
DAVIDSON LONDINENSIS INSIGNE IOANNIS
SAPIENTER SI SIRCEITER

MONTALEMBERT

ON

CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTY.

A Picture of England, Painted by a Frenchman.

BEING

A COMPLETE TRANSLATION OF THE MEMORABLE ARTICLE ENTITLED "A DEBATE ON INDIA IN THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT."

WHICH HAS SUBJECTED THE AUTHOR TO

THE NOW PENDING STATE PROSECUTION.

BY

M. LE COMTE DE MONTALEMBERT.

"A work which is destined to be remarkable. It is a noble and passionate eulogy of English freedom; the language of which extraordinary composition is a stream of unpausing eloquence."—THE TIMES.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1858.

A DEBATE ON INDIA IN THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.

I. THERE are ill-constituted minds for which repose and silence are not the supreme good. There are people who experience, from time to time, a want to quit the tranquil uniformity of their ordinary existence. There are soldiers who, conquered, wounded, in chains, condemned to a fatal inaction, console themselves and become invigorated at the sight of the struggles and dangers of others. It is not that they find any attraction in the vile and wretched sentiment of secure selfishness portrayed in the famous lines of Lucretius:—

> "Suave, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
> E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem.
> Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri
> Per campos instructa, tuâ sine parte pericli."

No, it is a purer and higher motive; it is the effort of the unarmed gladiator, an interested spectator of the arena where he is not destined again to figure, who applauds the exploits of his happier rivals, and encourages the combatants with a sympathetic cheer, drowned, but not altogether lost, amid the enthusiastic cries of the attentive spectators.

I candidly confess, that I may be classed in the number of such men; and, I will add, that I have found a remedy for this disease, from which it is so little admitted that people suffer just now. When I feel myself attacked by the malady, when my ears tingle, now with the buzzing of the newsmongers of ante-

chambers, and again with the din of fanatics who fancy themselves our masters, and of hypocrites who think us their dupes, —when I am stifling in an atmosphere loaded with the exhalations of servility and corruption, I set forth to breathe a purer air, and to take a life-bath (*bain de vie*) in free England.

The last time that I availed myself of this relief, fortune favoured me; I was thrown into the midst of one of those great and glorious struggles in which we see brought into play all the resources of the intelligence, and all the emotions of the conscience of a great people; where the greatest problems that can interest a nation out of its minority are solved in open day by the intervention of the greatest minds; where men and things, parties and individuals, orators and writers, the possessors of power, and the organs of opinion, are called upon to reproduce, in the midst of a new Rome, the picture drawn by a Roman of the olden time, under the influence of the emotions of the Forum:—

> "Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
> Noctes atque dies niti præstante labore,
> Ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri."

At these words, I see certain brows darken, and behold traced upon them the repugnance with which all that may seem a remembrance or a regret of political life inspires the votaries of the fashion of the day. If, among those who have opened these pages there should be some who are the slaves of that fashion, I say to them without ceremony,—"Stay where you are; do not go any further. Not a particle of what I am about to write can prove agreeable or interesting to you. Go,—ruminate in peace amid the rich pastures of your thrice happy retirement, and do not envy the right of those who envy you in nothing, to remain faithful to their past, to the solicitudes of the intellect, and the aspirations for liberty."

Every one is happy after his own fashion; people must be in a way, I cannot say of understanding one another, but, at least, of not disputing with each other, when they have no longer any incentive to ambition or affection in common, and when they do not agree in opinion with respect either to happiness or honour.

I grant, besides, that there is nothing, absolutely nothing in the nature of the institutions or of the political personages of our time, which can resemble the men and things forming the subject of this rapid sketch. It will be understood, as a matter of course, that I do not in any way pretend to convert those progressive minds, who consider that Parliamentary Government has been advantageously replaced by universal suffrage, or those politicians of the Optimist school who assert that the crowning victory of democracy consists in handing over to a sole sovereign, the exclusive direction of the foreign and domestic affairs of a nation. I write for my own satisfaction, and for that of a small number of invalids, of prying, curious people,—of maniacs, if you will have it so, like myself. I study contemporary institutions which are no longer ours, but which once have been, and which still seem worthy of admiration and envy to my mind, behind-hand as it is. Might not the sympathy and attention which men of high talent have awakened in favour of the fine ladies of the Fronde, of the equivocal personages of the great rebellion of England, or of the obscure and sterile agitations of our ancient Communes, be sometimes directed towards the deeds of a nation which lives and moves in its strength and its greatness at seven leagues from our northern shores? I do think that they might, and, what is more, I imagine that this study of foreign statistics, or, to speak more correctly, of contemporary archæology, may prove as agreeable in our leisure hours as a commentary on the comedies of Plautus, or a narrative of the exploration of the sources of the Nile.

II. At the end of last spring the state of Hindostan, and the issue of the insurrection which had for a whole year been raging in the Northern Provinces of that extensive region, still formed the principal subject of attention in England. How could it have been otherwise? As for me, I was astonished and alarmed that the English people, after the consternation and anger of the first few months, had so speedily abandoned itself, not, certainly, to a criminal carelessness, but to a premature confidence in the issue of the struggle. I felt desirous to discover, in the society of the most competent judges, the true causes for the

insurrection, as well as the means which were intended to be employed in order to triumph finally over a danger so formidable, so little foreseen, and aggravated to such a pitch by threatening complications, which from day to day might appear on the stage of European politics. I offered in that investigation an ardent and profound sympathy towards the great, free, and Christian nation, from which God exacted so terrible a trial; and I felt that sympathy redoubled in presence of the inhuman fury of so many of the organs of the Continental press, and, unfortunately, of the *soi-disant* Conservative and religious journals against the victims of the Bengal massacres. I should have wished to inform every individual Englishman whom I met that I had no connexion whatever with the parties whose journals applauded and justified the cut-throats, and whose earnest vows are still daily offered up for the triumph of the Mussulman and Pagan hordes over the heroic soldiers of a Christian people,—the ally of France.*

I felt, besides, what every intelligent liberal feels and knows, that the attitude of the Continental press with respect to the Indian question, demonstrates once again the great fact which constitutes the immortal honour of contemporary England. All the apologists of absolutism, whether ancient or modern, monarchical or democratic, take part against her; with her, on the contrary, are to be seen all those who still remain faithful to that regulated liberty of which she was the cradle, and is, to this hour, the invincible bulwark. That is but natural and right; moreover, it suffices to cause us to overlook, in the present policy of England, certain sympathies which may be more easily accounted for than justified, and to pardon her some wrongs which, under another state of things, would call for the severest reprobation.

I may boldly affirm, that no one knows better, that no one has

* I consider that praise has little value and little dignity when criticism is not permitted. But I feel myself sheltered from all suspicion of servility in rendering just homage to the courageous perseverance with which the Emperor's government maintains an alliance, the rupture of which would certainly increase its popularity, but would convey a fatal blow to the independence of Europe and the true interests of France.

more loudly signalised than I, the backslidings and deviations of English policy during the few past years. I was certainly the first to denounce, previously to 1848, the policy of Lord Palmerston, but too often imperious towards the weak and truckling to the strong, in the highest degree imprudent, illogical, and foreign to all the great traditions of his country. But, in fact, when we read the wretched invectives of the Anglophobes of our day, when we compare with their complaints against England the ideas which they emit and the systems which they laud, we feel involuntarily inclined to be indulgent towards all that they attack—indulgent even towards Lord Palmerston. It would be, besides, the height of folly and of iniquity to regard England as solely culpable, or as the most culpable, among the nations of the earth. Her policy is neither more selfish nor more immoral than that of other great States which figure in ancient or modern history. I even believe that it would be possible to demonstrate a thesis of an altogether contrary character. It is not charity, but strict justice, which begins at home; and, under this head, no French publicist has the right to stigmatise the policy of England before having passed judgment on the political crimes of France during the Revolution and the Empire, not as set forth by adverse witnesses, but such as their apologists—M. Thiers, for instance—have represented them. Rummage as you may the most suspected recesses of English diplomacy, you will find nothing there which bears even the most far-fetched resemblance to the destruction of the Republic of Venice, or to the ambuscade of Bayonne.

Besides, it is not the general, but the colonial policy of England which is now in question; and it is precisely in this latter that the genius of the British people shines with all its lustre; not, certainly, that it has been at all times and in all places irreproachable, but it has ever and everywhere equalled, if it have not surpassed, in wisdom, justice, and humanity, all the other European races which have undertaken similar enterprises. It must be confessed, that the history of the relations of Christian Europe with the rest of the world, since the Crusades, is not attractive. Unfortunately, neither the virtues nor the truths of

Christianity have ruled the successive conquests won in Asia and America by the powerful nations of the West. After that first impetuous advance, so noble and so pious, of the fifteenth century, which fathered the great, the saintly Columbus, and all the champions of the maritime and colonial history of Portugal, worthy of as high a place in the too ungrateful memory of men as the heroes of ancient Greece, we see all the vices of modern civilisation usurp the place of the spirit of faith and of self-denial, here exterminating the savage races, and elsewhere succumbing to the enervating influence of the corrupting civilisation of the East, instead of regenerating it or taking its place. It is impossible not to recognise that England, more particularly since the period when she gloriously ransomed her participation in the kidnapping of the negroes and colonial slavery, may pride herself on having escaped from the greater part of those lamentable deviations from the path of rectitude. To the historian who requires an account from her of the result of her maritime and colonial enterprises for the last two centuries, she has a right to reply, "*Si quæris monumentum, circumspice.*" Can history exhibit many spectacles of a grander or more extraordinary nature, or more calculated to honour modern civilisation, than that afforded us by a company of English merchants which has endured through two centuries and a half, and which governed but yesterday, at a distance of 2,000 leagues from the mother country, nearly 200,000,000 of men by means of 800 civil servants, and of an army numbering from 15,000 to 20,000 men? But England has done better still; she has not only founded colonies, but called nations into being. She has created the United States; she has erected them into one of the greatest powers of the present and of the future, by endowing them with those provincial and individual liberties which enabled them to victoriously emancipate themselves from the light yoke of the mother country. "Our free institutions" (such is the tenor of the Message for the year 1852, of the President of that great Republic) "are not the fruit of the revolution; they had been previously in existence; they had their roots in the free charters under the provisions of which the English colonies had grown up."

At the present day England is in course of creating in Australia United States anew, who will soon, in their turn, detach themselves from the parent tree, destined as they are to become a great nation, imbued from the cradle with the manly virtues, and the glorious liberties which are everywhere the appanage of the Anglo-Celtic race, and which, let us declare it once again, are more favorable to the propagation of Catholic truth, and to the dignity of the priesthood than any other *régime* under the sun.

In Canada, a noble French Catholic race, detached unfortunately from our country, but French in heart and in manners, owes to England the benefit of having preserved, or acquired, in addition to full religious liberty, all the political and religious liberties which France has rejected; the population has increased tenfold in less than a century, and will serve as a basis to the new confederation, which, extending from the Oregon to the St. Lawrence, will one day be the rival or the ally of the great American Republic.

All these circumstances are forgotten, misunderstood, or misrepresented by certain Royalist and Catholic writers, who discharge their venom every day against the greatness and the liberty of England;—strange and ungrateful Royalists, who forget that England is the only country in Europe where the *prestige* of royalty has not suffered a taint during the last two hundred years nearly; the only country, too, which offered an inviolable asylum to the august exiles of the royal family of France, and lavished, with surpassing munificence, its assistance to the French emigrant nobility, and to the French clergy, proscribed for having refused to compound with schism:*—Catholics, stranger still! who do not fear not only to compromise all the rights of justice and truth, but, still more, the interests of the church itself,

* 8000 priests, 2000 laymen, and 600 French nuns sought refuge in England in 1793. In 1806, they had received from the English, both in the shape of private subscription, and parliamentary votes, the sum of *forty-six millions francs.* A London Catholic Journal, the Rambler for August 1858, borrows these figures from the Book of the Abbé Margotti, entitled "*Rome and London*," of which it publishes in the same number an amusing and complete refutation.

by obstinately seeking to establish a radical hostility between the cause of catholicity, and the free prosperity of the most extensive empire which exists in our days on the face of the globe, every successive conquest achieved by which, opens up immense vistas to the preaching of the gospel, and to the extension of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The cruel joy with which the disasters, whether actual or supposed, of the English in India, have been welcomed, the strange sympathies with the murderers of Delhi and Cawnpore, the daily invectives against a handful of brave soldiers struggling with innumerable enemies, and with a fatal climate, to avenge their brothers, their wives, and their children, immolated alike, and to restore the legitimate and necessary ascendant of the Christian West, over the peninsula of India, will constitute one of the darkest pages in the history, already so little edifying, of the religious press of our time. We regard as revolting those sanguinary declamations, accompanied by continual instigations to war, between two nations happily and gloriously allied—a war from the dangers and sacrifices of which its pious promoters well know that they will be the last to suffer. And when they abound in the columns of certain journals specially devoted to the clergy, and encouraged by its members; when they are displayed between the narrative of an apparition of the Virgin, and that of the consecration of a church to the God of mercy and of love, a sentiment of painful repugnance, which may be classed among the heaviest trials in the life of an honest man, is called forth in every Christian soul which has not yet been infected by the hateful passions of a retrograde fanaticism; we can fancy that we hear in a night passed in the East the cry of the jackal between the cooings of the dove and the refreshing murmur of the waters.

I know this inspiration of old; it was breathed into and detested by me in the days of my childhood, when a considerable number of those who called themselves the defenders of the altar and the throne banned with their disapproval, the generous sons of Greece in insurrection against the rule of the Ottomans, and who hailed the disasters of Ipsara and Missolonghi as so many defeats sustained by schismatics and revolutionists. Happily,

nobler inspirations prevailed in the counsels of the restoration, as in the natural generous hearts of the royalists. The genius of Chateaubriand crushed to powder the unfortunate leanings of the party to which he had always belonged toward the butchers of the Peloponnesus. And yet to-day there is not a Legitimist but recognises that it was the glory of Charles X., to have taken the principal part in the deliverance of Greece, and repudiates with horror the opinions held thirty-five years ago, by the principal organs of the Royalist party. Let us hope that the day will come, when every Catholic will repudiate with equal horror, the detestable encouragement given at present by the religious press, to the assassins of India. Fortunately, no voice of authority in the assembly of the faithful, no pontiff, no prince of the church, has taken part in this concert. On the contrary, we are delighted at being able to signalise, among the numerous pastoral letters published upon this subject by the catholic bishops in the British islands, a patriotic sympathy for the sufferings of their countrymen. That of Dr. Gillies, Vicar Apostolic of Edinburgh, deserves to be quoted as the most eloquent lament yet inspired by that national catastrophe. And it is particularly agreeable to us to recall to mind here the liberal and paternal subscription of Pius IX. for the benefit of the English sufferers in India. It was at once a touching pledge of the imperturbable amiability of his pontifical soul, and the most conclusive refutation of those prophets of hate, who preach up an irreconcilable schism between the Church and British Greatness.

For my own part—I say without circumlocution—I hold in horror that orthodoxy which makes no account of justice or truth, of humanity or honour; and I am never tired of repeating the significant words, lately expressed by the Bishop of Rochelle:—"Would it not be well to give to many Catholics a course of lectures on the virtues prescribed by the law of nature, on the respect due to one's neighbour, on upright dealing even towards our enemies, on the spirit of equity and of charity? The virtues of the natural order are essential, and from their exercise the Church herself has not power to dispense."

Again, how is it that people do not understand that, by these

rash denunciations of a nation which finds itself reproached at the same time with the crimes of its fathers, and the virtues of its children, its conversion to Protestantism in the sixteenth, and its assertion of liberty in the nineteenth century, they expose themselves to the harshest and most dangerous reprisals. Ah! if it had been given to France to accomplish the great colonial career which was open to it in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we should, no doubt, possess a great and consoling example of which every Catholic might be proud. If we had remained, with our missionaries, and our bold but humane adventurers on the banks of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, where the genius of France would have found so vast a career wherein to develope itself at its ease; if we had known how to preserve the empire of the East Indies, which seemed, for a moment, to be within our grasp, and to inaugurate there the social and Christian virtues which are the legitimate appanage of our race, we might brave every criticism and every comparison. But we have lost all those fine possessions, and lost them precisely in that good old time to which people wish to bring us back, when the monarchy was not under any control, when "error had not the same rights as truth." Such being the case, and in the presence of history, does not justice command us to avow, that the Catholic nations, with the exception of France, have failed wretchedly in the execution of the great task which Providence imposed upon them in behalf of the races whom they had subjugated? Does not history cry to Spain in implacable accents, "Cain, Cain, where is thy brother?" What has she done with those millions of Indians who peopled the isles and the continent of the New World? How many years sufficed for their annihilation by the unworthy successors of Columbus and of Cortes, in spite of the official protection of the Spanish Crown, in spite of the heroic efforts and of the fervid and indefatigable charity of the religious orders? Have they shown themselves less pitiless than the Anglo-Americans in the North? Are the lamentable pages, penned by Bartholomew de Las Casas, effaced from the memory of men? The English clergy are reproached with not having protested against the exactions of Clive and of Warren

Hastings. We admit it is not given to Protestantism to give birth to such men as Las Casas and Peter Claver; that is the exclusive and immortal privilege of the Catholic Church. But what are we to think if those orthodox nations, with the advantages of such apostles and of such teaching, have depopulated half the globe? And what society did Spanish conquest substitute for the races which had been exterminated instead of having been civilised? Must we not turn away our eyes in sadness at seeing how far the first elements of order, energy, discipline, and legality are wanting everywhere, except perhaps, in Chili, to Spanish enterprise, so destitute is it of the strong virtues of the ancient Castilian society, without having been able to acquire any of the qualities which characterise modern progress? In Hindostan itself what remains of Portuguese conquest? What is there to show for the numberless conversions achieved by St. Francis Xavier! What remains of the vast organisation of that Church which was placed under the protection of the Crown of Portugal! Go, ask that question at Goa; fathom there the depths of the moral and material decrepitude into which has fallen a rule immortalised by Albuquerque, by John de Castro, and by so many others worthy to be reckoned among the most valiant Christians who have ever existed. You will there see to what the mortal influence of absolute power can bring Catholic colonies as well as their mother countries.

What must be concluded from this? That Catholicity renders a people incapable of colonizing? God forbid! Canada, the example of which we have quoted above, is there to give the lie to any such blasphemous assertion. But we are bound to conclude this much—that it is well, when people constitute themselves the champions of Catholic interests, to look behind and around before heaping up invective on invective, calumny on calumny, in order to throw discredit on those nations which are unfortunately foreign or hostile to the Church. When people have for ever in their mouths the dictum of De Maistre, "History has been for three centuries in a conspiracy against truth," they should not begin afresh, in history written for the use of Catholics, that great conspiracy against truth as well as against justice and liberty. On

the contrary, there is another dictum of M. De Maistre which should be called to mind, "The Church is in need of truth, and is in need but of that." Falsehood, under either of the two forms which law and theology recognize — namely, the *suggestio falsi* and the *suppressio veri*, is the saddest homage which can be rendered to the Church. She cannot be served well by borrowing the method and adopting the proceedings of her worst enemies. To play the tricks and to enact the violences of error in her cause, is not to defend the truth. The spirit of modern times has begun to perceive that a great deal of falsehood has been in circulation during three centuries against God and His Church; it has begun to shake off the yoke of that falsehood. Do people, then, wish to plunge it back again into the hatred of good? Do they wish to repel it towards the intellectual excesses of the 18th century? For that end, one infallible mean is at hand—the practice or the absolution of falsehood, even involuntary, for the greater glory of God.

III. But has England herself been irreproachable in the foundation and administration of the immense empire which she possesses in the East Indies? Certainly not; and, if we were tempted to attribute to her a degree of innocence or of virtue to which she has never pretended, it would suffice to undeceive one's self to look through the works without number which have appeared on the Government of British India, not only since the breaking out of the insurrection, but previously to that event. In all this mountain of publications, panegyric and apology are exceedingly rare; the most vehement Philippics and accusations abound; but what is of far more consequence than systematic praise or blame, is the profound and superlatively sincere investigation of the faults, dangers, difficulties, and infirmities of British rule in India.

I shall not cease to repeat, that it is in this extensive, and, indeed, unlimited publicity, that the principal strength of English society consists, the essential condition of its vitality, and the sovereign guarantee of its liberty. The English press, at first sight, seems to be nothing but a universal and permanent indictment against every one and everything; but, upon a closer in-

spection, we perceive that discussion, rectification, or reparation, follow closely on denunciation and strong language.

Mistakes and injustice, no doubt, frequently offend, and in a flagrant degree; but they are almost always amended immediately, or excused in consideration of the salutary truths or indispensable lights which reach the public mind by the same road. Not a general, an admiral, a diplomatist, a statesman is spared; they are all treated in the same manner as the Duke of Wellington, when, at the outset of his victories in the Peninsula, he was preparing the emancipation of Europe, and the preponderance of his country —in the midst of the clamours of the Opposition, both in the press and in Parliament; and all, like him, resign themselves to this situation, confiding in the definitive justice of the country and of opinion, which has hardly ever been wanting to them. The public, accustomed to the din and to the apparent confusion which arises from this permanent conflict of contradictory opinions and testimonies, ends, after the lapse of a certain time, by coming to recognize its true position. It possesses, above all, a wonderful tact for unravelling the true nature of certain purely individual manifestations, however noisy they may be, and for attributing to them that degree of importance which they really merit, respecting and maintaining the while the right which every Englishman asserts for himself, to judge and criticize everything, and even to deceive himself at his proper peril.

Those who feel themselves offended—not without reason—by the coarse form, or by the evident falsity of certain opinions expressed by some English orators or writers with respect to foreign affairs, should never forget two circumstances—first, that this species of cutting and unbridled criticism is indulged in more coarsely, more freely, and more habitually on the subject of English public men and home affairs; secondly, that it is always the act, as well as the opinion, of an individual member of a society in which the progress of civilization has consisted up the present hour in the unrestrained development of individual power and liberty. This is what is continually forgotten; and hence arise so many opinions, either absurdly false or exaggerated, of the continental press respecting the true bearing of certain speeches

or writings, which it does not fail to quote and to comment on as possessing a *quasi* official sense. Notwithstanding international relations so numerous and so long-continued, notwithstanding the slight distance which separates France from England, and the brief interval intervening between the French people and their past history, we have lost the art of understanding the nature of a great free nation, whereof each individual is free, and permits himself every whim. We possess not only the habits, but even the instincts of those sober and orderly peoples, doomed to an eternal minority, who sometimes consent to go astray in fearful paths, but who speedily fall back into civil impotence, among whom no one dares to speak, except after orders, or by permission, with the salutary terror of a warning from authority hanging over their heads, if they should be so rash as to oppose, by never so little, the ideas of Government or those of the mass.

In England, and throughout its vast colonies, it is quite the reverse; every one in the world of politics says what he thinks, and does what may please him, without permission from any one whomsoever, and without incurring repressive measures other than those imposed by general opinion and by the public conscience, when these may be braved with too great a degree of boldness. Under the impulse of the moment, in a fit of spite, ill-humour, or vanity, any English subject, any isolated individual, without a mission from others, without authority, influence, or responsibility to any one, but seldom without sympathy, expresses, by word of mouth or in writing, whatever may pass through his mind. Sometimes it is the triumphant accent of justice and truth which makes itself thus heard, universally understood, speedily accepted, and everywhere repeated by the thousand echoes of an unrestrained publicity; and it is in order not to destroy this chance, which may be the only one in favour of right and of national interest, that the English are unanimous in resigning themselves to the serious inconvenience attaching to liberty of speech.

At other times, we encounter ridiculous or offensive exaggerations, gratuitous insults to foreigners, or, again, in a contrary direction, a direct appeal to their interference in the internal

affairs of the United Kingdom.* Oftener still, we notice a pleasantry, a sally, a puerile boast, a platitude, destined, on the morrow, to be contradicted, refuted, abused, and forgotten. But

* See in the *Univers* of the 25th of August ult., a translated report of a speech of Archdeacon Fitzgerald, in which he proposed to his countrymen to recur to the Emperor of the French, for the purpose of obtaining from the English Government the concession of tenant right. What would be the consequence in France, in Austria, or at Naples, if a Catholic priest should hold such language in public, and invite the faithful to address themselves to a foreign ruler, in order to force the Government at home to do them justice?

Some days later, in a meeting composed of ten thousand persons, held in the open air, on the 28th of August, for the purpose of presenting a petition to Parliament, to obtain the reversal of the sentence against two countrymen condemned to death for having murdered a landowner, the Reverend John Kenyon, a Catholic priest, addressing the assembled people, spoke to this effect:—"I am enraged with myself, on reflecting that I stoop so low as to propose to you a petition to a Saxon Parliament, to those English who have their foot upon our neck and their hands in our pockets. People talk about our progress, about our new prosperity; no, we are not prosperous, we cannot be so, and even if we could, we would not: for what is prosperity without liberty? . . . Let us guard our causes of complaint as a treasure, and let no one deprive us of them until God shall grant us the power, and point out the way to avenge them. . . . If we demean ourselves again on this occasion to petition Parliament to have Judge Keogh hanged, that vile and iniquitous judge, &c. [this was said of the man who had presided at the assizes, and whose sentence was thus received]. . . . *If justice in this country were not a caricature, Judge Keogh would already be hanging from a gibbet fifty feet in height.*"

His hearers loudly applauded this language, which was published in all the papers, and which not one even thought of suppressing. It must be added, that not a soul took alarm at it; a tolerable proof of the strength of the English Government and the liberty enjoyed in Ireland. Let my readers remember what occurred some time ago to an Advocate of Toulouse, who had published a pamphlet upon the condemnation of Brother Léotarde, and then judge what they ought to think of the pretended oppression under which the Catholics in Ireland are now groaning, according to certain ignorant ranters who confound at will the present and the past.

if by chance such a passage should fall in the way of one of those translators, authorized by the censorship, who nourish in so strange a manner the continental press, instantly all the privileged detractors of liberty transcribe it, take due note of it, wax wroth thereat, cry aloud, "See how England thinks, and what she says!" and proceed to the deduction of consequences of an absurdly alarming cast, now for the peace of the world, anon for the security of British institutions, under pain of being promptly and shamefully controverted by reflection and facts.

Let us hazard the passing remark, that the great evil of absolute governments is, that their faults are kept secret. Like an abscess that is never lanced, never dressed, never reduced, these faults spread, and little by little corrupt the entire body of society. On the contrary, as has been observed with reason, an evil is never irreparable in a country where people know how to preach themselves a lesson with such rigour without fearing to wound national pride or humiliate the Government. Publicity in England, rash, imprudent, coarse, often apparently compromising the dignity of the country, and sometimes capable of endangering international relations, constitutes at once the daily bread of the majority, the supreme asylum of the minority, the pivot of universal existence.

It is the remedy for all the evils inseparable from a civilization so far advanced, a painful but salutary and infallible remedy, and which, above all, proves better than any other argument the strong constitution of the patient. This remedy has never yet failed; witness what came to pass during the Russian war, and the comparative state of the two allied armies in the course of their second winter in the Crimea. Happy the nations who can so undergo the ordeal of fire and sword. Those nations may be truly called manly who find nothing to envy in any one, and who have to fear only an excess of confidence in their strength.

The preceding observations serve to explain the fact, that there exists no kind of reproach or of abuse which the English and the Anglo-Indians have not addressed to their Government, to their generals, above all to the East India Company, that great corporation which, after a hundred years of success and of increasing

prosperity, beholds itself attacked at the close of its glorious career by that cowardly complicity of human nature all the world over with fortune, which shows itself when she abandons those whom she has long overloaded with her favours. But, if we duly weigh the worth of all these accusations, if we hear the witnesses for the defence, if we consult the past state of things as compared with existing facts, we cannot feel inclined to ratify in every point the sentence pronounced against it. The future will tell, whether it was right to profit by the actual crisis by suppressing the "Double Government," and by displacing the multitude of wheels which, ever since Pitt's famous Bill of 1784, have always had for effect to render more complicated the action in India of the home Government, by restraining more and more the independence of the Company. Meanwhile, it would be the height of injustice to condemn its history in the lump.

Certainly, it has committed more than one fault, perhaps more than a single crime. It has not done all the good it might have done. But I assert, without hesitation, that the East India Company, now defunct by virtue of the Act of the 2nd of August, 1858, is, of all powers known in the colonial history of the ancient or modern world, that which has done the greatest things with the humblest means, and that which, in any equal space of time, has conferred the greatest amount of good and inflicted the least of evil on the peoples subject to its rule. I assert, that it delivered the different populations of India from a yoke which, in general, was atrocious, in order to subject them to a regime incomparably milder and more equitable, although still imperfect. It employed for the improvement of the conquered race not, certainly, all the efforts which it ought and might have made, and which the English themselves unceasingly called for, but a hundredfold more solicitude and devotion than any of the native Powers whose place it took upon itself to fill, or than any of the European nations invested by conquest with a similar mission.

Admitting, even, that the immoral selfishness of a corporation of merchants has but too often signalized its *débuts* in the Peninsula of Hindostan, still, for more than 50 years its generals and principal agents, the Wellesleys, the Malcolms, the Munroes, the

Bentincks, fully displayed all the zeal and all the activity becoming their high functions, to expiate the evil deeds of their predecessors, and to lead every impartial observer to avow, that, in the present state of things, British domination is at once a benefit and a necessity for the inhabitants of India.

It has not found means to correct, or to contain within bounds, everywhere, the haughtiness, coldness, and the insolence natural to the English; but it has constantly struggled againts the results arising from that disagreeable mixture of selfishness and energy, which, in the instance of the Anglo-Saxon race, too frequently degenerates into ferocity, and of which but too numerous examples offer themselves in the United States.

In those districts where it was invested with territorial sovereignty, it abolished in every direction slavery and forced labour (*corvées*); in the majority of cases it respected all vested rights, and, but too often, abuses established before its advent to power. Hence it is that European agents, continually deceived by the native *employés* who serve as indispensable under-agents in immediate contact with the population, have come to be regarded as accomplices in the use of atrocious means and of torture put in practice by the tax-gatherers; but let it not be forgotten, that it was the Indians who employed torture, while it was the English who discovered, denounced, and punished the native butchers.

Respecting the question of the territorial constitution of Hindostan, forming the subject of so much controversy, and so imperfectly understood, the Company has always prevented the dispossession of the proprietors of the soil by the English colonists or speculators, sanctioning, with Lord Cornwallis, the feudal tenure of the great Mussulman and Hindoo landowners in Bengal, recognizing and giving regular effect to the rights of the present cultivators, as, for instance, in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras; or those of rural communities as in the case of the North-Western Provinces.

The Company has been reproached, above all, with the eagerness it has exhibited in the annexation to its immediate rule of States the suzerainty of which it accepted or obtained in their capacity either of allies or vassals. But people do not ask them-

selves often enough, if it has not been necessarily and involuntarily compelled, in the majority of cases, to absorb these independent States. From all, of which we ourselves have made trial in Algeria; from what has taken place in China up to this; it is clear that nothing can be more difficult than to establish relations with the Eastern races, either as our allies or auxiliaries, and that their limited good faith, and even their intelligence, cannot go beyond the idea of open war or complete subjection. Every one seems agreed in regarding the recent annexation of Oude by the Marquis of Dalhousie as an unjustifiable act, which has furnished a legitimate pretext for the insurrection of the Sepoys. It would be more just to reproach the English Administration with having too long covered with its protection the crimes and excesses of the Court of Lucknow, and of the aristocracy, composed of great feudatories, who crushed down the country under civil wars and exactions. Read in the *Private Life of an Eastern King*, a work published in 1855, the account of the outrageous conduct of one of those monsters who reigned at Lucknow previously to the annexation; and, again, in a work by Colonel Sleeman, Political Resident at that Court, the daily acts of violence and spoliation which the rural populations underwent, in consequence of wars between feudal chiefs. The English have not accepted in a sufficiently zealous spirit the responsibility imposed on them by their position as a protecting power, the species of suzerainty which they exercised since 1801, when an English army occupied that state — when, also, they made the mistake of restoring the native dynasty under the tutelage of a resident. Either they should not have intermeddled in any way with the affairs of their next neighbours, or they should not have tolerated ancient excesses and abuses to perpetuate themselves under the English suzerainty. This much is certain, — that the population is actually less ill-treated in the districts completely united to English rule than in those where the nominal authority of the Rajahs and of the Nabobs, tributaries of England, still subsists. Meanwhile, the efforts of the Company to bring into regular and universal use the European system — so little in accord with Eastern habits — of administering justice, and of striking and

levying taxes, have led it to clash with a crowd of individual interests, and to render the masses ill-disposed. Although less heavily taxed than under the native princes, the population is not less inclined to fear that the rights of property, as understood by and practised among them, might be sacrificed and rendered subordinate to fiscal interests. Besides, the Governors-General, sometimes in spite of the Company itself, seem to have deeply wounded the national feeling of the Indian races by refusing to recognise, when there might be question of the order of succession to the throne among the Rajahs and Nabobs, the titles of adopted heirs, whom the laws and immemorial usage invest with the same rights as the heirs of the body.

It is especially on the subject of religion, that the accusations against the Company can be regarded as unjust and contradictory. Some bitterly reproach it with having done nothing for the propagation of Christianity in India; others again attribute the recent explosion to the spirit of proselytism which it encouraged or tolerated on the part of missionaries, and of certain officers animated by a zeal too evangelical. Under both heads, these accusations are false. Founded for exclusively commercial purposes, the East India Company has never affected, like the Spanish and Portuguese conquerors, to work "for the greater glory of God;" but, as a compensation, it has never undertaken to impose truth by force on a people fanatically attached to its errors, and it has not seen any of the races subject to its rule disappear or become extinct. It struggled slowly and prudently against certain social crimes which formed part and parcel of the Hindoo religion, such as the self-immolation of widows, infanticide, and Thuggism; but, at bottom, it has scrupulously respected the religion of its subjects. By its example, still more than by its direct action, it has repressed a blind and rash spirit of proselytism, which could have only served to increase the natural antipathy between the two races, and which might have ended in the horrors too justly imputed to the Spaniards of Mexico and Peru. But, far from presenting any obstacle to the preaching of the Gospel, it, in the first place, organised the national worship for the benefit of the English *employés;* and, further, by opening

up the immense regions of India on either bank of the Ganges to Christians of every persuasion, it secured to every effort of individual zeal that liberty which is the first and sole requirement of conscientious missionaries. Those among us who come forward periodically as apologists of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who laud Charlemagne for having condemned to death those who were so bold as to seek an escape from baptism in flight, will, doubtless, be of opinion that it was better to murder people after baptising them, as the Spaniards did in America: but an overwhelming majority among the Christians of our day will be of another opinion; and no sensible man will tax the East India Company with the commission of a crime in having pursued in Hindostan that very system which we ourselves practise in Algeria, and the introduction of which into the Ottoman Empire and China is demanded by us.

Those who reproach England with not having been able to gain Protestant converts in Hindostan would do well, perhaps, to inform themselves of the number of Catholics whom we may have converted in Algeria. I go too far, even, in making mention of Algeria; for, if I am correctly informed, the preaching of the Catholic religion to the natives, and the efforts made to convert them, encounter there the most serious obstacles on the part of the civil and military authorities. We have not yet heard, so far as I am aware, of Catholic missions encouraged, or even tolerated by the French Government among the Arabs, the Moors, or the Kabyles subject to French rule. It has been alleged as a crime against the English magistrates that they kept on foot property devoted to the celebration of the absurd and frequently obscene rites of Brahminical idolatry, and that they sent a guard of police to keep order on occasion of such ceremonies. This has not taken place in India since the Act of 1840; but it is precisely what the French Government believes itself to be called on to do in Africa; and assuredly we shall not meet with any state paper penned by an English functionary, professing an equal amount of sympathy and protection for Mahomedan worship as the speech of M. Latour-Mézeray, Prefect of Algiers in 1857, to the Muftis and Ulemas, in which he quoted the Koran with unction, in order

to exalt the munificence of the Emperor towards Islam. I do not remember having seen a single word of criticism on this speech in those French newspapers which are the most prodigal in invective against the pretended complicity of the Anglo-Indians with the worship of Juggernaut.

The new Secretary for India, Lord Stanley, son of the Premier, has solemnly declared that the Home Government, now invested, subject to the control of Parliament, with all the powers of the old Company, means to persist in the (so-called) errors of the latter on the subject of religion. In an official interview between him and the delegates of Protestant Missionary societies, on the 7th of August ult., he announced that, though allowing all due liberty to missionaries, the authorities would observe the most sincere and most complete religious neutrality, by the maintenance of equality before the law between the votaries of every religious belief.

What can be more favourable to the progress of Catholicity in India than this system? What competition has it to fear; since it is certain that the distribution of Bibles, to which act is limited Protestant propagandism, has not yet produced other than delusive results? Is it not evident that if the Government intervened more directly, it could do so only in the interest of Anglicanism? What is to be required is, that it should faithfully execute this programme, and that it should put an end to the flagrant injustice which has so long prevailed respecting the salaries of the Protestant and Catholic chaplains attached to the army, and the facilities granted for the celebration of divine service in the prisons and regimental schools. But here, again, when the pecuniary favours accorded to the schools and churches of the Establishment are contrasted with the abandonment of Catholic institutions, it is forgotten that the English religious establishments in India were founded at a period when the Catholics of the mother country groaned under penal laws, just like Protestants in France. Both the former and the latter have been indebted for their emancipation to the altogether modern principle of liberty of conscience. The East India Company had the merit of recognising this principle in Hindostan, before it had triumphed in England. Although exclusively composed of Pro-

testants, it has never opposed the preaching of Catholic doctrine. What is now demanded, and rightly, is, not only liberty, but equality, as between different sects, and that point is being arrived at gradually. The English Government has already made a step in the right direction; in 1857, the Company doubled the salaries of the Catholic chaplains, and, by virtue of an order made by the Duke of Cambridge, Commander-in-Chief, bearing date the 24th of June, 1858, 19 additional Catholic chaplains have been nominated, with salaries equalling in amount those of the Protestant chaplains. A circular of General Peel, Secretary of War, dated the 23d of June, 1858, has introduced into the economy of the regimental schools some valuable reforms, which might well serve as models in Prussia and other countries where there is a mixed population. But, beyond those favours, which are only acts of justice, the progress of the Catholic religion in India has been, for a long time past, identified with the maintenance and the existence of British power, by the fact alone that this latter assures liberty to the preaching of the Gospel, and exercises an ascendancy, for the benefit of Europeans, and of their opinions, even in those regions which may not be subject to its rule. Let us suppose that the English should be expelled from India, and that the country should be placed once more under the yoke of the restored Mussulman and Hindoo princes; is it not evident that we should soon be obliged to present ourselves there to protect our missionaries with cannon-shot, as has been done in China and Cochin-China, "Our hope of success"—thus writes a French missionary on the point of setting out for Thibet in July, 1857—"lay in the *prestige* which English power exercised in the regions we were about to traverse." The numerous Catholic bishoprics established in the Peninsula of Hindostan since its conquest by England, bear witness more loudly than any other argument, to the importance of the services rendered by that conquest to the true faith. If the congregation of the Propaganda at Rome were consulted, it would then be known how many bishops and missionaries have reason to rejoice at the absolute liberty which they enjoy in the Company's territories, whenever they do not encounter difficulties arising from the former patronage of the Portuguese Crown, and from the too generous concessions formerly

accorded by the Holy See to a Catholic State whose spirit of chicanery and of encroachment dates neither from to-day, nor yesterday, but traces its origin to the period of its first establishments, and forms so sad a contrast with the title of "Very Faithful" granted by the Popes to the Kings of Portugal. The sworn detractors of modern liberty, the retrospective admirers of orthodox and absolute monarchies, will find nothing in the annals of the Anglo-Indian Government which can, even distantly, recal the 10 years' imprisonment to which were condemned at Goa, the Vicars-Apostolic sent by Urban VIII. to Japan; or the penalty of death, which was still in force in 1687 against all those who endeavoured to penetrate into China without previous permission from the Governor of Macao.

Besides, the Indian insurgents, less enlightened, no doubt, than their patrons at Paris and Turin, have not made any distinction between Catholics and Protestants; at Delhi, at Agra, and Cawnpore, they sacked our convents and slaughtered our missionaries, just as if they were Church of England men; and these latter had merited the crown of martyrdom by their indefatigable devotedness and generous charity towards the wounded and sick of both sects.

This is certain, that amid all this deluge of accusations, launched against the British Administration by the foreign press, and that of the mother country, and principally by the newspapers published in India, which respect no one and suppress nothing, no one has yet succeeded in pointing out, within any reasonable period shortly preceding the insurrection, a single act of cruelty, corruption, or perfidy which can be imputed to any individual English functionary, whether civil or military. This gives us the key to a fact of very great importance, and which alone suffices to absolve English dominion in India. During the period of nearly eighteen months that the insurrection has lasted, its character has been purely military. The civil population has taken no serious part in it, and, except in some rare instances, has refused all aid to the insurgents, notwithstanding the good opportunities and numerous temptations which the partial defeats of the English, and the small number of their troops, may have presented. Far from that, it is well known that it is, even now,

to the aid of Indian native princes, and of auxiliary troops borrowed from races different from those composing the Bengal army, that England owes the good fortune of having been able to make a successful stand against the insurgents. The revolt has been exclusively the work of the Sepoys enrolled in the Company's regiments; and upon this point again the slightest act of rigour or of violence on the part of the English officers, which could have provoked the revolt, is not produced in evidence. In order to induce them to rise, it was necessary to have recourse to fictions, not one of which implies any harshness or injustice on the part of the English officers, but which turned altogether on the supposed dangers to which the religious faith and the traditional usages of the Sepoys were asserted to be exposed. Their credulity in this respect is the more inexplicable, since the most competent observers are unanimous in recognising that the English had practised forbearance, carried even beyond its natural limits, towards the prejudices of caste, and the overweening sense of superiority of the Brahmins, who formed a majority in the Bengal regiments. The indulgence and partiality for the Indians had been pushed so far, as to do away with corporal punishment in the native army, subsisting, as it still continues to do, as regards the English troops, and of which such revolting use had been made in Europe during the period of the revolt in the Ionian Islands in 1849, at the very time that the draymen of London violently assaulted the Austrian General Haynau, whom they reproached with having caused women to be flogged in Hungary.

After having thus allotted to the defence of a great people unjustly defamed so much of our space, our motive being that it enjoys almost alone the honour of representing liberty in modern Europe, it is fitting to testify to the just indignation which the excessive rigour of the chastisements inflicted by the English on the vanquished insurgents who have fallen into their hands ought to evoke. I am aware of all that can be said to excuse reprisals, only too legitimate, against savages guilty of the most monstrous excesses committed on the persons of so many officers, surprised and disarmed, and especially of so many noble women, innocent young girls, and poor little children slaughtered in hundreds

without any provocation for such horrid deeds. I can well understand the battle-cry of the Highlanders at the assault of Delhi, "Remember the ladies! Remember the babies!" I admit, moreover, that the severe punishments inflicted on soldiers, taken with arms in their hands, all of them voluntarily enlisted, and bound, under an oath taken of their own free will, to respect the commanders whom they have massacred, cannot be compared with the chastisements inflicted on innocent and hospitable populations by the conquerors of the New World, nor even with the rigorous punishments decreed by our generals of the French Empire against the populations of Spain and of the Tyrol, engaged in the most legitimate of insurrections; still less to the horrors committed in Vendée by the butchers of the Convention. But, for all that, I am not the less convinced that the just limits of repression have not been overpassed, and that the executions *en masse* of the defeated Sepoys, systematically continued after the first outburst of grief caused by unheard-of atrocities, will fix an indelible stain on the history of British rule in India. This is no longer justice, but vengeance. A people really free should leave the sad privilege of being cruel to slaves in revolt. A Christian people ought to know that it is at once a thing forbidden and impossible for it to struggle against infidel races, with such arms as mere punishment may supply. It is the part of the English "*gentlemen*" (*sic*) who direct military and political operations from the Indus and the Ganges, to know how to resist the odious incitements of the Anglo-Indian press. They have before them the example of the chivalrous Havelock, who, in a proclamation addressed to the soldiers whom he was leading against the cut-throats of Cawnpore, declared that it did not become Christian soldiers to take Pagan butchers for their models.

That one name of Havelock recalls and contains in itself all the virtues manifested by the English in that gigantic struggle, and which would find themselves tarnished beyond hope of restoration by an obstinate perseverance in too cruel a repression. Havelock, a hero of the antique stamp, resembling by his finish and most irreproachable qualities, the great Puritans of the 17th century, already advanced in age before having distinguished

himself, suddenly flung into the jaws of an immense danger, with but insignificant means of grappling successfully with it, brought all things to a happy issue: by his conscientious courage, attained, at one stroke, that glory and immense popularity, which are re-echoed wherever the English language is spoken, died before he could have enjoyed them, occupied in his last moments with the interests of his soul, and the propagation of Christianity in India, and saying to his son, about to receive his last sigh, "For forty years I have been preparing for this day; death is for me a blessing." He figures worthily at the head of a group of heroes, who showed themselves equal to every difficulty, danger, and sacrifice. Among them, grateful England loves to name Nicholson, Wilson, and Neil, also carried off by death in the midst of their victories; Sir Henry Lawrence, foremost among the heroes of Lucknow, and the man whose energy has recently saved the recent conquests of the North-West; in fine, if we only speak of the dead, Captain Peel, the young and noble son of the great Sir Robert Peel, as brave on land as he was at sea, whose premature loss has been a national loss. Victims of a struggle between civilization and barbarism, they are known to every Christian people; all can admire them without restriction and without reserve. They do honour to the human race.

And it is not only such names, great beyond comparison, it is the bearing in every respect of this handful of Englishmen, surprised in the midst of peace and prosperity, by the most frightful and most unforeseen catastrophes. Not one of them shrank or trembled before their butchers — all, military and civilians, young and old, generals and soldiers, resisted, fought, and perished with a coolness and intrepidity which never faltered. It is in this circumstance, that shines out the immense value of public education, such as we have signalized it in these pages, which invites the Englishman from his youth to make use of his strength and his liberty, to associate, resist, fear nothing, be astonished at nothing, and to save himself, by his own sole exertions, from every sore strait in life. Again, the Englishwomen, doomed to share the sufferings, the anguish, and, in such numbers, the atrocious death of their fathers and of their

husbands, showed the same Christian heroism. The massacre of Cawnpore, on which occasion, before being slaughtered, men and women, tied together, obtained for sole favor to kneel and hear read the prayers of the Liturgy by the chaplain destined to perish with them, looks like a page torn from the Acts of the first martyrs. It gratifies us to link this scene with the day of solemn fast and humiliation ordered by the Queen, and universally observed on the 7th of October, 1857, when the noble spectacle presented itself of a whole people prostrate before God, to beseech Him for pardon and mercy. Such are the examples, and such the memories, and not the revolting and puerile excesses, of a bloody repression, which ought to furnish England with strength to resist her enemies, and with the conviction of vanquishing them.

IV. In all that the reader has perused thus far, I have not pretended to explain or to justify all the circumstances attending the recent occurrences in India; I did not seek to sit in judgment on the past, still less to inspire a confidence in others as to the future of that empire, which I myself am far from sharing. I merely wished to give expression to my own impressions respecting a class of facts and ideas to which it is impossible not to pay attention when one is interested in the destinies of liberty and justice here below. For the rest, they will serve to explain the disposition with which I attended the principal Parliamentary debate on the subject of India, during the last session.

It was the first week in May. Two months had hardly passed since the advent of the new Ministry, presided over by Lord Derby, and the fall, unforeseen as it was, of Lord Palmerston. The causes of these events are known. To the sentiment of universal horror excited in England, as everywhere else, by the execrable attempt of the 14th of January, a violent irritation had succeeded, produced by the steps taken by the French Government, and by certain addresses published in the *Moniteur*, which seemed to consider English society, where there is no political police, responsible for the preparations of a crime which not all the power and vigilance of the French police were able to prevent. The Government of King Louis Philippe might with just as good a grace have

held England responsible in 1840 for the Boulogne expedition. We can speak the more freely of this occurrence, inasmuch as our Government, with a wisdom which does it honour, has since spontaneously ceased to insist on the points which had theretofore occupied its attention. The right of free asylum is regarded by the English people as one of its national glories; and that people is, of all others, the least inclined to sacrifice a right on account of the abuse which its exercise may sometimes occasion. Besides, Frenchmen of every shade of opinion, and of all parties, have availed themselves of that right in the course of the numerous revolutions which have distracted modern France; the different dynasties that have reigned in France have availed themselves of it, and the reigning sovereign has to a greater extent than any one. Hence, people felt in no way obliged to Lord Palmerston and his colleagues for the species of condescension with which they replied to imperial requirements. The old war-cry during the struggles of the English crown with the Papacy of the middle ages resounded throughout the country—*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.* Although the House of Commons would have approved by its vote the principle of the Bill (otherwise perfectly reasonable and legitimate) intended to facilitate the application of legal punishment in the instance of principal offenders and their accomplices in crimes committed abroad, that assembly could not resist the current of public opinion, and, on the 19th of February, it adopted a vote of censure against the manner of conducting the diplomatic relations between the two countries. Under the weight of this solemn censure, Lord Palmerston was obliged to resign with all his colleagues.

But it would be to deceive ourselves sadly, if we sought in this ephemeral difference between France and England the true cause of the fall of a ministry, which had enjoyed till then a popularity so long-continued and so powerful. Those causes must be traced higher, and are more honourable, and, at the same time, more natural. With this ancient and deep-seated popularity, after a great war speedily and successfully terminated under his auspices, after a recent dissolution of the House of Commons had declared for him on the Chinese question against the formidable league of his adversaries, and put him at the head of a greater majority

than ever, he might well have been considered secure in the possession of power for years to come. But the height which he had reached seemed to have made him dizzy. Long a circumspect courtier of public opinion and of its caprices, one would have said that he suddenly thought himself free thenceforth to disdain, and even to brave it. Although he would always have succeeded in obtaining the support of a majority in the Commons for his foreign policy, he had not the less excited in a great number of liberal and sensible minds a lively and increasing antipathy for a teasing and blustering policy, equally without dignity and logic, at one time affecting a zeal for liberty which did not recoil before any revolutionary sentiment, at another adoring and adulating absolute monarchy—a policy which has certainly brought more ill on the good name of England than all the insults of her detractors. To these causes of discontent, so justly provoked by his foreign policy, others were not wanting, produced by his disdainful indifference to the greater number of internal reforms interesting to new parties. As happens too frequently to statesmen grown old in the exercise of power, he had grown accustomed to dispense with the services of every superior merit but his own, to surround himself with honest and docile mediocrities, and imagined that the quantity of his adherents would always compensate for their quality. He hardly ever conferred office on any who were not members of a family clique or clan of which the public had long been tired, and which the Premier seemed to take pleasure in circumscribing more and more every day. Lastly, he had thrown open the Cabinet to a personage whose moral reputation had been compromised, whether wrongly or rightly, and this nomination had aroused quite a storm among the middle classes, growing more and more susceptible on this point. In fine, that constant good humour, that jovial cordiality, that gaiety of high and refined society, by which he dazzles and fascinates in private life, and which rendered him so many services in the most critical debates, seemed in their turn to abandon him. One would have said that he took a pleasure in irritating his adversaries, and rendering his friends uneasy, by the arrogant and sarcastic tone of his replies to questions in the House of Commons. It is said, that nothing has more con-

tributed to increase the majority which unexpectedly arrayed itself against him, than the contemptuous irony with which he met, some days before the vote of censure, the question of Mr. Stirling, respecting the famous legacy of the Emperor Napoleon I. to Cantillon, who had attempted to assassinate the Duke of Wellington. All the causes, great and little, put together, ended by diminishing and shaking the ascendancy which Lord Palmerston had conquered, by his rare capacity, his indefatigable ardour, his eternal youth, and incontestable patriotism. Without, everything in his commanding position seemed sound and unimpaired: it was, however, undermined in the opinion of many; an unforeseen and sudden shock sufficed to crumble it. The circumstances which I am about to recount have rendered this ruin much more complete and more enduring than it at first appeared to be.

In fact, neither Lord Palmerston, nor the public, believed that the defeat was decisive. Lord Derby had been charged with the mission of forming a new Cabinet, in his capacity of head of that old Conservative party, which has never recovered from the blow inflicted by its own hands when it refused to follow Sir Robert Peel in the paths of legitimate progress, and which has not since been able to constitute a majority, either in the country or in the House. But Lord Derby was at the head of a staff which had already worked, with more or less success, in 1852, and which he was careful to reinforce with younger, more active, and more intelligent men, so as to display an array of battle more brilliant and more imposing than the ranks of the somewhat used-up colleagues of Lord Palmerston.

Side by side with powerful orators, such as Mr. Disraeli and Lord Ellenborough, and with laborious and popular administrators, such as Sir John Pakington and Mr. Walpole, was seen shining Lord Stanley, the youthful son of the Earl of Derby, whom all parties seem agreed to salute as the future and popular chief of a great new party, and of a conciliatory and energetic ministry. However, despite of the somewhat lucky *début* of the new ministry, its existence could not be looked upon as certain. Only two-thirds of the majority which had overthrown Lord Palmerston consisted of the partisans of Lord Derby; the remain-

ing third part comprised, besides the brilliant but numerically insignificant names of the Peelites, all the independent Liberals, and, above all, the Radicals, far more advanced in their political opinions than the common-place Whigs of Lord Palmerston's army, and still more than the Tories ranged behind Lord Derby. Such a majority might very well sustain during some time a government the work of its vote, but promised no durable support. Lord Palmerston and his friends reckoned on the speedy dissensions and lassitude which such a situation could not fail to engender. They only waited for a favourable opportunity to fall into line once more, and to win back a position temporarily lost by errors which might easily be repaired, and which they would know how to fortify by profiting by the lesson which they had received. This opportunity was not slow in presenting itself under as brilliant and favourable circumstances as possible.

Lucknow, the capital of the kingdom of Oude, had just yielded to British arms. The attention of England had for a long time been fixed on that great city, where 600 Englishmen and 200 Englishwomen, besieged in a palace hardly furnished with mere battlements, by 60,000 cut-throats and by a hostile population of 51,000 in number, had furnished during four months an example of courage as heroic as, and more successful than, that of the defenders of Saragossa. Delivered by Havelock, they were not able to keep possession of the fortress immortalized by their valour; and it was necessary that a fresh army, under the command of Sir Colin Campbell, should snatch from the insurgents a city which was at once a fortress and the capital of the insurrection. The taking of Lucknow seemed necessarily to bring about the submission of the entire kingdom of Oude, the union of which to the territories under the immediate sway of the Company had been regarded as the principal cause of the insurrection, thanks to the discontent with which that measure had filled the minds of the greater number of the Sepoys, natives of that country, and voluntarily enlisted into the Bengal army. To make sure of that submission, Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, thought proper to publish a proclamation, bearing date the 14th of March, 1858, which pronounced, under the title of annexation to British dominion, the pain of absolute con-

fiscation of all property belonging to the talookdars, to the chiefs, and landed proprietors of Oude, with the exception of six, specially indicated, who had aided the English authorities during the revolt. He reserved to himself the faculty of restoring part or the entire of the property so confiscated to those who might give proof of a prompt submission, and lend their energetic aid to the Government for the restoration of peace and order.

Such an act was of a nature to wound deeply, not only the dearest interests of a native population of five millions of souls, but still more the public conscience of England, tardily but profoundly convinced that the respect of the rights of property is the basis of every social right. It was specially matter of wonder that such a document should emanate from Lord Canning, who, taken by surprise during the second year of his administration, by the explosion of a revolt the most unforeseen and the most formidable that had ever broken out against a foreign rule, till then had shown himself equal to the terrible difficulties of his situation, and had resisted, with the most noble and Christian constancy, the sanguinary incitements of the English residents of Calcutta against the rebels and the Hindoos in general. The Anglo-Indian press, exasperated by the inflexible moderation of the Governor-General, had bestowed upon him the *sobriquet* of "Clemency Canning." And this was the man who now decreed, against a people *en masse*, this chastisement, as impolitic as it was excessive, as iniquitous by reason of its universal application, as by its faculty of smiting the posterity of the guilty and the innocent alike.

Hence, hardly was the proclamation known in London, than it excited a general sensation, which found vent in the shape of a question addressed on the very day of its publication (6th of May) by Mr. Bright to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Disraeli. The latter replied that the Government had already conveyed to Lord Canning its formal and total disapproval of the measure in question. Now, two days after, public attention was attracted anew to the publication in a London newspaper of a still stranger and more startling document. This was the despatch in which the Earl of Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control —

that is, Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs — had, so far back as the 19th of April, signified to the Governor-General the solemn censure of the Home Government.

Lord Ellenborough, who had been formerly Governor-General of India, where he had signalized himself by the conquest of the vast provinces of Scinde and Gwalior, was dismissed by the Directors of the East India Company, whom his too ardent zeal and intemperate official language had alarmed. This, I believe, is the sole example of the exercise of the supreme *veto* by the Company, which possessed the right of having recourse to it in order to cancel the appointment of the Governor-General of India, whose nomination since 1784 lay with the Crown. A rival of Lord Derby in oratorical talent, and one of the most considerable personages of his ministry, Lord Ellenborough has always practised an independence in his proceedings and a vehemence of language, which have rendered him as redoubtable to his friends as to his enemies. Those who have had the good fortune to meet him in society, in the presence of Lord Canning, are in a position to state, that never was contrast more complete than that between the character and bearing of these two Governors-General. They both belong to history, which has rarely registered a more significant document than the communication addressed by one of them to the other.*

Then in a series of paragraphs, which do not seem to have been intended for immediate publication, the Minister censures, without circumlocution, the annexation of Oude, effected by the English Government under Lord Dalhousie, as well as the fiscal measures which followed the incorporation of that kingdom. He concludes from that measure, that the revolt in Oude possessed the character of a legitimate and regular war rather than of a rebellion; and, consequently, that the inhabitants of that country ought to be treated with indulgence rather than be rendered amenable to the most rigorous punishment that can be inflicted on a conquered people. The despatch concludes thus:—†

* Here M. de Montalembert quotes a portion of Lord Ellenborough's despatch to Lord Canning.

† Here M. de Montalembert again gives a quotation from the despatch.

History, I am convinced, will side with the author of these noble words, and will add, that the statesman to whom they were addressed was capable of understanding and giving effect to them. But politics are not always at one with history, and justice itself required that this solemn and memorable reprimand should not be forwarded to its destination — above all, that it should not be published — before the high functionary therein accused could justify or explain his conduct. Hence a sudden explosion of astonishment and discontent. Everyone understood that it was at least highly imprudent thus to disavow, during the continuance of the war in Oude, the entire antecedent policy respecting that country, and to paralyze, by a disapproval in a public form, the authority of the chief representative of British power in India. The public, also, was offended by the haughty and somewhat pompous style of Lord Ellenborough's censure, the antipodes of the simple and matter-of-fact tenour of English official documents. This circumstance greatly contributed to excite the public mind against the author of the despatch.

Immediately Lord Palmerston and his friends recognized that the occasion was timely for taking the offensive, and for giving battle to the new Ministry, the issue of which could not fail to restore to less imprudent and steadier hands a power so strangely brought into danger. A natural feeling of vexation at their recent defeat, and an ambition equally natural to old statesmen who are sustained by a great party, suffice, at need, to explain their eagerness; but no one has a right to believe that they were not guided, in addition, by a more elevated and more disinterested sentiment, or that the desire to save British India from danger and evil, increased in a two-fold degree, did not influence the greater number of the chiefs, and, above all, of the soldiers of the Opposition. Be that as it may, the signal for a decisive campaign in both Houses of Parliament was given. On Sunday, the 9th of May, Lord Palmerston assembled all his partisans at a preliminary meeting held at Cambridge House, his private residence. Lord John Russell, his predecessor and rival, the ever-respected head of the old Reform party, at variance with him ever since the negotiations of Vienna, in 1855, and whose neutrality served to cover the Derby Ministry, promised his

support. The day was fixed for the attack, and officially announced to Parliament, the *rôles* of the principal actors in the assault assigned and studied, the chances of victory and its probable consequences made the most of. Everything announced the certain defeat of Government, when a new episode suddenly changed the face of affairs.

Lord Ellenborough, instructed by the storm of opinion as to the nature of the error he had committed in publishing his despatch, conceived the generous idea of accepting for himself alone the responsibility and the punishment of that error. Without even communicating with his colleagues, he gave in his resignation to the Queen, and he informed the House of Lords on the 11th of May of the step he had taken in language too noble not to merit quotation.*

A sacrifice made so spontaneously, and with so much dignity, ought naturally to have had for effect the mitigation of public opinion; but the Whigs (by this term we designate, for sake of brevity, the different members of Parliament who side with Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell) had too artfully combined their plan of attack to think of abandoning it so easily. The occasion appeared to them too good, and too unlikely to occur again, not to profit by it, and not to endeavour to snatch the direction of public affairs from a Cabinet already dislocated, and which existed only by sufferance on the part of a majority of which it was not the legitimate representative.

Two hundred members of Parliament, assembled a second time at Lord Palmerston's residence, pledged themselves to support a resolution expressive of a vote of censure against the Ministry. The combat, which had been announced beforehand, took place in both Houses on the 14th of May.

V. In the House of Lords, the vote of censure was brought forward by the Earl of Shaftesbury, son-in-law of Lady Palmerston, long known for his zeal for the interests of religion and for those of the various charitable associations in connexion with the church of England. The illustrious House had never been so full or so animated; a more numerous crowd of strangers had never thronged the vicinity of the imposing and magnificent hall; a more brilliant

* Here M. de Montalembert cites a portion of Lord Ellenborough's speech.

galaxy of peeresses had never before filled the gallery where stand the statues of the Barons who signed Magna Charta. The resolution proposed by Lord Shaftesbury was drawn up with prudent reserve. It did not imply in any manner approval of the confiscation decreed by Lord Canning, and left full scope to the House to reserve its judgment on that point till it might be informed of the motives for the act; but it formally condemned the premature publication of Lord Ellenborough's despatch, as tending to weaken the Governor-General's authority and to encourage the rebels. The mover of the resolution developed it with moderation; it was supported, among other speakers, by the Dukes of Somerset, Argyll, and Newcastle. It is gratifying to see those great names, which figure in the feudal, political, and military history of England, thus reappear and keep their place at the head of the interests of a people completely free, and of a society so profoundly transformed. After them, and according to the custom of England, which reserves the last word during the debate to the leaders of party, or of the Government, the thesis of the Opposition was resumed by Lord Granville, who had been President of the Privy Council and leader of the Upper House under the Palmerston Ministry, and who was so well fitted to fill that part by the graces of his diction and the conciliating cordiality of his disposition. All these speakers, alive, as they were, to the damage done to their cause by the resignation of Lord Ellenborough, vied with each other in insisting on the principle of the collective and absolute solidarity of the Cabinet, and contended that it was not permitted to a Ministry to get rid, by the sacrifice of one or more of its members, of the responsibility of an error once committed, and recognized as such.

A Government, they argued, is one, homogeneous, and indivisible, and the privilege of choosing a scapegoat cannot be accorded to it. While listening to them, my mind was struck by the danger of those abstract, absolute, out-and-out theories which glide into the discussions usual under free Governments, under cover of a party or momentary interest, and which, little by little, come to be erected into indisputable dogmas. Nothing, in my opinion, is better calculated to weaken and bring into discredit the representative system, already sufficiently complicated and

sufficiently difficult to keep in equilibrium, as, indeed, are all those systems special to societies which stand up for the maintenance of the rights of intelligence. It is to the detractors, and not to the partisans of free institutions, or to those who work them, that ought to be abandoned the task of deducing such chimerical embarrassments from a false logic. I understood better, and was more gratified by the testimony of lively and affectionate interest which every one bore to the honour and fair renown of Lord Canning. There was something touching and highly equitable in this prepossession in favour of an absent brother, particularly as he was at a distance of 15,000 miles from his country, charged with the care of governing so many millions of men,—a statesman whose courage, wisdom, and humanity had reflected honour on the office he filled, and which is certainly the most important which can be confided, at the present day, by a free people to hands of man. Son of the great orator who was Prime Minister under George IV., the contemporary and rival of our own Chateaubriand, he has shown himself worthy of bearing his father's name; and every one instinctively shared the sentiment which animated his friends, when they said to the Government, "It is your right and your duty to recall him if he has done wrong; but it is not lawful for you to aim a blow at his honour and his dignity before he should be able to afford an explanation to the country, still under the influence of gratitude for his services.

No one among the Ministerial speakers thought for a moment of disputing Lord Canning's services; but Lord Ellenborough, disembarrassed of all apprehension of compromising his colleagues, took up the question anew, in its true bearings, with his usual energy and eloquence. If the publication of the despatch was an offence, he alone was accountable, as his colleagues had known nothing of it, and, no longer being a member of the Cabinet, there remained, as far as he was concerned, nothing more to be said or done in reference to that point. But the despatch in itself was salutary and necessary.*

The Premier, the Earl of Derby, although rendering homage

* Here M. de Montalembert quotes Lord Ellenborough's speech.

to the character and services of Lord Canning, and stating that the Government was a complete stranger to the premature publication of Lord Ellenborough's despatch, was not the less as explicit as possible in his adhesion to the doctrines of the latter on the subject of the confiscation, and on that of the system suitable to be adopted towards the Indian population. "The question lies," said he, "between pardon and confiscation, in a country where every landowner is a soldier and every soldier a landowner. We incline to pardon. If you condemn us, England will not have a sufficient number of troops to restore security to British rule in India." In the speech of the noble lord, who, as is well known, has a leaning for the employment of personal and sarcastic arguments against his adversaries, we remark a feature of manners purely English. He considered himself at liberty to reproach the religious Lord Shaftesbury with having made himself the organ of a meeting of members of Parliament, held at his father-in law's the Sunday preceding, which thus, according to Lord Derby, 'had not been exclusively consecrated to religious occupations.' Lord Shaftesbury considered himself so compromised by this reproach, that he thought himself called upon to address to the newspapers an exact account of the manner in which he spent his Sunday, during which the frequent repetition of liturgical occupations did not leave him an instant for a recreation so profane as that in which he was believed to have been guilty of indulging.

At 2 o'clock in the morning the House divided. Up to the last moment the result seemed doubtful, but, after the votes had been counted—not only those of all the peers present, but those also of the absent, who, from a singular respect for individual right, have the privilege of voting by proxy—it was ascertained that the vote of censure against the Government had been rejected by 167 votes against 158,

This feeble majority of nine in an Assembly where the Conservative party, of which Lord Derby is the recognised chief, has always preponderated, sufficiently indicated the extreme danger which the administration had encountered. A victory won with such difficulty in that House, where it thought itself sure of a majority, presaged an almost certain defeat in that of which but

two-fifths at most recognised him for leader. Far from being discouraged by the issue of this first engagement, Lord Palmerston's army saw in it only the first signal of a success the result of which it already anticipated. The most careful calculations as to the issue of the debate indicated a majority varying from 50 to 80 votes, which, according to the antecedents, or the supposed predilections of the different members of the House of Commons, should, at one and the same time, restore Lord Canning's compromised authority, and avenge Lord Palmerston's recent defeat, by renewing against his successors an attack in the nature of a vote of censure, to which he himself had succumbed three months previously, "Before a week," declared with confidence the newspapers which supported the former Ministry, energetically seconded by the vehement attacks of *The Times*, "before a week the Derby Ministry will have ceased to exist." All this time people lost sight, amid these hypothetical calculations, of the eventual dispositions of a new party, which, under the designation of Independent Liberals, have gradually eliminated itself from the ranks of the Whig and old Reform party, which yielded with too great docility to the supremacy of Lord Palmerston. Toward this party gravitated more and more, not only those timid minds floating doubtfully between two opinions, which every assembly contains within it; but, in addition, a notable fraction of the ancient disciples and colleagues of Sir Robert Peel, and at least half of the Irish Catholic members, justly irritated at the carelessness and hostility of the great Whig leaders towards the interests of their country and their religion. These outsiders agitated and combined together, on their side, on the approach of the decisive conflict; and their newspapers caused it to be sufficiently understood, that their support was not assured to the plans of the Opposition without requital.

For the rest, in these preliminary agitations, as also in official deliberations, everything passes in open day, with a frankness and absence of constraint that nothing alters. It is evident, that plots or intrigues are not in question, but honourable and legitimate struggles which the entire public ought at once to witness and to participate in. It is not merely a knot of political men, it is the whole nation whom these struggles divide and animate.

Parliament, as well as the press, high circles and the mass of society, spectators and actors, are simultaneously carried along by, and equally interested in, them. Political life circulates everywhere; everywhere we see come to light the opinion of a great community of free and enlightened men, who deliberate, directly and indirectly, on the interests properest to occupy their attention; who do not think that others can do their business for them better than they can do it themselves, and in no way understand that an external Power should take upon itself to govern for them, among them, and without them. But if these questions excite every one, they embitter no one. Here, as elsewhere, I can record, over and over again, in how great a degree the reciprocal courtesy of parties and individuals survives and resists the asperities of politics. First, intentions and plans of attack are frankly communicated, and even the papers which are to serve as the grounds or pretext for discussion; all tactics based on a stealthy surprise, or supported by masked batteries, would be set at nought by an unanimous outburst of opinion from all parties. Moreover, the most declared adversaries, the bitterest rivals, make it a point of honour not to carry into private and social life the hostilities of public life. People often say to one another the most disagreeable and personal things across the floor of the House of Lords, or the House of Commons; exaggerated accusations are launched, and pleasantry is pitiless; but these same people meet in the same drawingroom or dine together in the evening. In fact, they are sticklers, before all things, for remaining always gentlemen, people in society and of the same society, and for avoiding to poison one's entire existence by the animosity of an ephemeral conflict. It was not so in France, it will be remembered, when public life reigned and agitated our minds. What can be the cause of this difference? The fact, doubtless, that at bottom every one is of one way of thinking in England, not only on the fundamental questions of the constitution and of social organization, but, moreover, on the conditions and consequences of the struggles of each day.

The strife is ardent, even passionate; but the prize of victory and the issue of the combat do not change in any way the soil whereon the battle is fought, or the conquests definitively obtained

for all. The temporary possession of power is disputed, the triumph of a question or opinion is hotly pressed for; but no one thinks of imposing *nolens volens* that opinion on his adversaries, or even on his neighbours, on pain of exile from public life, and condemnation to nothingness if they have the boldness not to suffer themselves to be convinced or intimidated.

The vote of censure moved in the House of Commons was drawn up with the same prudence as that in the House of Lords; it did not constitute an approval of Lord Canning's proclamation, but a direct and formal disapproval of the sentence pronounced by the Government against that act. Its proposer was Mr. Cardwell, one of the most distinguished members of the Peelite party, a faithful and devoted friend of Lord Canning, universally looked up to, whom his position and antecedents did not suffer to be regarded as subjected to the preponderating influence of Lord Palmerston, or as capable of sacrificing a moral and national interest to party spirit. The first day of the debate (the 14th of May) presented nothing remarkable, except the brilliant *début* of a Ministerial orator, Sir Hugh Cairns, the Solicitor-General, one of the new men of liberal stamp with whom Lord Derby has had the tact to strengthen his Ministry. He sought to demonstrate that, the debate once opened, it was impossible to abstain, as the Opposition wished to be done, from calling in question the measure adopted by Lord Canning. If that measure were wise and just, how came it to pass that the Opposition refused to approve it? If it were not, why make it a ground of accusation against the Government for having censured it? When people have not the courage to approve the confiscation, they ought, at least, to abstain from blaming those who condemn it. The Government, for one thing, has its settled conviction, and openly declares it; its adversaries have none, or, having, do not dare to express it. Becoming the aggressor, in turn, he smartly reproaches Mr. Vernon Smith, Minister for India under Lord Palmerston, and Lord Ellenborough's predecessor, with not having communicated to the latter a private letter addressed to him by Lord Canning, under the belief that he was still in office, in which he informed him of his (Lord Canning's) intention to publish his famous proclamation. The constant and natural usage requires

that the outgoing Ministers should communicate, without exception, to their successors all documents which may reach their hands subsequently to their retirement. Lord Clarendon had so acted, quite recently, in the instance of Lord Malmesbury. In forsaking this customary course, Mr. Vernon Smith had deeply offended public opinion, and caused a great deal of recrimination within and without the walls of Parliament; and, although the letter in itself did not really contain anything of importance, the malevolent and derisive manner with which the explanations which he had been several times obliged to repeat respecting this matter were received by the House, must have presented to the minds of attentive observers the first symptom of a break-up among the majority, and of the uncertainty of the result so positively predicted. It was in the course of this first debate, also, that Lord John Russell came forward to reinforce the Opposition. by his important suffrage, giving his support to the motion of censure, insisting on the solidarity of the Government with the act of Lord Ellenborough; on the danger which that act was calculated to bring on the security of the British possessions in India; finally, on the moral force which would result for his adversaries from the censure cast on the annexation of Oude. Strengthened by so desirable an adhesion within the House of Commons, and assured, without, of the still more efficacious support accruing from the circulation of *The Times,* the two-fold cause of Lords Canning and Palmerston still had every chance of a speedy and complete success.

However, during the debate of the following day (17th of May) a member who sits near Lord Russell, rose to oppose him; in his person the fraction of the independent Liberals was to make its appearance in the discussion. This was Mr. Roebuck, one of the boldest, most favorably heard, and most popularly eloquent speakers in England. He it was who had dealt such heavy blows to the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston, when the latter was in power; and he now came forward, once again, to endeavour to defeat the noble lord's tactics, and to counteract his plans. Mr. Roebuck falls too often into the error of compromising the success of his ideas, and the authority of his positions, by enouncing opinions unreasonable in substance, and

further expressed with a degree of rigidity and exaggeration which increase the repulsion they inspire. He did not take the pains to abandon this regrettable habit during the memorable debate in question. Alluding to the Bill which had been brought in, and the object of which was to deprive the East India Company of the government of Hindostan, and to transfer it to the Crown, he went so far as to say that the Crown was a chimera, and signified in reality the House of Commons, since the entire power attributed to the Crown, was virtually exercised by the House.

This doctrine was at once imprudent and inexact; for it is dangerous thus to condense, under the form of absolute maxims, the gradual and qualified consequences of the development of liberty; and if the preponderance for centuries past of the House of Commons is an incontestable fact, it is not the less false, on that account, to say that the power of resistance of the House of Lords has been annihilated, and that the Crown does possess an immense *prestige*, and an authority by so much more solid that it is reserved for great occasions and for solemn decisions. But Mr. Roebuck, in the course of his speech, took high ground, and raised himself above the vulgar preoccupations of a merely personal or national policy, for no one had as yet approached the question with so much frankness, no one had as yet signalized so exactly its importance, the sacred character of the principles which it involved, and the danger of subordinating them to party interest.*

Be it said, to the honour of the assembly which heard these words, pronounced with emotion and with the effort of a speaker evidently suffering from ill health, that each of the foregoing sentences was followed by energetic applause, and not a single murmur betrayed the susceptibilities of a disturbed or offended patriotism.

After having established and confirmed the distinction, already announced by Lord Ellenborough, between the rebellion of the Sepoys, and the war in which the inhabitants of Oude had

* Here M. de Montalembert quotes from Mr. Roebuck's speech.

engaged, he expatiates on the folly and criminality of the confiscation, and thus sums up his opinions:—*

And, thereupon, he pointed his finger, in the midst of applause, at the bench where sate Lord Palmerston impassive and serene, surrounded by his ancient colleagues.

Several among these latter, and, particularly Sir Cornewall Lewis, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir Charles Wood, formerly Lord of the Admiralty, made every effort, and not without talent, to restore the question to the narrow ground from which Mr. Roebuck's vehement frankness had diverted it. But I cannot find, with the best intentions to be impartial, anything in their speeches worthy of being quoted. Like all the advocates of the vote of censure, they dwelt on the situation in which Lord Canning had been placed, and on the ingratitude evinced towards a man who had saved and reflected honour on British rule in India. Less reserved than the resolution itself, they went so far as to defend the Proclamation, in so far as the confiscation pronounced by it was, according to them, only to be put in force, not against the mass of the rural population, but against rebel proprietors, whom violence and usurpation had put in possession of their estates. The Ministerial speakers maintained, on the contrary, that, besides the great talookdars and zemindars who represented the territorial aristocracy, there existed in Oude a crowd of petty landed proprietors, using alternately the sword and the plough, and who evidently would be affected, as well as the great feudatories, by the absorption of all right of property in the domain of the State.

It must be confessed, that these contradictory but important details in the nature of information were less listened to than the eccentricities of young Sir Robert Peel, who, ever since his entry into public life, has availed himself of the great name he bears to arrogate the privilege of telling disagreeable truths to every one with a smartness and absence of all ceremony, against which people bear up with difficulty. On this occasion, however, his violent invective against Lord Palmerston, whose subordinate he

* Here intervenes a second extract from Mr. Roebuck's speech.

had long been in the career of diplomacy and in the Administration, did less harm to his illustrious adversary than to himself; but he was more successful when he pointed out, without circumlocution, to the antagonists of the Ministry, a danger which began to loom in the horizon. This danger lay in a dissolution of the House of Commons,—an extreme measure, no doubt, coming so soon after the dissolution which had so recently taken place, but which the Earl of Derby possessed the right of proposing to the Queen, in order to put the country in a position to decide between its policy and the hostile majority in Parliament. In this respect, Sir Robert Peel expressed an apprehension which gained ground every day; and he distinctly announced, in the name of the advanced Liberalism which he professes, the hope and the certainty of seeing the Liberal electors side with the great principles of justice and humanity proclaimed in Lord Ellenborough's despatch, rather than with the manœuvres of a party which sacrificed its principles to the feverish impatience of a resumption of office.

VI. However, in the midst of these debates, which pre-occupied in so great a degree the attention of all England, which invited the intervention of all distinguished public men, and which revealed a position growing more and more uncertain upon the old and new parties, between whom the government of the country is shared, an interlude presented itself, which paints the British character too well not to find a place in this narrative. At the opening of the sitting on the 18th of May, Captain Vivian, an adherent of Lord Palmerston, proposed to the House to adjourn till the 20th. He counted on the support of his motion by all the Ministerial and Conservative party, and he presumed that Mr. Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, who has so often drawn from his quiver the pointed arrows of his eloquence to launch them against his political adversaries, would entertain a lively desire to witness the exploits of another *archer* in another arena.

What might this strange interruption mean? It meant, that the day after the Epsom races were to take place, which have for their principal attraction the great annual prize which is called (it is not known why) "the Derby;" that Lord Derby, who is at once

the First Minister, first orator, and first sportsman in England, was a competitor for this prize; that the horse (his own) he backed to win it, was called Toxophilite (which, in Anglo-Greek, signifies *archer*); and, finally, that this race is an object of popular, one might say of national interest, in which the upper and lower, political and commercial classes take part with that universal and passionate anxiety which the ancient Greeks and Romans, and the Spaniards of modern times, have shown for analogous but less innocent spectacles. "These are the Olympic games of England," said Lord Palmerston one day; and it is the most exact definition which can be given of them.

The House unanimously adopted Captain Vivian's motion, and broke up to proceed *en masse* to Epsom Downs. Prepared speeches were thrust into the pocket, and eloquence hung up on the same peg with party spirit. Every one agreed to forget for one day England and India. Whether India was to be governed by confiscation or by conciliation, whether England was to keep Lord Derby for Prime Minister or not, was no longer the question, but whether Lord Derby's horse should win the race that bore his master's name, and in the issue of which the whole country was interested.

Since the sovereign House of Commons thus bids good bye for a day to serious matters, let us do likewise; let us follow it to Epsom, and let us join a group of members quite resolved to vote against each other on the morrow, but still more resolute to amuse themselves together to-day, the jovial eve of a decisive battle.

It has been well said, that he who has not seen the Derby, has not seen England; and for that reason, people are less in the right who incessantly repeat that an Englishman does not know how to amuse himself; or, at least, to amuse himself with spirit, and with order and decency at the same time. Whoever has seen 200,000 or 300,000 inhabitants of London and its neighbourhood assembled under a fine spring sun on the green slopes of Epsom Downs; whoever has wandered among all these equipages of every possible class, among these sheds, these bands of music, these open-air theatres, these tents with their fluttering streamers, this sea of bipeds and quadrupeds, returns home

thoroughly convinced of the truth of two things generally but little received: first, the honest and communicative gaiety of the immense majority of the numerous throng; secondly, the great degree of equality which brings together, for this day at least, conditions of society usually the most distinct and apart from each other. Princes of the blood, and peers of most ancient pedigree, elbow grooms in the crowd and others of low degree, and even take part in the popular games which occupy the irksome intervals between the races. Nowhere—not even among us in France—is seen a greater mingling of ranks; nowhere else, too, a gaiety, good humour, and decency, resembling more the same qualities which distinguish in so honourable a manner our popular masses, when they abandon themselves to their periodical and official amusements. In the midst of this joyous and animated throng, one might believe oneself in France. But this illusion speedily vanishes, when one remarks the absence of everything like an official programme, of all interference on the part of the authorities. It is individual industry which has done it all—announced everything, foreseen everything, regulated everything; the subscriptions collected to defray all expenses are spontaneous. A mere handful of policemen, without arms, and lost, as it were, in the midst of the throng, reminds one of precautions taken against an interruption of order. By these features we instantly recognise England.

On the way to Epsom, as during the preceding days, every conversation turned on the odd coincidence between Lord Derby's political destiny and his luck as a racing-man. As on the evening before, his name was on every lip; and in the issue of the race about to come off, people took pleasure in accepting an omen of his victory or his defeat in the division to take place the day after. An opinion, rather generally credited, circulated to the effect, that the noble lord was far more solicitous for the success of his horse, than for that of his party. The public credence was slight in his relish for the cares and fatigues attaching to that office of premier, already once filled by him, the loss of which seemed to have inspired him with little regret, the possession of which could hardly add another charm or fresh lustre to his lofty and impregnable position as a great peer and a great

orator. Head of one of those families, very few in number, of the English aristocracy which date from the times of the Plantagenets, fourteenth earl and peer of his name, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, placed, by a fortunate union of rank and talent, among that knot of men who are beyond all reach of rivalry, of whose names none are ignorant, whose merits none contest, there remains for him no social distinction to be acquired, not even the blue riband of the Garter. But the blue riband of the Turf (it is thus that the prize which bears his name at the Epsom races is designated) appears to every one, and to him in particular, the legitimate and natural object of his ambition. Shall he win it or not? That is the question the solution of which tasks every mind, and seduces into the midst of the crowd all the notabilities of politics and diplomacy, among others Marshal Pelissier, who represents so worthily our country and our army, and enjoys among our neighbours a popularity so great and so justly merited.

Let us follow them into the paddock — that is, a reserved space where the horses entered for the race are exhibited previous to the start. Attention is momentarily attracted to this or that horse; but it is Lord Derby and the horse that carries his fortunes that fix every eye. There he is! Which of them? The man, or the horse? Both are there; but hardly has the horse made his appearance than the owner is forgotten. The celebrated animal is walked slowly to and fro, as if to display in detail all the points which are to assure victory to him, to his master, and to the innumerable host of betters who have risked their money on his back. A numerous group of political personages, intermingled with connoisseurs of another order, follow with comical gravity, and a sort of religious attention, every movement of the animal. I had the satisfaction to recognize among them one of the most ardent defenders of Church and State, an Anglican of the old stock, the same who some time afterwards was destined to do me the honour of signalizing me to the House of Commons as an advocate of the cause of civil and religious liberty, only with a view to reduce England and France under the domination of the Jesuits. He seemed completely to have forgotten the dangers of the Established Church, and the formidable progress

of Popery, to such a point was he absorbed by the contemplation of Toxophilite's paces.

After some insignificant interludes, the crowning race commences; twenty-four horses start together. How shall I paint the devouring anxiety, the tumultuous swaying to and fro of the crowd, the forward spring, the rustling of the hundred thousand persons whose eyes and hearts are concentrated upon a single object? The disinterested stranger involuntarily recalled his *Virgil* to mind, and the immortal verses of the fifth book of the *Æneid*, which have familiarized every one of liberal education, and every cultivated mind, with so many insignificant details for ever ennobled by the epic muse. The race, which was run over a space of three-quarters of a league, lasted less than three minutes. For an instant, thanks to an inequality of the course, all the horses disappeared from the view of the spectators; when they again came in sight, the different chances of the rivals began to declare themselves. One moment more of devouring anxiety, a hundred thousand heads turned towards the winning-post. Fate has decided. It is not Lord Derby who has won. His famous horse is only second. The "blue ribband" escapes him; the cup has been won by the horse of a baronet unknown, who has realised at a stroke something like £40,000.

In this unexpected check to the Prime Minister at Epsom, every one saw a prognostic of the political defeat which awaited him at Westminster. But friends and opponents seemed to forget the disastrous omen in the feverish excitement which attended the return of the crowd to London. Every one, as usual, wished to start and return at one and the same time: every rider, each separate turn-out, whether large or small, public or private, tears madly along the two or three lanes which lead into the highway: all are intent upon the return to the great city. It is almost impossible to comprehend how it is, that such fearful disorder and such numerous mishaps do not occasion some dire catastrophe amid the confused and unruly crowd, the more as it is only in the far distance that a few policemen are visible, always unarmed, who, by a movement of the hand, re-establish order in the line till it is again interrupted and broken. I smiled in reflecting on the contrast of these simple but sufficient precautions with the

furious charges common among our Municipal Guards, with helmet on head and sword in hand, when sweeping down upon a half-dozen hackney-coaches daring enough to break through the line on the occasion of ministerial receptions, in those fabulous ages when our parliamentary folks were accustomed to trudge on foot to see the ministers we liked or opposed. Notwithstanding, no serious calamity occurs; every one reaches his destination, he scarcely knows how, but in safety. The 300,000 spectators disperse and hie to their own homes without any talk of misadventure being bruited abroad. The visitor has scarcely cleared the picturesque and undulating country in the vicinity of Epsom, than he passes an interminable series of suburban villas, all green and smiling, which form the environs of the great city, in which he may read, more than in anything else, the material prosperity of the country, where houses less sombre and less monotonous than those of the town peep out in all their bravery from beds of flowers or tall trees; where the balconies, windows, gates, and pathways are crowded to overflowing with a joyous company, as remarkable for beauty on the part of the women and children, as by the air of contentment and sympathy beaming from every face. There is no spectacle in the world which can come up to this living stream, through whose hurrying and noisy waves we press with redoubled speed. Its nature somewhat changes as we draw nearer London, where a denser but gloomier population betrays the presence of the working-classes; but it leaves upon the mind an ineffaceable remembrance of a true popular festival, the issue of the spontaneous impulse of its actors, and ennobled by the manly intelligence of a people who not only understand self-government, but also how to amuse themselves without the help of the authorities.*

* The close of this paragraph turns upon a pun, which is, of course, untranslatable. It runs thus :—

Every one knows the miserable pun of Louis XV. to one of his philosophic courtiers: "Duke de Lauraguais, what have you been doing in England?" "Learning to think (*penser*), Sire." — "What? horses?" (*panser des chevaux*, meaning, to *dress the wounds* of horses.) "Both, Sire," might have been just as well the reply of Lord Derby, if we can imagine Lord Derby in France, and at the court of an absolute monarch.

VII. Everyone's mind returned, the day after this holy-day, to the pre-occupations that engrossed its eve, and plunged anew into the great struggle, the issue of which was to exercise so vital an influence on the destinies of England and of India, and on the future of those 200,000,000 of souls, of whom Mr. Roebuck has spoken with such noble eloquence. It was not merely in Parliament, or in high society, or in exclusively political circles, that this ardent curiosity was bent on divining the result of the debate. The entire country, represented by all that it contained in the form of intelligent and well-informed men, followed, with feverish anxiety, the different incidents of the conflict, and identified itself with its slightest details, thanks to the powerful and useful air of the press, which causes to penetrate into the humblest hamlet a detailed and perfectly accurate report of the Parliamentary debates. It does more; it accompanies them with commentaries, which sum up and reproduce those debates, adding thereto arguments often more conclusive and more original than those of the speakers. It is in this way, that it awakens the conscience of the country, that it invites and occasions the intervention of all in the affairs of all, and that it proclaims, while it regulates, the direct action of the country on its representatives and its chief. What wit and science, what irony and passion, what talent and life, have been poured forth during this fortnight through the voluminous columns of the English newspapers! I was, for my own part, lost in astonishment, so long a time had elapsed since I had taken part in that running and alternate fire of daily discussion, which we, in former days, knew and practised, it may be to excess, but which has become impossible among journals, some of which only possess the right of revealing everything, and which are always prone (more or less involuntarily) to the inciting their adversaries on to a territory, where an official gag is sure to be in waiting for them. While the "Daily News," the "Star," and the other independent or radical papers, manifested a greater or less lively sympathy towards the maintenance of the new policy, the formidable artillery of the "Times" continued to thunder against the ministry and against the famous despatch. By its side, the smaller papers, specially devoted to the cause of Lord Palmerston, redoubled their zeal and vigour in

order to sustain the ardour of its adherents both in the House and among the public at large. They always predicted, with unvarying confidence, the certain defeat of Government, and promised themselves a majority so considerable and so significant as to render all idea of dissolution useless and devoid of sense. Nevertheless, some symptoms of dismemberment already manifested themselves in the midst of the majority which had been so confidently counted on. Its chiefs, in traversing the ranks of their phalanx, could already remark the expressive silence of some, the increasing hesitation of several. The debate had evidently shaken, if not altogether changed, many opinions entertained from the first. All its brilliancy, all its strength had been on the side of the adversaries of the vote of censure. Its partisans had scarcely raised themselves above the combinations and recriminations of party spirit. The result was still more visible during the sitting of the 20th of May. Mr. Bright, who disputes with Mr. Gladstone the palm of eloquence and the attention of the House, brought on that day to the good cause the powerful aid of his opinion and increasing authority. Mr. Bright is a member of the Quaker sect; he is brother-in-law of that Frederick Lucas who, born in the same sect, became a Catholic, and in addition, the most energetic advocate of his new faith. Hardly had he entered the House of Commons when Lucas there took up a position beyond the reach of rivalry; everything predicted in him an orator and party leader who should equal, or, perhaps, surpass O'Connell; a premature death left behind the remembrance, still vivid, of the invincible charms of his language, and of the energetic uprightness of his convictions. Mr. Bright, like his brother-in-law, taking up a position outside of all old parties, and bordering on the road which leads to power, has not ceased to grow greater in public esteem, despite of the temporary unpopularity which attached to him in consequence of his opposition to the eastern war. Every one blames and regrets his exaggerated attacks against English manners (*moeurs*) and English institutions, attacks of which he himself is the living and brilliant contradiction; but every session has seen his ascendancy increase, and this Quaker is to-day one of the three or four most interesting personages, and most listened to, in England. It was a ques-

tion put by him which provoked the publication of the famous despatch. It was but just that he should now defend it. This he did with an energy, an accuracy, a simplicity of argumentation and of demonstration well fitted to carry conviction, rapidly and triumphantly, into every impartial mind. He also knew how to find skilfully the weak point in the armour of the Whig resolution, abstaining the while from expressing any opinion on Lord Canning's proclamation.*

Here, turning to attack the most redoubtable adversary of the despatch — Lord John Russell — he evoked against him, with felicity and justice, the remembrance of his own errors, and the imprudence committed by him in criticising tartness or harshness of language, expressed by no matter whom. He reminded him that he (Lord John Russell), on occasion of the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and of the arrival of Cardinal Wiseman in England, had addressed a letter, published, to the Bishop of Durham, which had given the signal for a considerable agitation, and sown the seeds of a strife which still endures. "The noble Lord," said our intrepid Quaker, in whose person the Dissenter pierces through the political orator, "has blamed Lord Ellenborough's despatch on account of its tone of invective and sarcasm. But the noble Lord ought to have been exceedingly reserved on that point, for he lives in a glass-house more fragile than any of ours. When he takes up his pen no one can foresee what he may give to the public. I remember a very extraordinary letter of his, etc." †

The House received with marked sympathy and with prolonged applause, these passages, and others still, which we must omit, in order to arrive at the conclusion of the speech, in which the eloquent and honest man whom we listened to with so much emotion, attacked alike the tactics employed by the former Ministry to recover power by the aid of a complication of external events, and the inhuman incitements of the English press to renewed executions.‡

* Here M. de Montalembert quotes a portion of Mr. Bright's speech.

† Here M. de Montalembert quotes that portion of Mr. Bright's speech which referred to the Durham letter.

‡ Here another quotation.

After a speech of such power, immensely applauded, one might well expect to see, at length, a speaker rise on the other side, capable of avenging the cause of the resolution of censure, and vindicating it against overwhelming attacks. But the expectation was vain. None presented themselves, except second or third-rate combatants, whose inferiority became more and more evident when Sir James Graham arose to defend the same thesis as Mr. Bright. Long invested with the highest functions in the Ministries, at the head of which respectively were Lord Grey, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Aberdeen, and, lastly, Lord Palmerston, he occupies, with Mr. Gladstone, the first rank in the Peelite party. He began by declaring, in the name of the venerable Aberdeen — a particular friend of Lord Canning, as of himself — that Lord Canning, whose fair renown might appear to have been compromised by the premature publication of Lord Ellenborough's despatch, had received, by the spontaneous resignation of the latter Minister, a reparation amply sufficient, and that the Government had acted towards him with great moderation in not recalling him. He then laid great stress on a fact, the news of which had arrived that very day, the energetic protest directed against the proclamation by Sir James Outram — that is, by that very one among the English Generals who had himself effected, under Lord Dalhousie, the annexation of Oude, who was still in command there, and who during the last campaign, had attracted universal admiration by consenting, like our own Boufflers at Malplaquet, and Lord Hardinge in Affghanistan, to serve as a volunteer under the orders of his subordinate, that subordinate being no other than Havelock, whom he did not wish to deprive of the glory of a victory already half gained. In aid of these imposing testimonies, Sir James Graham brought to bear all the weight of his own personal authority in his attack against the theory and practice of political confiscation. Calling attention to the warnings given by Machiavel, the great doctor, in the science of State crime, who taught that individuals and communities more willingly pardon those who have slaughtered their fathers, than those who have robbed them of their patrimony; he cited, in addition, the authority of the Duke of Wellington, who, addressing himself to one of his successors

in India, recommended him, above all things, to respect private rights and individual property. Then, contrasting the example of Napoleon I. with that of his conqueror, he referred to the energetic resistance, narrated in a recent publication by M. Villemain, which the Emperor encountered from his most faithful adherents, when, during the Hundred Days, he wished to fulminate from Lyons a decree of confiscation against thirteen of his principal adversaries. His Grand-Marshal, Bertrand, the honestest and most faithful of his friends, the companion of his last perils and last misfortunes, refused, in spite of his master's injunctions and entreaties, to countersign the fatal decree. "Those," said he, "who advise you to begin anew a *régime* of proscription and confiscation are your worst enemies, and I will not be their accomplice." Labédoyère added, "If the system of proscription and sequestration recommence, all that will not last long." Sir James summed up his own opinions, and, it may be said, the entire debate, in these terms:—*

After these two speeches, the cause of justice and truth was, morally speaking, victorious. However, the issue of the deliberation was still uncertain; some great speakers were still to be heard — on one side, Mr. Disraeli, leader of the House of Commons, and Mr. Gladstone, the most eloquent of the orators; on the other, Lord Palmerston, with all the inexhaustible resources of his intellectual eloquence. Public anxiety had reached its height, and on the day after (21st of May), the last day of this great conflict, the crowd of members and of spectators, huddled together in the narrow precincts of the House, surpassed all that had ever been seen theretofore. Stationed in the gallery reserved for the peers and strangers of distinction, Lords Derby and Granville, seated side by side, seemed to pass in review their two armies, while waiting for the decisive engagement which was to decide the lot of both, and to make them pass from one side of the neighbouring House to the other. An electrical agitation reigned in the ranks of the assembly. But, lo! at the very opening of the sitting an unexpected spectacle presents itself. A member rises from the Opposition benches to request the proposer of the motion of censure against the Government to with-

* M. de Montalembert here quotes Sir J. Graham's speech.

draw it. Mr. Cardwell, surprised by this abrupt proposition, flatly refuses. Instantly five or six other members of the Opposition successively renew the same summons. It was the symptom of the internal division which had been at work since the commencement of the debate, and of a defection which was becoming more and more dangerous. The army which had been so sure of victory began to give way. Mr. Cardwell still hesitated. Thereupon General De Lacy Evans, one of Lord Palmerston's oldest partisans, declared that, for him, he should propose a motion directly censuring Lord Canning's proclamation, and disapproving the confiscation-policy. Another Opposition member declared that, if a division were persisted in, there was no other course open to him but to bid good-bye to the proposer of the motion, and to quit the House. A third, more simply frank, evoked the possibility of a dissolution, which would probably cause many partisans of the vote of censure to lose their seats. A whole hour passed away amid this strange and increasing confusion; and every moment the certainty of the humiliating defeat of the Opposition was becoming more apparent. To avoid this disaster, Lord Palmerston took his resolution, and determined on retreating. To mask his retreat from the enemy, and putting forward as a pretext, the effect produced by General Outram's protest, quoted in the debate of yesterday, and officially published on that very day, he, in his turn, requested Mr. Cardwell to withdraw his motion. The latter at length consented, amid the ironical cheers of the Conservative party. The day was decided, and the campaign at an end, without the reserve having been brought into action. The Ministry carried the day, although not a single Minister had spoken.

There remained nothing more for the Cabinet, but to certify its victory, and to determine in advance its moral effect. This Mr. Disraeli accomplished with infinite address and triumphant modesty. He stated, at the outset, that it was not the Ministry who refused to accept battle, or who had to fear its result; neither was it the Ministry who had put its adversaries to rout. He acknowledged that the battle had been won by men who were neither members nor adherents of the Government — by Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Bright, and Sir James Graham, whose independence, talent,

and authority had thrown the most brilliant light upon the debate, and modified the preconceived opinions of a portion of the House. Resolved, for the rest, not to abuse success, and not to drive his adversaries to extremities, he declared that as long as Lord Canning should act comformably with a prudent and conciliatory policy, which was recommended to him, and which he had so long generously carried out, the Government would extend to him its confidence and support; for the rest, without waiting for the result of the debate, a telegraphic despatch to that effect had been already forwarded to him.

Mr. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Bright, in turns, rose to congratulate the House, according to their respective views, on the unhoped-for conclusion of the debate, and to certify as well to the justice done to Lord Canning as to the principles universally recognized in favour of clemency and moderation in India. After which the House adjourned for the Easter holydays.

It is very rare in well-regulated political assemblies, to see, upon a measure of vital interest, the already pre-conceived dispositions of the majority thus transformed through the sole and immediate influence of discussion. I will even add, that it must rarely be so, without it being possible to come to any conclusion adverse to the sincerity or morality of the representative Government. In questions relatively insignificant, or suddenly raised, public and unprepared discussion will naturally determine the decisons come to. The contrary is the rule in party struggles, in questions of higher importance, already more than sufficiently discussed by a free press and by the movements of opinion. Parliamentary discussion becomes, in such case, rather a result than a prelude. All legislative deliberation is a judgment; the discussion which precedes it, proves and produces the victorious arguments; it gives to the pleadings of the opposing parties the most signal and most incontestable publicity; but it helps, above all else, to note down, for contemporaries and for posterity, the items of the decree. I have often seen a majority swollen or diminished under the immediate pressure of the speeches of certain orators; but I had never before seen eloquent truth thus gain an ascendancy, and gradually work its way to victory.

It was not, therefore, without reason that speakers of very different kinds felicitated the House upon the issue of the debate; for that which had just taken place was the triumph of reason and justice, a triumph consolidated by the moderation and prudence of all parties, a triumph obtained by the unaided arms of discussion and eloquence. Party spirit had been beaten and outdone. All legitimate interests had been nobly defended and acknowledged; the honour of a great public officer, accused and absent, had found faithful and zealous champions; his character had been screened from all reproach, with honourable solicitude, by the very men who had most severely judged his conduct. The Governmental authority had been maintained by others as completely strangers to his responsibility as independent of his influence. An eloquent but imprudent Minister, and who had chastised himself for the indiscretion and exaggeration of his language, ought to have felt more than consoled by hearing his doctrines victoriously sustained by the most imposing votes, and implicitly approved by the legislative majority.

" Humanity, equity, the rights of the conquered and the feeble had found for champions the most intrepid orators, and those most attentively listened to in an assembly the echoes of which resound through the whole world, and their voices would penetrate even to the banks of the Ganges, to restore there, in their integrity, the laws of honourable warfare, and the conditions of civilizing conquest:—

" ' Ille, super Gangem, super exauditus et Indos,
" ' Implebit terras voce; et furialia bella
" ' Fulmine compescet linguæ.'

In a word, moral force had been openly and nobly preferred to material force by the organs of a great nation which is able and willing to do its own business; which nothing depresses or frightens; which sometimes deceives itself, but does not drive to extremities either events or men; finally, which knows how to manage everything and repair everything, without needing to submit to tutelage or to seek safety out of its own virile and intelligent energy."

While these reflections encompassed me, I quitted their great spectacle full of emotion and contented, as ought to have been

every man who sees in a Government something else besides an antechamber, and in a civilized people something more than a flock of sheep, docilely indolent, to be fleeced and led forth to pasture under the silent shadows of an enervated security. I felt myself more than ever attached to those liberal hopes which have always animated, through the most regrettable phases of our history, the *élite* of honest men, whom neither disappointment nor defeat has ever bowed down, and who, even in exile or on the scaffold, have always preserved enough of patriotism to believe that France could, quite as well as England, endure the reign of right, light, and liberty. Noble belief! well worthy to actuate the most painful sacrifices, and which, although betrayed by fortune, deserted by the crowd, and insulted by cowards, does not the less retain its invincible empire over proud souls and generous spirits.

VIII. When I returned to France, I read in the leading organ of the clergy, and of the new alliance of the Throne and the Altar, that all I had just seen and heard was "a farce played with great display of scenery," such as are often found in the history of deliberative assemblies. Happy country, thought I, and still more happy clergy, to whom such excellent information is given in such noble language!

Meantime the debate of May last had produced a salutary influence on the management of affairs in India. Lord Canning returned without difficulty to his former line of conduct, from which fatal counsels had diverted him. While setting forth the apology for the confiscation, in the despatch of the 7th of June, which the papers have recently published, he did not the less re-enter on an indulgent and moderate policy. If we are to believe the latest accounts, the submission of Oude is gradually going on. The *Talookdars*, brought back by the conciliatory conduct of the Commissioner Montgomery, submit one after each other, and re-occupy their lands at the same time as they resume their duty. In the other provinces of India, the insurrection, although still formidable, more so, indeed, than people generally believe in England, appears nevertheless to be narrowing and dying out. Not one of the sanguinary prayers, which, at this period last year, arose from the camp of the enemies of England, has, as yet been

realised; not one of their ill-omened predictions has been as yet fulfilled.

The law which has brought to a close the political existence of the India Company, entrusts the Government of the immense peninsula to a Secretary of State, assisted by a Council, whereof half the members are appointed by the crown, while the others are elective. One of the articles of this law, provides, that when a private individual has any complaint to make against the administration of India, he must apply to the Secretary of State; this is only a further application of that great principle of the common law of England, according to which, any Citizen has his remedy in Court before any public Officer. A guarantee of British liberty, of enormous importance and but too little known, which contrasts with that inviolability of the pettiest officials of France, created by the Constitution of year VIII, which people were simple enough, even under the constitutional *régime*, to place among the Conquests of 1789.

This Secretary of State is Lord Stanley, whose vigorous youth and solid understanding, promise to confer upon Indian affairs, a prudent and energetic guide, while inspiring universal confidence. He nobly epitomised the programme of the new organisation of the Government of India, in his speech of the 20th September, to one of the Civil Corporations of London. "We have to preserve India from the fluetuations of parliamentary politics, and to defend England against the more distant, but no less real danger of the contact of our executive power, with the administration of a country which can only be governed by means of absolute power." His father's ministry owes to the discussion of Cardwell's proposition, the consolidation of its existence, previously uncertain and tottering. The most advanced liberal opinion was easily resigned to the temporary duration of a cabinet whieh gives to the great reforming and independent party time to select younger and safer leaders than Lord Palmerston, and which, meanwhile, itself resolutely treads the path of useful reforms and legitimate progress. The *coryphées* of the Conservative administration underwent at this moment the chastisement often inflicted by Providence on statesmen whom political passions—I repeat passions, and not servile and factious

greediness—have carried on to injustice and exaggeration. The power they have so eagerly coveted, is one day granted to them; but on the condition of following precisely the same line which they made a reproach of, to their predecessors. Since their second period of office, Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli are occupied with doing all which they alleged as a crime against Sir Robert Peel. They accept, or they themselves propose liberal reforms which they have, or which they would to a certainty have combated if they had remained in the Opposition, into which they were thrown by the rupture with the illustrious chief, from whom they separated when he admitted the necessity of tearing to pieces the old Tory programme, and opening the doors of the future. The admission of Jews to Parliament, the abolition of qualification for the House of Commons, the promise of a new Parliamentary Reform, more efficacious than all the recent propositions, indicate the steps they have taken in this new path, and have naturally gained for them the sympathy of the Liberals, while by measures sincerely favorable to religious liberty in schools, in prisons, and in the army, they have acquired a sort of adhesion even among the more militant portion of the episcopacy and the Catholic press of Ireland.

But if the great debate on India has consolidated for some time this Conservative Ministry, it has rendered a service much more more considerable to England and to Europe by confirming the defeat of Lord Palmerston. In spite of the skilful slowness of his retreat at the last hour of the combat, that defeat was not the less evident and complete; and for the rest of the session the Chamber seemed to take pleasure in showing him that it had definitively thrown off his yoke. He will perhaps return to power, so long as the resources of his mind are abundant, and so long as the return to popularity in a free country is unforeseen and natural; but he will return to it with a lesson, if not a correction, and penetrated with the necessity of being more cautious towards his allies and his adversaries.

Another power, still more formidable than that of Lord Palmerston, has been vanquished in the struggle—*The Times*, pledged for two years back to the policy of the noble Lord, and which had devoted all its resources to the triumph of the plan of

attack combined by the late Minister. It is impossible not to see in this fact a conclusive proof of the national good sense of the English people. The incontestable utility of that immense engine of publicity, as the loud organ of every individual grievance, as well as the energetic stimulant of the public sentiment, would be more than counterbalanced by its omnipotence if this omnipotence did not meet with a check, and never received a lesson. The equilibrium of constitutional powers would be seriously endangered by the exclusive preponderance of a single journal, in which writers without mission and without responsibility speak as masters every day to the most numerous public in the earth. But, as I believe I have elsewhere proved, the empire of the tribune and its universal publicity are the necessary and efficacious counterpoise of this dangerous power of the press; and the debate on India has given a fresh and conclusive demonstration of the fact.

Let it be remarked, that in all these various phases of English politics in our day, there is no question whatever of the pretended struggle between the aristocracy and democracy, in which superficial observers fancy they find the key of the movements of opinion with our neighbours. In England, what in reality governs is the middle class — but a middle class much more largely established, and constituted after a much more hierarchical fashion, than that which governed in France at certain epochs of our ancient monarchy, and during the existence of our Parliamentary *régime*. That middle class has never known the puerile fits of enthusiasm, nor the annoying and envious pretensions, nor the base abdications, nor the inexcusable panics which degrade the history of our *bourgeoisie*. That middle class esteems intelligence highly, but character still more. It seeks after and values wealth, but as the sign of social strength and activity. It abhors apathy and weakness, and, consequently, arbitrary rule, whether it be imposed or admitted. It will exist by itself and for itself; hence its instinctive and traditional repugnance to centralization and bureaucracy. On the other hand, it does not aspire to possess itself of the whole of the public functions, and to shut out, above and below at the same time, access to power against all that does not belong to it. It opens its ranks to all who raise themselves

without contesting any elevation anterior to it, or independently of it. It willingly consents that the aristocracy by birth, which for ages is recruited from its ranks, shall represent at home and abroad the public authority and the national grandeur, just as a powerful sovereign, reposing in the tranquil and simple majesty of his power, willingly leaves to great men and lords the care of displaying the pomp of distant embassies, and obtaining the honour of onerous missions.

But it gives to understand that its will must be obeyed; that no other interest shall enter into conflict with its own: that no conviction shall prevail over its own. And it is not from to-day that this veiled but most certain sovereignty dates. For him who understands well the history of England, it has for two centuries always existed, and ever extended. Amid the superficial division of parties, it is the spirit of the middle classes which has ever directed those great currents of opinion of which dynastic and ministerial revolutions are merely the official interpretation. The English patrician has never been other than the active and devoted delegate, the interpreter and the instrument of that intelligent and resolute class in whom the national will and power are condensed. It is that class which Cromwell and Milton personified, when, by the sword of one, and the pen of the other, the Republic sat for a space on the ruins of the throne of Charles I. It was from that class, and with it, that Monk brought back the Stuarts, and that, 30 years later, the Parliament substituted for them a new Royalty. It was that class which, with the two Pitts, raised from the beginning of the 18th century the edifice of British preponderance, and which with Burke saved it from being ruined and infected by the contagion of revolutionary doctrines. It was the same class which, in our day, opened under Peel a new era of policy—the melioration of the condition and the enlargement of the rights of the working classes.

From this cause, arises the imperious necessity for that transformation of ancient parties which manifests itself in all the incidents of contemporary politics, and influenced the great debate of which I have endeavoured to give an account. . . . .

I hear certain great minds, which I venerate, groan over this inevitable transformation; I see them do their best to retard its

progress. Vain attempts and ill-founded grief! This dislocation of the old parliamentary ties is legitimate, natural and desirable. The old parties are as dead, as their reason for existence has passed away. The whig party is buried in the very temple of its victory; to it is due the immortal honour of having provoked by its initiative and perseverance, that noble and salutary progress, which has not caused the shedding of one drop of blood, and which has caused liberal ideas to triumph by the only means which liberty avows: Catholic emancipation, parliamentary reform, the abolition of colonial slavery, the suppression of the laws which burthened cereals. Its opponents of former times have become its imitators to-day, and may not impossibly go beyond it on the road of new reforms of a substantial and popular nature, which shall supplant old routine, and put in place thereof the benefits of rational and moral progress. Every one at the present time in England desires progress, and every one also insists upon it without disowning the glory of the past, or weakening any of the foundations of society. Of all the questions which interest now-a-days the safety or the honor of the country, there is not a single one which is connected with the ancient divisions of whigs and tories. What have the French alliance, the revolt of India, the war with Russia and China, the political and industrial emancipation of the colonies, to do with them? Nothing, absolutely nothing. The art of properly governing the country, of obtaining from its colossal resources the best possible results for its honour and prosperity; this is the only problem which remains to be solved. It suffices to legitimatize all honest ambition and to exercise every sort of known or latent ability. It suffices likewise to bring from time to time into the regions of power those periodical modifications, those salutary crises, which are indispensable in a free Government, because they prevent the majority from getting rusted, and statesmen from creating a monopoly of the enjoyment of power.

The real wants and the real dangers of the country are no longer to be found where people are in the habit of looking for them. Fifteen years ago, it was predicted that the repeal of the corn laws and free trade would bring about an irreconcilable antagonism between the agricultural and manufacturing interests.

The contrary is just what has taken place. The profits of the agriculturists have accompanied those of the manufacturers, and have often exceeded them. It was feared that the rural would be sacrificed to the town populatlon; on the contrary, it is the latter, which, multiplying indefinitely, awakens a feeling of solicitude as lively as it is legitimate, and constitutes England's social infirmity. In order to cure this evil, it is not merely the Government, but the entire country, which struggles to seek out the remedy. Its generous efforts will be recompensed by success, if, as everything indicates, in order to meet the encroachments of pauperism, it should find means of keeping within bounds those of the bureaucracy and of centralisation, which have destroyed or fettered liberty everywhere on the Continent, without being able to remove or check pauperism.

I have already shown in these pages, and I hail again with joy, the most significant and most consoling symptom of the actual state of England—I mean, the persevering ardour of the flower of the English nation in the pursuit of social and administrative reforms; of amelioration in the state of the prisons, and that of unhealthy habitations; in spreading popular, professional, agricultural, and domestic education; in the augmentation of the resources set apart for public worship; in the simplification of civil and criminal procedure; in toiling, in every way, for the moral and material well-being of the working classes, not by the humiliating tutelage of uncontrolled power, but by the generous combination of every free agency and of every spontaneous sacrifice.

England's danger is not from within. She would be willingly viewed by some in the light of a prey to the threats of Socialism, and as forced to take refuge in autocracy. Ingenious panegyrists of absolute power have lately exercised lavishly their perspicacity by looking up, in obscure pamphlets and obscure meetings, proofs of the progress of revolutionary ideas beyond the Channel. Those learned gentlemen have forgotten, or perhaps never knew, all that has been said and done in this direction from 1790 to 1810, not in holes and corners, but in open day, with the tacit assent of a great Parliamentary party, and under the patronage of the most remarkable men in the country, while it was suffer-

ing from serious financial embarrassments, from frequent mutinies in the navy, and from the formidable enterprises of the greatest captain of modern times. Every man who knows never so little of England, cannot but smile at these selfish apprehensions. The propagators of such notions might be referred to that honest London shopkeeper who appeared the other day before one of the police-courts, to ask the presiding magistrate how he could obtain repayment of the postage of a demagogical pamphlet, which had reached him by that morning's delivery. Not only does the nation itself not require any organic change, but there is not a single serious party, of former or present days, which entertains it for a moment. Never has the constitution been more universally respected, more faithfully practised, more lovingly appealed to. After a lapse of seventy years, it is as true to say now what Mirabeau replied, in 1790, to those birds of ill-omen who were prophesying the imminent downfall of the country of liberality *par excellence*,—"England lost! in what latitude, let me ask, is she likely to be wrecked? I see her, on the contrary, active, powerful, issuing with renewed strength from regular agitation, and supplying a hiatus in her constitution with all the energy of a great people."

No, England's danger does not lie in that direction. It is from without that she is menaced by the real perils to which she may succumb, and with respect to which she entertains an unfortunate delusion. I do not speak of the revolt in India merely, although I am very far from being reassured as to its final issue to the same extent that people in England seem to be; but it appears to me that she has more to fear from Europe than from Asia. At the close of the first Empire, Europe, with the exception of France, cherished an intimate accord with England, penetrated, moreover, as it then was, with the recent victories of the armies of the latter in Spain and Belgium. It is no longer so to-day. The English army has indubitably lost its *prestige*. Again, the gradual progress of liberal ideas in England, and the retrograde march of the great Continental States, for some years back, in the direction of absolute power, have marshalled the two political systems on two roads altogether different, but running

parallel to each other, and sufficiently near to admit of a conflict taking place from day to day.

There exists, besides, against England, in the minds of many, a moral repulsion, which of itself alone constitutes a serious danger. The English regard in the light of an honour, of a decoration, the abuse of that press which preaches fanaticism and despotism; but they would be far wrong in believing that there exist against them, in Europe, no antipathies other than those which they are right in considering an honour. Count de Maistre, whom they ought to reproach themselves with not knowing sufficiently well, who never saw England, but who divined it with the instinct of genius, and admired it with the freedom of a great mind, has penned this judgment:—"Do not believe that I do not render full justice to the English. I admire their government (without, however, believing, I do not say that it ought not, but that it cannot, be transplanted elsewhere); I pay homage to their criminal law, their arts, their science, their public spirit, etc.; but all that is spoiled in their external political life by intolerable national prejudice, and by a pride without limit and without prudence, which is revolting to other nations, and prevents them from uniting for the good cause. Do you know the great difficulty of the extraordinary epoch (1803) at which we are living? It is that the cause one loves is defended by the nation one does not love."

As for me, who love the nation almost as much as the cause which it defends, I regret that M. de Maistre is no longer living to stigmatise with that anger of love, which rendered him so eloquent, the clumsy effrontery which British *egoïsme* has manifested in the affair of that Isthmus of Suez, whose gates England would fain close against all the world, although, prepared in advance, she holds the keys at Perim. He would have been quite as well worth hearing on the subject of the ridiculous susceptibility of a portion of the English press regarding the Russian coal depôt at Villafranca; as if a nation which extends every day its maritime domination in every part of the world, and which occupies in the Mediterranean positions such as Malta, Gibraltar, and Corfu, could complain, with a good grace, that

other peoples should endeavour to extend their commerce and navigation.

On one side, then, the legitimate resentments excited by the imprudent and illogical policy of England in her relations with other States; on the other, the horror and spite with which the spectacle of her enduring and prosperous liberty fills servile souls, have created in Europe a common ground of animosity against her. It will be easy for any one, who may wish it, to turn to good account this animosity, and to profit by it, for the purpose of engaging England in some conflict, out of which she runs a great risk of issuing either vanquished or diminished. It is then that the masses, wounded in their national pride by unforeseen reverses, may raise a storm of which nothing in her history up to this can give an idea. To prevent this catastrophe, it concerns her not to blind herself any longer as to the nature and extent of her resources. Her military strength, and, above all, the acquirements in military science of her generals and officers, are evidently unequal to her mission. Her naval strength may be, if not surpassed, at least equalled, as it once was by our own, under Louis XIV. and Louis XVI., as it will again, if our honour and our interest should require it. She confides too much in the glory of her past, in the natural courage of her sons. Inasmuch as she is essentially warlike, she considers herself, wrongly, on a level with modern progress in the art of war, and in a position to resist superiority in numbers, in discipline, and camp experience. Because in 1848, the bravest and best disciplined armies did not save the great Continental monarchies from a sudden and shameful fall before an internal enemy, she chooses to doubt that a good and numerous army constitutes the first condition of safety against an enemy from without. For the very reason that she is free, she believes, and wrongly, that she has nothing to fear from the enemies of liberty. No! her institutions are not an impregnable bulwark, as Mr. Roebuck unreflectingly termed them on his return from Cherbourg. Alas! all experience of ancient and modern times proves, that free nations may succomb, like others, and even more rapidly than others. Liberty is the most precious of all treasures; but, like every

other treasure, it excites the envy, the covetousness, the hatred of those men, especially, who do not wish that others should possess an advantage, which they themselves have neither known how nor wished to possess. Like every other treasure — beauty, truth, virtue itself — liberty requires to be watched over, and defended with a tender solicitude, and an indefatigable vigilance. All the inventions of which modern science is so proud, are as useful to despotism as to liberty, and even more so. Electricity and steam will ever lend more force to strong battalions than to good reasons.

By substituting mechanical contrivances for the mainspring of morality—man's individual energy—the former invite and second the establishment of the empire of might over right. This is what the friends of England and of liberty ought never to lose sight of.

This is the only ground whereon one does not feel reassured by the prodigies of that individual initiative, and of those spontaneous associations, whose intrepid and inexhaustible energy, makes the strength and the supreme glory of England. Everywhere else, all the power and wealth of autocracy must avow themselves vanquished and eclipsed by that incomparable fecundity of private industry, which, in our time, without having been either incited or aided by the State, has hollowed out in the port of Liverpool, floating docks, six times as vast as those of Cherbourg; built up on the site of the Crystal Palace, the wonder of contemporary architecture; fathomed the sea, to deposit amidst its depths the telegraphic cable, and thus united the two great free peoples of the world, by the language of that electric spark, whose first-spoken words have wafted in an instant across the abysses, and from one world to another, the hymn of joy of the Angels at the birth of our Saviour, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."

But it is not merely in the regions of great industrial enterprise, to attract thither every eye, and to wring testimonies of admiration from the most unwilling mood, that those wonders of free and personal initiative manifest themselves. As for me, I feel myself much more excited, and still more reassured, when

I behold it at work in the very bowels of society, in the obscure depths of daily life; it is there one should see it extend its roots, and develop its vigorous vegetation, in order to estimate correctly the value for the souls and bodies of a people of the noble habit of providing of itself for its wants and its dangers.

I will only quote, and thus bring to a close, a study already too long, two *traits*, which are worthy, in my view, to inspire envy among the honest men of all countries, and which have passed by almost unperceived in England itself, so much in unison are they with everyday sights in that country, although we may vainly look for them elsewhere.

I open, at hazard, an obscure provincial paper, the *Manchester Examiner*, for the month of July last, and there find the history of four or five young people of the middle classes, who, in 1833, undertook to found, at their own expense, a free school in Angel Meadows, one of the wildest quarters of the immense industrial City of Manchester. They desired, to use their own expression, to tread out the heathenism of the working classes. But, like all heathenisms, that of Angel Meadows proved difficult of access, and greatly wanting in gratitude. Our young apostles had taken possession of a small empty house, and had gathered there a few children from the streets. As a return, they were serenaded in true beggar's style every night, and had their windows smashed every day; whilst dogs and dead cats were flung through the apertures thus violently made into the school-rooms. They were careful to keep their tempers, to make no complaint, and still to persevere, by calling in turn upon every father in the neighbourhood, for the purpose of explaining and inspiring confidence. After a lapse of five years, the triumph was theirs. At this present time, the sympathies of the population are with them, as well as the support of the clergy; and they reckon four hundred young pupils, whose voluntary preceptors they remain: a duty, however, which does not prevent them from following, with adults, a course of lessons in conformity with the programme of the great working associations of the city. They have thus become the competitors of that admirable institution, called the Ragged School Union, because its exclusive object is to teach ragged

children, and which counts already, in the City of London alone, 166 schools, 41,802 pupils, 350 salaried masters, and, what is more praiseworthy still, 2,139 gratuitous members, who impose upon themselves the duty of going several times a week to give lessons to these poor children! I shall be told, that is precisely what is done in France by all our brethren of religious orders and all our sisterhoods, who devote themselves to the people, as well as by many pious laymen. Undoubtedly; and I add, that it is what is done by the same classes in England, too, wherever such are to be found. But there are not enough of them, even in France; and with greater reason must this be said of England. Let us, then, learn to honour that sincere devotion to good, under whatever form it may be produced; if it could ever be formidable to any one or to anything, it is not certainly to the Catholic clergy or to Truth. Moreover, until it be affirmed and even demonstrated by the new oracles of the Church, that the condition of the Indians at Paraguay is the only ideal which it is suitable to propose to Europeans of the nineteenth century, it must be admitted that civil and civic virtues have alike their importance; and that religion, everywhere so disarmed in presence of poverty and materialism, is at least as interested as Society in the spontaneous development of that moral and intellectual strength with which it has pleased the Almighty to endow the creature of His predilection.

But here is another example, in another sphere, of that happy and consolatory activity of individual effort, wherein are brilliantly evident that talent for *self-government*, and that happy connexion between the upper and lower classes of the English population. Not far from Birmingham — another metropolis of English industry — stood an old feudal manor-house, surrounded by a fine park, and called Aston Hall. Charles I. took shelter there in 1642, and the good people of Birmingham, who were on the parliamentary side, had besieged him there. In the course of time the great city, as it waxed in size, had gradually reached and even surrounded by successive ramifications the old domain, with its fine trees and verdant lawns. The old and impoverished family, who owned the property, had no alternative but to dispose of it; and it was easy to foresee that the day was near at hand

when that space of fresh and salubrious verdure would disappear, to make way for new streets encumbered with forges and spinning-wheels. The idea then occurred to some of them to get possession of the property and convert it into a *People's Park*, in imitation of the example set by other towns. We are all acquainted with most enlightened countries, where such an undertaking would not have been regarded as possible, unless by knocking at the door of the public treasury, or suing to the sovereign's purse, by cleverly alternating the importunities of solicitation with the graces of adulation. They manage things differently at Birmingham. A committee is formed; it is composed, for the most part, of work-people, mixed with a certain number of patrons and heads of manufactories. The whole city subscribed to the work. A company is formed by shares, whereof the working classes become holders; and it is supported by a general subscription, in which every one takes part. The little girl of the charity school deposits her mite side by side with the bank-notes of the rich manufacturer. The sum required is soon collected; the domain is purchased in the name of the new association; the old mansion, carefully restored, is destined as a permanent exhibition of the arts and manufactures of the district; and the great park, with its trees the growth of centuries, is transformed into a place of promenade and recreation for the families of the working classes. Then, *but only then*, and when it is necessary to inaugurate this happy conquest of an intelligent and courageous initiative, they send their request to the Queen; for all these little municipal republics set the greatest importance on showing that royalty is the key-stone of the arch.

All that great association, so proud and so sure of itself, knows well, that it has nothing to fear from that sovereign power which is at once its graceful ornament and its faithful representative, and which, in turn, has nothing to dread from the active spontaneity of its subjects; which does not pretend to hinder any emancipation, any development of individual independence; which does not impose submission on energy, nor silence on contradiction; and which, in truth, is no other than liberty wearing a crown. The 15th of June, 1858, the Queen obeyed this touch-

ing appeal. She comes, and 600,000 working men hasten to meet her, issuing in myriads from every industrious hive of the districts of the *black country* — that is, from the counties of Stafford and Warwick, where coal mines feed the great mineral works. They offer her the affectionate homage of their happy faces, of their free souls, and of their manly efforts for aggrandisement and freedom. The Queen traverses that mighty crowd of an enthusiastic population, and opens the new museum. She bestows knighthood on the Mayor of Birmingham, elected by his fellow-citizens, by touching his shoulder, according to the ancient ceremonial, with a sword lent to her for that purpose by the Lord-Lieutenant of the county. She then causes to approach her the eight working men whom their comrades had indicated as the most usefully zealous in the common work, and says to them—"I thank you personally for what you have done to preserve this ancient manor, and I hope that this people's park will be for ever a benefit to the working classes of your city." As she was leaving, 40,000 children of the free national schools, and of various creeds, ranged along the way as she passed under the great oaks which had perhaps seen Charles I. beneath them; and they chanted together with an accent at once innocent and impassioned, which drew tears from many of those who were present, a hymn in lines, rude perhaps, but the burden of which was—

"Now pray we for our country,
"That England long may be,
"The holy and the happy,
"And the gloriously free!"