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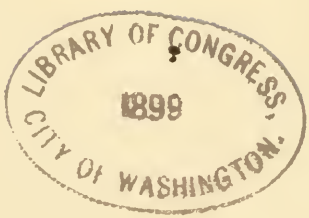
NEW YORK

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD

1899



INTRODUCTION.

From the time of the venerable Bede onward all Western historians have been accustomed to date their annals by means of the centuries, counting forwards and backwards from that year 1 A.D. which Dionysius Exiguus wrongly fixed as the birth-date of our Lord. But it is only in comparatively modern times that we have begun to talk and think of those centuries as entities with individual characters and attributes. The usage by which we speak of a "nineteenth-century idea" or "a thoroughly seventeenth-century practice" would appear strange to a critic from the Middle Ages, whose landmarks in history were not connected with the centuries, and who reckoned by 'indictions,' or the 'Seven Ages of the World,' or the dynasties of his native kingdom, or the time that had elapsed since Augustus or Charlemagne. To see how entirely artificial is our conception of the centuries, we have only to remember that to a Moslem the year 1900 appears as 1317–18, while a Jew thinks of it as 5660. But during the last eight or nine generations the world has grown so familiar with the idea of the century as a real and natural division of time, that it is impossible for us to disregard it when dealing with history.

The practice of reckoning by the centuries has at least one excellent feature. It induces the historian from time to time to take stock of the current of events and the movement of the world during the last hundred years of the Christian era. When the century in which we have lived is slipping from us, we begin to endeavour to formulate our general views on its character, work, and meaning, even though its latter years are still too close to us to allow us to view them in accurate historical perspective.

Every generation has a point at which it places the beginnings of what it vaguely calls contemporary history, a date which marks the boundary between the period which has passed away to become the exclusive property of the historian, and the period in which our knowledge is *not* drawn entirely from books. Between the days which we can actually call our own and the time which has wholly gone from us, lies a middle period, whose events and general character are made real to us, not only by literature, but by the oral tradition of the generation that has immediately preceded us. The limits of the years known to us in this way are of course continually receding, but at present the line of division is just approaching the date which marks the end of the greatest war which England ever waged. There yet linger among us rare survivors who can tell us that their earliest memories are of the arrival of the news that Napoleon was dead, or even of the rejoicings which followed the crowning victory of Waterloo. But the survivors of that generation are few and far between: the England of the Reform Bill, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and the Chartist Agitation, is still brought home to us in a way that is no longer possible for the times of George III. The peace of 1815 marks the division for us denizens of the last years of the nineteenth century, and beyond it lies a time when the conditions of life, the state of politics, the external relations and internal movement of the country, seem strange to us, so far do they differ from those of the England of our own day.

It is hard for us, who for forty-five years have never waged war in Europe, to realize an England which was for a whole generation engaged in an almost uninterrupted struggle—for existence as well as for empire—with her nearest continental neighbour; an England who was not the preacher of peace among nations, but the untiring fomenter of war, keeping the struggle against Bonaparte alive by the unending subsidies which she continued to pour into the hands of the military powers of Central and Eastern Europe. It seems bewildering to our notions of English credit, when we try to picture to

ourselves a time when Consols went down to 60, to 50, nay, on one occasion to 47; when the Bank of England was on one black day so near breaking that it paid its customers in sixpences, while a Bill to suspend specie payments was being rapidly run through the House of Commons; when, in consequence of the lavish issue of paper money, a five-pound note was only worth £3 17*s.* 10*d.* in hard cash; when the nation was taxed to the last halfpenny it could bear, and yet from £20,000,000 to £30,000,000 had to be borrowed every year to make expenditure and receipts balance.

Still stranger is it to endeavour to familiarize our minds with a time when Yorkshire artisans banded together to destroy all cotton-spinning machinery; when Birmingham mobs met to burn the houses of gentlemen suspected of advanced Liberal opinions; when the farmers' prayer was for "a bloody war and a wet harvest," and the landowner who enclosed common-land was counted a public benefactor as well as a sharp man of business.

But however unfamiliar many of the characteristics of the time of the great war of 1793–1815 may appear to us, it is in that period that we must look for the rise and development of most of the peculiar features of modern England. Within those twenty-three years, and as a direct consequence of the maritime war, we finally secured our commercial supremacy, and became the carriers of the world's merchandise. The frantic efforts of France to strike down our trade only resulted in creating and increasing a monopoly for us, where previously we had been merely the most important among a number of competitors. Equally within the compass of the years of the war lies the great revolution in English industry which made our country manufacturing rather than agricultural, a change which has altered all the conditions of life in a way which we hardly realize till we attempt to call up the details of last-century social economy. This transformation within was contemporaneous with a growth of the British Empire without, unparalleled before or since. In one generation our Indian territories swelled from being a single province and a few

scattered ports, to a great land dominion stretching along the upper waters of the Ganges and Jumna, and encroaching on to the great central tableland of the Deccan. In the two short viceroyalties of Cornwallis and Wellesley our possessions were doubled or even tripled in extent, and our influence rendered paramount over almost the whole peninsula. Simultaneously the colonies of France, Spain, and Holland fell before us, and the British flag waved from a hundred points on the Atlantic and Indian Oceans where it had previously been unknown. Australia saw the beginnings of the modest settlement of New South Wales, and in Canada the British began to preponderate by emigration over the French provincial element, so that the country became a colony rather than a military possession.

No less important is it that to the years of our struggle with France belongs the formation of political parties in England, which we can recognize as the progenitors of those of our own days. "Whig" and "Tory" at the end of the Great War mean something very different from "Whig" and "Tory" at its beginning. The political creeds of the rival statesmen of 1780 often seem incomprehensible to us. Those of their successors of 1815—differing though they may in many ways from those of the Liberals and Conservatives of to-day—show definitely the mark of the nineteenth century, and are manifestly capable of development into their later shapes. We may even note that the first popular use of the word "Radical," as applied to politicians, dates from the second decade of the period of which we are about to treat.

It is unfortunate, from the point of view of completeness, that the boundary of the century prevents us from dealing with the commencement of the struggle with France. Logically, we should start in 1793, and not on the 1st of January, 1801, if we are thoroughly to understand the England of 1815. But bound down by the prescribed limits of our subject, we must adhere to its strict chronology, and open our story in the year before the Treaty of Amiens, ere even the short breathing-space of peace in 1802–3 had broken the continuity of the great French war.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PEACE OF AMIENS.

When the nineteenth century opened, on New Year's Day 1801, England was still engaged in the weary war with revolutionary France. The struggle had already raged for eight years, and seemed as far from an end as ever. It made little difference to its character that the government with which the contest had to be fought out was no longer the corrupt Directory of Barras. The military despotism of the new First Consul, Napoleon Bonaparte, was quite as hostile to England, and infinitely more formidable. Till he had tried his strength against her and learnt the limitations of his power, Bonaparte was not likely to come to terms.

The struggle with France.

Moreover, we had just ascertained that we should have to fight him single-handed. The last of our powerful continental allies was now about to withdraw from the struggle. Austria had already opened negotiations for peace with the First Consul: since the defeat of

Isolation of Great Britain.

Hohenlinden (December 3, 1800) her position seemed untenable, and she was glad to be permitted to retire from the war, still retaining her ill-gotten gains in Italy, the lands of the unfortunate republic of Venice.

Bonaparte had resolved to let her off easily: not only did he wish to have his hands free for the duel with Great Britain and the internal reorganization of France, but he was jealous lest Moreau, the victor of Hohenlinden, might dictate peace at the gates of Vienna, and so cast into the shade his own achievements at Marengo in the previous summer. Hence came the peace of Lunéville (February 9, 1801), which took Austria out of the struggle against Bonaparte for more than four years.

The peace of Lunéville.

Russia, the other ally of England in the war of 1798–9, had already made her peace with France: the eccentric Czar Paul had not only thrown over the British alliance, but had ranged himself on the side of Britain's enemies. Inspired by a perverse and wrong-headed admiration for the person of the First Consul, he had set himself to aid him by every means in his power. In December, 1800, he had formed a League of the Baltic Powers: Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia declared an "Armed Neutrality" during the remainder of the struggle between England and France. Though not nominally directed against the former power, the "Armed Neutrality" was practically a declaration of hostility against her, for the confederates undertook to oppose—if necessary, by force of arms—the English doctrine that a neutral flag did not cover the goods of a belligerent on the high seas. The theory that neutral ships might be searched for contraband merchandise has long been abandoned, but in 1801 it was strongly held by British statesmen, and had already caused much friction with Denmark and other powers. The hot-headed Czar had followed up his declaration of Armed Neutrality by seizing the English ships ice-bound in Russian ports, and throwing their crews into

Russia—the Armed Neutrality.

prison—proceedings which left no doubt as to his future policy.

In 1801, therefore, England had to face not only her old enemy across the Channel, but the new league of the Baltic states. The prospect was not cheering, for the internal condition of the United Kingdom was anything but satisfactory. The last throes of the Irish rebellion had died down, and in 1800 Castlereagh had bribed and cajoled the Parliament on St. Stephen's Green to vote away its own legislative independence and consent to the Union with Great Britain. But if the position in Ireland was less desperate than it had been three years before, the general aspect of domestic affairs was gloomy. Dearth had prevailed all through 1800, and the rise in the price of bread had been followed by its usual consequences of discontent and riot. The National Debt was piling itself up at the most fearful rate —the revenue had been in 1800 only £39,000,000, while the expenditure had been £63,000,000; the immense difference between the two had to be made up by borrowing. The military enterprises of Great Britain had been uniformly unsuccessful, save indeed in India. The last of them, the invasion of Holland in 1799, had been perhaps the worst managed of the whole series. It was true that we had been as regularly victorious at sea as we had been unfortunate on land, but even our greatest triumphs—Camperdown, St. Vincent, and the Nile —had been defensive rather than offensive successes. We had prevented France and her allies from insulting our own shores, or from gaining a mastery in the waters of the Mediterranean. But Jervis, Duncan, and Nelson had been powerless to check the establishment of a French domination on the mainland of Western Europe. We had swept the mercantile marine of France, Spain, and Holland from the seas, and appropriated their carrying trade. Yet, since our great enemy had never been mainly dependent on its seaborne commerce, and since the woes of Dutch or Spanish merchants were not likely to

Domestic difficulties of England.

touch Bonaparte's heart, we could bring comparatively little pressure to bear upon France. It was not till he tried his worst against Great Britain and found that he could not hope to deal her any serious blow, that the First Consul evinced any real desire for peace. Meanwhile he hoped to retain his new conquest of Egypt, and to bring to the aid of the shattered navies of France and Spain the fresh naval resources of the Baltic powers.

Resignation of Pitt.

It was not under the guidance of William Pitt, whose unswerving hand had hitherto directed the foreign policy of Great Britain, that the last year of the Revolutionary war was destined to be fought out. Early in 1801 he resigned his office, on a question which, important enough in itself, was yet but a side issue in this time of stress and peril. While negotiating the details of the Union with Ireland, he had pledged his word to the Irish Catholics to introduce in the new United Parliament legislation for the relief of their many political disabilities. This he was preparing to do, when he found that the old king was determined to put his veto on any such action. Of the many deep-rooted prejudices of George III. none was more violent than his dislike for Romanists, and he had contrived to persuade himself that to give his assent to such a bill as Pitt was drafting would involve him in a breach of his Coronation Oath, "to defend the Protestant Church as by law established." When informed of the king's resolve, Pitt resigned (February, 1801): his exaggerated sense of loyalty to his old master prevented him from forcing matters to the point of actual conflict between king and ministry. He has been much censured, both for leaving the helm of state when the foreign danger was still so great, and for refusing to bring stronger pressure on the king, who, in spite of his obstinacy, might have yielded at the actual moment of friction.

With Pitt some of his personal friends retired from office, but the Tories still retained their hold on the government, and

continued to carry out Pitt's policy in every detail. The new prime minister was Henry Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons, a man of narrow views and limited ability, chiefly notable for his subservience to the crown and his utter want of originality. Addington, and not Pitt, was the man destined to bring the great Revolutionary war to its end, though to his predecessor must be given the credit of devising the measures which finally brought it to a successful conclusion.

Addington prime minister.

Before leaving office Pitt had made arrangements for the carrying out of two great expeditions, both of which were destined to win complete success. The first was aimed against the new French colony in Egypt. An English army concentrated in the Mediterranean was to land in the Delta and assail the French from the front, while a subsidiary force from India ascended the Red Sea, crossed the desert, and struck into the valley of the Nile south of Cairo. As it chanced, the Indian army arrived too late to take any part in the fighting, the larger expedition having done all the work.

The Egyptian expedition.

The French general Menou, who had to face the attack, chanced to be wholly incompetent. He was an eccentric and histrionic personage, who had embraced Mohametanism to please Bonaparte, and thought more of his poses and of his proclamations than of strategy. He divided his troops up into two bodies, so that the 20,000 English who landed at Aboukir, under Sir Ralph Abercromby, were superior to each fraction, though far inferior in number to the whole army of Egypt. Two fights in front of Alexandria broke the main force of the French, though the gallant Abercromby fell in the moment of victory. After short sieges the two halves of Menou's army, shut up the one in Cairo and the other in Alexandria, laid down their arms, and all Egypt was in our hands (March–July, 1801). Bonaparte's dream of an Eastern empire had come to a disastrous end. This was

The French expelled from Egypt.

inevitable from the first; without command of the sea such an outlying possession could not possibly be maintained.

The Baltic expedition.

Not less complete was the success of the English in the Baltic against the signatories of the declaration of Armed Neutrality. The bitter northern winter, which seals up the Russian and Swedish ports, prevented the early concentration of the allied fleets. Before the ice had broken up, an English squadron had been sent off, with orders to throw itself between the scattered divisions of the enemy, and to destroy them in detail. Such a plan was absolutely necessary, for if the confederate navies could have massed themselves they might have taken the sea with more than fifty ships of the line, and the British squadron numbered no more than eighteen. Nelson sailed with them, but only as second-in-command: by some inexplicable stupidity of those in charge at the Admiralty, he had been placed under the orders of Sir Hyde Parker, a respectable veteran destitute of all initiative and dash. The squadron reached the Sound on March 30, and three days later attacked Copenhagen, while the Russians and Swedes were still wholly ignorant of their approach.

Battle of Copenhagen.

The Danes had protected their capital and arsenal by a line of floating batteries interspersed with ships of war. Parker thought their front almost too formidable to be attacked, but finally gave Nelson permission to go in with twelve ships and do his best. The approach lay up a narrow channel between sandbanks, on which more than one of the English ships went aground. But Nelson forced his way up to the enemy, and engaged with them in the most furious cannonade of the whole Revolutionary war. No other of England's enemies fought their ships with such splendid obstinacy as the Danes: for some time Nelson seemed to be making so little progress that his cautious superior hung out signals desiring him to draw off and retire. But Nelson turned his blind eye to the signals, and persisted in the fight

till the Danish floating batteries were burnt or sunk. Although the shore forts still held out, the Prince Regent of Denmark then yielded to Nelson's summons, and consented to suspend his adherence to the Armed Neutrality. The British fleet was then directed against Cronstadt, but its presence in Russian waters turned out to be unnecessary. Ten days before the battle of Copenhagen the Czar Paul had fallen, the victim of a palace conspiracy. His constant petty tyranny and his mad caprices had driven his nobles to desperation, and on the night of March 23, 1801, he was strangled in his bedroom by a band of his own courtiers. His son and successor, Alexander, at once reversed his policy, released the English prisoners, and declared that the Baltic league was at an end.

Thus the new and formidable weapon which Bonaparte had intended to turn against Great Britain was shattered, a few months before the last French garrison in Egypt was driven to surrender. Foiled in both quarters, the First Consul at last began to make genuine overtures for peace: his earlier offers had no reality in them. Addington and his cabinet were far from realizing the bitter hatred of England which Bonaparte nourished in his heart, and believed that a permanent pacification with him presented no insuperable difficulties. The negotiations, which commenced in the summer of 1801, dragged on for many months, and the definite Treaty of Amiens was only signed on March 27, 1802.

Conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens.

By it England acknowledged the government of the First Consul, and accepted accomplished facts by recognizing the new boundaries of France and of her vassals, the Batavian, Helvetic, and Cisalpine Republics —new names which cloaked the identity of the Seven United Provinces, of the Swiss Confederates, and of Lombardy. Great Britain restored to France all her lost colonies in the West and East Indies; but Bonaparte—always liberal with the property of his unfortunate allies—allowed

Provisions of the Treaty.

the conqueror to retain the Spanish island of Trinidad in the West, and in the East the important Dutch settlement of Ceylon. Charles IV. of Spain and the Batavian Republic, however, received back the rest of the possessions of which they had been stripped, the former recovering the island of Minorca, the latter the Cape of Good Hope, both points of high strategical importance which English statesmen surrendered with deep regret. One more among the numerous clauses of the treaty requires mention—England had just captured Malta, which Bonaparte, in 1798, had lawlessly seized from the Knights of St. John without any declaration of war. The treaty provided that this important island, the key of the central Mediterranean, should be evacuated by the British forces and restored to its original owners, when the Order should have been reconstituted and remodelled. Herein lay the germs of much future trouble.

Expediency of the Treaty discussed.

By the Treaty of Amiens England, perhaps, gave up more than was absolutely necessary. Her position was a very strong one after the French failures in Egypt and the Baltic; and it was only a genuine wish for peace, and a misplaced confidence in the good intentions of Bonaparte, which led the Addington ministry to give up so many valuable conquests. England, in spite of all her financial burdens, had still plenty of strength left in her. The expense of the war, monstrous as it had been, was almost made up to her by the extraordinary growth of English commerce since 1793. The destruction of the mercantile marine of France, Spain, and Holland had led to an unparalleled expansion in our trade. In 1793 the export of British manufactures had been to the value of £14,700,000; in 1801 it had risen to £24,400,000. Similarly, at the earlier date we had re-exported £5,400,000 of foreign and colonial goods; in 1801 the figures had tripled, and were recorded as £17,100,000. The number of British ships at sea had risen from 16,000 to 18,000, in spite of all French privateering.

If we had failed to prevent the establishment of the French domination on the continent of Western Europe, France had failed quite as signally in her attempts to demolish our commercial and maritime supremacy. During the heat of the war we had grasped the control of Southern India, by putting down Bonaparte's ally, Tippoo Sultan of Mysore (1799); the "Great Proconsul" Wellesley was, at the very moment of the Treaty of Amiens, watching his opportunity to lay the foundations of British power in the central and northern regions of Hindostan by interfering in the affairs of the Mahratta states, a project which he was to take in hand before the year 1802 had expired.

Yet, even when all these facts are taken into consideration, there can be no doubt that Addington and his cabinet were fully justified in concluding peace with France. War is such a fearful burden, and its chances are so incalculable, that no government which is offered an honourable and not unprofitable peace should hesitate to accept it, merely because there is some prospect of obtaining yet better terms at some future date. The one mistake made was in thinking that Bonaparte was sincerely anxious for an equitable pacification, and wished to dwell beside us as a quiet neighbour. But the statesmen of 1801 could not know his character as we know it after a study of his whole career; they were quite excusable if they were deceived by his plausible verbiage, and allowed him some credit for the magnificent and praiseworthy sentiments which he professed.

CHAPTER II.

THE STRUGGLE WITH BONAPARTE: (1) THE NAVAL WAR.

1803–1806.

THE peace from which so much had been hoped was to endure for no more than thirteen months. But in March, 1802, well-nigh all men on this side of the Channel believed that the struggle with France had reached its end, and thought that a period of rest, economy, and retrenchment had set in. Britain was to turn to account the complete sovereignty of the seas and the new Indian empire which she had gained, and, by a careful development of trade and manufactures, was to free herself from the burden of her vast national debt. The army and navy were reduced with a haste that was to produce much trouble ere the year was out. So great were the expectations that were entertained of the prosperity that was to result from the peace, that when the French ambassador arrived in London, his carriage was actually drawn through the streets by the populace, and a general illumination testified to the national joy. Great numbers of English at once embarked on continental travel—a pleasure which had been denied them for more than eight years, and for which many of them were to pay dearly in 1803.

Bonaparte's objects in coming to terms with England had been twofold. He wished for an interval of quiet in which to prepare for that assumption of regal power which he had already determined to carry out. But he also wished to

recover the lost French colonies, and to gain time to rebuild the shattered French navy, which in 1802 had been reduced to less than forty ships of the line. In a few years he intended to create a new fleet, which should be able to dispute with that of Britain the mastery of the seas. Moreover, observing the enthusiasm with which peace was greeted in England, he fancied that our government would wink at several new aggressions which he was contemplating on the continent. Rather than renew the war, he imagined that the weak Addington would submit to many humiliations. In this respect he wholly misconceived the situation; he underrated the wariness and national pride of his opponents to an absurd degree.

Bonaparte's policy.

Only a few months had elapsed after the Treaty of Amiens had been signed, when the First Consul began to take in hand some measures which were certain to irritate England. In September he annexed to France Piedmont and the rest of the continental territories of the King of Sardinia, though that unfortunate monarch had given him no provocation whatever. Parma was at the same time appropriated, though compensation was in this case given to the dispossessed Bourbon duke. Soon after Bonaparte sent 30,000 men into Switzerland, and overturned there a government which was not sufficiently subservient to his interests. When England protested against this high-handed action, he merely replied that she had no concern with continental affairs, since there was no mention of Piedmont or the Helvetic Republic in the Treaty of Amiens. On his part he began to declaim against our government because Malta had not yet been evacuated: we had agreed to restore the island to the Order of the Knights of St. John, but since they had not yet been reorganized, our troops were still in possession. However, actual preparations for their departure had begun when the First Consul's action caused them to be suspended.

Fresh annexations by France.

Even before these matters of foreign policy had come to a

head, Bonaparte had created much ill feeling in England by making some extraordinary demands from our government. He proposed that we should expel from our shores the princes of the old royal family of France and certain other refugees, a request for the violation of English hospitality which was naturally refused. He also made an astonishing demand for the suppression of certain English newspapers and pamphlets, wherein his conduct and policy were being discussed with the usual freedom of political papers. When Lord Hawkesbury made the natural reply that in England the press was free, and that it was not our wont to expel foreign exiles who had done nothing against our laws, the First Consul pretended to regard himself as outrageously insulted (August 17, 1802).

Insults to British Government.

His ill-will was notably manifest in the regulations against English trade which he maintained. He utterly refused to sign any commercial treaty, and caused crushing duties to be laid on English goods, not only in France, but throughout the territories of her vassal republics. He also sent agents and spies all over Great Britain and the British empire, to discover our exact military and commercial resources. The final outbreak of wrath against him on this side of the Channel was largely caused by the publication of the papers of one of his agents, General Sebastiani, which were filled with elaborate plans for putting the French again in possession of Egypt, and for undermining English trade in the Levant.

Hostility to English trade.

It was no wonder that in the winter of 1802–3 the English ministers made up their minds that another war was probably in sight. They resolved to retain a firm hold on Malta, and to delay the surrender of the Cape of Good Hope, Pondicherry, and such other French possessions as had not yet been given back. When Parliament met in March, the prime minister announced that the army and navy, instead of being further reduced, would require certain

The British ambassador insulted.

additions. It was the news of these measures which led Bonaparte to show his hand: he summoned the English ambassador, Lord Whitworth, to the Tuileries, and, in the presence of a large assembly, delivered an angry harangue at him. He accused the English cabinet of violating the Treaty of Amiens with deliberate treachery, cried that they should have war if they wanted it, "but if they are the first to draw the sword, I shall be the last to put it back into the scabbard. Woe to those who violate treaties; they shall answer for the consequences to all Europe" (March 13, 1803).

After such a scene the Addington cabinet felt that war was inevitable; they began hurriedly to refit our dismantled fleet, and to re-embody our disbanded battalions. Bonaparte, on the other hand, began to move troops from inland France towards the shores of the Channel, and set naval preparations afoot in all his ports, especially in the new arsenal of Antwerp. Some negotiations, half-hearted on both sides, dragged on for nearly two months more; but when the First Consul insisted that we should not only recognize the legality of his doings in Italy and Switzerland, but also at once evacuate Malta, it was obvious that there could be no yielding. On the 12th of May, 1803, our ambassador left Paris, and the declaration of war on France promptly followed.

England declares war.

It is probable that at first Bonaparte had merely intended to bully and hector the British Government into condoning his annexations in Italy, and had assumed his aggressive airs in the full confidence that Addington and his cabinet would give way. When they refused to yield an inch, and met his menaces with a declaration of war, he showed all the irritation of a man deceived in his expectations. His first act was a sign of uncontrollable vexation, and not the least among his numerous violations of international law. He seized all the English tourists and travellers who were passing through France for pleasure or business, and put

Seizure of English travellers.

them in confinement as if they had been prisoners of war. They were about 10,000 in number, and Bonaparte actually had the cruelty to keep them confined during the whole of the war, so that those who had not escaped or died were still in his hands when he was overthrown in 1814. Another sign of his wrath was that he persistently continued to accuse the British Government of hiring assassins to attempt his life—ascribing all conspiracies against him, whether the work of royalist fanatics or discontented republicans, to English gold.

Thus began the second half of the great French war—the struggle with Bonaparte as opposed to the struggle against the principles of the Revolution. The two episodes are one in so far as they are regarded as constituting the great test-struggle between England and France, the last serious effort made by a foreign power to destroy our commercial and maritime supremacy by force of arms. Napoleon in this respect only continued the work of the Jacobins, and the short Peace of Amiens was a break so insignificant that we need hardly regard it at all. Up to 1802 the game had been a drawn one, and the adversaries had only paused for a moment to draw breath before resuming their duel.

Nature of the contest between England and France.

But the character of the struggle was profoundly modified by the fact that from 1803 onwards we were no longer fighting against the principles of the Revolution, but against a military despot of unparalleled genius, who had fought his way up from the obscure position of a lieutenant of artillery to that of the arbitrator of Europe, and had showed his ability to direct the anarchic energy of revolutionary France to his own ends. France under Bonaparte only resembles France under Robespierre in the unscrupulous vigour of her assaults on her neighbours. After having long posed as the prophetess of licentious liberty, she now becomes the apostle of despotism; and England was therefore able to appear once more as the protectress of the liberties of Europe

against a tyrant, abandoning her previous position as the defender of order against anarchy, which she had occupied since 1792. The Republicans had talked of freeing the masses in England from the government of a corrupt oligarchy: Bonaparte made no pretence of any such philanthropic aim, and merely spoke of destroying the power and wealth of Great Britain because she stood in his way. All through his career it is most notable how a hatred for this country pervades and explains all his widespread schemes. From the day when, as a young artillery officer, he drove our garrison out of Toulon, to the day when he saw the broken columns of his Old Guard rolling down the hillside of Waterloo, it was always England that stood before him as the enemy of his schemes and the final object at which his blows were levelled. His invasion of Egypt in 1798 had been aimed against our Indian empire, and we had foiled him. His policy after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens had always before it as its ultimate end the maritime and commercial ruin of England. He strove to accomplish it first by open invasion and maritime war, later by the more circuitous method of compelling all Europe to unite in the league of the "Continental System" and join him in his boycotting of English trade. All his wars with Austria, Prussia, and Russia were to a great extent indirect blows at the insular enemy whom he could not attack on her own soil, for all the confederacies against him were fomented and consolidated by the application of English gold. To win the fight of Friedland or Wagram meant to him that he could force another state into adopting a commercial policy hostile to England, not merely that he could seize territory or impose vassalage on the defeated foe. The final end of all his plans was to crush Great Britain, and the other episodes of the war were but means to that end, only necessary because England's continental allies must be subdued before England herself could be touched.

Bonaparte had many points in his favour while conducting the war against Great Britain. He had all the advantages that come from unity of purpose and despotic power. The ministers of a constitutional state are clogged with the responsibility to Parliament and the nation for all their actions. They have to face the criticism of the opposition and the comments of the press. Moreover, the policy of a cabinet of ten or a dozen men must necessarily be less coherent and self-consistent than that of a single autocrat. When each side had formed a scheme, the ruler of France could provide for its speedy and silent accomplishment; while the English expeditions were too often canvassed in parliament and divulged by the press before they had even left our shores. Bonaparte was his own finance-minister and his own commander-in-chief; while in England the views of the economist and the soldier were too often clashing in the cabinet, with the result that the one spent more than he intended, though the other was always being checked by insufficient supplies. Several times, as we shall see, Wellington was nearly starved out in Spain, while the ministry were positive that they were spending too much rather than too little on his army. Nothing of the sort could happen in France, where the same hand held the sword and the purse-strings. Bonaparte, too, in his dealings with his allies, could press his demands as a master; England had great difficulty in getting even part of her requirements carried out by confederates who knew that they were serving her as well as themselves, and could therefore get what terms they liked out of her.

The great war of 1803–1814 falls into two main parts. During the first, Bonaparte aimed at fighting England on the seas, and his fundamental project was the actual invasion of our shores. This period lasted for somewhat over two years, and ended in 1805, when we stirred up against him enemies who kept his army occupied in Central Europe, and destroyed his fleet at Trafalgar. During the second and longer section

of the struggle, Bonaparte abandoned his invasion scheme, frankly ceased to dispute the mastery of the seas, and strove to wear down England by cutting off the sources of her commercial prosperity by his "Continental System," a scheme hopeless from the first, and entailing on him in the end the desperate hatred, not only of the governments, but of the peoples of every European state. He finally fell because he had taught every patriot in every land to look upon him as a bitter and irreconcilable personal enemy.

At the first outbreak of the new war in 1803, it would be hard to say which of the two belligerents displayed the greater energy. Bonaparte marched 120,000 veteran troops to the coast of the Channel, and set every dockyard in France and Holland to work, in order to build men-of-war to equal the English fleet in numbers. He also constructed vast numbers of large flat-bottomed boats, in which he intended to convey his army across the straits under cover of his war fleet. His own headquarters were placed at Boulogne; to right and left his regiments lay at every port between Ostend and St. Valery. He was thoroughly set upon trying that invasion of our island which the Directory had abandoned as impracticable after the defeats of Camperdown and St. Vincent. A fog, he thought, might cover his crossing, or a gale might drive away the British squadron which observed him, or a lucky concentration of his own ships might for a moment give him the command of the Channel. But in some way or another he was determined that the attempt should be made. His troops were trained to get on board their flat-bottomed boats with extraordinary speed and order, and he boasted that the whole army could embark in France and disembark in England within forty-eight hours—a feat wholly impossible.

The camp at Boulogne.

On this side of the Channel the outbreak of war had roused wild anger against Bonaparte for cheating us out of the long-desired peace from which so much had been expected. With

anger was mixed a strong feeling of apprehension when the magnitude of the preparations at Boulogne became known. The excitement was far greater than that which had been felt during the critical year 1798. While the ministers were planning how best the military forces of the United Kingdom could be drawn out to meet the projected attack, the nation itself came to their aid by forming many hundreds of volunteer corps. In a few months 347,000 volunteers were under arms, besides 120,000 regulars and 78,000 militia. The new levies were very raw, and insufficiently supplied with cavalry and artillery. But their numbers were so great and their enthusiasm so genuine, that, with the regulars to stiffen their resistance, it cannot be doubted that they would have given a good account of Bonaparte, if ever he had succeeded in throwing the whole of his 150,000 men ashore in Kent and Sussex.

Feeling in England—The volunteers.

The spirit of the nation was displayed with equal clearness by the demand made for the return of Pitt to the helm of the state. Addington, whose efforts to organize the national defence were considered too slow and ineffective, retired from office in the spring of 1804, and Pitt's advent to power was signalized by an outburst of redoubled energy and an unsparing expenditure of public money. Every month that Bonaparte waited before dealing his threatened blow made the project of invasion more chimerical.

Pitt returns to office.

The longer the First Consul studied the problem of transporting his host across the straits on his light craft, the more difficult it began to appear. Finally, after many months spent in weighing the chances for and against the possibility of invading England before he had secured control of the Channel, Bonaparte seems to have come to the very wise and prudent conclusion that it was too hazardous an undertaking. Instead of placing his army on board of his transports and flat-bottomed boats and launching them on to the narrow seas, he resolved

Modification of Bonaparte's invasion plans.

to bring up his war fleet to convey them across. But to collect his line-of-battle ships from the scattered ports where they were being blockaded by the English squadrons was in itself a very hazardous and difficult task. He deferred the operation till 1804, and meanwhile took in hand a piece of domestic policy whose conclusion the rupture of the Treaty of Amiens had interrupted.

He thought the time was ripe for the open restoration of monarchy in France. A royalist conspiracy against his life being detected, he took the opportunity which it gave him to demand a higher and firmer position in the state than that of First Consul. Acting on his secret orders, the French senate requested him to assume the title of Emperor—the monarch of so large a realm and the controller of so many vassal states was too great (he thought) to be a mere king. Bonaparte at once accepted the offer, which seemed to fall in with the aspirations of the whole nation. Jacobinism was wholly dead, and there was a real and widespread enthusiasm for the ruler who had not merely smitten the foreign enemies of France, but had restored order within her boundaries, reorganized her finances, and brought back to the ruined country a considerable measure of internal prosperity (May 18, 1804). Bonaparte compelled the Pope to come to Paris to assist in his coronation: it was a grand if somewhat garish pageant, which went to the hearts of the few surviving members of the old republican party, and marked the complete ascendency of despotism in France. At its culminating point, Bonaparte, taking the crown out of the hands of Pius VII., who had been intending to place it on his head, crowned himself instead, and then placed another diadem on the brow of his wife, Josephine Beauharnais. For the future law ran in France in the name of the "Emperor Napoleon," though the state was officially spoken of as a republic for two or three years more, in spite of its new monarchical form (December 2, 1804).

Bonaparte assumes the title of Emperor.

In the autumn of 1804, Napoleon began to take in hand his new scheme for concentrating a naval force in the Channel to cover the passage of his army. He hoped to unite at Boulogne all the scattered French squadrons, and to join to them the navies of Holland and Spain. The latter power had just been forced by him, much against her will, to join the coalition. Charles IV., being summoned to supply the emperor with either ships or money, undertook to pay France an enormous subsidy, trusting thereby to escape an open breach with England. But the Addington cabinet got early news of the treaty, and promptly seized the frigates which were bringing the treasure from America (October 5), whereupon Spain a few months later declared war on England (December 12), and openly joined Napoleon.

England declares war with Spain.

This event immensely enlarged the area of naval war: English fleets had now to watch every port of Western Europe, from the Texel in the North Sea to Genoa in the Mediterranean, lest some detachment of the enemy might escape, and, by relieving other blockaded squadrons, concentrate for the moment a force which should outnumber our ships on the all-important belt of sea between Boulogne and the Kentish coast. Everything then depended on the untiring vigilance of our admirals, who had to keep up an endless watch on the hostile ports, and whose weather-beaten ships could never retire for a moment from the wearisome blockade.

The blockade of the allied fleets.

Napoleon at last thought out an elaborate and ingenious scheme for drawing together his scattered naval strength. The initiative was to lie with Villeneuve, the admiral commanding at Toulon, whose squadron was being watched by a somewhat smaller English fleet under the ever-watchful Nelson. He was to slip out of his port at the first opportunity, and, evading Nelson, to make for the Straits of Gibraltar. Picking up the Spanish ships at Cartagena and Cadiz, where the English blockading vessels

Napoleon's naval scheme.

were very few, he was then to strike out westward into the Atlantic, as if intending to deal a blow at the English West Indies. Nelson, the emperor rightly thought, would follow them in that direction. But after reaching the Caribbean Sea, the Franco-Spaniards were to turn suddenly back and make a dash for Brest, where lay a large French squadron, watched by Admiral Cornwallis and the English Channel fleet. If all went well, Villeneuve could raise the blockade of Brest, for, counting the ships in that port, he would have some sixty vessels to Cornwallis's thirty-five. Nelson meanwhile would be vainly searching the West Indian waters for the enemy who had reached the Channel. Cornwallis must retire or be crushed, and the command of the narrow seas must pass for some weeks into French hands. The invasion could then be accomplished.

Much of this scheme of the emperor's was actually carried out. On March 29, 1805, Villeneuve ran out of Toulon in a heavy gale, which had blown Nelson far to the south. He made for the Straits of Gibraltar, while the English admiral was vainly looking for him off Sicily, under the impression that he had sailed for Egypt. Fortunately for us, the Spanish fleet was in such a disgraceful state of disrepair and disorder, that no ships from Cartagena and only six from Cadiz joined the enemy, and Villeneuve had to start on his dash across the Atlantic with only eighteen vessels instead of the thirty on which he had counted (April 9, 1805). On the 13th of May they reached Martinique. After staying some weeks in the West Indies, that the knowledge of his arrival there might get abroad and mislead Nelson, the French admiral started homeward on the 4th of June. His great opponent meanwhile had only received full information as to the route taken by the French as late as May 9, and started for the West just a month later than the French, and with only eleven line-of-battle ships. He reached Barbados on the very day that Villeneuve turned back towards

Villeneuve escapes to the West Indies.

Europe, vainly sought him among the islands for a few days, and then, acting on his own unerring inspiration, turned backward and made sail for Europe. He was now only nine days behind the French, though he had started with a full month to the bad.

Meanwhile all Napoleon's elaborate plans for bringing Villeneuve to Brest, long ere his departure from the West transpired, were wrecked by the chances of war and the activity of the English Admiralty. A fast-sailing English brig sighted the allied fleet moving eastward soon after it left the West Indies. Making an extraordinarily swift passage, this little vessel brought the news to Portsmouth on the 7th of July. Realizing its tremendous importance, Lord Barham, the First Lord of the Admiralty, gave prompt orders that a squadron should be sent out into the Atlantic to intercept Villeneuve. This was done with such splendid speed that on July 23 fifteen vessels under Sir Robert Calder met the approaching enemy just as he arrived in sight of Europe, off the Spanish cape Finisterre. After an indecisive action, in which they lost two ships, the allies ran into Ferrol instead of sailing for Brest: Calder's appearance had checkmated them.

Calder's action off Cape Finisterre.

Nelson, too, was now back in European waters; on July 20, three days before Calder's action, he reached Gibraltar. All the British squadrons being now within touch of each other, Bonaparte's scheme had practically failed. But Villeneuve made its failure more disastrous than it need have been. Having procured reinforcements at Ferrol, he then moved to Cadiz to pick up the remainder of the Spanish fleet. After joining them, he had thirty-three ships of the line; but outside Cadiz lay Nelson with his own and Calder's squadrons, twenty-seven vessels in all. Villeneuve refused to put out, rightly thinking that his superiority in numbers did not compensate for the inferior quality of his crews. But nevertheless he had

Return of Nelson—Villeneuve retires to Cadiz.

to fight. His master the emperor had heard with disgust and wild anger that the fleet which was to give him the command of the Channel had appeared at Ferrol instead of at Brest, and had allowed itself to be turned from its goal by Calder's less numerous squadron. In his vexation Napoleon sent his admiral a letter taunting him with cowardice and bad seamanship, and informing him that a successor had been sent to supersede him.

To vindicate his courage, the unfortunate Villeneuve determined to offer battle to Nelson before he was displaced from command. The fleets met off Cape Trafalgar, on October 21, 1805, with the result that might have been expected. Nelson's vessels in two columns burst into the midst of the ill-formed Franco-Spanish line, and silenced or captured ship after ship by their splendid gunnery. The allied rear and centre were annihilated before their van could tack and come into action. Nineteen of Villeneuve's ships, including his own, were taken, and one blew up; only a remnant escaped into Cadiz. But Nelson was mortally wounded by a musket-ball in the thick of the fight. He lived long enough to hear that the victory was complete, but expired ere night. His work was done, for Napoleon never again dared to send a large fleet to sea or to risk a general engagement. Had Nelson's indomitable soul sustained his frail body for a few more years, there would have been little but weary blockading work for him to do. He had effectually put an end to all Napoleon's invasion schemes, by destroying more than half the French and Spanish ships which were to have swept the Channel and laid open the shores of Kent.

The Battle of Trafalgar.

The turning-point of the great naval campaign of 1805 had been Calder's indecisive action off Cape Finisterre. The moment it had been fought and Villeneuve had turned southward, Napoleon had mentally given up his idea of crossing the Dover Straits, and turned his attention to Continental

affairs. It was high time, for Pitt had been stirring up against him a formidable coalition. The old monarchies of Europe had been greatly displeased by Napoleon's annexations in Italy and elsewhere. Francis II. of Austria bitterly resented his constant intrigues with the minor German states, and as emperor had a special grievance against him. For in 1804 Bonaparte had violated the territory of the empire in the most outrageous way. He had sent a regiment of horse across the Rhine and kidnapped at night a Bourbon prince, the Duke of Enghien, whom he then tried and shot on a false accusation of being concerned in an assassination plot. Such a violation of international law and common morality had provoked open protest from Austria and Russia. These two powers were already negotiating for an alliance against France, when Pitt stepped in to offer them enormous subsidies and the active aid of the English fleet. It was hoped that Prussia too would join the coalition; but the ministers of Frederick William III. pursued a mean and double-faced policy, haggling with France and Austria at once, and offering themselves to the highest bidder. They finally helped neither side, but pounced on the electorate of Hanover, with Napoleon's consent, and preserved an ambiguous neutrality.

Pitt forms a new coalition against France.

The French autocrat was not unaware of the Austro-Russian alliance. When he heard of Villeneuve's failure, he dropped for ever his cherished invasion scheme, and, suddenly turning his back on the sea, declared war on his Continental enemies before they were ready for him. The troops from the camp of Boulogne were hurried across France by forced marches, and hurled into Germany, long before the Russians were anywhere near the field of operations. The Austrians alone had to bear the first brunt of the war; their imbecile commander, Mack, allowed them to be surprised before they were concentrated, and was himself captured at Ulm with nearly 40,000 men before the

Ulm and Austerlitz—Austria sues for peace.

war was many days old (October 20). This disaster left the Austrians so weak that they could not even save Vienna from the invader; the wrecks of their army had to fall back and join the Russians, who were only now coming on the scene. A month later (December 2, 1805) the French and the allies met in a decisive battle at Austerlitz, a Moravian village eighty miles north of Vienna. Here the unskilful generalship of the allies exposed them to a bloody defeat, which cost them more than 30,000 men. The Austrians now cried aloud for peace, which Napoleon only granted on very hard terms. He took away Venice and the other Austrian lands south of the Alps, and united them to Lombardy, so forming a "Kingdom of Italy," of which he wore the crown. The Tyrol was given to Bavaria, whose ruler had sided with Napoleon.

Moreover, Francis II. was forced to give up the time-honoured title of "Holy Roman Emperor" which his ancestors had held since 1438, and with it his place as nominal suzerain of the other German states. Most of the minor princes between the Rhine and the Elbe were forced to replace their nominal dependence on the Habsburg emperor by a very real servitude to Bonaparte. He formed them into the "Confederation of the Rhine" under his own presidency, and compelled them to place their armies and treasures at his disposal (July to December, 1806).

End of the "Holy Roman Empire"—The Confederation of the Rhine.

The news of the defeat of Austerlitz is often said to have been the death-blow of Pitt. This statement is only true in a general way, and the theatrical last words which are put into his mouth, "Roll up the map of Europe; we shall not want it again for twenty years," are not authentic. But there is no doubt that he was bitterly disappointed at the failure of the great coalition which he had raised against Napoleon. His death was really due to the long strain of anxiety during the projected invasion of England, and to his carelessness about his health, of which he

Death of Pitt.

was as reckless as he was about his private fortune. He died, a broken man, though aged no more than forty-six, on January 23, 1806. But his policy lived after him, and his successors were to carry it out to a successful end, though only after eight more years of desperate war.

CHAPTER III.

THE STRUGGLE WITH BONAPARTE: (2) THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM—THE PENINSULAR WAR—WATERLOO.

1806–1815.

WITH the battles of Trafalgar and Austerlitz, followed by the death of Pitt, the first stage in the great struggle with the French emperor came to an end. There was no further talk of the invasion of England, nor did Bonaparte attempt any more to dispute the dominion of the seas. But his mind was none the less set on the humiliation of England, though his methods of assailing her became more indirect. He had now in his eye the establishment of a domination over the whole of Europe. The first step towards the systematic reduction of his neighbours to subjection was the establishment of the "Confederation of the Rhine," whose members were from the first his slaves. The second was the planting out of his relatives as rulers of the smaller states of Europe. In 1806 his brother Joseph was made King of Naples, from which the imbecile Bourbon house were driven out, because they had dared to show sympathy with Austria during the war of 1805. A few months later came the crowning of his brother Lewis as King of Holland—the Batavian republic being ruthlessly swept away, without any option being given to the Dutch of declaring their wishes as to the government of their land. Bonaparte began to talk of himself as the "successor of Charlemagne," an ominous saying for

Napoleon's second line of policy.

Germans and Spaniards, since the great Frankish emperor's dominions had extended as far as the Elbe and the Ebro.

Meanwhile Pitt had found no competent successor in England. No statesman commanded sufficient authority with the people or the Parliament to take his place. The result that followed was a coalition ministry. The Whig party, excluded from office for more than twenty years, were invited to take their share in the governance of the realm. Charles James Fox and Sheridan took office, allied to Lord Grenville, long a faithful supporter of Pitt, and to many other Tories, among whom Addington was numbered.

A coalition ministry formed in England.

Even the way in which Bonaparte had broken the peace of Amiens had not wholly cured Fox of his idea that peace with France was possible. The invasion scheme being foiled, he thought that the emperor might be willing to come to terms. Accordingly, the Grenville-Fox cabinet entered into negotiations with the enemy in 1806. Napoleon at first used smooth words, but the conditions on which he offered peace were humiliating, considering that England had hitherto not only held her own, but had swept the French fleet from the seas and occupied a great number of French colonies. To his great regret, Fox was compelled to acknowledge that an honourable and reasonable peace was not procurable. Soon after he died (September, 1806), surviving his great rival Pitt by less than a year. The coalition ministry survived him a few months, but resigned in March, 1807. The two elements in it were at variance, and the Whigs made the refusal of George III. to allow them to introduce Catholic Emancipation their excuse for leaving office. A cabinet of pure Tories succeeded them, in which the leading spirit was Spencer Perceval, though the premiership was nominally held by the aged Duke of Portland.

Futile negotiations with Napoleon.

Death of Fox—Break-up of the coalition—The Tories return to office.

Not many months after the Austrians had yielded to their conqueror, and the Russians had retired sullenly towards the east, the third great Continental power was destined to feel the weight of Napoleon's sword. The weak and selfish ministers of Prussia had stood out from the coalition of 1805, and had sold themselves to Napoleon for the price of the annexation of Hanover—the patrimony of the old King of England. But no sooner was Austerlitz won and the allies crushed, than Napoleon began a series of systematic slights and insults to Prussia. He considered that, by making her bargain with him, she had sold herself to be as much his vassal as were Holland or Bavaria. The numerous insults which he inflicted on his ally Frederick William III. culminated in an extraordinary piece of bad faith. He had covenanted in 1805 that Prussia should keep Hanover: but, negotiating with England in 1806, he calmly proposed to the English ministers to take back that electorate and restore it to George III. as one of the terms of peace. This came to the ears of the Prussian court, and led to such an explosion of wrath that with great haste and hurry Frederick William declared war on France, without giving himself time to prepare his army or to purvey himself allies. He hastily tried to conciliate England, whose king he had robbed of Hanover, and to patch up an alliance with Alexander of Russia, who was still eager to fight, to reverse the verdict of Austerlitz. Both England and Russia came to terms with the Prussians, but not in time to give her practical assistance during the opening days of the war.

Prussia goaded into declaring war on France.

Advancing beyond the Elbe in order to overrun the lands of the princes of the "Confederacy of the Rhine," the Prussians found themselves suddenly assailed on the flank by the French army, which Bonaparte had secretly concentrated under cover of the Thuringian Forest. The Prussian troops had hitherto enjoyed a very high reputation, won in the splendid victories of Frederick the

Battles of Jena and Auerstadt.

Great. But the accurate drill and stern discipline which they inherited from him, and their undoubted courage in the field, did not save them from a fearful disaster. Guided by aged and incompetent generals, who had not studied Bonaparte's methods of attack, they were caught before they could concentrate, and defeated piecemeal at the battles of Jena and Auerstadt (October 14, 1806). When Napoleon had once got them on the run, he pursued them so fiercely that division after division was outmarched, surrounded, and compelled to lay down its arms. The king escaped with only 12,000 men, the wreck of a host of 150,000 veterans, to join his Russian ally. Of all the disasters which befel the powers of the Continent when they measured themselves on the field of battle against Bonaparte, this was the most sudden and humiliating. Only a few weeks after the declaration of war the Prussian monarchy was ruined.

After entering Berlin in triumph, the victor pressed on to the east to meet the Russians. His campaign against them was far more difficult and sharply contested. In the first pitched battle, fought at Eylau in a blinding February snowstorm, amid frozen lakes and pine woods, the emperor, though not beaten, failed to drive the enemy from the field. He retired for a space into winter quarters; but when the spring of 1807 came round he pushed forward again, and, after much sharp fighting, crushed the Russians at Friedland (June 14). The czar then asked for peace; meeting him on a raft on the river Niemen, the boundary of Russia and Prussia, Napoleon concluded with him the Treaty of Tilsit (July 7, 1807). The terms of this peace were far harder on Prussia, who had been friendly with France since 1795, than on Russia, who had thrice during the last ten years struck hard at her. Frederick William was stripped of half his dominions, partly to help in making a new kingdom called "Westphalia" for Napoleon's brother Jerome, partly to erect in Poland a vassal

Eylau and Friedland—The treaty of Tilsit—Prussia dismembered.

state called the "Grand Duchy of Warsaw," destined to act as a French outpost to the east. A crushing fine was laid on the dismembered monarchy, and French garrisons were permanently established in its chief strongholds. Russia, on the other hand, was left intact, and only compelled to sign an agreement to follow Napoleon's policy of attacking England by striking at her trade.

Since Villeneuve's incapacity and Nelson's vigilance had ruined Bonaparte's invasion scheme, another set of designs against Britain had been maturing in the emperor's mind, for her ruin was still the final end of all his policy, and the wars with Continental powers were no more than episodes in the struggle. There was a way in which victories like Austerlitz and Friedland could be turned to account. If all English trade with the states of the Continent could be prohibited, England —Napoleon thought—must grow poor and perish. The enforcement of this policy begins with the "Berlin Decrees," issued soon after Jena, in the autumn of 1806, and was continued by the Milan Decrees of 1807. These ordinances were among the most ingenious devices of the emperor's fertile brain; but, unlike most of the others, were decidedly impracticable from the first. Every one was familiar with the idea of a naval blockade, wherein the power supreme at sea places ships before the harbours of its foe and prohibits the ingress or egress of his merchandise. But Bonaparte's idea was the reverse of this: he would institute a land blockade—soldiers and custom-house officers should be planted all round the coasts of France and France's vassals and allies, to prevent English vessels from approaching the shore, and so to exclude her manufactures and colonial goods from the whole Continent. The Berlin Decrees declared the British Isles to be in a state of blockade—a curious inversion of the actual fact. No subject of France or of France's vassal states was to purchase or possess any British merchandise. No vessel of a neutral

The Berlin and Milan Decrees.

power—for example, the United States of America—which had touched at a British port or a port of the British colonies, was to be admitted into a Continental haven. All goods of British manufacture were to be seized, whenever and in whosesoever hands they were found, and confiscated to the crown. These rules were at once imposed on Holland, Italy, Spain, and Germany, and after Tilsit Russia also was cajoled into accepting them. In all Europe, only Turkey, Portugal, Sweden, and the small island kingdoms of Sicily and Sardinia were not included in their effect.

The new Tory government in England promptly took up the challenge. By the "Orders in Council" of 1807 the whole of the coasts of France and France's allies were declared to be in a state of strict blockade, and all vessels—even those under neutral flags—which left or entered them were declared good prizes of war, *unless* they could prove that since leaving home they had touched at a British port. This was a sort of ironical parody of Bonaparte's Berlin Decrees: obviously if both parties carried out their threats, there could be no foreign trade at all in continental Europe.

The "Orders in Council" of 1807.

The main difference between the two sets of Decrees was that from the first England had the power to put her edict in force, while Bonaparte's was a dead letter not worth the paper on which it was written. He could not force his subjects and allies to give up the countless articles of luxury and necessity which they had been accustomed to draw from Britain or Britain's colonies. From the first the proscribed goods contrived to penetrate into Europe despite his orders. They came up the Danube from Turkey, they crept into Spain from Portugal. Smuggling became scientific, and was practised on a gigantic scale. From Malta, Sicily, Gibraltar, and the Channel Islands vessels laden with contraband goods sailed every night to throw ashore their wares in Italy and France. Napoleon never succeeded in

Effects of the "Continental System."

excluding our goods, but he succeeded in making the price of them to his unfortunate subjects or allies three or four times the natural amount, for the smuggler's risk of capture had to be highly remunerated. Every time that a German or Spaniard had to pay two shillings a pound for his sugar, or to substitute chicory for his accustomed coffee, he was reminded that the Continental System was the cause of his privations, and asked himself what benefit his country was drawing from the French alliance to compensate him for his personal inconvenience.

As the years passed by, and Napoleon's demands grew more exorbitant, the nations chafed more and more against his tyranny, till there followed the great final explosion of wrath in 1813. But in 1807 this was as yet far off, and the full weight of Bonaparte's exactions was unrealized. Meanwhile the suffering brought on England was comparatively insignificant: we had still the undisturbed control of the Indian, Chinese, African, and North American trade to draw on, even though our commerce with Europe was restricted. Our ports and warehouses were full, and though we could not readily use some of our old markets, yet the stagnation of which Napoleon had dreamed was far from setting in. Such were the effects of the long-pondered scheme which the emperor had devised, a scheme which he carried out with a ruthless disregard for the interests of his subjects and allies, and which was to draw him first into the costly Spanish war of 1808, and then into the disastrous Russian war of 1812.

Seizure of the Danish fleet —Expeditions to Buenos Ayres and Egypt.

One of the secret articles of the Treaty of Tilsit had formulated a plan of the emperor's for combining the Russian and Danish fleets, in order to dispute the command of the Baltic with England—a device which Czar Paul had tried once before in 1801. This was easily foiled by the second English attack on Copenhagen (October, 1807). It was as completely successful as Nelson's feat had been in the earlier war, and the whole Danish fleet was carried off to

England. This naval success, however, hardly compensated for the failure of two other expeditions, from which much had been expected. One was an attempt to seize the Spanish colony of Buenos Ayres in South America, which ended in the capitulation of the incompetent General Whitelock with the whole of his 8000 men—a force too small for the errand on which it was sent. The other was a mismanaged expedition to Egypt, which led to nothing, and was finally abandoned with some discredit. The English army was indeed at this moment at the lowest point of its reputation. Unlike the navy, it had failed in most of the tasks on which it had been sent: only in India had it been uniformly successful. It was not till our men got leaders worthy of their merits in Wellesley and Moore that they were able to show their real value, and prove that they were more than equal to the boasted veterans of Napoleon. Their chance was now close at hand.

Napoleon seizes Portugal.

In 1808 Bonaparte conceived the iniquitous idea of seizing the crown of Spain, and substituting for its wretched King Charles IV. a monarch of his own choosing. Charles was an obedient ally, but he was so thoroughly incompetent that his assistance did not count for much: the emperor imagined that a nominee of his own would prove a more profitable helper. But the way in which he set about the conquest of Spain was characteristically treacherous and tortuous. He drafted a large army into the Peninsula under the excuse that he was about to attack Portugal, almost the last state in Europe which had not yet accepted the Continental System. Declaring that "the House of Braganza had ceased to reign," he poured his forces into Portugal, whose Prince-regent fled over seas to Brazil without attempting to offer resistance. But while one French army under General Junot had marched on Lisbon, large detachments followed behind, and occupied, under the guise of friends, the Spanish capital Madrid, and the fortresses of Barcelona, Pampeluna, and San Sebastian.

The Spaniards suspected no harm till Napoleon showed his hand by a disgraceful piece of kidnapping. King Charles IV. and his son, Prince Ferdinand, a worthless and useless pair, had been engaged in a bitter quarrel with each other. Bonaparte summoned them both to visit him at Bayonne, just across the French frontier, in order that he might arbitrate between them and heal their quarrel. They were foolish enough to obey this insolent mandate: when they arrived, however, he put them both in confinement, bullied them into signing an abdication, and sent them prisoners into France. He then took the astounding step of appointing his own brother Joseph Bonaparte as the successor of Charles IV., and the numerous French troops scattered through Spain everywhere proclaimed the usurper. The populace of Madrid rose, but was put down with ruthless severity, and Joseph made his appearance in the capital at the head of a strong guard.

Joseph Bonaparte proclaimed King of Spain.

Bonaparte had believed that centuries of misgovernment and disorganization had so broken the spirit of the Spanish nation that his impudent and treacherous scheme could be carried to a successful end. He was soon undeceived: the Spaniards, in spite of the decay of their ancient power and wealth, and the incompetence of their rulers, still possessed a healthy sense of national pride: they were, moreover, the most obstinate, fanatical, and revengeful race in Europe. Though deprived of their princes, and confronted with French garrisons treacherously installed in their fortresses, they sprang to arms in every province. In most quarters their raw levies were easily beaten by the French veterans, but a series of fortunate chances enabled the insurgents of the South to surround and capture at Baylen an army under General Dupont, which had forced its way into Andalusia (July 20, 1808). This was the first serious check which the French arms had sustained since Napoleon had been proclaimed emperor, and it had important results. Joseph

Resistance of the Spaniards — Capitulation of Baylen.

Bonaparte and his troops had to abandon Madrid, to retire beyond the Ebro, and to ask aid from France.

Typo. Etching Co. Sc.

Meanwhile a second disaster followed hard on the heels of the battle of Baylen. The English government had sent a small army to Portugal, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, an officer well known for his gallant services in India. This force routed at Vimiera (August 21, 1808) the French troops under Junot, which had occupied Lisbon. The defeat was so crushing that the enemy might have been pursued and driven into the sea without much further trouble. But Wellesley was superseded by a senior officer, Sir Hew Dalrymple, who arrived from England on the night of the battle. This cautious general admitted the French to terms, and by his Convention of Cintra (August 30, 1808), Junot's troops were allowed to quit Portugal with bag and baggage, and to return to France by sea.

The English in Spain—Battle of Vimiera—The Convention of Cintra.

Two such checks to the French arms called Bonaparte himself into the field. He hurried over the Pyrenees more than 200,000 of the veterans who had conquered at Austerlitz and Jena, and hurled himself upon the Spaniards. The latter were as inferior in numbers as in discipline and military spirit: their ill-organized bands were scattered in all directions, and Napoleon entered Madrid in triumph, and replaced his brother on the throne (December 4, 1808). He hoped to complete the conquest of the Peninsula by crushing the English army from Portugal, which was now advancing towards him under Sir John Moore—Dalrymple and Wellesley had been recalled to answer before a court-martial for the Convention of Cintra. The emperor moved in his troops from all sides to surround the 25,000 English, but Moore executed an admirably timed retreat, and drew the bulk of the French army after him into the inhospitable mountains of Galicia.

Napoleon in Spain—Sir John Moore's campaign.

While vainly pursuing the English, Bonaparte suddenly received news which changed all his plans: a new war was imminent in his rear. Austria had now had three years in which to recover from the humiliation of Austerlitz, and had completely reorganized her army. She was chafing bitterly against Napoleon's dictatorial ways and the restraints of the "Continental System." Seeing the French busy in the Spanish war, she gladly listened to the persuasions of the Perceval cabinet, who offered English aid for a fresh attack on the old enemy. It was the news of this danger in the rear which forced Bonaparte to quit Spain, taking with him his imperial guards, but leaving the rest of his troops behind him. Marshal Soult, to whom the pursuit of Moore was handed over, followed the English to the sea: at Corunna the retreating army, suddenly turned to bay, inflicted a sharp defeat on Soult, and embarked in safety for England (January 16, 1809). Moore fell in the moment of victory, after having taught his followers that the French could be outmanœuvred,

Napoleon leaves Spain—Battle of Corunna.

outmarched, and beaten in the open field. His troops had suffered much from the mountains and the bitter weather, but little from the overwhelming force of pursuers.

Battles of Essling and Wagram—Marriage of Napoleon.

The Austrian war of 1809 was the most formidable struggle in which Bonaparte had yet engaged. The enemy fought better, and were far better managed than in 1800 or 1805: they had also the advantage of the fact that 200,000 of the best troops of France were locked up in the Peninsula. The Archduke Charles, Austria's great general, long held Napoleon in check, and even forced him to recross the Danube after the battle of Essling. It was not until after many months of bitter fighting that the invaders at last gained a decisive battle at Wagram (July 6, 1809). The fortune of war might perhaps have been turned against the French by the help of England; but the Perceval cabinet most unwisely wasted a fine army by sending it into the swamps of Holland to besiege Flushing, and make a vain demonstration on Antwerp. Forty thousand men, who might have overrun North Germany, or recovered Madrid, accomplished nothing more than the capture of Flushing, and suffered so severely from marsh-fever that they had at last to be withdrawn without having aided the Austrians in the least. Francis II., meanwhile, was forced after Wagram to sign the peace of Schönbrunn, by which he gave up to Napoleon his whole sea-coast in Dalmatia and Illyria, part of Poland, and—bitterest of humiliations—the hand of his daughter Maria Louisa (October 14, 1809). To make this marriage possible, the French emperor callously divorced Josephine Beauharnais, the amiable if frivolous spouse who had shared his fortunes for fourteen years. If he hoped to bind Austria firmly to him by the match, Bonaparte was woefully deceived.

While the Austrian war was being fought out, the French made little progress in Spain. They were now being opposed not only by the Spanish levies, but by a new English army

headed by Wellesley, who had been sent back to the Peninsula when it was recognized that he had been in no wise responsible for the Convention of Cintra. The year 1809 was very glorious to the English arms: Wellesley first drove Marshal Soult out of Portugal, surprising him at Oporto, and forcing him to flee northward with the loss of all his guns and baggage. Then marching into Spain, he joined a Spanish army under General Cuesta, and defeated at Talavera (July 28, 1809) the French army which covered Madrid. He might even have won back the capital but for the mulish obstinacy of his colleague, and the gross misconduct of the Spanish troops, who could not be trusted except behind entrenchments. Talavera was won entirely by the 23,000 English, their allies refusing to advance even when the battle was won. After this heart-breaking experience Wellesley resolved never to co-operate with a Spanish army again, and to trust entirely to his own troops.

The French driven from Portugal — Battle of Talavera.

Meanwhile the news of Talavera caused the French troops from all parts of the Peninsula to concentrate against the little English army, which had to beat a cautious retreat to the Portuguese frontier. No result had been gained from the incursion into Spain, save that the troops had learnt to look with confidence on their leader, who received as his reward for his two victories the title of Wellington, under which he was to be so well known.

After the peace of Schönbrunn had been signed, Bonaparte commenced to pour reinforcements into Spain, and even spoke of going there himself "to drive the British leopard into the sea." Ultimately, however, he sent instead his ablest lieutenant, Marshal Masséna, with 100,000 fresh troops. The arrival of these new legions gave fresh vigour to the invaders: they overran most of Southern and Eastern Spain, and only failed when they were confronted in Portugal by the indomitable army of Wellington.

The "Lines of Torres Vedras" — Masséna's retreat.

The year 1810 was for the English commander the most trying period of the whole war. Masséna marched against him in overpowering strength, and all that was in his power was to play a slow and obstinate game of retreat, turning back on occasion, as at the very skilfully fought battle of Busaco (September 27), to check the heads of the French columns. In this way he led the enemy on to the gates of Lisbon, in front of which he had erected a very elaborate system of fortifications, the celebrated "Lines of Torres Vedras," extending in a triple range all across the peninsula on which the Portuguese capital stands. Masséna knew nothing of the lines till his army was brought up by running into the first of them (October, 1810). He found them so strong that he dared not risk an attack on them, and halted irresolute in their front. Wellington had expected this, and had prepared for the contingency by sweeping the whole countryside bare of provisions, and causing the peasantry to retire into Lisbon. Masséna's host starved in front of the lines for five months, vainly hoping for aid from Spain. But Wellington had cut their line of communication with Madrid by throwing numerous bands of Portuguese militia across the mountain roads, and no food and very few fresh troops came to help the invaders. When his army was almost perishing from famine, Masséna was constrained to take it back to Spain, suffering so dreadfully by the way that he only brought back two-thirds of the men whom he had led into Portugal (March, 1811).

"Guerilla" warfare in Spain.

The retreat of the French from before the lines of Torres Vedras was the turning-point of the Peninsular War, and in some degree the turning-point of Napoleon's whole career, for Masséna's march to the gates of Lisbon marked the last and furthest point of his advance towards the conquest of Western Europe. After this the French were always to lose ground. The emperor kept an enormous army in the Peninsula, but he could never wholly master it. No single region of Spain would remain quiet

unless it was heavily garrisoned; the moment that troops were withdrawn it blazed up again into insurrection. The Spanish levies were very bad troops in the open field, and were beaten with the utmost regularity, even if they had two men to one against the French. But they never lost heart, in spite of their defeats; as was remarked at the time, "A Spanish army was easy to beat, but very hard to destroy." It dispersed after a lost battle, but the survivors came together again in a few days, as self-confident and obstinate as ever. The regular troops gave the French far less trouble than the "Guerillas"—half armed peasantry, half robbers, who lurked in the mountains, refrained from attacking large bodies of men, but were always pouncing down to capture convoys, cut off small isolated detachments, and harass the flanks and rear of troops on the march. They so pervaded the country that the transmission of news from one French army to another was a matter of serious difficulty; a message was never certain to get safely to its destination unless its bearer was protected by a guard of five hundred men. The French habitually shot every guerillero whom they caught, and in return the insurgents murdered every straggler that fell into their hands. The drain on the strength of the army of occupation caused by this lingering and bloody war of retaliation was appalling. It was not for nothing that Bonaparte called the Peninsular War "the running sore" that sapped his strength.

Meanwhile the emperor was apparently at the very zenith of his power during the years 1809–11. His annexations grew more reckless and iniquitous than ever. He appropriated Holland, expelling his own brother Louis Bonaparte, because he showed some regard for Dutch as opposed to French interests, and had ventured to plead against the "Continental System." Soon after, he annexed the whole German coast line on the North Sea, and even the south-west corner of the Baltic shore. This again was done in the interest of the Continental System; the Hanseatic towns

Extent of the "French Empire."

had not shown sufficient enthusiasm in carrying it out, so he absorbed them and cut short several neighbouring principalities. By this last expansion the "French Empire" stretched from Lubeck to Rome, for the pope had already been evicted from the "Eternal City" in 1809. In addition, Bonaparte personally ruled the kingdom of Italy, and the Illyrian provinces on the Adriatic. Spain, the Rhine Confederation, Switzerland, the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and Naples were his vassals. Prussia was occupied by his garrisons since 1806. Austria, Russia, Denmark, and Sweden were his more or less willing allies. The English had no friends save in the weak kingdoms of Sicily, Sardinia, and Portugal, and among the still weaker Spanish insurgents.

England's policy.

Meanwhile, even in this dark time, England continued to carry out without following the policy that Pitt had left behind him. The conduct of affairs had passed into the hands of second-rate statesmen like Perceval and Lord Liverpool, but no hesitation was shown, though the National Debt continued to rise with appalling rapidity, and though Napoleon seemed more invincible than ever. The war in Spain was giving England a glimpse of success on land, though her armies had still to act upon the defensive, and to yield ground when the enemy came on in overwhelming numbers. Nation and ministers alike considered themselves irrevocably pledged to the war, and comforted themselves with the thought that Napoleon's empire, built upon force and fraud, and maintaining itself by a cruel oppression of the vanquished, must ultimately fall before the simultaneous uprising of all the peoples of Europe.

Battles of Fuentes d'Onoro and Albuera.

The year 1811 had seen the French in Spain checked in their endeavours to resume the invasion of Portugal. Masséna's last approach towards its frontier was stopped dead at the battle of Fuentes D'Oñoro (May 5). Eleven days later, a bloody fight at Albuera turned back Marshal Soult, who had

Typo. Etching Co. Sc.

endeavoured to drive off a part of the English army that lay further to the south, blockading the fortress of Badajoz (May 16). The French could advance no further, while Wellington, on the other hand, was not yet strong enough to be able to contemplate the invasion of Spain. It was expected in the Peninsula that Napoleon himself would soon appear, to finish the task which his lieutenants had proved unable to carry out. But though he recalled Masséna, he neither came on the scene himself, nor sent any appreciable reinforcements to Spain. He already saw a new war impending over him, and had turned all his attention to it.

Russia had not been completely crushed in 1807: her armies had been beaten, but only after a gallant struggle, and it was from a sincere desire for peace, and not from mere necessity, that the Czar Alexander had signed the Peace of Tilsit, and accepted the Continental System. Five years' experience of that intolerable burden had convinced him that the friendship of Napoleon was dearly bought by accepting it. His realm was losing more by the complete suspension of its foreign trade than it could lose by open war with France. The great landed proprietors, whose timber, hemp, and wheat had once found a ready market in England, and now could not be sold at all, were furious that they should be ruined to please Bonaparte. Urged on by threats of a conspiracy such as had overthrown his father Paul in 1801, Alexander yielded to the pressure of his nobles, and broke with France.

Russia and the Continental System.

This led to Napoleon's great invasion of Russia in 1812—a grandiose scheme. doomed from the first to failure, because its framer had not taken into consideration the difficulties involved in moving and feeding a host of 600,000 men in a thinly-populated land, destitute of roads and great towns. The Russians retired before the invaders, removing all stores of food, and causing the peasantry to migrate along with the army. Half the horses of Bonaparte's

Napoleon's Russian campaign.

army had perished, and a third of his men had been starved or had deserted before the enemy indulged him with a serious battle. He defeated them at Borodino (September 7) and entered Moscow, but only to find it deserted and empty. A great fire destroyed the city soon after his arrival, and he was driven to order his starving army to retreat on Lithuania to take winter quarters. But the first frosts of November slew off the exhausted soldiery like flies; the Russians harassed the melting host on his way, till it broke up in utter disorganization, and Bonaparte finally fled to Paris to organize new forces, leaving his lieutenants the task of bringing back the 30,000 miserable survivors of the "Grand Army," who had struggled out from the Russian snows.

In Spain, too, 1812 was a fatal year for the French arms. Wellington, having received more troops from England, and having thoroughly re-organized the Portuguese army, resolved to make a bold push into Spain. Early in the year he took by storm the two great frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo (January, 19) and Badajoz (April 6), striking so swiftly that the armies of succour could not come up in time to save them. This rapid success was bought at the cost of many lives, for the assaults had to be delivered before the fire of the defenders had been subdued; but time was all-important, and the result justified the lavish expense of blood. Having secured the frontier of Portugal, Wellington pressed forward into Spain, and won the first great victory in which he assumed the offensive, at Salamanca (July 22, 1812). By a sudden master-stroke he crushed in the flank of Marshal Marmont, and "routed 40,000 men in forty minutes." This victory led to the recovery of Madrid and the flight of Joseph Bonaparte from his capital. But, evacuating the other provinces of Spain, the French armies massed themselves to check Wellington's further advance, and before their superior numbers the English had to fall back

Storming of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz.

Battle of Salamanca.

on the Portuguese frontier. All southern Spain, however, had been cleared of the invaders, who now only held the northern half of the Peninsula.

The next year (1813) saw the complete ruin of Napoleon. When the Russians advanced into Germany, the whole nation rose in arms to aid them. Prussia alone, though she had been mutilated and robbed and oppressed with French garrisons, put 200,000 men into the field. The Emperor once more appeared at the head of a vast army, bringing up his last reserves, huge drafts from the army of Spain, and hundreds of thousands of conscripts. But his troops were no longer the veterans of Austerlitz, and his enemies fought with a fury of which he had never before had experience. He gained a few successes in the opening weeks of the struggle, but when his own father-in-law, the Austrian Emperor, plunged into the struggle, the odds became too heavy, and at the battle of Leipzig (October 16–18, 1813) he was overwhelmed by numbers, and suffered a crushing defeat, in which more than half his army was slain or captured. The enemy pursued him energetically, gave him no time to rally, and entered France at his heels. They had at last learnt to turn his own methods of war against him, and knew that a beaten foe must not be allowed time to rally. Crossing the Rhine at midwinter, the allies pushed deep into France. Bonaparte, with the wrecks of his army, made a desperate resistance, but had not a shadow of a chance of success. In spite of his skilful manœuvring, and of the splendid endurance of his troops, he was forced nearer and nearer to Paris. At last, while he was engaged with a mere fraction of the allied host, the bulk of it marched past his flank and stormed the lines in front of the French capital (April 4, 1814). On the news of the fall of Paris, Napoleon's own marshals refused to persist in the hopeless struggle, and compelled their master to lay down his arms and abdicate. In the rage of the moment the emperor swallowed poison, but his

Battle of Leipzig—Fall of Napoleon.

constitution was too strong, and he survived to fall into the hands of the victors. They sent him to honourable exile in the Tuscan island of Elba, whose sovereignty was bestowed upon him.

While the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians had entered France from the north-east, another army of invasion had been pouring into the southern departments. Wellington's campaign of 1813 was the most glorious and successful of all his achievements. In early spring he massed his troops on the north-western frontier of Portugal, and marched rapidly up the valley of the Douro. The French armies, scattered in distant cantonments, could not unite in numbers sufficient to give him battle till he had pushed them as far as Vittoria, at the very foot of the Pyrenees. When they did turn to fight, he beat them, intercepted their line of retreat, captured all their guns and baggage—the proceeds of the six years' plunder of Spain—and drove them headlong into France (June 21, 1813). After having defeated a month later a last endeavour of Marshal Soult to force his way back into the Peninsula (July 27–30, 1813) at the battles of the Pyrenees, Wellington captured the great frontier fortresses of San Sebastian and Pampeluna. He then crossed into France, and spent the winter and the early spring of 1814 in forcing Soult back over the rivers and hills of Bearn and Gascony. Just before Napoleon's fall, one division of his army captured Bordeaux, while he himself with the main body evicted Soult from Toulouse, after the last and one of the bloodiest fights of the Peninsular War (April 14). When the news of peace came, he was in full military occupation of eight French departments, and the two largest towns of Southern France.

Battle of Vittoria—Wellington enters France.

After the fall of Paris, and the abdication of Napoleon, the allied powers placed on the throne the representative of the long-exiled house of Bourbon, Louis XVIII.—the best choice perhaps that they could make, yet in itself an unsatisfactory

experiment. Louis, though not destitute of a certain shrewdness, was elderly, and a confirmed valetudinarian; he left the conduct of affairs to ministers whose unwise actions made the French complain that "the Bourbons had learned nothing and forgotten nothing" —they behaved, in short, as if the whole Revolution and its consequences had passed over their heads unnoticed. Meanwhile the allies met in congress at Vienna to redistribute Europe and to make an end of the relics of the Napoleonic *régime*. There were many conflicting interests, for the desires of Prussia, Russia, and Austria crossed each other on a dozen points, and a long period of friction was inevitable before a settlement could be reached. But the powers commenced to disarm, and thought nothing less probable than a new French war.

Restoration of Louis XVIII.

England alone was unable to disband her troops or dismantle her navy. She was still engaged in a struggle which had broken out in 1812. One of the consequences of the Continental System and the "Orders in Council" had been to inflict grave hardships on the trade of the United States, the one great neutral power in the world. France and Great Britain had done them equal damage, but it was natural that the Americans should resent more the action of the power which lay nearer to them and domineered over the seas. They were specially vexed at the harsh exercise of the right of search, and the frequent impressment of British seamen found serving on American ships, whose change of nationality our Government refused to recognize. To these sources of irritation was added a notion that while England was locked in her death-grapple with Bonaparte, it would be easy to overrun and annex Canada. Hence it came that the United States declared war in the summer of 1812. This "stab in the back," as the English called it, had no effect whatever on the general course of the European war. The small garrison of Canada, gallantly aided by the local militia,

The American war.

beat off every attempt to invade the great colony, and even compelled two small American armies to surrender. It did not prove to be necessary to distract troops from Europe for their aid. On the other hand, the English navy had an unpleasant surprise when, on three separate occasions, the large and admirably-handled American frigates took or sunk British ships of slightly inferior force in single combat—a thing which no French, Spanish, or Dutch vessel had ever accomplished. The American ships had to be hunted down by superior numbers—a fact very galling to the pride of their opponents. A considerable amount of damage was also done to our mercantile marine by American privateers. On the other hand, a strict blockade sealed up Boston and all the other ports of the United States, whose commerce was for the moment absolutely annihilated. When Napoleon was at last disposed of, the British Government began to pour Wellington's Peninsular veterans into America. One expedition took Washington, the capital of the United States, though another sent against New Orleans was beaten back with fearful loss. But before serious pressure had been applied, a peace was signed at Ghent (December 24, 1814), which left all matters—territorial and other—just as they had been before 1812. The end of Napoleon and his Continental System had removed the cause of war, and both parties gladly brought it to an end.

Meanwhile, in March, 1815, a new and unexpected crisis had arisen in Europe. While the envoys at Vienna were engaged in parcelling out the spoils of Napoleon, they received the unwelcome news that the ex-emperor had escaped from Elba, landed in Provence, and called his old followers to arms. The Bourbons had made themselves so profoundly unpopular that no one would fight for them; whole regiments and brigades tore off their white cockades and came to join the great adventurer. In a few days he was at the head of 100,000 men. Louis XVIII. fled to Flanders, and ere he had been gone more than a few

Napoleon escapes from Elba.

hours Napoleon was again installed in the Tuileries. He trusted that his sudden success might impose on the allies, and that the dissensions which had divided the Congress of Vienna might keep them from united action. But he was woefully mistaken. Every state in Europe promptly declared war on him.

Seeing that his only chance lay in swift action, Napoleon dashed into Belgium with all the troops he could collect, some 130,000 men. He had then to face a Prussian army under Marshal Blücher, and a composite force of English Hanoverians and Dutch, which had been placed under the command of Wellington. The Austrians and Russians were still far off. The campaign of 1815 was settled in six days. Bonaparte struck at the point where Wellington's left joined Blücher's right, intending to thrust himself between them and defeat them piecemeal. His first stroke against the Prussians was successful: he drove Blücher with heavy loss from his position at Ligny (June 16), while his lieutenant Marshal Ney detained the leading divisions of the English army by an indecisive action at Quatre Bras. Then, leaving a force under Grouchy to pursue Blücher, he turned his main body against Wellington, who offered him battle on the position of Mont St. Jean, eight miles south of Brussels (June 18).

Battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras.

For seven hours Wellington held his own on his chosen ground. Though his Dutch and Belgian troops melted from the field, his steady English and German battalions stood out nobly against the pounding of the French artillery, and the furious charges of the emperor's numerous horse. The British squares were still unbroken when in the afternoon the Prussian army began to come on the field. Blücher had evaded Grouchy, and loyally marched to the aid of his colleague. Seeing himself likely to be caught between two fires, Bonaparte tried a last desperate stroke: he flung 5000 veterans of his Imperial Guard on

The Battle of Waterloo.

Wellington's right centre, hoping to break through his enemy's line ere the Prussian pressure became intolerable. But the deadly fire of the British infantry mowed down the advancing columns before they could reach the head of the slope; and when the Guard was seen reeling to the rear, the whole French host broke up in hopeless confusion and fled. They could not be rallied till they had reached the very gates of Paris, and Napoleon's doom was sealed. He had to abdicate a second time as soon as the allies appeared in front of his capital, and when he surrendered himself to the British, was despatched, not to an honourable exile in Europe, but to the lonely island of St. Helena, in the South Atlantic, where he had to eat out his heart for six years in enforced idleness, and finally died of cancer in 1821.

There was nothing to be feared from France, where the weak rule of the restored Bourbons gave their neighbours no trouble for some years. So Europe was able to settle its accounts at the Congress of Vienna without further disturbance. Great Britain was paid handsomely, but by no means lavishly, for the part that she had taken in the long struggle against the Corsican usurper. In Europe she received two strongholds to make firm her hold on the Mediterranean—the invaluable strategical point of Malta, and the Ionian Islands further to the east. She also kept the small island of Heligoland, in the North Sea, which had served as a great smuggling depôt during the Great War. In America we retained the Dutch colony of Demerara on the Southern Continent—the tropical region now known as British Guiana; in the West Indies we took from the French St. Lucia and Tobago. In the Indian Ocean the valuable Isle of Mauritius (Isle de France) was ceded by France, and Holland gave up her settlement of the Cape of Good Hope, which served as an admirable halfway house to our Indian possessions, and has been the nucleus of our South African empire. The English

The Congress of Vienna—Acquisitions of Great Britain.

Government might have asked and obtained still more; but it was thought that by securing complete domination in the commercial and manufacturing world during the war, Britain had gained so much that she need not be over-exacting. Valuable colonies by the dozen were handed back to France and Holland, with an almost extravagant liberality.

The settlement of Continental Europe concerned us comparatively little, save in one point. Holland and Belgium were formed into a new "Kingdom of the Netherlands," which was expected to prove a firm ally of Britain and a barrier against the northern extension of France. For the rest, Austria took Venice and Lombardy; Prussia received broad grants on the Rhine and in Saxony; Russia absorbed Napoleon's "Grand Duchy of Warsaw." The petty despots of Central and Southern Italy—the Pope, the King of Naples, and the rest—secured an undeserved return to their long-lost realms. France was confined within her old boundaries of the year 1792.

The re-settlement of Europe.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE FALL OF NAPOLEON TO THE GREAT REFORM BILL.

1815–1832.

THE England which emerged from the great war of 1793–1815 was a very different country from the England of the days before the French Revolution. In all her history there has never been a period of twenty-two years into which so many changes have been compressed. Not merely in matters political and economic, but in all social matters—in literature, in national feeling, in everyday thought and life—there was a profound alteration visible. For the most part the change had been for the better: the great war had exercised a most wholesome and sobering effect on the national character. Few men had watched the atrocities of the French Revolution, or lived through the long period of suspense in 1802–1805, when foreign invasion was daily expected, without taking a profound impression from those times of storm and stress. In the eighteenth century we often hear complaints of the want of patriotism and public spirit in Great Britain: no such reproach could be made to the generation which had fought through the great French war. The slackness and cynicism of the eighteenth century had been completely lived down. Political morality had been enormously improved: in the latter years of the war Whig and Tory had learnt to work together for the common national good despite of mere

England after the great war.

Improvement in political morality.

party interests. In 1806–7 a Tory majority had accepted a Whig ministry because it seemed for the moment desirable: in the following years the Whigs had refrained from captious opposition to the later Tory cabinets—though of course they had not ceased to criticise their measures. There were none of the selfish and immoral combinations of cliques and groups which used to disgrace the eighteenth century. Parliamentary corruption of the bad old sort—the buying of members by hard cash or gifts of sinecures—had practically disappeared. Statesmen suspected of a want of private integrity could no longer come to the front.

The improved standard of political morals only reflected the general rise in the social morality of the nation. There was a growing feeling against drunkenness, foul language, gambling, and open profligacy, which had been looked upon with such a tolerant eye thirty years before. Nothing shows it better than the deep unpopularity of the Regent, George, Prince of Wales, who carried far into the nineteenth century the evil manners of the eighteenth. The contempt and dislike felt for him by the majority of the nation would never have been felt to such an extent by the older generation.

In social morality.

The revival of religious earnestness, which had begun with Wesley and the Methodists, was enormously developed by the influence of the war. The blasphemous antics of the French Revolutionists had shocked thousands of Englishmen into a more serious view of life, and twenty years of national peril had put flippancy at a discount. Prominent men who made no secret of their earnest religious convictions were no longer liable to be sneered at as enthusiasts or condemned as fanatics. All through the period the Low Church or Evangelical party was working hard and gaining an increasing hold on the nation. The religious indifferentism of the eighteenth century had disappeared.

In religion.

Nothing shows the general improvement of the nation better

than the higher tone of its literature. To the men of 1820 the coarse taste of the men of 1750 had become intolerable. Many will remember Sir Walter Scott's story of his friend who read over in old age the books which had seemed amusing fifty years back, and found that they only raised a feeling of shame and disgust. It was a fact of a very typical sort that Scott himself was by far the most popular poet of his own day; men preferred his healthy, vigorous, patriotic strains to the work of his younger contemporaries, Byron and Shelley: though both were greater poets than the author of *Marmion* and the *Last Minstrel*, the one was too morbid and satanic, and the other too hysterical and anarchic for the taste of the time.

Effects on literature.

Turning to matters of a more tangible kind, we find as great a difference in the England of 1792 and of 1815. The population and resources of the country had grown in those twenty-two years in a measure for which previous history could afford no parallel. The distribution of the newly-gotten wealth was far less satisfactory, and numerous social problems had grown up which were bound to force themselves upon public attention the moment that the stress of war was removed. In population, the United Kingdom had increased from 14,000,000 to 19,000,000 souls, in spite of the considerable waste of life in the foreign war and in the Irish troubles of 1797 8.

Increase in population and wealth.

But the rise in trade and commerce had been far more startling. Our exports had more than doubled: in 1792 they had stood at £27,000,000; in 1815 the figures were £58,000,000. The imports had gone up between the same years from £19,000,000 to £32,000,000. Still more astounding was the rise in the national finances. The ordinary peace revenue had produced £19,000,000 in 1792: the same heads of taxation, as opposed to the extra war-revenue, brought in £45,000,000 in 1815. It was this marvellous expansion of our resources alone which

Growth of trade and commerce.

had enabled us to last out the Napoleonic struggle. If, as generally happens during war, the national resources had decayed rather than multiplied under the stress of heavy taxation and constant alarms, we should have been exhausted long before Bonaparte had run through his full career. We have spoken already of the main factor of our prosperity, the monopoly of the carrying trade of the world, which we had won by our naval victories, and which our enemy's insane "Continental System" had done much to confirm to us. The other great element in the growth of the wealth of Britain had been the immense development of our internal manufactures. Even before 1792 the development of machinery in our factories had already begun, and we were rapidly asserting a superiority over our neighbours. The war completed our ascendency. While every other land in Europe was repeatedly overrun by hostile armies, Great Britain alone was free to work out her new discoveries without interruption. Many of her industries were notably fostered by the lavish expenditure on our army and navy: the demand for iron and steel, cloth and cotton, for military purposes had been enormous. Our factories had been working for continental paymasters also: even Napoleon himself, it is said, had been compelled to secretly procure from Yorkshire looms the cloth for the coats of the army which took the field in 1813, so entirely had continental manufactures failed him.

There was a general and very natural expectation in 1815–16 that the termination of the great continental war would bring about a period of even greater expansion and commercial supremacy for Great Britain. "Peace and Prosperity" have always been linked in men's minds. It is, therefore, at first sight strange to find that the five years which immediately followed Waterloo were among the most troublous and unhappy periods in our domestic history. So widespread and long-continued was the distress and unrest, that men of gloomy and pessimistic

Poverty and discontent of the labouring classes.

frame of mind feared that we were on the edge of a social revolution. The causes of the misery of the years 1816–21 are, however, not difficult to understand. They affected both the agricultural and the manufacturing interests.

The war had naturally caused an enormous rise in the prices of all agricultural produce. We had been cut off from the corn-markets of Europe, and after 1812 from those of America also. Moreover, the unwise system of "protection," which the Tory party consistently carried out, tended to keep corn artificially dear by the heavy import duties imposed on the supply from foreign countries. This monopoly of the English grower of cereal products had led to an altogether unnatural inflation of prices: thrice between 1810 and 1814 the annual average value of the quarter of wheat had risen over 100*s*. We consider it dear now when the figure of 30*s*. has been reached. While the town dwellers suffered from the exorbitant cost of the loaf, the land-owners and farmers had gained: the rents of the one, the profits of the other, had increased to an immoderate degree. The poorer agricultural classes had not shared to any great extent in this prosperity, owing to the iniquitous system of the Poor Law, of which we shall have to speak later on. But from 1814 onward the inflated war prices ceased, and during the next three years the cost of wheat varied from 60*s*. to 80*s*. the quarter, instead of from 90*s*. to 120*s*. This was a terrible blow to the farmers and landlords, who had calculated their rents and their expenditure on the higher average, as if the war was to last for ever. The whole agricultural interest was very hard hit, and many individuals were ruined. But the worst of the stress fell on the unfortunate labourers, though they had not shared in the profits of the time of inflated prices that had just ended. When the farmers were turning off their hands and cutting down wages, the poorer classes in the country were not compensated by the fact that the loaf had become appreciably cheaper. There followed

Agricultural distress.

acute distress, which ended in riots and rick-burning over large districts of the southern and midland shires. There were wild rumours of secret associations, of plots for a general rising like that of the French peasants in 1789, with plunder and massacre to follow. Most of this talk was groundless, but there was a certain amount of fire beneath the smoke, and in many parts the labourers were ready for mischief.

Troubles in the manufacturing towns.

While rural England was in this unhappy state, the great towns were also in evil case. In 1815–18 the manufacturing classes were suffering from their own set of troubles almost as much as the agricultural classes. The cessation of the war had put an end to the unnatural expansion of the industries which had profited by our naval and military expenditure: the price of iron, for example, fell from £20 to £8 a ton when the Government ceased to be a buyer. In many trades, too, over-speculation on the part of the great employers of labour led to distress. There had been a widespread notion that the countries of the continent would be able to absorb almost any amount of English goods the moment that the Continental System was removed. Our factories at once threw upon the world such a vastly-increased output that the foreign market was glutted: indeed, the final struggle of 1812–14 had so drained the resources of France, Russia, Spain, and Germany, that they had little or no money to buy luxuries or even necessaries. The exported goods had to be sent back or sold at an actual loss. Hence came bankruptcies and wholesale dismissal of operatives at home. The labour market was at the same time affected by the disbanding of many scores of thousands of soldiers and sailors. As many as 250,000 men were released from service in 1816–17–18, and had to find themselves new trades at short notice. Another source of trouble was the dying out of the old trades which had subsisted on hand-labour, and were being superseded by machinery. The last generation of the workmen in these industries suffered

bitter privations before they could or would transfer themselves to other occupations. It was they who distinguished themselves by the so-called *Luddite* outrages, in which gangs went by night to destroy the machinery in the new factories which were underselling their labour.

The Government which had to face all these difficulties, social and economic, was unfortunately not in the least competent to deal with them. George III. had fallen into his last fit of melancholy madness in 1810, and his son George, Prince of Wales, was a sorry substitute for him. The father had often been obstinate and wrong-headed, but at least he was always honest, courageous, and a model of all the domestic virtues: no one could help respecting the good old king, whatever he might think of his wisdom. But the Regent was frankly disreputable: he tried the loyalty of England to the monarchical system as no other ruler has done since James II. A debauchee and gambler, a disobedient son, a cruel husband, a heartless father, an ungrateful and treacherous friend, he was a sore burden to the ministries which had to act in his name and palliate his misdoings. There was a widespread hope that his ruined constitution would not carry him through many more years, and that the succession might pass to his young daughter, the Princess Charlotte. But she died in childbirth in 1816, a year after her marriage to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and her father was destined to prolong his worthless life for fourteen years longer.

Madness of the King—the Prince Regent.

The cabinet which held office under the Regent was the Tory administration of Lord Liverpool. Its chief was an honest man and a good financier, but narrow-minded, prejudiced, and blindly opposed to all measures of political reform. His home secretary was Addington (now Lord Sidmouth), the unsuccessful premier of 1801–4, a man even more bigoted than his chief. Foreign affairs were in the hands of Lord Castlereagh, another high

Lord Liverpool's Cabinet.

Tory, who had done good service as a diplomatist during the Napoleonic war, but was a reactionary, and suspected of being too great a friend of the despotic monarchs of the continent.

Lord Liverpool's ministry acted according to the best of its lights in dealing with the crisis of 1816-20. They cut down expenses as far as they were able, reduced the army and navy to the lowest limit consistent with safety, and did good service by restoring the currency, and replacing by a new coinage of gold sovereigns the depreciated bank-notes which had carried England through the war.* But thrift and honest finance were not sufficient to deal with the national troubles: measures of political and economic reform were urgently needed, and these the Liverpool cabinet was determined not to grant. They looked upon the strikes and riots that vexed the land, not as manifestations of poverty and starvation—which was in the main their real character—but as symptoms of a dangerous revolutionary conspiracy against the monarchy. The few noisy demagogues who were endeavouring to make capital out of the national discontent, they treated as if they were embryo Robespierres and Marats. Against the demonstrations and meetings of the distressed they employed armed force with a wholly unnecessary harshness. In the one or two cases where the rioters acted with violence, as at the Spa Fields Riot in London (1816), the Derby rising (June, 1817), and the Bonnymuir rising in Scotland (June, 1820), they made a very feeble show when resolutely faced: but the Government none the less had some dozens of them executed for treason. A much less formidable indictment and a far milder punishment would have sufficed for such half-hearted revolutionaries. The greatest of the mistakes of the ruling powers was the

Policy and repressive measures of the Government.

* In the worst years of the war the bank-note for £5 would only buy about £3 18*s.* in gold. There had been practically no coinage of guineas since 1797, nor of silver since 1787. The new issue of gold was made in sovereigns, not in guineas, a great convenience in all payments.

unhappy business at Manchester on August 16, 1819. An orderly demonstration by an unarmed multitude was dispersed by a cavalry charge, in which some five or six people were trodden to death, and sixty or seventy injured or wounded.

The cabinet had just so much excuse that there were a few hot-headed demagogues who really meant mischief. The best known was a certain Arthur Thistlewood, a bankrupt adventurer who had a small following in London. He was a wild incendiary of the type of the French Jacobins, whose language and violence he carefully imitated. To avenge the "Manchester Massacre," he plotted the wholesale murder of the ministers. Learning that the whole cabinet were about to dine together on February 23, 1820, he persuaded a score of frantic desperadoes to join him in an attempt to break into the house where they were to meet, for the purpose of slaying them all. He was betrayed by an accomplice, and his band was surrounded by a company of guards at their trysting-place in Cato Street, and arrested after a bloody scuffle. Thistlewood and several of his accomplices were very properly hung. Abhorrence for their atrocious plot had a good deal of effect in restraining further agitation.

The Cato-street Conspiracy.

Just before the "Cato Street Conspiracy" had been frustrated, the old king George III. died, and the regent ascended the throne under the name of George IV. It was assuredly not from any merit of his that the national troubles began soon after to die down. The fact was that they were mainly the result of famine and despair, and that about 1820 there was a marked recovery in trade in the manufacturing districts, while in the countryside the farmers and labourers had succeeded in adapting themselves in some degree to the new scale of prices for agricultural produce. Riots and outrages gradually subsided, but there remained a strong political dislike for the Tory cabinet and its harsh and repressive measures. The middle classes had begun to go over to the side of the Whigs,

Accession of George IV. Need of reforms.

who now, for the first time since the outbreak of the great French war, began to find that they had a solid and powerful backing in the nation. Men had willingly consented to put aside all demands for constitutional change as long as the struggle with Napoleon lasted. It was now high time that the projects for political reform, which Pitt had sketched out thirty years before, should be taken in hand. As Pitt's heirs in the Tory party showed small signs of carrying them out, all those who were anxious to see them brought forward joined the other camp.

Attitude of the Tories.

The chief of these burning questions was the Emancipation of the Catholics from political disabilities—a topic which had not been seriously raised since 1807—and the reform of the House of Commons, which was growing more unrepresentative of the nation every day. On certain other points—such as Free Trade, the removal of the protective duties placed on foreign corn and other commodities, the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, the reform of the Poor Laws—there was division in the Tory camp: the older generation were for leaving everything where it was: the younger were more ready to move on. In face of a vigorous and growing opposition, it is astonishing how long the Liverpool cabinet succeeded in staving off all manner of reforms: the delay was only rendered possible by the fact that the House of Commons so grossly misrepresented the nation. As long as the system of "rotten boroughs" went on, a Government supported by the majority of borough-mongers could defy public opinion in a manner that has long ceased to be possible.

George IV. and Queen Caroline.

It is a notable fact, as illustrating the politics of that day, that the first checks to the policy of this rigid Tory Government came not on any great question of reform, but on a personal matter concerning the king. George IV. had been separated for many years from his unfortunate wife, Caroline of Brunswick. Deserted by

her husband, she had fallen into an unwise and undignified manner of life, wandering round the continent with a train of disreputable foreign attendants. She was a vain, silly, and vulgar woman, in whom no one could have felt any interest if she had not been so ill-treated by the man who should have been her protector. When George III. died, she announced her intention of returning to England in order to be crowned along with her husband. The king looked upon her approach with dismay, and tried to frighten her away with threats of cutting off her income. But she came back in spite of him, whereupon George took the invidious step of persuading Lord Liverpool to allow a bill for her divorce to be brought before Parliament. His own conduct had been so disgraceful that he should not have dared to attack his wife. With deep feelings of secret shame the ministers lent themselves to this miserable scheme. A long parliamentary inquiry followed, which led to no conclusive proofs of the queen having been guilty of more than silly vanity and indecorum. The Whig leaders and the mob of London took up her cause, and meetings and demonstrations followed in quick succession. Disgusted at their position, the ministers in November, 1820, suddenly dropped their bill and let the queen go free. She started a violent agitation against her husband, and would have caused much trouble if she had not died suddenly in the next year.

In modern days a ministry would resign after such a blow to its credit as the cabinet of 1820 had sustained in the matter of the queen's trial. Lord Liverpool and his colleagues, however, clung to office, but for the future had lost the complete command over Parliament which they had hitherto possessed. In 1821 the character of the ministry began to change: Addington (Lord Sidmouth), who had been mainly responsible for the mismanagement of home affairs, resigned; Lord Castlereagh in the next year committed suicide in a

Changes in the Cabinet —the Liverpool-Canning ministry.

moment of insanity caused by overwork; several other of the old Tories disappeared from office. To replace them Lord Liverpool introduced younger men, who were not so entirely reactionary in their views, and were ready to follow the teaching of William Pitt in his earlier days, by linking the name of the Tory party with the idea of domestic reform. The chief of these were Canning, Huskisson, and Sir Robert Peel. The first-named statesman succeeded Castlereagh as foreign secretary, and promptly carried out a radical change in our European policy.

Huskisson and Free Trade.

Huskisson, who was a convinced free-trader, began to do his best to get rid of the protective duties that were cramping English commerce and manufactures. His great principle was to reduce the import duties on all raw materials—such as wool or silk—which were afterwards worked up in English factories. When once these commodities came in unburdened by taxes, their increased cheapness enabled our manufacturers to produce their fabrics at a rate which defied foreign competition. Huskisson would have got rid of the corn-duties also, but Tory prejudice foiled him.

Peel and Criminal Law Reform.

Peel, though not yet so far advanced in his views as his two colleagues, did admirable work as home secretary in the direction of administrative reform, and the mitigation of the unreasonable harshness of the criminal law. By a barbarous survival of mediæval practice, there were still many scores of offences for which the death-penalty was prescribed: among them were such comparatively insignificant crimes as sheep-stealing, shop-lifting, and coining. Peel was the first minister of the Crown who began to cut down this dreadful list. He still left the gallows as the doom of those guilty of forgery, murderous assaults, and many other acts which are now sufficiently punished by penal servitude, but struck out a good many items from the appalling total. The rest were all removed within fifteen years,

and murder and treason have for a long time been the only offences for which capital punishment is retained.

Canning's work at the Foreign Office demands a longer explanation. Ever since 1815 the continent had been under the control of the autocratic monarchs who had put down Napoleon. They lived in dread of a recrudescence of the revolutionary ideas which had been started by the Jacobins of France, and governed their subjects with a very tight hand, utterly refusing to listen to any petitions for the introduction of representative government or constitutional reforms. This was all the more hard because of the liberal promises which they had made to their peoples, when they were rousing them in 1812–13 to join in the general crusade against Bonaparte and the Continental System. The nations felt that they had been scurvily treated by their rulers, and from Poland to Portugal the whole continent was full of ferment and unrest. There were plots, conspiracies, and agitations in every quarter, some aiming at the overturning of autocratic government and the obtaining of a free constitution, others more national in character, and directed against the ruthless cutting up of ancient states and peoples which had taken place at the Congress of Vienna in 1814–15. In Germany and Spain the former idea prevailed, in Italy and Poland the latter. The Emperor of Russia conceived the idea of joining all the monarchs of Europe in a league against reform and liberal ideas, and framed the celebrated "Holy Alliance" in conjunction with Francis of Austria and Frederick William of Prussia. The restored Bourbons of France, Spain, and Naples were wholly in agreement with them.

Reaction in Europe.

The "Holy Alliance."

This reactionary confederacy had dominated Europe from 1815 to 1822. Castlereagh, while controlling the foreign policy of England, had refused to join the "Holy Alliance"; but, on the other hand, he had done nothing to hinder its work or to mark English

Attitude of Castlereagh.

disapproval of its narrow and despotic principles. Continental Liberals had always hoped for moral if not for tangible aid from free and constitutional England, and had failed to get it. We had looked on while the troops of Austria invaded Italy, and put down the new Constitution which had been unwillingly granted by King Ferdinand of Naples (1821), and while the armies of Louis XVIII. were being directed against the Spanish Liberals.

Canning's new foreign policy.

When Canning replaced Castlereagh at the Foreign Office (1822), this period of passive acquiescence came to an end, and English influence was used against the alliance of the despots. It was too late to save Spain, which was overrun by the French in the spring of 1823, but Portugal was preserved from the same fate by the energetic threats which were made against French intervention there. The independence of the Spanish colonies in America, which had long been in revolt against the misgovernment of the mother-country, was recognized. In the east of Europe, where the Greeks had rebelled against the Sultan after four centuries of miserable oppression, Canning used all his influence in their aid. Money and volunteers from England were permitted to make their way to the Ægean. Among the English "Phil-Hellenes" the most notable were the daring seaman Lord Cochrane, and the poet Byron, who roused himself from a life of idleness and luxury in Italy to give his aid to an ancient people in distress. He died of fever not long after his arrival in Greece; but his stirring poems and his excellent example did much to strengthen the wave of feeling in Western Europe which ultimately secured the freedom of Hellas. Canning, meanwhile, did all that he could short of declaring war to bring pressure on Sultan Mahmood, and to compel him to recognize the independence of his revolted subjects. He was prevented from going further by the uncertain attitude of the other powers, and especially of France and Russia, who could not make up their minds whether to regard Mahmood

as a legitimate monarch endeavouring to suppress Liberals, and therefore a friend, or as a Mahometan persecutor, outside the pale of a "Holy Alliance" of Christian kings.

In February 1827 Lord Liverpool was stricken down with paralysis, and the king, after some hesitation, offered Canning the vacant post of prime minister. He accepted it, and promptly got rid of the remnant of the old Tories who had still clung to office under his predecessor. Their places were filled with the more enlightened members of the party. It was hoped that a period of progress and prosperity, as marked as that of Pitt's famous rule in 1784–92, was about to commence, for the new premier had great schemes on foot both at home and abroad. But Canning had hardly time to settle down into office when he was carried off by an attack of dysentery (August 8, 1827). His death, only five months after he had reached the position in which he had the power to carry out his policy, was a most unfortunate event both for England and for the Tory party. His ministry continued in office for a few months under the nominal premiership of Lord Gooderich, and then broke up for want of a master mind to keep them together.

Lord Liverpool retires —Death of Canning.

The king, whose sympathies were all with reaction and the older Tories, invited the Duke of Wellington to take Canning's place. A more unfortunate appointment could not have been made: the great general proved to be a very poor politician. Personally, he had no sympathy with his predecessor's views; he believed in keeping things where they were in domestic politics. Free-trade, Catholic emancipation, and parliamentary reform were as distasteful to him as they had been to Addington or Castlereagh. In foreign policy his rooted principle was a dislike of continental Liberals; he had seen a great deal of the Spanish reformers in 1809–13, and had imbibed a great contempt for them and all their compeers in other lands. The duke was thoroughly honest and upright in all his principles and

Wellington Prime Minister.

prejudices, and he came on the scene with a splendid reputation for loyalty and patriotism. But he had never learnt the art of managing Parliament, of facing a determined opposition, or keeping together a party which consisted of two sections of divergent views. He very soon turned out of his ministry Huskisson, and the rest of Canning's followers, replacing them by Tories of the old reactionary breed. His first important action in foreign policy was to abandon his predecessor's support of the Greek insurgents, though England had been fully committed to their cause.

The battle of Navarino.

In the summer of 1827, while Canning still lived, an English fleet had been sent to the Levant with directions to bring pressure to bear on the Turkish army in the Peloponnesus, and force its commandant, Ibrahim Pasha, to agree to an armistice with the Greeks. Admiral Codrington interpreted his orders in a stringent sense, forbade the Pasha to move, and when he continued the usual policy of massacre sailed into Navarino Bay and blew to pieces the large Turko-Egyptian fleet which was lying there (October 13, 1827). He was given unstinted applause by the English nation, but not by the prime minister, who disavowed his action, styled the battle of Navarino "a most untoward event," and refused to take any further action against the Porte. Russia stepped in when Wellington withdrew: the new Czar, Nicholas I., sent an army across the Balkans, forced the Sultan to recognize the independence of Greece, and paid himself by confiscating a large slice of Turkish territory (August, 1828).

Wellington as a politician.

Throughout the three years during which he held office (1828–30), the "Iron Duke" did little to justify his reputation for firmness and steadfast purpose. There can be no doubt that his own inclination would have been to avoid all manner of constitutional change, and keep things exactly as they stood. But he showed an unexpected faculty for yielding when he was attacked and worried by the opposition. When his plans were defeated in

the House of Commons he did not resign, as most ministers with a parliamentary training would have done, but retained office, and often ended by allowing measures of which he disapproved to become law. As has been well remarked by one of his critics, "He treated politics as if they were military campaigns, and when beaten out of his position did not throw up the game, but gave way, and only retired on to another similar position in the rear." This line of conduct had, to the outside observer, every appearance of weakness, and looked like an undignified clinging to office. The duke, however, was honestly convinced that he was necessary to the State, and only retained the premiership because he thought that his resignation would open the way to revolution and civil strife.

His first retreat was carried out after a dispute on a religious question. The "Test Act" and "Corporation Act," which obliged members of corporations and office-holders under the Crown to make a profession of conformity to the Church of England, had long been a dead letter. Dissenters of all sorts had been allowed to evade their provisions. Yet when it was proposed to abolish these relics of seventeenth-century bigotry, the duke made a great show of resistance. The Whigs, however, succeeded in passing a resolution against them in the Commons: thereupon Wellington suddenly yielded, gave the measure the support of the ministry, and allowed the Acts to be repealed (1828).

Repeal of the Test Act and the Corporation Act.

His next show of weakness was even more startling. For some years the question of Catholic Emancipation, the old bugbear of George III., had been much obtruded on public notice, mainly by an agitation in Ireland, headed by the ablest Irishman whom the century has produced. The grievance of the Irish Catholics was a perfectly legitimate one: they had assented to the Union in 1800, because Pitt had promised that they should be given in the United Kingdom the same rights as their Protestant fellow-

Catholic Emancipation.

subjects. Pitt had failed to redeem his pledge, owing to no fault of his own, but to the old king's obstinacy. Now that George III. was dead, there was no reason why the promise given in 1800 should not be fulfilled: no one could believe that George IV. had any conscientious objection to it—unlike his father, he had no conscience at all. Nevertheless, the Tory party, with the exception of Canning and his friends, had refused to take up Pitt's engagement to the Catholics. Wellington, himself an Anglo-Irish Protestant by birth, had been as unbending as Liverpool or Addington.

O'Connell and the Catholic Association.

In 1823 O'Connell had founded a league called the "Catholic Association," to bring pressure on the English Government. It was a powerful, well-organized body, which worked by proclamations and monster demonstrations in the usual Irish style; it even collected a kind of impost called the "Catholic Rent," which was paid with a good deal more regularity than the king's taxes. Nominally suppressed by law in 1825, it was still in full vigour in 1828. O'Connell was a man of splendid eloquence and ready wit, with considerable organizing power. He was as completely the master of the Association as Parnell in later days was of the "Land League"; but he set his face against outrages and worked wholly by moral suasion. With all Ireland at his back, and the support of the Whig party in England, he was a most formidable power. To show his strength he had himself elected as Member of Parliament for County Clare, though he could not of course take his seat so long as the old laws against Catholics were still in force.

Wellington gives way.

Confronted with this great agitation, continually harassed by the Whigs, and opposed by the Canningite wing of his own party, Wellington for some time refused to listen to any proposal for Catholic Emancipation. But suddenly, in the spring of 1829, his resistance collapsed; to the surprise and disgust of his own bigoted

followers, he announced that he had become convinced that further resistance would only lead to civil war in Ireland, and that, rather than force matters to extremity, the ministry would bring in a bill placing the Catholics in the same position in matters political as members of the Established Church. Every post in the State was thrown open to them save those of King, Regent, Lord Chancellor, or Viceroy of Ireland. This measure was passed by the aid of the Whigs and the Canningites. A great proportion of the Duke's old Tory friends in both houses voted against it; for the future they distrusted Wellington, and could not be relied on to vote solidly at his order.

Nothing could have been more calculated to encourage the duke's adversaries than this display of weakness on his part. In Ireland O'Connell at once started another agitation, this time in favour of the dissolution of the Union of 1800—"Repeal" as it was popularly styled in 1830, Home-Rule as we should call it now. For nearly a score of years this movement was to convulse the sister island; meanwhile O'Connell himself appeared at Westminster with a following of fifty Irish Catholic members ready to make trouble for English ministries, Tory or Whig, in every possible way.

The "Repeal" agitation.

That Wellington retained office for more than a year after he had conceded Catholic Emancipation, was only due to the fact that in respect for his personal character and the great things he had done for England in 1808–15, his adversaries refrained from pressing him to extremity. All his measures in 1829–30 were weak and ill-judged; he even abandoned our Portuguese allies, whom Canning had saved in 1826, and allowed Dom Miguel, a usurper of most reactionary views, to be established as king in their country. But the overthrow of the ministry was deferred till November, 1830, before which date there was a general change in English politics caused by outside events.

On June 26, 1830, George IV. had died in his sixty-eighth year, unregretted by any single class of his subjects. It was a great boon to the nation that his successor was a prince of a very different stamp.

Accession of William IV.

William, Duke of Clarence, the king's next surviving brother, who now ascended the throne under the name of William IV., was a simple, good-hearted, genial old man, who had served with credit in the navy, and had long occupied the honorary post of Lord High Admiral. His intelligence was limited, but his intentions were good, and no one could dislike or despise him. The only thing against him was an eccentricity which sometimes led him into absurd speeches and actions, and made men fear that he was tainted with the insanity of his father, George III. Fortunately their dread turned out to be unfounded; he kept his head and made an admirable constitutional king. It was of enormous benefit to the nation as well as the monarchy that he was not a party man like his brother, and got on with the Whigs as well as with the Tories. He had married late in life (1818) and had two daughters, but both of them died in infancy, so that the succession to the throne now passed to his ten-year-old niece Alexandrina Victoria, the only child of Edward Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III.

During the very week in which William IV. ascended the throne the political horizon of Europe grew overcast. The domination of the "Holy Alliance" was suddenly threatened by popular risings in every region of the continent, the natural result of fifteen years of despotic rule, during which every national and constitutional aspiration had been crushed by brute force. The trouble began in Paris, where the narrow-minded and reactionary Charles X. was expelled by a revolt in which the army joined the mob. France did not become a red republic, as many had feared, but merely changed its dynasty; for Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, a very astute

Europe in 1830—Louis Philippe "King of the French."

intriguer, succeeded in putting himself at the head of the movement and was saluted as constitutional "King of the French"—the old title, "King of France," was dropped as savouring of feudalism. From Paris the wave of revolution spread right and left: there followed a vigorous rebellion in Poland against the despotism of Czar Nicholas I., a rising of the Belgians against their enforced union with Holland, insurrections in Spain and Portugal, and troubles of a less desperate sort in Germany and Italy.

In the midst of these foreign complications the Wellington ministry at last came to an end. The death of the late king was followed by a general election, in which more than fifty seats in the Commons were lost by the old Tory party. The fact was that the duke's weak policy had disgusted his own supporters, and even the knot of borough-mongers who were its firmest adherents had not exerted themselves very ardently in his cause. In the English counties, where popular feeling was able to express itself better than in the boroughs, more than sixty out of the eighty-two members returned were Whigs. When the new parliament met in November the ministers were defeated by a majority of twenty-nine on the first contentious topic that came up. Wellington resigned, and the king, in due constitutional form, sent for the head of the Whig party, and entrusted him with the formation of a cabinet. The new Prime Minister was Charles Earl Grey, the last survivor of the old Whig chiefs who had fought out the long struggle with the younger Pitt. He had been Foreign Secretary in the Grenville cabinet of 1807, but nearly all his colleagues were younger men who had never before held office. The only other members indeed of the ministry who had any administrative experience were three of Canning's followers, who now consented to join the Whig party—Lords Melbourne, Palmerston, and Gooderich. Their Lord Chancellor was Brougham, an eloquent but eccentric orator, who had shown himself formidable in attack while

Fall of Wellington's ministry—The Whigs return to office.

Tory cabinets were in power, but proved far too flighty and capricious as a responsible minister of the Crown.

Lord Grey.

Lord Grey was a man whom age had rendered cautious and moderate; he succeeded in carrying out the long-needed reforms, for which the nation had been waiting since 1815, with the minimum of friction and trouble. A less judicious leader might have provoked very serious political strife, for all the elements of discord were present in the situation. The Tory party commanded a great majority in the House of Lords, and controlled a large and unscrupulous minority in the Lower House: the seats of so many representatives of rotten boroughs were imperilled by the impending reform of the Commons, that they were naturally full of impotent and factious wrath. Lord Grey had announced, on accepting office, that he intended to make Parliamentary Reform the main feature of his administration, so his adversaries had fair notice of his intentions.

Necessity of Parliamentary Reform.

The condition of the House of Commons, considered as a representative body, had been growing more and more of a disgraceful anomaly for two hundred years. There had been practically no change in its constitution since the reign of Queen Elizabeth; scores of boroughs that had been flourishing market towns or seaports in the middle ages had sunk into decayed villages —some, like Gatton and Old Sarum, had dwindled down to a couple of houses. On the other hand, great industrial centres like Leeds or Birmingham had no representative whatever. In the shires things were almost as ridiculous—the great counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire, reckoning their inhabitants by the million, had the same two members as Rutland. It is hard to see how the survival of the antiquated system could have been seriously defended, save by the landowners who dominated "rotten boroughs" of the type of Old Sarum, or the capitalists who liked to buy a seat instead of facing troublesome masses of constituents. Pitt had

introduced a Reform Bill as far back as 1785, but it had been thrown out by a factious combination of the Whigs and the borough-mongers. Since 1792 the old Tory party had been almost continuously in office, and had always rejected any proposals for reform: the fact was that the existing anomalous state of affairs suited them, because the large majority of the rotten seats were in the hands of their supporters.

Every year since 1821 some Whig leader had broached the topic in the Commons, and every time his project had been summarily thrown out. Public opinion had been getting more excited on the point at each rejection. The middle classes, which had been steadily Tory throughout the Great War, had begun to pass over wholesale to the Whig party, under the reactionary Liverpool *régime*, and the Duke of Wellington's mismanagement had finished their conversion. It was intolerable that all progressive legislation should be stopped because a few scores of borough-mongers commanded enough votes to hold the balance in the House of Commons. It was ludicrous that a householder in Winchelsea or Appleby should have the privilege of choosing a member, while a householder in Liverpool or Leeds should not. The agitation which was on foot in 1816–20 was very different from that which now prevailed in 1830–32. The former had its roots in famine and poverty; it had only influenced the labouring classes, and had been led by a few hot-headed demagogues. The latter was essentially a middle-class movement; its leaders were the merchants and bankers of the great towns which were denied representation. It had the support of the masses, who hoped that a more representative Parliament would lead to enlightened social legislation for their benefit, but the real strength of the agitation lay in the well-to-do householders of the towns. Hence it was comparatively orderly in its progress; it was only in a few places like Bristol, where special local circumstances embittered feeling, that riot and disorder followed the campaign in favour of Reform.

Growth of the Reform agitation.

In March, 1831, Lord John Russell, a scion of the great Whig house of the Dukes of Bedford, introduced the Reform Bill in its first shape. It soon became evident that the ministerial majority was not large enough to carry the measure; though the representatives of five-sixths of the great constituencies voted for it, the members for the rotten boroughs were so numerous and so resolved not to sanction their own destruction, that the second reading of the bill was only carried by one vote (302 to 301) in the fullest house that had ever met. Seeing that they could not hope to finish the business with such a small majority, Lord Grey and his colleagues offered to resign; the king refused to receive their resignation, but dissolved Parliament instead, to give the nation its opportunity of renewing or refusing its mandate to the Whig party. The election was carried out in the midst of a tremendous agitation, unparalleled in the history of the nation; it ended, as might have been expected, in the ministers sweeping the whole country and obtaining a decisive majority of 136. In September the great bill was reintroduced, and passed all its three readings in the Commons with ease.

The Reform Bill passed in the House of Commons.

The resistance of the Tories had now to be transferred to the House of Lords, in which they were omnipotent. Pitt and his successors had almost swamped the upper chamber by their lavish creations of peers during the last forty years. Not gauging at its full strength the determination of the country to have the bill passed, the Lords threw it out by a majority of 41 (October, 1831).

Thrown out by the House of Lords.

The winter of 1831–32 was spent in furious agitation against the House of Lords. Meeting after meeting, attended by scores of thousands of the members of "Political Unions," "National Unions," and other such bodies, asserted their desire for "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill." The

Violent demonstrations against the Lords.

advanced wing of the Whig party, who were just beginning to call themselves "Radicals," began to agitate for the abolition of hereditary titles and the destruction of the Upper House. The results of the effervescence of popular feeling were shown when the cabinet once more introduced their bill; it passed rapidly through the Commons, and after a hot debate in the House of Lords its second reading was carried by a small majority (April 14, 1832).

But the Whigs had not yet completed their victory. Instead of openly throwing out the bill, the Tory peers tried another device: they proposed to mutilate it by postponing the clauses which disfranchised the rotten boroughs, without which the bill was practically useless. When this side blow was successful in the Lords, Grey promptly resigned and challenged the opposition to take over the management of affairs if they dared. The king sent for the Duke of Wellington, and invited him to form a Tory cabinet. For seven days the Iron Duke contemplated the possibility of facing the angry nation, and sounded his party as to their willingness to take the risk. During that week the nation was on the brink of civil war; many of the more hot-headed leaders of the Whig party made preparations for arming the members of the Reform associations and marching on London. Others, with greater ingenuity, organized a run on the Bank of England, in the hope that the enemy would not dare to face a financial as well as a political crisis. "To stop the duke, go for gold" was the word passed round among the merchants of London (May 8–15, 1832).

Attempts by the Lords to mutilate the bill.

Fortunately for the peace of the realm, Wellington shrank from the responsibility of accepting office. He found that it was very doubtful if the army could be trusted to act against the people. His Tory friends showed a general reluctance to accept the posts in his projected cabinet. Finally, he returned to the king and advised him to send again for Lord Grey, as

Wellington refuses to take office—The bill carried.

no alternative was possible. The Whig statesman would not return to power till he was granted a written promise that, if the House of Lords persisted in its opposition to Reform, the king would create new peers in sufficient numbers to swamp all resistance. This threat had its effect; to prevent its being put in force, Wellington and several scores more of Tory peers solemnly marched out of the House when the bill was again sent up from the Commons. In their absence it was allowed to pass by a considerable majority (June 4, 1832).

The details of the bill demand a word of notice. It disfranchised entirely no less than fifty-six "rotten boroughs," none of which had more than 2000 inhabitants. It deprived of one member each thirty small towns which had hitherto owned two representatives. This gave a total of 143 seats to be disposed of among the new centres of population. London got ten of them, new boroughs being created for Marylebone, Greenwich, Lambeth, Finsbury, and the Tower Hamlets. Twenty-two large towns, such as Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Newcastle, received two members each. Twenty-one places of secondary size were allotted one each. The more populous counties were cut up into divisions, to which sixty-five members were given. Eight new borough members were created in Scotland; in Ireland (where the existing arrangements only dated back to 1800) there was hardly any need of change.

The redistribution of seats.

At the same time the franchise was made uniform all over the United Kingdom; before 1832 every borough had its own rules. In the towns, the power to vote was given to every householder occupying a tenement of the value of £10 or over. In the counties the terms granted were less liberal; to the freeholders, who possessed the franchise before, there were added as voters all copyholders and leaseholders holding lands to the annual value of £10, and tenants-at-will of £50 holdings. This

The new borough and county franchises.

arrangement left the shopkeepers masters in the towns, and the farmers in the countryside. The artisans in the one, the agricultural labourers in the other, were still left without the franchise, and had to wait the one class thirty and the other fifty years before obtaining it.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE GREAT REFORM BILL TO THE CRIMEAN WAR.

1832–54.

THE passage of Lord Grey's Reform Bill is the central point of the political history of the nineteenth century. Never again for more than fifty years were men's passions to run so high; the unrest caused by the Chartist agitation in 1838–48 was a mere nothing compared to the excitement in 1830–32. The only time that can be compared to those troubled years is the short period in 1886, when Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill was in the air, and the Liberal party was bursting asunder. This later struggle only occupied a few months, but Lord Grey's battle with the Tories had covered nearly three years. If protracted a little longer, it would probably have led to the abolition of the House of Lords and many other sudden and destructive changes. To some people the time-honoured constitution of England seemed in danger; they prophesied that the Radicals would sweep the Whigs in their train, and carry universal suffrage, vote by ballot, and the whole programme of complete democracy the moment that the great bill had passed. There were even persons who made wagers that the United Kingdom would cease to be a monarchy before ten years were out.

Fears excited by the Reform Bill.

Nothing could have been more ill-founded than these fears;

when once the Reform Bill was passed the political horizon grew clear, and for the next twenty years the only really important topics in politics were matters of social and economic reform, such as the abolition of negro slavery in the colonies, the reform of the Poor Laws, the passing of the Factory Acts, and the gradual introduction of complete Free Trade.

Its actual results—Political ascendency of the middle class.

It is true that a busy agitation for democratic changes in the constitution was kept up by the Radicals and the "Chartists" for many years. But the middle classes, who had gained the control of the country by the Reform Bill, did not look with favour or interest on these projects, and steadfastly refused to allow them to be brought into the sphere of practical politics. The popular movement, which had broken down the opposition of the Tories and carried the bill of 1832, had been supported both by the middle classes and the labouring masses. The former, when it was passed, got possession of the power which they had coveted, and completely supplanted the old borough-mongering Tory oligarchy. They had no intention of allowing their new importance to be taken from them and given to the artisans and labourers; hence they had no inclination to Universal Suffrage or any other such device for transferring the sovereignty of the realm to the proletariate. We may define their position clearly enough by saying that they were Whigs, and not Radicals; they wished for practical reforms, and not for a theoretical revision of the constitution. Hence there came a split among the ranks of the great host which had fought for reform in 1830–32: the great majority of the leaders and organizers, and nearly all the wealth and intelligence of the party, were satisfied with what they had got, and settled down into contented Whiggery. The tail of the party—the unenfranchised masses, headed by a few demagogues—persisted in the cry for further constitutional changes: but though their demands were political, their aims were really social; they wanted to raise the standard of comfort and prosperity

among the labouring classes much more than to claim political rights. If they asked for the latter, it was only in order to use them to obtain the former, for the old delusion that peoples can be made prosperous and happy by Act of Parliament was omnipotent among them.

Supremacy of the Whigs in Parliament.

Meanwhile the main result of the Reform Bill in practical politics was to place the Whig party in power for more than forty years, with only four short breaks. Their reign was almost as long as that of the Tories between 1784 and 1830, for between 1830 and 1874 there were only eight years during which Tory administrations held office; for the remaining thirty-six Whig cabinets of one shade or another presided over the administration of the United Kingdom.

The state of Europe— Russia, Italy, Germany.

In foreign politics, the problems with which the Grey ministry had to deal, when the Reform Bill had been passed, differed considerably from those of the old days of the "Holy Alliance" and the reign of unrestrained despotism. The wave of revolution which had swept over the Continent in 1830 had left many traces behind it. In Russia, Italy, and Germany, indeed, the old landmarks of autocracy had not been permanently submerged, and the governments were as reactionary as ever. But the aspect of Europe had been profoundly changed by the fact that France had become a liberal and constitutional monarchy under King Louis Philippe. As a rule, France and England now found themselves taking the same views on Continental politics; if they sometimes disagreed, it was because Louis Philippe was a born intriguer and loved tortuous ways. Belgium was also established as a new constitutional kingdom, the Dutch having given up their attempt to hold her down when France interfered in favour of the insurgents. Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the widower of the English Princess Charlotte, was now king at Brussels, and maintained a firm friendship both with England and with France.

France, Belgium, and Holland.

In Spain King Ferdinand VII. had fallen into the hands of the Liberals in his old age, and had changed the line of succession, so as to allow his daughter Isabella to reign instead of his bigoted and reactionary brother Don Carlos. In Portugal a civil war was raging, which ultimately terminated in the expulsion of the usurper Dom Miguel and the triumph of the constitutional Queen Maria. Her cause was successful mainly owing to English and French support, the turning-point of the war having been a naval battle off Cape St. Vincent, where the skill of Admiral Napier enabled the small fleet of Donna Maria to annihilate a Miguelite squadron of more than double his force. All Western Europe was, in 1833, more or less freed from the yoke of the alliance of the despotic monarchs, though in Spain the struggle was to linger on for more than seven years and to cause almost as much misery as the Peninsular War. The last partisans of Don Carlos did not lay down their arms till 1840, and the cruelties perpetrated on both sides had been worthy of Soudanese dervishes or Kurdish irregulars.

Spain and Portugal.

On the whole, the foreign policy of the Whig Government was very successful; the last fears of the domination of Europe by despotism passed away, and Lord Palmerston, the able Canningite convert who managed our external relations, won a reputation for skill and decision which was destined to make him the almost inevitable Foreign Secretary of all the Whig Governments of the next thirty years. He was, indeed, far the most capable of the Whig statesmen of his generation, and a much more notable figure than the four prime ministers under whom he served. A bluff, hearty man, full of a genial self-confidence, and always determined that England should have her say in any European question that was pending, he was looked upon by his contemporaries as the ideal exponent of a "spirited foreign policy." We shall see that sometimes, as his opponents sneered, "his bark was worse than his bite;" but on the whole

Lord Palmerston's foreign policy.

he was a good servant of his country, and contrasted very favourably as a diplomatist with his successors on the Liberal side of the house.

But foreign affairs during the rule of the Grey cabinet were by no means so important as home matters. The years which followed the Reform Bill were full of constructive legislation intended to make up for the arrears of the barren time since 1815. The most important of the bills introduced by the Grey cabinet was that which dealt with the Poor Laws; but second only to this was the one which finally did away with negro slavery in our West Indian colonies.

Domestic reforms of the Whigs.

The Poor Law as it stood in 1832 was the most fertile source of misery that existed in the United Kingdom. Its unwise administration during the last forty years had done more to bring about social evil and political unrest than any other factor in the long list of popular grievances. For nearly two centuries the principle which governed the dealing of the State with pauperism had been a wise and sound one, laid down in the Poor Law of 1601 —that a clear distinction should be drawn between aged and impotent persons unable to work, and idle and improvident ones who could work but refused to do so. The former were entitled to relief from their parishes; the latter were to be compelled to apply themselves to labour, and even to be punished if they preferred the life of the tramp and beggar. This radical distinction drawn between the able-bodied pauper and the unfortunate victim of old age or disease was always kept in sight till the middle of the reign of George III.

Poor Law administration.

Policy of the Act of 1601.

It was not until 1782, one of the troublous years of the old American war, that the first step in the wrong direction was made, by an Act of Parliament (generally called from its framer Gilbert's Act) which allowed the guardians of the poor in each parish to find work near his

Gilbert's Act.

house for any person out of employment, and to add to his wages from the parish funds if he had not quite sufficient to maintain himself. This was followed fourteen years later by a far more disastrous piece of misplaced philanthropy. In the early days of the great French war distress was rife everywhere, and one of the methods taken to alleviate it was to establish a system of giving a regular system of "grants in aid of wages" for all poor labourers. A sliding-scale was fixed, by which, as the price of the loaf rose, more and more money was to be given to distressed parishioners: the larger the family the larger was to be the grant, in strict arithmetical progression. The idea was to establish a minimum wage for the labourer which he should not fail to get; but, unfortunately, the device tended rather to fix a maximum for him, and that a very low one. For the farmers began at once to cut down the pay of the men they employed, in order that they might save their own money at the expense of the parish—every shilling that they took off being replaced by another which came out of the parish funds. This, of course, had still further bad effects, for the labourer who was not drawing relief-money found himself receiving less than his neighbour who was. Very soon this compelled him to put in his claim for a similar dole, till the vast majority of rural population was receiving poor-relief, and the free labourer became a rare exception.

Disastrous changes in the Poor Law, 1795.

This disastrous system, tried first in Berkshire in 1795, gradually spread over the whole country. Its main result was that the farmers and their landlords pocketed all the immense profits which came from the high price of corn in the years of the French war; the rural poor got no share of it. Moreover, the system tended to general unthrift and improvidence among the country folk, because the sum of the dole received by each family was in proportion to its numbers; the more children a man had, the more poor-relief was paid him. Hence he wished to have as many children as possible; though he

might not be able to maintain them himself, the parish would feed them for him. Early and improvident marriages became the rule rather than the exception. It will scarcely be credited that this unhappy state of things was viewed at first with complacency by English statesmen. William Pitt himself once said that "parish relief should be given as a matter of right or honour in proportion to the number of the recipient's children, so that a large family will become a blessing, not a curse; and those who enrich their country with a number of children will always have a claim upon its assistance for their support."

The result of this blind philanthropy was that the population of the rural parishes went up by leaps and bounds, quite irrespective of any need for the existence of more hands for labour, till the poor-rate became an intolerable burden. Between 1795 and 1815 the annual amount of it rose from £2,500,000 to £5,400,000. After the war was over things grew even worse, for in the hard times of 1816–20, when prices fell and all trade stagnated, the population kept still increasing. Cases are quoted where parishes had to go bankrupt because the sum needed to feed their paupers actually exceeded their whole annual rateable value. In the year of the Reform Bill the maximum of misery was reached, the poor-rates rising to the sum of £7,000,000. That this reign of pauperism was artificial was soon shown when the government took the matter in hand.

Reform of the Poor Law.

Lord Grey's Act of 1834 provided that a return should be made to the old principle of Queen Elizabeth's law of 1601—that out-door relief should only be given to the aged and destitute. All others demanding a dole from the parish should be only granted it if they went into a workhouse—a hard test, but one which well discriminated between the idle and the really distressed, since no one wished to enter its walls unless he was compelled. The parishes were combined in groups called "unions," in order to

provide one large and well-appointed workhouse rather than a number of small and inefficient ones.

The immediate result of the New Poor Law was to force the farmers and other employers of labour to pay their men out of their own pockets, and not to depend on throwing half the expense on to the parish. Thus the labouring poor did not really lose by the change in the system; but it fell hardly on the generation which was then in existence, since their habits and manners of thought and life had been formed under the old law. It was impossible to get rid of the tradition of unthrift and recklessness caused by forty years of maladministration. On the whole the condition of the countryside after 1835 was decidedly less happy than it had been before 1795: prices had gone up, while wages had not, owing mainly to the old Poor Law. Even after its repeal they have risen very gradually, and have always been so much lower than those obtainable in towns, that there has been a steady drain of population from rural into urban England.

Results of the Act of 1834.

The financial results of Lord Grey's bill were admirable. The sum expended in poor-relief fell from the £7,000,000 at which it stood in 1832 to £4,700,000 in 1836. And what was far more important, the curse of pauperism was lifted from those of the rural poor who had the strength and independence of mind to fight for themselves. They were no longer practically compelled to live on charity, the most demoralizing of all manners of life.

The second great measure of social reform associated with the name of Lord Grey is the abolition of Negro Slavery in our colonies. The slave trade had been put an end to by the Grenville ministry in 1807, but the stoppage of the importation of fresh negroes did not make an end of the unhappy institution itself. Public opinion in England had been growing more and more ashamed that it should linger on within our empire, and an active

The abolition of slavery in the colonies.

agitation against it had been going on for many years. But the West Indian planters refused to take the matter seriously, and scouted several proposals made to them for the gradual abolition of slavery, and even for its amelioration in details. Their uncompromising opposition to change of any kind only made their fate come upon them the more swiftly and surely. In spite of their angry clamour, a bill was passed by which all slaves were made free, though they were bound as apprentices to their former owners for three years, in order to tide over the general breaking up of social institutions which must follow emancipation. As was but just, the planters were given compensation, a sum of £20,000,000 being voted to them in the proportion of £22 10*s*. for every man, woman, and child set free (August 1, 1834).

Effects of abolition on the West Indies.

The emancipation of the negroes was an absolutely necessary act of elementary morality. Nothing could justify the survival of slavery far into the nineteenth century. But from the point of view of the prosperity of the West Indies, the change brought disastrous results. The freed men were idle and disorderly; when the fear of the lash was removed, they did not take kindly to work. The sugar plantations of the West Indies have been gradually ruined by inefficient free labour, which cannot face foreign competition. In the first seven years after the abolition of slavery, the production of sugar fell off by more than a third, and that of coffee by nearly a half. Chinese and Hindoo coolies have been introduced to provide the plantation-labour which the free black refuses to carry on systematically. But no expedient has availed to save the West India planters from ruin, which has been almost completed in our own days by the iniquitous bounties on beet-sugar paid by France and other continental states. Till they are in some way removed or countervailed, it does not seem that prosperity can ever return to the West India Islands.

The main trouble which the Grey cabinet endured in their

otherwise prosperous years of office came from Ireland. Here Daniel O'Connell was hard at work with his agitation for the repeal of the Union: but that proposal never came within the sphere of practical politics, for no single person in Great Britain gave it any support. It was otherwise with a secondary matter to which O'Connell also set his hand. The Irish Catholics had a real grievance in that they were compelled to pay tithe for the support of the Protestant Church of Ireland. Over two-thirds of the land there was hardly any Protestant population, and the rectors and vicars had no congregations. They were largely non-resident, as they had no duties or work in their parishes. That the Romanists should be required to maintain them seemed iniquitous. Flushed with their success in the matter of Catholic Emancipation, the leaders of the peasantry started the "Tithe War"—a campaign against the clergy of the State Church and all who paid them their much-grudged dues.

Ireland—The tithe war.

Outrages were frequent, and riots broke out whenever the forcible collection of tithes was persisted in by the government. Lord Grey prepared remedial measures to do away with the grievance, but also very properly passed a "Coercion Act" to put down the rioters and ruffians who were terrorizing the countryside. For this he was bitterly assailed by O'Connell. There followed unfortunate dissensions within the cabinet as to the exact way in which the repression of violence and the removal of grievances should be combined. Finding many of his colleagues opposed to him, Lord Grey resigned; he was now an old man, and too worn out to face a crisis (July, 1834).

A Coercion Act passed—Lord Grey resigns.

The Whig party replaced their worthy old chief by Lord Melbourne, one of the Canningites of 1828. But the king thought that the Tories should be given their chance, and invited Sir Robert Peel to form a ministry. He did so, and dissolved parliament; but Toryism had not recovered from

the dreadful blow which had been dealt it by the Reform Bill. In the new parliament the Whigs were in a decided majority, and Sir Robert had to resign after having held office for no more than three months (December, 1834—March, 1835).

Lord Melbourne then returned to power, bringing with him nearly all his old colleagues who had served Lord Grey. His ministry lasted from 1835 to 1841, and forms one of the most uninteresting periods in the history of the century; there have been probably no six years between 1800 and 1900 whose annals have been more thoroughly forgotten. Their political history is mainly occupied by two agitations which led to nothing, and whose details have grown tedious—O'Connell's "Repeal" movement and the "Chartist" troubles. Both seemed serious enough at the time, but died out, and were not renewed for another generation.

The Melbourne ministry.

The one event of first-rate importance which occurred during the rule of the Melbourne cabinet was the death of King William IV. on June 20, 1837. His two daughters had died in infancy, so that the succession devolved on his niece, Alexandrina Victoria, the only child of his next brother, Edward Duke of Kent. All through King William's reign the eyes of the nation had been eagerly fixed on this young princess, for her life was the only one which stood between the crown and her uncle, Ernest Duke of Cumberland, the most unpopular and worthless of the sons of George III. It was a great relief to the whole people to see her ascend the throne at the age of eighteen, in health and vigour that gave every prospect of a long reign. Hanover, where the succession was entailed in the male line, passed away to the Duke of Cumberland, who made himself as much disliked there as he had been in England. The Electorate had been united to the English crown for 123 years; its separation was an unqualified benefit, for it had perpetually involved Great Britain in

Accession of Queen Victoria—Hanover separated from England.

countless problems of continental policy in which we had no real concern.

The admirable sovereign who still wears the crown of the United Kingdom, after a reign unparalleled for length and prosperity among all the annals of her predecessors, was little known to her subjects in 1837. She had been brought up very simply—almost, indeed, in seclusion—by her mother, Victoria of Coburg, the Dowager-duchess of Kent, who had been determined that she should not court any of the invidious popularity that comes to heirs apparent who show themselves too conspicuously during their predecessors' lifetime. But as her people came to know her, they recognized that they were fortunate in possessing the most blameless ruler that Great Britain has ever seen, the pattern and model for all constitutional sovereigns that ever wore a crown. She was conspicuously free from all the hereditary faults of her family; simple in her tastes, straightforward in act and speech, full of consideration for others, always striving to do her duty as a sovereign and a woman, she soon won and always retained her subjects' esteem and admiration.

Character of the queen.

Her personal character has been not the least among the influences which have led to a general rise in the morals of English society during her reign. Married four years after her accession to her cousin Albert of Saxe-Coburg, she gave the world an example of perfect domestic happiness, combined with the unremitting discharge of public duties. To those who remembered the court of George IV., the change made in a few years was astonishing. If there was ever any chance in the first quarter of the century that the monarchy might go down before the incoming flood of democratic ideas, the queen's character and conduct soon averted the danger. Nor can his meed of praise be denied to her husband, who discharged with rare self-restraint the difficult functions of a

Marriage of the queen with Albert of Saxe-Coburg.

Prince Consort. In spite of the vague distrust with which he was at first regarded, owing to his foreign birth, he showed that he was able to adapt himself to English political ideas and usages. In spite of many temptations, he never made himself a party man or allowed his name to be used for party purposes.

The change of reign, therefore, had no appreciable effect on the fortunes of the Melbourne ministry. If at first a few bigoted Tories grumbled that the young queen might become a tool in the hands of the Whigs, they were soon undeceived. The main difficulties of the Melbourne cabinet sprang from the fact that the majority which they commanded in the House of Commons was very small, except when it was reinforced by O'Connell and his "tail," as the horde of not very respectable satellites whom he brought to Westminster was often called. At a pinch the Irish would vote with the government to keep out the Tories, but in ordinary times they preferred to worry it, in order to make their power felt, and to screw "Repeal," if possible, out of the Whigs. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the days of the Melbourne cabinet were singularly unmarked by legislation of any kind, good or bad. The only really important measure which was passed was one to redeem Lord Grey's pledge of 1834 on the matter of the Irish tithe, from which the Roman Catholic peasantry were now wholly relieved—the payment being transferred to their landlords, who were mainly members of the Established Church.

The ministry and O'Connell—The tithe grievance removed.

The most marked feature of the years 1835–41 in the internal history of England was the fruitless "Chartist" agitation. Though it took a political shape, this movement was really social in its character. It was caused by the disappointment felt by the labouring masses at the small profit which they had got out of the passage of the Reform Bill and the advent of the Whigs to office. They had

The People's Charter.

vaguely believed that a millennium of prosperity would follow the purification of the House of Commons. When disappointed in this, they did not take warning, and reflect that the possession of political rights does not necessarily bring happiness or prosperity in its train. The demagogues who led them persuaded themselves that all would go well if only further reforms on more democratic lines were carried out. They therefore drew up the "People's Charter," from which their followers became known as Chartists; it demanded six concessions from the government: (1) universal suffrage was to replace the £10 household suffrage introduced in 1832; (2) voting was to be by ballot; (3) members of parliament were to receive a salary; (4) all the existing boroughs and counties were to be recast into electoral districts of equal population; (5) no qualification of property was to be required from members of parliament; (6) parliaments were to be annual, instead of sitting for seven years. If all these demands had been granted in a lump, they would not have really done anything towards helping the Chartists to higher wages or shorter hours of work, which were in reality the aims for which they were ready to fight. An outspoken popular speaker put the case clearly when he declared in 1838 that "the principle of the Charter means that every working man in the land has the right to a good coat, a good hat, a good dinner, no more work than will keep him in health, and as much wages as will keep him in plenty." Practically, in spite of its purely political form, the Chartist agitation was only an earlier shape of the demand for the "living wage" of which we hear so much to-day.

Of the six points of the Charter, the second, fourth, and fifth have been practically conceded for many years; the first is not far from completion since 1884, when all house-holders and most lodgers were enfranchised. No one can seriously suppose that the payment of members would revolutionize the character of parliament, and it is now universally conceded that annual dissolutions and

Progress of the Chartist agitation.

general elections would be an unqualified nuisance. Yet over this programme, perfectly incapable of producing the social benefits which were desired, the masses of the great manufacturing towns expended a vast amount of sound and fury between the years 1838 and 1848. They never had any leaders of weight or note, capable of guiding them with firmness and keeping them out of mischief. Hence they soon turned to aimless and destructive rioting, and thereby caused the whole middle class to rally round the government and determine that the "Charter" should on no account be conceded. In a riot at Birmingham in 1839, the damage done was so wanton and malicious, that the Duke of Wellington declared that it exceeded anything that he had seen in the towns carried by assault during the Peninsular War. At Newport, in Monmouthshire, a mob of five thousand Welsh miners armed with scythes and fowling-pieces seized the town, and had to be fired on by the soldiery. Such scenes made any further democratic reforms impossible, and though the Chartists kept bombarding parliament with monster petitions for the next nine years, no government, Whig or Tory, showed the least signs of listening to their threats. When they grew very violent in 1848, under the influence of news of revolutions on the Continent, 200,000 special constables appeared in the streets of London to aid the armed forces of the crown, and the Chartist meetings collapsed ignominiously.

Revival of the Tory or Conservative party.

The Melbourne government went out in August, 1841, and the Tory party, after eleven years of powerlessness, were once more in office. Under their new leader, Sir Robert Peel, they were a very different body from their ancestors of the days before the Reform Bill. Their wish to break with the reactionary traditions of Addington and Castlereagh is shown by the fact that they had now adopted the new name of "Conservatives." Their programme was no longer unintelligent resistance to all change, and while opposing the violent designs of the Chartists

and the Irish, they were quite willing to adopt cautious measures of advance in both constitutional and social legislation. The party, in fact, was led by chiefs who represented the Canningite Tories of 1828, and who were no longer divided by any very wide gulf from their Whig opponents. It was the same with the bulk of their adherents: the Chartists had frightened the middle classes into the Conservative ranks by tens of thousands. The feeble Melbourne government had entirely failed to keep together the great army which had won the victory of the Reform Bill. Peel himself was a commanding figure, more fitted to lead a great party than any statesman who had appeared since the death of William Pitt. He was the son of a wealthy Lancashire manufacturer, not one of the old ring of Tory landholders. His enlightened views on social and economic questions made him popular with the middle classes. In his foreign policy he was as firm as his rival Palmerston. As a financier and an administrator he was unrivalled in his age—finance, indeed, had always been the weak point of the Whigs. He was perhaps a little autocratic and impatient with the slower and more antiquated members of his party, but no one could have foreseen in 1841 that his rule was not to be a long one, and that he was ultimately destined to break up, not to consolidate, the Conservative party.

Sir Robert Peel.

His firm rule kept down the Chartists, and caused the final collapse of the "Repeal" movement in Ireland. O'Connell had been promising his countrymen Home Rule for many years and with most eloquent verbosity, but they grew tired when all his talk ended in nothing. The installation in office of a Tory government with a crushing majority in the Commons, left him no chance of using the votes of his "tail" to any effect. He had always set his face against insurrection and outrage, and when peaceful means became obviously useless to attain his end, both he and his followers fell into a state of depression.

End of the Repeal movement in Parliament.

The Peel government did not take his agitation too seriously: he was arrested for treasonable language used at a monster meeting at Tara in 1843, but the House of Lords reversed his condemnation on a technical point, and no further proceedings were taken against him. But his following broke up, the majority sinking into apathy, while the minority resolved to appeal, in the old fashion of 1798, to armed insurrection—a method even more hopeless for gaining their end than monster meetings. But it was not till five years later that they made their attempt.

Meanwhile, Peel passed many admirable laws for the benefit of the working classes. His Mines Acts (1842) prohibited the labour of women and children underground; his Factory Acts (1844) restricted the employment of the young in factories, and appointed inspectors to see to their sanitation and safety. He also set right the finances of the kingdom, which Lord Melbourne had left in a very unsatisfactory state, and did much for the introduction of Free-trade in commerce. In one year he reduced the import duties on no less than 750 articles of daily use, ranging from live cattle and eggs to hemp and timber. The loss in revenue this caused he made up by imposing an Income Tax, which he promised to abolish at an early date. He lost office ere the time came, and his successors have never made very serious efforts to redeem his pledge.

The Factory Acts—Financial legislation.

In foreign affairs the Peel cabinet had many troubles to face, but came safely through most of them. The disastrous Afghan war,* a legacy from Lord Melbourne's time, was brought to a not inglorious end. The first Sikh war, an even greater trial of our strength in the East, finally ended in complete victory. Two quarrels with France seemed likely for a moment to end in hostilities; both were provoked by the arrogant policy of the ministers of Louis Philippe. In 1844 the French laid

Afghan and Sikh wars—Difficulties with France.

* See chapter on India and the Colonies.

violent hands on, and deported, our consul at Tahiti, in Polynesia. Firmly faced and threatened with war, they apologized and paid him compensation. The second quarrel was more serious: in order to extend his influence over Spain, the old French king designed to marry one of his sons to the girl-queen Isabella. Finding that this proposal met with general resentment in Europe, and especially in England, he determined to secure his purpose in a more roundabout way. He married his son, the Duke of Montpensier, to the queen's sister, her natural heiress, while he bribed the Spanish court and ministry to give the hand of their unfortunate young sovereign to her cousin Don Francisco, a wretched weakling whom she detested (1846). He intended that Montpensier should be the practical ruler of the country as long as Isabella lived, and succeed to her throne when she died. This villainous plot against a helpless girl succeeded for the moment, but failed in the end, because Louis Philippe lost his own kingdom in 1848, and so was not able to support his son. It was carried out in the last months of Peel's power, and the resenting of its successful accomplishment passed to the Whig cabinet which followed him. Lord Palmerston broke sharply with France, but did not press the quarrel to the point of war. It caused, however, a final rupture with the French king, with whom we had hitherto been on rather friendly terms, and the fall of the old intriguer in 1848 was welcomed by most Englishmen as a righteous judgment on his sins.

The Spanish marriages.

Peel's later years of office (1845–6) were made unhappy by a domestic calamity of appalling violence—the dreadful potato-famine in Ireland. In other countries the complete destruction of the potato crop by blight in two successive years would have caused nothing more than serious inconvenience. But in Ireland half the nation depended on the root. The population had been multiplying with appalling rapidity; in thirty years it had risen from five to eight millions, and this not owing to flourishing trade or manufactures,

The Irish famine.

or to any great increase in the amount of land cultivated. The landlords had been permitting their tenants to cut up their farms into smaller and smaller patches, till an average holding did not suffice to support its occupier, who had to make up the deficit by seeking harvest work in England during the summer. Several millions of people were living on these wretched patches of ground, always on the edge of starvation, and sustained only by their potatoes. On such an indigent population two years of blight brought absolute famine. Before the disaster was fully realized, thousands had perished from actual hunger, or from the fevers and dysentery following on bad and insufficient food. The workhouses were crammed till they could hold no more, and outdoor relief did not yet exist in Ireland. Far too late, the government began to establish public soup-kitchens, and pour in food of all kinds. But it was long before relief could penetrate to out-of-the-way districts, and the famine was prolonged for many months.

The Corn Law question.

Sir Robert Peel, deeply impressed by the horrors of the situation, came to the conclusion that the best remedy would be the abolition of the protective duties on home-grown corn, which rendered difficult in such crises the importation of foreign food. After much thought, he resolved to introduce a bill providing for the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1849, and introducing for the three intervening years a low scale of duties. This bold step caused immediate division in the Tory camp; the great landowners, who formed such a large and powerful section of the party, were convinced that free trade in corn meant the ruin of English agriculture, and many of them resolved to follow Peel no longer. Several of his colleagues in the cabinet resigned, and many scores of members in the Commons announced that they should vote against their great chief's bill. The discontented faction was headed by Lord George Bentinck and Benjamin Disraeli, who now first appeared prominently in politics. He was the son of a Jewish man of letters, and had

hitherto been regarded as little more than an ingenious charlatan, though his somewhat bombastic and turgid novels showed plenty of cleverness and wit. Now, by organizing the opponents of Peel into a solid body, he showed that he could do something in practical politics.

The repeal of the Corn Laws was carried by Peel only with the assistance of the votes of his opponents, the Whigs, by 337 votes to 240—the minority including two-thirds of the Tory party (May 16, 1846). Two months later the Protectionists took their revenge on their former chief by uniting with the Whigs to throw out a Bill intended to put down agrarian crime in Ireland (July, 1846). Peel at once resigned. His enlightened and courageous action with regard to the Corn Laws had not only doomed him to sit in opposition for the rest of his life, but had hopelessly broken up the Conservative party. It was now divided into two irreconcilable sections, for Peel could not forgive the rebels who had turned him out of office, while the Protectionists looked upon him as a traitor who had cast away one of the main planks of the party platform. Such hard words had passed between them that they could not easily forgive each other. Hence it is not strange that the Conservatives were destined never to enjoy a real parliamentary majority again for nearly thirty years.

Repeal of the Corn Laws —Break-up of the Conservative party.

Meanwhile, the Whigs returned to office under Lord John Russell, the introducer of the Reform Bill of 1832, an adroit party politician, full of buoyant self-confidence, but not a man of any great mark or originality. Palmerston, a much more notable figure, resumed his place at the Foreign Office, which he was now to hold without any appreciable break for twenty years more, till his death in 1865. The new government had to take over two troublesome legacies from their predecessors, the Irish famine and the still-lingering Chartist agitation.

Lord John Russell's ministry.

In dealing with the former, they did not show themselves much

more effective than the Conservatives—there was still a vast mortality from fever and dysentery in 1846, which might have been prevented by really active measures of relief. In the following year, when the stress of the famine was over, the Irish landlords tried to free themselves from the danger of such another disaster, by suddenly reversing their former policy of multiplying small tenants on diminutive holdings. They began at once to consolidate the small farms into large ones by evicting their weakest and poorest tenants. This process was carried out in many cases with inconsiderate haste and reckless cruelty, families which had been brought low by the famine being cast out on the roadside by thousands. The greater part of them ultimately struggled across the Atlantic to the United States. The policy was the correct one from the point of view of economy, but it was worked out with inexcusable disregard for the sufferings of the evicted.

Irish policy of the government—Evictions and emigration.

The general indignation felt for the clearances of 1847 was the main cause of the Irish rising of 1848. A large body of O'Connell's former followers had some years before seceded from him, because they insisted that armed rebellion was justifiable, while he had been all for peaceful agitation. Now they struck their blow, and proved themselves (July, 1848) utterly unable to do anything serious. Smith O'Brien, an enthusiastic and well-meaning member of parliament, was their chosen leader, and proved a most incompetent general and organizer. He collected 2000 armed men, but his campaign ended in a ludicrous fiasco, the "Army of the Irish Republic" being dispersed by fifty constables after a scuffle in a cabbage-garden near Bonlagh, in Tipperary. Smith O'Brien and the other chiefs were tried and condemned for high treason, but the government wisely and mercifully gave them no further punishment than a few years' deportation to the colonies, and granted them "tickets-of-leave" long ere their sentence was out.

Smith O'Brien's insurrection.

The end of the Chartist agitation had fallen a few weeks before the Irish rising, and had been equally ignominious. The London Chartists, having resolved to march on the Houses of Parliament and present a monster petition for the "six points," were forbidden to approach Westminster. They declared their intention of forcing their way thither, but the government called out the troops, and 200,000 special constables answered the appeal for civil aid. Hearing of this army ready to meet them, the Chartists very wisely, but rather tamely, went home, after sending their vast petition to the Commons in three cabs. The fact that April 14, 1848, was a very rainy day seems to have had a good deal to do with this absurd fiasco.

End of the Chartist agitation.

The ease with which sedition and rebellion had been crushed in the United Kingdom in 1848, contrasted strangely with the height to which they rose on the Continent in the same year. The hidden fires which had once before flamed out in 1830 now burst forth again with even greater violence, and every state except Russia was soon in a conflagration. In Italy and Hungary the insurrections were purely national and directed against the foreign yoke of the House of Habsburg. In Germany and France they were partly political, partly social in character, and aimed at a sweeping change in the constitution in the direction of liberalism. In Spain they were purely factious, and only rose from the desperate strife of ambitious party leaders.

Revolutionary agitation in Europe.

The trouble started in France, where Louis Philippe in his old age was growing forgetful of his position as a constitutional king, and after eighteen years of fairly successful rule thought himself firm upon his throne. He set himself to oppose an agitation for the extension of the franchise, and by obstinately repressing all concessions, and putting down the meetings which the liberal party organized, provoked widespread discontent. The opposition, which had at first been peaceable and orderly, was gradually

Fall of Louis Philippe.

encouraged into violence by the mixture of obstinacy and vacillation which Louis Philippe displayed. On February 24 riots broke out in Paris: the king declined to allow the prompt and stern use of force, and tried to conciliate the rioters. But finding him so weak, they cried aloud for his deposition, and Louis Philippe, with a feebleness strange in one who had shown himself a good soldier on the field of battle, abdicated and fled in disguise. His family were sent into exile after him, and the almost bloodless insurrection ended in the creation of a republic. A show of firmness would have averted the revolution, for the middle classes had no desire for it, and the army would have obeyed orders if only they had been given at the right moment. The republicans, too, were divided among themselves, for the moderate wing was desperately afraid of the extremists, who were deeply imbued with socialistic views, and wished to introduce all manner of experiments in the direction of state-socialism. There was street-fighting in Paris before the Republic was four months old, and ere the year was out a President was put at the helm of the state, with the avowed object of suppressing anarchy and civil war by the use of armed force.

This "saviour of society" was most unwisely chosen; the man to whom France entrusted her safety was Louis Napoleon, the nephew of Napoleon I., an adventurer who had already headed two hair-brained risings against Louis Philippe on avowed imperialist lines. To suppose that such a personage—who loved to style himself "the nephew of his uncle," and was the heir of the old Bonapartist tradition—would settle down into the mere president of a Conservative republic was absurd. Louis Napoleon from the first set himself to get all the threads of power into his hands, in order to make himself an autocrat at the earliest opportunity.

Louis Napoleon.

Meanwhile, the French revolution of March, 1848, had set Europe on fire. In Italy there was a general insurrection

against the Austrian yoke, headed by Charles Albert, King of Sardinia. But the peninsula was not yet ripe for liberty; the insurgents in the various regions were full of local patriotism, and many of them dreamed of nothing but restoring the old republics of the Middle Ages. They failed to give each other loyal aid, and were betrayed by their princes, who saw that Italian liberty would mean Italian unity and their own expulsion. The pope and King of Naples contrived to paralyze the armies of Southern Italy, and the Sardinians, who were left almost unaided, proved not strong enough to expel the Austrians. After two campaigns, Charles Albert was crushed and compelled to abdicate (March, 1849); while the gallant but useless defence of Venice and Rome by local patriots, who had declared in favour of republicanism, had no effect on the general current of the war, and only served to prolong its miseries. With the fall of Rome (July, 1849) the struggle ended: the City of the Popes fell, not before the Austrians, but before a French force sent out by Louis Napoleon to "restore order" in the Papal States. Thus the nominal French republic showed its real character by dealing the *coup de grâce* to the republicans of the sister country. A Bonaparte could not be a true lover of liberty.

Insurrection in Italy.

The movement crushed by the Austrians.

The triumph of the Austrians in Italy seems most extraordinary, when we remember that they were at the same time oppressed by a democratic rising in Vienna and a great national rebellion in Hungary. The insurgents of the capital were put down after a severe struggle (October, 1848); but the Hungarians, under the dictator Kossuth, made head against the imperial armies, inflicted several defeats on them, and drove them back into Austria. Thereupon the Czar Nicholas of Russia, fearing that Poland would follow Hungary's example, poured his armies across the Carpathians to the aid of the young Emperor Francis

Risings in Austria and Hungary put down.

Joseph, and crushed the insurgents by force of numbers (August, 1849).

In Germany the troubles had been widespread, but not so bloody as in the south and east. The King of Prussia, driven for a moment from his capital, returned at the head of an army and frightened the insurgents into dispersing without loss of life (November, 1848). The German diet at Frankfort, which met with vague ideas of unifying the numerous states of the Fatherland into a single empire, went to pieces without having accomplished anything, for no two delegates agreed together in their views, and the conservative influences were strong. An attempt had been made to rouse national enthusiasm by an attack on Denmark, to free the German duchies of Holstein and Schleswig, from their vassalage to Frederick VII., but it miscarried hopelessly (June, 1848), and a democratic rising in South Germany was easily suppressed. When Austria's hands were freed by the end of the Italian and Hungarian revolts, the rest of Germany sank back into its former dependence on her. An attempt to set up Prussia in her place as head of a new German Empire (February, 1849) had come to nought, for King Frederick William IV. refused the proffered crown, seeing that by accepting it he must become involved in a war with Austria, and probably with Russia also, when those powers had crushed Charles Albert and Kossuth.

Democratic movements in the German states.

Lord Palmerston had a task of no mean difficulty when confronted with all the troubles of 1848–9. His own sympathy, and that of the English people, lay with the Italians and Hungarians. But it was obviously not our business to interfere directly in foreign constitutional and national struggles, in which we had no immediate concern. Palmerston let it be known that he would "take advantage of all opportunities to press counsels of order and peace on the contending parties," but that he would do nothing more. This policy laid him open to the charge of

Attitude of Lord Palmerston.

using strong language, but not backing it up by strong action, and he was bitterly attacked by the friends of Italy and Hungary for giving them no more than fair words. But it is quite certain that if he had entered on a crusade in favour of national rights and the liberty of peoples, we should have found ourselves engaged in war with the greater part of the governments of Europe. No help would have come from France, the other power which ought to have favoured the liberal side, for Louis Napoleon acted always as a self-seeking autocrat, and not as the president of a republic.

It was a hard day for the friends of liberty, when, in 1849, the last struggles of the insurgents of Italy and Hungary were put down by the Austrian and Russian bayonets. But the end was not yet; as Palmerston observed, "opinions may in the end prove stronger than armies." Before he died in 1865, he saw his prophecy fulfilled in part, and ere a quarter of a century had passed, Italy was united, and Hungary autonomous.

Meanwhile England had passed with the minimum of friction and trouble through the years which had been so disastrous to the Continental states. The two lingering dangers, Chartism and Irish rebellion, which had remained as an incubus on men's minds for the last ten years, had been faced and found to be mere empty terrors. Nothing more was heard of them, and it was twenty years before the discontents of which they were the outward sign again came to the front. The political horizon was more clear of clouds than at any previous time in the century, and the commercial prosperity of the United Kingdom was very marked—whether it came, as some said, from the triumph of the free-trade principles which Peel had introduced, or, as others maintained, from the confidence which had been inspired in the world by England's easy and triumphant passage through the troubles of 1848. There was a general feeling of buoyancy and optimism in the air, and a widespread confidence in the future. It may appear strange to us, who remember the

Prosperity and confidence in England.

thwarted hopes of 1848–9, that English public opinion thought that the Continent had settled down into quiet. But it is certain that the most confident language was used concerning the future reign of peace and goodwill among the nations of Europe. The success of the first great international exhibition, held in London in 1851, was, by a rather shallow train of thought, interpreted as a sign of the advent of a new era, in which war was to be abandoned as an anachronism, and the nations were to contend against each other only in the peaceful field of industry, settling all their disputes by arbitration.

The Exhibition of 1851.

This foolish confidence was first shaken by the events of December, 1851. Louis Napoleon, showing himself in his true colours after three years of dissembling, suddenly suppressed the French republic. He had packed the army and the civil service with his hired partisans till all was ready for a *coup d'état*. He struck promptly and most unscrupulously; the republican leaders were thrown into prison, their partisans who attempted resistance were shot down by hundreds in the streets (December 2), and a military dictatorship was set up. Twelve months later the usurper declared himself emperor under the name of Napoleon III. (1852).

The Second empire in France.

The President's stroke for power brought about, by a curious chance, the dismissal of Palmerston from office. The great foreign minister had more than once of late years drawn down rebuke on himself, for taking important political steps without giving either the queen or his colleagues fair warning. Now he offended them more bitterly than ever, by notifying to the French ambassador his recognition of the new government, without taking the trouble to obtain the previous sanction of the sovereign and the ministry. His conduct was indeed deserving of much blame, for the recognition of the new Bonapartist *régime* was not a thing to be lightly and heedlessly granted;

Recognition of Napoleon III. by Lord Palmerston.

but Palmerston was glad to see a strong government superseding the sham republic of 1848–51, and seems to have determined to force the hands of his colleagues.

Lord John Russell, furious at such an act of insubordination, dismissed Palmerston from office (December 19, 1851). But he had not foreseen that he was thereby likely to bring about his own fall. The late foreign minister played on him the same trick that the Protectionists had played on Peel in 1846. A few weeks later (February 16) Palmerston led a considerable number of his friends and supporters into the opposition lobby, to vote with the Conservatives against a Militia Bill which Lord John had introduced. The measure was rejected, and the Whig minority had to resign (February 16, 1852).

Palmerston's dismissal—Fall of Lord John Russell's ministry.

If Sir Robert Peel had still been alive, the Tories would have had a chance of recovering their ancient power. But that great statesman had been killed by a fall from his horse on Constitution Hill (June 29, 1850). His party was still broken up by the feud between Free-traders and Protectionists, and the two halves would not co-operate with each other. The queen called on Lord Derby, the head of the latter section, to form a ministry, which he and Disraeli (Lord George Bentinck, their other leader, was already dead) proceeded to attempt. They held office for a few months (March to November, 1852), but soon had to retire, as they did not at any time possess a majority in Parliament. A combination of the Whigs and the Peelite Conservatives swept them out of power before they had any opportunity of leaving their mark on English policy. Their short term of office, indeed, is only remembered for Disraeli's ingenious financial schemes, whereby he for the first time won the respect of the country, and came to be considered as something more than an able adventurer. It is also worth noting that while they were in power the great Duke of

Death of Sir R. Peel—Lord Derby's ministry.

Death of the Duke of Wellington.

Wellington passed away (September 14), having long survived all the other statesmen of the generation which had fought through the Napoleonic wars and faced the evil days which followed them. In his later years his political errors had been forgotten, and he enjoyed the respect and esteem of the whole nation, which only remembered, when thinking of him, the glories of Assaye, Salamanca, and Waterloo.

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY VICTORIAN ENGLAND.

1852.

WHEN we survey the nineteenth century from its last year but one, the first fact that strikes us is that its earlier half was a time of much more rapid and sweeping change than its second. We have now in our narrative passed the dividing-line between them, and reached the year 1852. The most cursory glance is enough to show us that the difference between the England of 1852 and the England of 1899 is far less than that between the England of 1801 and that of 1852. Almost all the great movements, social, economic, and political, which have given the century its character, were well developed before the time of the Crimean War. It is much the same with literature—all the greater writers of the century had started on their career before that date. In matters religious, the High Church movement in England—the main feature of the century—had been well started: the disruption of the Scottish Church into the Established and the Free Kirks had been completed. It is the same with the great discoveries and inventions which have changed the face of the land and the character of everyday life. The England of 1801 knew not the steamboat and the railway, the electric telegraph and illuminating powers of

Review of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Social and political movements.

Literature.

Religious movements.

Scientific discoveries and inventions.

gas; the England of 1852 was habitually employing them all, though it had still much to learn in the way of perfecting their use.

The greatest change of all, the transformation of the United Kingdom from a state mainly dependent on agriculture to an essentially manufacturing community, is also the work of the first half of the nineteenth century. We have already spoken of the enormous development of trade during the years of the great French war, but the prosperity of the landed interest had also been very great as long as that struggle lasted, and at its end the number of the inhabitants of the realm more or less directly interested in agriculture was still reckoned to exceed that engaged in manufactures. The great towns contained less than twenty per cent. of the population of England, while by 1852 they counted nearly forty per cent., and at the present day have risen to more than half of the total.* It was the gradual and silent change in proportion between the tillers of the soil and the townsmen, between 1815 and 1840, that made Free Trade inevitable. When the producers of food-stuffs had become a clear minority, it was absurd that the large majority to whom cheap corn was essential, should be taxed for their benefit. The landed aristocracy strove long to retain for agriculture its privileged position, and tried to cover the material benefits which protection brought to themselves, by patriotic talk as to the necessity for keeping England self-sufficing in her food-supply. When it became clear that population was growing too fast for the kingdom ever to be able to supply all its own needs, so that some amount of foreign aid must always be called in, the

Growth of the manufacturing and urban population—Free trade.

* In 1891 the purely rural "Sanitary Districts" of England had only 11,076,315 inhabitants out of a total population of 29,000,000. The total of the great towns in 1811 had been about 1,850,000 out of a total population of 10,000,000. In 1851 they had risen to be over 6,000,000 out of a total of 17,000,000.

cry for protection had obviously become impossible and effete. When the Derby ministry of 1852 made no open attempt to undo Peel's Free Trade legislation, it was realized that the old system was quite dead.

We have pointed out in an earlier chapter that the development of new mechanical inventions, and the improvement of machinery, which gave our British manufactures their first start, mostly date from the end of the eighteenth century, and were already at work during the years of the great French war. But the application of steam to the transport of goods, both by water in the sea-going steam-vessel, and by land in the railway train, gave an enormous impetus to our factories. These novelties start the one from the second and the other from the third decade of the century. Down to 1812, heavy goods could only be transported within the kingdom by road or by canal. Both methods were slow and costly, the former especially so; the canal system had of late been much developed, but there are many parts of the land in which physical conditions made the construction of canals impossible. In hilly districts, however favoured they might be by mineral wealth, good water-power, or other natural advantages, roads must be steep and difficult, and canals must cost a prohibitive sum. It was very hard to develop, for example, a coal-field, if it was remote from the sea and situated in a mountainous district.

Steam and the transport of goods.

Difficulties of inland transport.

The case was the same with goods destined for foreign markets. Only places specially favoured by their nearness to a great harbour, or their easy accessibility by canals, could readily move their products to the sea and place them on ship-board. When once stowed on the vessel, they were at the mercy of the wind and weather: since only sailing ships existed, their time of arrival at the foreign port was uncertain; often it might be protracted for months beyond the expected time. The time and the cost

Difficulties in the way of foreign trade.

of transport were things which even the most experienced merchant could not accurately calculate.

The improvement in the means of transport began slightly earlier on sea than on land. After many experiments and half-successful trials, the steamboat emerged as a regular method of conveyance towards the end of the great French war. The earliest paddle-wheel steamers were employed for river-navigation alone. Their first use was seen in America about 1807, but five years later the *Comet* commenced running up and down the Clyde.

The first steamboats and railways.

The possibilities of the invention were soon grasped, and it was in a very few years applied to ocean navigation, at first for short voyages, but ere very long for the longest possible distances. The first steamer crossed the Atlantic as early as 1819, but for some time the problem of coal-carrying baffled the naval architect, and steamers on an oceanic voyage were expected to eke out their coal by using sails when the wind was favourable. It was not until twenty years later that the problem was completely solved, and the great steamship companies began to be formed: the Royal Mail Packet Company started in 1839, the Peninsular and Oriental and the Cunard Companies in 1840. By 1852 most of the passenger traffic and the transport of all valuable and perishable goods had passed under the charge of steam, the old sailing vessels being relegated to the carrying of bulky and cheap commodities—such as coal or timber—whose rapid delivery made not much difference in their price.

Steam used for ocean voyages.

Steam navigation shortened in the most astounding way the time required for the transport of British goods to the remotest ends of the earth. It made time a calculable feature in commerce, instead of an element absolutely incalculable. Freights could be estimated with an accuracy and minuteness hitherto impossible; orders could be carried and executed at half their former cost. Hence British commerce was able to invade many new markets,

Resulting expansion of British trade.

and to compete with foreign manufactures in regions whose remoteness had once handicapped the development of trade.

The political effects of steam-navigation are another branch of its influence that cannot be neglected. It made the government of colonies and dependencies infinitely more easy, by shortening the time required for the exchange of question and answer between the local and the imperial government. The change had, no doubt, certain drawbacks; it rendered the meddling interference of the central authority in matters of petty detail more possible, and tended to make weak officials refer everything home, instead of using their own initiative. These developments, however, have only become really dangerous since the electric telegraph, a generation later, placed Whitehall in direct communication with every colonial capital. Meanwhile, steam had done nothing but good when it placed Calcutta at six weeks' instead of six months' distance from London, a feat accomplished after 1845, when the Peninsular and Oriental Company adopted the "Overland Route" by Alexandria and Suez, abandoning the long voyage round the Cape of Good Hope.

Political effects of steam-navigation.

It is curious to find how late steam was applied to our war navy. Before the screw superseded the paddle-wheel, and before armour had been invented, both the wheels of the steamer and her driving-machinery were much exposed to hostile shot and shell. Hence it was held that the type was too fragile for battle, and the old sailing ship-of-the line retained its place till the Crimean War. Steamers, when at last introduced, were only used as tugs and tenders, and were expected to keep to the rear when fighting was in progress. The first sea-going steam-ship in the navy was built as late as 1833. The first new line-of-battle ship driven by steam was only launched in 1852; this vessel, the *Agamemnon*, was fitted with the screw, which, since 1840, had already begun to supersede the paddle-wheel. But it was not

Employment of steam in war-vessels.

till the idea of covering warships with armour was conceived that the Admiralty finally ceased to employ the old sailing-vessels, of the type that Nelson had loved, as the main force of the navy.

Astounding as were the changes wrought by the invention of steam-ships, the daily life of the world has been even more influenced by the appearance of the railway and the steam-locomotive. Two ideas had to be combined for the production of this new device: tramways, on which waggons were drawn by horses, had been known since 1801; steam-locomotives, which lumbered along the high-road like modern traction-engines, had first been seen in 1803. The notion that the locomotive could be made to drag trucks along the tramway-line was the initial idea of our whole railway system. The experiment was tried at first only on the smallest scale in quarries and coal-mines. It was successful, but attracted no great attention till 1821, when George Stephenson, the father of railways, built the first line of any appreciable length, to connect the two north-country towns of Stockton and Darlington. This venture proved so successful that, four years later, Stephenson was employed to design a railroad to join Manchester with Liverpool. This undertaking was completed in five years, and in September, 1830, the first train was run. By a deplorable chance, it killed Huskisson, the great Tory champion of free trade. Engines had already improved so much, that trains of 1830 could travel at what was then considered the dangerous and break-neck rate of thirty miles an hour.

Growth of railways.

The first promoters of railways had imagined that they would be mainly employed for carrying goods; that passenger-traffic would form an important branch of their business does not seem to have occurred to them. The earliest first-class carriages were old stage-coaches fastened down to trucks, while third-class passengers were conveyed in open vans like those now employed to

Development of passenger traffic.

carry cattle. It was only the enormous and unexpected influx of travellers that led to the construction of proper carriages for their convenience. From the moment that the Liverpool and Manchester railway proved a great success, lines began to be laid all over the country. The public, which had once been sceptical as to the whole matter, hastened to subscribe money for every railway scheme that could be broached, even for those which were obviously not likely to pay. The great period of expansion lay between 1830 and 1850, and by the later date all the present main lines, except the "Midland" and the "London, Chatham, and Dover," had come into existence. Two great panics caused by over-speculation occurred in 1836 and 1845, but the development of the national railway system was such a genuine and such a profitable thing that such troubles only gave it a momentary check.

Railways can go, thanks to the skill of the modern engineer, into any corner of the earth where there is traffic sufficient to make them pay. Hence their creation opened out numerous corners of Great Britain which physical difficulties had hitherto kept in seclusion and poverty. Wherever coal and iron existed, they could now be utilized. Wherever manufactures are produced, they can easily be conveyed to the centres of home consumption or to the seaports which send them to foreign lands. Not the least important side of railway extension was that it made possible the easy transfer of labour from place to place. Down to 1830 the population of England had not been migratory; men seldom moved far from the region where they had been born and bred. But with the sudden appearance of means of quick and cheap locomotion, it became easy for the working classes to go far afield. Even in remote country districts the hitherto stationary rural classes began to move, mainly in order to invade the towns, where labour was better paid, and life more lively and bustling, if not more attractive in other ways.

The easy intercommunication between regions hitherto kept

apart led to the combination of the workmen in various lines of manufacture into "Trades Unions," for the purpose of securing by united action advantages which the individual or the men of a single district could not wring from their employers. Such associations had once been prohibited by Act of Parliament, and it was only in 1824 that they became legal. Their power from the first was very great, but has not always been wisely used. Excellent for securing the fair rise in wages during times of prosperity, they have often tried to prevent the equally rational fall in wages during periods of stagnation and adversity. Strikes set on foot for such objects may ruin the employer, but are also bound to starve the employed, since trade cannot be carried on at a loss. It is hopeless to endeavour to force the manufacturer to pay more than the state of the market enables him to give. If the strike under such circumstances is persisted in, the branch of industry in which it occurs must fail, and it is almost certain that the profits formerly made in it will be transferred to the foreigner. In their earlier days Trades Unions had another very legitimate sphere of operations, in dealing with the abuses and oppression which prevailed in many factories. The law had not yet taken notice of many evil features of the new manufacturing system which had sprung up during the great French war. Overcrowding, over-long hours of work, insanitary conditions of life, careless supervision in dangerous employments, were all rife. Against such criminal negligence on the part of employers the Unions could bring pressure to bear, and did so with the best results.

Trades unions and strikes.

The larger amount, however, of the legislation for the reform of factory life was due rather to the improved spirit of public opinion than to the direct pressure of the Trades Unions. The same humanitarian feeling which led to the abolition of negro slavery, or to the reform of the criminal laws, led men to take a legitimate interest in the welfare of the workers in great towns. Believing that every

The Factory Acts.

Englishman was responsible for any unnecessary misery inflicted on his poorer countrymen, philanthropists like Lord Shaftesbury led the agitation for the restriction of child-labour, the inspection of mines and factories, and the abolition of such abuses as the payment of wages in kind instead of money. Allusion has been made in an earlier chapter to these reforms, most of which were carried out between the years 1830 and 1850.

Along with them may be named several other typical developments of the nineteenth century, which show the general rise in the conception of social life. Capital punishment, which had been restricted to a comparatively few offences since Peel began his reforms, was practically abolished for all crimes save murder and treason in 1841. The last execution for forgery had taken place twelve years before, in 1829. The barbarous mutilation of the bodies of traitors was last seen at the execution of Thistlewood and his gang in 1820. The detestable practice of duelling barely survived into the forties. Drunkenness ceased to be tolerated in polite society, and a series of Acts starting in the "thirties" have slowly succeeded in making it less the typical national vice of Great Britain than it was in the early years of the century. Brutal amusements like prize-fighting have shown a gratifying tendency towards disappearance. In every case public opinion has outrun legislation, and the good effected has been as much the result of social pressure on the individual as of the punishments inflicted by the law.

Other phases of social improvement.

A few words must be spared to give some account of two inventions of no mean importance, which started early in the reign of Victoria, and have done much to modify the daily life of England. The first was the introduction of the penny post in 1840, after a long agitation led by Rowland Hill, who spent several years in convincing obstinate post-office officials that a uniform low rate for all letters delivered within the kingdom would cause gain, and not loss, to the exchequer. Down to 1840 letters were

The penny post.

charged with sums varying from 4*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* In that year the penny rate was accepted, and by 1842 the number of letters sent through the post had tripled itself. A few years later the increase had grown so great that a handsome and ever-growing profit was realized. The first penny letters were obliged to be despatched in government envelopes covered with an elaborate pictorial design, but after a few months the much more convenient adhesive postage stamp was invented, and superseded completely the older plan (1841). The electric telegraph started as a practical scheme about three years later than the penny post. It was originally worked by private companies, not by the government post-office. In 1843 the first line was built, covering the twenty miles between Paddington and Slough. Seven years later the network of poles and wires covered the whole kingdom; and in 1851 the first submarine cable was laid from Dover to Calais. It is almost impossible for us to conceive the change made in everyday life by the introduction of these cheap and quick methods of communication. The only thing that can be said against them is that they have killed the ancient and elegant art of descriptive letter-writing as practised by our grandfathers.

The electric telegraph.

Any account of the first half of the nineteenth century which omitted to notice its extraordinary fertility in literature of the highest class would be very incomplete. No period in English history shows such a cluster of great names; none save the Elizabethan age deserves to be named along with it. The period before the great French war had been a singularly dull one; only a few writers like Burns, Sheridan, Cowper, and Burke had given promise of the great outburst that was at hand. But the generation which grew to manhood in the stress of the struggle, or was born while it was still in progress, seems to have gathered inspiration from the general stir and tumult, intellectual and political, of the times. Even those whose range of topics lay among subjects which did not at

Literature at the opening of the nineteenth century.

once reflect the spirit of the age, were none the less deeply affected by it. In the earliest poems of Wordsworth and Southey, written before the eighteenth century was quite run out, we trace first a profession of faith in the principles of the French Revolution, and a little later a recantation of the error, as they fall into line with the prevailing national sentiment and adopt a strongly British tone.

Sir Walter Scott, the first of the greater poets to break into verse in the new century, was inspired not only by a romantic affection for the picturesque side of mediæval history, but by an ardent patriotism which led him to sing of the events of the great war as they passed by him. It must be confessed that his inspiration was not usually at its best when he dealt with such themes in the "Vision of Don Roderic" or "Waterloo." Lord Byron and Shelley, men of the younger generation, showed the influence of the times in a different way. The former was so deeply bitten by discontent for what he called the "Age of Bronze," that he abused Wellington, and called Waterloo "bloody and most bootless." But his protest against the common national feeling of his day in this respect is only a part of his general attitude of somewhat morbid and affected opposition to the whole state of English society and politics. Posing as a misunderstood genius and a censor of his times, Byron was almost bound to fall foul of the patriotism that had enabled us to fight through the great war. It is some consolation to see him in his last years doing something practical for liberty in the Greek war, instead of merely carping at the honest enthusiasms of his contemporaries. Shelley, on the other hand, was not merely a critic of his times, but an active apostle of political and moral anarchy. It is a thousand pities that the lot of such a poet should have been cast in the days of the French Revolution. The most futile and extravagant doctrines of the French school had a fatal attraction for his high-strung and hysterical mind, and he

Scott.

Byron.

Shelley.

lavished a wealth of splendid imagery on adorning the cheapest revolutionary ideas. Piercing below his glorious diction, we find the old protest against all laws, human and divine, which formed the stock-in-trade of the followers of Rousseau. Shelley was made for something better than denouncing "the crimes and tyrannies of priests and kings." But from the day when he was expelled from Oxford for sending his tract on "The Logical Necessity of Atheism" to the master of his college, he had an incorrigible tendency to take up every perverse idea that was in the air. It is thus that it came to pass that a poet who possessed the greatest mastery over language, the profoundest sympathy with nature, the widest range of thought, and the most abundant flow of beautiful images and ideas, exercised no influence whatever over his own generation.

It is kindest to Byron and Shelley to remember that the bulk of their writings were produced in the days when Lord Liverpool was prime minister. Toryism presented in such a dull shape had in it enough to irritate minds less susceptible than those of poets.

It is astounding to note how the flow of literature of the first class which begins during the great French war continues during the early half of the nineteenth century. Beside the great names which we have mentioned, Keats and Moore in poetry, Charles Lamb and de Quincey among essayists and descriptive writers, Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen among novelists, all start within a few years of each other. The period of 1810–30 is set thick with literary masterpieces, and long before the survivors of the generation which produced them had passed away, the men of the younger age, whom we may call the early-Victorian writers, had begun to work. Tennyson's first book of poems was produced twenty years before the death of Wordsworth; Dickens's earliest sketches were published only five years after Scott's latest novel. Lord Macaulay and Carlyle overlap Lamb and de Quincey. Thackeray, Robert Browning, Charles

Later writers.

Kingsley, and John Ruskin all produced some of their best work before 1852.* Most of these authors of the Early-Victorian time were destined to go on writing into the second half of the century, but all had arrived at maturity in the early years of Victoria's reign, and belong in their character and ideas to the earlier and not the later period of it. We shall note further on the lamentable dwindling of the harvest of first-rate literature in the last decades of the age.

Religious movements —Evangelicalism.

Any account of social change in England in the first half of the nineteenth century must take notice of the extraordinary changes which passed over its religious life during the period. At its beginning, the only vital force in the land was the Evangelical Movement, which had affected the Established Church almost as much as the dissenting bodies. The revival of active energy, which had commenced with Wesley in the middle of the last century, had reached its height by 1800. It had induced multitudes to leave the national Church in order to join the new Methodist sects; but there had remained behind, within the establishment, hundreds of clergy who carried on the Wesleyan tradition, and at the commencement of the century they were the only energetic party. But the Evangelicals were never the majority of the clerical body; there still survived a considerable leaven of the spiritual apathy of earlier Georgian times. The type of vicar who regaled his congregation with dry moral essays by way of sermons, and who regarded all

* It may be worth while to give the dates of these authors, to show the way in which they overlap. Scott died in 1832, Lamb in 1834, Southey in 1843, Wordsworth in 1850, de Quincey in 1859. Macaulay (1800–1859) began to write in 1824. Dickens (1812–70) published his "Sketches by Boz" in 1836. Tennyson (1809-92) issued his "Poems, chiefly Lyrical," in 1830. Thackeray (1811–63) produced his first book in 1840, and his great "Vanity Fair" in 1846-48. Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) was already writing essays in 1822, and issued "Sartor Resartus" in 1831. Charles Kingsley (1819–75) started his work with "The Saints' Tragedy" in 1847. Browning (1812–89) was producing verse as early as 1833. Ruskin's "Modern Painters" began in 1843, and was finished in 1846.

enthusiasm with distrust, was still very common. There is no doubt that the general moral level of the clergy had gone up in the reign of George III. Scandals were no longer frequent, and gross neglect of duty was rare. But outside the ranks of the Evangelicals fervour and activity were wanting. No adequate effort had been made to cope with the difficulties arising from the growth of the new manufacturing towns, or the expansion of London. For the first time in English history, a whole generation had grown up in such centres of population which was quite out of touch of religious instruction, and was tending towards practical heathenism.

Defects of the Evangelical party.

For dealing with such a problem, organization and corporate action were as necessary as zeal and fervour, and want of organization was unfortunately the weak point of the Evangelical party. In energetic missionary work on the individual hearer they were admirable and untiring, but just because their message of conversion was to the individual, they failed to build up any system of Church work and Church life. They had, moreover, never succeeded in getting command of the higher posts in the Church, and were much hampered by the dislike for movement of the bishops, most of whom were still political nominees or mere classical scholars, as in the earlier Georgian age. The Evangelical party were always to the front in schemes for philanthropic and benevolent ends. They had energetically supported the abolition of the Slave Trade and the passing of the Factory Acts; they had been vigorously pressing missionary enterprise in foreign lands, and were mainly responsible for the general rise in the moral tone of society during the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. But there was room in the Church for other developments, which they had been unable or unwilling to supply.

The first of these was that of the "Broad Church" movement, which was running strongly all through the middle of the century. Its exponents disliked the narrow scheme of

salvation and the emotional type of piety which were characteristic of the Evangelical school, and wished to make the Church comprehensive, tolerant, moderate, and learned. The earlier men of the Broad Church school laid more stress on the study of philosophy and logic as the basis of natural religion. The greatest name among them is that of Archbishop Whateley (1787--1863). The later leaders devoted more time to the historical development of dogma, the textual study of the scriptures—sometimes carried out in a rather destructive spirit, —and the reconciling of science and religion. They never had much influence with the masses, to whom their message was not directed, but largely affected the thought of the educated classes. Only a few of their leaders, indeed, tried to popularize Broad Church views; the only man of real proselytizing spirit among them was the poet and novelist Charles Kingsley. The enthusiasm which he displayed for all social progress and moral reform was not characteristic of the whole school, who were distinctly scholars rather than missionaries.

The "Broad Church" movement—Whateley—Kingsley.

A revolt against Evangelical doctrines on very different lines was to win far greater influence than the Broad Church school has ever attained. This was the so-called "Oxford Movement," which started in the fourth decade (1833–34) of the century among a knot of young university men, of whom several of the most prominent were fellows of Oriel College. The inspiring thought of the new High Church school—they soon got the name of Tractarians, from a series of tracts in which their views were set forth—was a belief in the historic continuity of the Church. They refused to accept the common Protestant doctrine that the Established Church started with Henry VIII. and the Reformation, and wished to assert its entire identity with the church of Augustine and Anselm. As a logical consequence, they were ready to accept all early and even mediæval doctrine which was not specially disavowed by the Anglican formularies. The Church

The "Oxford Movement."

of England, as a living branch of the Catholic Church, they thought, could not refuse to accept anything that had primitive usage on its side. Special stress was laid by them on two doctrines, equally repugnant to their Low Church and to their Broad Church contemporaries—the Real Presence in the Sacrament and the Sacrificial Priesthood of the Clergy. Such views had been held in the England of the seventeenth century, but they had been almost forgotten in the eighteenth, and sounded like a revival of popery to most men.

Enthusiastic study of the Early Fathers and of other sources of dogma formed part of the Tractarians' scheme of life. Their teaching found wide acceptance among the clergy, as was natural when the new doctrine so greatly magnified the priestly office. But the fervent piety and earnest lives of the early leaders of the movement, such as John Keble, John Henry Newman, and Hurrell Froude, would have attracted followers, even if there had been much less to be said in favour of their views. All through the forties there was bitter strife between the Tractarians and their opponents, who openly accused them of paving the way for the submission of the English Church to Rome. This notion was certainly confirmed by such writings as Newman's celebrated pamphlet, in which he proved, by a series of elaborate but unconvincing arguments, that the "Thirty-nine Articles" were so loosely worded that a man might hold all the more prominent Roman doctrines and yet stay within the Anglican establishment. The author did not convince himself, as a few years later he went over to Rome, followed by a number of his more prominent disciples, and died a cardinal in 1890.

The leaders of the Tractarians.

But the great bulk of the High Churchmen, headed by Keble, the model of parish priests, and Pusey, the most learned of their theologians, did not break away from the Church of their birth, but stayed within it. They were determined to win recognition for their views within the Anglican communion, and fully succeeded.

The High Church party.

Ere the movement was thirty years old it had transformed the face of religious England. The High Churchmen had from the first shown a capacity for combined action and orderly co-operation which the Evangelical party had never displayed. It came, no doubt, from the fact that their doctrines laid great stress on the corporate unity of the Church, and the duty of working in unison and setting aside personal prejudices, while the Evangelicals had relied on individual effort, and had never given their party any effective organization. Though not more zealous in parochial or missionary work than their elder rivals, the Tractarians proved far more successful. They did admirable work in the way of stirring up neglected districts, building new churches, putting an end to careless and slovenly forms of worship, and raising the general standard of activity expected from the clergy. It is by their splendid practical work in this direction that they have raised themselves to so high a place in the Anglican communion, for public opinion seldom fails in the end to recognize and reward such merit. Zeal, of course, has not always been tempered with discretion; but eccentricities on the part of a minority cannot blind us to the admirable effect of the High Church movement as a whole: it has certainly left the National Church in a condition of greater health and activity than it has enjoyed at any time since the reign of Queen Anne.

Schism in the Church of Scotland —The Free Kirk.

While the Tractarian movement had been fighting its first battles in England, the Established Church in Scotland had been rent asunder by a struggle quite as fierce, though turning on very different points (1834–43). The question at issue north of Tweed was the relation between the State and the Church, taking shape in a dispute as to the right of presentation to benefices. The system by which ministers were nominated by a patron instead of chosen by the congregation seemed so objectionable to a large section of the Scottish clergy, headed by Dr. Chalmers, that when Parliament refused to give the

parish a veto on the patron's choice, they seceded from the Established Church, and formed a new denomination called the Free Kirk (May 18, 1843). Thus they established a communion free from all State control, but only at the terrible cost of splitting Scotland into two spiritual camps, and setting up rival kirks and manses in every town and village, with a consequent crop of bitter quarrels that endured for more than a generation.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE CRIMEAN WAR TO THE DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON.

1853–1865.

When Lord Derby's ministry was forced to resign, in December 1852, English politics presented a spectacle which has never been exactly paralleled before or since. The Liberals and Conservatives were each divided into two opposing sections, kept apart by the most effective barrier—the personal animosities of their sectional chiefs. After the tricks they had played on each other, Russell and Palmerston could not easily combine, while the Peelite and the Protectionist Conservatives still looked on each other as traitors. The Peelites thought of Disraeli and his friends as the betrayers of their great dead leader; the Protectionists retorted that the Peelites had betrayed the old principles of their party when they followed Sir Robert in his conversion to Free Trade. But every one felt that the business of the country must somehow be carried on, and after a prolonged deadlock a coalition was patched up.

Coalition of Whigs and Peelites—Lord Aberdeen's ministry.

Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston agreed to serve together in the same ministry, but neither was to be premier. They took the Peelites into partnership, and gave the position of prime minister to Lord Aberdeen, who had been Peel's lieutenant at the Foreign Office. He was a worthy, well-intentioned man, and a scholar of merit, but certainly more

wanting in force and resolution than any minister who had taken the helm of State since the resignation of Addington in 1804. In foreign politics he was a great believer in non-intervention and masterly inactivity, but he was quite incapable of resisting his more energetic colleagues when they pressed and worried him forward into measures which he did not approve. Several other Peelites were received into the new ministry, the most notable of whom was William Ewart Gladstone, who had already acquired a considerable reputation as a financier, and was now made Chancellor of the Exchequer. There had never been any very essential divergence between the views of the Peelites and those of the more cautious Whigs, so that the two parties merged easily together, and in a few years the former were absorbed into the ranks of their allies: some of them, notoriously the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, became ere long advanced rather than moderate members of the Liberal party.

Gladstone's financial measures.

The new ministry, combining as it did all political sections except the Derby-Disraeli Conservatives, seemed very powerful and likely to last for many years. It made a most triumphant entry into office, starting with a considerable surplus and a popular budget introduced by Gladstone, who lowered or abolished a great number of import duties, in imitation of Peel's great measures of 1844. But he did not carry out his old leader's pledge of abolishing the income tax when good times had come round, and left it fixed as a millstone around the neck of the middle classes.

The Eastern question.

Before Lord Aberdeen had been many months in power, signs of trouble began to make themselves visible in the sphere of foreign affairs. The difficulty arose in Turkey, where the "Eastern Question" had never ceased to be a source of bickering between the great powers since the old troubles of the Greek insurrection in the twenties. The Ottoman empire had been in so many tribulations since those days, that there was a fixed idea in many

minds that it was at the end of its resources, and that in a few years the sultans must vanish altogether, or at least pass beyond the Bosphorus and abandon Constantinople and Europe. The consummation was devoutly to be wished, but no two powers were agreed on the manner in which it was to come to pass. Meanwhile their ambassadors continued to intrigue against each other with the Porte, as had been the custom for the last century and more.

Designs of the Czar of Russia.

The Czar Nicholas I. had his own plan for the dismemberment of the Sultan's realm, and for some time had been cautiously approaching the ministers of other countries, to see how they would take it. In January, 1853, he used more definite language to the English ambassador at St. Petersburg. "We have on our hands," he said, "a sick man—a very sick man : it will be a great misfortune if one of these days he should slip away from us, before the necessary arrangements have been made." The "necessary arrangements," as explained by the Czar in a later interview, were that the sick man's neighbours should have settled beforehand exactly what share of his inheritance each of them should take. Nicholas proposed that Servia, Roumania, and Bulgaria should pass under his own suzerainty as dependent principalities, while England might take Egypt and the island of Crete. The other powers, no doubt, would be propitiated with similar slices of Turkey.

Attitude of England and France.

The English Government received these proposals, when they were transmitted to London, in a very frigid way; they were not prepared to stand in to the bargain, and wished to stave off the day of dismemberment. Nicholas, nevertheless, went on with his scheme, and while secretly pressing it came into collision with another despot, the new Emperor of the French. Napoleon III. was at this time anxious to make firm his somewhat uncertain seat at Paris by pursuing a spirited foreign policy, and thought that it would not suit his plans to let Russia assume the leadership

in the East. France had for a long time claimed and exercised a certain patronage over the Christians of the Levant, and Napoleon did not intend that this protectorate should pass to the Czar.

The first signs of open opposition between the two emperors took the curious shape of a dispute as to whether Greek or Roman Catholic monks should be entrusted with the custody of the great shrines of Palestine. It was humorously said at the time that the war had its origin in a quarrel about a "key and a star"—the former was that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, the latter a large ornament in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. But the actual cause of rupture was the embassy of Prince Menchikoff to Constantinople; he came with orders to demand a formal treaty granting to Russia the protectorate over all the Christians of the East. This measure roused the anger of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the English ambassador to the Porte, who was a bitter opponent of Russia. He and his French colleague encouraged the Sultan to refuse Menchikoff's request, whereupon Czar Nicholas determined to bring pressure on Abdul-Medjid by occupying Roumania.

The key and the star—Menchikoff's embassy.

When his troops crossed the Pruth into Turkish territory (July, 1853), England found herself quite unexpectedly on the verge of war. There followed a long struggle in the English cabinet between Lord Aberdeen and his energetic foreign minister, Palmerston. The former, while protesting his distaste for war and his disbelief in its approach, was gradually edged on into making a close alliance with the French emperor, and sending a strong detachment of warships through the Dardanelles up to Constantinople (October 22). A few weeks later the Russian Black Sea squadron destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope, whereupon English and French ships passed the Bosphorus, and compelled the Russians to take refuge in the harbour of Sebastopol (January, 1854). From

The Russians cross the Pruth—England and France join the Turks.

this action to open war was but a short step, but it was three months before that step was taken. Driven forward by Palmerston, Lord Aberdeen consented to join the French emperor in issuing an *ultimatum* to the Czar, threatening hostilities unless he evacuated the Turkish provinces which he had seized. On his refusal, war was declared (March 27, 1854).

To have to fight for the maintenance of the corrupt despotism of the Sultan, in company with such a doubtful ally as Napoleon III., was an unhappy necessity. But it had to be done, since the Czar had determined to carry out the dismemberment of Turkey without the consent of the other powers. So much was his arrogant action resented in England that the war was very popular, and hopeful persons even thought that our alliance with the Sultan might regenerate Turkey, a delusion which was destined to endure for a whole generation.

Popular feeling in England.

England was at the moment very far from being prepared for active hostilities. Our army had seen no service in Europe since Waterloo, and its organization was wholly out of gear. The individual regiments were in good fighting trim, but they were quite unaccustomed to act together in large bodies, or to face the hardships of campaigning in a distant and thinly peopled country. The supply services were in a hopeless state of inefficiency; there was practically no one who understood how to feed and clothe an army in the field. But a considerable force, some 28,000 men in all, was hastily collected and sent to the Levant, where they joined a French army of about the same size. The general placed in command was Lord Raglan, a veteran of the Peninsular War. He had been a distinguished officer in his day, but was now sixty-six years of age and almost past service. He possessed tact and good judgment, but not the energy and force needed for a commander who had to direct a combined army and to deal with the divergent views of his French colleagues.

Want of military preparations.

Lord Raglan.

The allied army was directed to land in the Crimea, for a double purpose: a blow delivered in this direction would almost certainly call back the Russian invaders of Roumania to defend their own soil, and at the same time it was desired that Sebastopol, the refuge and arsenal of the Czar's Black Sea fleet, should be destroyed. There was also considerable advantage in attacking the enemy in a remote corner of his dominion, easily accessible by sea, as he would have great difficulty in forwarding thither reinforcements across the South Russian steppes, where roads and railways were then equally wanting. The Anglo-French army, rather over 50,000 strong, landed in the Crimean peninsula, unopposed, on September 17, 1854; three days later they met the Russians on the heights along the river Alma. Prince Menchikoff, who was in command, showed himself not more capable as a general than he had been as ambassador to the Porte in the preceding year. He failed to take full advantage of his strong ground; but his adversaries blundered almost as much, for half the French army was wasted in a useless turning movement, and did not fire a shot. The redoubts and batteries, however, which formed the key of the Russian position were stormed by the English, and the prince had to retire with his forces much shattered by the terrible musketry fire of the victors. The English had fought with splendid audacity, but had been miserably handled by their generals, who made themselves responsible for a wholly unnecessary carnage among their men by not properly combining their attacks. Lord Raglan himself blundered into the centre of the Russian lines, where he was unable to communicate with his subordinates, and would have been taken prisoner if the enemy had not been culpably blind to their advantage (September 20, 1854).

Invasion of the Crimea—Battle of the Alma.

After the victory of the Alma the allies might have entered Sebastopol without much trouble, for the demoralized Russian army withdrew into the interior. But the French commander,

St. Arnaud, refused to press their retreat, and when the allies quietly sat down before Sebastopol and made preparations for a formal siege, Menchikoff threw his battalions once more into the fortress, and prepared to defend it to the last. Thus began the famous siege which was to last for no less than eleven months (October, 1854—September, 1855), and to cost over a hundred thousand lives. The first bombardment of the place was undertaken

The siege of Sebastopol.

with insufficient resources, and ended in complete failure. Soon after reinforcements began to reach the Russians, mainly from the army which was now retiring from the Danube. With the aid of these succours Menchikoff made two vigorous attempts to raise the siege, each of which led to a battle.

On October 25 his field army descended on Balaclava, the port at which the English were landing their supplies, and

brought to action the very insufficient force—almost entirely cavalry—which had been left to defend it. The main advance was stopped by the heroic charge of Scarlett's brigade of heavy dragoons, who broke through and hurled back thrice their number of Russian horse. But this gallant and successful feat of arms was followed by the disastrous "Charge of the Light Brigade." A vague and ill-worded order sent by Lord Raglan was perversely misinterpreted by Lord Lucan, who commanded the English cavalry, and he proceeded to hurl the 670 sabres of the Light Brigade at the batteries which formed the centre of the Russian line. This mad project was executed; though encircled on three sides by a concentric fire from the whole hostile army, this handful of horsemen rode forward for a mile and a half, captured the guns, and broke up the Russian centre. But no attempt had been made to support them with infantry, and when their impetus was spent, these unfortunate heroes had to cut their way back through the enemy and return foiled to the English lines. They had lost 113 killed and 154 wounded out of 670 men: the only wonder is that a single trooper survived to tell this tale of dire mismanagement.

Balaclava—The charge of the Light Brigade.

Balaclava was nothing more than a drawn battle, for the Russians, though they had failed to capture the port, were able to maintain their advanced position opposite the English base. Nine days afterwards Menchikoff made another and a more desperate attempt to break through the besiegers' lines. At early dawn on November 4, two heavy columns were launched against the north-eastern corner of the allied position on the heights of Inkerman. Forty thousand men in all took part in the attack, but the column which debouched from the town of Sebastopol came on the ground long before that which marched from the open country. Favoured by a thick fog, the approach of the enemy was not seen till they were close upon the English camp. The first column was met by the nearest troops, and checked after

Inkerman—"The soldiers' battle."

desperate fighting among ravines and hillsides, where every regiment had to wage its own battle in the blinding mist. Presently the rest of the Russian host groped its way to the front, and at the same time more English troops came hurrying in from other parts of the siege lines. The second clash was even more terrible than the first, but after many hours of hand-to-hand fighting the assailants were again brought to a check, and French reinforcements began to come upon the field. At last the Russians recoiled, thoroughly beaten, and quite unconscious that their 40,000 men had been repulsed by 9000 English, aided in the end of the fight by 7000 French. The victory was eminently glorious to the rank and file of the victors, for in this "soldiers' battle" no direction by the commander-in-chief had been given, and, indeed, the fog and confusion rendered it almost impossible for him to exercise much control over the fight.

After Inkerman the siege of Sebastopol took a strange shape. The allies were actually outnumbered by the garrison for the winter months, and were barely able to maintain their lines round the south side of the city. The northern front was always open for the arrival of reinforcements from the interior of Russia. The winter was one of exceptional rigour, and both sides suffered the most terrible privations. In the long marches through the snow, the Russian armies of succour lost nearly half their numbers ere they could get to the front. The French and English, on the other hand, encamped on the bleak and barren plateau of the Chersonese, without any shelter save their tents, and with barely sufficient food to keep body and soul together, were slowly perishing from cold, dysentery, and the perpetual labour in the trenches. The English supply services broke down altogether, and could not even forward food to the front up the six miles of road which separated the port of Balaclava from the siege lines. The men starved, even when provisions by the shipload were being thrown ashore at the base. During

Sufferings of the troops.

January Lord Raglan had to report that of the 24,000 men under him only 11,000 were fit for service, while 13,000 were in hospital. The mortality among the sick rose to a frightful percentage, for there was not sufficient shelter for them, nor were the simplest medical comforts available. Indeed, the hospitals both in the Crimea and at Constantinople were in a disgraceful state, till volunteer aid was forthcoming from England, and Florence Nightingale and her nurses brought some order into the chaos.

Indignation in England—Lord Aberdeen resigns.

When the war-correspondents at the front and the private letters of officers let the public into the secret that the army was rapidly dying off, for want of ordinary care and vigilance on the part of the home authorities, a wild outburst of wrath followed. The nation was rightly dissatisfied at the way in which the war was being conducted. Sebastopol had not fallen for want of a little push and energy in the days following the victory on the Alma. A fleet sent to the Baltic had failed to do anything worthy of notice. Money was being spent with both hands, yet the army was starving. Some of the misfortunes of the winter of 1854–55 were, no doubt, due to the fact that the soldiers were not accustomed to the hard life of the field, and that the administration had no experience of war. But much more was due to red tape, foolish formalism, and culpable slackness at home. The scapegoats chosen by popular clamour were the premier, Lord Aberdeen, and his war minister, the Duke of Newcastle. They were forced to resign their offices, though the greater part of the blame ought to have been distributed among ignorant and obstinate subordinates in the home civil service, whom the ministers had not known how to stir up into activity. Lord Palmerston, whose name was regarded as synonymous with energy and readiness to fight, replaced as prime minister the unfortunate disciple of Sir Robert Peel.

In the spring of 1855 the war went on for some time without

marked success on either side. The Czar Nicholas was killed off by the hard winter, but his young son Alexander continued his policy. Fresh troops continued to pour into Sebastopol, and the great engineer Todleben so strengthened the place by building line after line of earthworks in front of its original front of ramparts, that the fortress continued to increase instead of to fall off in defensive power as the siege went on. The allies, however, did not relax their efforts: the French emperor, whose popularity was bound up with success in the war, forwarded large reinforcements to the Crimea. The English Government, whose task was harder because of the very small numbers of our standing army, contrived to raise our expeditionary force to 40,000. In May the Sardinian king, Victor Emanuel, joined England and France for political reasons—he was anxious to pose as a power of European importance, and to win the gratitude of France. A fine division of his troops joined the besieging army. But matters did not come to a head at Sebastopol till the middle of the summer. In June a new and enterprising French commander, Marshal Pelissier, was appointed. By his desire, a vigorous attempt to storm the place was made (June 17–18); some outworks were captured, but the main assault failed. It was not till September that a bombardment of unparalleled vehemence so shook the Russian works that a second assault could be made. Meanwhile Lord Raglan died, worn out by the fatigue and responsibility of a campaign which was too hard for a man of his age (June 20, 1855).

Progress of the siege—Death of the Czar—Victor Emanuel joins the Allies.

On September 8 the final storm took place. The French, massing 30,000 men on a single point, carried the Malakoff, a fort which commanded the whole line of defence: its capture rendered further resistance on the part of the Russians hopeless. But the English failed lamentably at the Redan, which had fallen to their share in the assault. The utterly insufficient force sent against

Fall of Sebastopol.

it entered the work, but was beaten out again with much bloodshed, because no reinforcements were pushed up to its aid. However, the fall of the Malakoff had settled the fate of Sebastopol. That night the Russians set the place on fire and evacuated it. Their army, however, still lay in great strength on the north side of the harbour, and to thrust it from the Crimea another great battle would have been necessary.

The effort was never made. The French emperor had now obtained the success and military glory which he had coveted, and was anxious not to risk them by any more fighting. To the great discontent of the English nation, which was but just warming to the work, he insisted on opening negotiations with the enemy. The Czar was only too glad to come to terms: his troops had suffered frightful losses, his finances were in disorder, and the coasting traffic of the empire, both in the Baltic and the Black Sea, had been annihilated by the raiding expeditions of English squadrons. There followed the unsatisfactory Peace of Paris (March, 1856), by which Russia surrendered a small strip of land at the Danube mouth, and undertook to maintain no war-fleet in the Black Sea. This last promise was certain to be maintained only so long as the alliance of France and England kept the Czar in check. The Sultan, on the other hand, issued many empty proclamations as to his intention to ameliorate the lot of his Christian subjects—professions which the Western powers were at that time simple enough to accept as a genuine sign of his intention to reform the Ottoman empire.

The Treaty of Paris.

Thus ended England's last European war in the nineteenth century. Much can be said against its policy: the defence of Turkish despotism, as subsequent events have conclusively proved, was not a worthy end in itself. We were throughout the struggle utilized and exploited by our selfish French ally, a thing that could

Policy of the Crimean war.

have been foreseen from the first. Finally, we had been forced to conclude a peace on terms wholly inadequate to the sacrifices we had made. The war had cost about £77,000,000, and had added £33,000,000 to the National Debt. More than 20,000 British soldiers had perished—the large majority, not by the bullets of the enemy, but sacrificed by the imbecile mismanagement which starved them into disease, and then sent them to die in comfortless hospitals. Our generals had certainly made no great reputation during the war, and the splendid courage by which the rank and file fought their way out of difficulties for which they were not responsible, had only barely staved off disaster on more than one occasion. Nevertheless, the war was probably necessary: it would have been impossible to leave Russia free to carve up Turkey at her good pleasure; and, considering the state of tension that had been reached in 1854, it is more than doubtful whether Nicholas could have been stopped by mere demonstrations and diplomacy. It is true that in 1879 a firm attitude and a great show of naval power kept the Russians out of Constantinople; but in 1854 they had not suffered so many checks, nor wasted so many lives and so much treasure, as in the later war, so that the Czar was then much less liable to pressure than was his son at the time of the Treaty of Berlin. The best, probably, that could be said for the Crimean war was that it taught us to know some of the worst points of our military organization, and raised the spirit of national patriotism, which had tended to sink low during the long peace since Waterloo. It certainly did not bring about either of the two ends for which it had been undertaken—the reform of Turkey or the permanent crippling of Russia. At the most it staved off the Eastern Question, as a source of trouble, for some twenty years.

In home politics the main result of the war was to put Lord Palmerston in office for the ten years that remained of his long life. Except for a short interval in 1858–59, he held the premiership continuously. This was the nation's mark of

gratitude for the vigour and energy with which he had conducted the war after the fall of Lord Aberdeen and the exposure of the administrative scandals of the Crimean winter. Palmerston, though always posing as a Whig, remained in many points true to the traditions of the Canningite Tories, to whom he had belonged in his youth. He believed in a firm foreign policy and the protection of British interests wherever they were endangered. He thought that political reform had gone far enough in 1832, and had no desire to tamper with the constitution. Small social and economic reforms he could tolerate, but he always found ingenious reasons for shelving the proposals of his more ardent followers when they tried to take up again the sort of legislation that had been predominant in the "thirties." The Radical members of his party chafed furiously against his apathetic attitude towards their projects, but till his death they could never succeed in getting their way. The fact was that the middle classes, in whose hands political power had lain since the Reform Bill, were very much of Palmerston's way of thinking, and had little or no wish to move on. They admired the old statesman's bustling and occasionally boisterous foreign policy, enjoyed his slightly cynical humour, and had every confidence in his sterling common sense.

Supremacy of Lord Palmerston.

In many ways it was fortunate that domestic politics were in a very quiet state between 1855 and 1865, for foreign affairs were always in a difficult and more than once in a dangerous condition. The source of trouble was generally to be found in the tortuous and vacillating line of conduct pursued by Napoleon III., who was always endeavouring to fish in troubled waters, and to maintain his difficult seat on the French throne by theatrical triumphs of the military or diplomatic sort. Though he maintained as a rule an appearance of friendship for England, yet we always found him a slippery ally, and were at least once on the verge of war with him. There is always a

English relations with Napoleon III.

temptation to a French military despot to think of revenging Waterloo.

Our foreign troubles after the Peace of Paris, however, were not all due to Napoleon. The first was a short Persian war, a sort of after-swell following in the wake of the Crimean struggle. The Shah Nasr-ed-din, acting under Russian influence, had tried to conquer Afghanistan and taken Herat. To cause him to desist, we sent a small force to the Persian Gulf, which seized the port of Bushire and pushed on into the country, till the Shah, whose troops showed little capacity for war, asked for peace and evacuated Herat (March, 1857). The little army under Outram and Havelock, which had won this success, was fortunately available for the suppression of the Great Indian Mutiny in the following summer. Of that fearful convulsion we shall have to speak in the chapter that deals with our Colonial empire.

The Persian war.

The second struggle in which we became involved was a quarrel with China in 1856. The governor of Canton, acting with the usual stupid arrogance and obstinacy of Chinese officials, had seized a vessel flying the English flag, and refused to apologize for his act. This led to an expedition against Canton, and ultimately to open war. But the troops which were sent, in 1857, for the invasion of China had to be diverted to India, and it was not till the Mutiny was at an end that we were able to resume our advance. In 1858, however, a fleet and army threatened Pekin, and after the forts of the Peiho river had been stormed, the emperor asked for peace, and received it on promising to make reparation, and to open several "treaty ports" to English trade by the Treaty of Tien-Tsing. These engagements were never carried out, and in 1859 we had again to bring pressure on the Chinese. This time we were leagued with the French, who had grievances of their own in the country. The Peiho forts were again stormed, Pekin taken, and the Summer Palace

The Chinese war.

of the emperor plundered and burnt, as a punishment for the treacherous murder of some British envoys, who had been negotiating with the mandarins. Convinced that the "barbarians" were too strong for them, the Chinese court then made abject apologies, paid a fine of 8,000,000 taels of silver, and ratified the former treaty of Tien-Tsing (October, 1860).

Long before the lingering Chinese war had ended, England had been interested in grave troubles nearer home. In January, 1858, while the Indian Mutiny was still raging, and all our attention was concentrated upon its suppression, we were suddenly brought into collision with the French Government. Some republican fanatics in Paris, headed by an Italian named Orsini, had made an attempt to assassinate Napoleon III. by hurling explosive bombs at him as he drove to the opera. He escaped himself, but ten persons were killed and over one hundred injured by the deadly machines. The French press and people were naturally roused to fury, and when it was found that Orsini had organized his plot and made his bombs in London, they turned much of their anger against England. The emperor's ambassador wrote strongly worded despatches calling on Palmerston to give securities against the repetition of such conspiracies, and protesting that "persons placed beyond the pale of common rights and under the ban of humanity" found shelter in the English capital. Far more violent language was heard in Paris, and one famous address offered to the emperor by a number of French officers besought him to let them destroy "the infamous haunt in which machinations so infernal are planned."

Attempted murder of Napoleon by Orsini.

These threats roused an equal anger on this side of the Channel, where it was supposed that the emperor wished to bully the Government while our army was engaged in India, and a strong anti-French agitation arose. Palmerston, however, on this occasion did not go with the impulse of the moment.

He thought that something should be done to prevent London from becoming the centre of anarchist plots, and brought in his "Conspiracy to Murder" bill, which made persons convicted of planning political assassinations liable to penal servitude for life, even if the crime was to take place beyond seas. The measure was reasonable enough in itself, but so strongly was English national feeling excited at the moment, that Palmerston's measure was denounced as mere truckling to France. He was beaten by a small majority in the House of Commons, many Liberals joining the Tory opposition, and had to resign office (February 19, 1858).

The "Conspiracy to Murder" bill—Defeat of Palmerston.

According to the proper constitutional form, the Tories, headed by Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, were now invited to form a ministry. They complied, though the experiment was from the first hopeless, since they were in a very decided minority in the House of Commons. The gust of popular wrath which had swept Palmerston from office soon blew over, and the Conservatives had to recognize that they were only in power as stop-gaps. Mr. Disraeli, however, by a series of ingenious expedients, succeeded in tiding the new ministry over the whole session of 1858. In the next year his great idea was to bring in a Reform Bill, which would at once have the result of showing that the Tories were not hopeless reactionaries, and of embroiling the Liberals with the Radical wing of their party. The latter had long been asking for such measures, and it seemed that the Tories could hardly be opposed for bringing them forward. Disraeli's bill lowered the franchise in the counties, giving all occupiers of £10 houses the vote, but at the same time proposed to qualify as electors all persons of education—graduates of universities, doctors, lawyers, and ministers of religion—as well as all persons who showed evidence of thrift by having £60 in the savings-bank. There was a great deal to be said for these proposals, but the Liberals

Lord Derby in office—Disraeli's Reform Bill.

chose to laugh them out of court as "fancy franchises," and when the bill was rejected, Lord Derby had to dissolve Parliament (March, 1859) and to resign, when the new House showed itself as much in the power of his enemies as the last.

This short Tory ministry in 1858–59 is mainly remembered for two useful pieces of work which it carried out. The first was the abolition of the East India Company, and the replacing of its administration in Hindostan by a new Imperial Government (August, 1858), a step which the Mutiny had made absolutely necessary. The second was the starting of the Volunteer movement in the spring of 1859. This last was the result of the threatened rupture with France in the previous year: the nation had been terrified at the idea of being caught in an unexpected war with an unscrupulous neighbour, when the whole army was abroad. By a very logical and at the same time patriotic impulse, it resolved to supply the much-needed army for home defence by taking arms itself. The moment that the scheme was broached it was received with enthusiasm; before the end of the year 180,000 men had been enrolled, who undertook to arm, clothe, and train themselves at their own expense, and to be ready to take the field whenever there should be danger of an invasion of the realm. The result has been to give England a second line of defence, which is now counted as a serious item in the national strength, though for some years it was not treated with much courtesy by War Office officials, or taken very seriously by old-fashioned members of the regular army.

The Volunteer movement.

When Lord Palmerston returned to office in 1859 with his old colleagues at his back, he found himself face to face with a great European war. The French emperor had turned off on Austria the wrath which in 1858 had seemed to be directed against England. Posing as the champion of the rights of nationalities, he promised his aid to Sardinia, if she should attempt once more, as in 1848,

The Italian war of liberation.

to free the rest of Italy from Austrian tyranny. The great Sardinian minister Cavour took the hint, and began to urge his master, King Victor Emanuel, to arm. Remonstrances by the Austrian Government were soon followed by war, in which France at once joined. But after beating the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino, and clearing them out of Lombardy, Napoleon soon showed that he was no unselfish enthusiast, but a mere speculator. He suddenly made peace, to the great disgust of the Italians, ceded Lombardy to Victor Emanuel, but paid himself by annexing to France the Sardinian province of Savoy, the ancient home of his ally's ancestors. Three reasons had guided the emperor to this ungenerous step: he did not wish to drive Austria to such extremity that she could never again be his friend, and he was somewhat afraid lest Prussia might attack him on the Rhine frontier while all his army was locked up in Lombardy. Moreover, he did not wish to create an Italian kingdom large enough to become a great European power. But in this last respect his selfish plans were foiled: deserted by France, the Italians finished the work for themselves. A series of insurrections in 1859–60 expelled the petty princes of Central Italy, and in the latter year the patriot adventurer Garibaldi threw himself into Sicily with a handful of followers, and overturned in that island and in Naples the rule of the cruel and imbecile House of Bourbon. In every state a popular vote hailed Victor Emanuel of Sardinia as King of United Italy; only Rome and Venice failed to fall into the new kingdom, since they were held down, the one by French and the other by Austrian bayonets (February, 1861).

Garibaldi—The kingdom of Italy.

On the progress of affairs in Italy the English cabinet and nation looked with much satisfaction, and Garibaldi received a splendid welcome when he visited Great Britain in 1862. But troubles were impending in other quarters which were not to end so happily. The oppressed people of Poland made a desperate attempt at

The Polish insurrection.

insurrection in 1862–63. Great sympathy was felt for them in this country, and Lord John Russell even made intervention in their favour with the Russian Government. But we were not prepared to go to war with the Czar single-handed, and Napoleon III. would not listen to any further schemes in favour of oppressed nationalities after his experiences in Italy. Our appeals were quietly passed over by the Russians, and Poland was dragooned into submission.

Much the same humiliation fell upon us in another matter in the succeeding year (1863–64). The German inhabitants of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were desirous of seceding from the kingdom of Denmark. Count Bismarck, the unscrupulous and iron-handed minister of the new King of Prussia, gave them armed help, and persuaded Austria, for reasons of national sentiment, to do the same. Against two such enemies the unfortunate Danes could do nothing; when their small army was driven northward, they made piteous appeals for aid to the powers of Western Europe. England was profoundly moved at the spectacle of the crushing of Denmark by the two great military powers, and proffered her good offices for the conclusion of peace. On this occasion it was hoped that Napoleon III. might give his aid, for he was growing very suspicious of Prussia and her prime minister. But once more the emperor proved a broken reed; he had other schemes in hand, and would not interfere to help the Danes. With great regret Palmerston had to confess that his intervention had come to nothing. Prussia and Austria forced Denmark to her knees, and made her cede not only the German districts of Holstein and Schleswig, but some purely Danish territory. These acquisitions the victorious powers then proceeded to parcel out among themselves, though they had pretended to take arms in order to enable them to attain their liberty as an independent German principality.

The Schleswig-Holstein question.

Neither the Polish nor the Danish question had ever brought

England within measurable distance of war. Palmerston's policy with regard to them, which Lord Derby rather harshly described as "meddling and muddling," had never committed us to any dangerous step. But while these European struggles were in progress, another and a greater war was raging across the Atlantic, in which we were more than once nearly involved. This was the famous War of Secession, which started in May, 1861, and lasted till April, 1865. For many years there had been an ever-growing bitterness between the Northern and the Southern States of the American Union. The masses of the North were manufacturing and protectionist; the South was ruled by an aristocracy of planters, was wholly agricultural, and had a strong desire for Free Trade. The natural grudges between them took form in bitter quarrels on two points, "state rights" and slavery. The Southern rice and cotton fields were worked by slave-labour; in the North there was a strong abolitionist party, which carried on a vigorous propaganda against the "divine institution," which now only survived elsewhere in benighted regions such as Brazil and Cuba. But though the question of slavery was at the bottom of much of the bitterness between North and South, the constitutional dispute about "state rights" came much more to the front at the beginning of the struggle. The wording of the American constitution made it quite possible to hold different views as to the powers and duties of the individual states whose alliance formed the Union. In the South the tendency was all in favour of local independence; in the North more was thought of the central government and the rights of majorities.

The American civil war.

In 1860 the "Democratic" party, which mainly represented the Southern States, was defeated at the presidential election, and Abraham Lincoln, a "Republican," from Illinois, who was known as an opponent of "state rights" and an abolitionist, came into power in January, 1861. Seeing that the machinery

Abraham Lincoln elected president.

of government, which they had of late controlled, was about to slip from their hands, the Southerners resolved on desperate measures. In the spring that followed, eleven States seceded from the Union and formed a new league, to which they gave the name of the "Confederate States of North America." The Northern majority utterly refused to recognize the legality of the secession, and set to work at once to crush the malcontents by force of arms. War at once broke out along the whole frontier from Virginia to Missouri. At first the Confederates proved fully able to maintain themselves on land, but at sea they were utterly outmatched, for the whole regular navy had passed into the hands of the North, which also owned nine-tenths of the seafaring population of the States. The Federals at once established a blockade of all the southern ports; at first it was intermittent and ineffective, but it grew more and more real, till at last "blockade-runners" could only leave or enter the harbours of the Confederates by the happiest combinations of luck and skill.

England and the war—The cotton famine.

Great Britain was affected in the most acute fashion by the war of Secession. Not only were we accustomed to draw great quantities of rice and tobacco from the South, but the Lancashire cotton industry was mainly dependent for its raw material on the American plantations. India, Egypt, and other Eastern producers were only just commencing to appear in the Manchester market as serious rivals of the Western cotton-grower. The gradual stoppage of the export of the Southern cotton as the Federal blockade grew strict, began to cause the most terrible distress in Lancashire, where many mills had to close from actual want of stuff to keep their machinery going. Skilled artisans were thrown out of work at the rate of ten thousand a week, and the evil seemed likely to grow worse and worse, for the war showed no signs of coming to an end.

In 1861, when it became evident that the Confederates were

not likely to be suppressed in a few months, as the Northerners had hoped, Lord Palmerston had recognized them as belligerents. This action greatly vexed the Federals, who persisted in treating them as mere rebels destitute of any legal rights. Public opinion on this side of the Atlantic was much divided in its sympathies during the war. To some it appeared in the simple light of a struggle to abolish slavery, and such persons could not but side with the North. On the other hand, many thought that the right of secession ought not to be denied to a unanimous people, and that the South had as good a title to free itself as Italy had to drive out the Austrian. Others, again, disliked the Northerners as jealous commercial rivals and bitter opponents of free trade, and were glad to see them in difficulties. Politicians, too, were to be found who thought that the balance of power in the world would be better kept if the vast republic in the West split asunder. On the whole, England was not unequally divided on the question; if anything, the balance of sympathy was on the side of the South. But this was largely owing to unwise action on the part of President Lincoln's government, who did their best to put themselves in the wrong. In 1862 the captain of a Federal man-of-war committed an extraordinary breach of international law, by stopping and searching on the high seas the English mail steamer *Trent*, in order to take from it two Confederate envoys who were travelling from Havana to Europe. The ship was voyaging between two neutral ports, and the envoys were manifestly non-combatants, but the United States authorities refused to see the error of their ways, and only surrendered Messrs. Mason and Slidell after a long and acrid controversy, and when Lord Palmerston had actually begun to hurry a considerable army into Canada. This ungracious act was long remembered with bitterness.

Feeling in England—The seizure of the *Trent*.

The state of Lancashire, too, was well calculated to exasperate British opinion. By the summer of 1862 the whole of the

cotton manufacturing district was in a state of semi-starvation, and the cotton famine grew worse in the winter that followed. The population was only kept alive by lavish charity. More than £2,000,000 were subscribed for their aid, besides £600,000 contributed by Government. The distribution was so energetically and skillfully made that actual starvation was kept at bay, and the death-rate of Lancashire was no worse than that of the rest of England. But the misery suffered was acute, and it was not till 1863 that it commenced to abate, as cotton was brought in from new and distant sources of supply to fill the place of the missing bales from Charleston and New Orleans.

Increase of the cotton famine.

After balancing from one side to the other during the years 1862–63, the tide of victory began to flow definitely in favour of the Federals during 1864. The South was exhausted even by her victories, and her supplies of men and money were running too low to enable her to cope much longer with an adversary who could draw upon double her population and four times her wealth. In these latter years of the war, the desperate resolve of the Confederates to strike at their victorious foe in every possible manner was shown by their reckless use of privateering, which was destined to bring England into trouble, and to give the Federals a legitimate grievance. It is, of course, illegal for neutrals to fit out warships for a belligerent, but Southern agents more than once succeeded in getting ships prepared in English dockyards, and then passed out to sea in order to become Confederate privateers. The case of the *Alabama* is the best known. This vessel was denounced to the Government by the United States minister as being a disguised warship, which was indeed the fact. But the authorities were unduly slow in ordering her detention. She slipped out of Liverpool by night, got to sea, and became a terror to Northern shipping for some two years. For the cabinet's slackness England had somewhat later to pay the tremendous bill of

The *Alabama* —End of the war.

the *Alabama* claims. The American war came to an end April, 1865, with the fall of Richmond, the Confederate capital, and the surrender of the Southern armies.

Palmerston survived to see the struggle finish, but died a few months later (October 18, 1865); he had kept up his power of work to the last, though he had reached the ripe age of eighty-one. With his removal from the scene a new epoch in English politics begins, in which foreign affairs were no longer to be so all-important, nor domestic politics so dull as they had been in the days of the last of the Whig prime ministers. The tendency towards democratic reforms and general change, which Palmerston had succeeded in stifling during his own day, broke out strongly when he was gone.

Death of Palmerston.

CHAPTER VIII.

DISRAELI AND GLADSTONE.

1865–1885.

MODERN politics in Great Britain may practically be said to begin at the death of Lord Palmerston; as long as the Liberal party was still generalled, and to a great extent officered, by the old Whigs, the great problems which had started at the time of the first Reform Bill of 1832 were not much pressed towards solution. The governments of the last thirty years had done much in the way of social and economic reform, but they had repeatedly shelved the larger political and constitutional question as to whether Great Britain was to become a democracy or not. In so doing they were but following the wishes of the majority of their constituents. The "ten-pound householders," in whose hands political power had been deposited by the first Reform Bill, were mainly drawn from the middle classes, and had no particular desire to see themselves swamped in the electoral body by the extension of the franchise. The farmers and shopkeepers of the United Kingdom were divided not very unequally between the two political camps: the Whig majority among them, which had been overwhelming in 1832, was much smaller in 1865, for the old prejudice against the reactionary Toryism of Castlereagh and Lord Eldon had been gradually forgotten, except in Scotland and Ireland, where for fifty years an enormous preponderance of Liberal members

The old Liberal party.

was always returned. But outside the body of electors there still remained the great unenfranchised masses, the multitudes which had been stirred by the Chartists in the forties, and which were now very inadequately represented in Parliament by the Radical wing of the Liberal party.

The unfranchised masses.

Political agitation generally languishes when times are prosperous and wages high, and the internal state of the United Kingdom had been so flourishing of late that very little had been heard of the democratic cries that had been so loud in the days of Chartism. But there was always below the surface a good deal of discontent at the present distribution of political power, and a certain survival of the old Chartist delusion that with the franchise would come practical and personal profits to those who were still excluded from the voting lists. Unless we remember the existence of this widespread feeling among the masses, the change in the policy of the Liberal party after Palmerston's death appears unintelligible. Among the leading men of that party, and even in the cabinet itself, there were many politicians who were convinced that something ought to be done to satisfy these aspirations. They thought that the attention of the country had been devoted far too much of late to foreign affairs, and that widespreading measures of internal reform, both constructive and destructive, were long overdue.

Character of Gladstone.

The most prominent man among these advanced members of the Liberal party was Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, who for the last six years had been Palmerston's Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had originally been a Peelite Tory, but had followed Lord Aberdeen in 1852, and had been absorbed with the rest of his supporters in the Liberal ranks. Once committed to that party, he had become a member of its progressive wing, and had for some time chafed against the policy of stagnation or of petty administrative reforms which Palmerston had imposed on his colleagues

during the last ten years. There can be no doubt that he was already guided by the idea which he openly formulated many years later—that it is the duty of a statesman to watch the public mind, and to endeavour to carry out the policy that "the sufficient number" dictates. Most politicians in England have wished to impose their own convictions on their party: the theory that the chiefs should make it their duty to ascertain and to carry out the latent or half-expressed wishes of their followers rather than their own, rests on the very democratic notion that the majority must always be in the right, and that special political training and individual knowledge count for little in the long run. It is doubtful whether Gladstone would have subscribed to this wording of the idea, but his conduct amounted to a practical carrying of it out. Put in the vaguer form of the aphorism that "We must trust the people," it commended itself to him and his followers. The Liberal watchwards in the later sixties were "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform"—a combination of words that would not have sounded very pleasantly in Lord Palmerston's ear, for he was a lover of a spirited foreign policy, a considerable spender of money, and a confirmed doubter as to the necessity of further political changes. He saw what was coming, and had remarked shortly before his death that "whenever that man (Gladstone) gets my place, we shall have strange doings."

Gladstone's popular budgets.

Gladstone's reputation in 1865 rested largely upon his very successful Free-Trade budgets of the last seven years. In a time when the national prosperity (in spite of the Lancashire cotton famine in 1862–63) had been very great, he had been confronted with such a flourishing revenue that he could announce a surplus every year. This surplus he had employed in the most popular way, by using it to take off nearly all the import duties on food-stuffs, such as tea and sugar, and on articles of daily consumption, such as paper and tallow. In all, between 1859 and 1865, he reduced the number of articles on which duty was paid from

419 to 48. Enthusiastic admiration was raised among his party by the success of his experiment, for the revenue seemed to increase the more for every item that he removed from the list of things taxable. We can now see that the sudden growth in national wealth, registered by this rise of receipts, was to a large extent due partly to a successful commercial treaty with France, partly to the removal of the United States from the field as a commercial rival during the disastrous War of Secession. Their shipping interest has to this day never recovered the blow, and their carrying trade had passed almost entirely into English hands. It is easy to say now that it requires no extraordinary genius to deal with the series of surpluses caused by years of exceptional prosperity, and that there is no financial magic in the wholesale remission of taxation on articles of consumption. To-day, indeed, the murmur is often heard that we have cut down too far the list of dutiable articles, and trust overmuch to the small number of commodities, such as wine, spirits, and tobacco, which still contribute to the revenue when imported. But in 1865 Gladstone's budgets seemed the cause rather than the effect of national prosperity, and no one ventured to doubt his financial omniscience. Every one who paid less for his pound of tea or his newspaper could look upon him as a personal benefactor.

Gladstone was not, however, destined to succeed immediately to the vacant place of premier. The veteran Lord John Russell—now Earl Russell—still survived, and though he had consented to serve under Palmerston, it was not to be expected that he would give way to a younger man. The Liberal party took him as their head in November, 1865, and he held office from that date till June, 1866; the rest of the ministry remained practically unchanged. Russell's reign was destined to be short: he was still honestly devoted to the ideas of 1832, and brought in a Reform Bill destined to redeem the old pledges of the Liberal party which Palmerston had so persistently

Lord John Russell's Reform Bill.

shelved. It was a very moderate measure, reducing the qualification for the franchise in the counties to £14, while in the boroughs the house of £7 was to be substituted for the house of £10 as the lowest limit of occupation conferring the vote. It was calculated that these changes would add about 400,000 electors to the 2,000,000 already in existence, so that the balance of power would still have remained in the hands of the middle classes.

The Tories naturally opposed the bill, on the ground that it was in no way superior to their own abortive measure which Disraeli had formulated in 1859. But it is more surprising to find that a section of the Liberal party also fought against it. A number of members who shared Palmerston's views, and had a rooted dislike to any further advance in the direction of democracy, declared that the bill was wholly unnecessary, and affirmed no real principle of value. They banded themselves into a small party of thirty or forty strong, which Gladstone in derision called "the Cave of Adullam"—because to it, as to David of old, fled "every one who was in distress, and every one who was discontented." The second reading of the Reform Bill was only passed by a majority of five in face of their opposition, and finally the Tories and "Adullamites" succeeded in carrying an amendment which wrecked the whole of the Government's scheme. Lord Russell thereupon resigned (June, 1866), and the queen sent for the Conservative leader, Lord Derby, and invited him to form a ministry.

The "Cave of Adullam."

Once more, as in 1858, Lord Derby and his lieutenant Benjamin Disraeli endeavoured to compass the difficult feat of carrying on the government of the country without a majority in the House of Commons at their back. For the Adullamites refused to coalesce with the Conservative party, and, quite contented to have wrecked Lord Russell's Reform Bill, fell back again into the Liberal ranks.

Lord Derby prime minister.

The tenure of office of the Derby-Disraeli ministry in 1866-68 forms an important landmark in the history of the Conservative party. It had now quite outlived its old traditions: Protection, as a matter of practical politics, was dead; mere opposition to all change, on the principle that all changes must be for the worse, had ceased to be a necessary part of the Tory creed since the days of Peel. Disraeli had long been engaged in the process which he called "educating his party"—that is, of substituting a positive programme of measures to be carried out for a negative programme of measures to be resisted and staved off. He always continued to display the greatest attachment to the old Tory principles of loyalty to Church and Queen, and to show an almost ostentatious care for the "landed interest," the farmers and landowners who had long formed the backbone of his party. But he brought to the front two ideas which had hitherto formed no very conspicuous part of the Conservative programme. The first was the conception of England as an Imperial world-power, interested in European politics, but still more interested in the maintenance and development of her vast colonial and Indian empire. This is the notion which friends and enemies, using the word in very different senses, now call "Imperialism." The second ruling thought in Disraeli's mind was the conviction that the Conservative party ought to step forward as a rival to the Liberal party in commanding the sympathies and allegiance of the masses. This aim he would not carry out in any democratic spirit; he did not intend to ask the people to state its demands in order that he might obsequiously carry them out. But he wished to persuade it that the Conservatives had their own plans for social, economic, and political reform, which were just as honest and far more rational than those of the Liberals. Everything should be done *for* the people, if not *by* the people.

Disraeli and the new Conservatism.

Imperialism —Conservatism and the people.

Each of these great ideas of Disraeli's was developed at a period very favourable for their success. The Liberal chiefs of the generation which followed Palmerston were distinctly wanting in a full sense of the greatness of the empire. They have rather cruelly been called "Little Englanders," for their dislike for expansion and their timid colonial policy. In their zeal for economy, they loathed the expenses which empire entails. Some of them occasionally talked as if it was inevitable that our colonies, when they grew strong enough, should "cut the painter"—as the Americans had done in 1776—and refuse to follow any longer in the wake of the mother country. They let the army and navy run so low that in moments of national danger we found ourselves in a perilous state of weakness. An appeal to the people against such a policy was certain of success, for the people has always been convinced of the reality of its imperial destinies. So, too, with regard to domestic matters, there were many things which favoured Disraeli's appeal to the masses. The Liberals of 1865 were steeped in the orthodox political economy; they were ready enough to grant political reforms, or to carry out Free Trade to its logical extreme, but many of them shrank from social reforms, on the ground that by interfering between man and man they were sapping the moral responsibility of the individual, or meddling with the natural law of competition which rules the world, or trying to make the state discharge functions for which it is not naturally designed. The old Liberal "doctrinaires" were very chary of taking in hand the kind of domestic legislation which would appeal to the sympathies of the masses, so that Disraeli had a fair chance of bidding for their support.

The "Little Englanders."

Liberalism and social reform.

The Derby-Disraeli ministry chanced upon very stirring times both at home and abroad; in the very week in which they assumed office (June 19–26, 1866) a great European war broke out. The greedy partners, Austria and Prussia, who

had joined to plunder Denmark in 1864, fell out over the distribution of the plunder. Count Bismarck, the able and unscrupulous Prussian premier, contrived to put Austria in the wrong, to induce Italy to attack her from the rear in order to recover Venice, and to fall upon her before she was prepared for hostilities. The Italians were beaten off; but the Prussians, largely aided by the "needle-gun"—the first breech-loading rifle used in European war—went on from victory to victory, till they completely crushed the Austrians at the battle of Königgrätz (July 3, 1866). After a struggle of only seven weeks, the Emperor Francis Joseph asked for peace, and obtained it on condition of giving up his position in Germany. Prussia made herself head of a new "North German Confederation," and annexed Nassau, Hesse-Cassel, Frankfort, and the kingdom of Hanover. So ended the old principality over which the Guelfs had ruled so long, and whose fortunes had been for more than a century (1714–1837) linked with those of England. The Austro-Prussian war was no concern of ours, but its consequences deeply affected us, for Prussia emerged from it a first-rate power, which she had hardly been during the days of the weak King Frederick William IV. (1840–1861). But William I. and his minister Bismarck soon caused those days of obscurity to be forgotten.

The war between Prussia and Austria.

The only foreign hostilities in which England was engaged during these years took place in Africa. A half-crazy despot, Theodore, King of Abyssinia, seized and imprisoned a number of British subjects, including two envoys who had been sent to conclude a treaty with him. When he proved deaf to all requests for their release, a small army was sent against him from India, under Sir Robert Napier. Hampered more by difficulties of roads and supplies than by the enemy, Napier forced his way far inland to the fortress of Magdala, the enemy's capital. The Abyssinian host was defeated by the

The Abyssinian expedition.

mere baggage-guard of the English force. The captives were surrendered, and Theodore blew out his own brains when he saw his army dispersed and his stronghold stormed (April, 1868).

Far more important than this trifling war were the domestic troubles of the United Kingdom in 1866-68. Ireland, which had remained in the quiet of exhaustion since the famine of 1845 and Smith O'Brien's fiasco in 1848, was now in one of her periodical fits of effervescence. It was mainly due to encouragement from America: when the Federal armies were disbanded in 1865, thousands of Irishmen, who had gone through the civil war, were thrown upon the world with a good military training and an ingrained hatred for England. Many of them engaged in a scheme for raising rebellion in Ireland, while others undertook to invade Canada in order to distract the attention of the British Government. They had hopes of being able to drag the United States into the turmoil, for the ravages of the *Alabama* and her consorts were bitterly remembered across the Atlantic. Emissaries, who crossed to Ireland, enrolled many thousands of enthusiastic young men in the "Fenian Brotherhood"—an association which took its strange title from the ancient name of the tribal militia of the Celtic kingdoms of the Dark Ages. Attempts, which fortunately failed, were made to tamper with the Irish regiments garrisoned across St. George's Channel. But the inevitable mismanagement, shirking, and treachery, which have distinguished all Irish risings, showed as clearly in 1867 as in 1848 or 1798. The widespread plans of the Fenians ended everywhere in ludicrous failure. Some thousands of them crossed into Canada, only to be easily dispersed by the loyal militia. The United States Government, though it did not take adequate pains to prevent their raids, refused to be drawn into collusion with them. The insurrection in Ireland only burst out at one or two isolated points, instead of spreading over the whole country. It resulted in no more than some ill-planned attacks

The Fenian outbreaks.

on police-barracks, and the insurgents fled into hiding when the troops came abroad. Some strange incidents in England attracted as much attention as the futile rising across the water. A large number of Liverpool Irish were implicated in a hair-brained scheme for seizing the stores and armoury at Chester. What they could have done if they had been successful does not sufficiently appear; but when 1500 of them had collected in the quiet old town, they found the police on the alert, and heard that a battalion of the Guards was expected from London, whereupon they mildly dispersed, save some dozens who were unfortunate enough to be arrested. The only exploits in which the Fenians showed any enterprise were two murderous attempts to release imprisoned members of their society. On the first occasion (September 18, 1867) twenty men with revolvers waylaid a prison van escorted by seven police, in the streets of Manchester, and took out their comrades within, after killing one and wounding four of the unarmed escort. The second attempt at rescue was still more reckless, and cost more lives. Some Fenian prisoners being confined in Clerkenwell jail, a gang of desperados placed a barrel of gunpowder against its outer wall and exploded it, thinking that their friends might escape in the confusion. The prisoners were not released, but in the neighbouring street four persons were killed, and more than a hundred—mainly women and children—injured (December 13, 1867). For these murders several Fenians were hung. Those who suffered for the Manchester crime are still honoured by anniversary services in Ireland, under the name of the "Manchester Martyrs." Deeds of this kind were calculated to irritate rather than to cow the British Government. The Conservative cabinet hurried troops into Ireland and raised special constables in England, but these precautions were hardly necessary. It was only at a somewhat later date that an English statesman was found to declare that murderous outrages brought the Irish question "within the sphere of practical politics."

While the Fenian movement was giving trouble, Disraeli was engaged in the difficult task of governing without a majority in parliament. That he succeeded in doing so for the best part of two years is an astounding testimony of his dexterity. All through 1867 he was engaged with his Reform Bill, drawn up on the same lines as that which he had before proposed in 1859. It differed from Lord Russell's scheme mainly in keeping the county franchise high (at £20 instead of £14), and in insisting on the "fancy franchises" that Disraeli had sketched out in his earlier bill, which gave the vote to all persons owning £30 in the savings-bank, or £50 invested in the public funds, or paying £1 of direct taxes, or who had received a liberal education. All those possessing these qualifications were to become electors if they were not already on the rolls; while if they were, they obtained a second vote in virtue of their evidence of thrift or superior instruction.

Disraeli's Reform Bill.

The Conservative Reform Bill was not so successful as Disraeli had hoped. Several members of the Government—of whom Lord Cranborne, the present Marquis of Salisbury, was one—resigned office because they regarded the measure as a concession to democracy. On the other hand, the Liberal party declared that the bill was not sufficiently broad and far-reaching, and proceeded to cut it about by unending amendments. Public opinion in the large towns was already excited on the question of Reform, and very shortly after the ministry had taken office, the famous riot in which the railings of Hyde Park were torn down (July, 1866) had reminded observers of the old Chartist days. Disraeli was very anxious to show the world that Conservatives could frame Reform Bills as successfully as their opponents, and was resolved to make a serious bid for popularity with the masses. Accordingly, when the Liberals began to mutilate his measure by amendments, he did not resign, but accepted all the changes, affirming that they did not affect the principle of the

The "Leap in the Dark."

bill. His scheme for the double vote was shorn away, his "fancy franchises" were struck off, but he still went on. He was compelled to accept the lowering of the household franchise to £5 in the towns and £12 in the counties, and to give votes to all lodgers paying £10 a year. Thus the measure became very democratic in form, more so than many even among the Whigs desired; but Disraeli persevered, and "took the Leap in the Dark" by bestowing the franchise on the masses. Save the agricultural labourers in the rural districts, practically all householders in the United Kingdom were now given the power of becoming electors. Among the groans of timid Conservatives and the scoffs of angry Liberals, who complained that Disraeli had stolen the credit of granting Reform from them, the bill became law in August, 1867.

For another session Disraeli continued to cling to office, holding out many schemes of social and economic legislation which he promised to put in practice. He was now possessed of complete control over his party, for in 1868 his aged colleague Lord Derby retired from politics, and there was no other member of the cabinet who could exercise the least influence over him. But his dexterous parliamentary tactics could not save him. The Liberals seized on the Irish question, and began to clamour for remedial legislation for the sister island as a cure for the disease of Fenianism. They began with pointing out the Established Church of Ireland as an abuse and an anachronism; Gladstone carried in the Commons a resolution demanding its disestablishment, and, defeated on this point, Disraeli could only resign or dissolve parliament. He chose the latter alternative; the new constituencies created by the Reform Bill of 1867 gave the Liberals a crushing majority of 120, and the Conservatives had to retire from office (December, 1868).

The Liberals return to office.

Gladstone, coming into office with such a splendid majority at his back, was able at once to take in hand all the changes

and reforms for which he and his followers had been yearning during the days of Palmerston. No party ever came into power with so many pledges to fulfil, and the Liberals made a conscientious attempt to discharge them all. They had to prove that they were the real friends of the people, and that Disraeli was a mere charlatan. "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform" were to reign everywhere.

Gladstone prime minister.

The first problem taken in hand by Gladstone was that of Ireland. He held that Irish discontent was not sentimental and national, but caused by practical grievances—a view which later events have proved to be untenable. Then, however, the whole Liberal party pinned its faith to the theory. The first measure taken in hand was the disestablishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland. As it existed in 1869, it was certainly an odd anomaly, for, though it claimed to be the State Church of the island, not more than one-fifth of the population belonged to it. In spite of the opposition of the Irish bishops and gentry, it was deprived of its endowments and its official status. But it retained its churches and cathedrals, and its clergy received personal compensation for their losses. The effect on the Irish Church was excellent: when freed from State control and allowed to govern itself it showed unexpected strength and vigour, and has been ever since a growing and flourishing body. Nonconformist enthusiasts who dreamed in 1868 that the Church of England might soon suffer the same fate as the sister establishment, have long since got over their disappointment.

Disestablishment of the Irish Church.

Having, as he hoped, done something to conciliate Irish Romanists by the Disestablishment Act, Gladstone then proceeded to deal with the more difficult question of the land. The absolute dependence of the poor peasantry of Ireland on landlords who were often absentees, and sometimes careless of all duties and bent on raising the last possible farthing of rent, was believed to be

The Irish Land Act.

the most fruitful source of Irish disloyalty. By the Land Act of 1870, Gladstone gave the tenant the right to be compensated, if his farm was taken from him, for any improvements he might have made on his holding. He also gave him the right to sell the "goodwill" of his land to his successor. This made the tenant a kind of joint-owner with the landlord of his farm, since he was given a valuable interest in it, often worth many times the annual rent. The Government was also under the idea that prosperity and quiet would be promoted by the establishment of peasant proprietors. Loans at easy rates were therefore offered to any one who wished to purchase his farm, if the landlord could be induced to sell.

This well-intentioned measure, however, had not the effect that might have been expected. Instead of being satisfied with their new advantages, the peasantry imbibed the idea that they ought to get complete possession of their farms for nothing. They wished to see a violent end made of all "landlordism," and were not in the least grateful for Gladstone's benevolent wishes. There was national sentiment as well as agrarian discontent at the bottom of the trouble. It was very discouraging to the Liberals that the year 1870 was so rife in murders, outrages, and riots that a "Peace Preservation Act" had to be passed, and extra troops sent into the country. Attempts to bribe Ireland have always failed.

Agrarian discontent continues.

A less questionable success was gained by the Government in their series of Acts dealing with national education. These were, on the whole, very beneficent. A bill for the revision of endowed and grammar schools, passed in 1869, did a good deal for the secondary education of the country, by bringing many well-endowed but inefficient schools under Government inspection. But the Elementary Education Act of 1870 was far more important. It affirmed the principle that the State was bound to provide gratuitous instruction for all the children in the realm. Attendance

The Education Acts.

was made compulsory, and wherever sufficient schools did not exist they were built with public money. In the thirty years which have elapsed since that day the proportion of illiterate persons in Great Britain has gone down to a negligeable quantity.

Another admirable domestic reform of the Gladstone Government was the Ballot Act. Down to this period voting at parliamentary elections was open, and the poll extended over many days. This arrangement gave ample scope for two abuses, intimidation and bribery, for it could be at once ascertained how every man voted. The introduction of secret voting made intimidation almost impossible, and bribery very risky, since the buyer of votes could never be certain that the recipient of his money had actually voted for him. A distinct improvement in the purity and decency of elections was seen; but the old evils were not wholly extirpated till more than ten years later, when the imposition of heavy penalties on both briber and bribed finally crushed the old scandals and abuses.

The Ballot Act, 1872.

The sphere in which the Gladstone Government showed most unhappily was that of foreign policy. Indeed, from Lord Palmerston's death down to the appearance of Lord Rosebery, the Liberals were singularly unfortunate in their dealings with external powers. They were so wedded to a consistent peace policy, that it required no ordinary provocation on the part of a foreign state to stir them up into remonstrance, much more into resistance. The fact was known abroad, and regularly traded upon by our neighbours.

Foreign policy of the Liberals.

The most notable event in the history of Europe which occurred during the tenure of office by the Gladstone ministry was the Franco-German war of 1870–71. Jealous of the new power of Prussia, and desirous of covering many mistakes of policy by another successful war, Napoleon III. rushed unprepared into a

The Franco-German war.

struggle with united Germany. Bismarck had foreseen the attack, and did what he could to precipitate it, for he was rightly convinced that the well-organized Prussian state was quite capable of crushing the French. His prescience was rewarded; Napoleon III. with nearly 100,000 men were surrounded and captured at Sédan, and when a republic replaced the monarchial government in France, its efforts proved as unavailing as those of its predecessor. Paris surrendered after a long siege (January 28, 1871), and peace was only granted on the condition of the cession of Alsace-Lorraine and the payment of a vast war-indemnity. When, after the treaty of Versailles, a wicked and senseless civil war broke out among the vanquished, and Paris was again beleagured and taken by French troops (March-May, 1871), it seemed as if France was likely to be permanently removed from the list of great powers.

England had very properly kept out of the Franco-German War, but some of its consequences affected her very directly. When Napoleon III. fell, the Russian Government formally disavowed the Black Sea Clauses of the treaty of 1856 which had terminated the Crimean War, and declared that it would build a warfleet in the Euxine when it chose. The French emperor, the other guarantor of the Treaty of Paris, having disappeared, England was compelled to take the affront mildly. It would have been mad to make the Russian declaration a *casus belli*.

Russia and the Treaty of Paris.

If the Gladstone cabinet must be held guiltless in this matter, the same cannot be said with regard to its action in the matter of our dispute with the United States, which came to a head in 1871. The subject in question was the claim of the Americans to be compensated by England for all the damage done by the *Alabama* and her consorts* to Federal shipping in 1863–65. There can be no doubt that the Palmerston Government had

The *Alabama* arbitration.

* See p. 150.

been slack and slow in the matter of detaining the *Alabama*, and that the United States had a legitimate grievance against us. But there is a long step between conceding this, and allowing that England should pay for all the mischief done by the Confederate cruisers. We had certainly a far greater cause of complaint against the States for allowing their territory to be made the base of the two Fenian attacks on Canada. Yet we allowed the Americans to make demands, not only for direct damages, but for indirect—such as the discouragement given to American trade and the prolongation of the War of Secession. The Liberal cabinet took this bullying very meekly, and suggested arbitration. A court of foreign arbitrators sitting at Geneva (June, 1872) gave the case against England, and bade her pay more than £3,000,000—a sum so considerable that when all the *Alabama* claims had been liquidated, there was still a considerable surplus left in the hands of the American Government. A second arbitration, made a little later, gave to the Americans the island of St. Juan, off the coast of British Columbia, which had been for some time in dispute between the two powers. Gladstone was under the impression that in submitting both questions to arbitration we had shown a regard for abstract justice and a laudable solicitude for peace. But public opinion in England generally took the view that we had made an undignified submission to threats, and had not been treated fairly in the awards.

The San Juan arbitration.

Only one satisfactory result came from the difficulties of foreign policy in the years 1871–72. Convinced that if we had been unexpectedly drawn into war our army was not in a condition to do itself justice, owing to the same defects that had been seen in the Crimean war, the Government took in hand its reorganization. The arrangements made by Mr. Cardwell, the Secretary for War, were for the most part wise and well considered. Want of reserves was the greatest deficiency in the existing system;

Cardwell's military reforms.

accordingly recruits were for the future to be enlisted, not for twenty years, but for short service—seven years with the colours and five in the reserve. Thus, when war broke out, some 60,000 or 80,000 trained men could be available to fill up the ranks of battalions which suffered in the field. Moreover, there was an attempt made to localize the regiments—battalions linked in pairs were assigned to every region in the United Kingdom. In theory each was to draw its recruits entirely from its own district, and one battalion was always to be at home and one abroad. This system has never worked in a quite satisfactory manner; some corps have become closely connected with the counties to which they were assigned—others have not, and have failed to elicit any local enthusiasm. Moreover, our constant small wars have rendered it impossible to keep precisely half the army at home. It is only by the raising of a considerable number of new battalions in 1898 that some approach has been made to the full carrying out of Mr. Cardwell's scheme. A more serious objection to the short service scheme has been that the home-battalion of each pair tends to become over-burdened with recruits. The proportion of very young soldiers in it is often so large that its efficiency for the field has been doubted. On the other hand, the reserve has been a great success. Whenever called out, it has appeared in full numbers and admirable spirit. By its means the young battalions could certainly be brought up to proper strength and efficiency.

One of Mr. Cardwell's other military reforms was the abolition of an antique abuse, which nevertheless caused some murmuring on account of the way in which it was conducted. He wished to get rid of the "purchase system," by which officers bought every step in rank, by compensating their seniors who were retiring or receiving promotion. It was an intolerable anomaly which often prevented poor and able men from rising, while rich but incapable officers bought promotion over their heads.

Abolition of the "purchase" system.

Though compensation was promised to all who had obtained their commissions on the old plan, yet so much opposition was made to the "Purchase Bill," especially in the House of Lords, that Mr. Gladstone finally dropped the measure and decreed the abolition of purchase by a Royal Warrant, on the ground that the armed forces of the realm were subject in such matters to the direct authority of the Crown. This was technically correct, but the act was much criticized as tending to take the army out of the control of parliament.

Fall of Gladstone's ministry.

The last complete year of the Gladstone ministry, 1873, was much less fertile in legislation than its predecessors. It only produced a "Judicature Act" for the consolidation of the courts of law, and an abortive scheme for the establishment of an "Undenominational" University in Ireland, which was wrecked by the declaration of the Roman Catholic bishops that they would have nothing to do with it. Early in 1874 the prime minister dissolved Parliament, though it was not yet six years old, to the great surprise of both parties. He went to the country with a declaration that, if returned again to power, he should proceed to abolish the income tax. This declaration was more fitted to affect the middle classes than the masses; and the latter, enfranchised in 1867, had now superseded the former as the depositaries of political power. To his own great surprise, Mr. Gladstone was beaten at the polls; he was defeated partly on account of the general dissatisfaction with his foreign policy, but probably still more through the resentment of the countless class, trade, and local interests which he harassed by his widespreading legislation. The Conservatives came into office with a majority of more than fifty in February, 1874.

Disraeli had now for the first time a real opportunity of showing what the new Conservatism was like. He was completely master of his party, and had finished the process of "educating" it which he had begun twenty years before. In his six years' administration, 1874–1880, he was able to

develop his policy in every direction that he chose. The two elements that went to make it, Imperialism abroad and cautious social reform at home, emerge very clearly in the annals of his tenure of power. If the former tendency seems to engross our attention more than the latter, it is largely because the lines of his ministry were cast in troublous days, when foreign policy became all-important.

Strong position of Disraeli as premier.

The first two years of the Disraeli ministry (1874–75) were a time of peace and quiet, notable mainly for the number of moderate and unostentatious measures of social and economic reform which the Government succeeded in passing. Such were the Agricultural Holdings Bill, by which farmers obtained compensation for unexhausted improvements when giving up their land; the Artisans' Dwellings Bill, which secured better housing for the workmen in great towns; and the Friendly Societies Act, which did much towards securing the better management of the savings of the poor.

Conservative legislation.

The only striking event of this time was the interference of Disraeli in Egypt, in the matter of the Suez Canal shares, the first attempt of England to obtain a footing in that country, where French influence had hitherto been predominant. The whole conditions of Eastern trade had been changed in 1869-70 by the construction of a ship-canal through the Isthmus of Suez by the French engineer Lesseps. Its convenience attracted to the Red Sea route a growing proportion of the commerce which had hitherto gone to India, China, and Australia by the circuitous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. It also put an end to the tiresome transhipment of goods and passengers landed at Alexandria, which had been necessary since the Overland Route * was adopted. Some three-fourths of the tonnage which passed through the canal was English, and yet the

England and Egypt—The Suez Canal.

* See p. 113.

control of the traffic was entirely in the hands of a grasping French company and a thriftless and oppressive Oriental despot. Luckily, the reckless extravagance of the Khedive Ismail landed him in financial difficulties, and while he was looking around for a purchaser for the 177,000 shares in the canal which he owned, the English Government stepped in with a prompt offer of £4,000,000 in ready cash. The offer, made by telegram, was accepted, and Disraeli was able to announce that England had become the owner of an interest in the canal amounting to almost half its value. This acquisition put our position in Egypt on an entirely new footing. But it was not only a political advantage, but a splendid financial stroke. The shares are now worth six times what was given for them, and the interest on them is an appreciable item in the national revenue.

In the following year, 1876, the political horizon of Europe, which had been fairly clear since the Franco-German war of 1870–71, began to grow overcast. An insurrection in Bosnia, which had been troubling the Turkish Government for some time, began to grow serious and to draw the attention of the powers to the interminable Eastern Question. The Sultan Abdul-Aziz had taken no advantage of the long respite given to his realm by the Crimean war. In spite of many promises made by his brother and himself since 1854, the administration of the Ottoman empire remained as scandalous and oppressive as ever. The Porte had borrowed huge sums of money from Europe, but they had been employed, not to develop the empire, but to gratify the Sultan's caprices, or at the best to furnish his army with modern rifles and artillery. The Bosnian insurrection spread, and it was soon discovered that Russian emissaries, sent by patriotic Slavonic societies, were sustaining it, with or without the full consent of their Government. In the summer of 1876 the princes of Servia and Montenegro took arms to aid the insurgents, and when the Servian troops were reinforced by

Insurrections in the Balkan Peninsula.

many thousands of Russian volunteers and placed under the command of a Russian general, it became evident that the Czar's ministers were at the bottom of the trouble.

The first impulse of the English Government and people was to lend support to the Sultan, despite of his notorious misrule, in order to keep Russia out of the Balkan Peninsula. But any such intentions which the Conservative cabinet may have cherished were foiled by the barbarities of the Turks themselves. While the Ottoman army was concentrated on the Servian frontier, a rising broke out among the Bulgarians. In the absence of regular troops, the Sultan put it down by employing hordes of Circassians and armed Mohammedan villagers, who displayed the same horrible cruelty which had been seen in the Greek insurrection of 1821, and was to be exhibited again in the Armenian massacres of 1897. When the news of the "Bulgarian Atrocities" reached England, Gladstone, who had nominally retired from politics in 1875, took the field again to denounce the Turks, and to protest against any action on the part of the English Government which might be held to encourage them. His crusade was completely successful; public opinion was so deeply stirred, that the premier had to appease it by declaring that Great Britain had no intention of bolstering up the effete and corrupt Ottoman power, but must confine herself to defending her own interests in the East.

Gladstone denounces "Bulgarian Atrocities."

It was in no small degree owing to this turn of national feeling in England, that the Czar was encouraged in the next year to declare war on Turkey (April, 1877), and sent his armies across the Danube to "deliver their Christian brethren from the infidel." The Ottomans made a much better fight than had been expected: the central government was weak—the reckless Abdul-Aziz had just been murdered, and his successor, Murad V., was almost an imbecile—but the army was courageous and well equipped. The obstinate defence of Plevna kept the Russian troops in

The Russo-Turkish war.

Europe at bay for the whole autumn, and it was only when Plevna was starved out that the Russians burst over the Balkans at midwinter. Driving the remnants of the Turkish armies before them, they drew near Constantinople. At St. Stephano, not far from the gates of the city, they imposed on the Sultan a treaty by which he surrendered a large territory in Asia, and gave back the small slip at the Danube mouth which had been ceded by Russia after the Crimean war. The greater part of European Turkey was to be divided among Christian states, of which a new Bulgarian principality was to be the largest (March 3, 1878).

Action of Lord Beaconsfield—The Treaty of Berlin.

Disraeli—or rather Lord Beaconsfield, as he must be called since his migration to the Upper House in 1877—was determined not to let Russia settle the Eastern question by herself. He informed the Czar's Government that the terms imposed on Turkey must be approved by a conference of all the powers. When no attention was paid to this demand, he sent a fleet up the Dardanelles, to the immediate vicinity of Constantinople; called out the reserves; obtained a grant of £6,000,000 for war preparations from parliament; and began to move Indian troops into the Mediterranean. These menaces brought the Czar's advisers to terms, and, rather than face a new war, they consented that the St. Stephano treaty should be revised. The process was carried out by delegates of the seven great powers, meeting at Berlin under the presidency of Prince Bismarck (June, 1878). By the treaty of Berlin Russia kept her own conquests, but the proposed Bulgarian state was to be split in two, and other powers were to take slices of Turkey for themselves. Austria was to occupy Bosnia, Greece was promised Thessaly, and England received the Isle of Cyprus. In return for this grant, she undertook to guarantee the integrity of the Sultan's remaining dominions in Asia, and also to see that the long-promised reforms were carried out therein.

Lord Beaconsfield and his colleague, Lord Salisbury, came back from Berlin claiming that they had obtained "Peace with honour," and in the main this was true. But the policy of the treaty lies open to much criticism. We were never able to get the Turks to carry out the projected reforms, which are much further from fulfilment in 1899 than they were in 1878. Our guarantee of the Turkish empire was never more than a farce. The island of Cyprus, held on a rather undignified tenure, proved barren and harbourless, and has never been of any use to us as a naval or military base. Crete would have been a far better choice. Bulgaria, so elaborately divided by the treaty, united itself by a revolution a few years later without any objection from any power. On the other hand, Russia had been humiliated by the revision of the St. Stephano terms, and owed England a grudge which could not easily be forgotten. These, however, were not the criticisms made on the Berlin Conference by the British opposition in 1878: the points then raised by Mr. Gladstone and his friends were that we might have joined Russia in bringing pressure on Turkey in 1877, after the Bulgarian atrocities, and so have prevented any war, and that it was unrighteous to offer any guarantee for the further maintenance of the barbarous and blood-stained Ottoman power. With the massacres of 1897 before us, it is difficult not to sympathize with this last view. Fortunately our guarantee lapsed long ago.

Criticism of Lord Beaconsfield's policy.

The Conservatives had yet two years of power after the Berlin Treaty was signed; they were full of unfortunate incidents, for some of which the cabinet was responsible, while others were the results of mere ill luck. In our chapter on India and the colonies we shall have to deal with the Afghan war of 1878–80, with its record of fighting that was not always fortunate. It was a direct result of our quarrel with Russia, for fear lest the Ameer should fall under Russian influence was the originating cause of our invasion of his realm. The Zulu

war of 1878–79 had no such direct connection with European politics; but when the disaster of Isandula made it unpopular, Liberal orators did not fail to point out that such misfortunes were the result of Imperialistic greed and the maintenance of a "forward policy" in the colonies.

But in all probability the Government suffered more in public estimation from its Irish difficulties than from its foreign policy. The parliament of 1874–80 was the first in which the Home Rule party and its policy of systematic obstruction came to the front. Home Rule was practically a reversion to O'Connell's old demand for the repeal of the Union, the Fenian programme of complete separation and the establishment of an Irish republic being tacitly dropped. As long as the Home Rulers were led by the quiet and respectable Isaac Butt, they made no great stir. But with the appearance of the cynical and saturnine Charles Stuart Parnell as a party chief, things changed. The more violent members of the Home Rule faction tried the policy of obstructing in Parliament all public business, foreign and domestic, by interminable speeches, irrelevant amendments, got-up altercations, and vexatious counts out. Their object was that of the importunate widow in the parable—to make themselves such a nuisance that their demands might be conceded out of mere weariness and disgust. Throughout the years 1877–80 they were incessantly wasting time and driving to despair the mild and kindly Sir Stafford Northcote, who had succeeded Lord Beaconsfield as leader of the House of Commons. At the same time they kept up a vigorous agitation against "landlordism" in the Irish countryside, which was accompanied with a running commentary of agrarian outrages, of which they disclaimed the responsibility. It cannot be denied that one result of their activity was to produce a general feeling in England that the Conservatives had proved themselves incapable of dealing with the Irish question.

The Home Rule party—Rise of Parnell.

In March, 1880, Lord Beaconsfield dissolved his parliament, which was now nearing its legal term of seven years. The general election was fought with more than usual acrimony, for the Liberals were stirred to great energy by Gladstone's "Midlothian speeches," in which he taunted the Conservatives as the advocates of unjust aggression all over the world, and the special friends of the Turk. His eloquence had no mean effect on the contest, and the Liberals came to the new Parliament with a splendid majority of one hundred. It boded ill for them, however, that the Home Rulers had swept all Ireland save Ulster, and appeared with nearly eighty members when the House met in the summer of 1880.

Fall of Lord Beaconsfield's ministry.

The second Gladstone ministry was destined to last just five years (June, 1880, to June, 1885). It was inaugurated with promises of the old Liberal panaceas, "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform," but it turned out to be a period of wars and rumours of wars, of disaster abroad and venomous civil strife at home. Its opening incident showed that Gladstone's external policy might perhaps be righteous, but was certainly neither dignified nor successful. The Government was hardly in office before it was confronted with the revolt of the Boers of the Transvaal, a Dutch state which Lord Beaconsfield had annexed in 1877, to save its population from being overwhelmed by its Zulu neighbours. In 1880, the Zulus having been long crushed, the Boers rose in rebellion, destroyed several small detachments, and finally inflicted a disgraceful defeat on the British forces at Majuba Hill. The Government had at first refused to treat with the insurgents, but after the first checks Mr. Gladstone came to the conclusion that they were patriots rightly struggling for independence, and, though large reinforcements were just reaching Natal, granted the Boers independence under the vaguest terms of suzerainty (March, 1881). Since then South Africa has never ceased to give trouble.

Gladstone's second ministry—The Boer war.

Even before the Transvaal disturbances were settled, Ireland was in a state of uproar which had not been paralleled since 1867. If the Home Rule members had been troublesome to the late Conservative Government, they continued to make themselves doubly objectionable to the Liberals. Mr. Gladstone was still under the impression, which he had imbibed in 1868, that Irish discontent could be healed by remedial measures. With this object he brought forward in 1880 a bill prohibiting landlords from evicting any tenants, however bad, without paying them "compensation for disturbance." This measure failed to pass the House of Lords, but in 1881 another "Land Bill" was successfully carried through, creating a Land Court, whose commissioners were empowered to fix all rents against which protest was made. It acted in the most stringent way, reducing rents from thirty to fifty per cent., but Ireland showed no signs of settling down. The peasantry had been persuaded by the Home Rulers that if they held together and kept up a lively agitation, the Liberal Government might be frightened into abolishing landlords altogether, compensating them from the public funds, and making over their estates to the tenantry. For this end the celebrated "Land League" was started, and soon spread over the whole country. Its leaders did not openly advocate outrages, but they were always full of excuse and pity for those who were detected in committing them. It was small wonder if agrarian crime suddenly developed to an extent which might have seemed incredible. Many districts of the south and west of Ireland were under a veritable reign of terror.

Irish discontent—The "Compensation for Disturbance" Bill.

The Land Act of 1881—The Land League and agrarian crime.

At last Mr. Forster, the courageous and well-meaning statesman to whom the secretaryship for Ireland was entrusted, got leave to seize and imprison on suspicion Parnell and some forty other chiefs of the Land League. Outrages redoubled,

and from his confinement in Kilmainham jail Parnell sanctioned the "No Rent Manifesto," an appeal to the whole tenantry of Ireland to refuse to pay a farthing to their landlords till the Government should be brought to its knees. It was largely acted upon in the southern and western parts of the island. Thereupon the cabinet declared the Land League "an illegal association," and suppressed it throughout the country. But the outrages only continued to grow worse: in the fourth quarter of 1881 they rose to the appalling figure of 732, of which eight were murders and thirty-four attempts at murder.

Imprisonment of the Land League leaders—The "No Rent Manifesto."

Broken down by the stress of the struggle, Gladstone resolved to take the astonishing step of releasing Parnell and the other suspects, if they would promise to aid him in quieting the country. This surrender took shape in the "Kilmainham treaty" of April, 1882, the prisoners covenanting that the No-Rent Manifesto should be withdrawn, and they would "make exertions which would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds." Forster, the Irish secretary, and Lord Cowper, the viceroy, at once resigned, refusing to make bargains with sedition. To fill the former's place Lord Frederick Cavendish took office, but only six days afterwards he was assassinated in broad daylight in the Phœnix Park, along with his under-secretary Mr. Burke, by some Dublin ruffians belonging to a society which called itself "the Invincibles" (May 6, 1882).

The "Treaty" of Kilmainham—The Phœnix Park murders.

Public opinion in England was deeply stirred by this dreadful crime, which so entirely justified Forster's refusal to sanction a policy of weakness. The Gladstone Government had to take up once more a policy of coercion, and to acknowledge that "the late arrangements must be reconsidered and recast." So great was the feeling stirred up against the Home Rulers in general, that Parnell himself thought it necessary to characterize

the murders "as cowardly and unprovoked assassinations." But he none the less opposed by all the weapons of obstruction the new Coercion Bills brought in by Sir William Harcourt, predicting that they would lead to even worse troubles than those of 1881. In this he was wrong; the "Crimes Act," vigorously administered by the new viceroy Lord Spencer, had a considerable effect in keeping down outrages. The Dublin murderers were detected and hung, to the great content of the nation, and several dastardly attempts to use dynamite for explosions in England and Scotland failed to frighten the Government, or to produce anything more than a redoubled determination that sedition and crime must be put down. Rampant obstruction was still kept up by the Home Rulers in parliament, and outrages continued to occur in Ireland; but by 1884 other questions had arisen to distract the attention of Great Britain from the sister island.

The Crimes Act passed—Continuance of the agrarian struggle.

The main question of foreign policy in the years of the war with the Land League was connected with Egypt. Since Disraeli's purchase of the Suez Canal shares we had kept our hand upon that country, sharing with France a sort of unauthorized control, which in 1879 was made more formal. In that year the extravagant and reckless Khedive Ismail was compelled to abdicate, and his son Tewfik was placed in power, but compelled to accept an English and a French minister, who were to be irremovable, and to take charge of the whole financial arrangements of the country. The young Khedive did not struggle against the "Dual Control," but it roused deep discontent among the native officials and ministers, who had previously fleeced the country at their own sweet will. An ambitious colonel named Arabi Pasha put himself at the head of a movement whose watchword was "Egypt for the Egyptians." Finding that the troops would follow him, he

Arabi's rebellion.

executed a *coup d'état*, seized the person of the Khedive, and drove away the foreign ministers (April, 1882).

It would have been natural for England and France to combine, in order to restore the Dual Control and put down the dictator. But the French Government refused to lend any help for such a purpose, not dreaming apparently that England would go in single-handed. Mr. Gladstone seems at first to have been in some doubt as to the policy to pursue, but the Mediterranean squadron was ordered to Alexandria. While it lay there a great riot broke out in the city, directed against all Europeans, and many hundreds of Greeks, Italians, and Levantines, with a few British subjects, were massacred (June 11, 1882). This occurrence naturally led to hostilities: when Arabi refused to obey Admiral Seymour's demand that he should stop fortifying Alexandria, and dismantle its batteries, the fleet was directed to bombard the place (July 11). The forts were wrecked, the garrison driven out, and the English landed and took possession of the ruins of the place.

France refuses to act—Bombardment of Alexandria.

Thus began the Egyptian campaign, which Gladstone persistently refused to call a war, maintaining that it was only "a series of military operations," because we were attacking, not the Khedive, the rightful ruler, but only his rebellious subjects. The struggle was short, for Sir Garnet Wolseley, to whom it was entrusted, managed the business with the most admirable decision and promptitude. The Egyptians were expecting him to debouch from Alexandria, but when his troops began to arrive in force from England and India, he turned aside and seized the Suez Canal, which he made his base for a march across the desert on Cairo. Arabi hurriedly raised the lines of Tel-el-Kebir to protect the capital; but Wolseley came upon them by a rapid night march, stormed them at dawn, and completely scattered the Egyptian host (September 13). A day later his cavalry seized Cairo before the enemy could rally,

The Battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

and the rebellion collapsed. Arabi and his chief supporters were captured and exiled to Ceylon, and the Khedive was replaced on his throne. But an English army of occupation remained in Egypt, though Gladstone promised the French and the Sultan that they should be removed when order and good government were restored—a most unwise pledge.

Circumstances, however, were too strong for the Liberal cabinet, or the promise would probably have been fulfilled.

Rise of the Mahdi—Abandonment of the Soudan.

But even before Arabi's rise, a rebellion had broken out in the Egyptian provinces in the Soudan. A fanatic from Dongola, named Mohammed Ahmed, had put himself at the head of the Arab tribes of the south, who were groaning under the bitter oppression of their Egyptian taskmasters. He proclaimed himself to be the *Mahdi*, the prophet whom all Mussulmans expect to appear just before the Last Judgment, and announced that he was the destined conqueror of the world. His first successes caused the whole Soudan to rally round him, and his "dervishes" drove the Egyptian troops into their fortresses. To stay his progress, General Hicks was sent to Khartoum with a raw native force, hastily raised from the wreck of Arabi's army. But as he marched towards Kordofan Hicks was surrounded and cut to pieces with the whole of his host (October 3, 1883). Gladstone then determined to abandon the Soudan, believing that the dervishes were an oppressed population struggling for a not-undeserved freedom, and not seeing that they were desperate fanatics bent on the conquest of the whole world, and set on slaying every one who refused to acknowledge their Mahdi.

To withdraw the Egyptian troops from the Soudan, Charles Gordon, a brave and pious engineer officer, who had once governed the country in the days of the Khedive Ismail, was sent to Khartoum. On his arrival there he found that the rebellion had gone much further than he had expected, and that it was impossible to

Gordon at Khartoum.

carry out the Government's plan without further military aid. He was driven into Khartoum and there besieged by the Mahdists in February, 1884. At the head of his dispirited and ill-disciplined Egyptian troops he made a gallant defence, but his repeated demands for British bayonets were regularly refused till it was too late. In the autumn Gladstone at last determined to send an expedition to the Soudan; but by this time Khartoum was at its last gasp. Wolseley, the victor of Tel-el-Kebir, forced his way up the Nile and despatched a column across the desert to relieve the city. After a most perilous march the troops beat the dervishes at the desperate battle of Abu-Klea (January 22, 1885), and forced their way to within a hundred miles of Gordon's stronghold. But the time was past for succour. On January 26 the Mahdi stormed Khartoum, and massacred Gordon and the 11,000 men of his garrison. On receiving this disastrous news the expeditionary force retired on Egypt, abandoning the whole Soudan to the rebels, who slew off the greater part of the people, and turned the whole region into a desert.

Two half-hearted attempts were made, one before and one after the fall of Khartoum, to attack the insurgents from the side of the Red Sea. But the expeditionary forces which landed at Suakim, though they beat the dervishes at El-Teb and Tamai (1884), and Tofrek (1885), recoiled before the difficulties of the waterless desert which separates the coast plain from the Nile, and accomplished absolutely nothing.

The betrayal of Gordon—for so the tardy action of the Government was generally and not unnaturally styled—alienated from Gladstone many supporters whose faith had survived Majuba Hill and the Kilmainham Treaty. For the last year of its tenure of office the Liberal cabinet was profoundly unpopular. It had profited little from the one constructive measure of its later years, the Reform Bill of 1884. This was designed to level up the electoral body, by giving the franchise

The Reform Bill and Redistribution Bill.

to the last considerable class who were still destitute of the vote—the agricultural labourers of the counties. The Conservatives refused to allow the bill to pass, stopping it in the House of Lords, till Gladstone consented to let redistribution accompany reform; *i.e.* to rearrange all the constituencies so as to make them fairly equal in size. This idea was very imperfectly carried out. The democratic ideal of "one man one vote" was now practically attained, but not that of "one vote one value," for a few hundred inhabitants of a decaying Irish town, or a depopulated Irish county, still return the same number of members as enormous London constituencies, such as Chelsea or East Ham. Gladstone justified the anomaly by the theory that the further a district was from the capital the more did it require representation—a doctrine not likely to be popular with Londoners. The main result of the bill was that the smaller boroughs which had escaped disfranchisement in 1832, now became absorbed in the surrounding country districts. The seats gained from them mostly went to new constituencies in the north of England.

State of parties in 1885—Gladstone's third premiership.

In June, 1885, the Government was defeated, by a chance combination of Conservatives and Home Rulers, on an unimportant detail of the budget. Gladstone thereupon resigned, and Lord Salisbury, head of the Conservative party since Lord Beaconsfield's death in 1881, took office. As the Liberals were still in a considerable majority, this arrangement was evidently a mere stop-gap. At the end of the session, Lord Salisbury dissolved Parliament, and the first general election after the Reform Bill of 1884 occurred. What attitude the new constituencies would adopt was quite uncertain. Gladstone, in a series of long and vigorous speeches in his constituency of Midlothian, asked for a majority large enough to enable him to keep down both Tories and Home Rulers in case they should combine. But this was denied him: though the Liberals swept away nearly all the county seats in the east

and centre of England, where the newly enfranchised labourers all voted for their benefactor, yet they suffered a number of disastrous defeats in the towns, where public opinion was greatly excited against their weak and unlucky foreign policy. When the House met, the Liberals had just such a majority over the Conservatives (330 to 251) as allowed the eighty-six Home Rulers under Parnell to keep the balance of power in their hands. The Irish chief had been sounding the heads of both parties for some time, and thought that Gladstone was likely to prove more squeezable than Lord Salisbury, though several Conservative leaders—especially Lord Carnarvon—seem to have given more attention to his overtures in 1885 than was consistent with the true policy of their party. In January, 1886, Parnell assisted the Liberals to evict Lord Salisbury from office, and Gladstone for the third time became prime minister. Even before he took office it began to be noised abroad that he was in secret negotiation with the Irish, and ready to buy their allegiance by the grant of a measure of Home Rule. Here begins a new chapter of our domestic history; that one of the two great parties should make a permanent alliance with the Obstructionists had never been deemed possible before 1885.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOME RULE QUESTION AND IMPERIALISM.

1886–1899.

SINCE the days immediately preceding the Reform Bill of 1832, the United Kingdom had never been in such a state of political excitement as prevailed from November, 1885, to July, 1886. It was in the former month that rumours began to get abroad that the "liberal measure of local self-government," which Gladstone had spoken of in his Midlothian speeches as desirable for Ireland, meant Home Rule. At midwinter it was stated that he had invited Parnell to confer with him on the scheme, and to suggest guarantees for the preservation of law and peace in Ireland when Home Rule should have been conceded. Nevertheless, many Liberals refused to believe that there was any truth in the reports, and several of their party leaders announced that they still remained opposed to any grant of legislative independence to Ireland.

But when the Tories had been evicted from office in January, 1886, and Gladstone came into power, his proceedings showed that rumour had not lied. It soon became known that the premier was drafting a Home Rule Bill, and that violent dissensions were on foot in the cabinet, since several members of it were not prepared to follow him in his new departure. In March, the president of the Local Government Board, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the best-known leader of the

Rumours as to the Home Rule Bill—Liberal dissensions.

Radical wing of the party, resigned his office, as did Mr. George Trevelyan, the secretary for Scotland. But the bulk of the Liberal party were still in the dark as to the exact form which the projected bill would take, and it was quite uncertain whether the majority were prepared to follow the premier. All that was known was that there were bound to be some secessions when Gladstone's plan was set forth. Meanwhile the Conservatives were commencing a vigorous agitation against any concession to Parnell, and the Irish Protestants of Ulster were fiercely proclaiming that they would resist, even with armed force, any attempt to place them in subjection to the Home Rule majority in the south and west.

On the 8th of April, the bill was at last introduced and explained by the premier, in a speech occupying nearly four hours. It was proposed to establish an Irish parliament in Dublin, consisting of 309 members sitting in a single chamber; by a device strange to British ideas, these members were to be of two classes, 206 representing the boroughs and counties, while the remainder were to be peers or senators of an anomalous sort, chosen for long periods, and not liable to lose their seats at a dissolution. The Imperial Government was to retain control over the army, matters of external trade, the customs and excise, and foreign policy. The rest of the affairs of Ireland were to be entrusted to the Dublin parliament, which would have in its power the police, the maintenance of law and justice, all matters of internal taxation, education, and all the executive and administrative parts of the governance of the realm. By an elaborate financial scheme, Gladstone calculated that Ireland should pay £3,244,000 a year to the Imperial exchequer as her contribution to the management of the British empire; she would have, he thought, about £7,000,000 more for her own local purposes. No Irish members were for the future to come to Westminster, so that the Crown was to be the only formal link between the two kingdoms.

Introduction of the bill.

The heated debates which followed lasted from the 8th of April to the 7th of June. Parnell expressed his satisfaction with the bill, though he claimed that financially it was a hard bargain for Ireland. It remained to be seen whether the defection from the Liberal ranks would be large enough to compensate for the eighty-six well-disciplined followers whom he was about to lead into the ministerial lobby. Gradually, however, it began to be clear that the split in the Liberal ranks was much deeper than Gladstone had hoped. Lord Hartington and most of the Whig section of the party were known to be alienated, and it was also found that Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Bright were about to be followed into opposition by a considerable number of the Radicals. Member after member arose on the Liberal side of the House to complain that the guarantees given for the loyalty of Ireland were too weak; or that no protection was afforded for the minority in Ulster who disliked Home Rule; or that the proposed financial arrangements were unworkable; or that the removal of the Irish members from Westminster broke up all connection between the kingdoms; or, more simply, that persons with the antecedents of Parnell and his followers could not be trusted with power. When the crucial division on the second reading of the bill was taken on June 19, no less than ninety-three Liberals voted against the Government, and the measure was thrown out by a majority of thirty (341 to 311). Mr. Gladstone at once dissolved parliament, though it was not seven months old, and appealed to the country to endorse his new policy (June 25).

Split in the Liberal Party—The bill rejected.

The general election of July, 1886, was by far the most bitterly fought contest of the present half-century. Disruption of old party ties amongst the Liberals lent it a particularly personal animosity, since every "Unionist" of the last parliament found his seat attacked by a "Gladstonian." The latter charged their former friends with disloyalty and desertion;

"Unionists" and "Gladstonians"—The general election.

the former replied by taunting the majority with blind subservience to Gladstone, and with making terms with the friends of traitors and assassins. The stake at hazard was by far the greatest of the century; the Unionists believed that their defeat would mean civil war in six months, and the possible disruption of the empire. Gladstone, on the other hand, held out the prospect of a pacified and friendly Ireland—a thing of which no man had ever ventured to dream—and warned his opponents that even if they won they had nothing to offer but a policy of interminable and hopeless coercion for the sister island. Passions on both sides ran higher than at any other crisis that men could remember, yet it was satisfactory to find that the election itself was carried out without any of the rioting or the corruption that used to be so common in the days before the Ballot Act.

Defeat of the Home Rulers—The Liberal-Unionist party.

The result was decisive; the majority of the Liberal Unionists kept their seats—seventy-eight of them appeared in the new parliament. On the other hand, the Gladstonians had lost some forty or fifty seats, and retained no more than 191. The Conservatives were 316 strong, and the Parnellites 85. When Lord Hartington, as head of the Liberal Unionists, explained that he and his friends would not amalgamate with the Conservatives, nor take office, but would never join in any combination with the Gladstonians so as to imperil the position of the incoming ministry, it became clear that a long spell of exile from office awaited the friends of Home Rule. For most intents and purposes the Conservatives might count on a majority of a hundred.

When Lord Salisbury took office for the second time, in August, 1886, with such a powerful alliance at his back, domestic politics began to quiet down with a surprising quickness. The tendency was most marked in Ireland, where many expected that the rejection of the Home Rule Bill would be followed by riots and outrages worse than those of 1882–83.

The reverse was the case; a distinct amelioration was visible after the fall of the Gladstone ministry, and a prolonged attempt made by some of the Parnellite leaders to raise agrarian trouble by a scheme called "the Plan of the Campaign" was a failure. Their idea was to repeat in a minor form the "No Rent" edict of 1882, binding the tenantry in certain estates to cling together and refuse to pay more rent than they thought fit. But Mr. Arthur Balfour, the new secretary for Ireland, proved by far the most successful administrator that had been seen across St. George's Channel for a generation. Indeed, he was the only statesman of modern days who has gained rather than lost credit while holding the unenviable post which was now allotted to him. The wild abuse of the Parnellite members in the Commons did not seem to worry him, and he showed an imperturbable indifference to all their accusations and raillery. The Government aided him by passing a Coercion Bill of a very stringent kind (July, 1887), which, on the whole, served the end for which it was designed, since, in spite of certain riots ending in bloodshed—such as the "Mitchelstown massacre" of October 12—Ireland was growing less disturbed all through 1887-88. The systematic obstruction which the Parnellites, aided by many Gladstonians, offered to this bill, only led to the passing of new and much-needed reforms of procedure in the House of Commons, which made the useless wasting of time more difficult. An Irish Land Bill which accompanied the Coercion Act was less successful, pleasing neither tenants nor landlords, and soon being forgotten.

The Plan of Campaign—Mr. Arthur Balfour Irish secretary.

The year 1887 is best remembered, however, for no matter of party politics, but for the Queen's First Jubilee (June 21), a great ceremony held to commemorate her Majesty's completion of the fiftieth year of her reign. A solemn service held at Westminster Abbey was attended by all the Royal family, and

The Queen's Jubilee—The Imperial idea.

witnessed by an assembly gathered not only from the United Kingdom, but from India and all the colonies. Lord Beaconsfield's "Imperialism" still dominated his party, and everything was done to make the Jubilee a manifestation of the loyalty of the whole empire. In this aspect it was most successful; not only did the premiers of the autonomous colonies and a party of Indian rajahs join in the ceremony in London, but rejoicings and demonstrations all round the world bore witness to the respect and love entertained for our aged sovereign in every corner of her dominions. Both at home and abroad the political effects of the Jubilee were admirable. They may be taken to mark the complete predominance of the Imperial idea first brought into prominence by Disraeli half a generation before.

It was in truth the interests of Greater Britain—a name just beginning to come into vogue—rather than purely foreign affairs, which formed the most important parts of our external politics from this time onward. Whether under Liberal or Conservative ministers, England has steadfastly refused to entangle herself in alliances with any of the Continental powers.

Greater Britain and the Continental Powers.

In the seventies, while Bismarck was the dominant statesman in Europe, Germany, Austria, and Russia formed an alliance, the "League of the Three Emperors," which was the governing factor in European politics. It might have seemed natural for us to look for friends in France and Italy, and for some time we were on excellent terms with both these powers. But things changed after the Egyptian war of 1882; our occupation of Egypt was a bitter blow to France, all the more so because it was entirely her own fault that she did not become our partner. Having refused to aid us in crushing Arabi, she was never again able to get her foot into the Nile valley, and has always cherished a rather unreasonable grudge against the power which finished the business without her. The facts that

Jealousy of France of our position in Egypt.

we have never formally proclaimed a protectorate over Egypt, and that Mr. Gladstone made his unfortunate engagement to evacuate the country "when circumstances permitted," have furnished a dozen French foreign ministers with opportunities for harassing English cabinets with inquiries as to the date of our departure, and the reasons for our delay. All reforms which we made in Egypt, even the most simple and necessary, formed the subject of angry diplomatic notes. The anomalous position occupied by a state which exercises the reality of suzerainty without its legal form, rendered such criticism only too easy.

As long as France stood alone in Europe, and the League of the Three Emperors still existed, her intrigues against us in Egypt were tiresome rather than dangerous. Circumstances, however, gradually changed; the Czar Alexander II. had been assassinated by the Nihilists in 1881, and his son Alexander III. was not a friend of Germany. Moreover, the old Emperor William I., who always preserved a kindly feeling for Russia, died in 1888, and with his decease the influence of Bismarck, all-powerful in Germany since 1866, and in Europe since 1870, began to wane. Even before his old master's death, the breach between the two empires had been clearly marked, and Bismarck had publicly announced that a continuance in his former policy was no longer possible. There followed a rearrangement of the relations of the great Continental powers, Germany and Austria avowing that they had concluded formal treaties with Italy, and taken her into partnership in a new "Triple Alliance." Russia and France, thus left in isolation, were forced by the logic of circumstances to look toward each other for support. Their drawing together only began to be evident about 1891–92; down to that date the Russian Government had doubted too much the solidity of the French republic, whose ministries were always changing, and whose very existence

The Triple Alliance—Friendship between Russia and France.

had seemed imperilled in 1887–88 by the intrigues of the theatrical adventurer General Boulanger.

William II. of Germany —Dismissal of Bismarck.

The position on the Continent was still further modified by the dismissal of Prince Bismarck from office by his active and imperious sovereign, the young emperor William II., who refused to be dominated by the great statesman as his grandfather had been (March, 1890). From that time onward the German monarch himself has taken the place as the mainspring of Continental politics which the great chancellor so long occupied. It was for some time feared that his ambition and energy would lead him into stirring up trouble all over Europe, but he has disappointed his enemies. Though his policy cannot always be praised, and his unending flow of speeches and telegrams is not always guided by discretion, he has practically displayed an ability and moderation for which he at first received no credit.

Foreign policy of the British Government.

The attitude of the English cabinet, in face of the new alliances on the Continent, was bound to be reserved. Considering how we were embroiled with France in Egypt, and how suspicious we have always been of Russia in the East, it might seem obvious for England to draw near to the Triple Alliance, to whom our fleet would be invaluable in time of war. But any formal treaty with the three powers might possibly involve us in struggles in which we have no interest, and causes of friction with Germany were continually arising over colonial matters, owing to the perpetual annexation in remote corners of the earth to which both Bismarck and William II. were prone. Hence the foreign policy of the Salisbury ministry in 1886–92 (like that of their successors ever since) consisted in careful balancing and neutrality, with the final object of not offending both groups of Continental powers at once. If we were led into such a misfortune, it might end in their sinking their grudges and making common cause in order to plunder

the British Empire—a possible though not a probable contingency.

Meanwhile the internal policy of the Conservative ministry was conducted on much the same lines as that of the Beaconsfield ministry of 1874–80—the party had learnt its lesson, and strove to combine practical reforms and administrative efficiency at home with the safeguarding of the empire abroad. The first Chancellor of the Exchequer whom Lord Salisbury appointed, Lord Randolph Churchill, tried to raise a cry for economy, and actually resigned his office because he thought that the army and navy estimates were too high. But his declaration found no echo among the Conservative rank and file, and he discovered that he had committed political suicide by his hasty action. All through the years 1886–92 the cabinet continued to produce bills for domestic reforms of the practical kind, such as the Local Government Bill of 1888, creating the elective county councils which have worked so well ever since their creation; and the Free Education Act of 1891, which made the education in elementary schools gratuitous, by stopping the demand for the "school pence" which parents had hitherto been obliged to pay. But the most successful measure carried during the whole tenure of office by Lord Salisbury was undoubtedly the conversion of the National Debt in 1888. Mr. Goschen, a Liberal Unionist who succeeded Lord Randolph Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer, devised a plan for offering all the holders of the "Three per Cents." the choice of being paid off at the full nominal value of their bonds, or of retaining them and receiving $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. interest instead of the former 3 down to 1903, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. after that date. Very few of the fundholders asked for their money back, and since 1889 the country has saved £1,400,000 a year by the transaction. So far is the value of the securities from being lowered by the diminished interest,

Domestic reforms of Lord Salisbury's ministry.

Conversion of the National Debt.

that the $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.'s are now worth far more than the old "Consols," and generally stand at £110 and over for the nominal £100 stock.

The Irish question, in spite of the increasing quiet across St. George's Channel, was never long forgotten; and the two chief incidents by which it was kept before the public eye were very curious. The *Times* newspaper, publishing a series of articles on "Parnellism and Crime," ended them by printing a letter purporting to have been written by Parnell himself in extenuation of the Phœnix Park murders. He was made to say that policy compelled him to denounce them, but that "Burke got no more than his deserts." Parnell denied the authenticity of the letter, and in August, 1888, began an action for libel against the *Times*, putting his damages at £100,000. The Government resolved to appoint a special commission to inquire into all the charges brought by the *Times* against Parnell and his followers. The three judges who sat to try the matter (September, 1888—January, 1889), found that "the respondents did nothing to prevent crime, and expressed no *bonâ fide* disapproval of it; that they disseminated newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of crimes; and that they entered into a conspiracy to promote, by a system of coercion and intimidation, an agrarian agitation for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords." But they also found that the supposed letter of Parnell on the Phœnix Park outrage was a forgery, and acquitted him of the charge of insincerity in denouncing it. The document had been concocted and sold to the *Times* by Richard Pigott, the disreputable editor of a Home-Rule newspaper in Dublin, who finally confessed to the forgery, fled to Spain, and there committed suicide to escape arrest. For having been deceived by this villain, the *Times* had to pay £5000 to Parnell.

The Pigott forgeries, and the Parnell Commission.

The Gladstonian party elected to consider the verdict of

the special commission as amounting to a complete rehabilitation of Parnell, his followers, and his methods. On his return to the House of Commons he received an ovation from them, and was loaded with compliments and testimonies of confidence. But it was only for a year more that they were to have the benefit of his company and co-operation. In 1890, to the surprise of the whole political world, he appeared in the unenviable position of co-respondent in the Divorce Court. The petitioner was his friend and lieutenant Captain O'Shea. Hardly any attempt was made by Parnell to defend the case, which presented many discreditable incidents. The verdict was accordingly given against him, but it seemed at first that it would not make much difference in his position, as his followers showed their usual wonderful discipline, and re-elected him their chief. But they had reckoned without Mr. Gladstone and the "Nonconformist conscience." Public opinion in England has got beyond the stage in which a notorious evil-liver can be accepted as leader of a great party, and the bulk of the Liberal masses, among whom the dissenting element was specially strong, were profoundly grieved and disgusted at the exposure. Gladstone, expressing their views, issued a manifesto to the effect that "the continuance of Mr. Parnell in his leadership would be productive of disastrous consequences." The threat that English support would be entirely withdrawn from Home Rule so disturbed the Irish party, that a majority of them came to the conclusion that their chief must be dethroned. There was a bitter struggle among them, for some feared their autocrat, and others could not forget his past services. But the Catholic priesthood threw its powerful influence into the scale of morality, and a majority of the Irish members declared Parnell deposed, and elected in his place Mr. Justin McCarthy, an amiable literary man whose control over them was not likely to resemble the iron rule of Parnell.

The O'Shea divorce suit.

Attempts to depose Parnell from his leadership.

The ex-leader, however, refused to take the verdict of the majority, and, with those of his followers who adhered to him, formed a new party, which appealed to the people of Ireland against "English dictation," as exercised by Mr. Gladstone. Parnellite and Anti-Parnellite candidates contested every vacant Irish seat, and Parnell himself scoured every county in the kingdom, denouncing the traitors and weaklings who had betrayed him. The discovery that his adherents were in a minority only spurred him on to fresh exertions, which his health could not stand. After some open-air meetings held in inclement autumn weather, he caught inflammation of the lungs, and died in a few days (October 6, 1891). Contrary to expectation, his party survived his death; the bitterness between the two sections of Irish members was too great to allow them to amalgamate, and the Parnellite and Anti-Parnellite factions are still with us.

Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites—Death of Parnell.

Nine months after the death of Parnell, Lord Salisbury dissolved Parliament, which had now reached its sixth year of life. The general election of July, 1892, resembled all its predecessors for the last quarter of the century, in that the outgoing ministry lost by it. It seems that there is always a considerable body of electors who are discontented with any existing Government, and vote for the opposition, whatever may be the politics of the "Ins" and the "Outs." This "swing of the pendulum" was clearly visible in 1892. Though it could not be alleged that Lord Salisbury's cabinet had been conspicuously inefficient or unsuccessful in administering the empire, yet numerous constituencies with an old Liberal record, which had gone Unionist at the time of the first Home Rule Bill, now reverted to their former politics. In the new Parliament there appeared 269 Conservatives and 46 Liberal Unionists, against 274 Gladstonians and 81 Irish Home Rulers. The Parnellite faction seemed almost wiped out, and kept only nine seats. It

End of Lord Salisbury's ministry—State of parties.

was notable that England had a clear majority against Home Rule (273 to 197), while the Gladstonian majority of 40 in the whole United Kingdom consisted entirely of Irish members.

Gladstone, therefore, when he took office in August, 1892, was to a great extent in the hands of his allies from across St. George's Channel. He was compelled to make Home Rule the main plank of his platform, though many of his British followers had their minds set on other topics, such as the disestablishment of the Churches of Scotland and Wales, the abolition of the House of Lords, temperance legislation in the direction of "Local Option," anti-vaccination, universal suffrage, the payment of members of Parliament, and numberless other local or sectional ideals. A political opponent cruelly styled them "a fortuitous concourse of enthusiasts or faddists, grouped under a banner for which they felt a very secondary interest." But whatever were the thoughts of some of his followers, Mr. Gladstone himself was earnestly set on carrying his Home Rule Bill; to guide it through Parliament, he trusted, would be the last great work of his life. He was now eighty-three years of age, and personal infirmities were at last beginning to tell on his strong physique; if Ireland was once satisfied, he hoped to sing his *Nunc Dimittis*, and retire from the wearing duties of public life.

Gladstone's fourth premiership —The Liberal programme.

All through the autumn of 1892 the details of the forthcoming bill were carefully kept dark, but in February, 1893, it was launched on the waters of debate by the aged premier. The measure differed considerably from the project of 1886. It proposed to constitute an Irish parliament of two houses, not of one. The upper house was to consist of 48 members, chosen only by persons with a rateable holding of £20 or more. The lower house was to contain 103 members, representing the existing parliamentary constituencies of Ireland. Another crucial difference from the

The second Home Rule Bill.

bill of 1886 was that Irish members to the number of 80 were to be left at Westminster and to vote on all Imperial matters, though not on purely English or Scottish concerns. A third was that Ireland was to pay, not a lump sum of £3,200,000, but a percentage or quota of between four and five per cent. of the whole revenues of the three kingdoms. But the main points of the first Home Rule Bill were kept: Ireland was to manage her own internal administration, police, laws, taxation, and education.

The bill was debated at enormous length; it took the whole time between February and September to carry it through the Commons, and this was only accomplished by stifling debate on many of its clauses by means of the "closure." But there was a certain unreality in the discussion, owing to the fact that every one knew that the real tug of war would come only when the bill had passed the Lower House and gone up to the Lords. The third reading passed (September 1, 1893) by 301 to 267. The Lords then took it in hand, and made short work of it; on September 8 it was rejected by a majority of about ten to one (419 to 41).

The bill passed by the Commons and rejected by the Lords.

Two courses were now open to Gladstone. He might dissolve Parliament at once and ask for the country's verdict on the conduct of the Upper House. If a triumphant majority were again given in his favour, the Lords would probably bow before the storm and let the bill pass, as they had done with the Reform Bill of 1832. On the other hand, it was open to him to reject the idea of a dissolution, and to proceed to carry other Liberal measures such as his party might desire, undertaking to recur to Home Rule at the first favourable opportunity. From taking the first course he was probably deterred by the fact that no outburst of popular feeling followed the rejection of the bill; the news was received everywhere with apathy. There was every reason to fear that a general election might only lead to

Constitutional position of the Home Rule ministry.

"the back swing of the pendulum," and a reversion towards Unionism.

Accordingly Gladstone retained office, and announced that after a very short recess he should summon Parliament to meet again in November for active legislative work. But great difficulties met him: the Irish were discontented; the English Radicals were split up into cliques and coteries which pulled different ways; the party discipline was evidently deteriorating. All that was done in the way of important legislation was the passage of a Parish Councils Bill, which gave parishes the same power of electing boards to settle their local affairs which the last Conservative Government had given to the counties.

Gladstone remains in office.

In March, 1894, the premier announced that he was compelled to lay down his office; the stress of work was too much for one whose eyesight and hearing were both beginning to fail. His last speech as prime minister had consisted of a diatribe upon the perversity of the House of Lords in setting itself against the House of Commons; and he more than hinted that, if they continued to act as they had done on the Home Rule question, the nation must take in hand their reform or extinction. It was, therefore, curious that a member of the recalcitrant house should be chosen to fill Gladstone's vacant place. His successor was Lord Rosebery, his Foreign Secretary, an able man in early middle age, who had won considerable applause by his administration of our external affairs, but who could not be called a typical Radical or an enthusiastic Home Ruler. In many ways he was more like the Whig statesmen of the eighteenth century than the Liberal politicians of to-day, combining considerable literary talents and a wide knowledge of foreign affairs with a keen passion for the turf. He is the only British premier who has ever run winners of the Derby (1894 and 1895).

Retirement of Gladstone —Lord Rosebery premier.

On Mr. Gladstone's retirement, it became at once evident

that his party depended more for its coherence and strength on his personal ascendency and unrivalled knowledge of parliamentary tactics than any one had supposed. When the veteran chief was removed, and his eloquence and enthusiasm were no longer constraining his followers to obedience, they soon began to fall asunder. One of Lord Rosebery's first public utterances was a declaration that so long as England, "the predominant partner" in the United Kingdom, was clearly opposed to Home Rule, that question must be relegated to the future. He expressed a conviction that England might be converted, but the time of her conversion was not yet come. Such an announcement from a minister whose majority consisted entirely of Irish Home Rulers, was not likely to help him in keeping the party together. It was obnoxious alike to Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites. On the other hand, many English Gladstonians disliked Lord Rosebery's foreign policy, which was practically a continuation of that of the late Conservative cabinet, and was decidedly Imperialistic in its tendencies. He was the first Liberal minister since Lord Palmerston who took a strong line with our neighbours, and refused to be bullied. Radicals, too, complained that the party of progress found an inappropriate head in a member of an effete and reactionary House of Lords. Some styled him an opportunist, and denied that he could be called Liberal at all.

Differences of opinion in the Liberal party.

With half his party discontented and the other half apathetic, it was not likely that Lord Rosebery would make much of a record in legislation. His ministry only lasted sixteen months (March, 1894–June, 1895). The cabinet introduced a good many bills; the most important were a Welsh Disestablishment Act, an Irish Land Act, and a Local Option Bill to please the temperance party. But it did not succeed in passing any one of them, the votaries of each measure hindering the progress of the others, because their own was not given priority. It was felt, moreover, that

End of Lord Rosebery's ministry.

all the debates were somewhat hollow, for when such measures were sent up to the House of Lords, they would certainly be rejected; yet the Government did not seem anxious to appeal to the country against the attitude of the Peers. Such an unsatisfactory state of affairs was bound to come to an end, and in June, 1895, Lord Rosebery took the opportunity of a chance division on a small military matter, which had gone against the ministry, to dissolve Parliament.

Lord Salisbury's second Ministry—A Unionist cabinet.

The gloomy forebodings of the ministerialists were more than fulfilled by the general election of July, 1895. It resulted in a complete defeat of the Gladstonians; they reappeared in the new house with only 177 supporters instead of 260, while the Conservatives numbered 340, and the Liberal Unionists 71. Even if the 70 Anti-Parnellite and 12 Parnellite Irish members were credited to the Radical party, they were still in a minority of more than 150. Lord Salisbury, therefore, resumed office with the largest majority at his back that has ever been enjoyed by an English premier during the past two generations. He strengthened his position by recruiting his ministry, not only from among Conservative leaders, but from the ranks of the Liberal Unionists. The latter no longer refused, as they had in 1886, to amalgamate with their allies; in addition to Mr. Goschen, who had been taken into the last Conservative ministry, both Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain, representing respectively the Whig and the Radical wings of their party, received cabinet office, the one as President of the Council, the other as Secretary for the Colonies. Several minor posts went to their followers. Thus the present administration must be styled Unionist rather than Conservative.

It has now held office for nearly four years, and appears likely to see the century out. The main part of the annals of 1895-99 consists of a series of foreign complications, for none of which the Government can be held really responsible; they

have several times assumed a most threatening aspect, and it is only in the last few months that the clouds have begun to clear away. Most of the troubles arose from the inevitable responsibilities of empire; there is no quarter of the globe in which there may not appear at any moment serious problems for a British minister. When Lord Salisbury assumed office the chief areas of disturbance were in the Levant. The timid but fanatical Sultan Abdul-Hamid, enraged at a weak and futile Armenian rising in Asia, permitted, or more probably ordered, a series of horrible massacres of Armenians in districts far remote from any focus of insurrection. These atrocities, extending over the two years 1895–97, exceed in horror anything that happened in Bulgaria in 1877, but have passed unpunished. The Russian Government considered that it was not to its interest to interfere, as it had no wish to encourage the Armenian nationality. The German emperor, who is set on establishing a strong political and trade interest at Constantinople, was equally determined to keep matters quiet. England was the only power which really wished to take any steps towards bringing pressure on the Sultan, and failed to effect anything when it was obvious that she stood alone—France, Italy, and the United States confining themselves to platonic expressions of disgust at the atrocities. An attempt was made by some of the Radical party to throw odium on Lord Salisbury for his inability to chastise Turkey, but it was discouraged by their more responsible chiefs, who saw that the ministry could not act against the will of Russia and Germany without incurring grave risk of war.

Foreign difficulties of the Government—Armenian massacres.

The Armenian question was in full development when two other crises arose. The first was a dangerous quarrel with the United States. There was a dispute on foot in South America, as to the exact boundaries of the British colony of Guiana and the Republic of Venezuela; the territory in question was

The Venezuelan Boundary question.

mainly pathless jungle, but it was believed to contain valuable gold-mines. On the pretext that any acquisition of territory in America by a European power was contrary to the "Monroe doctrine," the theory which states that "America is for the Americans," President Cleveland sent a message to his Congress, laying down with unnecessary peremptoriness a claim to interfere in the matter. An outburst of anti-British feeling in the United States followed, and in the winter of 1895–96 affairs looked very threatening. Fortunately, the English Government kept cool, and American feeling soon calmed down, so that later in the year an amicable arbitration on the disputed boundary was arranged. It is pleasant in 1899 to see how entirely the relations between Great Britain and the United States have changed, and to recognize that the wise and conciliatory attitude of our cabinet has had its reward.

The Venezuelan question was at its height when trouble broke out in South Africa, caused by Dr. Jameson's mad and piratical raid into the Transvaal Republic (December 29—January 1, 1896), of which we shall have to speak at greater length when dealing with the colonies. The rage with which the German emperor's most gratuitous telegram to President Krüger about Jameson's surrender was received in England, contrasted strangely with the quiet way in which Mr. Cleveland's equally unwise utterances had been taken a few weeks earlier. Noting the trend of English public opinion, and finding himself unlikely to be supported by other powers, William II. successfully explained away his telegram, and the war scare passed over.

The German emperor and Dr. Jameson's raid.

As if the Armenian, Venezuelan, and Transvaal difficulties were not enough for one year, we were on very bad terms with France in 1896 over the interminable Egyptian question. The re-conquest of the Soudan from the Khalifa, the successor of the late Mahdi, having been determined upon, the

French Government intrigued to frustrate it, by preventing the Egyptian Government from finding money. They were so far successful that Great Britain had to advance £500,000 herself, to provide for the projected expedition. In West Africa, too, there was continually friction with French expeditions, which were pouring into the Niger valley, and cutting off our old-established colonies from their trading communications with the interior. The same was the case in the far East, where the French Government had been encroaching on Siam, and was trying to absorb the whole country; but finally it came to a compromise with Great Britain, by which both powers agreed to leave alone what remained of that kingdom.

Disputes with France in Egypt, West Africa, and Siam.

The year 1897 opened not quite so unprosperously as 1896, but there was still trouble in the air. The Armenian question was not exhausted when an insurrection broke out in Crete, to which the Greek Government lent open support. Miscalculating the strength of the Turkish empire, or hoping that a vigorous stroke might set all Eastern Europe in a flame, the Greeks finally declared war on the Sultan, and tried to invade Macedonia. But the powers refused to move; it was generally thought that Greece had no right to open the Eastern question in such a violent manner, and she received no aid. Her raw army was overwhelmed by the numbers of the Turks, and fled in panic (April, 1897), so that the king had to sue for peace in the most humiliating fashion. The powers insisted that the terms should not be too hard, for no one wished to encourage the Sultan, and Greece was let off with the cession of a few mountain passes and a fine of four million Turkish pounds.

The war between Turkey and Greece.

This Eastern crisis having passed over without any further developments, the inhabitants of the United Kingdom and of the whole British Empire were able to celebrate, undisturbed by any grave trouble from without, the Queen's "Diamond

Jubilee" on the 20th of June, 1897. Having completed the sixtieth year of her reign, our aged sovereign has now worn the English crown for a longer period than any of her ancestors — her grandfather, George III., who died in the fifty-ninth year after his accession, is the only British monarch who approaches her length of rule. As the years roll on, her subjects have realized more and more their obligations to one who has been the model of constitutional sovereigns, and has set so high the standard of public as well as of domestic duty. The pageant of her state visit to St. Paul's was notable, even more than that of 1887, as showing the unanimity and loyalty of her vast colonies and possessions; representatives from every spot where the British flag waves being given their place in the procession. Two whole generations of her subjects have now grown up to manhood since Victoria's accession, and it is almost impossible for them to realize England without her. Comparing 1837 with 1899, we see what great things have been done in her name, and trust that our descendants may look upon the "Victorian age" as not the least glorious period in our country's annals.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Many may have hoped, after the Jubilee, that the short remainder of the century might pass by without our being troubled with any more wars or rumours of wars. But the year 1898 was destined to see us nearer to an open breach with a first-rate European power than we have been since the end of the struggle in the Crimea. We have already had occasion to allude more than once to the restless activity of France in thrusting her way into the neighbourhood of our possessions, both in Africa and in the East. Early in 1898 grave trouble was caused by her enormous annexations in the valley of the Niger and the Congo, where for the last fifteen years she has been building up an empire which exists more on paper than in reality, a dozen forts and a few movable columns of black

Settlement of West African dispute with France.

troops being supposed to Gallicize a region half the size of Europe, most of whose inhabitants have never seen a Frenchman. After pushing in behind our colonies of the Gambia and the Gold Coast, and cutting them off from inland expansion, the French, in 1896–97, made an attempt to seize the Lower Niger, in spite of a treaty dating back to 1890 which defined our interests in that quarter. It was only after considerable friction that an agreement was made in June, 1898, by which the tricolour was hauled down from some of their most advanced stations, pushed well within the British sphere of influence: much was given up to them that might have been rightfully withheld. But this dispute was a mere nothing to that which occupied the later months of the year.

The Soudan expedition—Battle of Omdurman.

The Soudan expedition, which had started in 1896 to destroy the power of the Khalifa and reconquer the valley of the Middle Nile, had met with uniform success from its first start. Under the able guidance of Sir Herbert Kitchener, the commander of the Egyptian army, it had cleared the dervishes out of the province of Dongola in 1896, after the battle of Ferket. In the next year the invaders had pushed on to the line of Abu-Hamed and Berber, driving the enemy before them. In 1898 the Khalifa was to be attacked in the heart of his empire: a considerable body of British troops was sent up to join the Egyptians, and in April the advanced guard of the Arab host was destroyed at the battle of the Atbara. In August Kitchener marched on Omdurman, the enemy's capital, and was met outside its walls by the Khalifa at the head of the full force of his barbarous realm, at least 50,000 fighting men. In one long day's fighting these fanatical hordes were scattered and half exterminated; it is calculated that 11,000 were slain and 16,000 wounded before their fierce charge was turned back (September 1). Omdurman and Khartoum were occupied, and the Khalifa fled into the desert.

A few days later an unpleasant surprise was reserved for

Kitchener and the British Government. An insignificant French force, under Major Marchand, about one hundred men with five officers, had pushed across Central Africa from the Congo, and seized Fashoda, a point on the Nile far above Khartoum. By means of this futile occupation the French Government had apparently hoped to establish a claim to a portion of the Nile valley. Long ago, in Lord Rosebery's time, they had been warned that any such proceedings would be treated as an "unfriendly act," but they had nevertheless gone on. Lord Salisbury now informed the French foreign minister that Major Marchand must be withdrawn, and that the gravest consequences would follow if he were not. We were, in fact, on the brink of a war with France, for her intolerable "policy of pin-pricks," pursued for the last ten years, had rendered any further yielding impossible. Fortunately, the French Government faltered and made submission: it was not ready to fight when its internal politics were confused by the wretched Dreyfus case, and when its ally, the Czar, refused any prospect of help. Marchand was withdrawn, and a treaty has just been signed (March, 1899), conceding that the whole Nile basin falls within the English sphere of influence. This is certainly the greatest triumph for English diplomacy since the Berlin treaty of 1878.

The Fashoda dispute.

The African question seems settled, but ere the century is out there may be grave trouble in another region, the extreme East. Since the war of 1895 between China and Japan, the Chinese empire seems to be falling to pieces. Our own wish has always been to preserve, if possible, its integrity, to favour the progress of reforms, and meanwhile to maintain the "open door" for all foreign commerce in all its ports. This policy is crossed by that of Russia, Germany, and France, all strongly protectionist powers, who wish to establish spheres of influence in China, and to monopolize the trade of them for themselves. Russia has lately obtained possession, euphemistically called a "lease," of the northern

The Far Eastern question.

harbours of Ta-lien-Whan and Port Arthur, while Germany has seized Kiau-Chau and the surrounding territory on similar terms. To balance this we have ourselves taken over Wei-Hai-Wei, which faces Port Arthur across the great northern Gulf of Pechili. We have also extorted from the Chinese Government a promise not to alienate any of Central China, the basin of the Yang-tse-Kiang river. To what further developments these "leases" and agreements may lead, it is impossible to say, but it is evident that the gravest dangers of friction between the great powers underlie them.

While our foreign relations in every part of the world have been so strained during the last few years, it is natural that domestic matters should be less interesting. The Government has carried out a certain amount of small social reforms, and one or two measures of somewhat greater importance. The wisdom of some of them is not quite clear. The relaxation of the vaccination laws seems a mere piece of pandering to popular sentiment; and the Irish Local Government Act of 1898 is an experiment whose dangers are obvious, and which can only be justified by success. Now that the horizon abroad is clearer, it may be hoped that the old policy of unpretentious domestic reform, which Lord Beaconsfield first bound up with the Conservative programme, may be persevered in by his successors. Few governments certainly have had such chances as the present administration; their adversaries are not only weak, but torn by their internal discords. Mr. Gladstone died on May 19, 1898, after three years of retirement from politics, at the great age of eighty-eight. His name and influence had done much to keep his party together even after he had withdrawn from active life. Since his death they have been more divided than ever, and seem unable to formulate any accepted political programme. The Anti-Parnellite party has resolved itself into two hostile factions, which only unite to repudiate the Parnellites. The Radical party has changed its leader twice

State of political parties.

in three years, and seems rent by intrigues resting on purely personal quarrels. "Home Rule," we have been told on good Radical authority, "is dead," yet it is difficult to see under what other banner the heterogeneous elements of the opposition are to unite. Nevertheless, it is impossible to forget that the "swing of the pendulum" has regularly ruled the general elections of the last thirty years; it will be curious to see if it shows itself once more in that of 1901.

Meanwhile the century draws towards its close, with domestic politics in a far more stagnant condition than at any other date since the days of Palmerston. Foreign affairs, after the termination of the Fashoda incident, seem almost equally quiet, and the observer can pause for a moment on the edge of the twentieth century to look back on the later years of the nineteenth.

As we had occasion to remark in the chapter which dealt with early-Victorian England, the years since 1850 have not been fraught with such sweeping changes as those of the previous half-century. For the most part they have been spent in the working out of problems which had already been formulated in the previous generation. In things material this has notably been the case. We are still engaged in perfecting the inventions of our grandfathers, in developing already discovered realms of fact or thought rather than in winning new ones. This is as true in science as in literature, in politics as in art. The great new departures belong to the first half of the century; the second does but carry them on. In some channels of activity the current seems to be running very slowly in 1899, and in none more so than in literature. The list of great writers now at work compares miserably with that of 1875, and still worse with that of 1850. Few men of the younger generation have arisen to replace the lost masters of the early-Victorian age.

In some respects, it cannot be denied, the later years of the century have been a time of disillusion and disappointment.

Many of the ideas that inspired enthusiasm forty years ago have been tried in the balance and found wanting. The state of foreign politics seems heartrending to those who remember the dreams of peace, liberty, and international good-will which sanguine prophets held out as the inevitable results that would follow from the unification of Germany and Italy, and the establishment of a parliamentary republic in France. Equally broken is the ideal of the elder exponents of free trade, who believed that a sort of industrial Millennium was to set in, when England frankly abandoned protection and opened her markets to all the producers of the world. The promises of 1850 have never appeared further from fulfilment than in 1899. The same kind of pity for lost hopes comes over us when we read the writings of well-meaning persons of the last generation, who were imbued with such a blind faith in scientific discovery that they made out of it a kind of "gospel of science," which was to settle all mental and moral problems. We no longer imagine that new facts in chemistry or physiology will help much to reform the evil ways of the world. The idea that material progress must necessarily lead to moral progress has gone out of fashion.

But if we face the coming years with less enthusiasm and confidence than some of our fathers felt, it cannot be said that we look forward on the twentieth century with fear or discouragement. Not in blind pride and reckless self-assertion, but with a reverent trust that the guidance which has not failed us in the past may still lead us forward, strong in the belief in our future that grows from a study of our past, we go forth to the toils and problems of another age.

CHAPTER X.

INDIA AND THE COLONIES—IMPERIAL FEDERATION—CONCLUSION.

WHEN the nineteenth century opened, the British flag was already planted in most of the regions where it now waves, but in almost every quarter our possessions were mere streaks along the coast-line, or islands of moderate extent. The empire which the elder Pitt, Clive, and Warren Hastings had won for us, was but in an early stage of development. Beyond the Atlantic, the West Indies, with their rich sugar and coffee plantations, were by far our most important possession. Canada was still mainly French in population, and not really settled beyond Toronto and Kingston; inland and westward there was nothing but wastes of forest and prairie, the "great lone land," which was not to be taken under cultivation till the second half of the century. Then the British claim to the North-Western Territory as far as the Arctic Circle was only marked by a score of forts belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, to which the scanty Indian population came to barter their furs and skins. A fort on Nootka Sound by Vancouver's Island was then the sole sign that British colonization was about to extend as far as the Pacific. Across that ocean Australia was already counted as a British possession, but the only settlement that it contained was the convict colony of Botany Bay. It had been founded so recently as 1788, and Sydney was in

The British Empire in 1800.

Canada and the West Indies.

Australia.

its earliest, and not over happy, infancy. In India we were already the masters of broad provinces, and all the three presidencies were in existence. Bengal and Bahar, the prizes of Clive's victory at Plassey (1757), were by far the most important of the territories that obeyed the East India Company, and Calcutta was already the greatest port of India. But the Bombay presidency comprised hardly anything outside the island and city which give it its name, the old dowry of Catharine of Braganza. The Madras presidency consisted of four or five scattered patches of territory, taken some from the Nizam of Hyderabad, some in a recent war (1793) from Tippoo Sultan of Mysore. Three important native princes, the Nawabs of Oude, of the Carnatic, and of the Deccan (the Nizam), were bound to us by somewhat elastic ties of dependence; they followed our lead in politics, and supported large bodies of British sepoys by their subsidies. All three had become our vassals to get protection from dangerous neighbours in the inland, Sultan Tippoo and the freebooters of the Mahratta confederacy. Ceylon had just been conquered from the Dutch (1796), but till the Treaty of Amiens it was quite uncertain whether the island was to remain permanently in our hands.

India.

In Africa our hold was still more insignificant; half a dozen forts on the pestilential coast of Guinea were our only ancient colonies. We were in military possession of the Cape of Good Hope, taken from the Dutch in 1796, but this important settlement had not been confirmed to us by any treaty. As a matter of fact, we were about to restore it to the Dutch at the Peace of Amiens, and our permanent hold on it was only to begin in 1806. How Egypt was won in 1801 we have related in our first chapter. In the Mediterranean there was no spot that we could really call our own save Gibraltar. From Malta we had just evicted the French garrison, and Minorca was also in our hands for the moment (1798–1802). But though occupied

Africa and the Mediterranean.

by British garrisons, they were in no sense British possessions.

At the peace of 1802 the position was grievously changed for the worse, owing to the reckless way in which we gave back to Bonaparte all the points of vantage from which we had, with such difficulty, evicted his republican predecessors. Of all our conquests, only Trinidad and Ceylon were retained. Spain recovered Minorca, France all her West Indian possessions, Holland the Cape of Good Hope, Surinam and Demerara, Turkey her Egyptian Pashalik.

Results of the Peace of Amiens.

When, therefore, the short and troubled period of peace in 1802–3 had come to an end, we had to repeat the wearisome process of eviction that had been carried out once before between 1793 and 1801. In the first three years of the struggle with Bonaparte, the dread of an invasion of England was too pressing to allow us to send large expeditions far from our own shores. But after 1805, the sure and steady reconquest of the outlying dependencies of France and Holland began. The Cape was recovered in 1806; Curaçoa and the rest of the Dutch West Indies in 1807. Martinique, Senegal with the other French ports of West Africa, and also French Guiana (Cayenne), fell in 1809; Guadaloupe, in the West Indies, and the Isles of France and Bourbon in the East, were taken in 1810; and with the capture of the great and wealthy island of Java in 1811, Napoleon ceased to possess a single transmarine colony. He had himself sold Louisiana to the United States, in order to prevent it falling into our hands, while in Hayti (St. Domingo), once the most wealthy of all the French dependencies, the garrison had been exterminated by the insurgent negroes, who had formed an anarchic republic in servile imitation of their former republican masters.

English reconquests, 1803–1811.

While the tricolour was being lowered from one island after another in the Eastern seas, we were in India deeply engaged

in a struggle against French influence, if not against French armies. One of Bonaparte's favourite dreams was to stir up the princes of Hindostan against their British neighbours. While in Egypt, he had sent his emissaries to Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore: buoyed up by false hopes of French aid, the reckless son of the great Hyder Ali had committed himself to war with England. But his armies had been scattered, and he himself fell sword in hand as he strove to defend the breach at Seringapatam from Baird's stormers (May, 1799). About half his dominions were annexed to the Madras presidency.

India—The conquest of Mysore.

The conquest of Mysore was but the first blow which Lord Wellesley, the able and ambitious Governor-General of India, directed against French influence. The leading native power in the peninsula was the Mahratta Confederacy, a league of five great rajahs, of whom four owed a nominal allegiance to the fifth, who bore the title of Peishwa. Most of these princes had taken into their pay French officers, who had raised and disciplined for them many battalions of trained *Sepoys*. Scindia alone, the rajah of Gwalior, possessed some 30,000 or more of such troops. Wellesley believed that there was a great danger for the British power in the existence of such large masses of men led by French commanders, and was anxious to induce the Mahrattas to come under British suzerainty and dismiss their foreign officers. But the rajahs, proud of their position as the chief military power in India, had no wish to surrender their independence.

Lord Wellesley and the Mahratta Confederacy.

Fortunately for Wellesley's plans, the Peishwa, Bajee Rao, having quarrelled with his two greatest vassals, Scindia and Holkar, fled to seek the protection of the Bombay Government, and was induced to buy his restoration to his throne by signing the treaty of Bassein (1802). By this instrument he undertook to subordinate his foreign policy to that of the British, and to pay an annual tribute

Restoration of the Peishwa.

for the subvention of a body of British troops. He was accordingly restored to his seat at Poonah by armed force; but his submission to the governor-general led to two wars between the East India Company and the other Mahratta princes.

First Scindia, and his ally the rajah of Nagpore, attacked the British; but they were unable to hold their ground. Lord Lake, starting from Bengal, beat Scindia's northern army at Laswari (November 1, 1803), and took Delhi, the ancient capital of India There he found the aged Mogul emperor, Shah Alum, who had long been the captive of the Mahrattas, and, having rescued him from his oppressors, proceeded to use his name to legitimize all our doings in Hindostan. Meanwhile, Arthur Wellesley, the governor-general's brother—the Wellington of a later day—was operating further to the south. At Assaye he cut to pieces Scindia's French Sepoys, after the bloodiest struggle that India had yet seen. Fording a deep river and advancing on a narrow front under an overwhelming fire of artillery, he threw his troops upon the disciplined battalions of the Mahratta chief. Nearly a third of the British fell, but Scindia's host was broken and his regular troops cut to pieces (September 23, 1803). A few weeks later Wellesley attacked the rajah of Nagpore at Argaum, and inflicted upon him an equally severe lesson (November 28, 1803). The allied princes thereupon came to terms, and acknowledged the British supremacy. Scindia was compelled to surrender Delhi and the Doab, the nucleus of our "North-West Provinces," as also some maritime districts opposite Bombay, while the rajah of Nagpore ceded Orissa, on the eastern coast of India, which was incorporated with the presidency of Bengal. Immediately after it became necessary to attack Scindia's rival and enemy, Holkar, who tried in his turn to expel the British from North-Western India. He was an evasive and lightly moving enemy, who proved very difficult

Battle of Laswari—Capture of Delhi.

Battle of Assaye and Argaum—Scindia submits.

Submission of Holkar.

to catch, but was finally run to ground and beaten at Deeg and Furruckabad (November, 1804).

Before Holkar was quite disposed of, Wellesley had been compelled to resign the governor-generalship and to retire home, on account of his many quarrels with his masters, the East India Company (1805). They did not appreciate the greatness of his conceptions or the splendour of his conquests, and only thought of him as a great spender of money. It was Wellesley who really built up the British Empire in India. Before his day we did but possess a few scattered provinces spread along the coast. He it was who conceived the idea of pressing all the native states to accept "subsidiary treaties," and to acknowledge the suzerainty of the East India Company. By seizing and retaining Delhi, the old imperial city, he claimed for his masters the supremacy in the peninsula, which had slipped out of the hands of the Moguls eighty years before. His unbounded power over the native princes who were vassals of the Company, was shown by his annexation of the whole of the Carnatic in 1801, because its nawabs had drifted into bankruptcy and showed themselves utterly unable to administer their broad realm. For similar reasons, he cut short the borders of our almost equally unsatisfactory dependent, the Nawab of Oude.

Lord Wellesley the true creator of our Indian Empire.

After Wellesley's work was accomplished, we can for the first time speak of the British Empire of India; before then there was at most a British Empire in India, with which large sections of the peninsula had no political connection.

The working out of Wellesley's plans was not destined to be completed for many years. His successors, Lord Cornwallis (1805) and Lord Minto (1807–13), made no attempt to finish the subjection of the native states, merely patching up a series of treaties which secured the integrity of our new frontiers. Lord Minto devoted himself to the complete

Governorships of Lords Cornwallis and Minto.

conquest of Napoleon's scattered colonies in the east, occupying Bourbon and the Isle of France in 1809, and so making an end of the privateers who, from their base in those islands, were wont to swoop down on the Indiamen that passed by on their long voyage round the Cape. He also overran Java and the Spice Islands in 1811, sending against them the largest expedition that had yet been fitted out in British India. Thus, when the Congress of Vienna met in 1814, the tricolour flag had been swept completely out of all the Eastern seas.

Generous policy of Great Britain at the Treaty of Vienna.

Nothing is more striking in the history of the Napoleonic war than the reckless generosity with which we restored, in 1814, the greater part of their lost colonies to the new governments of France and Holland, in order that they might make a fair start in their subjects' eyes, and not take over the administration laden with the burden of their predecessors' sins. In our solicitude for the welfare of Louis XVIII. and King William I., we gave back well-nigh all that we had conquered since the beginning of the century. Malta was retained, and the Ionian Isles, with the full consent of their inhabitants; there was no reason why the latter should any longer follow the fate of Venice, or the former be handed back to the obsolete order of the Knights of St. John. We also kept the French Isle of France and the Dutch settlement at the Cape of Good Hope, as strategical points of supreme importance covering the route to India. But all the rest was surrendered. Java, an empire in itself, the very pearl of the East, went back to Holland along with Curaçoa and Surinam. To the French were restored not only their old West Indian Islands and their insignificant possessions in India, but several small colonies whose cession in 1814 would have caused no friction, but which since have proved intolerable nuisances to the British Empire. From Bourbon they have in recent days pushed over to Madagascar, and there destroyed our trade and our flourishing missionary stations. From Goree and Senegal,

on the West African coast, they have gone out to conquer the "hinterland" of our old colonies of Gambia and Sierra Leone. Even more foolish, perhaps, was the restoration of St. Pierre and the fishery rights on the coast of Newfoundland, which have been used ever since to hinder the natural development of that ancient dependency of the British Crown. All these places, insignificant, perhaps, in 1814, but of infinite importance in modern days, Liverpool and Castlereagh gave away with a reckless indifference to the future which we cannot too much deplore.

Down to 1815 the story of the Napoleonic war lends to the history of the British Empire a certain unity which disappears after that date is passed. From the Congress of Vienna down to the days of Lord Beaconsfield and the new Imperialism, there are very few connecting links between the annals of our various dependencies. The history of each group must be followed out separately down to the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

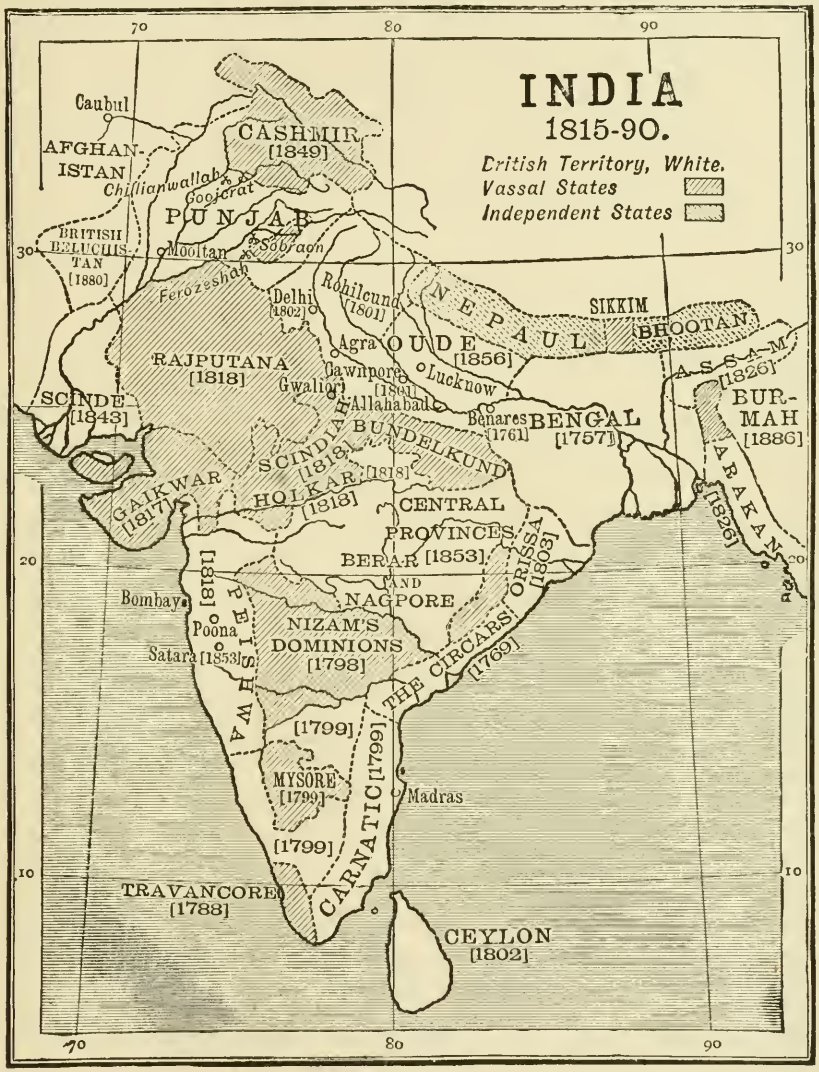
India first demands our attention. At the time of the Treaty of Vienna there ruled at Calcutta a governor-general who was a worthy successor to Wellesley, and completed the work from which his great predecessor had been so prematurely withdrawn. Francis Rawdon, Marquis of Hastings, one of the last surviving heroes of the war of American independence, was already an old man when he went out to India in 1813, but he ruled the land for ten years, and left his mark behind him. His first efforts were directed against the Gurkhas, the warlike mountain tribes of Nepaul, who were too prone to make raids on the northern limits of Bengal. They were defeated after much hard fighting (1814–16), and driven back into their hills; but, since we made no effort to take away their independence, they retained no grudge against us, and have served as auxiliaries with great fidelity and courage in all our subsequent wars.

Rule of the Marquis of Hastings in India—The Gurkhas.

After driving back the Gurkhas, Lord Hastings cleared Central India of the Pindaris, a number of companies of mercenary adventurers, like those which infested Mediæval Italy, who had been for many years the scourge of the Deccan. Directing expeditions against them from all the three presidencies, so as to enclose them in a ring, he gradually hunted them down, till their bands broke up and their leader Cheetoo fled alone into the jungle, there to be devoured by a tiger (1818). The Pindari war led Hastings into a greater struggle with the greater part of the Mahratta states. Their princes had given the freebooters secret help, hoping to weaken the English power by their aid. The leader in the plot was the Peishwa Bajee Rao, who had never ceased to regret the state of dependence in which he had been placed by the Treaty of Bassein, and wished to throw off his vassalage to the East India Company. His allies were Appa Sahib, the rajah of Nagpore, and the regents who ruled the dominion of the young Holkar, the rajah of Indore. But formidable as the confederacy appeared, Hastings crushed it without much effort. The allies were never allowed to combine: the rajah of Nagpore was defeated before the gates of his own capital (November, 1817); the armies of Holkar were scattered at Mahidpore (December, 1817). The Peishwa, hunted from his capital Poonah, was brought to bay at Ashtee (February 19, 1818), and so thoroughly beaten that he came into the British camp and surrendered himself. This war made an end of the Mahrattas as a danger to India; the confederacy was dissolved, and the Peishwa's dominion annexed to the Bombay presidency. The Nagpore rajah was deposed, the Holkar state was shorn of a third of its territories. Not only were Holkar and the new rajah of Nagpore compelled to become British vassals and to conclude subsidiary treaties with the East India Company, but their compeers Scindia and the Gaikwar of Baroda, though they had not been engaged in

Final subjugation of the Mahrattas.

the war, were induced to follow their example. Thus the British Empire was extended over all Western India, and the only states south of the Himalayas which did not now fall



under our domination were the Sikhs beyond the Sutlej, and the ameers of distant Scinde.

From 1818 to 1838 India enjoyed a long interval of comparative quiet, during which the native princes settled

down to the new state of things, while the governor-generals were mainly engaged in organizing our newly acquired possessions. The only war of importance in the period was one with the King of Burmah (1824–26). That barbarous potentate, in utter ignorance of the strength of British India, indulged in vain dreams of conquering Bengal. But when his bands crossed the frontier they were easily routed, and an expedition, sent by sea to Rangoon, pushed up the Irrawadi to within a few miles of Ava, the capital of Burmah. Thereupon the king sued for peace, and obtained it on conditions of ceding Assam, at the foot of the Himalayas, and the long swampy coast district of Aracan.

The Burmese war.

Events far more important than the Burmese war began in 1838. Ever since the beginning of the century we had looked with suspicion on the gradual advance of the Russians in Central Asia. Bonaparte had twice (1800 and 1809) endeavoured to urge on the Russian Government to an overland expedition against India, a project wholly chimerical, as long as the waste lands east of the Caspian and the independent khanates of Turkestan interposed a barrier of many hundred miles between the Russian bases at Orenburg and Astrakhan and the westernmost limits of Hindostan. But since 1809 the Russians had been pushing steadily forward; and in 1837 they had encouraged their ally the Shah of Persia to besiege Herat, the frontier fortress of Afghanistan, and had begun negotiations with the Ameer Dost Mahomed, who ruled at Cabul.

Russian advance towards the Indian frontier.

The advisers of Lord Auckland, governor-general from 1835 to 1842, were unreasonably alarmed at these intrigues, and resolved to go forward to meet a danger which was not yet imminent. A former ruler of Afghanistan, Shah Sujah, was living as an exile in India since his expulsion by Dost Mahomed: we concluded a treaty with him (1838), by which

we undertook to replace him on his throne, he, on his part, undertaking to become the friend and ally of the British Government. Our army crossed the Indus, traversed the Bolan Pass, occupied Candahar, and stormed the fortress of Ghuzni (1839). Shah 'Sujah was placed upon the throne of his ancestors at Cabul, and the British troops began to withdraw towards India; but, as some of the Afghans were still up in arms, we left garrisons at Cabul and Candahar to aid the Shah.

Lord Auckland's Afghan policy—Restoration of Shah Sujah.

Any ruler maintained on his throne by British bayonets is bound to be unpopular among the wild and fanatical tribes of Afghanistan, and Shah Sujah's subjects were determined not to submit to the friend of the infidels. In the winter of 1841, insurrections broke out all over the country: the Candahar force, under General Nott, successfully maintained itself, but a dreadful disaster happened at Cabul. There our troops were in the weak hands of General Elphinstone, a veteran broken down by age and disease, who ought never to have been left in such a responsible position. He divided his force, sending one brigade under Sir Robert Sale to hold the fortress of Jelalabad, which commands the main pass from India. With the other he intended to overawe Cabul; but the city rose in arms, and soon he was blockaded in his cantonments. His provisions ran short, and after much desultory fighting he offered to evacuate the country if he was given a free exit. The treacherous Afghans eagerly accepted the proposal, but, when the troops were threading their way through the snows of the Khoord-Cabul pass, fell upon them and in a running fight of three days exterminated the whole force. A single officer, Dr. Brydon, cut his way to Jelalabad with the news that all his comrades had perished. This was the greatest disaster we have ever suffered in the East: one English regiment, the 44th foot, and five regiments of sepoys, 4500

Destruction of the Cabul garrison.

men in all, were absolutely annihilated; with them perished more than 10,000 of their Hindoo camp followers.

The Indian Government was slow to believe in such an unprecedented calamity, but when it was realized, a powerful force under General Pollock entered Afghanistan to relieve Jelalabad. The garrison of that place, however, had not only defended it, but had sallied out into the open and defeated the main army of the enemy. Pollock, picking up Sale's victorious troops on the way, marched on Cabul, on which point Nott also pushed forward with the Candahar brigade. The Afghans were thoroughly routed; Cabul was taken, and its chief buildings blown up as a retribution for the treacherous massacre of Elphinstone's army. But Shah Sujah had been assassinated long ago, and there was no object in lingering in the barren and hostile country; so our armies were withdrawn, and Dost Mahomed was permitted to resume the throne from which we had driven him (1842). For more than thirty years successive governor-generals severely let alone the country where we had suffered such a disaster. Lord Auckland's "forward policy," indeed, had been wholly unjustifiable; he did not know the Afghans, and he had failed to see how difficult it would have been to hold such a country when the powerful and independent Sikh kingdom, occupying the Punjaub, lay between us and the only direct route to Cabul.

General Pollock's expedition.

The Afghan war was finished by Lord Ellenborough, an able administrator, whose only fault was his tendency to issue magniloquent proclamations in the style of the first Napoleon (1842–45). He had a dangerous crisis to face, as our prestige had been greatly shaken by the Cabul disaster, but came safely through it. He added to the limits of British India by annexing Scinde, whose ameers had shown symptoms of hostility in 1843. They were subdued by Sir Charles Napier, a veteran of the Peninsular War, who beat

Lord Ellenborough—Battle of Meanee—Annexation of Scinde.

at Meanee an army of more than twelve times his own numbers, composed of gallant tribesmen who repeatedly pushed up to the very bayonets of the British troops (February 17, 1843). This was one of the most astonishing victories ever gained in Hindostan.

Two years later we found ourselves involved in a war with the sole remaining state in India which preserved its full independence. For nearly fifty years the Punjaub had formed a powerful kingdom under the Sikh despot Runjit Singh, a man of genius, who had formed his co-religionists into an invincible army, with which he conquered his Mohammedan neighbours and held down all India north of the Sutlej. Knowing the might of Britain, he had always kept on the most friendly terms with the East India Company, but when he died in 1839 trouble ensued. The proud and fanatical army which he had created would obey no meaner masters, and Runjit Singh's successors perished, the victims of military mutinies or palace conspiracies. Quite contrary to the will of their nominal rulers, the Sikh troops resolved to attack the British, hoping to take Delhi and conquer the whole peninsula. They were for a moment not far from succeeding, and if their leaders had been capable and loyal to each other, the consequences of their adventure might have been tremendous.

Runjit Singh, and the Sikh power.

In December, 1845, they crossed the Sutlej into British territory with 60,000 men, and found themselves confronted by a much smaller army hastily gathered together by Lord Hardinge, the governor-general. He entrusted his troops to Sir Hugh Gough, a hot-headed old soldier, whose only tactics consisted in hurling his infantry straight at the enemy and endeavouring to sweep them away with one desperate charge. This sort of attack answered well enough against ordinary Indian troops, but the Sikhs were made of sterner stuff. The fighting with them was very desperate; no less than five

Lord Hardinge and the Sikh invasion.

pitched battles were fought between December 18, 1845, and February 10, 1846.

Battles of Ferozeshah and Sobraon.

The crucial struggle was at Ferozeshah, where Gough's headlong courage failed on the first day to force the Sikh lines; his Sepoy battalions flinched, and his European regiments suffered the most frightful losses. Next day we resumed the struggle; but the enemy, whose losses had also been tremendous, had not the heart to face two pitched battles on successive days, and sullenly retired. The campaign terminated at Sobraon (February 10), when Gough had to storm a circular entrenched position with the Sutlej at its back. Leading his troops forward with his customary impetuosity, he saw them driven back from assault after assault. But finally the Sikhs ungarnished one front of their works, while reinforcing the rest; a British column penetrated into the gap, and the gallant enemy were finally driven into the Sutlej, where thousands perished when their bridge of boats broke down. Ten days later the British army appeared in front of Lahore, and the Sikh government asked for terms. We recognized the young rajah Dhuleep Singh as the successor of Runjit Singh; but he was ordered to pay a heavy fine, to cut his army down to 30,000 men, and to surrender the south-eastern corner of his dominions, where they reached nearest to Delhi.

Battles of Chillianwallah and Gujerat.

But the spirit of the Sikhs was not yet broken; they looked upon themselves, not as beaten, but as betrayed by incompetent generals, and were quite ready to try the fortune of war once more. Only two years after Sobraon (March, 1848), Moolraj, the governor of Mooltan, massacred some British officers, and appealed to the old army to take the field once more and throw off the foreign yoke. The whole Punjaub at once blazed up into insurrection, and the work of 1846 had to be repeated. Unhappily for the British troops, they were still under the command of the headstrong Gough, who showed that he had

learnt nothing from experience. After two checks, into which his rashness led him, in the autumn of 1848, he brought the main Sikh army to action at Chillianwallah. There he delivered a frontal attack on an enemy screened by a jungle and covered by a tremendous fire of artillery. Some of the British brigades were almost blown to pieces, but the valour of the survivors evicted the Sikhs from their lines, and Chillianwallah counts as a victory (January 11, 1849). But the war was really settled by the decisive action of Goojerat (February 6), where for once Gough was persuaded to allow his artillery to batter the enemy's lines before the infantry was let loose. Shaken by the fire of eighty heavy guns, the Sikhs broke when the attack was delivered, and the British won the field with small loss—a great contrast to their sufferings at Ferozeshah and Chillianwallah.

Settlement of the Punjaub by Sir John Lawrence.

A month later the whole Sikh army laid down its arms, and the Punjaub was annexed (March, 1849). The problem of its settlement appeared likely to be so difficult that picked men were drafted in from all the presidencies to take up the task, their chief being the administrator Sir John Lawrence. The work was so well done that the new province settled down into great quiet and content, and when, eight years later, the Sepoy mutiny broke out, we were able to enlist our old enemies of the Sikh army by the thousand to put down the rebels of Delhi and Oude.

Lord Dalhousie and the native princes.

The annexation of the Punjaub was carried out by Lord Dalhousie, who as governor-general did more to extend the limits of British territory than any of his predecessors since the Marquis of Hastings. He was strongly of opinion that the government of the feudatory princes was so bad, that it was for the true interest of India that as many of them as possible should be got rid of, and their possessions taken under direct British rule. With this object, he refused to fall in with the prevailing native custom by which childless rulers were allowed to adopt

into their family any one whom they chose, and to pass on to them their full rights of sovereignty. In this way he declared, in 1848, that the Mahratta state of Satara had fallen in as a lapsed fief for want of an heir. In 1853 the much larger and more important principality of Nagpore was annexed on the same principle, and formed into the "Central Provinces." Jhansi, a third Mahratta state, was taken over for the same reason in 1854. When Bajee Rao—the Peishwa who had been stripped of his dominions, but not of his title, in 1818—died in 1853, Dalhousie refused to allow his title to be passed on to his adopted son Dhundu Punt, and gave him a pension instead. These acts seemed to the Hindoos to strike at the roots of all family life and ancestral custom. They could not understand the English view, by which an adopted child is regarded as something very different from the actual son of his benefactor. In their ideas, the annexation of Nagpore or Jhansi was simple robbery.

Annexation of Satara and Nagpur.

Dalhousie also succeeded in shocking Mohammedan feeling by his seizure of Oude in 1856. The last king of that state was an incurable spendthrift and a reckless oppressor of his subjects. Dalhousie, after repeated warnings, declared him deposed, and made a new province out of his wealthy but dilapidated realm. To these enormous confiscations inside India, he added one external conquest. The king of Burmah having molested the English merchants of Rangoon on many occasions, Dalhousie declared war on him in 1852, and drove him out of Pegu and the lands at the mouth of the Irrawaddy. They were added to Aracan, and formed into the new province of British Burmah.

Annexation of Oude and part of Burmah.

Dalhousie was something more than a mere annexer of territory. He was a great reformer and organizer, introduced railways and telegraphs into India, fostered the education of the natives, and endeavoured to give them more places in the civil service than

Dalhousie's internal policy.

had seemed good to his predecessors. Nevertheless, his actions must be considered as having contributed to a very considerable degree towards precipitating the great rebellion which broke out soon after his departure for England in 1856.

The origins of this fearful convulsion are not hard to trace, though the exact proportion which each cause had in producing the rising of 1857 is more difficult to ascertain. The Mutiny was mainly a military conspiracy; it was only in Oude and a few other districts that the population of the countryside took any active part in it. For some years before the outbreak the spirit of the native army had been steadily deteriorating. The old notion of the invincibility of the British arms had been shaken by the Afghan disaster of 1841, and by the narrow escape from defeat in the Sikh campaign of 1845-46. No tie of natural loyalty bound the Sepoys to the government which they served; indeed, a very large proportion of them were born subjects of the king of Oude, and resented his deposition. They were kept true by their pay and immunities, by their respect and affection for their officers, and by their wholesome dread of the European garrison of India. All these motives had been shaken of late; the Government had been offending them by sending them on over-sea expeditions to Burmah and China. Some of their old privileges, *e.g.* extra pay for service beyond the Sutlej, had been abolished. The tie of personal loyalty to their hierarchical superiors had been much loosened; the British officers no longer spent their whole life with their regiment, and were often transferred from corps to corps or detached on civil employ. The comparative easiness of obtaining leave to England since the Overland Route had been invented, and steamships had brought India within six weeks' voyage of London, was not without its effect. Moreover, in 1857 the proportion of British to native troops in India was abnormally low; many of the regiments summoned to Europe for the Crimean war had not been replaced, and

Causes of the Mutiny—Condition of the native army.

what white troops there were had been mainly concentrated in the newly annexed Punjaub. Between the Sutlej and Calcutta there were, at the moment of the outbreak, only six British battalions.

A great mercenary army which has begun to despise its masters, and thinks it has a grievance against them, is ripe for revolt. The Sepoys had been so much pampered and petted by the Government, that they thought that it could not do without them. It only needed a cause and a cry to spur them into open rebellion.

Aims of the Sepoys—The greased cartridges.

The cause was supplied by political intriguers, largely drawn from the ranks of those who had suffered by Dalhousie's annexations. The dependants of the ex-king of Oude were a centre of discontent among the Mohammedans, and those of the ex-Peishwa among the Mahrattas. The secret programme laid before the Sepoys was the restoration of the Mogul emperor—who still lived as a pensioner at Delhi—as the national sovereign of India, and the restoration under his suzerainty of all the lately annexed states. This scheme would appeal more to Mohammedans than Hindoos, but the revival of the Peishwaship would not be without its effect among the latter. The actual cry which set the smouldering elements of rebellion ablaze was a foolish rumour, to the effect that the Government was about to attempt to force Christianity on its subjects. This was to be done, so it was averred, by defiling the soldiers. The grease of pigs and of cattle was to be smeared on the cartridges which were being issued to the troops for the new rifle, with which they were being re-armed. Hindoos would loose their caste by touching the lard of the sacred cow, and Mohammedans be polluted by handling the fat of the swine. All being contaminated, the "Sircar" would invite them to become Christians! This incredibly silly tale found implicit credence in many quarters, and seems to have provoked the outbreak of the rebellion before its organizers were quite ready.

It would seem that a general rising had been planned for the month of May, but even before that date isolated risings occurred. The first at Barrackpur, near Calcutta, was easily suppressed, and the two regiments which took part in it were disbanded. The Government had no idea that they were dealing with a mere corner of a great conspiracy.

The serious trouble began with the revolt of the brigade at Meerut, a great cantonment near Delhi, on May 7, 1857. The mutineers, after shooting many of their officers, marched on the ancient capital, induced the troops there to aid them, and murdered many scores of Europeans. They then went to Bahadur Shah, the aged Mogul prince, and saluted him as their monarch. He was placed on the throne of his ancestors, and hailed as Emperor of India. The news of the seizure of Delhi by the rebels flew round northern Hindostan in a moment, and was followed by mutinies in almost every cantonment where a native regiment lay. In most cases their rising was accompanied by the murder of their officers under circumstances of gross treachery and cruelty. In a few weeks the whole of Oude, with Rohilcund and the greater part of the North-West Provinces, were in the possession of the insurgents. The rising spread into Bahar at one end, and into the Central Provinces at the other. The main centres of revolt were Lucknow, where a young relative of the old ruler of Oude was proclaimed king, and Cawnpore, which was seized by the would-be Peishwa Dhundu Punt, the adopted son of Bajee Rao—a miscreant better known by the name of the Nana Sahib. The English who escaped massacre sought refuge in the few stations, such as Agra and Allahabad, where there was a European regiment in possession.

Outbreak at Meerut—Seizure of Delhi—Spread of the Mutiny.

The blow was so sudden and unexpected that for a moment the Government was paralyzed: the Punjaub, where lay the greater part of the white troops, was separated from Calcutta by four hundred miles of territory which had passed to the

rebels. It was from Sir John Lawrence in the Punjaub that the first signs of movement came. After disarming the Sepoys in his district, he sent a small force of five thousand British troops against Delhi. They forced their way to its gates, and there established themselves, in order to attack a city garrisoned by twice their own number of regular troops. So began a siege which lasted from June 8 to September 20. Lawrence pushed up to aid the besiegers all the white men he could spare, and a quantity of new Sikh levies, raised mainly from our old enemies of 1848. They behaved admirably, and never for a moment showed any signs of disloyalty. On September 14 General Nicholson stormed the city, and after six days of desperate street fighting the rebel army broke up, and the emperor and all his family were taken prisoners. The aged Bahadur Shah himself was spared, but his sons and grandson were shot without a trial by Major Hodson, the fierce cavalry leader who had followed up and seized them.

Siege and fall of Delhi.

Meanwhile, two sieges further to the south had been engrossing the rebels of Oude. At Cawnpore General Wheeler, with four hundred fighting men and a much larger number of women and children, was beleaguered by the Nana Sahib in some flimsy entrenchments. Worn out by heat and starvation, the garrison yielded on terms, when they were promised a free passage by river to Calcutta. But the treacherous prince fell upon them as they were getting into their boats, and slew all the men in cold blood (June 27). Two or three hundred women and children were saved alive for a time, but when he heard that an English force was drawing near Cawnpore, the infamous Mahratta had the whole of his unfortunate captives hacked to pieces and cast into a well (July 15). A siege with a very different result was proceeding at Lucknow, where Sir Henry Lawrence, with a single British battalion and a great mass of English fugitives, was being attacked by the main body

The Cawnpore massacre —Siege of Lucknow.

of the Oude rebels. Lawrence was shot early in the siege, but his companions defended the extemporized fortifications of the Residency for three months against some forty thousand rebels, till relief at last came.

It was brought by Sir Henry Havelock, who had arrived at Calcutta with the troops returning from the Persian war,* and was promptly sent up country with a mere handful of men, to endeavour to save Cawnpore and Lucknow. He arrived too late to help Wheeler's unhappy garrison, but on September 25 cut his way through to Lucknow, and there established himself in the midst of the rebels, whom he was not strong enough to drive away. The gallant defenders of the Residency were not finally relieved till November, when Sir Colin Campbell, who had been sent out from England with reinforcements, came up and escorted them away from their stronghold.

The relief of Lucknow.

By this time Delhi had fallen, and England was pouring troops by tens of thousands into Calcutta and Bombay. The rest of the war consisted in the gradual hemming in and hunting down of the rebels by Sir Colin Campbell's army. In December he defeated, outside Cawnpore, the troops of Scindia, who, in spite of their master's orders, had taken arms and joined the Oude insurgents. In February, 1858, he marched for the second time on Lucknow, and stormed palace after palace, till, after three weeks of hard fighting, the insurgents abandoned the place and fled into Rohilcund (March 21). There they were beaten again at the battle of Bareilly (May 7), and finally dispersed and fled to their homes. To the great grief of his pursuers, the infamous Nana Sahib escaped the sword and the rope, and got off into the jungles of Nepaul, where he is believed to have died of malaria a few weeks later. The only corner where the war now lingered was around the Mahratta towns of Gwalior and Jhansi, where the rebellion

Arrival of reinforcements —Battles of Bareilly and Gwalior.

* See p. 141.

was headed by the Ranee of the latter place, a cruel princess, who had massacred a number of English prisoners to avenge the annexation of her late husband's dominions in 1854. She fell in battle, armed and fighting like a man, under the walls of Gwalior (June 16, 1858). This was the last general engagement in the war, but for many months more movable columns were still hunting down the last scattered bands of insurgents in Rohilcund and the Central Provinces.

Thus ended the dreadful record of the Indian Mutiny, a struggle whose horrors moved the heart of England far more than any other events which have happened during the last two generations. Never have English troops fought better nor more ruthlessly; they were wrought up to frenzy by the treacherous massacre of unarmed captives and women and children. Hence it is not surprising that they never gave quarter, blew captured traitors from guns, and hung at sight any one who was convicted of having given the least help to the rebels.

Abolition of the East India Company.

One of the things which had buoyed up the Sepoys in their rising was a prophecy that the *raj* of the East India Company was destined to last only a hundred years, counting onward from Plassey and 1757. The forecast was actually fulfilled, though in a different sense from what the rebels had expected, for the Company was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1858, and its administration taken over by the Crown. Since 1833, when its constitution had been varied at one of the periodical renewals of its charter, it had been forced to give up its trading monopoly and its attempts to restrict the settlement of Europeans in India. In 1853 its distribution of patronage had been curtailed, and its civil service thrown open to competition. At the time of its dissolution, therefore, it had ceased to be a mainly mercantile concern, and was almost wholly occupied in administration. There was no reason why such work should not be under the immediate control of the Crown, and in 1858 the whole machinery of government was taken over and placed

under a "Secretary of State for India" and the governor-general, whose name was now changed to that of viceroy. The European troops of the old Company's army became the 101st to the 109th regiments of the British establishment, and a new native army was organized to replace that which had ended so disgracefully in the mutiny.

From 1858 to 1878 the history of India was comparatively uneventful. A policy of "masterly inactivity" was pursued as regards the external neighbours of the empire, and no fighting was on foot, except for the purpose of repelling the intermittent raids of the wild tribes of the north-west frontier and the savages of Bhootan. The time was one of quiet internal development, and agricultural improvements, railways, canals, and the prevention of famines were the main topics that engrossed the attention of successive viceroys.

This period came to an end with the accession to power of Lord Lytton (1876–80), a pupil of Lord Beaconsfield, and a strong Imperialist. His viceroyalty opened with the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India in a great durbar held at Delhi on January 1, 1877, one of the first developments of the "New Imperialism." But the most important event of the time was the second Afghan war (1878–80). It was a direct consequence of the political conflict of England and Russia at Constantinople after the Turkish war of 1877–78. While hostilities between the two powers seemed probable, a Russian embassy went to Cabul and enlisted the Ameer Shere Ali as a confederate of the Czar. Lord Lytton, resolved to stop this new development, declared war on the Afghan ruler, and sent three expeditions across the frontier into the Ameer's dominions. Candahar having fallen, and Sir Frederick Roberts having stormed the Peiwar-Kotal pass and advanced close to Cabul, the Ameer fled towards Russian territory, and died soon after. His son and successor, Yakub Khan, at once

Lord Lytton proclaims the Queen Empress of India.

The second Afghan war.

asked for peace, gave guarantees, and received a British envoy as a permanent resident in his capital. But this weak prince was totally unable to control his wild subjects, who rose in arms, murdered the envoy, Sir Louis Cavagnari, and all his escort, and proclaimed the "holy war" (Jehad) against the British infidels. Lord Lytton was obliged to launch his armies for a second time against Afghanistan. Roberts again marched on Cabul, and occupied it after the battle of Charasia, but was soon beset by a vast horde of insurgents who beleaguered him in his camp. He drove them off, however, and was completely triumphant long before reinforcements reached him from India.

Battle of Maiwand—Relief of Candahar.

But matters went worse in the south, where the pretender Eyub Khan defeated at Maiwand the garrison of Candahar, and formed the siege of that city. It was saved, when in very evil plight, by the rapid march of Roberts from Cabul: in twenty-three days he crossed the mountainous lands which separate northern and southern Afghanistan without the loss of a man. Falling on the besiegers, he scattered them at the battle of Candahar (September 1, 1880), and practically finished the war at a single blow. Lord Lytton would have liked to annex much of the conquered territory, but Mr. Gladstone was now in power at home, and the warlike viceroy was recalled. The Liberal Government withdrew our troops, after recognizing as ameer Abdur Rahman, a nephew of the late ruler, Shere Ali. He has, on the whole, proved a good neighbour to India, and kept faithfully the pledges which he made in 1880.

Final annexation of Burmah.

The next important movement in our Indian Empire was on the flank furthest from Afghanistan. The kings of Burmah had always been vexatious neighbours, and in 1885 we were drawn into war with Theebaw, a despot who had massacred all his relatives and entered into intrigues with France. His worthless army was scattered with ease, and his whole dominion annexed; but the suppression of the brigandage (*dacoity*) which had always prevailed

in Burmah proved a much harder business than the dethronement of the king, and was not finished for several years, during which many scores of expeditions had to be sent out against the bandits (1885–89).

Since then the troubles in India have nearly all been upon the north-western frontier, where the slow approach of Russia has always to be watched with a jealous eye. She has long since put an end to the difficulties of distance, which made any designs against our territories impossible in the earlier part of the century. The khanate of Bokhara was subdued in 1868, that of Khiva in 1873, the independent Turkomans of Merv in 1884, so that the Russian boundaries march with those of Afghanistan. Two serious frontier disputes between the Ameer Abdur Rahman and the governors of Turkestan (1885 and 1895) ended in armed collisions, and might have led to war between England and Russia if we had not behaved with studied moderation. North and east of Afghanistan, on the barren waste of the Pamirs, the Russian posts are in actual touch with tribes subject to direct British rule.

Boundary disputes with Russia.

It was our determination that there should be no further encroachment in this quarter which led to the conquest of the mountainous Hunza and Nagar districts in 1893, and to the occupation of Chitral. The prince whom we placed on the throne of the last-named state was murdered by his kinsmen, who raised a rebellion against the British power. This led to the admirably planned Chitral expedition of 1895, and to the planting of considerable garrisons in that remote and high-lying district.

The Hunza and Chitral expeditions.

It was probably the sight of this extension of our influence into regions where it had been little known that set many of the tribes of the north-western frontier in a ferment in 1897. One after another the hordes along the Afghan border took arms, and committed outrages within our boundaries. To put

them down, an army was drawn together larger than any that British India had seen since the great Mutiny. At one time 60,000 men were in the field at once against the Afridis and their neighbours. After expeditions had forced their way into the remotest valleys of their rugged land, the tribes asked for peace (1898); but even now the frontier has not completely settled down, nor has a full military scheme for the occupation of the passes been worked out.

The campaign on the north-west frontier.

In comparison with these troubles on the north-west frontier, those which have happened of late on the other flank of our Indian Empire appear insignificant. They date from the occupation of Tonquin by France in 1885; since then that power has made constant endeavours to extend itself across the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and to occupy Siam and the Shan States north of it. But in 1896 a treaty was concluded, neutralizing what remains of Siam, and dividing the rest of the disputed regions into a British and French sphere of influence: since then there seems to have been a cessation of friction in this quarter.

Disputes with France as to Siam.

The political future of India still remains the greatest problem which lies before British statesmen. We have reduced the country to a state of unity and good organization, such as it never knew before, under the Moguls or any other power. We have covered it with railways and canals, broken up millions of acres of jungle, and irrigated hundreds of miles of desert. The famines which a century ago used to march unhindered over the land, and to sweep away tens of millions of victims, are now fought from their first appearance, and lead to comparatively small loss of life, though in remote districts much misery must still prevail. In 1897, during the last great dearth, as many as four and a half million persons were receiving government relief at the same time. We have given equal laws and justice to all; we have abolished evil customs

Results of British rule —Material benefits.

of immemorial antiquity, such as suttee and thuggism ; we are doing our best to teach our subjects self-government, by giving the cities native municipalities and trying to interest our vassal princes in public works, sanitary and educational reform, and such-like Western ideas.

On the material side, the work accomplished has been enormous and uniformly beneficial. In other respects, the results of our presence in India have not always been so encouraging : it is hard to root out the ancient enmities of creed and race, and serious riots show from time to time that the British bayonet is still needed to keep the peace. The cheap education which we have lavished upon our subjects has not always reached the directing classes, but has created a half-educated literary proletariate, whose energy too often finds vent in silly and seditious journalism. On the other hand, the old governing classes often complain that there is no career for them under our *régime*. Though financial legislation is framed to press as lightly as possible on the poverty-stricken masses, yet our rule cannot be called cheap according to Eastern ideas. But considering the difficulties with which we have to cope, the situation must be considered hopeful rather than the reverse. If the results of our energy in some directions have been disappointing, it is possible to point to plenty of cases where the influence of Western ideas on natives of all classes, from the highest downwards, have been admirable. But the problem of what Great Britain must do when the greater part of the leading classes have come under such influences and ask for further rights of self-government, is one which will not have to be settled by the present generation. "Indian National Congresses," and such-like meetings, to-day represent little or nothing : what they may represent fifty years hence, no man can say—but the future must take care for itself.

Attitude of the native races—The problem of self-government.

Passing from India eastward in our survey of the empire

we note that, in 1815, we had hardly any hold on the Indo-Chinese and Malay lands, merely owning a few scattered harbours in Sumatra, the island of Penang, and a small strip of coast in the Malay peninsula, called "Province Wellesley," from the great Governor-General, who acquired it in 1800. But, in 1824, we exchanged Bantam and our other ports in Sumatra with the Dutch for the far more eligible colony of Malacca, dominating the straits through which all trade passes from India to China and Japan. To this was added the island of Singapore, ceded by a Malay rajah in the same year 1824. The moment that this possession came into our hands it began to develop in the most extraordinary way; Singapore, which, when we received it, was a mere island of jungle, is now a town of 200,000 souls, and one of the greatest ports of the world. It has become a halfway house, not only for commerce passing from China eastward or westward, but also for all the trade of Australia and the Dutch East Indies.

The Straits Settlements —Growth of Singapore.

A similar greatness has come to Hong-Kong, which we seized in 1842 after the first Chinese war; for fifty years it was the only spot in the further East under a civilized European Government, and, "trade following the flag," became the emporium of the greater part of the Chinese empire. The opening of other ports on the mainland, after the second Chinese war, took away its practical monopoly, but has had no effect whatever in diminishing the bulk of trade which passes through its harbour. The island-city has now 250,000 inhabitants, and is growing across the water on to the mainland, where further concessions of land have just been granted by the Chinese Government. The effect of the recent seizure of ports further to the north by Germany and Russia, and of our own "lease" of Wei-Hei-Wai (1898), has still to be worked out. The only thing of which

Growth of Hong Kong.

The policy of the "open door."

we can be certain is that the parcelling out of the Chinese coast into "spheres of influence," by powers which believe in strict protection, cannot be favourable to our own trade; and that the more that the policy of the "open door" for all commerce in the Celestial empire is maintained, the better will it be for Great Britain. Monopoly in a part will not compensate us for losing the power of competition in the whole.

Australia was in 1800 still very imperfectly known, though, as we have already had occasion to mention, an English convict settlement had been planted at Port Jackson some twelve years before. But even down to 1802 its shape was so little known that the great island of Tasmania was supposed to form part of it. As long as the region was nothing more than a place of punishment for those "who left their country for their country's good," it was not likely to develop fast or happily. But, after the peace of Vienna, the capacities of the vast plains of Eastern Australia began to be known; no region so well suited for pastoral enterprises on the largest scale exists in all the world. Free settlers provided with some little capital began to drift in, and to plant their stations on the broad grassy upland of New South Wales, where sheep and cattle soon began to multiply at an astounding rate. But for a whole generation the unsavoury convict element continued to predominate, and to give the continent a bad name. Fortunately the ameliorations of the English criminal law between 1820 and 1840, began to diminish the depth of the stream of ruffianism which was poured into Australia year by year, while the free colonists grew more numerous as the opening for the sheep farmer began to be realized. The feeling among them as to the further importation of convicts grew so strong, that the British Government diverted the main stream from New South

Early development of Australia.

Gradual abolition of the convict settlements.

Wales (1840), to newer penal settlements in Tasmania and Western Australia. The system was not, however, finally abandoned in Tasmania till 1853, and in Western Australia till 1864, though in the last years of its existence the annual export of convicts had been very small.

Down to the middle of the century it seemed likely that Australia would never develop into anything more than a thinly populated pastoral country, occupied by a community of "squatters," each owning a vast run of many thousand acres, and employing a few shepherds and cattle-men to tend his live stock. Wool, tallow, and hides, with a certain amount of timber, were practically the sole exports of the continent. But all was changed in 1848–51 by the discovery in Port Phillip, the southern region of New South Wales, of enormous deposits of alluvial gold, richer than anything known in the old world, and vying in wealth with those of California. There was of course an instant rush to the new gold-field, and the population of the Port Phillip district went up so rapidly that it was cut off from the parent colony, and formed into a separate community, under the name of Victoria, in 1851. It has ever since remained one of the chief gold-producing centres of the world, and more than £250,000,000 worth of the precious metal has been extracted from its mines. More than £4,000,000 worth a year is still exported, though the easy surface deposits have long been exhausted, and all the metal has to be crushed by machinery from the solid quartz reef. Some time after the Victorian gold-field was developed, similar fields of smaller extent and lesser richness were found to exist in other parts of the continent. New South Wales, and the younger colony of Queensland (created in 1859), have both an important output, and quite lately (1886), similar deposits have been discovered in Western Australia, which was till that date the most belated and thinly peopled of the colonies of Australia.

Discovery of gold-fields.

The gold discoveries led to a great increase of the town-dwelling as opposed to the pastoral population of the colonies. They also led to a great influx of population over and above that actually engaged in the mining industry. The growth of a class of small farmers led to a long-protracted struggle between them and the "squatters" who had previously had a monopoly of the land. The latter held their enormous pasture-runs by long leases from the Crown, which they desired to render perpetual. Their opponents wished to cut up these vast estates, in order that arable farms might be carved out of such parts of them as are suited to the plough. Since the introduction of representative government in Australia, in 1850–51, the tendency has, of course, been to place power in the hands of the majority, and to deprive the squatters of their ancient ascendency. But there are many parts of the continent where pasturage must always be predominant; great tracts of the interior are so ill provided with water that they must always be unfitted for arable cultivation. In the northern part of the continent, including the greater part of the colony of Queensland, the climate is so hot that it is unsuited for field work by Europeans. Such regions naturally become sugar or rice plantations, which have to be worked by the imported labour of Chinese or "Kanakas" (natives of the South Sea Islands). But the Australian proletariate show great jealousy of such foreign labour, and would apparently prefer that the sub-tropical parts of the continent should be undeveloped, rather than that a large coloured population should grow up in them. Two of the characteristic features of extreme democracy in a new country have been very well marked in some of the Australian colonies,—the tendency towards strict forms of protection in commerce, and the desire to thrust all duties and responsibilities on the Government till State socialism is almost in view. Legislation to prevent the accumulation of large

Growth of towns—The farmers and the squatters.

The Labour question.

Democratic legislation.

properties, by heavy progressive taxation, has also been heard of. Victoria has always been in the van in such democratic ideas, while New South Wales has shown itself more cautious.

At present the main topic in the whole group of Australian colonies is the dispute about Federation; all the six colonies now existing* are in theory favourable to it, but sectional interests, of course, exist to make the carrying out of the scheme difficult. The jealousy between the two capital cities of New South Wales and Victoria—Sydney and Melbourne—necessitates the selection of some secondary town as the centre of federal government. There is also enough difference in the domestic policy of several of the colonies to make an agreement difficult, but that it will be ere long arrived at cannot be doubted, and is in every way desirable. When accomplished, it will be a step towards the solution of the larger problem of Imperial Federation. Australia has shown no indisposition to take her part in the defence of the empire; the colonies already maintain in common a small navy known as the "Auxiliary Squadron," and in 1885 New South Wales contributed a military contingent to one of the Soudan expeditions.

The question of Federation.

To the east of Australia lies the colony of New Zealand, consisting of two large and one small island placed far out in the Pacific, some twelve hundred miles from the nearest point of New South Wales. Colonization here only began in the reign of Victoria, the first emigrants arriving in 1839. The history of New Zealand has been very different from that of the Australian continent, owing to the existence of a large and energetic native population. The aborigines of Australia, a few thousands scattered over a vast continent, were among the lowest and most barbarous of mankind. The Maori tribes of New Zealand, on

New Zealand—The Maoris.

* New South Wales (dating from 1788) originally included all the Australian colonies. Out of it were cut Tasmania in 1825, West Australia in 1829, South Australia in 1836, Victoria in 1851, and Queensland in 1859.

the other hand, were a fierce and intelligent race, given to the horrid practice of cannibalism, but in other respects by no means an unpromising people. They were ready and able to defend themselves, when they considered their rights had been infringed, and since the first settlement there have been three wars (1843-47, 1863-64, 1869-70), in which the Maoris displayed great courage, and considerable skill in fortification. Regular troops in large force had to be employed to evict them from their stockaded "*Pahs*." Of late years a better *modus vivendi* has been found, and they seem contented with their large reservations of land, their subsidies from Government, and the four seats which have been given them in the New Zealand Parliament.

The islands were, at their first colonization, organized as six provinces, each with a separate government, and were not united into a thoroughly centralized union till 1875. Their general character differs from that of Australia, as they are far more broken up by mountains, better watered, and much more temperate in climate: in the Southern island snow not unfrequently falls. There are large pastoral districts and grassy plains, which supply the frozen meat now so common in English markets, but also considerable mining regions and large forest tracts. New Zealand was never dominated by the "squatter" aristocracy which once ruled Australia, but has always been in the hands of the smaller farmers. It is in sentiment the most democratic of all the Australasian colonies, and has gone further even than Victoria on the road towards placing all social enterprise, industry, and commerce under State control.

In the Western Pacific Great Britain was, for the first three quarters of the century, content to possess the larger part of the trade of the numerous groups of islands, France and the United States having much smaller interests. But the French annexations in Tahiti and New Caledonia, and the later appearance of the Germans in New Guinea, led to our setting

our mark on a good many of these coral archipelagos. The Fiji Isles was our first annexation (1874); Southern New Guinea was annexed in 1884, to cover the northern flank of Australia. At various later days the Cook, Solomon, Ellice, and Santa Cruz groups have been taken over. A complete list of our possessions in this quarter would show many other unfamiliar names; none of them are of any great size or any high importance. The main reason of their occupation has always been the activity of our encroaching neighbours, and not our own desire for more coral reefs and atolls. It will be curious to note the ultimate fate of Samoa, where British, American, and German interests are all now involved, and are very difficult to reconcile.

Other British possessions in the Pacific.

Our North American colonies have a very different history from those of Australasia. In that continent no annexations have been made nor frontiers moved since 1815, though there has been trouble with the United States on three separate occasions as to the exact interpretation of old boundaries, where definitions were placed on paper before exact geographical knowledge was available. The most important of them was the "Oregon question" of 1846, when the delimitation of the English and American possessions on the Pacific coast was carried out, by the simple expedient of drawing a line along the forty-ninth degree of latitude, from the Lake of the Woods to the Pacific. All natural boundaries were thus overruled in the most arbitrary way, but a fair compromise was on the whole obtained.

The North American colonies—The Oregon question.

The internal history of these colonies has been far more interesting than that of most of our possessions. In 1815 Canada had just escaped the imminent danger of being overrun by the armies of the United States. The splendid valour and loyalty of her militia had aided the small British garrison to fling back three invasions,

State of the colonies in 1815.

and the peace of Ghent had restored the condition of affairs which had prevailed before the war. Our possessions consisted of six separate colonies, each administered as a separate unit—Upper and Lower Canada, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, as well as of the vast and desolate Northern and North-Western territories extending to the Pacific, which were then in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company. Lower Canada, an entirely French-speaking and Catholic province, the remains of the old French colony of "New France" was still by far the most important member of the group. The other settlements, the base of whose population was composed of the exiled loyalists who left the United States in 1783 to seek new homes, were still in their infancy; in Upper Canada the inhabited zone extended no further west than Kingston and Toronto. Each province was governed by a ministry ("Executive Council"), and a Legislative Council of Crown nominees, with a Representative Assembly elected by the people.

As the colonies developed, friction began to grow up between the non-representative ministry and Upper House on the one side, and the elective assembly on the other. The people naturally wished to have a greater control over the executive than had been granted in a constitution drawn up in the eighteenth century before the growth of free colonies was understood. The trouble was worst in Lower Canada, where the barrier of language and national sentiment existed between the Government and the French population of the province. Led on by Papineau and other demagogues, the French Canadians burst out into open rebellion in 1836–37. But they met no assistance from the English colonists, and were suppressed without much difficulty by the troops and loyalist volunteers. Their numerous sympathizers in the United States were disappointed to see the rising collapse, and the republican propaganda disappear.

Constitutional friction—Papineau's rebellion.

The Home Government, however, was wise enough to see that the rebellion in Lower Canada had a real grievance beneath it, and sent out Lord Durham to America, in 1838, to report on the advisability of changes in the form of administration. In accordance with his advice, the whole constitution was recast in 1840. The two provinces of Lower and Upper Canada were united, so as to deprive the discontented French party of their separate political existence. A single parliament was instituted for their governance, consisting of a small upper house, or "Legislative Council," of life members, and a larger lower house chosen every four years by the electors. The lower house obtained a practical control over taxation and the choice of ministers, which it had not previously possessed. Similar modifications were carried out in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which provinces Lord Durham had wished to incorporate with Canada, but this scheme was only accomplished a quarter of a century after his death.

Lord Durham's reforms.

Since the reforms of 1840, there has been absolutely no constitutional trouble of any importance in Canada or the small sister-colonies. The only military incidents that they have seen were the repulse of the Fenian invasions of 1866 and 1867,* and the suppression of the rebellions of the Indian half-breeds of the North-West Territory in 1870 and 1884. Both operations were accomplished entirely by the colonial militia. The advance of all the North American colonies has been steady and increasing; wealth has been found in the enormous forests of the north and the rich prairie land of the west. The limit of population has been moving steadily towards the Pacific, on whose shores two new settlements, Vancouver Island and British Columbia, were incorporated in 1858; while in the older lands, Upper Canada, the English-speaking province of Ontario, has quite superseded Lower Canada, the French-speaking province of Quebec, as the premier colony.

* See p. 160.

The progress of British North America was greatly assisted by the federation of the colonies, carried out between 1867 and 1873. The two Canadas, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia formed themselves into the new "Dominion of Canada" in the first-named year; the North-Western Territory, once the property of the Hudson's Bay Company, joined them in 1870, British Columbia in 1871, and Prince Edward Island in 1873. The remote fishing colony of Newfoundland has preferred not to cast in its lot with the rest, though in its dealings with its aggressive French neighbours * it would be greatly helped by being able to speak with the same voice as its greater sisters. The "Dominion" is now a federal government, with a governor-general, a Senate appointed for life, and a House of Representatives. The individual provinces still retain for local purposes their provincial assemblies, and enjoy complete home rule under the central government.

The "Dominion" of Canada.

Since the federation, the most important landmark in the history of the colonies is undoubtedly the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway between 1881 and 1885. Since it was finished, the development of Manitoba and the other regions of the "Great Lone Land" has been very rapid. Nine new provinces now exist in this once uninhabited region, with a rapidly growing population of over 300,000 souls. They are mainly devoted to ranching and corn-growing, unlike the districts further east, where the lumber trade is still the great industry. The Canadian Pacific has an imperial as well as a colonial importance, since it provides a quick route to the extreme east, passing entirely through British territory. About 1100 miles is saved in passing from Liverpool to Japan or Northern China, if the route by Halifax, Montreal, and Vancouver is taken rather than that by the Suez Canal and Singapore.

The Canadian-Pacific Railway.

* See p. 219.

Very different from the fate of Canada has been that of our other great group of possessions in America—that formed by the West India Islands and British Guiana. In the early part of the century, their sugar and coffee plantations, worked by slave labour, and exposed to no foreign competition, while protection was still in vogue, supplied the whole British Empire and brought untold wealth to the planters. The first great blow to them was the abolition of the slave trade in 1832; the free black labour was never so regular or efficient as that which prevailed under the unhappy old system. But Free Trade proved an even deadlier foe to these once flourishing islands; the cheap beet sugar of Germany and France, unfairly fostered by government bounties, has underbid West Indian sugar in our markets for many years. An entire collapse in their trade has taken place, and, though attempts have been made to replace the ruined industry by developing the cultivation of tobacco, cocoa, and fruits, they have not been fully successful, and our West Indian possessions are in a far less happy position than any other part of the empire.

The West Indies and British Guiana.

We have still to deal with one great section of our colonial possessions—those situate in Africa. In 1815 we held no more than scattered ports along the shores of Guinea, at the mouth of the Gambia, in Sierra Leone, and on the Gold Coast, together with the new acquisitions of Cape Colony, taken from the Dutch, and Mauritius, annexed from France, by the Treaty of Vienna. The stations on the Guinea coast were no more than harbours, occupied, in spite of their deadly climate, in order to serve as debouches for the very profitable trade of the valley of the Niger. Mauritius was a tropical colony of the same sort as Ceylon or Malacca, profitable both from its sugar plantations and from its position as a port of call on the way to India. But Cape Colony had much greater possibilities before it, being capable of illimitable extension to the north over

The African colonies in 1815.

thousands of miles suitable for either cattle-breeding or corn-growing. Its position only differed from that of Australia in that the settlers were confronted with a large and warlike population of Kaffirs, who showed no signs of dying out before the advent of the white man, like the Australian natives.

The original settlement round Cape Town was and has always remained Dutch, but from 1815 onward English settlers kept pouring into the eastern part of the colony, where they are completely predominant. A greater or less amount of friction has always existed between the British Government and the Dutch "Boers"; in 1836 a great body of these settlers pushed northward in order to set up independent states on the Orange river and in Natal. But they were followed up by the power which they detested, and both of their new communities were annexed. A second migration, or "trek," of the Boers then took place across the Vaal river, where they founded the "Transvaal," or "South African Republic." This was also seized for a moment by the British, but in 1852–54 we evacuated both it and the Orange river district, which once more organized themselves as independent states. Natal, however, has always remained a British colony, and the Dutch element there has for a long time not been predominant.

The British Government and the Boers.

The curse of the South African colonies from their first foundation has been the incessant breaking out of Kaffir wars; since 1815 there have been at least a score of them. The most important was the Zulu war of 1879; a series of kings of genius had built up a military organization of great efficiency, by which the Zulus made themselves masters of all the neighbouring tribes. The attitude of their ruler, Cetewayo, seemed so threatening that Sir Bartle Frere declared war on him and invaded his dominions. But the Zulus vindicated their warlike reputation by falling upon and annihilating a whole British regiment and several thousand native allies at the surprise of

The Kaffir wars—Subjection of the Zulus.

Isandula. It was not till large reinforcements, under Sir Garnet Wolseley, had been hurried out from England, that Cetewayo's power was destroyed at the battle of Ulundi, and his realm passed under British suzerainty.

The Boer war—The Transvaal independent.

Shortly before the Zulu war (1877) we annexed the Transvaal republic, where the Boer settlers seemed in danger of being exterminated by their black neighbours, and a state of anarchy was setting in. The Dutch protested at the time, but not much attention was paid to their complaints till, in 1880, after the Zulus had been destroyed and the Gladstone cabinet had susperseded that of Lord Beaconsfield, they suddenly rose in arms, and destroyed or besieged the small British garrisons which occupied the country. Troops hurried up from Natal and the Cape were checked at the combats at Laing's Neck and the Ingogo river; but the worst disgrace was not suffered till the fight at Majuba Hill (February 27, 1881), where the British were thrust out of the strong position they had taken, with heavy loss, including that of their commander, Sir Pomeroy Colley. Mr. Gladstone thereupon made peace with the Boers, granting them their independence under a very light and nominal admission of vassalage to Great Britain.

Discovery of gold—Dr. Jameson's "Raid."

Since then rich gold-mines have been discovered in the Transvaal, to which thousands of British subjects have flocked; their centre is Johannesburg, now a town of a hundred thousand souls. The Boer government has always been carried on in a most narrow-minded and retrograde spirit; nearly all political rights are refused to the "Uitlander" settlers by the Dutch farmers, who now form a decided minority in the land which they are themselves unable or unwilling to develop. Constant chafing against this misrule finally led to a conspiracy on the part of the immigrants, and in December, 1895, there was a rising at Johannesburg, to aid which Dr. Jameson, then a high official of the British South African Company, made a most unwise

and unjustifiable incursion into the Transvaal at the head of five hundred of his mounted police. They were defeated, surrounded, and captured *en masse* by the Boers, whereupon the Johannesburgers laid down their arms. Dr. Jameson's escapade not only brought us into trouble with Germany,* but made our relations with the Transvaal far more difficult than before, as President Krüger not unnaturally persisted in believing that the British authorities in South Africa, if not the Colonial Office in London also, were at the back of Jameson's raid.

Since then affairs in the Transvaal have always been in the most strained condition, and difficulties may at any moment break out. The most deplorable part of the "Raid" has been that it has embittered the feelings between the Dutch and English inhabitants of South Africa, which had been slowly improving since the Boer war of 1880. It has also deferred for many years the project of a South African confederation, after the manner of that which has been so successful in Canada; as long as the present relations prevail between the two races, nothing can be done.

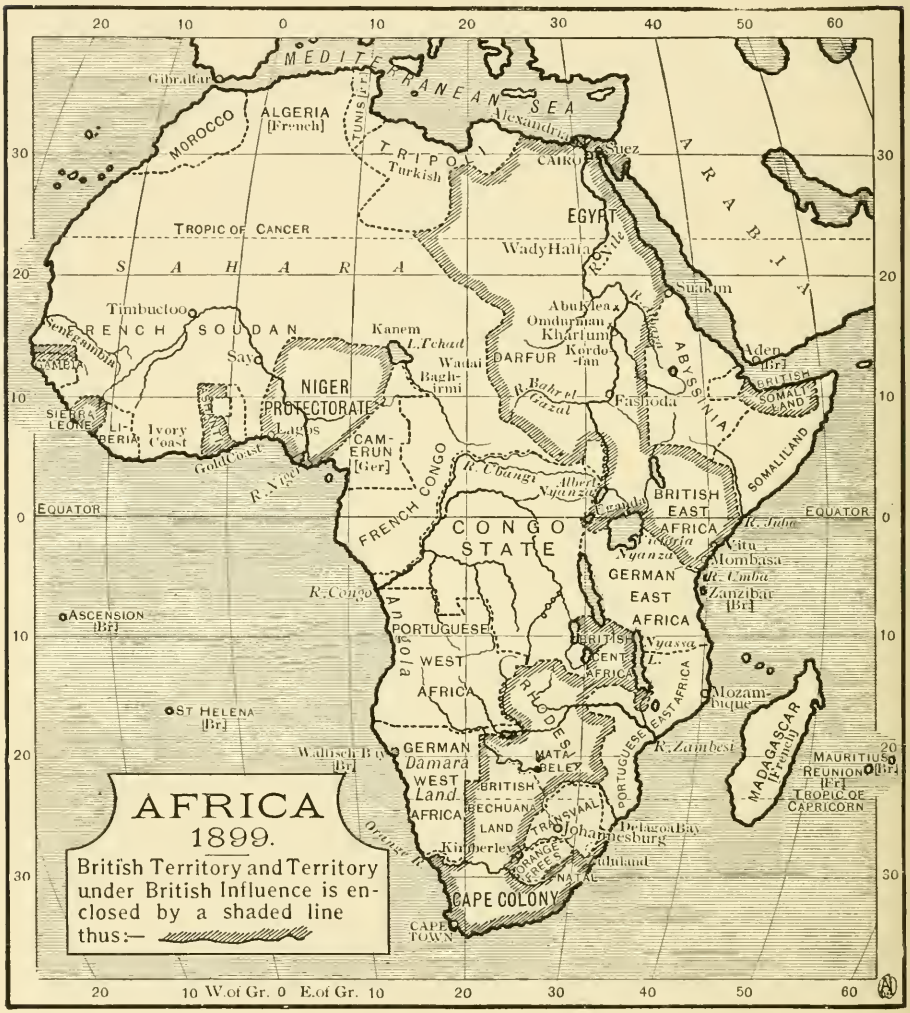
Continued friction between Boers and Uitlanders.

The South African colonies, however, have other foreign politics beside those which concern the two Boer republics. Down to 1884 we were the only European power possessing a lodgment in the southern end of the "Dark Continent," save for the decaying Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique. A slow and peaceful extension of Cape Colony northward seemed the natural line of development. In 1871 we annexed Griqualand West, where rich diamond mines had just been discovered, and the town of Kimberley was growing up. A little later Basutoland and other inland districts were taken under our protection. But in 1884 Prince Bismarck, then still at the height of his power, proclaimed a German Protectorate over Damaraland, the coast district north of the

German colonization and the scramble for Africa.

* See p. 204.

Orange River, while in 1885–90 similar claims were set up by Germany to the maritime tract on the eastern side of Africa north of Mozambique. This intrusion of a new colonial power into regions which we had fondly marked out as likely to pass



into our own hands, forced England to take action, and the "scramble for Africa" began.

The danger was that the Germans pushing inland from both sides of the continent, might meet in the valley of the

Zambezi, and shut out our colonies from further expansion northward. Hence came about the establishment of the two great Chartered Companies. The "South Africa Company," incorporated in 1889, of which Mr. Cecil Rhodes has always been the leading spirit, seized Matabeleland and Mashonaland after a short war with the Matabeles, a warlike Zulu race who were formerly dominant in the regions inland from the Transvaal and Mozambique. The "Central Africa Company" operated further to the north, and occupied the regions beyond the Zambezi and to the west of the great lake Nyassa. Their sphere of influence was put under formal British protection in 1891. Thus the southern end of Mr. Rhodes's great "Cape Town to Cairo" scheme was successfully put beyond the danger of German or Portuguese interference.

British South African Company—Policy of Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

Other complications, however, arose further northward in the region about Zanzibar—an Arab state with a large undefined dominion on the mainland opposite the island capital of the Sultan. The German annexations about Vitu and Dar-es-Salaam (1885–90) devoured a great part of his nominal empire; Mombasa and the rest were leased to a third British Chartered Company—the "East Africa Company," founded in 1888. Zanzibar itself was placed under British protection in 1890, and an elaborate treaty with Germany delimited the spheres of the two powers, the line being drawn at the river Umba. The "East Africa Company" ceded its rights to the British Government in 1895, so that this territory is now held directly under the Crown. This protectorate extends all along the east coast of Africa, from Mombasa to the river Juba, where it touches on the north a sphere of Italian influence, reaching up to the mouth of the Red Sea. Beyond this lies another patch of British territory in Somaliland, facing Aden across the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and so guarding the way to Suez.

Britain and Germany in East Central Africa.

One further annexation has been made in East Africa, as

late as 1894. In that year we assumed a protectorate over the inland kingdom of Uganda and the neighbouring regions. British missionary enterprise had for many years been very vigorous in this direction, and our attention had been called to it by the cruel persecutions of Christians carried out by Mtesa and his son Mwanga, the despot who murdered Bishop Hannington and his companions in 1888. The Uganda protectorate lies about the two great lakes of the Victoria and Albert Nyanza, and the headwaters of the Nile. Expeditions are at the present moment on the march to push northward from this region and connect our dominions with the middle Nile, where the British and Egyptian flags are floating at Fashoda. If it had not been for long civil wars in Uganda, this task would have been ere now completed. But the necessity for putting down Mwanga and his partisans was followed by that for subduing a revolt of our own Soudanese mercenaries, and three years have been lost. Meanwhile a railway is being rapidly pushed up from Mombasa to connect our inland protectorate with our head-quarters at Zanzibar, a task that will probably be completed before the century is out.

Uganda.

The programme sketched out by Mr. Rhodes, of drawing a continuous chain of British protectorates from Cape Colony to the Nile valley, has thus been completed except at one point. Beyond the north end of Lake Nyassa, German East Africa touches the Belgian "Congo Free State," and until a right of transit is acquired through one or the other of those territories, the "Cape Town to Cairo" route cannot be practically used. It is probable that some arrangement will ultimately be made by which this difficulty can be got rid of.

The "Cape Town to Cairo" route.

In Western Africa the power with which we have had most of our difficulties is not Germany, but France. Down to the third quarter of the century we conducted well-nigh the whole trade of this part of the continent, through our settlements of the Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and

Lagos. The region was too unhealthy to tempt us to attempt inland conquest, and after several expeditions to chastise the coast tribes, notably the Ashantees, we always withdrew to our ports again. But expansion inland has been forced upon us by the French, who, starting from their colonies of Senegal and the Ivory Coast, have conquered the inland of Guinea, or the "French Soudan," as they now call it, so as to cut off our Gambia and Sierra Leone settlements from their "hinterland." To prevent Lagos from being treated in the same way, and to keep the whole basin of the Lower Niger free for English trade, the "Royal Niger Company" was organized in 1885, and the coast from Lagos eastward as far as the Cameruns was taken under British protection. The Niger company has worked up the great stream, till its officials met the French descending it from the neighbourhood of Timbuctu. The expected collision occurred at several points, and led to great diplomatic difficulties, which were ultimately settled only in 1898, by a treaty which gave the lands on the Middle Niger to France, and those from Say to the sea, along the Lower Niger, to England. This solid block of territory exploited by the Niger Company is cut off from any possibility of expansion eastward by the activity of the Germans in the Cameruns and the French on the Ubangi. The territories claimed by those powers now completely surround our Niger protectorate.

West African colonies—Friction with France.

One further boundary in Africa remained to be settled—that between France and England in the regions where the basins of the Congo and the Nile meet. We have already had to describe the Marchand * expedition to Fashoda and its consequences. The last of them has been the final delimitation of the French and English spheres of influence in that debatable land. By an agreement reached in March, 1899, we have taken over, for ourselves, or our Egyptian *protegées*, Darfur, Kordofan, and the Bahr-el-Gazal; while France

* See p. 208.

is to be permitted to conquer Kanem Wadai and Baghirmi, when she can succeed in pushing troops into those remote regions.

Thus the "scramble for Africa" has ended in the annexation, real or nominal, of the whole continent by one European power or another. Except some desert tracts in the Eastern Sahara, south of Tripoli, there is no region which is not claimed by one of the great colonizing states. The boundaries now settled, however, are in many cases so unnatural, that their modification is certain to be one of the main employments of the twentieth century.

It remains to add a few words about a topic which for the last ten years has been in every mouth—Imperial Federation.

The problem of Imperial Federation.

At the present moment the Crown is the only formal tie between the many colonies and possessions over which the Union Jack floats. But racial patriotism and the memories of a great past tell in favour of federation in the majority of the colonies, no less than in the mother-country. A firm and well-compacted union of all the British lands would form a state that might control the whole world.

But if sentiment is all in favour of Imperial Federation, there are many practical difficulties in its way. Supposing that the union were accomplished, and a Federal Parliament of the whole British world assembled, would the mother-country allow herself to be outvoted and her policy changed by a combination of her daughter-states? On the other hand, would Canada be prepared to enter into a war for purely Australian interests, or South African colonists vote money freely for a struggle to keep the "open door" in China? It is extremely possible that such doubts would prove to be unnecessary, and that in the spirit of mutual dependence every member of the Federation would make its sister's quarrels its own. The example of the United States, whose foreign policy has seldom been handicapped by internal

Constitutional difficulties.

differences of opinion between the various states, is there to comfort us. A much more serious objection turns upon the matter of Free Trade and Protection.

All British commercial policy since the days of Peel has been conducted on free-trade lines; they undoubtedly suit a great manufacturing country, which at the same time owns the carrying trade of half the world. On the other hand, many of the colonies are furiously protectionist in sentiment, and tax the goods of the mother-country no less than those of the foreigner. Federation would certainly be followed by a commercial union, by which the colonies would undertake to give the products of Britain a preferential tariff. Canada set the example in the excellent agreement made in 1898. But in return they would be almost certain to ask that Britain should abandon her hard-and-fast line of Free Trade, and impose duties on foreign goods, so as to give her daughter-states an advantage over the alien. It is probable that Great Britain might ultimately consent to go some way in this direction, seeing the enormous political benefits that would ensue. But it would certainly be a great wrench to her to reverse the commercial policy of fifty years, and to revert to ideas that have been long discredited.

Commercial difficulties.

India supplies a third set of difficulties in the way of federation. It is hard to see how she can be fitted into the scheme. No doubt the colonies might be given their fair share in her administration, as long as the present condition of affairs continues. But if India is ever trusted with a greater measure of self-government than she at present enjoys, it is clear that her 250,000,000 inhabitants would weigh very heavily in the federation. If taken into partnership, she would swamp the rest of the empire.

The Indian difficulty.

In spite of all such difficulties—and there are dozens more which might be urged, turning on various financial, military, and administrative points—there seems to be no really insuperable barrier to the carrying out of the great scheme. The

examples of the Canadian federation, which has worked so well for thirty years, and of the Australian federation, which is just being accomplished, are decidedly encouraging for the larger scheme. The matter must, to a very large extent, be settled by sentiment; to thrust union on recalcitrant members would be fatal. But in most parts of the colonial world the sentiment is tending in the required direction, and "where there is a will there is a way." The progress towards federation must inevitably be slow, and preceded by many half-measures and partial agreements. These are, indeed, already coming into existence; facts like the Australian "auxiliary squadron", the South African money contribution to the imperial navy, the commercial treaty with Canada in 1898, the lately concluded inter-colonial agreements between Canada and Australia, and Canada and the West Indies, are all steps toward the great end. Most important of all, perhaps, is the ever-growing rapidity of communications by sea and land; the barriers of distance are the most formidable hindrances to union, but they are being quickly removed. An achievement like the Canadian-Pacific Railway not merely develops a new province, but helps to bind the whole empire together. British Columbia is, for all practical purposes, as near to London now as Malta was in 1815. As communications grow easier, the consciousness of common origin and interests must grow stronger, and the inter-dependence of the mother country and the colonies be better realized by both parties. Mutual ignorance was really the reason why, earlier in the century, Great Britain sometimes seemed an unsympathetic parent, or her colonists discontented children. We are now long past the time when Canada and Australia seemed so far off and so unimportant that English statesmen talked lightly of the day when they would, in the natural course of things, "cut the painter," and leave Great Britain alone as a small manufacturing island in the North Atlantic. What difficulties there are, will now proceed more from the local

Prospects of Federation.

patriotisms and jealousies of the colonies than from the impracticability of the mother country. They must not be undervalued; it is conceivable even yet that the great English-speaking peoples may drift asunder, and be forced to play a secondary part in the development of the twentieth century. If, as we confidently hope, they hold together and combine in some more or less definite federal scheme, the future of the whole world lies in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon race.

APPENDIX.

MINISTRIES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Date.	Politics.	Prime Minister.	Lord Chancellor.	Home Secretary.	Foreign Secretary.	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Mar. 7, 1801	Tory	H. Addington	Lord Eldon	Lord Pelham C. Yorke (1803)	Lord Hawkesbury	H. Addington
May 12, 1804	Tory	William Pitt	Lord Eldon	Lord Hawkesbury	Lord Harrowby Lord Mulgrave	William Pitt
Feb. 11, 1806	Whig	Lord Grenville	Lord Erskine	Lord Spencer	Charles James Fox Lord Grey (1806)	Lord Henry Petty
Mar. 31, 1807	Tory	Duke of Portland	Lord Eldon	Lord Hawkesbury	George Canning	Spencer Perceval
Dec. 2, 1809	Tory	Spencer Perceval	Lord Eldon	R. Ryder	Lord Bathurst Lord Wellesley	Spencer Perceval
June 9, 1812	Tory	Lord Liverpool	Lord Eldon	Lord Sidmouth (Addington) Sir Robert Peel (1822)	Lord Castlereagh George Canning (1822)	N. Vansittart F. Robinson (Lord Goderich)
April 24, 1827	Tory	George Canning	Lord Lyndhurst	Sturges-Bourne Lord Lansdowne	Lord Dudley	George Canning
Sept. 25, 1827	Tory	Lord Goderich	Lord Lyndhurst	Lord Lansdowne	Lord Dudley	J. C. Herries
Jan. 25, 1828	Tory	Duke of Wellington	Lord Lyndhurst	Sir Robert Peel	Lord Dudley Lord Aberdeen	Henry Goulburn
Nov. 22, 1830	Whig	Lord Grey	Lord Brougham	Lord Melbourne	Lord Palmerston	Lord Althorpe
July 18, 1834	Whig	Lord Melbourne	Lord Brougham	Lord Duncannon	Lord Palmerston	Lord Althorpe

A gap while Wellington and Peel vainly tried to construct a ministry, Dec. 1834–April, 1835.

April 18, 1835	Whig	Lord Melbourne	Lord Cottenham	Lord John Russell Lord Normanby	Lord Palmerston	T. Spring-Rice F. Baring
Sept. 6, 1841	Tory	Sir Robert Peel	Lord Lyndhurst	Sir J. Graham	Lord Aberdeen	H. Goulburn
July 6, 1846	Whig	Lord John Russell	Lord Cottenham Lord Truro	Sir G. Grey	Lord Palmerston Lord Granville	Sir Chas. Wood
Feb. 27, 1852	Tory	Lord Derby	Lord St. Leonards	Spencer Walpole	Lord Malmesbury	B. Disraeli
Dec. 28, 1852	Whig	Lord Aberdeen	Lord Cranworth	Lord Palmerston	Lord J. Russell Lord Clarendon	W. E. Gladstone
Feb. 10, 1855	Whig	Lord Palmerston	Lord Cranworth	Sir G. Grey	Lord Clarendon	W. E. Gladstone Sir G. C. Lewis
Feb. 25, 1858	Tory	Lord Derby	Lord Chelmsford	S. H. Walpole T. Estcourt	Lord Malmesbury	B. Disraeli
June 18, 1859	Whig	Lord Palmerston	Lord Campbell Lord Westbury	Sir G. C. Lewis Sir G. Grey	Lord John Russell	W. E. Gladstone
Nov. 6, 1865	Whig	Lord Russell	Lord Cranworth	Sir G. Grey	Lord Clarendon	W. E. Gladstone
July 6, 1866	Cons.	Lord Derby B. Disraeli (1868)	Lord Chelmsford Lord Cairns	S. Walpole Gathorne-Hardy	Lord Stanley	B. Disraeli G. Ward Hunt
Dec. 9, 1868	Lib.	W. E. Gladstone	Lord Hatherley Lord Selborne	Henry Bruce Robert Lowe	Lord Granville	Robert Lowe W. E. Gladstone
Feb. 21, 1874	Cons.	B. Disraeli (Earl of Beaconsfield, 1876)	Lord Cairns	R. A. Cross	Lord Derby Lord Salisbury (1876)	Sir S. Northcote
April 28, 1880	Lib.	W. E. Gladstone	Lord Selborne	Sir W. Harcourt	Lord Granville	W. E. Gladstone H. E. Childers
June 24, 1885	Cons.	Lord Salisbury	Lord Halsbury	Sir R. A. Cross	Lord Salisbury	Sir M. Hicks-Beach
Feb. 6, 1886	Lib.	W. E. Gladstone	Lord Herschell	H. E. Childers	Lord Rosebery	Sir W. Harcourt
Aug. 3, 1886	Cons.	Lord Salisbury	Lord Halsbury	H. Matthews	Lord Iddesleigh Lord Salisbury	Lord R. Churchill G. J. Goschen
Aug. 18, 1892	Lib.	W. E. Gladstone Lord Rosebery (1894)	Lord Herschell	H. H. Asquith	Lord Rosebery Lord Kimberley	Sir W. Harcourt
July 2, 1895	Unionist.	Lord Salisbury	Lord Halsbury	Sir M. W. Ridley	Lord Salisbury	Sir M. Hicks-Beach

POPULATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.*	Total.
1801 ...	8,892,536	1,608,402	5,319,867 (?)	15,720,805
1811 ...	10,164,256	1,805,864	6,000,000 (?)	17,970,120
1821 ...	12,000,236	2,091,521	6,801,827	20,893,584
1831 ...	13,896,797	2,364,386	7,767,401	24,048,584
1841 ...	15,914,148	2,620,184	8,175,124	26,709,456
1851 ...	17,927,609	2,880,742	6.552,385	27,368,736
1861 ...	20,066,224	3,062,294	5,798,967	28,927,485
1871 ...	22,712,266	3,360,018	5,412,377	31,484,661
1881 ...	25.974,439	3,735,573	5,174,836	34,884,848
1891 ...	29,002,525	4,025,647	4,704,750	37,732,922

* No accurate Irish figures can be given for 1801 or 1811.

THE NATIONAL DEBT.

	£
In 1792, at commencement of French Revolutionary War	239,663,421
In 1802, at Peace of Amiens	537,653,008
In 1815, after Waterloo	861,039,049
In 1837, at accession of Victoria	761,422,570
In 1854, before Crimean War	769,082,549
In 1857, at end of Crimean War	808,108,722
In 1898	644,909,847

FOREIGN SOVEREIGNS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

FRANCE.

Bonaparte, "First Consul"	1799–1804	Napoleon III.	1852–1870
Bonaparte as Emperor Napoleon I.	1804–1814	Third Republic ...	Sept. 4, 1870
Louis XVIII.	1814–1815	A. Thiers, President	1871–1873
Napoleon restored March—June	1815	Marshal Mac-Mahon ,,	1873–1879
Louis XVIII. restored ...	1815–1824	J. Grévy ,,	1879–1887
Charles X.	1824–1830	M. F. Carnot ,,	1887–1894
Louis Philippe	1830–1848	J. Casimir Perrier ,,	1894–1895
Second Republic	1848–1852	Felix Faure ,,	1895–1899
		C. Loubet ,,	1899–

RUSSIA.

Paul	1796–1801	Alexander II.	1855–1881
Alexander I.	1801–1825	Alexander III.	1881–1894
Nicholas I.	1825–1855	Nicholas II.	1894–

PRUSSIA-GERMANY.

Frederick-William III. ...	1797–1840	Frederick, Emperor ...	1888
Frederick-William IV. ...	1840–1860	William II., Emperor ...	1888–
William I.	1860–1888		
Elected German Emperor	1871		

AUSTRIA.

Francis II., "Holy Roman Emperor"	1792–1805	Ferdinand	1835–1848
Francis II., Emperor of Austria	1805–1835	Francis-Joseph	1848–

SPAIN.

Charles IV.	1788–1808	First Republic	1868–1870
Ferdinand VII. (*de jure*) / Joseph Bonaparte (*de facto*)	1808–1814	Amadeus of Savoy ...	1870–1873
Ferdinand VII. restored ...	1814–1833	Second Republic	1873–1875
Isabella	1833–1868	Alphonso XII.	1875–1885
		Alphonso XIII.	1886–

TYPICAL BUDGETS.

BUDGET OF 1801-2, LAST OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	8,758,184	National debt and sinking fund ...	25,346,689
Excise	11,573,427	Navy	17,258,135
Irish receipts (customs and excise not yet amalgamated with British)	2,350,509	Army and ordnance	20,084,813
Stamps	3,249,122	Civil list and civil services	3,615,386
Land and assessed taxes	4,648,078	Miscellaneous ...	11,177,917
Income tax	5,804,515		
Post-office ...	1,250,725		
Loans	36,145,059		
Miscellaneous ...	1,461,509		
Total ...	£75,241,128	Total ...	£77,482,940

A ruinous budget; besides the £36,145,059 raised by issuing new Government stock, the greater part of the £11,177,917 "miscellaneous" in the expenditure column is to be accounted for by the paying off of an adverse balance of exchequer bills from 1801. There still remains a deficit of two millions! There are no loans to foreign powers, as Austria has withdrawn from the war.

BUDGET OF 1810. NAPOLEONIC WAR IN PROGRESS.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	13,816,218	National debt and sinking fund ...	33,433,828
Excise	25,350,990	Navy	20,058,412
Stamps	5,546,082	Army and ordnance ...	23,188,631
Land and assessed taxes	8,011,205	Civil list and civil services	1,533,140
Income tax	13,492,215	Loans to foreign powers	2,050,082
Post-office	1,471,746	Miscellaneous ...	5,079,547
Loans	15,690,826		
Miscellaneous ...	1,968,618		
Total ...	85,347,900	Total ...	85,343,640

The amount borrowed by loan this year, and that lent to foreign powers, are both below the average.

BUDGET OF 1820. AFTER THE GREAT PEACE.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	11,475,259	National debt and sinking fund ...	49,339,773
Excise	28,941,629	Navy	5,943,879
Stamps	6,853,986	Army and ordnance...	10,281,702
Land and assessed taxes	8,192,301	Civil list and civil services	2,268,940
Post-office	1,621,326	Loans to foreign powers	48,464
Borrowed from the sinking fund ...	13,833,783	Miscellaneous ...	4,479,992
Miscellaneous ...	1,867,308		
Total ...	72,785,592	Total ...	72,362,750

The customs dues have been cut down, the income tax abolished, the expenditure on army and navy halved. The burden of the national debt remains enormous. The cross-entries in both columns as to the sinking fund should be regarded as cancelling each other.

SIR ROBERT PEEL'S LAST BUDGET, 1846.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	22,612,708	Interest on national debt, etc.	27,656,555
Excise	15,563,084	Navy	7,803,464
Stamps	7,895,628	Army and ordnance...	9,061,233
Land and assessed taxes	4,479,944	Civil list and civil services	2,736,806
Income tax	5,656,528	Miscellaneous ...	7,903,533
Post-office	2,004,007		
Miscellaneous ...	1,489,505		
Total ...	£59,701,404	Total ...	£55,161,591

The income tax has been reintroduced by Peel. The expenditure on the national debt is largely reduced by the abandonment of the old "sinking fund." A surplus of £4,000,000 realized.

A CRIMEAN WAR BUDGET, 1855.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	21,991,675	Interest on national debt, etc.	27,864,533
Excise	17,042,295	Navy	14,490,105
Stamps	7,159,539	Army and ordnance	13,831,601
Land and assessed taxes	3,225,121	Civil list and civil services	7,706,721
Income tax	10,922,266	Miscellaneous ...	5,242,026
Post-office	2,635,336		
Miscellaneous ...	1,115,335		
Total ...	£64,091,567	Total ...	£69,134,986

A deficit of £5,000,000 to be made up by borrowing, in spite of a heavily increased income tax, raised from 7*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* on the £. The war has swelled the naval and military expenses by £10,000,000.

A MODERN BUDGET, 1898.

Income.	£	*Expenditure.*	£
Customs	21,798,000	Interest on national debt, etc.	25,000,000
Excise	28,300,000	Navy	20,852,000
Stamps (including death duties, etc.)	18,750,000	Army	19,330,000
Land and assessed taxes	2,430,000	Civil list and civil services	22,818,003
Income tax	17,250,000	Miscellaneous ...	14,935,991
Post-office	12,170,000		
Telegraphs	3,010,000		
Miscellaneous ...	2,986,004		
Total ...	£106,694,004	Total ...	£102,935,994

Customs, owing to huge remissions of taxation since 1860, remain low. "Stamps" are enormously increased, largely owing to new death-duties. The Post-office brings in almost five times its yield of 1855. Telegraphs, now a Government monopoly, are a new heading. Income tax, at 8*d.* in the pound, yields half as much again as it did at 1*s.* 4*d.* in 1855. Civil service expenditure has increased at an even greater rate than military and naval. The national debt shrinks every year.

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FINIS.

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