such an employment of Good Friday, and it is believed that they are most faithfully represented by "Iconoclast" in name and person, who would, no doubt, in his religious zeal, break down and grind to powder, under the iron heel of Democracy, the images which England has set—the Church, the Crown, the Houses of Parliament, and the people. But mark me, the Iconoclast will find no voice to answer, even though he bawl his throat dry in Trafalgar-square with the fountains close at hand, from morning till evening. Against these images which England has set up, one and all, Mr. Bradlaugh declares his implacable hostility.

The (late) Tower Hamlets Literary and Scientific Institution was used for Socialist and Infidel lectures, and was the head-quarters of a formidable Chartist organization during the threatening demonstration of 1848. It is now, and has been ever since 1854, an Infant

School and day Nursery, and, under the excellent Incumbent of the parish, effects more good than it did when in the hands of its former possessors.

The proposal to meet in Hyde Park on Good Friday and the document below are kindred in spirit to a certain extent, and are, in the opinion of all right-thinking people, from one source alone, the devil. It is to be hoped that the fact will not be lost sight of, that the Reform League are in union with avowed Infidels. The old spirit is at work.

Here is the document above alluded to :—

"Tower Hamlets Literary Institution, Morpeth-street, Bethnal-green.—A plain and Fancy Dress Ball will take place at the above institution on Good Friday, April 14th, 1854. M.C. (Master of Ceremonies), Mr. C. Howes. Tickets, Sixpence each. Commence at Eight.

" A Ball on Easter Monday, April 17. A first-rate Quadrille Band is engaged."

However, in the midst of all this evil, it is refreshing to remember the protest of the London Working Men's Conservative Association, passed on the 25th ult.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A Worshipper of the Images which England has set up, and no Iconoclast.

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Reform League held a meeting in Trafalgar Square on Monday evening, Mr. Guedalla in the chair. This gentleman said that unless Mr. Disraeli stripped his Bill of its obnoxious clauses and inserted a lodger franchise, the Reform League would no longer waste their time in promoting demonstrations and processions, and in displaying badges and scarves. If the working classes did not get their rights they would refuse to pay taxes in the imposition of which they had no voice, and the Government might look for such demonstrations as had never been seen or dreamed of. A resolution was passed, condemning the attempt of the Government to continue the exclusion of the working classes from the suffrage by clogging their Bill with the personal payment of rates, a long term of residence, and the omission of the lodger franchise. Mr. Mantle, in supporting the

resolution, feared that the proceedings of the Reform League had been too constitutional, and he was not sure that if, instead of going to Downing Street with a white flag, they had gone with a black one, they would not have extorted justice from the fears of the British Parliament. The next step which the Leaguers propose to take is to refuse the payment of taxes, which will be very unpleasant indeed—for the Leaguers. At another meeting, on Wednesday evening, Mr. Beales threatened to resign his chairmanship. He recommended an increase of agitation, found fault with Mr. Gladstone's 5*l.* proposal, accused Mr. Disraeli of deliberate untruth, and announced that General Garibaldi had become honorary president of the League! The following scene then ensued :—

Mr. Cremer moved, "That this meeting of delegates, feeling the political atmosphere to be overcharged with corruption and intrigue, believes that it is advisable for the political health of the Reformers of London that they inhale the bracing and invigorating air of Hyde Park. We, therefore, resolve to take an airing in Hyde Park on Monday, May 6th, at six o'clock in the evening, and cordially invite our brother Reformers to do the same; and, after having met to confer upon the political state, to leave the park by Apsley-gate, and march by route then to be indicated." ("No" and "Yes.") He would leave them to conjecture the route which would be taken. He was opposed to the meeting on Good Friday. ("No, no.") Those who said "No, no," could go if they liked, but he should not.

The resolution was seconded amidst cries of dissent and "Have the meeting in the Park on Good Friday."

The Chairman rose and said that if they did not wish to have him for their President any longer, they could choose another. He would not do what he did not think was for the good of the cause. He was quite ready to resign ("No"); but he would not sit there and listen to taunts. He had taken the steps which he thought right and best. He would not barter his principles and conscience.

Mr. Brightly proposed, and Mr. Bubb seconded, an amendment that there be a demonstration in the middle of the night.

This gave rise to a discussion, in which views were stated that the Reformers should show to the Government, and their enemies in general, that they were no longer to be trifled with. One speaker suggested that the President and the Executive of the League, supported by a body of Reformers, should go and knock at the doors of the House of Commons.

Mr. Osborne condemned the inactivity of the League, characterising it as a "dead body," and said that people were asking him if it was still living. He would do anything to strike terror into the Tories.

The Chairman defended the conduct of the League, and referred to the deputations to Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone, and the meetings in Trafalgar Square on Monday evenings.

Mr. Osborne: If you call the meetings in Trafalgar Square a success, God help you!

Mr. Weston, in speaking upon the question, thought the later they could bring a large body of roughs to the West-end the better. It was no use arguing with their enemies any longer. They would only give them their rights when they could not help it.

Mr. Osborne again condemned the action of the executive, and referred to the Chairman in a style which so offended that gentleman, that he said he had sacrificed more for the cause than ten thousand Osbornes; that he would not stop there to be insulted, and would leave the place.

Mr. Beales took up his hat, and was leaving the room, but was hastily surrounded by several delegates, and begged to resume his seat, which he did.

Mr. Odgers believed that Mr. Osborne had never been of much service to the League, and said that the Council had never been wanting in courage.

The Chairman said that if the trades unions did their duty, the question was settled. It was the fault of the working man that they did not obtain their rights. His impression was that the midnight torchlight meeting would be unadvisable.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost, and Mr. Cremer's resolution was unanimously carried.

It was ultimately referred to the Executive to consider the best means of carrying out the resolution, and also that the delegates bring the subject of the expense of the demonstration before their branches at their next meeting.

THE CROWN, THE CHURCH, AND PEOPLE.

[To be sung at Banquets while the Loving Cup is being passed around.]

Words by W. H. F. *Music by R. E. M.*

Come pass the bowl,
Each loyal soul,
Prepare to do your duty;
Our country's foes
Give no repose;
They strive to mar her beauty.

O'er friends within,
Our foes without,
Can surely triumph never,
But falser hands,
Would break the bands,
If once the Three they sever.

Long live the Queen,
Long live the Heir,
To whom the people gather;
Upon the throne,
A light shines down,
From the now silent Father.

We join each hand
In loyal band,
For England, Home, and Beauty;
And still we say,
In this our day,
We'll stand to do our Duty!

We Derby own ;
On, Stanley, on !
For the Crown, the Church, and People !
We'll stand or fall,
United all,
In a land which has no equal.

Come, pass the bowl,
Each loyal soul ;
Prepare to do your duty ;
Though England's foes
Take no repose,
They ne'er shall mar her Beauty.

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