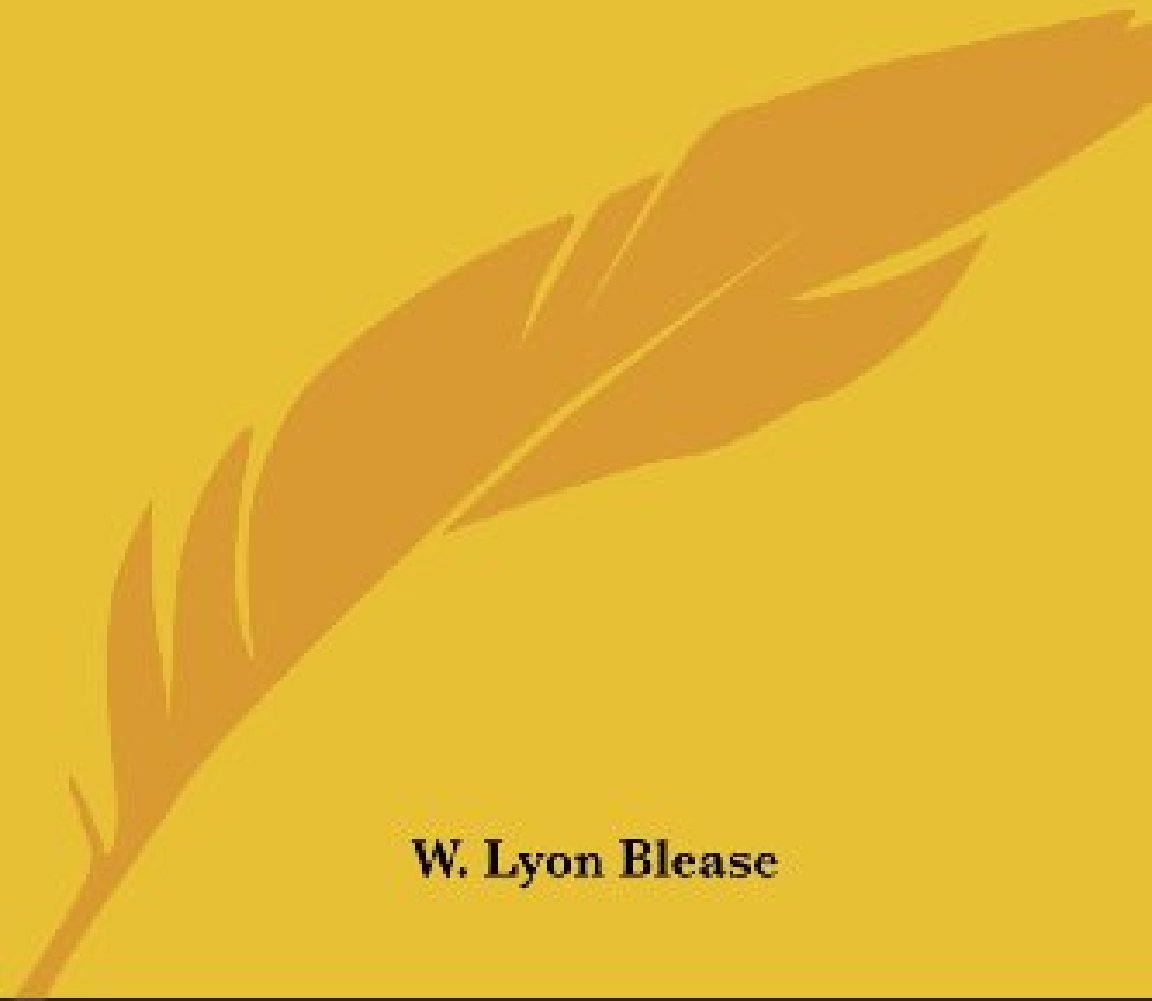
A Short History Of English Liberalism



W. Lyon Blease

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A few typographical errors have been corrected. They appear in the text like this, and the explanation will appear when the mouse pointer is moved over the marked passage.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLISH LIBERALISM

BY

W. LYON BLEASE

No rational man ever did govern himself by abstractions and universals.... A statesman differs from a professor in an university; the latter has only the general view of society.... A statesman, never losing sight of principles, is to be guided by circumstances; and, judging contrary to the

exigencies of the moment, he may ruin his country for ever.

BURKE, "On the Petition of the Unitarians."

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE
LEIPSIC: INSELSTRASSE 20

TO
"THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

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A Short History of English Liberalism

CHAPTER I

LIBERALISM AND TORYISM

This book attempts to trace the varying but persistent course of Liberalism in British politics during the last hundred and fifty years. It is not so much a history of events as a reading of them in the light of a particular political philosophy. In the strict sense a history of Liberalism should cover much more than politics. The same habit of mind is to be discovered everywhere else in the history of thought, most conspicuously in religious history, but not less certainly in the history of science and of art. The general victory in these innumerable conflicts of opinion has been to Liberalism, and the movement of

the race, during the period with which the writer is concerned, is precisely measured by the degree in which the Liberal spirit has succeeded in modifying the establishments of the preceding age. The object of this book is to investigate the course of that process of modification in politics.

By Liberalism I mean, not a policy, but a habit of mind. It is the disposition of the man who looks upon each of his fellows as of equal worth with himself. He does not assume that all men and women are of equal capacity, or equally entitled to offices and privileges. But he is always inclined to leave and to give them equal opportunity with himself for self-expression and for self-development. He assumes, as the basis of his activity, that he has no right to interfere with any other person's attempts to employ his natural powers in what he conceives to be the best way. He is unwilling to impose his judgment upon that of others, or to force them to live their lives according to his ideas rather than their own. They are never to be used by him for his own ends, but for theirs. Each is to be left to himself, to work out his own salvation. The Liberal habit of mind has its positive as well as its negative side. Just as it leads its possessor to refrain from interfering with the development of others, so it leads him to take active steps to remove the artificial barriers which impede that development. Natural obstacles will remain, though even these may be diminished. But the artificial conditions, which prevent or hinder growth, are perpetually obnoxious to the Liberal. Upon class distinctions in society, privileges of sex, rank, wealth, and creed, he wages unceasing war. They are, in his eye, weights and impediments. To one of two individuals, not distinguishable in natural capacity, they give an advantage which is denied to

the other. It is the object of the Liberal, not to deprive any individual of such opportunities as are required for the exercise of his natural powers, but to prevent the excessive appropriation of such opportunities by members of the privileged class. The differences between the practical aims and methods of Liberals at different times are very wide. But the mental habit has always been the same. "The passion for improving mankind, in its ultimate object, does not vary. But the immediate object of reformers and the forms of persuasion by which they seek to advance them, vary much in different generations. To a hasty observer they might even seem contradictory, and to justify the notion that nothing better than a desire for change, selfish or perverse, is at the bottom of all reforming movements. Only those who will think a little longer about it can discern the same old cause of social good against class interests, for which, under altered names, Liberals are fighting now as they were fifty years ago."[1] The constitutional Liberalism of Fox, the economical Liberalism of Cobden, and the new collectivist Liberalism of Mr. Lloyd George exhibit great differences in comparison. But the three men are alike in their desire to set free the individual from existing social bonds, and to procure him liberty of growth.

The justification for this individual freedom is not that the man is left to his own selfish motives, to develop himself for his own advantage. It is that it is only in this way that he can realize that his own best advantage is only secured by consulting that of his fellows. "The foundation of liberty is the idea of growth ... it is of course possible to reduce a man to order and prevent him from being a nuisance to his neighbours by arbitrary control and harsh

punishment.... It is also possible, though it takes a much higher skill, to teach the same man to discipline himself, and this is to foster the development of will, of personality, of self-control, or whatever we please to call that central harmonizing power which makes us capable of directing our own lives. Liberalism is the belief that society can safely be founded on this self-directing power of personality."[2] This Liberalism has nothing to do with anarchy. Coercion may be consistently applied wherever individual liberty is employed for the public injury, and the imprisonment of burglars and the regulation of factories by law are only two aspects of the same thing. But Liberalism restricts freedom only to extend freedom. Where the individual uses his own liberty to restrict that of others he may be coerced. But in spite of the modifications to which all such political principles must be subject, the general rule holds good. The ideal Liberal State is that in which every individual is equally free to work out his own life.

The practical difficulty of working out the relations between the individual and the society in which he is placed is of course very great, and it will probably always be impossible to maintain a perfect equilibrium. No doubt we shall always suffer from one or other of the two unsatisfying conditions—the sacrifice of the individual to what the majority thinks to be the right of the whole society, and the sacrifice of the society to the undue emancipation of the individual. But the necessary imperfection of the result is no argument against this or any other political system of thought. Politics are no more than a means of getting things done, and when we have found a society of perfect human beings, we can fairly complain that their affairs are not perfectly

managed. So far as he can, the Liberal aims at securing this balance of social and individual good, remembering that the good of society can only be measured by the good of all its members, and not by the good only of some dominant rank, creed, or class. "Rights are relative to the well-being of society, but the converse proposition is equally true, that the well-being of society may be measured by the degree in which their moral rights are secured to its component members.... The moral right of an individual is simply a condition of the full development of his personality as a moral being. Equally, the moral right of any community is the condition of the maintenance of its common life, and since that society is best, happiest, and most progressive which enables its members to make the utmost of themselves, there is no necessary conflict between them. The maintenance of rights is the condition of human progress.... To reconcile the rule of right with the principle of the public welfare is the supreme end of social theory."[3]

In practical politics the work of modern Liberalism has been to alter the conditions of society so that this freedom of growth may be secured for each member of it. The old conception of society was a conception of classes. Human beings were graded and standardized. Certain privileges were reserved for certain groups. Society looked, for its estimate of a man, not to his natural powers, not to what he might make of himself, but to his brand or mark. If within a certain degree, he had a free choice of his mode of life; if without it, he found his condition prescribed, sometimes so rigorously that he could hardly ever improve it. Liberalism has endeavoured to go deeper into the man, to get beneath the outward complexion, to find out his intrinsic worth, and to

give him that place in the social estimate which his natural powers deserve. Arbitrary distinctions are abhorrent to it. It is incapable of thinking in terms of class. Every class is, in its eyes, only an aggregate of individuals, and to exalt one class above another is to appreciate some individuals at the expense of others, to place marks of comparative social worth upon the members of different groups which do not correspond to the relative values of their natural qualities. Against a privileged race, rank, creed, or sex Liberalism must fight continually. By the artificial elevation of one above another, it is made to count for more in society, its members are aggrandized and those of its rivals are depreciated; and while the first are encouraged to abuse, the second are hampered and fettered in their growth. The Liberal asserts that no man, because he happens to be of a particular sect, or to be born of a particular family, or to possess a particular form of property, or to hold particular opinions, shall be invested by Society with privileges which give him an advantage in social intercourse over his fellows. He does not assert that all human beings are equal in capacity, but he demands that their natural inequalities shall not be aggravated by artificial conditions. For what he is worth, each shall be free to realize his highest capacity.

The Liberal conception of equality as between individuals is extended to the case of Churches, of nations, and of sexes. These classes are indeed not regarded by the Liberal as classes, but simply as associations, for limited purposes, of individuals, who are, in all essential respects, separate and distinct. To confer a privilege upon one Church or nation or sex is simply to confer a privilege upon the individuals who compose it, and whether the

privilege is the monopoly of political power or the sole right to take part in a public ceremony, it does in greater or less degree affect the relative social values of the members of the two groups, and places the members of the inferior at the disposition of those of the superior. To give the Established Church the sole right to take part in the coronation of the King is a violation of Liberal principle of the same kind, though not of the same degree, as to exclude Dissenters or Catholics from Parliament, and if men were content to exclude women only from the legal profession, they would be arrogating to themselves a superior value no less clearly than when they refuse to them the right to control their own government.

The same general habit of mind is applied to foreign policy. The acknowledgment of the equal worth of individuals within the nation becomes the acknowledgment of the equal worth of nations among themselves. "Nationalism has stood for liberty, not only in the sense that it has resisted tyrannous encroachment, but also in the sense that it has maintained the right of a community to work out its own salvation in its own way. A nation has an individuality, and the doctrine that individuality is an element in well-being is rightly applied to it. The world advances by the free, vigorous growth of divergent types, and is stunted when all the fresh bursting shoots are planed off close to the heavy, solid stem."[4] The interference of one with another, attempts to prescribe the limits or the cause of development, are as obnoxious in international as in intra-national relations. It was in fact in connection with this idea of nationality that the words "Liberal" and "Liberalism" came into use. The first English Liberals were those statesmen who followed Canning in his championship of Greece and the South

American Republics, and some of them were very far from being Liberals within the borders of their own State.[5]

This extension of Liberalism from individuals to nations is easy as a mental process, but very far from easy as a matter of practical politics. Nationality is not difficult to define in general terms. It is sometimes infinitely difficult to decide in a particular case whether the general definition applies. John Stuart Mill has perhaps given as much precision to the Liberal conception of nationality as it can bear. "A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nation if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and others. This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language and community of religion greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of the causes. But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents, the possession of a national history and consequent community of recollections, collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past."[6] Nationality is not a thing of sharp outline, any more than any other political conception, and community of interest, the management of common concerns over a long period of time, has triumphed over differences so potent as those of race and creed. Such has been the fortune of Switzerland, of Canada, and of white South Africa, and it is the hope of Liberalism that such will also be the fortune of Ireland. Without attempting to draw hard lines between communities, the Liberal sees in them distinctions of worth and capacity such as he sees in individuals, and he would give the same freedom of

self-development to a nation as to a human being.

The idea that nations are to be bound by moral rules as much as individuals is only another application of the general rule that one man is to be treated as equally entitled with every other to the development of his own faculties. The same rule is extended to nations as to single persons. No one people has the right to interfere with the free development of another, until it is clearly and unmistakably proved that that free development will be generally injurious. Once this principle is accepted, it becomes impossible, as in the case of single persons, for one nation to decline to recognize moral rules in its dealings with others. Morality is nothing but the subjection of individual wills to the common will, as expressed in defined rules. Immorality is only the arrogance of the individual will, refusing to submit itself to general rules, while it endeavours to enforce general rules upon others. The Liberal State is that which recognizes the universal application of its own principles of conduct, declines to thrust its own ideas upon unwilling associates, and works in harmony with other races instead of in opposition to them.

It is not suggested here that it is any part of the Liberal doctrine to seek peace at any price, or to turn the other cheek to the smiter. A vital condition of the existence of morality is that moral persons shall be ready at all times to defend it. To suffer wanton aggression is as fatal to a nation as to an individual. It is a mere encouragement to the general infringement of rights which means the dissolution of international morality. Liberal patriotism exists, though it is of a different kind from that patriotism which is so conspicuous a feature of our modern Imperialism. Imperialist patriotism is often a vulgar

assertion of selfish power. Liberal patriotism is a means of diminishing national selfishness. Just as the Liberal believes that the best life within the nation is produced by the growth of free individuality, so he believes that the best life in the race at large is produced by the growth of free nationality. "If there is one condition precedent to effective internationalism or to the establishment of any reliable relations between States, it is the existence of strong, secure, well-developed, and responsible nations. Internationalism can never be subserved by the suppression or forcible absorption of nations; for these practices react disastrously upon the springs of internationalism, on the one hand setting nations on their armed defence and stifling the amicable approaches between them, on the other debilitating the larger nations through excessive corpulence and indigestion. The hope of a coming internationalism enjoins above all else the maintenance and natural growth of independent nationalities, for without such there could be no gradual evolution of internationalism, but only a series of unsuccessful attempts at a chaotic and unstable cosmopolitanism. As individualism is essential to any sane form of national socialism, so nationalism is essential to internationalism."[7]

By far the most difficult of all the tasks which Liberalism has to perform is in its conduct of foreign policy. Even in domestic affairs it is often not easy to calculate the effects of particular proposals, how far they can be pressed towards the ideal, in what temper they will be received by the people, with what smoothness they will operate when they have been expressed in an Act of Parliament. It is a matter of accommodating ourselves to somewhat intractable

material, and of managing, persuading, and guiding human beings whose motives we cannot directly control. But the facts are at least fairly within reach. The Liberal statesman has as much opportunity as anybody can have of knowing the mental habit and disposition of those whom his legislation will affect. He is acquainted with their history. He is guided by previous successes or failures. In the last resort, he knows that the great bulk of the people concerned will respect the law even if they dislike it, and will express their dissent no more dangerously than by turning him out of office. In foreign affairs his difficulties are infinitely greater, and the consequences of failure may be disastrous. He is dealing, not with subjects, but with independent persons, who, except in a few points settled by agreement, observe no common law with himself. Their objects are obscure, and may only temporarily coincide with his own. They may have private arrangements among themselves of which he knows little or nothing, and if they cheat him in their own interest he has no remedy except one which is so violent as to be worse almost than any disease. Finally, even if his knowledge of the facts were more accurate, and his confidence in his associates more complete, he would still be baffled by the hostility to Liberal ideas which animates some, if not all, of the foreign diplomatists.

These are obstacles to direct action which it would be folly not to take into consideration, and in the case of the present Foreign Secretary they seem to have proved insuperable. But in some directions it is obvious that the Liberal statesman can pursue his course without fear. Where no powerful opponent or associate is concerned, he is as free as within his own country, and he is bound to act on purely Liberal

principles. He must act always according to moral rules, even in dealing with weak peoples. He is bound to do nothing which would help to maintain a vicious system or government. He is bound not to interfere in the domestic affairs of another nation, save where the fundamental liberties of his own countrymen are in danger. It is equally his duty to refrain from arrogance towards distracted China and towards united Germany. It is not his business to lecture the Russian Government for its vile domestic policy or the Spanish Government for the atrocious murder of Ferrer. But it is no more his business to strengthen these Governments, either by his alliance or otherwise, in thus acting towards their subjects. It is no doubt the duty of Liberals who are private persons to protest against cruelty and oppression, wherever it may be found. Public opinion counts for something, even in a foreign country, and if we cannot prevent evil abroad, we can at least keep alive the hatred of it in our own country. The Englishman who is indifferent to the sufferings of Finland is in danger of becoming insensitive to his own. But whatever may be the duty of private persons, official representations to a foreign State are always useless, and often exaggerate the evils to which they refer. In the face of foreign dictation, domestic tyranny becomes a patriotic duty. Whatever a Liberal Foreign Secretary may think, he must not dictate to any established Government. But his duty on the other side is equally clear, and he must do nothing to strengthen such a Government against its subjects. Palmerston's expressed approval of Napoleon III's *coup d'état* and Sir Edward Grey's more indirect support of the present Russian tyranny are equally illiberal. If a Government which violates every Liberal principle in its domestic policy is not to

be treated as an enemy, it is no more to be treated as a friend. It is entitled to the honourable observance of all agreements for the joint management of joint concerns, and to perfect freedom in its own domestic administration. It is not entitled to anything which will enhance its power. To assist it directly or indirectly is to participate in its wrongdoing, and no Liberal can safely do that without impairing his own character.

These are elementary rules which the Liberal must observe in all cases where his conduct is to be determined by nothing out of his own control. In other cases he can often do very little, and is compelled to acquiesce in conduct of which he would never himself be guilty. Here it is his duty to do as much as he can, to avoid the offensive imposition of his own ideas upon his fellows, to avoid arrangements which dispose of the fortunes of weak peoples irrespective of their wishes, to work in concert, not with one Power or group of Powers, but with all who are interested, and, in case of difficulty, to throw his weight into the scale with those whose aims most resemble his own. Generally, it is his duty to substitute the expression of moral rules by arbitration for the brutal assertion of national egoism in war. But there is no general presumption against war. It is always an evil. But it may be the least of possible evils. War for the independence of his own nation requires no justification. War for the independence of another nation or for the defence of some rule of international morality is to be judged by its expediency. "It seems to be impossible to state the principle of non-intervention in rational and statesmanlike terms, if it is under all circumstances, and without qualification or limit, to preclude an armed protest against intervention by other foreign

Powers. There may happen to be good reasons why we should on a given occasion passively watch a foreign Government interfering by violence in the affairs of another country. Our own Government may have its hands full; or it may have no military means of intervening to good purpose; or its intervention might in the long run do more harm than good to the object of its solicitude. But there can be no general prohibitory rule. When a military despot interferes to crush the men of another country while struggling for their national rights, no principle can make it wrong for a free nation to interfere by force against him. It can only be a question of expediency and prudence."[8] In other words, the importance of the moral rule involved must be weighed with the chances of success, the cost of war, the waste of life and wealth, and the sufferings of the poorer classes, which are the inevitable consequences of war. In the face of a universal enemy like Napoleon a war on behalf of Spain and Portugal was just. The Crimean War and the Boer Wars were unjust. Wars on behalf of Poles or Finns against Russia or Hungarians against Austrians would have been just, but not expedient, because no maritime power could have waged them with any chance of permanent success. It is a matter of calculation, and there are few wars, other than wars for the independence of their own country, which Liberals would not hold to cost more in blood and treasure than the principle for which they were undertaken.

It is obvious that this reasoning is entirely inconsistent with the theory of the balance of power. That theory, unhappily revived in recent years, requires not merely the subordination of morality to expediency in particular cases, but the complete abandonment of morality as a condition of

international politics. Its essence is not international agreement and the rule of right, but international hostility and the rule of force. It sets the States into two groups, one of which must always act against the other. England's policy is no longer decided by herself, but by herself in consultation with allies, whose character and objects may be purely selfish. If one of her associates is guilty of immoral aggression against one of the opposing group, or asserts some right which ought only to be conferred upon her by international agreement, she is dragged into a quarrel in defence of wrong against right, and not only violates moral rules in the particular case, but weakens her own ability to observe them in every other. Her honour and her interest alike are placed in the hands of others. She accepts a bill in blank, which the holder may fill in with any amount he pleases. In cases of extreme necessity this may be inevitable. When all are threatened by an enemy of the type of Napoleon, England cannot dissociate herself from the rest on account of their want of scruple. But as a settled and habitual policy the maintenance of the balance of power must be abhorrent to every man who is not ready to put his conscience into the keeping of others.

An examination of the opposing mode of thought will make clearer the essential nature of Liberalism. This opposite may fairly be called Toryism, if that term is used, like the other, to describe a persisting habit of mind and not a policy, which varies from generation to generation. Conservatism and Unionism are not satisfactory equivalents. The latter, especially, expresses only opposition to a particular project of Liberalism, and is itself, like its object, of a

temporary nature. Conservatism on the other hand, though a permanent force, is not essentially opposed to Liberalism. It is indeed often allied with Toryism, and so long as Liberalism continues to do positive and reconstructive work the strength of Toryism must generally lie in this negative and preserving instinct. When the two opponents exchange their usual parts, the Conservative mass swings over to the Liberal side. It is to Conservatism, as well as to Liberalism, that Free Trade owes its present security. In the face of active retrogression, the true Conservative, without becoming a Liberal, ranges himself with Liberals. But this sort of temporary alliance is rare. Until very recent years Liberalism has been the active and changing force, and has accordingly always found Conservatism its enemy.

A very good illustration of this working agreement between the positive dislike of individual emancipation and the negative reluctance to modify an institution which prevents it was furnished a short time ago by the Dean of Canterbury. The Convocation of the Diocese was considering whether the wife's pledge to obey her husband should be struck out of the marriage service. To the Liberal, this pledge, purporting to invest the subjection of the female sex to the male with a divine sanction, is one of the most obnoxious of all the fetters upon the freedom of women. Regarding the woman as of equal worth with the man, he has no doubt that this institution must be modified in her interest. On the occasion in question, the proposal for her relief was successfully opposed by the Dean. He said that when they were asked to say that the views of the Apostles regarding the position of the two sexes were wrong, that was a somewhat alarming and distressing principle to introduce into their deliberations. They

were bound, not only by the ancient traditions of their Church, but by their vows, to submit their judgment absolutely to the statements of the Apostles on matters of that kind.[9] This is a clear case of Conservatism defending Toryism. The subjection of the wife enjoined by the marriage service dates from a period long preceding even that of apostolic barbarism, when women were regarded as absolutely at the disposition of their male associates. In origin it was a crude assertion of the male ego at the expense of the female. The modern Church makes no such naked requisition, and defends the selfish establishment, not because it is selfish, but because it is an establishment.

This is the usual method of Conservatism. The position was fixed by the remote ancestors of the present garrison, and they are content to defend it even though they would never have themselves taken it up. But pure Toryism lives to-day, and reproduces the thoughts, the arguments, and often the very words, of the Toryism of a century ago. Opponents of Disestablishment repeat the language of the supporters of the Test Act. Opponents of Woman Suffrage, even those who call themselves Liberals, argue as Eldon and Peel argued against Parliamentary Reform. Ulster preserves the atmosphere of the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. Mr. Lloyd George, like Mr. Joseph Chamberlain thirty years ago, excites the same fury as was produced by Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*. The same principles contend on different stages, and through the mouths of different actors. Though the cries of the unending warfare change, the parties are always the same. Liberty is like the books of the Roman Sybil. As each instalment is wrested from the grasp of the monopolists, the remainder becomes at

once as precious as was previously the whole: loss of one privilege never prepares them for the surrender of another. The admission of Dissenters to public office involved no adoption of the general principle that all sects should be treated equally by the State. The abandonment of rotten boroughs was no acknowledgment that every individual subject to government had the right to control government. The innumerable concessions made by Toryism to Irish nationality have involved no general recognition. The old arguments have been shattered and dissipated in more than one contest. But when the forces of Liberalism advance against the next line of defence, the ancient retainers of monopoly are dragged from the hospitals and galvanized into new activity, to be routed again after a struggle almost as bitter and as long as the first. Toryism is beaten. It is never converted.

This Toryism is the habit of mind which refuses to concede to others that right of free expression which it requires for itself. It is the egoistic mind which regards all others as at its disposition. Its opinions are of superior worth, and others must give way. As the Liberal temper is extended, so is the Tory. The ego includes the Church, the occupation, the nation, and the sex of the individual. It thinks of human beings in classes, as distinguished from itself. They are Dissenters, or "people who do not agree with my religious opinions"; tenants, or "people who pay money to me or my class for the privilege of working or living on our land"; foreigners, or "people who happen to be born in countries other than my own"; wives, widows, and spinsters, or "persons who are, or have been, or will be connected with my sex." The Tory habitually thinks of his fellow-creatures not according to their individuality, but according to

their class, the face value which, regardless of their intrinsic worth, either entitles or disentitles them to his favour. They either belong to his own class or they do not. The real worth of each is not the standard by which he forms his judgment of them. Every act and utterance, every request and protest of another person is referred to the artificial connection, or distinction, instead of being judged for itself. The prime condition is that the other should keep in his place. By the Liberal the other is considered as an isolated object, an end in himself, to be treated without regard to any artificial association between them. The accidental is distinguished from the essential, and the creed, nationality, occupation, or sex is not allowed to interrupt the clear view of the human being who is enclosed in it. The Tory deals with his object as invested with a status. The Liberal deals with the man in himself.

These different points of view determine the different attitudes of the two parties to political problems as they arise. The pure Tory is of course as rare as the pure Liberal, and neither of the two groups, which are at any particular time described as Liberal and Tory, corresponds exactly with the habit of mind associated with its name.[10] Self-styled Tories are occasionally strongly Liberal in particular cases. Windham, who thought that the abolition of bull-baiting was a dangerous revolution, voted against the Slave Trade. Peel, the greatest man whom the old Tory party ever produced, was Liberal in finance, in legislation about crime and factories, and in foreign policy. In the same way, men who are Liberal in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred show themselves to be Tory in the last. Robert Lowe, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the great Liberal Ministry of 1868, had as fierce a contempt for the

working classes as Lord Salisbury himself. The question of Woman Suffrage, appearing unexpectedly on the surface of politics in 1906, has divided both parties, though in different proportions. The true Liberal supports the demand for enfranchisement. The true Tory opposes it. But the agitation has discovered some of the most bitter of sexual egoists on the Radical benches of the House of Commons, and champions of the individual's right to control her own government even among the Cecils.[11] The division between the members of the schools is thus not sharply defined. But the schools always exist, and it is in the perpetual conflict between them that the progress of the nation takes place.

Every political problem involves a conflict between an existing institution and the interest of individuals. The two parties thus approach it from different sides. The Tory looks down from the institution to the man, the Liberal up from the man to the institution. To the Liberal, the State and all other institutions within it are things of flesh and blood, they are so many expressions of human society, associations of human beings for their own human purposes. To the Tory, the institution is a machine, its efficient working is everything, and it is the duty of the individual to subordinate himself to that object whether his own interest is served by it or not. The Liberal says, "The State is made for man, and not man for the State." The Tory reverses the dogma, and even when he pursues the good of individuals, he pursues it rather in order to make them better soldiers or workers, that is to say, better servants of the State, than to make them better in themselves. Democratic government to the Liberal is an essential condition of the free growth of the individual soul. To the Tory, if he believes in it at all, it is a piece of efficient

political machinery. "What use can the State make of this man?" asks the Tory. "What use can this man make of himself?" asks the Liberal. The Tory theory is expressed in terms of duties, the Liberal in terms of rights. The disposing mind is at the back of the one, the encouraging mind at the back of the other. The Tory finds the good of the individual in the strength of the State. The Liberal finds the strength of the State in the good of the individual. Where the one seeks to maintain and use, the other seeks to ease, to alter, and to readjust, binding himself to no particular scheme of political or economic construction, but ready to apply to each case of individual hardship, as it arises, such devices as he can invent.

Practical Toryism, the theory as it has been expressed in actual politics, has been until recent years the Toryism of a governing class. But no class has a monopoly of it. The same habit of mind exists everywhere. There is nothing so universal as the aristocratic temper, which disposes of the fortunes of others according to its own sense of what is fitting. The Tory statesman of a hundred and fifty years ago was a landowner, a Churchman, and a man of wealth. But his view of life would have been much the same if he had been a tinker, an atheist, and in daily expectation of the workhouse. He might, in pursuit of his own class interest, have rebelled against the Toryism of the governing class, without abating any of his own. To such persons as came within his disposition he would display the same zeal for the assertion of his own ego at the expense of theirs, as that which he resented in his own superiors. Even the poorest man has generally a wife, and even the meanest of Englishmen can always speak contemptuously of foreigners. Toryism is a

habit of mind, which is often modified by circumstances, but can and does exist in men and women of all classes, irrespective of wealth, creed, or occupation.

It is true that this Tory doctrine is not always crudely stated. The formula is more often that of identification than that of disposition. If the inferior class is so placed that the superior class may dispose of it, it suffers no hardship, because the interest of both is the same. The people are identified with the State, the workmen are identified with the employer, the wife is identified with the husband. Make the State strong, and you make the people happy. Give the employer higher profits, and the workmen get higher wages out of those profits. Give the husband security and freedom, and the wife will partake of them both. But whatever the form of argument may be, the result is the same. There is an inevitable tendency in human nature to deteriorate in the enjoyment of absolute power. Some governing classes may use the strength of the State to make the people happy. Some employers may cheerfully share their increased gains with their workpeople. Some husbands may concede to their wives that complete freedom of occupation, expression of opinion, and control of property which they themselves possess. But history and contemporary experience alike afford innumerable examples of governing classes oppressing or keeping down their subjects, of employers giving higher wages only in response to strong or even violent pressure from their workmen, and of husbands depriving their wives of independence of thought and action, and even of the control of their own bodies. There is no security for the individual in the generosity of superiors. It is only when all are recognized by the State as having

equal worth in their relations with each other that individual liberty can be enjoyed by all.

The essential differences between Liberalism and Toryism are revealed in their disputes about the larger political topics. The franchise never fails to draw clear expressions of character from both sides. To the Liberal, the right of a man to control his own government is only one of the many rights which go to make up his right to control his own life. His freedom of life cannot be complete if, without his consent, his earnings may be diminished by taxation, his business ruined by a commercial treaty, the education of his children prescribed by legislation, and his whole fortune impaired by a declaration of war. There can be no real freedom of growth without control of government. But the argument for enfranchisement is based on more than the direct consequences of it. That the man who is taxed against his will enjoys only an imperfect freedom is obvious. What is not so readily perceived is that he is indirectly affected in a much more serious way. It is axiomatic that a governing class will, sooner or later, abuse its absolute power. Landowners use the tariff to increase their rents, and so impose burdens upon the poor. The middle class prohibits the combination of workmen in trade disputes, or resists the regulation of factories by law. Working-men exclude working-women from trades which they wish to preserve for their own sex. Men erect a system of marriage law which places the wife in the power of the husband. All this is written in history, and cannot be disputed. But the unseen consequences of disfranchisement are not so often realized. There is constant action and reaction between political

institutions and social estimates. If disfranchisement springs from depreciation, it also encourages it. To confine the control of government to one class is to appreciate that class at the expense of others, and to encourage its members to abuse their disfranchised associates whenever they are brought into contact with them. So long as the big business of politics is reserved for them, so long are they compelled to believe that the monopoly is the reward of their superior worth. Their ego is exalted, and that of their subjects is depressed. Private insolence is the inevitable consequence of public privilege. Government by landlords means interference with the political and religious opinions of tenants. Government by Protestants means the exclusion of Catholics from offices of dignity and profit. Government by masters means bad conditions of labour and fettered powers of combination among workmen. Government by men means the exclusion of women from professions and the maintenance of a double standard of morality. It is not suggested here that disfranchisement does more than affect tendencies. The political thinker who values his reputation will always write in terms of tendencies rather than in terms of states. But disfranchisement at least tends to produce, if it does not actually produce, the consequences of social depreciation. In some countries, or in some states of society, these may be less dangerous than the consequences of general enfranchisement. But they always exist.

An admirable statement of this part of the case for enfranchisement has been recently made by an opponent of Woman Suffrage. "If you enfranchise women," he said, "you cannot deprive them of the powers and privileges which accompany it. If they are to share men's political duties they must enjoy

his rights, they must be eligible for the Bar, the Bench, for the Civil Service, and for election to Parliament. Once in Parliament you cannot brand them as a class or sex apart, to be deprived of any of the high offices open to men. If they are not to attain these offices, it cannot be by the avowal of sex, but by an admission of incapacity."[12] This is absolute Toryism. Disfranchisement is a convenient means of depreciating women in private life, and the main bulwark of the male ego. It disables every woman in advance, and deprives her of private rights without the trouble of testing her capacity. Her political disability marks her with a brand wherever she goes, and the person who disposes of her politics, disposes also, in proportion to his own selfishness, of her occupation, of her marital rights, and of her honour. Mr. Harcourt is content to exclude her from Parliament and the legal profession. Baser men display the same male egoism in depriving her of education, in enfeebling her body and mind by excessive child-bearing, and in taking advantage of her poverty to use her as a prostitute for the gratification of their vilest passions. This confession by an opponent of Woman Suffrage illustrates the temper of Toryism in all controversies about the franchise. Acknowledge the right to control government, and you acknowledge the right to control life. So long as it lies in the power of one class to impose taxes, to regulate the hours of labour, to admit and to exclude from occupations, and generally to control the political organization of society, so long will its members be tempted to dispose of the members of the subject class in every part of life. When the equality of both classes in the State is admitted, the admission of their equal worth in all their private relations inevitably follows. There

is no essential difference between public and private rights.

But the reaction of political status upon the individual has another aspect no less important than this. Participation in the organized life of the community is a necessary part of that education which modern opinion requires for every human being. There are now living very few of those frantic Tories who believe that it is harmful to develop the minds of the poor, and every civilized State regards public education as one of its ordinary duties. But once the right of individuals to a good education is admitted, the extent of the right can hardly be limited to the provision of elementary or secondary schools. There is no education to be compared with the experience of organized life. Trade Unionism and Co-operation, political associations outside Parliament, the management of charities, all these are valuable not only for their immediate results, but for the way in which they train the people concerned. Incomparably the best school of the kind is politics. Nothing so broadens the mind and so disciplines the temper as being engaged, even in a humble capacity, in the management of political affairs. But the connection between the individual and the State must be direct, if it is to produce its full benefit. The vague and irresponsible interest of the disfranchised is a poor substitute for the definite obligation to apply one's own strength to the machine itself, which is the privilege of the enfranchised. The extension of the suffrage to all individuals in the State is thus an essential part of the Liberal faith, not only because it prevents direct and indirect abuse, but because it is a means of education without which few individuals can ever develop their natural powers to the full. "We, who

were reformers from the beginning, always said that the enfranchisement of the people was an end in itself. We said, and we were much derided for saying so, that citizenship only gives that self-respect which is the true basis of respect of others, and without which there is no lasting social order or real morality."[13] "If the individual is to have a higher feeling of public duty, he must take part in the work of the State.... That active interest in the service of the State, which makes patriotism in the better sense, can hardly arise while the individual's relation to the State is that of a passive recipient of protection in the exercise of his rights of person and property."[14] It is this conception of the exercise of the franchise which leads to the apparent paradox that the people are never fit for the suffrage until they possess it. In practice these logical difficulties have little weight. It is true that the only real test of political capacity is politics. But it is no hard task to detect in a person's management of other affairs how he is likely to conduct himself as a voter. Plain good sense is the only essential quality. It is got by living, not by learning, and where conditions of life are reasonably good, political capacity will not be wanting. The franchise completes, it does not make, education. It may thus be fairly extended to all ordinary persons as part of the Liberal method of equipping the individual for the fullest life of which he is capable.

Influenced by these considerations, the Liberal asserts that the franchise is a right which exists in the individual subject. To the Tory, accustomed to the idea of disposition, the subject is under and not above the State. Where the Liberal emphasizes the responsibility of the State to the subject, and requires that every act of its ministers shall be done in the interest of the subject, the Tory emphasizes the duty

of the subject to submit to the State, and by a process of argument which is as illogical as it is politically vicious, leaves it to the State to decide even to what persons it shall be responsible. Thus Sir Robert Inglis, opposing in 1853 a Bill for permitting Jews to sit in Parliament, contended "that power was a trust which the State might delegate to those whom it thought fit to exercise it—the exercise of the suffrage, for example—but it was the inherent right of no man. If it were, then indeed had they destroyed the value of the principle by all the restrictions imposed with respect to property, to age, and to sex."[15] The allusion to sex was prophetic. More than half a century later, Professor Dicey uses precisely the same argument against the enfranchisement of women. "The rights of an individual with regard to matters which primarily concern the State are public or political rights, or, in other words, duties or functions to be exercised by the possessor not in accordance with his own wish or interest, but primarily at least with a view to the interest of the State, and therefore may be limited or extended in any way which conduces to the welfare of the community."[16]

The confusion of thought in both these passages is the same. What is the State? Who are the community? How is the State to know what conduces to the welfare of the community? Both these Tory thinkers reason as if the State were some concrete thing, some piece of machinery, existing out of and independent of the society of human beings, managing their affairs, allotting them their rights, and associating with itself in their government such of them as it was pleased to select. Their argument is based upon this fundamental absurdity. The State has in fact no existence apart from human beings; it

is not external to society, but a growth out of it, and its own form and constitution are determined in all cases by the creatures whom the Tory theorists treat as subjected to its absolute discretion. The Liberal declares that human beings exist before the State, and control it, that their opinion determines in what way the State, like the Church, the industrial system, and the home, shall be constructed, that opinion varies in different countries and in different ages, and will at one time and in one place acquiesce in despotism and at another time and in another place require adult suffrage, but that always, first and last, the subjects are masters of the State.

What is actually at the back of the Tory mind, when it reasons in this fashion, is that the State, as conceived by them, is not external to all society, but only to a part of it. In other words, when it says "the State," it means "the governing class for the time being." It is always thinking of a privileged class disposing of the fortunes of another class. To Sir Robert Inglis "the State" meant "men of twenty-one years of age, who are landowners and Christians." To Windham, fifty years before, it meant "men of twenty-one years of age, who are landowners and Churchmen." To Professor Dicey, fifty years later, it meant "men of twenty-one years of age." The class varies, and its boundaries extend. But it is always of a class of some dimensions that the Tory thinks when he speaks of "the State." In effect he argues that the general body of men and women have no right to control their own government, except when the class into whose hands government has fallen sees fit to give it them. By the same process of reasoning the most bloody despot who ever usurped a throne could exclude aristocracy itself, and keep the control of government in the hands of the meanest of his

parasites. This conflict between the individual right of the subject and the absolute discretion of the governing class has been repeated at every proposal to extend the franchise in Great Britain. The work of Liberalism has been, and is still, to extend the limits of the governing class, and to make State and subjects, government and governed, co-extensive.

The same characteristic difference between the desire to adapt an institution to the encouragement of individual growth and the desire to compel individual growth to the efficient working of an institution peeps out, even where the practical proposals of the two parties appear to be identical. A Liberal supports State education because it puts the poor man into fuller possession of himself. A Tory supports it because an ignorant poor man is likely to be turbulent and to make attacks upon the institution of property. A Liberal supports a Mental Deficiency Bill because it protects feeble-minded persons against their neighbours and against themselves. A Tory supports it because it discourages the breeding of types which he regards as useless to the State. While the general attitude of Toryism to the economic reforms of modern Liberalism has been hostile, a small section of the Tory party has shown itself ready enough to support, and even to originate schemes which interfere with economic freedom and the rights of property. But the motives of the Liberal and the Tory social reformers are not the same. The one aims at private happiness, the other at public utility. "We would endeavour," said Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, "to secure to every man the best conditions of living, and so far as can be done by laws and customs, to secure him also an equal chance with others of a useful and happy life."[17] "The essence of our policy," says Lord Willoughby de

Broke, "is to give each individual the elements that will afford him an opportunity of at least living a free and a decorous existence, and the opportunity to raise himself or herself to the highest point of moral and material efficiency."[18] The emphasis on happiness in the one passage and on efficiency in the other shows precisely the difference in the objects of the two men. The first is personal, the second instrumental. The Liberal conception of the State makes the development of the individual an end in itself. The Tory conception makes it a means of public advantage, of obtaining workers for national industries and soldiers for national armies, and it is accompanied by proposals for conscription, protection, and the maintenance of popular education at a low level, which are redolent of restriction and subordination. A Tory journalist puts the matter more precisely: "If Unionism is to recover the confidence of the masses it must recognize their claim to a fuller and a happier life. Only in this way can it serve the great causes which it has at heart. We stand for the Empire. An Imperial people cannot be built up in squalor and poverty, when every thought is absorbed by the provision of the daily bread. We cannot get a hearing for Imperial causes until we have brought happiness into the homes of the people."[19] The Tory makes its inhabitants happy for the sake of the Empire. The Liberal has no use for the Empire unless it makes its inhabitants happy.

Modern Toryism is identified with Imperialism, and, except for the relics of old controversies between sects, most of the antagonism of Liberal and Tory centres to-day about the Empire. The most definite opposition is to be observed in original conceptions.

To the Tory, the Empire seems to be something in itself; he is impressed with its size, its wealth, its population; the mere existence of such a huge fabric, efficiently maintained, under the national flag, satisfies him. The Liberal is more concerned with what the Empire represents, with its maintenance of individual liberty, with its development of the subject peoples which it contains, with its encouragement to exploitation, with its implied antagonism to foreign peoples, with its increase of the cost of armaments, and with its effect upon the temper of domestic government. He is not, as a practical statesman, concerned to evacuate any part of this vast inheritance. "The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty." But he looks with suspicion upon any attempt to increase it, he encourages every transfer of control to local authorities, he insists that where races of an inferior civilization are incorporated their affairs shall be managed in their interest and not in that of the conquering race, and he views with constant apprehension the inclusion of such races because he knows that their despotic government must threaten the existence of his own free institutions. If the Empire is justified at all, it is justified by the ideals which it expresses, and by nothing else.

The better Imperial idea was thus described a few years ago by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain: "We, in our Colonial policy, as fast as we acquire new territory and develop it, develop it as trustees of civilization for the commerce of the world. We offer in all these markets over which our flag floats the same opportunities, the same open field, to foreigners that we offer to our own subjects, and upon the same terms. In that policy we stand alone, because all other nations, as fast as they acquire new territory—

acting, as I believe, most mistakenly in their own interests, and, above all, in the interests of the countries that they administer—all other nations seek at once to secure the monopoly for their own products by preferential and other methods."[20] These are noble and generous words. The conception of a rich and powerful race extending the blessings of order, good government, and industrial enterprise into the backward parts of the earth for the universal benefit of all mankind is a magnificent conception. But if it ever was Imperialism it is not the Imperialism of to-day. In less than ten years the speaker denied himself. The trustees of civilization became national egoists, subordinating all others to their own ascendancy. The free and open market was made a national monopoly, and British subjects arrogated to themselves all the exclusive privileges which had been "most mistakenly" reserved to themselves by other nations. The deterioration of generosity has seldom been so swift and so complete. In 1912 Mr. Chamberlain's successor in the leadership of Protectionist Imperialism makes the exclusion of the foreigner the very essence of Empire. "Co-operation in war was a vital necessity; but there could never be real co-operation in war unless there first had been co-operation in peace. It was for that reason that Unionists had advocated, and intended to advocate, the policy of Imperial preference. All the Dominions had urged the Mother Country to adopt in trade—and in everything else—that principle which would enable one portion of the Empire to treat all other portions of the Empire on better terms than were given to the rest of the world." The whole basis of the Empire is thus made to be hostility towards foreign peoples, and instead of war being a hateful necessity, undertaken to preserve the ideals for

which the Empire stands, it becomes itself the first object of the Empire, to which all its other possibilities must be sacrificed.

The Empire, as conceived by modern Imperialists, is in fact the negation of Liberalism. Domestic liberty, local independence, economic freedom, the development of inferior races, all must be sacrificed to the idea of an isolated and mechanically efficient unity. "The Unionist policy is a policy of union and strength. The Unionists say: As we are faced by great dangers, let us hold to the tried and proved national organization which was devised to meet such dangers in the past. And they say also: Let us have peace between the classes, for division in that way is even more dangerous than the division of the United Kingdom into its separate tribes or parishes.... We must keep united or we will be destroyed. But the Unionists go farther, and they say: We must be united not only as a United Kingdom but as a British Empire. Old England by herself may not have the strength to face the enormous forces now being arrayed against her. In the same way the Dominions by themselves have not the strength to maintain their freedom against possible attacks. Let us therefore combine, and then we shall be like the bundle of faggots, impossible to break. Now this policy of Imperial union cannot be achieved by sentiment alone. Sentiment is an excellent thing; but as part of the Empire is Dutch and part French, and as even British colonists tend to forget the Mother Country and look upon their own new country as the centre and the boundary of their patriotism, we need the perpetual unifier of material interest. Where a man's treasure is, there shall his heart be also." Therefore we must tax imported foodstuffs in order to give a preference to the Colonies. If we do not,

"What are we to offer to Canada in the way of a material interest strong enough to make her foreign policy identical with ours?"[21]

This is the subordination of everything to organization. Ireland is to be governed against its will, the poorer classes are to be kept down by force or by indulgence, the industrial and commercial freedom of the Colonies and the Mother Country is to be fettered by artificial bonds of trade, in order that Germany may be kept in her place. The illustration of the bundle of faggots will serve for the Liberal as well as for the Tory. What the Liberal wants is not a bundle of dead wood, but a group of living and growing trees about a parent stem, each planted freely in the soil and drawing from it its own sustenance.

The Tory conception of the Empire is in fact very like the old Roman Empire, and ominous comparisons are often drawn between the two.[22] The Roman Empire was a similar gigantic organization, which subordinated all other ideas to that of strength and unity against external peoples. What will preserve the British Empire from the fate of the Roman is what the Romans omitted, the encouragement of local independence, the sacrifice of mere mechanical efficiency to that infinite diversity of individual civilizations which keeps nations alive. The recent Canadian attempt to make a treaty of reciprocity with the United States produced some excellent examples of the viciousness of Imperialism. The Liberal Ministry allowed the British Ambassador in the States to place his services at the disposal of the Canadian Government. They assumed that it was not their business to dictate to the Canadians what commercial arrangements they should or should not

make with foreign peoples, and they treated a Canadian Government which had been in office for seventeen years as properly representative of the Canadian people. The Tory Imperialists attacked them for assisting the Canadian Ministry in its negotiations. Their demand, in effect, was that the British Government should have at least tacitly disapproved of this assertion of Canadian independence. For the moment the Canadian people have refused to enter into the treaty. Ten years hence they may have changed their minds, and we shall then have a direct conflict between Imperialism and Canadian Nationalism. The Liberals would allow the Canadians to manage their own affairs as they think best. The Tories, even though they would refrain from force, would at least try to bribe them into an artificial union, which they would not enter of their own free will.

The deterioration of Imperialism really dates from the South African War. This was the first expression of Imperial unity. But what was that unity worth, which was employed for the shameful purpose of destroying the local independence which it existed only to maintain? The whole justification of the Empire was that it enabled communities of different characters to grow freely within it, and the war destroyed what war should never have been undertaken except to preserve. The difference of opinion about that grave event marked the characteristic difference between Liberal and Tory. The life of the individual parts is everything to the Liberal, and their organization is only tolerable in so far as it protects and encourages that life. It is not to him, as it is to the Tory, a thing in itself, a permanent segregation of his race from the rest of humanity, a monopoly and a preserve, to be

maintained as a weight in the balance of international power. Nor has he any doubt that the loosely knit federation, which he prefers, will prove in the end stronger against Foreign enemies than the drilled and disciplined union which the Tories want. The Roman Empire collapsed because of this unnatural perfection of strength. The native vigour and independence of its parts were sacrificed to centralization. By enslaving the minds of her dependents to the Imperial idea, Rome threw herself open to less organized but more individualistic enemies. By leaving the inhabitants of her Dominions to develop themselves according to their own ideas, and not by managing them as potential weapons against the foreigner, Great Britain has brought herself to her present strength. A conscript army may be maintained for an indefinite period by constantly renewing the recruits. Nations cannot be renewed, and a conscript Empire must inevitably perish of its own rigidity.

Imperialists often speak of the Empire as if it consisted entirely of self-governing dominions of white men. In fact, by far the greater part of it is governed despotically, and consists of countries where white men cannot make permanent settlements. This part of the Empire the Liberal regards from two points of view. The less civilized or less powerful races which inhabit them are as individual to him as are the Canadians or the Germans, and are no more to be used by him for his own interest. "A superior race is bound to observe the highest current morality of the time in all its dealings with the subject race."[23] Order, justice, capital, the development of natural resources, and education, with an honest spirit in the Government, may help rather than retard the growth of the local

life. But with the benefits of civilization is too often introduced the temper of exploitation. Confiscation, massacre, slavery, open or disguised, and the abuse of native women, have been common enough in the building of the Empire, and the conduct of men like Cole of Nairobi and Lewis of Rhodesia shows that the same habit of mind is far from rare at this day.[24] The modern history of South Africa contains more than one disreputable passage of this kind, and if the development of territories like Uganda and Batsutoland has been more disinterested, it is only because they offered less easy prizes to the rapacity of trading companies and financiers. The primary motive of all our appropriations of territory has of course been our desire to increase our own wealth, and in most quarters we have been more anxious to force the native population into labour for our profit than to improve their condition or character. The plea that our Empire is justified because it elevates inferior races is a piece of cant which has been grafted on to a purely materialistic system. How little separates us even now from the old slavery may be seen in the following passage from a Tory newspaper: "In all essential qualities of racial progress, in self-control, perseverance, reasoning power, and so forth, the negro races are far behind the white.... The negro is given new racial ambitions by the acquisition of civil and in some cases of political rights.... The white South African ... may be forced to reconsider his whole native policy.... Education is a frightful source of mischief.... Industrial education, the painful teaching of toil in civilization, must precede the higher development."[25] In plain English, we may have to disfranchise the coloured voters of Cape Colony, shut up their schools and churches, and reduce them to

slavery. In just such language did the West Indian planters reason in the days of Wilberforce, from the fact of inferiority, through the deprivation of the means of improvement, to the ultimate destruction of character in "industrial education." It is in problems of this sort that the Liberal sees the evil side of Empire. It is more important to him that the black races of Cape Colony should not be deprived of the franchise than that South Africa should be able to assist Great Britain in time of war. If the country can only be included in the Empire at the cost of this deliberate degradation of the native peoples, it is better in his eyes that it should become independent. When the Empire ceases to encourage the growth of all peoples within it, the justification of it has ceased to exist.[26]

The badness of this government of less efficient races lies not only in its possible, and almost inevitable, exploitation of those races themselves, but in its reaction upon the people of Great Britain. There are very few men who can occupy themselves even with the honest and disinterested management of the affairs of a subject people without suffering some deterioration of their love of liberty. However benevolent despotism may be, it is always despotism. The essence of such government as that of India is to dispose of the fortunes of a people according to our own opinion of what is best for them, and not according to theirs. When it is bad, it is tyranny. When it is good, as it nearly always is, it is indulgence. It is never responsibility. It never seriously contemplates the time when the subject shall control his own affairs, or shall even be associated on equal terms with the foreign conqueror. Those who grow accustomed to this absolute power can never work comfortably with

free institutions, and the whole of the governing race tends to become infected with the disposing habit. The business of government becomes more than the spirit of it, the mechanical successes of administration are applauded, while the stultification of the general mind is overlooked. Efficiency is exaggerated at the expense of freedom, criticism of the Ministry is treated as insolence, and the right of every intelligent man to interest himself in the affairs of his own country is subordinated to the convenience of officials.[27] The official always looks up and not down for approval and censure, and he cannot depress the eye of his mind when he returns home from one of our foreign dependencies. The Imperialist revival of the last thirty years has thus coincided, not only with the neglect of domestic affairs, but with the active suppression of domestic freedom. The foremost champions of the House of Lords in 1909 were a retired Viceroy of India and a man who, after a successful career in Egypt, had been the mouthpiece of British insolence in South Africa. The best name in the list of the opponents of Woman Suffrage is that of the greatest despot that Egypt has ever known. "Is it not just possible," asked Cobden in 1860, "that we may become corrupted at home by the reaction of arbitrary political maxims in the East upon our domestic politics, just as Greece and Rome were demoralized by their contact with Asia?"[28] No Liberal who has watched the joint progress of Imperial expansion and domestic reaction, which has taken place since Cobden's death, can answer that searching question in the negative.

The foregoing examination will be sufficient to indicate the scope and the method of the following

chapters. They attempt to describe the political growth of the country, from a time when power was confined to a small disposing class, to the present day, when we have reached a well-defined stage on our advance towards complete equality of values. They also deal with the varying fortunes of Liberal ideas in foreign policy. The process seems to the writer to resemble the change from the old Ptolemaic to the new Copernican system of Astronomy. The old astronomers believed that the Earth was the centre of the Universe, and that the planets revolved about it. The new astronomers discovered that the Earth was not the centre, and that the other planets, though they had certain relations with and attractions for the earth, actually were, in the main, independent of it, and revolved, like it, about a common centre in orbits of their own. Similarly Toryism imagined that the unprivileged sex, classes, and creeds existed for no other purpose than fulfilling those duties which related to itself, and for enjoying those rights which proceeded from itself. It has been compelled to recognize that other individuals, however united with the dominant class for certain limited purposes, have their independent interests, orbits, and personalities. The writer cannot pretend to be indifferent, as between Liberalism and Toryism. But the last chapter will be sufficient proof that he is not over-full of the spirit of mere party.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN THE REIGN OF GEORGE III

Modern English politics may be fairly said to begin about the accession of George III. The conflict of Liberalism and Toryism can no doubt be traced farther back. But though the same principles may have been at stake during the Civil War, or even in the time of the Lollards, the general movement was slow, and the connection with modern politics less definite. About the middle of the eighteenth century society began to group itself more permanently, and a train of events was started which can be traced continuously to our own time. Movement also became more rapid, and the appearance of the social fabric has been more changed in the last hundred and fifty years than it was in the preceding fifteen hundred. It is possible, therefore, to get a substantially accurate explanation of modern politics by a survey of the recent period alone. So many causes have been crowded into those few years that the weight of the others is almost negligible. The history of Liberalism is, for practical purposes, the history of Liberalism since 1760. This chapter will therefore examine the political condition of England about that date.

The political structure changed little between 1760 and 1820. At the end of that period, as at its beginning, power was in the hands of a class which monopolized every privilege of race, sex, creed, and rank, and disposed, at its discretion, of the fortunes of all inferior persons. Ireland and the Colonies were subordinated to Great Britain, women to men, Catholics and Dissenters to Churchmen, manufacturers, traders, and workmen to landowners. The classification of humanity, for political purposes, was complete. The machinery of the State was controlled by a governing class, bound to listen to the complaints of its subjects, but not submitted to

their authority. The temper of this class as a whole, though it was nominally divided into Tories and Whigs, was essentially Tory. The two sections disputed between themselves, and some of the Whigs expressed Liberal opinions on particular subjects. But the general mental habit of both parties was that of Toryism. It was not until after the Reform Act of 1832 that even the germ of a Liberal party made its appearance in English politics, and it was not until after the Reform Act of 1867 that such a party held office. The history of Liberalism in the early period of its growth is the history of its slow and painful progress through people who did not consciously accept it.

The general Tory view of political society was most forcibly expressed after the French Revolution. The proclamation of the equality of individuals which that implied was met by very clear and explicit denials. It is obvious that Toryism was thus strung to its highest pitch, and that it may have been less aggressive in temper before the violence of the Revolution inflamed it. But though it was exaggerated by the Revolution, it was not essentially altered, and the language of the Tories of 1820 may fairly be taken to illustrate the mental habit of Tories of 1760. The root principle of government was that it should be controlled by the wealthy owners of land. There was some free voting in towns. But most borough seats could be bought, and many were in the absolute disposition of the nearest landowner. The owners of freeholds worth forty shillings a year voted in county elections, and were comparatively independent. But no voter, however sturdy and self-reliant, had a real voice in politics. The landed gentry took politics for their business, and if the voter could draw attention to what he conceived to

be a grievance, the landowner decided whether any remedy should be applied. "The country gentlemen," said Lord North, "are the best and most respectable objects of the confidence of the people."[29] Wilberforce described the same class as "the very nerves and ligatures of the body politic."[30] The manufacturing class and traders were looked upon with a curious and comical jealousy. The great growth of these classes at the end of the century meant a new form of wealth and a new form of political power, and Sir William Jones probably spoke the feelings of most of his class when he opposed a motion for the Reform of Parliament in 1793. He said "it had ever been his opinion, since he began his political career, that the country had too much of a commercial turn, and that its commerce would soon become more than a match for its virtues. The petitioners proposed a measure that evidently tended to throw weight into a scale which preponderated too much already. He asserted that boroughs, bought and controlled by men of property, formed the only balance to the commercial influence, which was increasing by too rapid strides, and which ought to be checked."[31] So Robert Jenkinson, afterwards Earl of Liverpool, "thought the landed interest, which was the stamina of the country, ought to have the preponderant weight, the manufacturing and commercial interest the next place, and then those whom he styled 'the professional people.'" He therefore opposed attempts to reform Parliament, because "the counties and many of the populous boroughs were required for the return of country gentlemen. The commercial towns secured the election of certain persons in that line, and the close boroughs for the election of the professional people."[32] He thus divided society into nicely

graded classes, and constructed the whole political system with a view to securing that each class should express just the value which he attached to it. Corrupt town constituencies were to be preserved in the constitution in order that the landed gentry might preserve their monopoly of politics against the men of commerce. But a more striking, because a more innocent, revelation of the arrogance of the dominant class is contained in Lord John Russell's record of his discovery of intelligence among employers of labour. Russell was a Whig, and lived long enough to become a Liberal. In 1810, when he was a young man, he made a pilgrimage through England, and solemnly made this entry in his diary. "The first of the few remarks still to be made is the singular quantity of talent we found amongst the manufacturers. There was not one master manufacturer of Manchester or Leeds ... that might not be set apart as a man of sense, and hardly any that, besides being theoretically and practically masters of their own business, were not men of general reading and information."[33] What are we to think of social estimates, when a young nobleman makes a note of signs of intelligence among captains of industry in the conscientious spirit in which his modern successors record traces of civilization among Papuans or the inhabitants of the Congo? The public privileges of the two classes corresponded with these private estimates of their relative importance. Political offices as a matter of course were reserved for the landed proprietors. A trader was sometimes made a knight or a baronet, but never a peer.[34] The best appointments in the Army and Navy and what is now called the Civil Service were distributed in the same way. A Member of Parliament must have a definite income derived from

land.[35] A similar qualification was required in Justices of the Peace. No one could kill game who was not a landowner, or a person holding a licence as gamekeeper from a landowner. If a man died in debt, his plate, furniture, and stock in trade might be seized by his creditors, but his land could not. In every way land was invested with peculiar rights. There were in fact only three ways in which a man might rise to political importance without being a landowner. A few naval officers of high rank had risen from mean beginnings. Servants of the East India Company sometimes acquired vast fortunes in India, and forced their way into domestic politics by sheer weight of wealth. A lawyer of the humblest birth might fight his way up to the Woolsack, and become a peer of the realm. But as a rule the ordinary avenues were open only to the landowning class.

The wage-earning common people were more contemptible than the merchants and manufacturers. On no account were they to be admitted into the political ring. "Send the people to the loom and the anvil," said Lord Westmoreland, and there let them earn bread, instead of wasting time at seditious meetings.[36] "I do not know," said Bishop Horsley, "what the mass of the people in any country have to do with the laws but to obey them."[37] "It requires no proof," said the Lord Justice Clerk from the bench, "to show that the British Constitution is the best that ever was since the creation of the world, and it is not possible to make it better.... A government in every country should be just like a corporation; and in this country it is made up of the landed interest, which alone has a right to be represented; as for the rabble who have nothing but personal property, what hold has the nation upon them?"[38] So Pitt "did not

consider those to be the best friends of the people who were always goading them to bring forward petitions, and encouraging the agitation and discussion of political affairs."[39] Castlereagh, the last great leader of the Tory reaction, "always maintained that in a representative government the preponderance of property and high station was more conducive to order and general prosperity than that of mob orators or needy adventurers.... He was no friend to a system which was to be directed by men who had no other influence than what they could acquire by pandering to the low interests and lower passions of a misguided rabble."[40] The most consistent of all the Tories was Windham, a country gentleman of considerable learning and practical good sense, and the intimate friend of Pitt. He began his political career as a Whig, but turned Tory after the outbreak of the Revolution, and died without a shred of Whiggery left to him, except a qualified dislike of the Slave Trade. He seldom lost an opportunity of depreciating the common people, and of excluding them from politics. "He could not see the harm there was of preventing all endeavours to explain to a poor, illiterate fellow, whose extent of powers was but barely adequate to the task of procuring food for his own subsistence, points which had divided the opinions of the ablest writers."[41] Referring to the case of Bloomfield, a labourer, who wrote a poem called "The Farmer's Boy," he said that "he had doubts how far it was proper to encourage ideas of literary profit or renown in those who had been bred to a useful trade."[42] Speaking against a Bill for the suppression of bull-baiting, he said that the petition from Stamford against the Bill came from "a body of sober, loyal men, who attended to their several vocations, and never meddled with

politics."[43] When Whitbread introduced a Bill to provide a public school in every parish, Windham opposed it. "The increase of this sort of introduction to knowledge would only tend to make the people study politics, and lay them open to the arts of designing men."[44] The publication of the proceedings in Parliament was to be suppressed for similar reasons. "The people at large were entitled to justice—they were entitled to every favour that could be shown to them consistently with their own safety, on which depended their own happiness—they were entitled to every advantage they could possibly be capable of enjoying, as much as the proudest person in the state; but they had not education to enable them to judge of political affairs.... He confessed he never saw any man of a low condition with a newspaper in his hand, and who read any of it, without comparing him to a man who was swallowing poison under the hope of improving his health."[45] Though Windham did not succeed in persuading the House to exclude the reporters, the basis of his case was generally accepted by the Tory party. Plunket described the working classes in the same style as Windham. "He was willing to allow to them the enjoyment of every constitutional privilege which they were entitled to possess; he never could consider that nice discussions on the very frame of the constitution, on the most essential changes in the institutions and fundamental laws of the country, were calculated for minds of such intelligence and cultivation."

Politics, in a word, were bad for the lower classes. "These men, the nature of whose employment and whose education disallowed them to be statesmen, might, however, learn enough to become turbulent and discontented subjects."[46] Government was not

to be according to the will of the people, who were incapable of directing that will rightly. "If, to our misfortune," said Canning, "we had found a popular assembly existing under the direct control of the people, forced to obey its will, and liable to be dismissed by its authority,... it would have been the duty of wise legislators to diminish its overbearing freedom, and to substitute in its place a deliberative freedom."[47] Even public meetings were only to take place under the sanction of the superior class. "Far was it from him," said Castlereagh, in introducing his Six Acts, "to call on the House to do anything that would operate against the ancient and sacred right of the people to petition, under the protection and with the sanction of the magistrates, or the other constituted authorities of the land.... But meetings not called under such authorities, convened by men without character, rank, or fortune, were in all probability called for improper objects, and therefore were a fit subject for the animadversion of the law, and it was but reasonable that they should assemble under circumstances that gave a sort of prima facie security against outrage."[48] There was a general presumption that a popular meeting was a seditious meeting, and if any such meeting was held at all, its respectability must be guaranteed by members of the upper classes. These opinions, aggravated as they were by the excesses of the French Revolution, may be taken as fairly representative of Toryism during the whole of the reign of George III.

The natural consequence of this general depreciation of the poorer people was that they were injured in other ways than mere disfranchisement. The whole scheme of society was so constructed as to prevent them from ever rising above the station in which they were placed. No facilities were provided for

their education by the State, in spite of the obvious inadequacy of private enterprise. A Scottish Act of 1696 had compelled landowners to provide schools in every parish of Scotland. But in England the neglect was gross and widespread. A Select Committee reported in 1818 that not more than 570,000 children were publicly educated. As the number of children of school age was about 2,000,000, this meant that only one child in four received any sort of education. As the teaching was often hopelessly inefficient, the case was much worse even than the figures themselves showed; and as affairs had considerably improved during the twenty years before the Committee began its inquiry, it would probably be fair to assume that in 1788, immediately before the outbreak of the Revolution, only one poor child in ten received any substantial mental training. Lancaster the Quaker began to found schools in 1801, and the British and Foreign and National Societies commenced operations a few years later. No systematic teaching of the poor had been previously attempted except by private benevolence. But it must not be supposed that even charity was always disinterested. Lurking behind many of these projects was the belief in education as a precaution against disorder. Wilberforce spoke of popular education in language which showed that he believed in it not merely because it helped the poorer people to develop their natural capacities. Referring to the political disturbances of 1819, he asked, "If a proper notion of the sacredness of property had been given to the people, would they have passed such resolutions as those by which they had disgraced themselves at Barnsley?"[49] The governing class thus used education partly, at any rate, as a measure of police. Ignorant poverty meant

danger to wealth.

The poorer people, being kept in such a state of intellectual degradation, were naturally criminal to a far greater degree than at the present day, and the criminal law punished their offences with such savagery that juries often acquitted guilty persons rather than expose them to the consequences of an adverse verdict. In 1819 there were still on the Statute Book two hundred felonies punishable with death. When it was proposed to substitute transportation for life for the death penalty in the case of stealing goods worth five shillings from a shop, Lord Ellenborough, the Lord Chief Justice, protested in the House of Lords in the name of himself and all his colleagues on the bench.[50] Conspicuous in ferocity were the Game Laws. In 1816 it was made a crime punishable with transportation for seven years for any person to be found at night in possession of a net or a snare.[51] Spring-guns and man-traps might be set by any landowner about his premises. The public prisons were dens of vice and breeding-places of disease. Women were flogged in public till 1817, and in private till 1819, and transportation meant prostitution for nine women out of ten, if not on the voyage, at any rate after they reached the colony.[52]

While the general state of the common people was so low, some of them had religious consolations. Those of them who belonged to the Church of England were elevated above Dissenters and Catholics, as country gentlemen were elevated above themselves. The same habit of mind persisted in religion as in politics. A particular Church, connected with the ruling class, and staffed by its members and dependents, was termed the Church of the nation.

Others existed only on sufferance. The conditions of their existence were prescribed by the members of the dominant sect. Free-thinkers were punished for blasphemous libel. Dissenting Christians, whether Protestant or Catholic, were excluded in different degrees from public life. Persecution of an active sort was at this date very rare, and Dissenters, at any rate, enjoyed a qualified legal immunity. The Test and Corporation Acts, passed in the reign of Charles II, were still in force, and bound practically every public officer to take the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. As a Liberal Churchman of the time put it, "The Saviour of the world instituted the Eucharist in commemoration of His death—an event so tremendous that afflicted Nature hid herself in darkness; but the British Legislature has made it a qualification for gauging beer-barrels and soap-boilers' tubs, for writing Custom-House dockets and debentures, and for seizing smuggled tea."[53] But breaches of these Acts were regularly committed, and were regularly covered by the passing of an annual Act of Indemnity. The Catholics were in much worse case. A whole code of penal laws had been contrived against them in the reign of William III, and in Ireland, where three-fourths of the people were Catholics, the code had been a fearful engine of oppression. Catholics were by these laws excluded, not only from Parliament and public offices, but from the Army and Navy and the legal profession. A Catholic could not have a priest as his private chaplain. He could not send his children to be educated abroad. He could not inherit land. He could not own horses above a certain value. The exclusions were still absolute in 1760. The grosser interferences with private liberty were, like the Acts against

Dissenters, not commonly enforced, though so late as 1793 a zealous Scottish Protestant claimed his right to tender a Protestant oath to a Catholic landowner, and, on his refusal, to take possession of his estate. [54] But such enjoyments as were possessed by the members of these inferior Churches, including the deliberate mitigations of the existing law, were concessions from their superiors. All was a matter of permission and connivance, and not of right. It was the benevolence of masters which they had to acknowledge, and not the association of equals. "It is idle to hope," said Castlereagh in 1801, "that Dissenters of any description can ever be so zealously attached subjects as those who are of the established religion; but the question is, what system, without hazarding the powers of the State itself, is best calculated, if not warmly to attach, at least to disarm the hostility of those classes in the community who cannot be got rid of, and must be governed?" Pitt, eleven years earlier, displayed less insolence, but was as firmly opposed to any idea of equality between sects. "The Dissenters had a right to enjoy their liberty and property; to entertain their own speculative opinions, and to educate their offspring in such religious principles as they approve. But the indispensable necessity of a certain permanent church establishment, for the good of the state, required that toleration should not be extended to an equality.... He had no idea of such levelling principles as those which warranted to all citizens an equality of rights."[55] This is the essence of Toryism, to grant to others such indulgences as we think fit, and to retain the consciousness of our own superior worth and power, even while we refrain from abusing them.

Within the borders of Great Britain the Tory

philosophy was expressed most crudely and practised most universally in the relations of men and women. Women were made only for those purposes which they could fulfil in connection with men. They must be trained only in those qualities which men required in them, irrespective of their own varying capacities and dispositions. They must not engage in any occupation where they might compete with men. Their political conditions were prescribed by men. Even the moral rules which regulated their private conduct were settled by men, who degraded the wretched prostitute while they permitted themselves the indulgence which produced her downfall. When a woman married a man her real property passed to him for his life and her personal property absolutely, and the subordination of her judgment to his, enjoined upon her by the marriage service, was secured by this deprivation of her economic independence. "The profession of ladies," said Mrs. Hannah More, "to which the bent of their instruction should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families."[56] "Men," said Mrs. Barbauld, "have various departments in life; women have but one.... It is, to be a wife, a mother, a mistress of a family."[57] Association with a man being the beginning and end of a woman's course of life, her whole mind was to be trained, not according to her capacities, but according to what a man would want of her. Almost every contemporary treatise on the education of women emphasizes the necessity of suppressing the woman's intellect in the presence of the man's. "If you have any learning," said Dr. Gregory in a very popular work, "keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts and a cultivated understanding."[58]

"Young ladies," said Mrs. Barbauld, "ought only to have such a general tincture of knowledge as to make them agreeable companions to a man of sense,"[59] and she persuaded Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to abandon her scheme of endowing a women's college. Toryism has never elsewhere been so remorseless in warping nature to its own prejudices, and no slave was ever more carefully trained to intellectual feebleness and triviality, or more carefully educated in submission and docility towards his master, than was the ordinary young English lady of the end of the eighteenth century.[60]

If this was the general atmosphere of feminine education, it is not difficult to understand the ferocious contempt which was poured upon Mary Wollstonecraft, who suggested that women should even take part in affairs of State. Even Fox, who came nearer to pure Liberalism than almost any of his contemporaries, spoke with derision of Woman Suffrage.[61] After the great war with France, demonstrations of the working classes in favour of Reform were frequently attended by women. This drew from Castlereagh a coarse and brutal condemnation. Speaking in favour of his Six Acts, which were intended for the suppression of these popular demonstrations, he said: "There was one point on which he should propose no law; it was the part which women had borne in the late transactions, for he trusted that it would be sufficient to restrain them from similar conduct in future, to let them know that when the French republicans were carrying on their bloody orgies, they could find no female to join them except by ransacking the bagnios and public brothels. He was happy that no female had attended any public meeting in the metropolis. Such a drama would, he trusted, be put an end to by

the innate decorum and the innate sense of modesty which the women in this country possessed, and which would purge the country of this disgrace."[62] Castlereagh was an honest and chivalrous man according to the standards of his time. But which showed the greater appreciation of the real worth of woman, and the greater respect for her real interest, the workman who permitted her to take an active part in political affairs, or the nobleman who hinted that if she so much as showed herself at a public meeting, she was no better than a whore?

Eighteenth-century Toryism was less definitely extended beyond the boundaries of Great Britain than is its modern equivalent. The conception of a nation as a unit in human society had little weight in politics until after the French Revolution. Before that great event the mass of a people was regarded more as an appendage to the titular head of the State than as an aggregate of human beings with claims to control their lives without foreign interference. It was only when nations came to be regarded as collections of individual men and women, whose individual security and happiness were the first objects of their government, and no longer as mere lumps of weight in the balance of power, that the independence of a nation became an important thing in itself. The revolt of the American Colonies, which fired the train of modern Liberalism, was an assertion not only of individual rights as against government, but of the rights of one homogeneous and self-contained community against another. But Toryism had a more ancient and a more thorough experience in Ireland. A clearer example of the egoistic use of one nation by another could hardly be found in history. From the day when the first English raiders descended upon the Irish coast down to the

day when George III ascended the throne the paramount object of the English Government in Ireland had been the maintenance of English and not of Irish interests. It was no longer a case of subjugation and forcible repression. But it was still a case of conscious and deliberate employment of the territory and resources of a conquered people for the benefit of the conquerors. The Irish were left the semblance of freedom, but they were so hedged round with limitations and qualifications that they would have resented slavery no more bitterly. The strength of their limbs served only to aggravate the fretting of their chains. They had a Parliament which could legislate only as the English Parliament allowed. They could engage in industry, but only in such industries as the English Government, ever jealous for the English manufacturer, permitted. They could make goods for export, but the English Government kept the most lucrative branches of foreign and colonial trade for its own people, and practically confined the Irish to supplying such goods as it required for its own domestic consumption. Englishmen owned land in Ireland, and spent the rents in England. English clergy owned cures in Ireland, and did their duties by deputy. The whole system was absentee, and the fate of Ireland was always decided abroad.

But the worst of the grievances of the Irish were the penal laws against Catholics, by which racial and religious Toryism combined to deprive of property and exclude from public life, not a sect, but almost an entire people. Of all the instruments of foreign tyranny, religious disabilities are the most hateful, and if economic abuses did more to impoverish the Irish, the penal laws did most to poison their temper. The Irishman's enemy pursued him into his most

private heart, and as the wound was deepest, so the resentment was most fierce. The laws were not enforced so mercilessly as they had been fifty years before. But they remained on the Statute Book, and kept alive the memories of the more active persecutions of the past. The whole nation was thus aggrieved. The Protestants suffered no less than the Catholics from the legislative and commercial grievances, and if the religious disabilities tended to sunder the dominant caste from the rest of the people, both sects tended to forget their mutual hostility in their hatred of the common enemy. Towards the end of the century a few English statesmen foresaw the inevitable explosion, and urged that the recognition of Irish nationality was the only way to establish good Irish government. Not even an Irish Parliament could work if it was closed to the vast majority of the people. "The Catholics," said Fox, "are no longer a party. The parties now to be dreaded in Ireland are, on the one hand, a few people holding places of great emolument, and supporting corruption and abuses; and, on the other, the Irish nation.... I no longer apprehend any danger to Ireland from disputes between the Catholics and the Protestants; what I apprehend is the alienation of the whole Irish people from the English Government."[63] "God never intended one country to govern another," said Shelburne, "but that each country should govern itself."[64] "In a mighty empire," said Dr. Laurence, "which enjoyed the blessing of a free constitution pervading the whole, where two independent Parliaments existed, that which was the more illustrious and exalted in character, in authority, and in jurisdiction, he should have expected, would have felt it to be its peculiar duty to cultivate, protect, and foster in the other,

whatever could be there discovered of the true parliamentary spirit. And what was that spirit? A zealous attachment of each and all to their proper constitution, a conscious sense of their own dignity, a reverence for themselves, a vehement and a jealous love of independence."[65]

These Whigs, speaking after the French Revolution had shaken old political systems to their foundations, expressed the Liberal theory of the Empire, that local control of local affairs is not only the best preventive of English egoism, but also the best cure for local feuds. But in 1760, thirty years before the Revolution, few Englishmen of either party could be persuaded, in dealing with Ireland, to consult anybody's interest but their own. In 1778 Bills were introduced to abolish most of the restrictions upon Irish trade with England and the Colonies. So vehement was the opposition aroused by these proposals that we are assured by a contemporary authority that "a foreign invasion could scarcely have created a greater alarm." Petitions poured in from every quarter except the City of London. Even the errors of the English manufacturers displayed their bitter and unreasoning jealousy. An old Statute had permitted the importation of Irish sailcloth. This Statute was overlooked, and one of the new Bills proposed, in effect, to enact what was already law. But this was opposed as fiercely as the rest, and the most disastrous consequences were predicted from a practice which had been in operation for half a century. The efforts of Burke and the other champions of Ireland were powerless in this whirl of selfishness. Most of the proposed reforms were abandoned, and his disinterested conduct cost Burke his seat for Bristol.[66] No other events of the time so clearly showed how the great majority of Englishmen

regarded Ireland.

Such was the general scheme of Toryism, an elaborate system of distinctions. A small class of male, rich, Church of England landowners controlled and regulated the whole of political society. This class monopolized public honours and dignities of every kind, and in each of their separate spheres of aristocracy smaller personages lorded it over those without the pale. Some were invested with all the privileges at once, others might content themselves with one or two. Everywhere some one was exalted and some one depressed, irrespective of their natural capacities and their intrinsic worth. It is not suggested here that active tyranny was at all common. The Catholics were not persecuted as they had been in the reign of William III. Dissenters were generally indulged. The education of women, bad as it was, was substantially better than in the time of the later Stuarts. The working classes enjoyed a much higher degree of comfort and security than was to be theirs for a century to come. But the atmosphere of Toryism remained. The test of a political system is not how it operates in a state of equilibrium, but how it shows itself in the face of changes. Condescension and indulgence are no less the marks of tyranny than persecution and confiscation, and its essential nature is revealed when the inferior asks to be permitted to think and act for himself. When economic and psychological changes began to break down the old acquiescence in arbitrary disposition, Toryism became active, positive, and subjugating.

Formally contrasted with the political party which was called Tory, was the political party which was called Whig. In many respects the contrast was no

more than formal. The fundamental assumptions of the two parties about the comparative worth of classes were the same, though the Whigs relied more than the Tories upon commercial places like the City of London. In theory there was substantial difference between the two conceptions of the State. The Tories preferred strong government, and inclined towards the Crown, as its titular head. The theory of Hobbes thus expressed the Tory mind: "The Covenant of the State is made in such a manner as if every man should say to every man, 'I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner.' This done, the multitude so united is called a Commonwealth."[67] In this view association in political society is association in surrender. The essence of it is subordination. The Whigs, on the other hand, inclined towards Locke. "Men being by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the power of another without his own consent. The only way whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community."[68] The essence of this association was delegation and not surrender. The subject conferred power without abandoning his right to control the use of it. The theory of Locke was afterwards incorporated by Rousseau and the other French thinkers into their revolutionary philosophy, and at the end of the eighteenth century its effect was tremendous. It contains the germ of complete Liberalism, But in England it was long embedded in a mass of circumstances which prevented it from attaining to full growth. The people who held it were

aristocrats and landowners, and they converted the potentiality of Liberalism into the fact of Whiggery. Whiggery, in short, was nothing but Liberalism qualified by interest.

To this extent Whigs and Tories were distinguished. The Whigs, in the line of old controversies, inclined to Parliament as against the Crown. Society, according to Locke, was based upon a sort of contract. Each member, subject to the corresponding rights of his neighbours, was entitled to enjoy such property as he acquired without interference by others. For the common good, certain general rules are contrived by agreement, and the State is entrusted with all powers necessary for protecting the common interest of the whole as well as the separate interests of the individual members. As the State affects all, so it must act with the consent of all, and a representative Parliament is the only means of expressing that consent. This argument puts the supreme control of the State in the hands of Parliament. If the Tories had any definite theory of this nature, it was more that of Hobbes, who suggested that the State was imposed upon Society for the purpose of maintaining order among mutually hostile individuals. The two schools of thought were thus led to emphasize, in the one case, the need for Parliamentary control, and in the other, the need for a strong executive Government. But this theoretic distinction, though it contained the seeds of many practical divergences, did not correspond, in the year 1760, to any great difference of character. The Whigs as a body were aristocratic, they were Protestant, they were Church of England, they were territorial, they were male. The sole point in which they were substantially more Liberal than the Tories was the toleration of opinion. They inherited from Locke a

much more real belief that a man had a right to think as he pleased, and to express his opinions as he pleased. They were more willing that other people should differ from themselves. They had no doubt of their own superiority, but they did not abuse their inferiors. They remained themselves orthodox, but they declined to persecute.

This general toleration must not be rated at too high a value. Religion was a cold and lifeless thing among the governing class, and the Wesleyan movement, which began about this time to breathe a new moral spirit into the common people, was treated by the bulk of fashionable society with extreme contempt. Toleration sprang more often from indifference than from generosity, and when the French Revolution broke out most of the Whig aristocracy deserted to the Established Church as one of the strongholds of reaction. Religion then became valuable to property. So long as it meant little, they gave it liberty. When restriction became useful to the magistrate, liberty was forgotten. It was only a small section of the Whigs that, at any particular date between 1760 and 1820, could be found steadily and conscientiously practising Liberal ideas even in religion. In the early part of that period Liberalism existed only among the body headed by Lord Rockingham, of whom Edmund Burke was the brains and the tongue. Burke thus attacked the Catholic disabilities: "To exclude whole classes of men entirely from this part of government cannot be considered as absolute slavery. It only implies a lower and degraded state of citizenship; such is (with more or less strictness) the condition of all countries in which an hereditary nobility possess the exclusive rule." He admits that "this may be no bad form of government," but declares that in the Irish case the indirect hardships produced by the

Protestant ascendancy are more even than the indirect. "They are rivalled, to say the least of the matter, in every laborious and lucrative cause of life; while every franchise, every honour, every trust, every place down to the very lowest and least confidential (besides whole professions) is reserved for the master cast.... If they who compose the privileged body have not an interest, they must but too frequently have motives of pride, passion, petulance, peevish jealousy, a tyrannic suspicion, to urge them to treat the excluded people with contempt and rigour." This is pure Liberalism, perceiving that the whole man is depreciated by his political disabilities.[69] So Fox said of the Catholic claims: "Though they require only qualification for corporations, Parliament, and offices under Government, the object is of great magnitude to them. It is founded on the great principle of requiring to be placed on a footing of equality with their fellow-subjects."[70] This insight was rare, and it was confined almost entirely to matters of religion. Discussion of political and proprietary institutions was as hateful to the ordinary Whig after the Revolution as to any Tory, and even Burke always drew the line at Unitarians. This Church had been excluded from the Toleration Act of William III, and in 1792, the year in which Burke wrote his *Letter to Langrishe*, Fox introduced a Bill to put them in the same position as other Dissenters. Some of the Unitarians, especially Priestley of Birmingham, had written and spoken in favour of the Revolution, and a Unitarian society had celebrated the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. Burke's support of the Catholics may have been partly due to his reverence for the antiquity of their creed, which was, if anything, more venerable and more august than his

own. The Unitarians were revolutionaries in religion and in politics alike, and were opposed to the Established Church. "Let them disband as a faction," said Burke, "and let them act as individuals; and when I see them with no other views than to enjoy their own conscience in peace, I for one shall most cheerfully vote for their relief." Fox was beaten by two to one, and the Unitarians were not relieved until the end of the French War.

With the exception of this Rockingham section, and the small section which at a later date took the Liberal view of the French Revolution, there were no Whigs who showed a real tendency towards Liberalism. They suffered, for the most part, no uneasiness at aristocratic monopolies, and had no illusions about the equal worth of all human beings and their right to equal opportunities. They believed in a governing class as firmly as the Tories, and but for their religious freedom and their dislike of prosecutions for seditious libels the Rockingham Whigs were not much better than the rest. Government must always remain in the hands of aristocracy. There must be an element of representation in order to prevent an abuse of the governed by men endowed with absolute power. But representation must be of classes and interests, and not of persons; and it must always be qualified by property. "Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a State that does not represent its ability as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it can never be safe from the invasions of ability unless it be out of all proportion in the representation."[71] The franchise must be confined to men of substance, and so long as there was a fair representation of all classes, except

those who had no property, it was of little importance that whole centres of population had no representatives at all, while some depopulated districts had almost as many representatives as electors. The individual voter did not count. He voted as representing an interest. One manufacturing town would be able to protect the industries of all. One seaport would maintain the interest of all. It was a sufficient check on a Government that there was one channel of communication through which its subjects might make their complaints audible.

The elector thus appointed had no power to suggest or to originate. He could only check and prevent. So Burke, in his speech on a Bill for Shortening the Duration of Parliaments, said: "Faithful watchmen we ought to be over the rights and privileges of the people. But our duty, if we are qualified for it as we ought, is to give them information, and not to receive it from them; we are not to go to school to them to learn the principles of law and government. In doing so we should not dutifully serve, but we should basely and scandalously betray the people, who are not capable of this service by nature, nor in any instance called to it by the constitution.... They can well see whether we are tools of a court or their honest servants ... but of the particular merits of a measure I have other standards." Philip Francis was no less explicit: "In the lowest situations of life the people know, as well as we do, that wherever personal industry is encouraged, and property is protected, there must be inequalities of possession, and consequently distinction of ranks. Then come the form and the order, by which the substance is at once defined and preserved. Distribution and limitation prevent confusion, and government by orders is the natural result of property protected by

Freedom."[72] In plain English, the Whigs regarded man not as a political, but as a proprietary animal. The object of the State was to protect man as the owner of property. Man as a living creature was not its concern. If he could acquire property he came within its consideration. If he could not, it would not help him; he must fend for himself. He had a right to its protection against interference, but he must expect no positive help. Equal worth, equal rights, and equal opportunities were principles of which the Whigs knew as little as the Tories themselves.

Between 1760 and 1820 there were only two prominent Whigs who approached complete Liberalism. Others occasionally used language which led in the same direction. Lord Moira was not far away in 1796, when he opposed a Bill for suppressing public meetings. "He could not believe that the Almighty made any part of mankind merely to work and eat like beasts. He had endowed man with reasoning faculties, and given him leave to use them." Whitbread was as near when he introduced a Bill to enable justices to fix a minimum wage instead of leaving workmen to charity and the Poor Law. "Charity afflicted the mind of a good man, because it took away his independence—a consideration as valuable to the labourer as to the man of high rank."[73] But the Whig leaders whose settled habits of mind were most Liberal were Shelburne and Charles James Fox. Shelburne's Liberalism was deep and philosophic, that of Fox impetuous and practical. But both, though they were never friendly with each other, had substantially the same sympathies in all controversies of their time. Shelburne seems to have had no social prejudices. He was an intimate friend of Bentham the Utilitarian, of Priestley the Unitarian, of Price the Dissenting parson-economist, and of

Horne Tooke the Radical. He even appointed a Dissenting minister as tutor to his son. In politics he held opinions which were astonishingly in advance of those of his contemporaries. He was a Free Trader. He favoured the election of local authorities, the abolition of alehouses, the encouragement of workmen's clubs and friendly societies, annual national holidays, cheap county courts, the conversion of prisons into reformatory institutions, and national compulsory education.[74] This practical Liberalism was inspired by original Liberal theory. The old feudalism and government by territorial aristocracy must go, and the middle and working classes must take its place. After the fall of the Bastille he said: "The nonsense of feudality can never be revived.... The Bastille cannot be rebuilt. The administration of justice and feudality cannot again go together.... The rest ... may be very safely left to public opinion and to the light of the times. Public opinion once set free acts like the sea never ceasingly, controlling imperceptibly and irresistibly both laws and ministers of laws, reducing and advancing everything to its own level."[75] In drawing up a series of reflections on society he laid down "one fundamental principle, never to be departed from, *to put yourself in the power of no man*."

"Constitutional liberty consists in the right of exercising freely every faculty of mind or body, which can be exercised without preventing another man from doing the like.... No man can be trusted with power over another.... No gratitude can withstand power. Every man from the monarch down to the peasant is sure to abuse it."[76] The territorial theory he despised. "It would have been happy if the right of primogeniture was destroyed altogether or never had existed."[77] He said that the

middle and working classes were sure to govern England in the long run, and not only published an English edition of Condorcet's *Life of Turgot*, in order to spread sound economic ideas among them, but even proposed to found a non-party and Free Trade newspaper to be called *The Neutralist*.[78] He welcomed the rise of the new industrial democracy. "Towns," he said, "will be always found the most open to conviction, and among them the tradesmen and middling class of men. Next to them are the manufacturers [*i.e.*, the workmen], after which, but at a great distance, comes the mercantile interest, for in fact they belong to no country, their wealth is movable, and they seek to gain by all, which they are in the habit of doing at the expense of every principle; but last of all come the country gentlemen and farmers, for the former have had both their fortunes and their understandings at a stand ... and the farmers, who, uneducated and centered in their never-ceasing pursuit of gain, are incapable of comprehending anything beyond it."[79] This frank acceptance of the new order at home and abroad, and this wise confidence in the good sense of the classes who were coming into power contrast very forcibly with the frantic denunciations of Jacobinism in which Burke taught most of his contemporaries to indulge. Shelburne was generally suspected and disliked by his associates, and the only explanation seems to be his undisguised indifference to the conventions of the old order.

Fox was as Liberal in his own way as Shelburne, and if his Liberalism was less wise, it was much more lively. Even his vices seem not to have impaired what was a rare and beautiful nature. He never took sides coldly. As a mere debater he excelled. He was a perfect master of words, and no English orator has

ever surpassed him in readiness, in force, in the arrangement of a case, in simplicity and directness of statement. But his finest quality was his warmth of heart. He was a very spendthrift of sympathy, and every speech of his on behalf of the Americans against England, of the Indians against Warren Hastings, of Revolutionary France against her foreign invaders, of the Irish Catholics against their Protestant oppressors, or of the English common people against their reactionary Government, had a reality which was absent from the more splendid utterances of men like Sheridan. Even Burke, who was allied with Fox in such fierce contests as those about America, Warren Hastings, and Catholic disabilities, never felt a cause as Fox felt it. Fox had that very rare and admirable faculty of inserting himself into the very heart of the oppressed and of resenting their wrongs as if they had been his own. Even in his greatest moments, when he denounced the treatment of the Americans or of the Hindoos, Burke was external to the object of his sympathy. He was a sort of divine arbiter, condemning wickedness because it violated an eternal principle. Fox was never more than human, and if he was always less majestic than Burke, his sensitiveness was far more acute. "The defeats of great armies of invaders," he said, "always gave me the greatest satisfaction in reading history, from Xerxes' time downwards."[80] A man who can feel the ardour of a patriot in a struggle more than two thousand years old may be a bad philosopher, but he is the best possible champion of struggling colonies, of oppressed nationalities, and of peoples whose governors deprive them of the rights of liberty and discussion. His defence of democratic institutions shows how Fox got into the heart of Liberalism. "We are

compelled to own that it gives a power of which no other form of government is capable. Why? Because it incorporates every man with the State, because it arouses everything that belongs to the soul as well as to the body of man; because it makes every individual feel that he is fighting for himself, and not for another; that it is his own cause, his own safety, his own concern, his own dignity on the face of the earth, and his own interest on the identical soil which he has to maintain."[81] It was this capacity for seeking human beings rather than forms which made Fox such a champion of liberty during the great war with France. He never thought out his principles, and his instinct for their application was not always unerring. There are some early instances of factious opposition, which do him no credit. But he stood the great test of the French Revolution, and if others provide posterity with more of the philosophy of Liberalism than he, no other ever preached it more honestly or more courageously in his day.

With these exceptions the Whig party of the end of the eighteenth century contained few believers in Liberalism. The parties were indeed less sharply divided at the accession of George III than they are at the present time. Groups of statesmen, like the Rockingham Whigs, were united on general principles of government. Districts, like the City of London and Westminster, showed a general inclination towards democratic institutions. But party ties were largely personal, and George III deliberately set himself to break down divisions of opinion by bribery and intimidation, and to consolidate a majority of the Commons in a union which had nothing in common but its subserviency to the Crown. The labels of Whig and Tory could not

then be applied so surely as those of Liberal and Conservative to-day. Liberal opinions are therefore to be found only in a state of partial distribution. The Rockingham Whigs were Liberal in maintaining the supremacy of Parliament over the Crown, in claiming the rights of free election and free discussion for the electors, in advocating the abolition of religious disabilities, and especially in defending the American colonists against arbitrary government from England. But even they had no belief in a wide franchise, and some of them, who lived into the French Revolution, even became violently reactionary. Liberalism was thus a matter of patchwork at the best, and it would be difficult to find any considerable party of men who were united in a substantially Liberal political creed until 1868, when Gladstone's first Government came into power. The general tone of government up to the outbreak of the Revolution was Tory, tempered in some quarters by Liberal views of special subjects. After the Revolution, though the general aspect was more definitely Tory, a real Liberal appearance was assumed by a small section of the Whig party, and the growth of modern Liberalism actually began.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST MOVEMENT TOWARDS LIBERALISM

Three great events, or series of events, combined to produce the process of individual emancipation, which is the subject of this book. The first was the

economic transformation, called the Industrial Revolution, which began about 1760 and ended about 1830. The second was the American Rebellion, which ended in the recognition of the independence of the United States in 1783. The third was the French Revolution, in part at least a consequence of the American Rebellion, which ended in the establishment of a Republic in 1793.[82] The first operated to change the conditions of life of the English people. The second and third operated to communicate to them ideas for which their new conditions of life had made them ready. Revolutions are never the product of circumstances alone, or of speculation alone. They are begotten by speculation acting upon circumstances. New ideas falling upon a people who have no reason to seek change bring forth little fruit. New ideas falling upon a people who have cause for discontent may bring forth fruit a hundredfold. England, at the end of the eighteenth century, was a society in a state of rapid economic change, which produced a disposition in the mass of the community to alter institutions adapted for more stable conditions. From America and from France came the preaching of the right of the individual to control his own life, which precisely suited the case of those whom swift alterations of the economic structure exposed to injury.

For the purposes of this work it is not necessary to examine the industrial changes in detail. They had four leading features: the discovery of new processes of manufacture, the invention of machinery, the application of power, and the improvement of communications. The application of coal, instead of wood, to the smelting of iron, and the introduction of powerful machinery in the cotton and woollen industries, enormously increased the production of

goods, and with that the demand for workpeople and the size of towns. In 1761 Brindley and the Duke of Bridgewater began constructing canals, which enabled goods to be carried about the country in greater bulk and with more speed than was ever possible with packhorses and carts. James Watt obtained his first patent for the steam-engine in 1769, and by the end of the century it was established in almost every industry of importance. All these changes combined to increase to an enormous extent the quantity of manufactured articles. But they did much more. They altered the distribution of population, and they altered the whole system upon which industry was based. Two things were of vital importance for the working of the new inventions. The iron industry had formerly been situated in the South of England, where the forests of Sussex provided ample fuel. The coal-beds lay in South Wales and the North of England, and the iron mines lay conveniently beside them. The iron industry accordingly disappeared entirely from Sussex, and was re-established in the other districts. The coal and iron industries determined the situation of the industries which required steam power and machinery. The cotton industry found another of its necessities in the climate of Lancashire. The woollen industry was transferred from Norfolk, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Devonshire to the West Riding of Yorkshire. These geographical redistributions of industry, in the course of half a century, shifted the bulk of the population to the Midlands and the North.

The change was not merely geographical. Machinery required additional capital expenditure, and steam power must be used on a large scale if it was to be profitable. For the old manufacturer, a workman

managing tools or a hand machine in his own cottage, was substituted the new manufacturer, a capitalist employing large numbers of artisans in his factory, managing his large machines, which were operated by his steam power. The old system was a system of small and scattered master workmen, producing and selling their own goods. The new system was a system of closely aggregated wage-earners, producing goods for a common employer, who provided the machinery, the power, and the superintendence, and sold the product of their labour for his own profit. This feature of the Industrial Revolution was as important as its redistribution of industry. It meant a considerable loss of independence among the working class, and it meant the birth of an entirely new class, the employers of labour, whose wealth and importance were destined to rival and eventually to surpass that of the landed gentry.

The most obvious consequence of these economic changes was the conversion of the rustic cottager into the town-dwelling artisan, and the growth of the towns presented difficulties and created grievances of which previous generations had had little experience. The towns were designed at hazard, with little adaptation to the needs of the present, and with no view to the needs of the future. They were hastily planned and hastily built. The problem of the slum, previously recognized only in London and a few seaports and country towns, was now to be found in every little factory town which sprang up in the potteries, the textile districts, and the coal and iron districts. Narrow streets, dark courts, houses built back to back, inadequate sanitary appliances, deficient water-supply, bad drainage, every evil thing which to-day stares at the sad eyes of progress, was

planted at a thousand spots where before there had at least been open country and fresh air. Factory and housing legislation were unknown. Men toiled twelve or fourteen hours a day in bad air, in excessive heat or cold, and with insufficient light. Women, who had been accustomed to weave, and spin, and bake, and brew in their own cottage homes, followed their industries into the factories. Some of them toiled underground in coalpits. A child of six might be worked for fourteen hours a day in a mine, as a chimney sweep, at a potter's oven, or in a cotton mill. Pauper children were farmed out to employers under conditions which were no better than slavery. Wages, in the absence of any real combination among the workpeople, were at the discretion of the employers, and naturally fell to the lowest possible level. Some trades were better than others, and some employers were better than others. But the evidence collected by different Parliamentary Committees between 1800 and 1840 is overwhelming proof of general, if not universal, degradation. The managing class seems to have believed that leisure was dangerous, even for little children, and the poor were made slaves, lest they should become dissolute.

The conditions of life and labour, bad as they were, were often made worse by the precarious nature of employment. At the present day, invention seldom inflicts great shocks upon labour. Improvements are constant but gradual. In the hurry of the Industrial Revolution, invention proceeded at an accelerating pace, and the introduction of some new appliance into a single industry might reduce the demand for labour by a quarter, or a half, or even three-quarters, and almost depopulate a town at a single blow. Some trades were more fortunate than others in this respect, but almost all suffered. All alike were

injured by the constant wars in which the country was involved. These wasted capital, increased the taxation of the necessaries of life, and, by disturbing foreign trade, made profits speculative, and so made it difficult for the most benevolent manufacturer to establish his business upon the basis of high and steady wages for his workfolk. The country was never actually invaded, so that industry was never ruined, as it was ruined in Germany and other parts of Europe. Even Napoleon clothed his troops in Yorkshire woollens when he set out to conquer Russia. But the production of wealth, which so increased in spite of war, was chiefly for the benefit of the employing and investing classes. The share of the working class was undoubtedly much less in proportion than their share under the old system. But their lot was made harder still by high prices, and especially by the high price of corn. The growth of population had, by the end of the eighteenth century, made it impossible for the country to supply all the wheat required for domestic consumption. The war checked imports, bad harvests reduced the home supply, and a vicious protective tariff completed the work of natural causes. Between 1785 and 1794 the average price of a quarter of wheat was about 50s. Between 1795 and 1801 it was about 87s., and at a later date it rose to a still greater height. The industrial population was thus distressed by bad conditions of life, fluctuations of employment, long hours, low wages, and high prices. When we recollect that this society was composed very largely of ignorant men, we are not surprised to find many of them disaffected and even turbulent. The man who knows, or thinks that he knows a remedy for his misery is often dangerous. But he is never so dangerous as the man who knows nothing of causes

and effects, has never pondered over a question of economics, and, as he has never sought an explanation for the present, can have little idea of how he can most wisely direct the future. The progress of the Industrial Revolution was thus accompanied by suffering and discontent among the labouring population.

These economic changes led directly to psychological changes, and the new thinking was not merely the expression of unreasoning discomfort. An entirely new class appeared in society. The employers of labour were added to the other elements of the middle class, the merchants and shipowners, the barristers and doctors, and the better sort of clergy and attorneys. The new class, larger and more wealthy than any of the others, was dominated by no traditions, either for good or evil, and it depended for its existence and growth upon qualities of enterprise and adaptability, which territorial wealth neither required from nor fostered in its owners. The rise of the capitalist employers meant a great increase in the Liberal spirit, and their influence eventually broke down the Toryism of the old landed interest. The manufacturers were perhaps more Liberal than they knew, and their unconscious influence on political habits of mind was as great as their deliberate expression of new ideas. The whole atmosphere in which they lived was fatal to Conservatism, and new ideas moved more rapidly among them than among those who were surrounded by the stereotyped forms and persisting influences of a feudal land system. Manufacture, by its constantly changing processes, accustoms those who engage in it to the idea of continual adaptation and improvement. Its organizers are never afraid of change in itself, and they always refer established

things to standards of utility. They are intolerant of any thing which appears to subject convenience to forms. The early capitalists were therefore little disposed to set much store by the distinctions of sects and orders. They were wealthy, and were naturally not inspired by zeal for the wider distribution of wealth. They were employers of labour, and were naturally not anxious to strengthen labour in its demand for higher wages and better conditions. But they were ready to accept, not manhood suffrage, but the reform of rotten boroughs; not the disestablishment of the Church, but the removal of the disabilities of Dissenters and Catholics; not social reform, but the abolition of the protective tariff; not State education, but the mitigation of the ferocities of the criminal law; not the appropriation of the unearned increment of land, but the destruction of the antiquated ceremonies which made its transfer difficult and expensive. The general effect of the rise of this class was to strengthen Liberalism, not so much by a direct assault upon Toryism as by overbearing Conservatism. One positive piece of Liberal work is due to them. Their whole industrial system was built up in free and open competition. They hated the interference of the State, and it was they who, in a subsequent generation, abolished Protection. But at the time with which this chapter is concerned, their chief value lay in that they had none of the aristocratic Tory's antipathy to new ideas as such. They had no love of political monopolies which were not their own.

The effect of the Industrial Revolution upon the minds of the working class was infinitely more acute. The employers had no aversion to change. The employed had every reason to seek for it. While they became, as dwellers in towns, more exposed to the

infection of new ideas, they encountered new hardships, which made them more sensitive. Political doctrines, which hardly stirred the mind of a cottager, dividing his time between manufacturing and tilling a small plot of ground in open country, sounded loudly in the ears of an artisan, quickened by contact with machinery and constant intercourse with his fellows in the factory or in the street, cramped by living in a sunless court in a crowded town, earning a bare subsistence by exhausting labour, or thrown out of work by the introduction of a new machine or the bankruptcy of his employer. Even in the absence of systematic education, there is a kind of intellectual development which is inevitable in industrial society. Friendly societies, Trade Unions, crowded workshops, closely packed dwellings, all tend to stimulate the exchange of ideas, and however clumsy the industrial organization of the period may have been, it inevitably produced a new quickness of thinking. The character of that thinking was determined by the conditions of life.

Political disability may have nothing, it cannot have much, to do directly with economic distresses. But no people in a state of bodily misery was ever yet persuaded by the most logical argument that the one is not connected indissolubly with the other. They are wretched. They cannot control their circumstances. Does it not follow that if they could control their own circumstances they would cease to be wretched? Economic discontent invariably produces political discontent, and that whether the sufferer has a voice in his government or not. It is always to the advantage of society that he should have such a voice. If he has a vote he may overturn a Government. But he will not overturn all

government. He may expel a party. He will not subvert the State. Whether a trade depression will produce a revolution or only a General Election depends on whether the bulk of the working people are enfranchised or not. In the one case the party system provides discontent with an alternative. In the other there is no hope of constitutional change. Probably only the excitement of the war with France saved England from violent internal disturbances at the end of the eighteenth century. The sense of national power is a good anodyne for personal misery, as governing classes have always been aware. But if there was no great disaster, there was grave unrest. All circumstances combined to make the preaching of new social principles popular and their application to the existing state of society fierce.

It was not merely a vague and general suffering which stimulated political discussion among the working classes at this time. They had definite grievances, which were obviously produced by their disfranchisement and could only be removed by their admission to political power. When the Industrial Revolution began, there was still on the Statute Book the Act of Elizabeth, which allowed the magistrates to fix wages in proportion to the prevailing local price of corn. It is doubtful whether this method of establishing a minimum wage based on the standard of bare subsistence could have been used successfully in the new conditions. Country gentlemen might have been able to make an accurate guess at a fair wage when industry was stable and competition not acute. They would certainly be incompetent in the age of machinery, of violent fluctuations of trade, and of intense competition between employers. The only people who can ever fix minimum wages are

the employers and workmen themselves, acting through representatives. But the Act offered at least the opportunity of experiment, and any attempt to preserve a decent standard of life among the workpeople would have been better than the alternative of leaving the standard to the discretion of the employer, who would naturally be disposed to make it low. The agricultural labourers made several attempts to get their wages fixed in this way.[83] For various reasons the Act was not enforced, and in 1795 the magistrates began to adopt the alternative of granting poor relief regulated by the price of corn. This was the fatal Speenhamland policy, which, by securing a subsistence to all labourers, irrespective of their work, degraded their character by making up wages to the subsistence level, whatever their amount, induced employers to reduce wages for pauper labourers and independent labourers alike, and, by enormously increasing the burden of rates, seriously injured the whole agricultural industry.

A similar experience befell many of the artisans, especially the cotton weavers. In 1795 Whitbread introduced a Bill, which proposed to apply the principles of the Elizabethan Act to the workers in towns. It was read a second time without opposition, but got no farther. Thirteen years later a second Bill was defeated by the Economists and *laissez faire*. It was honestly believed by theorists and by the few practical politicians who, like Pitt, were beginning to study political economy, that wages could only be fixed by bargaining between employers and employed, and depended upon the extent of the wages fund, the amount left after the employers had paid the rent of their land, the interest on their capital, and their own profits. This fund was always assumed to be fixed. Any attempt to increase it

meant a reduction of profits, and a reduction of profits meant a less inducement to employers to establish industries, and consequently a reduction of employment. To some extent the argument was sound. During the rapid transition from hand labour to machinery, it might have been worth an employer's while to employ large numbers of men at low wages rather than a small number of men with expensive machinery. A slight increase of the average wage might have turned the balance in favour of the machinery. But the argument as a whole ignored two facts. The first was that the inducement offered to the employers was excessive, and that they might still have established as many factories, even if their profits had been somewhat less. The second was that an increase in wages would have been followed by increased efficiency and an increased production of wealth, leaving larger sums to be given to employers and employed alike. These considerations did not weigh with the early economists. Wages were left to what was called free bargaining, in which the comparatively wealthy employer got the better of his comparatively poor workmen.

This refusal of redress by legislation was the more exasperating because it was accompanied by a prohibition of redress by combination. Parliament would neither help the workmen nor allow them to help themselves. Attempts to organize Trade Unions were discouraged or actively suppressed. In 1799 and 1800 two Combination Acts were passed, which made illegal all contracts between workmen for obtaining an advance in wages, for reducing hours of employment, for preventing employers from employing any particular workman, or for controlling any person in the management of his

business. Breach of the Acts was made a criminal offence, punishable by fine and imprisonment.[84] Combinations of employers were nominally prohibited in precisely the same way, but in the political circumstances of the time the law was enforced only against the men. Trade Unions, in fact, continued to exist, and in many trades they succeeded in arranging wages with the masters. So long as the relations of employers and employed were friendly, the Acts were left alone. But when a strike began they were brought into operation, and the workpeople were forcibly reminded of the consequences of political impotence. Large numbers of them were thus reduced to the same state as the agricultural labourers, and lived on scanty wages, eked out by charity and the Poor Law.

The Industrial Revolution thus gradually transformed society, and created what were substantially two new classes of people, of which the first was by nature averse to Conservatism, and the second was by circumstances made restless and eager for change. The successive events of the American Rebellion and the French Revolution fell upon this changing society like flame upon stubble. But a few years before the dispute with the Colonies came to a head, there took place a sort of preliminary demonstration of the principles which that controversy forced into prominence. Speculation had brought a small body of Englishmen to definite support of manhood suffrage, annual Parliaments, and the substitution of pledged delegates for representatives with freedom of action. These principles were simply the logical extreme of Liberalism. If every man is to be regarded as equal with every other, then every man must have a vote. If every man ought to have a vote, he must be allowed to exercise it as soon as he becomes entitled

to it, and therefore Parliament must be dissolved every year in order to permit the new voters to express their wishes. If every man ought to have a vote, he must be allowed to vote not merely on general principles of policy, but on details, and his representative must be instructed to vote for or against without using his own discretion. This abstract reasoning had not affected any large proportion of the population. The Duke of Richmond was the most distinguished of these speculators; John Cartwright, a naval officer, who afterwards became a major in the militia, was the most voluminous of their writers; their most effective workers were men like the clerical Horne Tooke and Wyvil; and their largest following was in the county of Yorkshire. As a political force they counted for nothing at all. But the affair of Wilkes and the Middlesex election brought the whole subject of representative government vividly into the public eye, and the political philosophers found their doctrines for a short time popular.

Between 1768 and 1770 there was a distinct tendency in politics towards the reform of Parliament, the reduction of the number of rotten boroughs, and the restriction of the influence of the Crown. This was produced by bad harvests and industrial depression. The expulsion of John Wilkes from the House of Commons in 1770 brought this discontent to a head, and provoked not only dangerous riots in London, but also violent discussion of political principles. Wilkes was a disreputable person, though not more disreputable than some men who enjoyed the confidence of the Crown and Parliament. He was obnoxious to the Government of the day, and after twice beating the Tory candidate for Middlesex, was twice expelled

from the House. The Government and the House thus asserted their right to refuse to accept the chosen representative of the electors, and, in effect, to dictate to them what representative they should choose. It did not require any pedantic process of reasoning to show that this was the negation of representative government, even of the qualified representative government of that time. The right of election is nothing unless it is the right to elect whom the electors please. Within the metropolitan area the House of Commons was fiercely attacked, and there was more than one conflict between the Courts of Law and the Executive. The main question was whether the House of Commons was to be a private assembly of gentlemen, managing public affairs as irresponsibly as they managed their own estates, or whether it was to be a public assembly, chosen by the community and responsible to it. "What were the relations between the House of Commons and the constituencies? Could the House dictate to the constituencies whom they should elect? If it could, did it not follow that members were neither representatives nor delegates, but an absolute oligarchy?" From this the public proceeded to inquire not only whether the House was right in expelling an elected member, but by what title those who voted in favour of expulsion held their own seats. The scandals of the existing system were obvious. Even at that day, before the growth of the great towns, the distribution of seats bore no relation to the figures of the population. The county of Cornwall returned as many members as the whole of Scotland. London, Westminster, and Middlesex, the most densely populated part of the kingdom, returned only eight members, while Cornwall returned forty-four. Out of 513 English and Welsh members, 254 were returned

by only 11,500 voters, and six constituencies had less than four voters each. Bribery and corruption was thus made an easy task. Boroughs were bought and sold like landed estates, and Lord Chesterfield complained in 1767 that the Indian adventurers had so raised prices that mere inherited wealth could not compete with them.[85] The expenses of elections were enormous, and in some cases reached £30,000 or £40,000.[86] Inside the House, members, who had thus acquired their seats either by nomination or by purchase, had nothing to fear from their constituents, and many of them could be bought by the Crown with little difficulty. In 1770 no less than 192 of them held offices under the Crown, and were directly under its influence.[87] A House of this sort could only be endured without complaint while it acted in harmony with public opinion. So long as politics were no more than a business for gentlemen, it mattered little how gentlemen acquired their interest in it, or how they employed their interest when they had got it. But the disputes about Wilkes made people think that politics concerned the electors as well as the legislators, and when the voters of Middlesex found that the gentlemen in the House refused to accept their representative, they, and other voters like them, began to inquire fiercely into the whole system.

Wilkes actually made use of some of the logical Liberal or Radical terms of speech for his own purposes. In No. 19 of the *North Briton*, he wrote of the right of the people "to resume the power they have delegated, and to punish their servants who have abused it," and he invited his constituents to give him their "instructions." Whether Wilkes honestly held the Radical faith or not, he preached it with great popularity and success, and he stood for

much more than he was. He was unquestionably a scoundrel. But he was expelled from the House because he was a demagogue. Persecution converted him from a blackguard into a standard of battle, and "Wilkes and Liberty" became the cry of all who valued free government. Liberty has always owed as much to the folly and extravagance of its enemies as to the wisdom and devotion of its friends.

The contest ended in the victory of Wilkes and the electors of Middlesex, and the popular ardour was quickly cooled. But two permanent marks were left upon English politics. The first was of infinite importance, as indicating a breach in the aristocratic monopoly of public affairs. The public meeting became a regular means of expressing opinion and of influencing Parliament. In August, 1769, a meeting was held in Westminster Hall at which seven thousand people were said to be present.[88] Many meetings were also held of the freehold voters of the different counties, who were at this time almost the only independent voters in the country. These passed resolutions, sent instructions to their members, and approved petitions.[89] The second permanent change effected by the Wilkes controversy was the establishment of the Society of the Supporters of the Bill of Rights. This was founded in 1769 to assist Wilkes, the prime mover being Horne Tooke, the Vicar of Brentford.[90] The fundamental principles of this Society were Radical, and it proposed to test every candidate for Parliament by inviting him to pledge himself to equal distribution of seats, annual Parliaments, and the exclusion of placemen from the Commons, and to take an oath against bribery. The Society was soon superseded by the Constitutional Society, which maintained the same principles, and from this time political associations outside

Parliament have remained a permanent feature of English life.

When the immediate controversy had subsided, the course of domestic politics remained uneventful for a few years. The King and Lord North were slowly buying up the House of Commons, and establishing a practical despotism which proved far more dangerous to the public than the more obvious tyranny of the Stuarts. The Rockingham Whigs looked with jealous eyes upon this revival of their ancient enemy, the power of the Crown. Even as it stood, Parliament was better than Monarchy. Parliament acted according to law, the Crown at its discretion or caprice. Parliament was responsible in some measure to the people it governed, the Crown was not responsible at all. Parliament was an instrument which could be wielded, however clumsily, by the nation; the Crown was an active and independent agent, which could only be expelled for misbehaviour, after the mischief had been done. If the Crown were allowed to overcome the resistance of Parliament, the last check on its power would be gone. This small body of Whigs therefore laboured, though with little success, to maintain the purity and independence of the Commons by the exclusion of placemen and the reduction of sinecures. The American War brought the whole question of government to an issue, and the struggle, which had seemed to end in the English Revolution of 1688, was fought out again across the Atlantic. The dispute between England and the Colonies was simply whether the Colonies were to be governed despotically or in accordance with their own wishes. The stamp duty and the tea duty, which figured so largely in the quarrel, imposed no real burden on the Americans, and would not, by themselves, have

caused any difficulty. Even the elaborate commercial restrictions, which used the Colonies for the interest of the Mother Country in the same way as they used Ireland, had produced little ill-feeling. What really happened in the first fifteen years of George III's reign was that a community of civilized men, united by their common geographical situation and common interest, and sundered from an older civilization by some thousands of miles of ocean, became resolved no longer to be governed in accordance with the ideas of that older civilization. The Americans, in a word, had acquired a nationality of their own. While the French held Canada, the danger of invasion from the North kept the colonists eager for the British connection. The expulsion of the French in 1763 left the colonists free from external menace, and without this pressure towards union, the essential differences of the two societies made themselves felt. The dispute about taxation would undoubtedly be settled by all modern lawyers in favour of England. Parliament had the legal right to impose taxes on the Americans, nor was there anything morally wrong in asking them to contribute to the cost of their own defence. But the proposal to tax was only evidence of a persisting habit of disposition. The Americans were not interested in the affairs of Europe. They preferred to manage their own business. The English Government made the fatal error of first irritating them by arbitrary interference, and then alienating them by force. In 1783 George III acknowledged the independence of the United States of America.

The war produced a direct conflict between Liberalism and Toryism. Did the Colonies exist for the benefit of the Mother Country or for their own? Had or had not one section of the Anglo-Saxon race

the right to compel another section? Was a homogeneous society two thousand miles away to be governed by an English Government in a way of which it disapproved? Subsequent generations have settled the Empire upon Liberal principles, and have decided to treat a colony of white men as an independent nationality. The Tories of the American Rebellion decided otherwise, with disastrous results. But in losing the American Colonies, England escaped a greater disaster. It was a choice between losing the Colonies and losing domestic liberty. Never was the relation between foreign and domestic policy more vividly displayed. Never was it more clearly demonstrated that a political philosophy is one and indivisible. The Tories could only conquer in America by principles which would enable them to conquer in England also. This was always present to the minds of the Whigs, who had no doubt that in fighting for the Americans they were fighting their old enemy of the Revolution. Liberalism and Conservatism were in this case identified. The Whigs, in maintaining the principle of representative government, were defending an established institution. The Tories, in endeavouring to destroy local self-government by principles which struck at the root of domestic self-government, were revolutionaries rushing headlong into reaction. "I deny," said one of their champions, "that there is any such thing as Representation at all in our Constitution, but that the Commons are taken out of the people, as the democratic part of the Government, not elected as representatives of the people, but commissioned by them in like manner as the Lords are commissioned or appointed by the Crown. If the Commons were the representatives of the people, the people might control them, and the

instructions of the electors would be binding upon the members."[91] The Whig doctrine, opposed to this negation of Parliament, was stated most forcibly by Burke, in his *Address to the King*. In this manifesto he said: "To leave any real freedom to Parliament, freedom must be left to the Colonies. A military government is the only substitute for civil liberty. That the establishment of such a power in America will utterly ruin our finances (though its certain effect) is the smallest part of our concern. It will become an apt, powerful, and certain engine for the destruction of our freedom here. Great bodies of armed men, trained to a contempt of popular assemblies representative of an English people; kept up for the purpose of exacting impositions without their consent and maintained by that exaction; instruments in subverting, without any process of law, great ancient establishments and respected forms of government; set free from, and therefore above, the ordinary English tribunals where they serve,—these men cannot so transform themselves, merely by crossing the sea, as to behold with love and reverence, and submit with profound obedience to the very same things in Great Britain which in America they had been taught to despise, and had been accustomed to awe and humble.... We deprecate the effect of the doctrines which must support and countenance the government over conquered Englishmen."[92]

The matter was indeed worse than a mere corruption of the army. The people who used the army would be as much demoralized as the army itself, and every Tory civilian would be converted into an active enemy of his own freedom. Burke, whose speeches on this subject are a treasure-house of political

wisdom, saw straight into the heart of the matter. "There are many whose whole scheme of freedom is made up of pride, perverseness, and insolence. They feel themselves in a state of thraldom, they imagine that their souls are cooped and cabined in unless they have some man, or some body of men, dependent on their mercy. This desire of having some one below them descends to those who are the very lowest of all, and a Protestant cobbler, debased by his poverty, but exalted by his share of the ruling Church, feels a pride in knowing it is by his generosity alone that the peer, whose footman's instep he measures, is able to keep his chaplain from a jail. This disposition is the true source of the passion which many men in very humble life have taken to the American war. *Our* subjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependants."[93] It was not argument, but a habit of mind, which Burke encountered. Even without a victory in America, the corruption of the Tory mind was bad enough. It was precisely in the temper of the American War that Tory statesmen, after the French Revolution, afflicted their own countrymen. But from the utter loss of the temper of independence England was saved by the loss of the Colonies. The power of the Crown seemed to be strong even after the war. But a train of events in the mind had been started which could not be stopped, and in feet, when George III abandoned his hold over the Americans, he abandoned also his hold over the English.

This victory was decisive, and it is difficult to see in what other quarter it could ever have been won. There was no country in Europe where such a definite assertion of the right of a people to control their government was likely to be made. Even France, where a few years later the assertion came

with ten times greater vigour, owed much to the American rising. The French Government, which allied itself with the Americans to injure its old enemy England, by that very act destroyed itself. The final result of its exertions was precisely the opposite of what it intended, and what, at first sight, it achieved. Apparently, it humiliated England and elevated itself. Actually, it saved England and destroyed itself. Its subjects were exposed in America to the fatal contagion of liberty. They brought it back to their own country, and in ten years the French Government had perished, and the whole of Europe was infected.

It cannot safely be asserted that the Revolution in Europe would have been so successful but for the American Rebellion. The general ignorance and apathy of the poorer classes, and the general acceptance of established things which prevailed among the others, were weights which few Europeans would have tried to lift, or could have lifted if they had tried. In the American Colonies were gathered people of a different complexion. The Rebellion was not that purely noble and disinterested thing which lovers of liberty would have wished it to be. But the people concerned were such as made certain their maintenance of a noble principle, even from bad motives. The stocks from which they sprang were among the most vigorous of the English race. The lives which most of them lived made them hard and self-reliant. The distance which they lived from the Mother Country weakened the influences of tradition. Their institutions were in some districts reminiscent of the English. But in general it would be fair to say that they had no aristocracy and no privileged Church, land was free to all, the women were trained to vigour and independence no less

than the men. Except in a few of the older settlements every circumstance tended to foster individuality, and left a man free to raise himself by his own exertions to positions of dignity and power. As Tom Paine put it in the Second Part of his *Rights of Man*, "So deeply rooted were all the Governments of the old world, and so effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think." The significance of this great event could hardly be exaggerated. One of the oldest and most powerful monarchies had been humiliated by a people who proclaimed, as the foundation of their new State, the equality of all individuals within it. The presence of the United States was a perpetual reminder to the discontented and the suffering among the older peoples that successful revolt was possible, and that constitutions might stand fast which did not confer privileges upon any class in the community. It would be absurd to pretend that the American people have not often fallen short of their own ideals. But the ideals were at least established. It was no small thing that a State should have come into being whose founders proclaimed in their Declaration of Independence that "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." There are not less than five historical or logical

errors in that sonorous passage. But it acted on the old world like the voice of God among the dry bones.

Opinion in England seems to have been generally favourable to the war. Opposition was most marked among the commercial classes, whose trade was seriously injured by the loss of the colonial market and the destruction of shipping. Such as it was, it encouraged the organization of public opinion outside Parliament, which had been previously practised in the affair of Wilkes. The attack was properly directed against the Crown. The City of London led the way in December, 1779, by resolving "that the various measures which have brought the landed and mercantile interest of this country into its present reduced and deplorable situation could not have been pursued to their actual extremity, had it not been for the abuse of the present increased, enormous, and undue influence of the Crown." There followed a meeting of the freeholders of Yorkshire. This assembly protested against the multiplication of sinecures and pensions "from whence the Crown had acquired a great and unconstitutional influence, which, if not checked, might soon prove fatal to the liberties of this country," and a committee was appointed to prepare a plan for an association to promote economic reform and restore the freedom of Parliament. Great excitement was caused at this meeting by the indiscreet remarks of a gentleman called Smelt, who had been one of the tutors of the Prince of Wales. He appears to have argued that the King's influence was too little rather than too great, and the indignation produced by his remarks shows how widely independent opinion dissented from the servility of Parliament.[94] Similar meetings were

held in nearly thirty different counties and boroughs, and in most of them committees of correspondence were appointed. Deputies from some of these committees met in London in March, under the chairmanship of Wyvil, the Yorkshire clergyman. The deputies published a memorial which described the state of government as "a despotic system," declared that "the whole capacity of popular freedom had been struck at," and referred in plain terms to the "venal majority" in the House of Commons. The memorial demanded that one hundred new members should be sent to Westminster to represent the counties.[95]

This external pressure produced some effect even upon Parliament, corrupt though it was. In April the House of Commons resolved by a majority of eighteen "that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." Resolutions in favour of economical reforms were passed without divisions, and Burke introduced a Bill for reducing expenditure by about £200,000 a year and for abolishing some of the worst of the sinecures. But the tide soon ceased to flow in Parliament. The Gordon Riots in June, 1780, gave the Tories a very useful weapon against popular agitation. The Duke of Richmond actually introduced a Bill for manhood suffrage and annual Parliaments on the very day when the Protestant mob began the work of plunder and arson. But any attempt at political reform was at this time hopeless. There was no unanimity among the reformers. The Duke of Richmond was a logical Radical. Fox supported annual Parliaments and opposed manhood suffrage. Burke, who was active in proposals to suppress corruption, would not accept even triennial Parliaments, and though he had no objection to slight changes in the distribution of

seats, hated equally all drastic changes in the franchise and in the composition of the House of Commons. A dissolution of Parliament and an election, at which the King spent nearly £50,000 in buying votes, strengthened the Tory Government, and even Burke's plans for economical reforms were generally defeated.

The campaign in the country persisted, and in May, 1782, William Pitt revived the question of political reform in the House of Commons. There can be no doubt that Pitt was then and for some time afterwards in favour of considerable changes, and but for the accident of the French Revolution, he would probably have abolished many of the rotten boroughs and extended the franchise by the end of the eighteenth century. His speech of 1782 was hardly less vigorous in its denunciations of royal and aristocratic influence than were the speeches of Fox in the House and those of the country meetings outside it. But he was at this time only a new member, with none of that mastery of the assembly which he afterwards acquired. His motion for a Special Committee was beaten by 161 votes to 141, and fifty years elapsed before the cause received such powerful support again. Pitt did indeed introduce a Bill in 1785 which provided for the purchase of a certain number of rotten boroughs and the transfer of their members to the counties and London, and for the establishment of a permanent compensation fund which should be applied to similar objects in future years, as the population passed to the unrepresented industrial towns of the North. But in this scheme he acted without his colleagues. By 248 votes to 174 the House refused him leave to introduce the Bill, and he never made a second attempt. Five years later the French

Revolution made him a determined opponent of the cause which he had once supported.

So far as Parliament was concerned, the Liberal movement for political reform made no headway. In other channels the Liberal tide moved quietly but steadily. In 1778 relief was obtained by the Roman Catholics from some of their worst disabilities. In that year Sir George Savile's Bill abolishing the penalties upon priests and Jesuits who were found teaching in schools, and the infamous rule which dispossessed a Papist owner of real property in favour of the next Protestant heir, was passed in both Houses without opposition. But even this slight measure of justice aroused great hostility in the country, and two years later the Gordon Riots showed that the persecuting zeal of Protestantism was not yet dead. The Dissenters were the next to move, but in their case Conservatism was too powerful. In 1787, dissatisfied with the annual Acts of Indemnity, which preserved the stigma of inferiority while relieving them of its legal penalties, the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists attempted to procure the repeal of the Test Act and the Corporation Act. Their case was presented in the House of Commons by a Churchman named Beaufoy in 1787 and again in 1789. North opposed him on the grounds that abolition would endanger the Established Church, which was an essential part of the British Constitution. Fox took the true Liberal view, declared that no Church should be Established which was not the Church of the majority of the people, and went so far as to say that "if the majority of the people of England should ever be for the abolition of the Established Church, in such a case

the abolition ought immediately to follow." Pitt was no bigot, but consulted the Archbishop of Canterbury. A meeting of the Bishops decided against abolition by ten votes to two.[96] Pitt, therefore spoke against the motion, which was defeated.[97] But the cause was not hopeless. The voting in 1787 was 178 against 100. In 1789 it was 122 against 102. But in 1792, when a similar motion was made by Fox, the conditions were altered. The French Revolution had broken out. The property of the French Church had been confiscated. Dr. Priestley, the most copious of the Dissenting writers, had expressed his desire to disestablish the English Church. Dr. Price, the most popular of the Dissenting preachers, had praised the acts of the French revolutionaries. All the fears of reaction rallied to support the Establishment, and the motion was beaten by 296 votes to 105. It was not brought forward again for nearly forty years.

The right of free discussion, so essential to the maintenance of political and religious liberty, gained some additional protection in 1791, when Fox's Libel Act was passed. Prior to that date juries had been confined in libel cases to answering two questions: was the document published? and what did its words mean? The judge then decided whether the meaning put upon the words by the jury constituted a libel or not. This system gave a great advantage to the Government in all cases of seditious or blasphemous libel, and prosecutions of printers and journalists were very common. The judge was a lawyer, and probably Tory in his opinions. He was connected with Government, with the propertied classes, and with the Established Church. Any attack on existing

political, proprietary, or religious institutions was therefore tested by a man who was probably prejudiced in favour of all three, and might actually have defended in the House of Lords the policy which had been attacked by the prisoner at the bar. Judges like Lord Mansfield and Lord Camden had shown themselves, during the Wilkes controversy, to be honourable and upright. But the danger existed, and even if the judge's power was not consciously abused, it was always liable to be affected by class prejudice.[98] Fox's Libel Act gave to the jury the right to decide whether a publication was libellous or not. After the outbreak of the French Revolution, when the middle classes showed themselves as bigoted as the upper, even trial by jury was but a poor protection to an avowed Republican or atheist. But the new principle was safer than the old, and it was something even to have asserted that a man's political opinions should be judged by his fellow-subjects, and not by a member of the governing class. The Act implied, in the minds of those who voted for it, a reversal of the old conception of State and subject. So long as the supremacy of the State was assumed, criticism of government was inevitably regarded as improper. It was, in effect, the servant rebuking the master. On the other hand, when the right of the subject to control the State becomes the basis of political reasoning, criticism of government is no more than the master rebuking the servant. The passing of Fox's Libel Act is a proof that political minds were in a state of transition, and suggests, no less than Pitt's proposals for reform, that but for the French Revolution political estimates might have been revised, and political institutions readjusted, at a much earlier date than they were.

One other transaction of this period is of importance in the history of Liberalism. In 1785 the House of Commons resolved that Warren Hastings should be impeached for his conduct of affairs in India. Hastings had been Governor-General under the East India Company, whose territory and influence had been enormously increased since the victories of Clive and the expulsion of the French twenty years before. The prime mover in the impeachment was Burke, who devoted to the preparation of the charges and the conduct of the trial enormous industry, and an eloquence so tremendous that to this day no man can read his speeches without shaking with horror and indignation. The Company had been guilty of every vice which the disposing mind displays when it is brought into contact with weaker peoples. It had developed the art of exploitation to perfection. Its agents were in the country to make money for their shareholders, and in pursuing the interest of their shareholders they did not forget their own. The natives were exposed to a double confiscation, and every consideration of good government was not seldom subordinated to this universal rapacity. The agents bribed and forged, they abused judicial process, they broke treaties and sold their allies, they made war upon those peoples whom it was convenient to treat as their enemies, and when they wanted an excuse for a campaign of their own they hired out British soldiers to a native destroyer, and entrusted to him the work of massacre and pillage which they were unwilling to undertake themselves. The inhabitants of India were not at that time acquainted with the classics. Had they been, they might more than once have quoted with grim justice against the British those words which the Latin historian put into the mouth of one of their own

ancestors: "Slaughter and plunder are in their vocabulary synonymous with Empire, and when they have made a desert they call it peace."[99]

Hastings was in fact incomparably better than his predecessors, and after the trial had dragged on for more than seven years he was acquitted by the Lords. But the proceedings had established the great principle that morality is to be observed by white races in dealing with black, and that even though forms of government may be different, the objects of government are the same in all parts of the world, the happiness of the governed and not the enrichment of the governor. The impeachment cost Burke fourteen years of unremitting labour. But though he failed in his immediate object, and though the improvement in the methods of Indian government was slow, the permanent effects of his work remained. Burke's speeches were often overcharged, and if Hastings had been as bad as Burke believed him to be, he would have been supernaturally bad. But indignation on behalf of an alien race is not so common that we can afford to spare even its excess. A later generation of Englishmen, reading some of the sorry pages in the history of our modern Empire, may regret the absence from us of Burke's imagination, sympathy, and inexhaustible wrath. Acts of Parliament passed in 1772 and 1784 gave the Crown political control over the East India Company, and the complete transfer of the Company's rights in 1858 established the government of India upon a political and no longer upon a commercial basis. Blemishes there are still, but there are few systems of government in the world which are less influenced by the desire to promote the selfish ends of the governors. The transformation of English opinion with regard to

India began with Burke.

On the eve of the French Revolution there seemed to be a very good prospect of reforms in the English Constitution. The Catholics had made an actual advance. The Dissenters had every reason to be hopeful. The Tory leader himself had shown sympathy with free election and the enfranchisement of the new industrial districts. But the fate of English liberties lay in the hands of the French Government. If Turgot and the French reformers had had their way, the Revolution might have been averted, or at least mitigated. The triumph of the French privileged classes made reform impossible, and made it certain that revolution would be violent and universal. In May, 1776, Louis XVI, impelled by faction and his bad wife, dismissed the one statesman who could have made absolute monarchy tolerable to the French people. By the end of 1793 he and the Queen had perished on the scaffold, the nobility were dead or in exile, and a French Republic was proclaiming with even greater emphasis than the American the doctrines of individuality and natural right. The shock to established things was terrific. This was not a matter of a handful of colonists in a remote part of the world. It was a whole nation, and that in the heart of Europe, which had not only risen against monarchy but had destroyed it, and with it aristocracy and the Church. Every institution upon which political society was based had vanished in the flood, and the French people, not content with establishing new principles at home, were calling upon the common people abroad to do the like, and were announcing their intention of carrying help wherever it was required. It is difficult to imagine in

these days with what feelings those who believed in class distinctions and privileges and the aristocratic monopoly of government witnessed the triumph of an assembly which issued this Declaration of Rights.

"I. Men are born, and always continue, free and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

"II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

"III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty; nor can any individual or any body of men be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it."

The Declaration affords as ample material for criticism on logical and historical grounds as the American Declaration of Independence. But its plain meaning was the same: that the subordination of the individual to the institution was at an end, and that everything in politics was to be tested in future by its effect upon human beings, irrespective of their rank, wealth, creed, or occupation, or sex. In a word, it was the source of modern Liberalism.

In England the Revolution was at first regarded with general approbation, or at least indifferent curiosity. To Whigs like Fox and Mackintosh, as well as to Radicals like Price and Cartwright, it was a matter of exultation to see the end of absolute monarchy in France. Even a Tory might view with equanimity the summoning of a French Assembly which bore some resemblance to the English. Even a lawyer might rejoice at the fall of the Bastille, the symbol of

arbitrary government, and the negation of the English rule of law. But as the Revolution swept beyond the constitutional forms, when the mob broke loose in Paris, when the King's head was cut off, when the heads of men and women who were noble in character as well as rank were carried through the streets on pikes, when the property of the Church was confiscated, and when members of the old nobility of the most splendid nation in Europe exhibited their destitution in every town of England, the bulk of the English people hurried into reaction. If anything beyond the mere excesses of the Revolution was required to turn a timid friend into a frantic enemy, it was the Assembly's proclamation of its intention to help all other peoples to follow its example. There is no people which hates political bloodshed more than the English. There is no people which more stubbornly resents foreign interference in its domestic affairs. Both these national characteristics were offended by the Revolution, and their offence was the opportunity of Toryism. Burke's *Reflections on the Late Revolution in France* was published in 1791, and gave voice to the national dislike of violent political changes. The book, with its deep reading of human nature, its insistence on the continuity of national growth, and its contempt for those who thought to alter a political society by reasoning in the abstract, was the wisest book which the Revolution produced on either side. But it was full of errors of fact, and it made no allowances for the horrible suffering which the old system had imposed upon the common people of France. If it expressed the opinions of a wise Conservatism, it was also made the textbook of selfishness and monopoly. Every person who owned property or privilege was roused by it into hatred of any change which

threatened to extend the political rights of the majority. The governing class marshalled itself to defend its own. From the moment when Burke published his book to the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, hardly a single Liberal measure was passed into law. The fate of the Dissenters has already been described. Parliamentary Reform fared no better. In 1792, 1793, and 1795 Charles Grey, afterwards Earl Grey, brought the subject before the House of Commons. In 1782 Pitt had been beaten by 161 votes to 141. In 1793 Grey was beaten by 282 to 41, and in 1793 by 258 to 63. The Dissenters were not admitted to public offices till 1828. The Catholics had to wait till 1829. Parliament was not reformed till 1832. Nor was the Tory spirit displayed simply in neglect. It was active and vicious. During the long interval between the beginning of the Revolution and the triumph of the Whigs in 1831, the Press was gagged, political associations were broken up, combinations of workmen were prohibited, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, public meetings were forbidden or violently dispersed, and large numbers of worthy and respectable men were transported or kept in prison, in many cases without trial. Free institutions endured, but they ceased to operate. Liberty was kept, but in chains.

The man who determined the course of this reaction was William Pitt, and though much of its evil must be ascribed to the state of general opinion, his personal responsibility was very great. He seems to have assumed that failure would follow every attempt at change, and though he was in favour of the Reform of Parliament, of Catholic Emancipation, of Free Trade, and of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and was not hostile to the removal of the

disabilities of Dissenters, he abated every one of his principles without seriously attempting to put them into practice. He was one of the greatest politicians and one of the worst statesmen England has ever had. He managed Parliament with astonishing success, and hardly ever used it for a good purpose. His failure to reform the House of Commons increased discontent and made government more difficult. His failure to emancipate the Catholics before the Union with Ireland was the final and decisive cause of the Rebellion of 1798, and his failure to emancipate them after the Union was the chief reason why that measure did nothing to improve the condition of Ireland or its relations with England. His failure to abolish the Slave Trade, when even Tories like Windham were against it, prolonged for twenty years a system of human misery and degradation such as had never been known in any civilized part of the world. His system of finance burdened the country with an unnecessary load of debt. His failure to adjust the customs tariff to the new conditions of a population which was no longer self-sufficing increased distress and discontent with it. His chief enterprise, the war with France, was begun in folly and conducted with incompetence, and it was not until after his death that it was efficiently conducted to a successful issue. The one thing which he did was to maintain a strong central government in the United Kingdom. But to this maintenance of government he sacrificed almost everything for which government exists. "The Pilot who weathered the storm" flung all the cargo out of the ship, and steered her from the high seas into dangerous shallows, from some of which she has not yet escaped.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ENGLISH OPINION

The Revolution affected English society in two directly opposite ways. It is unquestionable that its violence drove the majority into hostility not only to Revolution, but to Reform. But many men and women welcomed the triumph of its principles with an enthusiasm which was almost as extravagant as the opposition of the rest. Those who had preached equality in the days of Wilkes and the American War were encouraged to greater zeal, and the bigness of the new shock awakened interest in masses of people who had previously been apathetic. The Industrial Revolution had by this time produced much of the social alteration of which some account has already been given, and the artisans of the North offered a fertile soil for doctrines which had previously fallen on barren ground. Political speculation now for the first time attracted the serious attention of the governing class. The new thinkers themselves belonged to all ranks, though very few of them were to be found among the aristocracy. They all preached, with more or less ardour, and with a more or less crude application of logic to political conditions, the doctrine that every man had an equal moral right with every other to control his own life. For practical purposes the speculation of these primitive Liberals did not extend beyond male limits. But some, of whom Mary Wollstonecraft was the most conspicuous,[100] even made the same claim for every woman. When only one woman in ten thousand had any substantial intellectual training, it

was natural enough that men should give little thought to their political rights. Until women were sufficiently educated to ask for equality in the State, it was impossible that men should think seriously of granting it. But the French Revolution, though its direct effect on the political condition of women was insignificant, started, in their case as in that of men, a train of events which has borne fruit in more modern times. The emancipation of women from the control of men, which is the most profound of all the social changes of the last fifty years, has been produced by precisely the same changes in social ideas as those which have abolished the political distinctions among sects and classes of men. It is only another part of the process of the emancipation of the individual which is called Liberalism.

The most obvious feature of this early Liberal movement is its neglect of economic questions, and its concentration upon the mere machinery of government. The science of political economy was indeed only in its infancy, and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, had little effect upon practical politicians of any school until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Political argument was therefore conducted in these early stages very largely upon a theoretical basis, and Tories, Whigs, and Radicals contended as mightily about the abstractions of natural rights and sovereignty as the early Churches about the difference between Homoousion and Homoiousion. Almost the only practical grievances alleged against the old system were expensive wars and the maintenance of sinecures. The early Reformers, though the doctrine of *laissez faire* was not formulated until half a century later, in fact believed it. They were in economics what the Whigs were in politics. They hated the

interference of the executive, and they would probably have looked upon attempts to alter economic conditions as meddling, which would restrict the liberty of the citizen and increase the already dangerous influence of the Crown.

This indifference, or rather hostility, to economic reforms was shared by all parties alike. Practically everybody agreed that it was a bad thing for Government to interfere with trade, though few went so far as to condemn the system of Protection. Arthur Young disliked Government interference as an economist. "All restrictive forcible measures in domestic policy are bad."[101] Burke declared that his opinion was against "an overdoing of any sort of administration, and more especially against this most momentous of all meddling on the part of authority, the meddling with the subsistence of the people."[102] Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations* said that "According to the system of natural liberty, the sovereign has only three duties to attend to ... I. The duty of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies; II. The duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and III. The duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals, to erect and maintain, because the profit could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society."[103] This was the general opinion of the manufacturers, and in 1806 it was embodied in a Parliamentary Report on industrial conditions: "The

right of every man to employ the capital he inherits or has acquired according to his own discretion without molestation or obstruction, so long as he does not infringe on the rights or property of others, is one of those privileges which the free and happy constitution of this country has long accustomed every Briton to consider as his birthright."[104] The aristocracy and the commercial classes alike distrusted an interference which restricted their personal freedom.

The Radicals, who professed to be, and were much more alive to the distresses of the labourers and artisans, were hardly less emphatic. "All government," said Dr. Price, "even within a State, becomes tyrannical as far as it is a needless and wanton exercise of power, or is carried farther than is absolutely necessary to preserve the peace or to secure the safety of the State. This is what an excellent writer calls 'governing too much.'"[105] "Government," said Godwin, "can have no more than two legitimate purposes, the suppression of injustice against individuals within the community and defence against external invasion."[106] Most of the Radicals were in fact of the middle class, and few of them saw things from the workman's point of view. However far they went, they were careful to maintain the rights of property. "The phrase 'domineering rich' is exceptionable," said Major Cartwright, "as it may, by cavillers, be construed into an attempt to excite the poor to invade the property of the rich. It is not by an invasion of such property that the condition of the poor is to be amended, but by such equal laws as would have a natural tendency to prevent injustice, and to benefit every class of the community."[107] A free Parliament would allow every man an equal chance of obtaining wealth.

Neither Cartwright nor any of his associates seems to have considered that, while wealth was accumulated in the hands of a small class, equality, even of opportunity, was impossible without some measure of State interference. What was needed by the working class was the removal of taxes upon food and raw materials, a helpful instead of a degrading Poor Law, the right to combine against their employers, and factory legislation. But the speculators were more concerned to reduce the interference of aristocratic government with the liberty of the middle class than to increase the interference of any sort of government with the working class, and they failed to see that the workmen's grievances were not the same as their own. A man who was wellnigh pressed to death with heavy weights was to be relieved by an improvement in the ventilation of the torture-chamber.

The Radicals[108] thus, in common with the Tories and the Whigs, ignored economic problems, or assumed that they were incapable of solving them by political action. But their opinions, so far as they went, were Liberal opinions. They made the individual the unit of political society, and denounced all artificial barriers between ranks and classes. In his younger days Cartwright held principles which led directly to Republicanism. In his pamphlet *Take Your Choice*, which was published in 1776, at the height of the American dispute, he said: "How much soever any individual may be qualified for, or deserve any elevation, he hath no right to it till it be conferred upon him by his fellows.... It is liberty, and not dominion, which is held by divine right."[109] The suffrage must be extended to all adult men. "Personality is the sole foundation of the right of being represented; ... property has, in reality,

nothing to do in the case.... It is a very fit object of the attention of his representative in Parliament, but it contributes nothing to his right of having that representation."[110] "We might as well make the possession of forty shillings per annum the proof of a man's being rational, as of his being free."[111]

But Cartwright, though a perfect specimen of the logical politician, and reasoning on principles as purely Republican as those of Paine himself, was a member of the middle class, and enjoyed, during a great part of his life, a substantial income. He openly opposed the followers of Paine, and at a meeting of the Society of the Friends of the People, which he helped to found in 1792, he carried a resolution in favour of King, Lords, and Commons.[112] This Society contained not only Radicals like Cartwright, but Whig Reformers like Grey and the Duke of Bedford. Eventually, the logicians were squeezed out, and the Society became a Whig organization, the least vigorous of all those which worked for reform outside of Parliament. The best of its members were practical politicians, who concentrated on active and notorious abuses like rotten boroughs and the disfranchisement of large towns.[113] Grey worked in Parliament very steadily, and other representatives of the Society spoke manfully on occasion in both Houses. But as a whole it seems to have done little to arouse the feeling of the country, and it was as vigorous in its condemnation of its more active associates as in its attack upon the common enemy. Its principles were essentially Whig, and not Liberal. "We profess," wrote Lord John Russell, the chairman of the London Society in 1794, "not to entertain a wish 'that the great plan of public benefit which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended will speedily be carried into effect,' nor to amuse our fellow-

citizens with the magnificent promise of obtaining for them 'the rights of the people in their full extent'—the indefinite language of delusion."[114] So even Fox, though he said that "government originated not only for, but from the people," and "the people were the legitimate sovereign in every community," yet declared himself "a steady and decided enemy to general and universal representation."[115] Sir Francis Burdett and one or two other Members of Parliament took the purely Radical view. But so late as 1818, when, after nearly twenty years of heated agitation, Burdett moved resolutions in favour of manhood suffrage, annual Parliaments, and equal electoral districts, Brougham said on behalf of the official Whig Opposition: "As for universal suffrage, or the doctrine which severed the elective franchise altogether from property, he begged leave to observe that he never had at any time held it as less than the utter destruction of the Constitution."[116] The Whig Reformers were thus distinguished from the Radicals, and as they spoke contemptuously of the extremists, so they were in their turn attacked as lukewarm and time-serving. Even Fox himself did not escape censure, though he was always careful to abstain from recrimination. [117] The real value of the Whigs was that they opposed themselves steadily to all attempts to suspend the ordinary law, to stifle public discussion, and to govern the country by the arbitrary power of the executive. In this cause Bedford and Grey and Fox were heartily at one, and the various Bills for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, suppressing or restricting public meetings, and dissolving political associations were always opposed by a compact body of members of both Houses.[118] The few Whigs, who kept their heads in the face of Revolutionary

France, aimed at the old Whig objects, the supremacy of Parliament over the executive, and the maintenance of the rule of ordinary law.

When the Society of the Friends of the People had fallen into the hands of the Whigs, Cartwright and Radicals like the Duke of Richmond, Dr. Price, and Horne Tooke found a new outlet for their logical energies in the Society for Constitutional Information, which had been founded in 1780. The members of this Society were infinitely less experienced in practical affairs than men like Grey, and some of their publications show a most pedantic and ludicrous precision of reasoning from abstract principles. Like all abstract politicians, they despised those who were content to advance in opinion by easy stages. "How," asked Cartwright, "shall we speak of the imbecile efforts of our professors of moderate reform—so much in the nature of moderate honesty!—politicians whose abortive conceptions and Sisyphean labours never can command the respect of Parliament, Prince, or People? Can nothing cure these step-by-step Reformists of their insanity?"[119] Their own doctrine was compressed on one occasion into the following remarkable resolutions:

"1. Representation—'the happiest discovery of human wisdom'—is the vital principle of the English Constitution, inasmuch as it is that alone which, in a State too extensive for personal legislation, constitutes Political Liberty.

"2. Political Liberty being a common right, Representation co-extensive with direct Taxation ought, with all practicable equality, to be fairly and honestly distributed throughout the community; the facility of which cannot be denied.

"3. The constitutional duration of a Parliament cannot exceed one year."

The question of the ballot was on this occasion left open, and a prize, consisting of the thanks of the Society, was offered for the best essay on its advantages. The justification of the third proposition is a comical instance of the way in which these theorizing politicians were carried away from practical affairs.

"The truth of the third proposition in the Constitution or this Union is made evident by the following, among other considerations:

"1. An Englishman, at twenty-one years of age, enters on his inheritance, whatever it may be. 2. A greater inheritance descends to every one of us from Right and the Laws than from our Parents; on which maxim Sir Edward Coke (in his second Institute) remarks, 'Right is the best birthright the subject hath; for thereby his goods, land, wife, children, his body, life, honour, and estimation are protected from wrong.' 3. To no other 'Right' than that of a People either personally or representatively making their own Laws, whereby they may be 'protected from Wrong,' can this remark of Sir Edward Coke possibly apply. 4. When Election is withholden for seven years, then all who came of age since the preceding election are kept out of their Inheritance and best Birthright. 5. Even supposing the Representation of our Country were in other respects quite perfect, yet septennial Parliaments would still deprive the whole Nation of its political Liberty for six parts in seven of human life; and triennial Parliaments must have a like effect for two years in every three; whence it follows, that Parliaments of any duration exceeding

One Year instead of a protection from, would be an infliction of 'wrong'; contrary to the Constitution, against Right, and destruction of Liberty."

This pedantry would destroy itself: by the application of the same principles it could be proved that a General Election was necessary once a month, or once a week, or once a day. But the real objection is that which these *a priori* Reformers constantly overlooked, the fact that a Constitution is after all only a machine contrived for certain practical ends of government, that it must be arranged upon a basis of convenience, and that infinitely greater hardship could be inflicted upon the country by interrupting trade for one month in every twelve and spending a million pounds in unproductive ways, than by forcing a small portion of the population to abstain from voting even until it was as much as twenty-eight years old.

These doctrines being based upon pure logic, and not upon practical convenience, were naturally made applicable to all peoples without distinction. "All being pure and genuine," said Cartwright, "the result will be, a strict unity of form universally applicable; and exhibiting its subject, political liberty, as evidently a common right and inheritance of every people or nation; for to talk of English liberty, and French or Spanish or Italian liberty, as different in nature is contrary to reason."[120] It is easy to understand why men like Fox and Grey, accustomed to grapple with the affairs of men who were swayed by prejudice, tradition, interest, by everything but reason, were contemptuous of political theories of this sort. No one who has been engaged in active politics can fail to understand that men are infinitely variable, and that what suits one race will not suit

another. There was really only one problem to consider. Given a society with a known history, composed of human beings of a known character, and distributed among known conditions, what form of government was best suited to their case? Origin, character, social and economic distribution, and past history, are all different in different peoples, and political institutions will inevitably differ also. The Radicals were far enough away from real life. But with all their incapacity for politics, they performed the great service of preaching the political importance of individuality.

More influential than they were Tom Paine and his followers. These had fewer men of experience in their ranks, they had less respect for existing institutions, and they were as bitterly contemptuous of pioneers like Cartwright as the pioneers in their turn were contemptuous of the Whigs in Parliament. Cartwright clung to King, Lords, and Commons, the Established Church, and administration by men of property and rank. Paine was a Republican, a theist, and a social reformer. The one had influence among the aristocracy, the gentry, the manufacturers, and the forty-shilling freeholders. The other was popular with the artisans and tradesmen. But in general habit of mind the two men were very similar. The differences were differences of class. Both belonged to the same species. They were equally destitute of the historic sense, and equally incapable of understanding that institutions must grow and change with society, and cannot be praised or condemned according as, at any particular moment, they do or do not correspond with the needs of the people who work them. Both pushed theory to logical conclusions, irrespective of the course of events in the past or the practical difficulties of the

present. Of the two, Paine had more political capacity. He had more genuine understanding of the character of his audience, and his influence was infinitely more widespread than that of any of the older men. Burke's *French Revolution* drew a volley of books and pamphlets from his opponents. The *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* of Sir James Mackintosh was the best of these. But Mackintosh, no less that Dr. Price, Mrs. Macaulay, and Mary Wollstonecraft, was outwritten and outsold by Paine. Of the *French Revolution* 19,000 copies were sold in twelve months. In the same period Paine sold more than 40,000 copies of the First Part of the *Rights of Man*.[121]

This famous book is marked by many of the vices of extreme opinions. Its reading of events in France, in some of which Paine had taken part, was far more accurate than that of Burke's treatise. Paine avoided the mistake of taking the Revolution to be a mere outbreak of capricious violence, and gave due weight to the intellectual revolution which had preceded it, and to the economic distress which aggravated it. But though he knew France better than Burke, he had not Burke's grasp of the idea of growth, of the necessity of development rather than of reconstruction in politics, and he could not understand that an institution, which was now useless or detrimental, might, in an older system, have been necessary to the existence of society. Such phrases as Burke's "chain and continuity of the commonwealth" had no meaning for him. Everything was to be cut off and begun afresh. "Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself in all cases as the ages and generations which preceded it."[122] "When we survey the wretched condition of man, and the monarchical and hereditary systems of government, dragged from his home by one power,

or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and construction of governments is necessary."[123] Paine is here not unlike the surgeon in Mr. Shaw's play, for ever eager to plunge his knife into the vitals of the patient, without knowing either the history of the disease or the chances of its cure. How much wiser is Burke's "I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but carte blanche, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases. A man full of warm, speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it, but a good patriot and a true politician always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman." Paine's prophecies were as extravagant as his reading of history was inaccurate. "I do not believe," he said, "that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe."[124] After one hundred and twenty years Portugal alone has attempted to follow the example of France, and it was eighty years before even France expelled its last despot.

The truth lay midway between the two extremes. Burke was right in theory and wrong in facts. Paine was right in facts and wrong in theory. Paine was deceived by the events of his own time. He had personally assisted at the making of two new constitutions, and he exaggerated the ease with which others might be made like them. This violent plucking out of ancient loyalties seemed normal, when in fact it was altogether abnormal. In America,

separated from the old world and its old habits, the process had been comparatively easy. In France, as subsequent events proved, it was of enormous difficulty. Men who habitually build their houses on the sites of abated earthquakes are not in a day to be twisted out of their habit of submitting to illogical things like kings and nobles and Churches. Nor is it often servility or credulity which produces that submission. In the vast majority of cases it is only that they accept that to which they have been accustomed, and require some outrageous provocation to make them change. This was incredible to Paine. What was unreasonable was fraudulent, and what was fraudulent to-day had always been fraudulent. "It is impossible that such Governments as have hitherto existed in the world would have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle, sacred and moral. The obscurity in which the origin of all the present Governments is buried implies the iniquity and disgrace with which they began."[125] The obscurity seems a little less dense to us, and the King and the Church appear as necessary in their proper order to the consolidation of society and its advance out of barbarism. To Paine the early king was only the head of a band of robbers, and the early Church was contrived only to maintain him in power by investing him with superstitious terrors. He assailed monarchy and aristocracy with a variety of scornful epithets: "Nobility means No-ability." "Titles are but nicknames." "France has outgrown the baby-cloaths of Count and Duke, and has breeched itself in manhood." "The difference between a republican and a courtier with a respect to monarchy is that the one opposes monarchy, believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it, knowing it to be nothing." "As

to who is king in England or elsewhere, or whether there is any king at all, or whether the people choose a Cherokee chief, or a Hessian hussar, for a king, it is not a matter that I trouble myself about." "The House of Brunswick, one of the petty tribes of Germany." "The splendour of a throne ... is made up of a band of parasites living in luxurious indolence out of the public taxes." "Monarchy is the master-fraud, which shelters all others." A torrent of these gibes and sneers at things which to the ordinary man and woman of comfortable surroundings were hardly less than sacred, roused against Paine all that horror and aversion which in our own day has been inspired by Mr. Lloyd George.

But the most disturbing part of Paine's book was not its epithets, but its doctrine. Before him Radicals had argued more or less directly from the assumption of natural rights that every man is invested at his birth with rights against his neighbours, and that political constitutions must be based upon these rights. The theory of natural rights came from Rousseau, and the French Revolution claimed to be a practical consequence of it. Paine brought it over from France in its crude simplicity, and preached it more forcibly and more effectively than it had ever been preached before. It was based on a false historical assumption. Every account of the creation agreed that men are all born equal, of the same degree, and endowed with equal natural rights. These, natural rights were the foundation of all his civil rights. "Natural rights are those which appertain to man in right of his existence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and also all those rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happiness, which are not injurious to the natural rights of others. Civil rights are those which

appertain to man in right of his being a member of society. Every civil right has for its foundation some natural right fore-existing in the individual, but to the enjoyment of which his individual power is not, in all cases, sufficiently competent. Of this kind are all those which relate to security and protection." The basis of liberty is contained in the first three articles of the Declaration of Rights of the French National Assembly, the whole of which Paine quotes in full and declares to be "of more value to the world than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated." The first of these articles, if true, destroys every one of the distinctions of class and creed which were dear to eighteenth-century England. "Men are born, and always continue, free and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility." It followed from this premise that no one class had any right to impose laws upon the rest of the community without their consent. The nation must be the source of sovereignty, and no individual or body of men could be entitled to any authority which was not expressly derived from it. Monarchy, aristocracy, the Established Church, the territorial system, and primogeniture, everything which gave artificial advantages to one man over his neighbour, must be swept away. Given the first assumption that all men are born equal, the rest follows as a matter of course.

It is as easy to refute the doctrine as to state it. It is not historically true that men are or ever have been born equal. It is not logically true that a man is born with any rights or can ever acquire any except with the consent of his associates. The historical basis must appear absurd to any one who is acquainted with the theory of evolution and the early history of family and tribal organization. The logical basis must

appear equally absurd to any one who is acquainted with the nature of a right. It is impossible to conceive of such a thing as an abstract right apart from definite human relationships. A right cannot exist in the air. It cannot even attach to an isolated individual. A right is always a right against some other, and postulates the association of its possessor with at least one other human being. How can we with any propriety speak of the rights of Robinson Crusoe before the arrival of Friday? The powers of Crusoe were at first limited solely by physical considerations. When he took Friday under his protection he acquired certain rights as against Friday, and at the same time Friday acquired certain rights as against him. But this is only to say that the natural power of each to do as he pleased, hitherto limited only by natural forces, was thereafter limited also by certain rules of conduct, recognized by both for observance so long as their mutual relations continued. The extent of those limits could only be defined by their agreement. These are all the rights which any man can ever possess, even in the most complex society. A right is nothing more or less than a defined natural power. It may vary in the degree of its definition. It may be enforced by all the authority of the whole community, and be called a legal right. It may be enforced only by the pressure of the opinion of the community or of a class, and be called a moral right. In neither case is it a thing of spontaneous generation. It arises always out of the relations of human beings with each other, and may always be tempered and qualified by the nature of their relations.

Paine's mistake lay simply in using the word "natural" instead of the word "moral." To assert that a man has a natural right to control his own

government is to assert what is demonstrably false. To assert that a man has a moral right to control his own government is to assert simply that in the writer's opinion a man ought to be allowed to control his own government, and the dispute is simply about a particular problem of ethics. Substitute the one word for the other in the passage above quoted, and what is now a false statement of fact becomes a reasonable, if not an unanswerable, argument. The quarrel between Paine and Burke, so far as it was a practical quarrel and not merely a quarrel about terms, was a quarrel about the precise manner in which certain common ethical principles should be enforced. Government is merely the organization of human beings for certain common purposes, and the structure is to be adapted solely to the execution of those purposes. If a particular scheme means the abuse of one section of the community by another, one of the ends of government, the protection of all the human beings concerned, is not achieved, and the scheme, if possible, should be altered. Once we come to the conclusion, upon ethical principles, that every human being ought to have an equal chance with every other of developing himself, it follows, not as a logical deduction, but simply as a matter of practical convenience, that one class ought not to be entrusted with the control of others. A constitution in itself has no merit. Its only value is as a piece of working machinery, and it is to be tested not by the degree of its conformity to abstract principles, but by its practical effects.

Burke himself, in fact, destroyed his whole argument against "natural rights," not as a proposition of logic, but as a basis of political action. He admitted that men had certain "real" rights: "to justice," "to the fruits of their industry and to the means of making

their industry fruitful," "to the acquisitions of their parents, to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring, to instruction in life, and to consolation in death." But what is the difference between these "real" rights of Burke and the "natural" rights of Paine? How are these rights created and maintained, but by public opinion and current ideas of morality? And if these, why not others? "It is a thing," said Burke, "to be settled by convention." Tom Paine meant nothing else. But when Burke said, "As to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the State, that I must deny to be amongst the direct, original rights of man in civil society," Paine might have asked in what respect rights to justice and to the fruits of industry differed from rights to control government. If the rules of justice are defined by Government so that it becomes difficult, tedious, and expensive, how is the poor man to exercise his right to justice? If Government taxes the raw material of his industry, is not his right to the fruits of it being impaired? In his *Present Discontents* Burke had described clearly enough the consequences of absolute power, the corruption of the governor and the oppression of the governed. If government remains in the hands of a class, it will inevitably be conducted in the interests of that class, and the rules of justice and the regulation of industry will be contrived according to its interests and not according to those of the general community. In other words, the rights of the rest of society, however real, direct, and original, are always liable to be diminished or destroyed by the caprice of their governors. Burke's admissions lead as inevitably to universal suffrage as the false assumptions of Paine.

It must not be assumed that Paine was a mere

theorizer. So far as the interests of the mass of the people were concerned, he was the most practical of reformers. Tories and reactionary Whigs appealed to "the glorious Revolution of 1688."[126] Cartwright and the Radicals deduced liberty from abstract hypotheses without considering to what practical uses liberty was to be put. Paine came boldly forward with definite proposals for social reforms, and it was this practical application of his principles which made him to be detested where Cartwright was only despised. It was bad enough to assail aristocracy. Words could hardly express the feelings with which comfortable people listened to his attacks upon property. These would seem moderate to a generation which has grown accustomed to Socialism, as a creed if not as an institution, and his proposals were little more drastic than those of the present Liberal Government. He advocated graduated death duties, old-age pensions, maternity grants, the right to work, and international agreement for the limitation of armaments.[127] It is true that the language of his proposals was anything but reckless. He was far from being an advocate of violent methods. "It is always better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time of every argument to show its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a discretionary violation of those which are good."[128] "The right of property being secured and inviolable, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity, legally ascertained, and on condition of a previous just indemnity."[129] This is the language of temperance. But the owners of property have little capacity for reflection when their interests are attacked. They are seldom concerned to

examine the justice of any infringement of their privileges, and they find it difficult to distinguish between taxation and spoliation, between appeals to natural justice and the negation of law. Paine's adversaries did not believe in natural rights. But they believed in what were far worse. They believed in natural wrongs. It was monstrous to suggest that all men were entitled to equal opportunities. But it was quite reasonable that the vast majority should be kept in a situation where they could not be confident even of a bare subsistence. The good cause, if not the logical reasoning, was Paine's. The right to property is, like all his "natural" rights, or the "real" rights of Burke, a moral right, and its extent is to be determined upon the same principles as every other. Violent disturbances of it are bad, as violent disturbances of every right are bad, not because they are disturbances, but because they are violent. There is nothing more essentially vicious in a criticism of property in land or machinery than in a criticism of property in a negro. As Burke said, "It is a thing to be settled by convention."

Paine's suggestions for social reform were of little immediate importance, and it was a hundred years before the first of them, a graduated death duty, was passed into law. His value in his own day lay, not in his practical proposals, but in his insistence upon the equal value of individuals in the State. What the Whigs had practised partially and obscurely Paine preached universally and with precision. His *Rights of Man* was the principal textbook of the new school of politicians, who, by basing their politics upon individuality instead of class, eventually transformed the English theory of government. The Reformers found government the profession of a few families of landed proprietors, at the best prevented from active

abuse by an imperfect system of representation of classes. They made it a thing of trust and responsibility, for which every man must prove his competence by his readiness to act directly for the benefit of those whom he governed. They found it an incident in the lives of men of leisure. They made it an expression of the life of men of all ranks alike. Omitting the false historical assumption, there is nothing substantially untrue in Paine's contrast of the old spirit with the new. "Government on the old system was an assumption of power, for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society."[130]

These new principles did not appear on the surface of politics until forty years later, and not a single institution was in the interval altered in the direction of Liberalism. The Whig Opposition broke into pieces, and the majority joined the Tories.[131] The Church of England found itself for once allied with the Wesleyans, whose Christianity was as much repelled by Paine's *Age of Reason* as its own aristocratic temper was repelled by his *Rights of Man*. The governing class was driven into a paroxysm of fear and rage by Paine's triple assault on aristocracy, property, and orthodox religion, and every Conservative instinct was roused in its defence. Every Reformer, moderate and extreme, was involved together in one denunciation. Their opinions admittedly came from France, and every atrocity which had taken place in France was due to those opinions. Voltaire was an atheist. Rousseau was a profligate. The French aristocracy had been massacred. The French Church had been stripped of its possessions. The French landed proprietors had been spoiled. All this had been done in the name of the rights of man. The English Reformers believed in

the rights of man. These had been proved by events in France to be incompatible with law, order, religion, and morality. All who valued these must unite in their defence against the deadly opinions. Belief in the rights of man marked an Englishman like a contagious disease. Atheists, Theists, and Christians, Trinitarians and Unitarians, Churchmen and Dissenters, Reformers, Radicals, and Republicans, landowners, manufacturers, and artisans, people who believed in vested interests and people who did not, all were Jacobins, and all were swept away in one turbid flood of unreasoning invective.

Every proposal for change was opposed by the same arguments. Every institution, good, bad, or indifferent, became a foothold for shuddering Conservatism. Alteration became synonymous with evil; there was no good save in establishment. Even the Slave Trade was strengthened against pious Tory gentlemen like Wilberforce by the same arguments which defended the representative system against the profane Republican artisans of Lancashire. Thus Lord Abingdon claimed to have "incontrovertibly proved that the proposition for the abolition of the Slave Trade is a French proposition, that it is grounded in and founded upon French principles, that it means neither more nor less than liberty and equality, that it has Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* for its chief and best support ... that it has had in the colonies of France all the direful effects necessarily flowing from such principles, namely, those of insubordination, anarchy, confusion, murder, havock, devastation, and ruin."[132] Nearly thirty years after the publication of Paine's book, Lord Wellesley, denouncing universal suffrage, annual elections, and

voting by ballot, said that, if carried into execution, they "would be the destruction of all regular government, the destruction of all religion, and the destruction of all private property."[133] But the most ludicrous expression of this fear of change occurs in one of Windham's speeches against the Bill to suppress bull-baiting. The House of Commons solemnly listened to a solemn assurance that the Bill was promoted by Methodists and Jacobins, and that it was directed to the destruction of the old English character by the abolition of all rural sports. "Out of the whole number of the disaffected, he questioned if a single bull-baiter could be found, or if a single sportsman had distinguished himself in the Corresponding Society ... the antiquity of the thing was deserving of respect, for antiquity was the best preservation of the Church and State."[134]

The controversy was not allowed to remain a mere matter of words. Both sides set themselves to organize machinery for the dissemination of their opinions. The Radicals used the Society for Constitutional Information. The extremists established the Corresponding Society, whose branches, composed chiefly of the middle and working classes, corresponded with similar societies in France, held meetings and published their resolutions in the newspapers, and industriously circulated copies of the *Rights of Man*. So vigorous were their operations that a Royal Proclamation was issued in May, 1792, denouncing these "wicked and seditious writings" and correspondence with "persons in foreign parts," and exhorting all subjects of the Crown to discourage them.[135] In November the Tories formed an Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers, which declared that "It appears from history and

observation, that the inequality of rank and fortune in this happy country is more the result of every man's own exertions than of any controlling institution of the State. Men become great who have greatly distinguished themselves by the application of talents natural or acquired; and men become rich who have persevered with industry in the application to trade and commerce, to manufactures, and other useful employments."[136] Such language was hardy enough in a society where public dignities were monopolized by a few families, whose inherited wealth was augmented as often by jobbery as by industry. The Association seems to have acted as a private detective agency and sent reports and secret information to the Government. But the honours of agitation rested, as usual, with the reforming party. If their success was small, it was due less to the private efforts of their opponents than to the superior resources of the Government itself.

It is difficult to discover how widely the new ideas had spread by the end of the century. The war with France, which lasted almost continuously from 1793 to 1815, probably drew off much of the national enthusiasm. A foreign war is always favourable to the enemies of domestic liberty, and however much their distresses may drive common men to hate their governors, they generally hate them less than the national enemy. Industrious as they were, the agitators were too closely identified with France to be popular, and it was not till the end of the war that the middle and working classes as a whole began to lend them a favourable ear. In the meantime, they were regarded by the Government as infinitely more powerful than they really were, and for thirty years they worked in constant danger of imprisonment or

transportation. They had been depressed, in common with Whigs like Fox and Grey, by the ferocity of the French mobs. But the invasion of France by the Duke of Brunswick and the complete victory of the new national Government, restored their confidence at the same time as it reawakened the terrors of the Tories. The most trifling expressions of sympathy with the French people or their principles exposed them to spies and informers and zealous loyalists. [137] On the 8th May James Ridgway and H. D. Symonds were sentenced to four years' imprisonment for publishing Paine's works. On the 27th, for saying in a coffee-house, "I am for equality; I see no reason why one man should be greater than another; I would have no king, and the constitution of this country is a bad one," Mr. Frost was struck oft the roll of attorneys and sentenced to an hour in the pillory and six months in Newgate. On the 1st October Mr. Pigott and Dr. Hudson were tried for drinking "The French Republic" in a coffee-house. At Leicester a man called Vaughan distributed a handbill criticizing the war because it inflicted hardship on the poor. He was sent to prison for three months. Benjamin Bull distributed the *Rights of Man* at Bath, and was imprisoned for a year.[138] Paine himself was tried for seditious libel in 1792, and in his absence was outlawed. But the most ferocious punishments were inflicted in Scotland. In England, short of high treason, there was no legal offence possible except sedition or seditious libel, for which the punishment was a term of imprisonment. In Scotland the offenders might be transported. In September, 1793, the Rev. Thomas Fysche Palmer, Unitarian minister at Dundee, for publishing an address couched in very temperate language, from which it was proved that he had struck out some

more extravagant expressions, was sentenced to seven years' transportation. The Whigs in Parliament protested against this monstrous sentence. But the House, by a large majority, refused even to compel the Home Secretary to detain the convict ship pending its revision.[139] In the same year Thomas Muir, a gentleman of acknowledged respectability, was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation for an offence of as trivial a kind as that of Mr. Palmer.[140] Other Reformers, chiefly members of Corresponding Societies, met at Edinburgh in December, 1792, in what they rashly called a "National Convention." This consisted of delegates from Societies all over the kingdom. It passed resolutions, appointed committees, and acted as a permanent body of political delegates is accustomed to act, in order to further the cause of Parliamentary Reform. There was nothing violent in the objects, the proceedings, or the language of the Convention, which passed a resolution in favour of government by King, Lords, and Commons without a single dissentient voice.[141] But the French Revolution had begun by the meeting of a "Convention," and the delegates, in addition to selecting that unfortunate title, presented an address to the French National Convention, and habitually addressed each other, in imitation of the French, as "citizens." This was enough for the Government. A representative body, with a French title, in communication with the French Government, and using French forms of speech, must meditate that sort of revolution which had been contrived by the French people. It fell upon the delegates with all the ferocity of despotism in a panic. William Skirving, Maurice Margarot, and Joseph Gerald were transported for fourteen years, and Alexander Callender was outlawed. English

juries were less frantic than Scottish. The members of the London Corresponding Society had done similar acts in England. But in 1794, when several of them, including Horne Tooke, were tried for high treason, all were acquitted.

The precise details of all these proceedings, and the widespread suffering which they caused, are not important for this book. It is enough to state here that there was much expression of discontent, and that the Government dealt with it in the worst possible way. The wise course was to detach the respectable agitators from the agitators who were not respectable by substantial improvements in the franchise and the distribution of seats. But the Government were incapable of drawing distinctions, and, by confounding all sorts of discontent in their repression, alienated and embittered even those whom they had it in their power to conciliate. Evidence of any general conspiracy to alter the existing order by violent means there is none. Nothing was ever published on behalf of the Government itself which proved anything but constitutional and orderly expressions of dissatisfaction, with occasional outbreaks of reckless language and exceedingly rare instances of such acts as the purchase or manufacture of weapons.[142] There were no collections of arms, no riots, except such as were purely industrial, and no demonstrations of force. Not a single life was ever taken or attempted by the Reformers, and the only dangerous political disturbance of the period was the outbreak of the Tory mob, who looted and burnt the houses of Dissenters and Radicals at Birmingham. But the governing class was afraid, and in its fear it struck out blindly at everything which it disliked.

The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in 1791, and the executive received power to arrest and detain suspects without trial. At a later date, extraordinary powers were created. A meeting held near London in October, 1795, was followed by an attempt to assassinate the King. The meeting was orderly, and there was not a shadow of proof that there was any connection between the two events. But the Government took advantage of the prevailing indignation to create new crimes, and to increase the punishments for existing crimes. The Treason Act made it an offence, punishable on a second conviction with seven years' transportation, to "incite or stir up the people to hatred or dislike of His Majesty's person or the established Government and constitution of the realm," and extended the definition of high treason. The Sedition Act prohibited the holding of meetings without the presence of a magistrate, made it an offence punishable with death for twelve persons to remain together after a magistrate had called upon them to disperse, and declared that any house, where a substantial number of persons beyond that of the resident family assembled for a common purpose, should be treated as a disorderly house, unless specially licensed. In 1799, after the mutiny in the fleet at the Nore and the great Irish Rebellion, in both of which the Society of United Irishmen had been involved, new statutes made it a criminal offence, punishable by fine and imprisonment, to belong to the Corresponding Society, or the Societies of United Irishmen and United Englishmen, or to take oaths of secrecy. No printer was to be allowed to conduct his business without obtaining a certificate from a clerk of the peace. No attempt was made to discriminate between the Corresponding

Societies, whose violence was confined to their language, and the other two societies, which had undoubtedly been concerned in the mutiny and the Rebellion. Individual atrocities were ascribed to French principles. The Reform Societies preached French principles. Therefore they were as guilty as the criminals themselves. In effect, all organized political agitation was suppressed.

All these measures were steadily opposed by the small body of Parliamentary Whigs who had not lost their belief in free government. Fox, Grey, and Whitbread in the Commons, and Bedford, Lansdowne,[143] Moira, and Lauderdale in the Lords, denounced every restriction upon the right of free discussion, and at huge meetings at Copenhagen House and in Palace Yard they protested against the Treason and Sedition Bills. They were not in sympathy with the extremists, who often attacked them as bitterly as the Tories themselves. There is nothing so obnoxious to violent opinions as moderation. It seems to add hypocrisy to wickedness. But to those who can see historical events in proportion the good service of this handful of statesmen is beyond question. They maintained the purely Liberal view that toleration is not to be confined to opinions of which we ourselves approve. "All political libels," said Fox, "he would leave to themselves; discussions on government, so far as they did not interfere with private character, he would permit to pass entirely unrestrained."[144] "The best security of a Government," said Tierney, "is in the free complaints of a people."[145] "The safety of the State," said Grey, "could only be found in the protection of the liberties of the people.... There never was an extensive discontent without great misgovernment. The people ought to be taught to

look to Parliament with a confident expectation that their complaints would be heard, and protection afforded to them. When no attention was paid to the calls of the people for relief, when their petitions were rejected, and their sufferings aggravated, was it wonderful that at last public discontents should assume a formidable aspect?"[146] Protests sometimes became threats. Fox declared in 1795 that if the Treason and Sedition Bills were carried into law, the propriety of resistance to government would no longer be a matter of morality but of prudence only, and in this he was supported by Sheridan and Grey.

These Whigs at least contrived to see the popular point of view, and would have suffered opinions which they would do nothing to promote. The Tories saw no point of view but their own. They hated free discussion, because they saw that it meant the end of the institutions which they cherished. Discussion was to them only a stage on the way to rapine and murder. It made, therefore, no difference whether discussion were honest and orderly or not. They were resolute to maintain existing establishments, and the most constitutional of critics was as much a public enemy as the most ferocious of rebels. They drew no distinction between agitation and revolution. They inquired into discontents, but only into their extent and not into their causes. They applied violent remedies, not to the real disease, but to its symptoms. The patient was noisy, and they beat him for being noisy, when they ought to have cured the fever which produced his delirium. The vice of their system lay not so much in their suppression of disorder as in their neglect of reform. Order must be maintained by government, even when the breach of

it is the fault of government. But it must be accompanied by redress of grievances. It is the business of a statesman to manage his people, not to compel them, and however necessary it may sometimes be for him to enforce the law, it remains the weakest, and should always be the last of his instruments. It is useless for him to maintain order unless it is accompanied by goodwill. Some men may be constitutionally so disaffected that nothing can appease them. But the majority can always be satisfied by a generous treatment of their grievances. Even after the crisis of the Revolution Pitt might have made the state of England more happy than it was. But what he did not do was not so important as what he had not done. He believed in Parliamentary Reform, in Catholic Emancipation, in the relief of Dissenters, in Free Trade. He was in power from 1783 to the outbreak of the Revolution, and might have conciliated the middle class and the Irish, diminished public corruption, stimulated industry, and reduced the cost of living. This would not have prevented all discontent. But it would have confined it to its essential and irreducible minimum. Whether this inaction was due to his own lethargy or the incurable selfishness and stupidity of his associates and supporters, it was undoubtedly responsible for a large part of his subsequent difficulties. He left heaps of combustible material untouched, and it was his own fault that it caught fire. In this unhappy state, lurching between bitter discontent and savage repression, English liberty struggled through the great war.

The affairs of Ireland furnished another battle-ground for contending principles during this period. The complete subjugation of that country was ended in 1782, when demonstrations of armed force

wrested legislative independence from an England surrounded by foreign enemies. The Irish Parliament was left free to make such laws as it pleased for Ireland, and the deliberate destruction of Irish industries in the interest of English ceased for ever. But this independence, though won by the united efforts of all creeds and classes, was the independence of a Protestant oligarchy. The great bulk of the Irish people escaped an external only to submit to an internal tyrant. The Irish Parliament, though patriotic in matters of commerce, was hardly any more indulgent than the English in its religious policy. Catholics were excluded from the Houses at Dublin as vigorously as from those at Westminster, and few important mitigations of their lot were obtained from their own countrymen. In 1792 Catholics were admitted to the Bar, mixed marriages were allowed, and it was made legal for a Catholic to educate his children abroad. In 1793 all public offices were thrown open to them, except seats in Parliament and the highest places in the Army, the Judicature, and the Civil Service. These changes removed the worst disabilities of the upper and middle classes, who had now fewer disabilities than their fellows in England and Scotland, and there was thus exhibited a considerable reduction of Protestant insolence. The supremacy of Pitt in England aroused great hopes that the last stones of the edifice would soon be removed. Catholic emancipation would not have cured all the ills of Ireland, any more than Parliamentary Reform would have cured all the ills of England. An excessive population, crowded into agriculture by the destruction of manufactures, demoralized by landowners who were too often thriftless or absentees, and deprived of education by the laws which prohibited teaching by Catholic

priests or laymen, was in a condition which mere political reforms could do little to improve. What Catholic disabilities did was to poison economic discontent by the memories of racial and religious persecution. The conduct of the English Government of the day was dangerously uncertain. The hopes of the Catholics were roused in 1794 by the appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam as Lord-Lieutenant. Fitzwilliam was notoriously in favour of the Catholic claims, even though he was not authorized to make any promises on behalf of the Government. He was too open in his professions of sympathy, and when Protestant bigotry procured his recall, the apparent treachery only aggravated the bitterness of old subjection. Catholic resentment and Protestant arrogance soon brought matters to a crisis. Neither party gained credit from the rising of 1798. The excesses of the magistrates and the troops before, during, and after the fighting were often of mediæval atrocity, and the retaliation of the rebels cannot be justified, though it is amply explained by the character of the provocation. This fearful outbreak in the middle of the French War satisfied the English Government that only by a Union could Ireland be kept in peace. The good effects of the recent concessions had vanished in this whirlwind of savagery, and Protestant and Catholic were once more in the temper of the Middle Ages. Mutual goodwill could only be restored by a common tutelage.

There was nothing bad in itself in the plan for a legislative Union. Had it been carried through with a just regard for Irish opinion, and had it been followed by a strict attention to the grievances of the common people, the Union might have been one of the brilliant successes of the English race. In fact it

was itself effected by shameful means, and it was followed by misgovernment as fatally unsympathetic as that which had preceded it. English rule in Ireland was less ferocious in the nineteenth century than in the eighteenth. But it was no less conspicuous a failure. No constitutional machinery can be better than the men who work it, and Englishmen after the Union showed themselves no less unimaginative and egoistic than their predecessors. The objects of the Union were stated by Pitt, with perfect good faith, to be the substitution of government by an impartial authority for government by a faction which was steeped in the memories of old oppression. "An impartial Legislature standing aloof from local party connection, sufficiently removed from the influence of contending factions to be advocate or champion of neither, being so placed as to have no superstitious reverence for the names and prejudices of ancient families, who have so long enjoyed the exclusive monopolies of certain public patronages and property ... this is the thing that is wanted for Ireland."[147] That was what was wanted for Ireland. What it obtained was a Legislature as partial, as inextricably involved in local party connection, and as closely wrapped about with superstitious reverence for ancient families and their patronages and property as could have been contrived. For half a century at least the government of Ireland remained what it has always been in the hands of England, government by armed force, in the interests of the landlords against the tenants, of the Protestants against the Catholics. A system which Pitt devised as a protection against the old abuses was converted into an effective engine for their maintenance. Pitt was himself partly to blame for this disastrous failure. He probably never saw the

need for economic reorganization. But he saw clearly enough the need for the ending of religious strife, which poisoned the whole temper of the people and wasted on the jealousies of sects and the hatred of government energy which would otherwise be free to run in healthy and productive channels. His weakness in not pushing on with Lord Fitzwilliam made the rebellion of 1798 inevitable. Similar weakness after the Union made the constitutional change useless. It was undoubtedly part of his original plan to emancipate the Catholics. But the King, the Church, and Protestant Ireland were too strong for him. Pitt resigned. The Whigs came into office, with a Ministry which was united at least on the Catholic question. The King again had his way, and rather than hold office without fulfilling their Catholic pledges, they resigned in their turn.[148] Pitt's course was clear. He should have refused to come back without permission to do what he thought right. But he preferred the convenience of the King, and accepted office on condition that the Catholic question was left open. This was as effective as a definite refusal. Canning persuaded the House of Commons in 1812, but Eldon in the Lords defeated his colleague's Bill, and until Eldon could be expelled there was no hope for Ireland. The friendly Tories would never unite with the Whigs to defeat the hostile Tories. Nothing was done to solve the problem, and Ireland, for a generation after the Union, was governed by coercion.

Throughout this wretched dispute the Whigs maintained the ancient doctrines of their party with regard to religious disabilities. But the problem aroused controversy about a second conception of more recent growth, the conception of nationality. Burke had tried to treat Ireland as an equal nation

for commercial purposes. The Whigs of 1801 extended the idea to its extreme limits. Had the Irish Parliament the right to surrender its powers to a Parliament of the United Kingdom without receiving the approval of its own electors? Unquestionably it had the legal right. Had it also the moral right? The Whigs held that it had not. "What right," asked Sheridan, "has the Irish Parliament to resolve that, instead of going back to their constituents, they shall form part of a foreign legislature?"[149] "The Union," said Fox, "is not an alteration, but a destruction and annihilation of the Irish Constitution. Union therefore, like revolution, cannot be justifiable but by the unequivocal consent of the people."[150] Pitt opposed this doctrine on the usual Tory ground. It led, he said, immediately "to the system of universal right of suffrage in the people, to the doctrine that each man should have a share in the government of the country by having a choice for his representative; and then goes back to the whole system of Jacobinism."[151]

The Union was therefore carried through the instrumentality of a legislature bribed to betray its constituents. This transaction was much worse than it appeared. The English Government which neglected the wishes of the Irish people in this matter would neglect them in all others. The Union was a supreme act of despotism, the fitting prelude to the systematic disregard of Irish opinion which followed it. "There must," wrote Fox a few years later, "be a fundamental change in the system of governing Ireland, to give even a chance of future quiet there.... That there should be a part of the United Kingdom to which our laws, nominally at least, extend, and which is nevertheless in such a state as to call for martial law, etc., so repeatedly, is

of itself ground for reconsidering, at least, the system by which it is governed."[152] The Tories could not understand, even in the case of England, that it is the business of a governor to manage and not to coerce the governed, and race and religion combined to obscure still further their view of Ireland. The system remained what it had been and was, and the consequences of this fatal negligence are with us to this day.

The foreign policy of the Government gave not a few opportunities for expressions of Liberalism. The rights of nationalities were in issue in the beginning of the French War, in the treatment of Ireland, in the descent upon Copenhagen, and in the negotiations which followed the downfall of Napoleon. In all these cases the Whig Opposition stated the pure Liberal doctrine. In that of the war with France, one section of them carried the doctrine to an absurd extent. In origin, the war was unquestionably a war of interference, an attempt to force upon the French people an obnoxious government, and to compel them to abandon those new and revolutionary principles which they had adopted for themselves. Pitt himself had apparently no such object, and was hurried into the war partly by the French threats of assisting other peoples to revolt, and chiefly by the irresistible pressure of the English governing class. It is impossible to read contemporary literature, the debates in Parliament, the newspapers, the pamphlets of Burke and other acknowledged leaders of opinion, the resolutions of corporations and public meetings, and the private correspondence, without coming to the conclusion that the great bulk of influential political society was inspired by a

fanatical hatred of the new opinions. Whatever pretexts may have been urged in public, and may have been in fact held by comparatively sober people like Pitt, the impelling force behind the English armies was dread of French principles. The sword of the invader could not have been feared more than the fatal contagion of his ideas. The Germans and Austrians, who invaded France in 1792 to restore the monarchy, were less concerned to hide their motives than the English Government. But there was little difference in substance between them. The Continental Sovereigns moved of their own motion. The English Ministers were carried on by their supporters.

Against a war of this kind the Whigs spoke forcibly and with justice. Lansdowne described it as "a war, the alleged object of which was to repel unprovoked aggressions, but the real one to prescribe laws to an independent country."[153] It was "a metaphysical war; it was declared against France on account of her internal circumstances."[154] Fox said it was no better than the methods of the Inquisition. We were killing people because they thought differently from ourselves. "How could we blame all those abominable acts of bloodshed and torture, which had been committed from time to time under the specious name of religion, when we ourselves had the presumption to wage a similar war?"[155] It was "the most gross violation of everything sacred which could exist between nation and nation, as striking at the root of the right which each must ever possess of internal legislation."[156] "Whatever our detestation of the guilt of foreign nations may be, we are not called to take upon ourselves the task of avengers; we are bound only to act as guardians of the welfare of those with whose concerns we are immediately

entrusted."[157]

This language was wise, and its wisdom was proved by events. The Bourbons were not restored. The temper of the French people was incredibly stimulated. The new system which might have repelled by its violence and rapacity became the centre of the national enthusiasm. It inflicted a crushing defeat upon its foreign invaders and then proceeded to avenge this additional injury by the massacre of those whom the invasion was intended to assist. Whether Napoleon would have appeared in French history or not without this strengthening of the Revolutionary system, it is impossible to say. Certainly the foreign interference with the first Government consolidated the nation, and prepared for Napoleon's use the most formidable weapon that he could have obtained for the braying of Europe. There is a tragic instance of that insight which is not foresight in the correspondence of Castlereagh, and it shows how completely the English Government misunderstood what they had done. "The only thing ... which really dispirits me is, the unprecedented struggle of order against anarchy, and the unfortunate facility with which France recruits her army as fast as the sword exterminates it. A few days transforms their ragamuffins into troops, which are not contemptible even when opposed to the best soldiers in Europe.... It is the first time that *all* the population and *all* the wealth of a great kingdom has been concentrated in the field: what may be the result is beyond my perception."[158] What was going on was that anarchy was being reduced into order within the boundaries of France, and no hatred of early extravagance or subsequent tyranny need blind us to the courage, energy, and skill of those French statesmen who, in the face of their enemies,

built up the new system upon the ruins of the old. The war made their task comparatively easy, and if it diminished their strength, it made their material more workable. The foreign invasion operated like a powerful electric current, and fused the scattered particles of French nationalism into a solid bulk. The whole fiery mass of France was being beaten and welded and forged into something which Castlereagh could not understand: a nation, every member of which had a personal interest in and a personal devotion to his nationality. Such a thing had not been known before in France. But it was not long before even Castlereagh was made to feel that in the councils of Europe the rights of man might count for as much as government by orders.

The Whigs carried their maintenance of the equal rights of nationalities to its inevitable conclusion that nations, no less than individuals, must be bound by moral rules in their dealings with each other. Fox declared that "the greatest resource a nation can possess, the sweet source of power, is a strict attention to the principles of justice. I firmly believe that the common proverb of honesty being the best policy is as applicable to nations as to individuals ... and that cases which may sometimes be supposed exceptions arise from our taking narrow views of the subject, and being unable at once to comprehend the whole."[159] When he was almost at the point of death he proceeded to suggest an international congress for settling disputes. "He disapproved ... of any government pursuing under the title of indemnities a system of partition of States, making some republics, some monarchies, and annihilating the political existence of others, without regard to moral rectitude or to the common feelings of mankind, which considerations had more influence

on the affairs of the world than some politicians were aware. The partition of Poland, the seizure of Holland, the subjugation of Switzerland, and the division of States, by the agreement of some, and by the fraud and rapacity of others, had done more to destroy the confidence of mankind in each other than all the other misconduct of the powers put together. In private society, when men lost their confidence in one another, the compact was dissolved. The same rule applied to States, for they were only aggregates of individuals. He recommended to all the powers of Europe a system of justice and moderation, as the only means of putting an end to the evils under which we labour. He recommended a general congress, and that these principles should be prevalent in its deliberations."[160]

These principles of international morality were applied most forcibly to the destruction of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen in 1805. The Danes were not hostile to us, and in common with all the other small peoples of Europe they had every reason to fear Napoleon. The English Government knew that Napoleon intended, if he could, to use the Danish fleet against them. The English fleet accordingly was sent to Copenhagen to demand the surrender of the Danish ships, and on receiving a very natural refusal, destroyed some and carried off the rest. This proceeding is generally treated in English schools as a matter for national gratification. To Liberals it appears a very dangerous abuse of arbitrary power. Contemporary Europe was of the same opinion, and the direct consequence of the affair was to range all the Northern States on the side of Napoleon. We deprived him of the Danish ships, and we threw into his hands the Danish army, and all the forces of

Sweden, Norway, and Russia as well. The chorus of denunciation in Parliament was for once not confined to the Whigs. Even Windham said "he would sooner have seen the Danish fleet in Buonaparte's hands than in ours, under all the circumstances of the case."[161] Erskine lamented that the whole course of civilization had been interrupted by this act. "If anything could give delight in reading the history of civilized nations, it was the progressive improvement that was to be traced in law and civilization amongst the nations of the world. This was the first instance in which the principles of that amelioration had been trampled upon by us."[162] Lord Moira spoke in the same strain. "As long as there was a power in Europe which, from its regard to justice and to the rights of other States, could form a sort of rallying-point to the oppressed, there was some probability that the nations who were groaning under the yoke of a pitiless and inexorable tyrant would have watched for some opportunity, and made some exertion in common to throw it off. Such a power was this country, previous to the late most unjustifiable and unfortunate attack upon Denmark; but by this attack that hope had been completely extinguished."[163] Grey disposed of the argument that reasons of State could justify immorality. "So far from adding to the safety of the country, that point on which its safety most particularly depended, he meant its honour, had not only been greatly weakened, but had in fact received a mortal stab."[164] Prior to this oppression of the Danes, England had had the chance of heading a European movement for emancipation from Napoleon. Every small State might have supported her as a protector, and every large one as an ally against a dangerous rival. After the attack it became

for the small States simply a choice between two protectors, either of whom seemed to offer security against the other if not against itself. The exasperation of the moment swung the balance to the side of Napoleon, and England found herself face to face with a hostile Continent.[165]

Fortunately for the country, the Government soon effected a great change in their policy. For the first time they enlisted on their side what the French had had from the beginning, the idea of nationality. The war had entirely changed its character. Beginning as an interference with the internal affairs of the French people, it had merged, since the rise of Napoleon, into a struggle against a power which was as universal in its appetite as it was unscrupulous in its methods. Against this force, which was so astonishing that it appeared to many pious Christians as Anti-Christ himself, schemes and combinations had proved powerless. England had escaped disaster because she was an island. The rest of Europe, with the exception of Russia, had been beaten to the ground. These dynastic contrivances of kings and emperors wanted the national spirit which supported their adversary. To the common people in many parts of Europe Napoleon appeared as a deliverer from their domestic oppressors, and the little states of Germany and Italy, which he had carved out of the bigger, were ready enough to see a champion of freedom in one who tyrannized only over tyrants. The end began when he deposed a Spanish king and put his own brother on the throne of the proudest and most exclusive nation of Europe. The Peninsular War at last found England in her right place, at the head of a league of nationalities. The Whig Opposition, always weak in numbers, was now broken to pieces. Part of it repeated the old

arguments, which applied to everything but the present facts, hailed Napoleon as the champion of liberty, and even expressed regret at his downfall at Waterloo. The wiser men saw at once the significance of the Spanish expedition. Canning was now the Tory Foreign Secretary. He found a hearty supporter in Grey among the Whigs, and both felt an idea in what for Castlereagh was still no more than a matter of business. "Of all the infamies ever incurred by a nation," said Grey, "I think the greatest would have been to have appeared to abandon the Spaniards."[166] "The allies have now been placed by France in the situation in which France was originally placed by the allies. The success of both has been occasioned by the spirit of resistance, produced by injury and oppression; and my great hopes of the present confederacy are chiefly derived from this, that it has arisen rather from the feeling of the peoples than the policy of the Governments which it embraces."[167] The new principle succeeded at last. The Spanish people, with English help, crippled Napoleon, the Russian people wore him out, and the German people overwhelmed him. In 1815 the victory of Waterloo completed his destruction, and the European peoples had at last leisure to look to themselves.

Comparing the England of 1815 with the England of 1790, the Liberals of the time would find little cause for satisfaction. The economic problems of the country were more acute, and the attempts to remedy them directly by legislation and indirectly by encouraging combinations of workmen had been defeated. A solitary Act of 1802, which did something to regulate the conditions of parish

children who had been apprenticed to private employers, was the only measure of protection which had passed into law. Parliamentary Reform and Religious Emancipation seemed more remote than ever. The principle of nationality had been violated in Ireland, and if the recognition of it in the later stages of the war gave some ground for future confidence, hope was soon to be dispelled.

Unhappily for the common people, the spirit of nationality had been used only as a means and not as an end by the various enemies of Napoleon. No sooner was the common enemy destroyed than the victorious monarchs sat down to cut up and distribute Europe among themselves. They had fought, not the French, but the French Revolution, and when the main conflagration had been extinguished, they had still to stamp out the burning embers which had been blown about its borders. The young Republics which had been created were to be restored to their old rulers, and all the ancient monarchies were to be re-established, and where necessary strengthened by the acquisition of new territory. There is something almost ludicrous to modern eyes in the spectacle of these kings and emperors and their chancellors and envoys assigning and allotting human beings, by millions together, without inquiring into the wishes or interests of those with whom they dealt. England participated in the game, and Toryism and Liberalism were again brought into conflict.

The Tory view, expressed by Castlereagh and Liverpool, was hardly less callous than that of the Tzar Alexander himself. There is hardly a word in any of their speeches or dispatches which shows any tenderness for men and women as such. Human

beings to them were only subjects. The old form of Europe was to be restored, subject only to such changes as were necessary to strengthen the principal enemies of Revolutionary France. To the balance of power was to be sacrificed all local or national independence. "Upon the subject of Austria and Prussia," wrote Lord Liverpool, "we must always expect a degree of jealousy on the part of every French Government. It is quite essential, however, to any balance of power that these two monarchies should be made respectable. The principle recognized in the early part of this year, that Austria should have a population in the whole of about 27,000,000 of souls, and Prussia one of about 11,000,000, appears to be quite reasonable, and ought to give no umbrage to France."[168] Lord Liverpool wrote of "souls," but if he had been writing of cattle his language would have been no different. Castlereagh was no better. The Congress of Vienna, at which this vivisection of a continent took place, had in his eyes two objects, to check France and to check Russia. Prussia and Austria must therefore be aggrandized. Italy might be the next free people and become as dangerous as France, and the dream of her unity and independence must be subordinated to the necessity of at once strengthening Austria against Russia and of suppressing those small states upon which Napoleon had conferred independence. Venice, an ancient Republic, was handed over to Austria. Lest France should infect Italy, the Genoese Republic must be annexed to the Kingdom of Piedmont. Lest Russia should dominate Sweden, Norway must be taken from Denmark and given to Sweden. In order that Holland might be strengthened against France in the North, she must be allowed to annex Belgium. Prussia must be strengthened, but

not too much, and accordingly the Kingdom of Saxony was cut in half. The Poles had been divided between Russia, Austria, and Prussia in 1792. They now expressed a desire for independence, but in vain.[169] Austria and Prussia must be maintained at all costs. Castlereagh regretted that they should be sacrificed and left them to their fate.

The Whigs protested warmly against this infamous disposition of the affairs of unconsenting peoples. Particular acts, in particular the partition of Poland, it was not in the power of England to prevent. But that was no reason why she should give them her formal sanction. "England," said the young Lord John Russell, "might have appeared as a member of a confederacy to oppose France without sanctioning any of those acts of pillage by which the deliverance of Europe has been disgraced. If she was not able to prevent those acts, she need not have soiled her fair fame by appearing to countenance them."[170] But other matters were entirely within the control of England. She had entered into a treaty with Russia and Sweden, by which she bound herself not only formally to transfer Norway from Denmark to Sweden, but actually to compel the Norwegians by force of arms to submit to their new masters. Even Canning, who, though a member of the Government, held Liberal opinions in foreign affairs, declared that "if the question now was, whether consent should be given to the treaty, he had no hesitation in saying that he would refuse it."[171] Wilberforce "considered the partitioning of States against their will a most despotic sacrifice of public rights."[172] Lord Grenville appealed "to the old-established and true principles of national law in opposition to the new-fangled doctrine of utility, or, in other words, the subversion of all moral principle," and denounced

"the horrible injustice by which an unoffending people were to be bent to the dominion of a foreign power."[173] Grey expressed the complete Liberal theory. "The principles are the same in the one case and the other, whether between individuals or between States. No matter to what degree the impunity of power might silence the claims of right, its nature cannot be altered; it is equally sacred, equally important, and is equally to be recognized, in every attempt to protect the weak against the strong.... The rights of the Sovereign over his subjects are not the rights of property. They do not confer the privilege of transferring them from one to another like cattle attached to the soil.... The Sovereign might withdraw himself from their protection. He might absolve them from their allegiance to himself; but he had no right to transfer their allegiance to any other State. It became, then, the right of the people to decide to whom their allegiance should be given."[174] He dealt in fitting terms with the contention that it was after all for the benefit of the Norwegian people. "Can it be argued," he asked, "that any country shall be obliged to accept what a foreign State thinks proper to consider as happiness? No sort of tyranny can, in my judgment, be conceived more complete than that a Government should undertake to force another people to submit to that system which such Government may regard as happy, although that people may think quite the contrary."[175] Neither the reluctance of Canning nor the attacks of the Whigs could prevent the outrage. The British fleet blockaded the Norwegian ports, and the Norwegian people submitted to their new masters.

CHAPTER V

THE DECLINE OF TORYISM

The conclusion of the war closed the outlet through which the national energies had been so long strained, and left the people free to contemplate their own situation. Popular discontent again made itself felt, and it was more formidable than ever. Trade was dislocated by the peace, industries were reduced which had fattened upon the war, and the numbers of the idle workmen were swollen by disbanded soldiers and sailors. At the same time bad harvests diminished the supply of corn, and a new Corn Law which prohibited imports till the home price was eighty shillings a quarter aggravated the effects of natural deficiency. Wages in some trades were bad, and grew worse. In 1819 ribbon and silk weavers of Coventry petitioned Parliament to provide them with the means of emigrating to another country. They worked sixteen hours a day, in some cases for eighteenpence or half a crown a week. None of them earned more than ten shillings a week. A hand-loom cotton weaver could make only five or six shillings a week. A pound a week was a good wage for a workman in any industry.[176] The price of corn rose higher and higher. In January, 1816, a quarter of wheat cost fifty-two shillings and sixpence. In June, 1817, it cost a hundred and seventeen shillings.[177] As each member of the working class consumed on the average about one quarter a year, it follows that a family of five spent on bread at the rate of £13 a year at the first rate, and eighteen months later at the rate of £29. The whole income of a weaver might be swallowed up in buying bread alone, and his family be still left in want.

To this dreadful picture a comic touch was not wanting. The Lord Advocate once referred to it in language which shows how remotely separated were the people and their rulers. "In many instances," he said, "the manufacturers, who in former times were in the habit of attending church, now employed the forenoon of the Sabbath in political discussions; and it was a common practice for weavers to work at their looms on the same day, and till a late hour of the night—and this too with their windows open, to the horror and disgust of the passengers."[178] The economic necessity which deprived the wretched artisans even of the day appointed for their rest was thus twisted into a stain upon their character. It is not surprising that they discussed politics. Pending their emancipation, they had only three possible aids, starvation, parish relief, and charity; and many unhappy workmen and their families experienced all three. Political agitation revived on the conclusion of peace, and it was more extensive and more determined than before. It was met by the same dull and brutal repression and refusal of redress.

We have before us all the evidence upon which the Government proceeded, and there can be even less doubt than in connection with the events of twenty years before that its action was wrong and foolish. Almost every disturbance which took place could be traced to industrial or agrarian causes, and the ordinary law was in all cases sufficient. The Government preferred to treat the riots as proof of a general conspiracy against the State, and they took extraordinary steps in order to suppress them. In 1817 they suspended the Habeas Corpus Act. The suspensions of the earlier period might have been justified by the universal war, by the rapid dispersion of Jacobin principles, by the dangerous state of

Ireland. The suspension of 1817 had no such excuse. The paroxysm of the French Revolution had come to an end. Ireland was disaffected but subdued. There was no war. The Government had nothing to do but to attend to the condition of the people. But this was the last thing which it occurred to the Government to do. Even when the original impulse had ceased to operate, they continued to move in the line of reaction, and repeated mechanically the watchwords of their predecessors, who had at least the excuse that they were surprised and horrified. Sidmouth gravely described the Radicals as "the enemy."[179] It never seems to have occurred to any one in authority that Radicalism and riots were not cause and effect, and instead of grappling with the economic conditions which were equally the cause of both, Ministers discussed nothing but the means whereby the law was to be more easily enforced.[180] Undoubtedly there were occasional disturbances of a serious character. Between 1801 and 1811 the population increased by 21 per cent. The bulk of increase was among the North Country artisans, whose growing numbers at once made their economic distress and their political impotence more conspicuous than ever. There was a dangerous riot in Spa Fields, London, in November, 1816. Another occurred at Huddersfield in the following May, a third at Derby, and a fourth at Nottingham. Secret societies were formed in different parts of the country, and the tongue of Hunt and the pen of William Cobbett, rivalling the earlier popularity of the *Rights of Man*, led the Government to suppose that the whole fabric of society was in danger. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, the Seditious Meetings Act was revived, and Secret Committees of both Houses were appointed to collect information.

It is clear from the reports of these Committees that there was nothing in the state of the country to justify these unusual measures. The great mass of the people showed no sympathy with the rioters. Education was spreading rapidly in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Scotland, and the artisans were thinking for themselves. Violence was rare, but agitation was general. Large bodies of people marched to public meetings at Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and other provincial towns. Not a shadow of proof was produced by the Committees that these had any criminal intention, and one fact is sufficient to prove the contrary. At almost every meeting women and children were present.[181] The discipline and order of these crowds were indeed, in the obscure reasonings of men like Liverpool, Sidmouth, and Castlereagh, an additional proof of their seditious character. A turbulent common people never puzzled a Tory. It was the nature of the beast to be disorderly. But a common people which thought, and spoke, and organized, and met and dispersed in companies at the advice of its leaders, was a thing which he could not understand. What he could not understand, he feared. Not the least significant fact in this record of dull and unimaginative mismanagement is the connection between Castlereagh and Continental statesmen of the type of Metternich. These people had formed a Holy Alliance for the express purpose of suppressing attempts to establish Liberal Constitutions in Europe. Castlereagh, representing Great Britain, had refused to join the Alliance. But in his own country he was pursuing its very policy, as the European despots well knew. The letters in which the Courts of Vienna and Berlin congratulated him on his suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act and the right of public

meeting are among the most degrading which have ever passed through the British Foreign Office.[182]

The worst incident of this struggle between people and Government was the affair of Peterloo. This showed, as vividly as could have been desired, how completely the working class was at the mercy of a governing class, which controlled Parliament, the Army, and the Bench. A large but peaceful meeting, containing many women and children, was held in St. Peter's Square, Manchester, to hear speeches by Hunt and other popular leaders. The crowd had gathered from all the towns in the neighbourhood, and had marched, unarmed but in military order, to the place of assembly. The magistrates thought they were faced with rebellion. They sent police and yeomen to arrest Hunt, who stood on a waggon in the middle of the crowd. The yeomen got entangled among the people, and with the assistance of some hussars proceeded to convert the meeting into a riot. Men, women, and children were cut down or trampled by the horses; a few were killed and many injured. The action of the soldiers was endorsed by the magistrates and by the Government.[183] Whigs in both houses protested and demanded an inquiry, and Radical meetings everywhere denounced the affair as a massacre. The Government listened neither to expostulation nor to abuse. They refused to hold an inquiry. Persons injured had a legal remedy, and it was not the business of the executive to investigate matters which might come before the judiciary. It was true that a man or woman who was cut down in the midst of a panic-stricken mob might be unable to identify the cavalryman concerned. But it was not the business of the Government to step in where the law failed. Besides, the magistracy were honourable and patriotic men, and it would cast a

slur upon them and weaken their authority if their superiors examined their conduct. The language of Ministers was in keeping with their whole policy. The people were to be kept down, and it was not necessary, seeing that they were politically powerless, to be squeamish about ways and means. All the usual arguments were thus employed to protect the official wrongdoers against the public. One official will always defend the wickedness of another against private persons who happen to be unpopular, and a Secretary of State, who can rely on the support of a resentful party, will always ignore the wrongs of political opponents upon whose votes he is not forced to depend.[184] It is in agitations for the franchise that we learn best to appreciate it. In no other circumstances is the tendency to abuse power greater in the governor, nor the incapacity to obtain redress more conspicuous in the governed.

The direct consequence of this wanton abuse of power was to increase the disaffection of the common people and to stimulate the Whigs in Parliament. Much as they hated Radicals, the Whigs were too honestly indignant to tolerate executive outrage of this kind, and too anxious to retain their own leadership of constitutional opposition, to leave all the work of protest to the Radicals themselves.[185] The citizens of London, York, Bristol, Nottingham, and other large towns sent addresses to the Prince Regent, and a great meeting of Yorkshire voters was summoned by no less a person than Lord Fitzwilliam, the Lord-Lieutenant of the county. The Government was more frightened than ever, and contrived new methods of repression. Fitzwilliam was dismissed from his office, and Sir Francis Burdett was fined £2,000 and imprisoned for three months for publishing a violent criticism in a newspaper.

Castlereagh then introduced the notorious Six Acts. The drilling which had preceded popular meetings was made illegal. The trial of offenders was to be more expeditious. The magistrates were authorized to issue warrants to search for arms. Transportation was made the punishment for a second conviction for seditious libel. Public meetings were restricted. Pamphlets were subjected to the same stamp duties as newspapers. A touch of comedy was lent to these proceedings by a grant of £1,000,000 for the purposes of building new churches. This had two objects. The first was to check the spread of Dissent. "It was their duty," said Lord Liverpool, "to take care that those who received the benefits of education should not be obliged to resort to Dissenting places of worship by finding the doors of the church shut against them." But the second object was to prevent political agitation. "The recent increase of population," said the same statesman, "had taken place chiefly in the manufacturing towns; and it was impossible that great masses of human beings should be brought together in the manner in which they were situated in these towns without being exposed to vicious habits, and to corrupting influences dangerous to the public security as well as to private morality."[186] The gravity with which such remedial measures as this were proposed shows how utterly the Tories had failed to understand their business. It is always the habit of a Tory to suppose that popular discontent is a matter of preaching. It is always preached up, and it can always be preached down. The people ask for bread, and the Tories offer them a dogma. The Government of 1819 was no wiser than its predecessors, and it applied itself with great diligence to convert the people by words from a disposition which arose directly out of a combination

of low wages and high prices. They were saved by the forces of nature. The Regent ascended the throne as George IV in 1820, and his scandalous prosecution of his wife for a short time gave the people a new cry against the Government. But with the defeat of the Bill of Pains and Penalties the popular feeling subsided. Ministers had imagined themselves to be faced with a conspiracy between the Queen and the populace like that which had placed Catherine II on the throne of Russia. But the death of the Queen removed the leader, and good harvests, by bringing down the cost of living, reduced the sufferings of the people. The Tories remained in office for another ten years.

An attempt at economic reform was made at this time of crisis which deserves some notice. On the 16th December, 1819, Sir William de Crespigny moved that a Select Committee of the Commons be appointed to inquire into Robert Owen's scheme of co-operative production in New Lanark. Owen's experiment eventually failed. But as an experiment it was immensely valuable, and afforded abundant proof of the value of education, of the reduction of child labour, of a short working day, and of good conditions of housing and factory administration. Parliament could not have failed to profit by the study of such an excellent model. During the debate on Crespigny's motion, many professions of sympathy with distressed workmen were made, and not a few compliments were paid to the owner of the New Lanark mills. But Owen had made two dangerous blunders. As a Socialist he had spoken against private property, and his religious opinions were unorthodox. His scheme was therefore "subversive of the religion and government of the country," and Tories like Castlereagh, Pietists like

Wilberforce, and individualist economists like Ricardo joined in denouncing it. The argument of Wilberforce shows with what conscientious frivolity these governors studied the condition of their subjects. If Owen's plan, he said, "proceeded upon a system of morals founded upon no religion whatever, but rather upon considerations of moral rectitude of conduct only, he was of opinion that it behoved the House to be cautious how it gave its sanction to an institution which did not acknowledge as one of its essential features that doctrine on whose truth and piety it was not for him now to enlarge."[187] Upon such barriers the motion was shipwrecked. It was lost by 141 votes to 16, and the working classes were left to the tender mercies of competition.

Everything at home seemed hopeless for the cause of Liberalism. But while the demand for reform seemed to have grown weaker and its concession more remote, the aspect of foreign affairs was much more favourable. During this last period of Tory domination, which extended from the accession of George IV in 1820 to his death in 1830, the principle of nationality was steadily and courageously maintained. In capacity the members of these Tory Governments, with the exceptions of George Canning and Sir Robert Peel, were inferior to all who had held office before them since 1791. Castlereagh, the strongest of the older men, killed himself in 1822. Liverpool, who was Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827, was a respectable mediocrity. Sidmouth was rather less. Eldon, as Lord Chancellor, reigned supreme in the Lords, and nearly every measure of reform which was pushed through the Commons was overwhelmed in the Lords by his single argument. "The change now proposed was in direct contradiction to what their ancestors had supposed

to be the constitution; whether they were right or not in that supposition was a matter which he would not take it upon him to decide."[188] But foreign affairs were happily outside the control of the House of Lords, and Canning, who joined the Government after Castlereagh's death, managed them in the temper of pure Liberalism. Except on the Catholic question, Canning was in domestic politics a Tory. But his zeal for the rights of nationalities was as warm as that of Fox himself, and he never failed to encourage the growth of that spirit which had finally overcome Napoleon. He became the acknowledged leader of European Liberalism. Even Castlereagh, after the great partition of Europe had been completed, had declined to interfere in foreign civil wars, or to assist in the coercion of rebellious nationalities. Canning turned the cold negations of his predecessor into warm encouragement and remonstrance.

The first difficulties arose in Spain. The expulsion of the French had been followed by the restoration of the Spanish dynasty, and the promises of free institutions which had been used to stir up popular feeling were soon forgotten. Once secure upon his throne, King Ferdinand proceeded with great vigour to suppress what elements of liberty he could discover in his dominions, and by 1822 the whole of Northern Spain was in a state of civil war and the South American Colonies were in revolt. The Holy Alliance had been contrived for just such circumstances as these. The French King sent an army into Spain to help King Ferdinand. That this was an outrage not even Castlereagh and Liverpool could deny, though it merely imitated the policy of the English Tories of 1793. They declined to join the Holy Alliance, and they addressed a strong protest to

the guilty Powers. They declined, on the other hand, to go to war on behalf of one half of the Spanish people against the other. The system of Spanish government was for the Spanish people to decide. But the revolt of the Colonies gave Canning an opportunity of which he was glad to avail himself. At the earliest opportunity he formally recognized the revolutionary Governments. The establishment of a reactionary monarchy in Spain, where the issue of the civil war was in doubt, was one thing, the extension of the reaction to colonies which had set themselves completely free from their former rulers was another. There was no question here of appearing as a partisan in a domestic dispute. The Colonies were in fact independent. Was England to remain passive while they were reduced once more into subjection? Canning was resolved that if despotism were to be the rule on the Continent of Europe it should not be extended beyond those limits. He "called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old,"[189] and no one who compares the present condition of South America with that of Spain will question the wisdom any more than the expediency of his act.

The affairs of Portugal produced a similar problem, and in 1826 Canning went so far as to send troops to Lisbon to protect the Portuguese Liberal Regency from Spanish invasion. In 1828 Don Miguel usurped the Portuguese throne and violated the constitution which as Regent he had sworn to protect. The Tory Government, which had lost Canning in 1827, and was now in the hands of Wellington, adopted the strict Liberal attitude of not dictating to the Portuguese people how they should be governed. If they prevented France from supporting despotism, they could not, with any consistency, themselves

support democracy. "Don Miguel," said Peel, "was the person administering *de facto* the government of Portugal, and he could not think it prudent on the part of England to undertake to displace him and to dictate to the Portuguese who should be their ruler."[190] But the Government went farther than inaction. An expedition was fitted out in England by Portuguese refugees, and made a descent upon the Azores. A British ship fired on them and turned them back. It was the manner of the act rather than the act itself which was at fault. If the Government were bound not to assist the Constitutionalists in Portugal, they were bound to prevent their own territory from being made a base for their operations. The expedition should never have been allowed to sail. The use of armed force on the high seas was very unpopular, and Wellington was severely criticized by the Whigs. Their instinct was right, if their conduct was wrong. Wellington was in fact not so much refraining from interference in the domestic affairs of Portugal as suppressing a democratic movement. "We are determined," he wrote, "that there shall be no revolutionary movement from England on any part of the world."[191] He was equally determined, as subsequent events showed, that there should be no revolutionary movement in England itself. He would have drilled the English people as he allowed Miguel to drill the Portuguese, and if his policy was Liberal, his temper was Tory.

The debates on these Portuguese incidents are significant, not only because they reveal an almost universal acceptance of the principle of non-interference, but because they contain the ominous expressions of dissent from that principle which fell from the lips of Palmerston. Palmerston had succeeded Canning at the Foreign Office, and he

always claimed to be Canning's disciple as well as his successor. He formally joined the Whig party in 1830, and with the brief interval occupied by Peel's administration of 1841, dominated the foreign policy of England until his death in 1865. He had all Canning's hatred of foreign tyranny, but, in his case, generosity was mixed with an arrogance and vanity which increased his difficulties and often defeated his objects. "If by interference," he said in the Miguel debates, "is meant interference by force of arms, such interference, the Government are right in saying, general principles and our own practice forbade us to exert. But if by interference is meant intermeddling, and intermeddling in every way, and to every extent, short of military force, then I must affirm that there is nothing in such interference which the laws of nations may not in certain cases permit.... In like manner as in a particular community any bystander is at liberty to interfere to prevent a breach of the law of that community; so also, and upon the same principle, may any nation interpose to prevent a flagrant violation of the laws of the community of nations."[192] The bystander in a street row is an exact description of Palmerston in his foreign politics. It is in these passages that we find the explanation of a foreign policy which for a whole generation afterwards disturbed, irritated, and demoralized the whole civilized world. For the time being he continued Canning's policy with success. In spite of Wellington, he assisted to liberate the Greeks from the Turks in 1829, and it was largely owing to his bold opposition to France that Belgium burst the fetters imposed upon her by the Treaty of Vienna, and wrested her independence from Holland in 1830. In foreign affairs Liberalism had thus made a great advance since 1820. The interference in French

domestic policy which was involved in the war of 1793 had never been repeated, and England, while herself respecting the rights of other nations, had actively assisted at the emancipation of Portugal, South America, Greece, and Belgium.

Even in domestic affairs the Tory barriers were being slowly borne down by the rising tide. A humanitarian treatment of the lower classes had already become apparent in legislation. The punishment of the pillory was abolished in 1816. The whipping of women was stopped in 1820. In 1823 Peel succeeded Sidmouth at the Home Office, and the temper of that department changed as conspicuously as that of the Foreign Office changed when Canning took the place of Castlereagh. Romilly had fought in vain for mitigations of the criminal law from 1808 to 1818. Sir James Mackintosh, after him, had met with slight success. Peel introduced Government Bills, and overcame even Eldon and the Bishops in the House of Lords. One hundred capital offences were abolished by a single one of these Bills. In 1827 it was made illegal for any one to use man-traps or spring-guns for the capture of housebreakers or poachers. In 1802 Peel had passed a Bill for the protection and education of parish apprentices who were employed in manufactures. In 1819, 1825, and 1829 he applied similar regulations to the case of all children, whether paupers or not, who were employed in factories. The sum total of these restrictions was little enough, and they still permitted a child of ten to be worked for sixty-nine hours a week. But they laid the foundation of our system of Factory Law. In 1824 the Combination Acts were repealed, and an instrument which had been frequently used for the disablement of workmen agitating for better terms of employment was thus

taken from the employers. Even before the great Whig victory of 1831 there was thus strong evidence of a change in the temper of government. Political power was retained as jealously as ever. But the ruling class was obviously losing its blind and obstinate reverence for antiquity and establishments. This change was due partly to the influence of Evangelical Christianity, which at this time guided a large section of the English middle class, including Tories as solid as Wilberforce and Hannah More. This philanthropic Christianity had played a great part in the abolition of the Slave Trade, and it now operated to humanize in some measure the state of England. But the most powerful influence of the time was a philosophy which was identified with revolution and free thought rather than with Toryism and religion. This was the philosophy of Bentham, or Utilitarianism.

Unlike the philosophies of men like Cartwright and Paine, Utilitarianism extended far beyond the boundaries of politics. It was a system of ethics from which political principles were deduced, and it was directed not only to political institutions, but to social institutions of every kind, including property and marriage. Burke's *French Revolution*, though primarily political, had in fact expressed a whole intellectual system, and its almost mystical Conservatism, believing in the irrational working of human instincts through illogical and hardly comprehended instruments, had been developed and extended by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Benthamism was a rationalistic and criticizing system, which referred everything to reason and experience, and would accept nothing merely because it had become by age the centre of human confidence. The intellectual Conservative tended to identify truth

with antiquity. That an institution had existed, that an idea had been generally accepted for a long period, was sufficient proof of its rightness; it should be criticized with reverence and modified, if at all, without substantial change. The Benthamite respected nothing and criticized everything. Armed with his own practical philosophy, he summoned every institution and every idea to stand and give an account of itself, and if it failed to satisfy him, no degree of antiquity could save it from condemnation. Benthamism was thus a profoundly modifying force in other fields than that of politics. But for the purposes of this book it is not necessary to undertake a general examination of it.

Bentham began to preach his philosophy before the end of the eighteenth century. But its influence was not great until the French War had exhausted practical Toryism. Largely under the direction of James Mill the new thinking then began to make headway, and it had produced considerable political results even before the enfranchisement of the middle class in 1832. In the turmoil of warring theories Bentham laid about him with great impartiality. He had no sympathy with antiquity and prescription. These were but "the infantile foolishness of the cradle of the race."[193] But his contempt for historical Conservatism was equalled by his contempt for the conception of natural rights. "Rights, properly so called, are the creatures of law, properly so called; real laws give birth to real rights."[194] He had no patience either with appeals to history or with abstract reasoning. He was as ready as Paine to cut off society and begin it afresh, and as little ready as Burke to construct a theory in the air and apply it without regard to its practical effects. He had one guiding principle—that of utility,

by which he meant a tendency to promote human happiness. Burke and Coleridge asked, "How has it grown?" Cartwright and Paine asked, "How does it conform to reason?" Bentham asked, "How does it work?" Every institution—the monarchy, the Established Church, the law, property, marriage—was to be examined. If it promoted the general happiness, it might remain, however little it realized an abstract ideal. If it did not, it must go, whatever its antiquity and splendour. Cumbrous legal forms and savage punishments which did not prevent crime must be abolished, even if they dated from the reign of Richard I. The House of Commons must be reformed, root and branch, because it was corrupt and selfish. Property was essential to the stability of society, and it must be preserved, whatever advantages it gave to one class over another. Marriage must be made dissoluble, because, while divorce was impossible, indissoluble unions meant misery for many men and women.

It is easy to find fallacies in the philosophy of Benthamism. It is untrue to say that morality consists in the pursuit of pleasure. There are logical fallacies in the expression "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Men do not habitually pursue their own interests, and if they are left free to pursue them it is not true that each of them will secure the greatest happiness for himself. But whatever difficulties reasoners may find in the philosophy, there is no question that the practice of the Utilitarians was of immense value to society. The abstraction at which they aimed was not a mere abstraction. Cartwright wanted liberty as an end in itself. Bentham wanted happiness, which involved an indefinite number of tangible benefits. A Benthamite might reason absurdly about "self-interest" and

"happiness," but in effect he was seeking to improve conditions of life and to redress grievances. An assertion that it is the duty of Government to produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number might confuse a logician. To the ordinary Englishman, incapable of deep reasoning, it meant that it was his business, whenever he saw an abuse which could be remedied by legislation, to promote legislation to remove it. Utilitarianism provided a working formula for practical philanthropy.

Its direct influence upon politics was distinctly of a Liberal kind. Every man was to count for one, and no man for more than one. No man could know the interest of another better than the other himself, and each must be left free to pursue his own. A restricted franchise and government by a class could not stand. Where each man's conduct was directed solely to the pursuit of his own interest this could only mean the abuse of the majority for the benefit of the minority. "Whatsoever evil it is possible for man to do for the advancement of his own private and personal interest that evil sooner or later he will do, unless by some means or other, intentional or otherwise, he be prevented from doing it.... If it be true, according to the homely proverb, that the eye of the master makes the ox fat, it is no less so that the eye of the public makes the statesman virtuous."[195] The argument is, of course, only partly true, and if it were entirely true it would be a poor argument for a wide franchise. If every man will, sooner or later, subject the public interest to his own, are we likely to be any more happy under a democracy than under an oligarchy? If all are corrupt, does it matter very much whether all or only a few have power? Democratic government has its peculiar dangers, and it may be corrupted by absolute power no less than

despotism or aristocracy. But it at least diffuses power among an infinitely greater variety of people, who are less likely to be animated by a single interest than a closely knit and homogeneous class. For the practical purposes of the time, where the privileges were all in the hands of the minority and the deprivations were all suffered by the impotent majority, the argument was good enough. It led to universal suffrage no less directly than reasoning from the abstract rights of man. In practice some of the Benthamites stopped short at a middle-class franchise. This class was so large and so varied in character that it might be trusted to legislate for the nation as a whole. But the Benthamite reasoning went beyond this. It involved, as Bentham himself admitted, the enfranchisement of women. James Mill and many of his friends would not go so far, and drew from William Thompson, in 1825, his *Appeal of One-Half of the Human Race*, which is the second of the great marks in the progress of English women.

Disputes about subjects of this sort, which were not yet practically important, did not weaken the general influence of the Utilitarians. Even where their philosophy was rejected, their sustained and general attack upon abuses produced its effect. They were allied with Tories like Wilberforce in abolishing the Slave Trade. Romilly, Mackintosh, and Peel reformed the criminal law in the very spirit of Bentham. Sydney Smith, Jeffrey, Macaulay, Brougham, and the other Whigs, who since 1802 had written in the *Edinburgh Review*, habitually spoke with contempt of Utilitarians. But their practical politics were hardly different from those of James Mill and George Grote. [196] Restrictions on trade, excessive punishments for crime, costly and incomprehensible legal procedure, religious inequalities, anomalies of the franchise,

sinecures, jobs, all the fetters which hampered the individual in the pursuit of his own interest, were attacked by Whigs and Utilitarians together, and with the irregular assistance of Tories like Peel, the two contrived, between 1820 and 1850, to transform English politics.

The work of the Utilitarians was Liberal, so far as it went. Their insistence upon the equal value of all individuals led to the removal of restrictions upon liberty. No man could know the interest of another. Therefore every man must be left, as far as possible, to himself. Each must control his own government. Each must be permitted to hold and to publish his own opinions. Trade and manufacture must be left to the unfettered discretion of traders and manufacturers. The Government must stand away from the individual, except when, as for national defence, some central control was inevitable. This course of reasoning led the Benthamites into the neglect of economic problems which was the great blemish of their practical politics. The economists had arrived at the theory of *laissez faire* by a different route. Both schools now gave a scientific expression to the old English dislike of Government interference, which the Whigs cherished as part of their inheritance from the past, and the new middle class as the result of their methods of industry. All four groups agreed in this claim for individual freedom, and the humanitarian tendencies of Benthamism were sacrificed to its pedantry. Enterprise was allowed full play. Protective duties were reduced and finally abolished. Competition stimulated and encouraged the production of wealth. But while the masters profited, the workpeople suffered.

There is a very precise indication of the way in which the political economy of the day and the Utilitarian theorizing combined to neglect the peculiar miseries of the common people, in a speech of Joseph Hume. He was speaking against the Framework Knitters' Bill of 1812, which proposed to fix maximum and minimum rates of wages, and to prohibit the payment of workmen otherwise than in cash. Hume declared that the function of the State in economic matters was "to protect both masters and workmen, and allow every individual to exert himself in employing his capital and labour in such an honourable manner as he may think best; every one in general being the best judge of his own abilities how to employ his stock in trade.... Viewing capitalists and artisans equally as traders, I consider an uncontrolled competition as beneficial to both, and the strongest spur to ingenuity and industry.... If it should be more convenient or profitable for a workman to receive payment for his labour partly or wholly in goods, why should he be prevented from doing so? For if such a practice is inconvenient or injurious to any man, he will not work a second time for the master who pays him in that manner."[197] In the same speech Hume declared that he would put masters and men on an equal footing by the repeal of the Combination Acts, and the Acts were repealed, on Hume's motion, in 1824. This speech and the repeal of the Acts were Benthamite in essence. But equal treatment by the State was not equality, and to leave masters and men free to fight out their disputes was not to make each count for one and no one for more than one. Of what use was it to tell a workman that his uncontrolled competition with his fellows was a spur to his ingenuity and industry, when it meant that a crowd of men, under pressure of

starvation, undersold each other for a bare subsistence? Of what use was it to put capitalists and workmen into a comparison as traders, when for the one holding out of the market meant merely a temporary loss of income, and for the other it meant destitution? Of what use was it to say that a workman who was deprived of part of his earnings by the truck system could refuse to work a second time for the master who paid him in that manner, when he had perhaps no means of travelling to find another, and when in any case there were so many men willing to fill his place on any terms that the master had no reason to fear his refusal? For all its philanthropy, Benthamism did not settle the problem of the conditions of life among the working classes. Wages, hours of labour, ventilation, sanitary appliances, housing and the planning of towns, were all left by the Utilitarians to this desperate system of individual bargaining. On this side their philosophy was as conspicuously deficient as that of Cartwright himself. But its results were positive, and it gave to the scattered impulses of Liberalism a coherence and a philosophic unity which they had hitherto lacked.

Apart from the new humanitarianism, there were other signs that the old Tory structure was breaking to pieces. Two of its main supports were destroyed before the Tory party left office in 1830. The Church of England was at last deprived of its political monopoly. Papists, Dissenters, and Jacobins had long enjoyed a common abhorrence, and all the progress which the two depreciated religious classes had won before the French Revolution had been lost. In 1819 the Tory Government had actually spent £1,000,000, raised indiscriminately by taxing them as well as Churchmen, on building new churches to prevent the spread of their opinions. Ten years later each had

won a signal victory over its hereditary enemy.

The state of Ireland since the Union had been such as to make all lovers of order and good government despair. A population of 7,000,000 was crowded on to land which was not extensive enough to support it. One-seventh of the people, it was said, lived by begging or robbery.[198] The rest farmed little patches of land for which many of them paid rent at the amazing rate of ten guineas an acre a year.[199] The average rate of wages was fourpence a day.[200] Squalor and disease were the lot of the majority of the inhabitants of a rich and fertile land. Their economic distress, which was due, at least in part, to the vicious, unsympathetic system of absentee landlordism, was aggravated by religious disabilities. Under the Tithe Law a Protestant clergyman was entitled to one-tenth of the produce which a Catholic farmer could scrape out of his potato-patch. Poverty and ignorance combined with religious bitterness to make the government of Ireland impossible. In every year since the Union the ordinary law had been suspended, and the English ruled Ireland only in the way of foreign conquerors. In 1822 they governed under the Insurrection Act, which empowered the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim a whole county to be in a disturbed state, to compel all residents to keep in their houses between sunset and sunrise, to instruct magistrates to enter houses at night to see if the inmates were at home. Constitutional government was at an end.

In 1821 Plunket, who was a Tory Irishman, introduced a Bill to relieve the Catholics from their disabilities. It was carried through the Commons by a majority which included such rigid Tories as Castlereagh, Wilberforce, and Croker, as well as

Canning and Palmerston and the Whigs. The Lords, led by Liverpool, Eldon, Wellington, and Sidmouth, threw out the Bill. Canning introduced another Bill in 1822, which met the same fate. But a measure of a different kind was passed into law in the same year, and did much to allay the bitterness, if it did little to improve the economic conditions of the Irish. This was an Act which extended the Tithe Law to grazing land as well as to agricultural land, and at the same time enabled the tithe-owners to accept a money payment instead of a part of the actual produce. This relieved the peasantry of the obnoxious liability to hand over the actual produce of their labour to the representative of an alien Church.

The main grievance remained, and the struggle for complete emancipation now entered upon its final stage. In 1823 Daniel O'Connell founded the Catholic Association, a gigantic league, which included Catholics of every rank, and levied a rent or annual contribution on all its members. In 1825 this had become such a formidable engine that an Act was passed to suppress it. The law was evaded. It was directed against societies formed for political objects. The Association was dissolved, and a new Association was formed ostensibly for educational and charitable purposes. The Act suppressed societies which renewed their meetings for more than fourteen days. The new Association sat for fourteen days at a time, and described the meetings as "convened pursuant to Act of Parliament." The rent was paid as before, but was stated to be paid "for the relief of the forty-shilling freeholders," or "for all purposes allowable by law." The Act, in short, achieved nothing except to irritate the Catholics, and to show them that they could defy the English Government.

Under these circumstances, there was nothing for wise Protestants to do but to give way. A Bill was introduced relieving the Catholics of their political disabilities. It was accompanied by two other Bills, which were intended to mitigate the dangers of the first. One of these additional Bills, or "wings," was intended to take political power from the poorest, most ignorant, and least independent of the peasantry, by disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders. The other was intended to conciliate and improve the character of the leaders of opinion, by endowing the Catholic clergy. The Emancipation Bill passed the Commons by a majority of 21. The bigotry and stupidity of the Lords had not diminished since 1812, and they threw it out by 178 votes to 130. For four years more the Catholic Association remained the dominant force in Irish politics, and every bitter and violent man in the country had a just ground for denouncing the English Government. The House of Lords made one more attempt to reduce Ireland to anarchy. Liverpool died in 1827, and was succeeded by Canning as Prime Minister. This substitution of a friend of the Catholics for an enemy meant the beginning of the end. Eldon, Wellington, Peel, and four other Ministers resigned, some of the Whigs joined the Cabinet, and the English Ministry was at last united in a policy of justice and wisdom. But the death of Canning a few months after he became Premier again shattered the hopes of Liberalism. The old party came back, with Wellington at their head, pledged to resist the Catholic claims. Within twelve months they had cut their own throats, and a trifling controversy in the Cabinet led not only to Catholic Emancipation, but to the entire destruction of the Tory system.

Two boroughs, Penryn and East Retford, had been

disfranchised for bribery and corruption. The question arose whether their members should be transferred to the counties in which they were situated or given to some of the large towns like Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, which had no members at all. Huskisson, the President of the Board of Trade, took the Liberal view, and in an important division voted against the Government. The letter in which he explained his action was accepted by Wellington as a resignation. His post was given to Vesey Fitzgerald, the member for Clare, who submitted himself for re-election in the ordinary way. To the consternation of the Tories, O'Connell himself came forward as a Catholic candidate. The Catholic Association and the priests led or drove the voters to the poll, Fitzgerald was beaten out of the field, and O'Connell, disqualified by his religion, but with three-fourths of the Irish people at his back, claimed a seat in the House of Commons. The Government had the choice of two courses, neither of which promised them any credit. They might give way to organized illegality and emancipate the Catholics. They might exclude O'Connell and undertake a new civil war in Ireland. Wellington was as good as a soldier as he was bad as a statesman, and he knew when a position had become untenable. He was now ready to retreat in good order. Peel supported him, and the two together controlled the Cabinet. The Relief Bill and the Bill disfranchising the freeholders were both law by the end of April, 1829.[201] The endowment of the clergy was abandoned. Two facts of vital importance were involved in this defeat of the Government. The first was that, for the first time in English history, a political association had compelled Parliament against its will to pass a measure into law. The

people were beginning to control their Government. The second fact was that the Irish had been forced into the belief that patience and endurance were less likely to succeed in obtaining redress than violence and intimidation. The stupid resistance of the House of Lords had planted this idea ineradicably in the Irish mind, and the events of the next fifty years watered it and made it flourish to excess. The reaction of these events upon English politics resembled that of the success of the American Rebellion. The people were no longer at the disposition of the governing class. What Ireland had done, England could do. All over the country Political Unions for Reform came into existence, and imitated the success of the Catholic Association. In two years the old system came to an end.

Before the final breakdown of the Tory party the Dissenters had won for themselves the abolition of their disabilities. On February 26, 1828, Lord John Russell moved for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. There was nothing new to be said on either side of this controversy. Was or was not a Dissenter to count for as much in the State as a Churchman? Two quotations from the debate will set the two schools of thought in their places. Sir Robert Inglis, a Tory Churchman, said: "The question whether any man ought to be eligible to power is a question of pure expediency, not of justice; and such power may be regulated by sex, by age, by property, or by opinions, without any wrong to any one's natural claims."[202] In other words, a disposing class is to decide the social value of another class in the interests of any institution with which it is itself associated. Brougham replied in the language of pure Liberalism: "Assuming that no practical grievance exists, is the stigma nothing? Is it nothing that a

Dissenter, wherever he goes, is looked on and treated as an inferior person to a Churchman?... Is it nothing even that the honourable baronet should say, as he has said this night, 'We will allow you to do so and so'? What is it that gives the honourable baronet the title to use this language ... but that the law encourages him to use it?"[203] On this occasion Liberalism won an unexpected victory. The motion for repeal was carried by 237 votes to 193, and Peel, accepting the decision of the Commons, was able, after much labour, to overcome the resistance of the Lords.[204]

Two great breaches had thus been made in the edifice of Toryism, and the Liberal tide was now very high above the point at which it had been left by the French War. But events were moving more rapidly outside Parliament than within it. The large provincial towns were still growing larger and their demand for representation louder. A financial crisis in 1825 had injured industry. Bad harvests in 1829 and 1830 combined with the import duties on corn to increase the sufferings of the artisans and labourers. The latter were already much demoralized by the administration of the Poor Law, and the riots and disturbances in agricultural districts and factory towns alike were more serious than they had ever been. The demand for Reform was renewed with great vigour, and this time with success. The details of the final struggle are not important for this work. Several circumstances combined with the economic condition of the people to make agitation effective. Continental Liberalism won two great victories in 1830. Belgium shook off the yoke of Holland, and Charles X of France, expelled by a new revolution, took refuge in England. Both these events gave encouragement to English reformers. At the same

time the Parliamentary Whigs, who had never before recovered the cohesion which they lost in 1793, were united under the leadership of Lord Althorp in the Commons and Lord Grey in the Lords. The Tories, on the other hand, were broken up by the surrender to the Dissenters and the Catholics. The Whigs, with a few exceptions like Lord Durham and Lord John Russell, had no liking for drastic changes. But the pressure in the country was too strong. A motion on some trivial matter connected with the Civil List overthrew the Ministry. The Whigs came in under Lord Grey, and introduced a Reform Bill which made a clean sweep of the rotten boroughs, gave seats to all the large provincial towns, and enfranchised every townsman who occupied a house worth £10 a year. A defeat in Committee produced a dissolution and a great Whig victory at the polls. The Lords, indifferent alike to the trend of history and to the state of contemporary opinion, threw out a second Bill. A great clamour broke out all over the country, and at Bristol, Nottingham, and other places the scum of the populace destroyed an enormous amount of public and private property in riots. A third Bill was introduced in 1832, Wellington again led his forces in retreat, and the Bill received Royal Assent on the 7th June, 1832. The people were at last the masters in their own house.

CHAPTER VI

THE MIDDLE-CLASS SUPREMACY

The significance of the victory of 1832 was immense.

It broke up and reconstructed the whole of the machinery by which the old Toryism had managed the people, and it involved the first great revision of social values which had taken place in England. It was perhaps more important as a precedent for future changes than for what it was in itself. It was very far from implying the triumph of Revolutionary principles, though the spread of Revolutionary principles had alone made it possible. The Whigs themselves remained aristocratic and territorial, and they still dominated politics. The small group of commercial and manufacturing Members of Parliament was considerably increased by the enfranchisement of the new towns. But members continued for another generation to be chosen for the most part from the nobility and gentry, and only their constituents and the tone of their policy were changed. Very few members and only a small proportion of the newly enfranchised class had any belief in the equal worth of individuals in the State. The revision of values extended no farther than the middle class. Capital was appreciated in relation to land. Labour was still depreciated in relation to both. An end was put "to all the advantages which particular forms of property possess over other forms,"[205] but property as a whole was still supreme. The Reform Act was intended to enfranchise "the middle class of England, with the flower of the aristocracy at its head, and the flower of the working classes bringing up its rear."[206] From their new elevation these looked down upon the mass of wage-earners as the old Tories had looked down upon them. "I would withhold from them," said Macaulay, "nothing which it might be for their good to possess.... If I would refuse to the working people that larger share of power which

some of them have demanded, I would refuse it because I am convinced that, by giving it, I should only increase their distress. I admit that the end of government is their happiness. But that they may be governed for their happiness, they must not be governed according to the doctrines which they have learned from their illiterate, incapable, low-minded flatterers."[207] In just such language had Pitt referred to the working class and the Corresponding Society. Just as the old Tories had held that the landed gentry were the natural leaders of the nation, so the new Whigs paid the same tribute to the upper and middle classes combined. "The higher and middling orders are the natural representatives of the human race."[208] The disposing habit had come down a step. But it remained the disposing habit.

The new governing class had that dislike of forms and liking of individual liberty to which reference has been made. The Parliamentary Whigs, no less than the manufacturers, were imbued with the same spirit. The natural bias of their party had always been in that direction. They had abolished slavery, had emancipated Dissenters and Catholics, had defended free speech during the reaction, and had finally substituted the control of the middle class of the common people for that of the aristocracy and the landed interest. In recent years they had been infected with the temper, even while they despised the philosophizing, of the Benthamites. In one respect they lagged behind the Philosophic Radicals. They were landed proprietors, and their adoption of Free Trade was slow and reluctant. It was as unnatural for them to lower the price of their tenants' corn as it was for the manufacturers to reduce the hours of their men's labour. But their general tendency to restrict the action of

Government was as marked as that of the avowed Utilitarians. They constantly, as in the reference to "happiness" already quoted, used the very language of the creed. The following words of Macaulay might have been spoken by Grote or Roebuck. "The business of Government is not directly to make the people rich, but to protect them in making themselves rich.... We can give them only freedom to employ their industry to the best advantage, and security in the enjoyment of what their industry has acquired. These advantages it is our duty to give at the smallest possible cost. The diligence and forethought of individuals will thus have fair play; and it is only by the diligence and forethought of individuals that the community can become prosperous." The Reform Bill would thus indirectly conduce to the national prosperity. "It will secure to us a House of Commons which, by preserving peace, by destroying monopolies, by taking away unnecessary public burdens, by judiciously distributing necessary public burdens, will, in the progress of time, greatly improve our condition."[209]

"Reform," said Sydney Smith, "will produce economy and investigation; there will be fewer jobs and a less lavish expenditure; wars will not be persevered in for years after the people are tired of them; taxes will be taken off the poor and laid upon the rich;... cruel and oppressive punishments (such as those for night poaching) will be abolished. If you steal a pheasant you will be punished as you ought to be, but not sent away from your wife and children for seven years. Tobacco will be 2d. per lb. cheaper. Candles will fall in price ... if peace, economy, and justice are the results of Reform, a number of small benefits ... will accrue to millions of the people; and the connection between the existence of Lord John Russell and the

reduced price of bread and cheese will be as clear as it has been the object of his honest, wise, and useful life to make it."[210]

There was therefore very little disposition among the Whigs to undertake economic reforms. "We can no more prevent time," said Macaulay, "from changing the distribution of property and intelligence, we can no more prevent property and intelligence from aspiring to political power, than we can change the courses of the seasons and of the tides."[211] But in the immediate present they would decline to change the distribution of property as firmly as to change that of political power. The two things in fact went together. Society was based on property; universal suffrage meant the confiscation of property. Therefore the franchise must be limited to the owners of property. "My firm conviction," said the same typical Whig, "is that, in our country, universal suffrage is incompatible, not with this or that form of government, but with all forms of government, and with everything for the sake of which forms of government exist; that it is incompatible with property, and that it is incompatible with civilization."[212]

This refusal to undertake anything in the nature of graduated taxation or social reform was accompanied by a dislike of the organizations by which the working people endeavoured to help themselves. After the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824 the number of Trade Unions had greatly increased. The methods of these associations were often of a violent and dangerous character. Any unusual poverty will produce disorder, even among men of good understanding. The effect on men of

poor education is much worse. The new-found power of combining was thus often abused, intimidation and assault were common, and even murder was not unknown. To the Whigs, as to the philosophic Radicals, the whole system of Trade Unionism was nothing but tyranny and oppression. They failed to see the necessity for combination. They assumed that nothing could increase wages but an increase of production, and consequently that so long as the total earnings of a trade remained fixed a Trade Union could produce no result except a bad temper. They ignored the possibility that the master's profits and the landlord's rent might both be reduced without injury to the industry as a whole. In all this the Utilitarians agreed with them. But theorists like Hume and Roebuck were compelled logically to admit that if a man was to be free to pursue his own interest, he was to be free to combine with others. A Trade Union was thus not offensive to a Radical except when it abused its rights and acted oppressively. The Whigs had a much stronger objection. A Union to them was obnoxious in itself, probably because it had a social and political, as well as an industrial complexion. The Radical employer at least understood his men. The Whig landowner probably did not. Brougham described the Union leaders as "idle, good for nothing agitators," and declared that "the worst enemies of the trades themselves, the most pernicious counsellors that they possibly could have, were those who had advised them to adopt the line of conduct which they had followed since the repeal of the Combination laws."[213] Palmerston referred constantly in his correspondence to the rise of Trade Unions as a danger to the State.[214] This is the style in which modern Tories spoke during the miners' strike of

1912. The grievances were ignored or not understood, and the attempts at self-help were treated only as evidence of a malicious and dangerous spirit.

This temper led the Government into one gross abuse of power. In 1834 an Agricultural Labourers' Union was formed in Dorsetshire. Some foolish person thought it necessary to bind the members by an oath. One of the Statutes of the Revolution period had made it illegal to administer an oath to a member of any association. The Act had been passed in consequence of the mutiny at the Nore and the activities of societies like the United Irishmen, which were avowedly criminal. It had not been intended to apply, and it had practically never been applied to any other kind of society. It was suddenly revived in the case of the Dorsetshire labourers. Six of them were tried at Dorchester, found guilty, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. The ferocity of the sentence was surpassed by the indecent haste with which the Government hurried the wretched men out of the country. They proceeded exactly as the Tories had proceeded in the cases of Muir and Palmer. The prisoners were put on board a convict ship, which set sail before the matter could be discussed in Parliament. To the working man new Whig was but old Tory spelt differently. But on this occasion popular opinion was against the Government. The men were ignorant, but honest. Two of them were Methodist preachers. None of them was, in any real sense of the word, criminal, and the whole country was roused in their behalf. Petitions poured in from towns of every sort, from Oxford, Cheltenham, Leeds, Newcastle, and Dundee. Hume, Roebuck, and O'Connell spoke in the House of Commons. Twenty thousand workmen, headed by Robert Owen,

marched on one occasion to Whitehall, and Melbourne was compelled to receive a deputation. Humanity and reason at last had their way, but it was two years before the prisoners received a pardon, and longer before they had all returned home. In this episode the country showed itself more Liberal than the Government, and the Whigs were sharply reminded that the Reform Act had changed their own situation no less than that of the Tories.

The case of the Dorchester labourers is sufficient proof that the Whigs had little understanding of the working classes and little sympathy with their point of view. The agitation for the people's charter, manhood suffrage, annual Parliaments, vote by ballot, and the rest, never made any impression upon Parliament. The Chartists were sent to prison when they broke the law, their meetings were sometimes dispersed by force, and they were sometimes shot dead in the course of riots. For several years after the Reform Act the Whig Government was engaged in watching and suppressing political agitation almost as regularly as the Tories before it. But more than one important economic reform was carried through Parliament about the same time, and conferred considerable benefits upon the common people. One was the Act of 1834, which reconstructed the Poor Law system. This was purely Benthamite, and the Report of Royal Commissioners, upon which it was based, was drafted by the Utilitarian, Nassau Senior. The new Poor Law combined the thorough, scientific, mechanical principles of the theory of utility with the characteristic Benthamite avoidance of restrictions on liberty. The old system had been promiscuous and charitable. Relief had been granted in many quarters promiscuously, and without regard to indirect consequences. Wages had been kept

down, bastardy had been encouraged, no tests had been required to show that the applicants were really distressed. Rates had in consequence increased enormously, and in one parish had reached such a height that the whole economic system had broken down, and industry had actually ceased. There were some remarkable exceptions,[215] but the general state of the country was slovenly. The reform was of the most drastic character. A central body of commissioners was appointed to introduce uniformity. Small parishes were united to form efficient units of administration. Relief was to be granted by elected Boards of Guardians, and not by inexperienced justices of the peace. But for the purposes of this book the most important changes were in the system rather than in the machinery. Every applicant for relief must pass a test. He was offered relief, but only coupled with the workhouse, where he must make some return in labour for what he received. The workhouse must be of such an unattractive character that none but those who were in actual want would enter it. In short, the poor man must be forced, by this sufficient deterrent, to rely upon his individual strength and skill. The new system met with great apparent success, and much of the success was real. It unquestionably stopped the demoralization of the labourers, and rates were everywhere reduced. The failure was of the sort which was inevitably incident to Benthamism. The law checked pauperism, but it did not abolish poverty. It prevented the abuse of public assistance, but it did not deal with those causes of poverty which did not depend on the motives of the poor themselves. The idler was driven by the workhouse into work. The honest man who was made destitute by the bad organization of casual labour, by the

periodic fluctuations of trade, by the introduction of machinery, or by the bankruptcy of his employer, could only be driven into the street. Where independence depended upon the will of the man himself the unpleasant nature of poor relief was beneficial. Where it depended upon causes beyond his control it was actually harmful. The Utilitarian dislike of positive attempts to improve conditions of life and labour thus left their work incomplete.

A second economic reform was the Factory legislation of 1831 and 1833. The object of the Acts, which, owing to inadequate inspection, was only partially attained, was to restrict the hours of labour of children and young persons. Peel's Act of 1825 had prohibited the employment of children under sixteen for more than twelve hours of actual work a day, and it applied only to cotton mills. The Act of 1833 prohibited all night work in all textile mills, prohibited the employment of children under nine except in silk mills, imposed a limit of forty-eight hours a week on children up to thirteen, and a limit of sixty-nine hours on young persons up to eighteen. It also provided for a system of inspection, which unfortunately proved insufficient. This was the first important example of a general State interference in economic conditions, and the campaign for its improvement and extension divided all parties.

The true line of Liberal action was undoubtedly in the direction of restricting the liberty of the individual to exploit those who were unable to protect themselves. But such a course was contrary to the general individualistic current of the time, and a large section of the Whig party was persistently and bitterly hostile. The best of them eventually came to the same conclusions as Macaulay. "I hardly

know which is the greater pest to society, a paternal Government, that is to say, a prying, meddlesome Government which intrudes itself into every part of human life, and which thinks that it can do everything for everybody better than anybody can do anything for himself; or a careless, lounging Government which suffers grievances, such as it could at once remove, to grow and multiply, and which to all complaint and remonstrance has only one answer: 'We must let things alone; we must let things find their level.'... I hold that, where public health is concerned, and where public morality is concerned, the State may be justified in regulating even the contracts of adults.... Never will I believe that what makes a population stronger, and healthier, and wiser, and better, can ultimately make it poorer."[216] But there were few of the Whigs who held these wise opinions immediately after their triumph in 1831, and even Macaulay in 1832 defeated a Tory candidate whose views on Factory legislation were at that time far sounder than his own. Those Whigs who belonged to the middle class were generally hostile to the whole movement. Cobden, not yet in Parliament, would have prohibited all employment of children under the age of thirteen.[217] But Brougham, Harriet Martineau, and the type of business man which was best represented by John Bright, were bitter opponents of reform. The utmost which could be got from the middle-class Parliaments which followed the Reform Act was a restriction of the work of children. The protection of adults, even by the regulation of machinery, ventilation, and temperature, was always repugnant to their stubborn belief in the power and the duty of the individual to work out his own salvation.

The real impulse to Factory legislation came from two different quarters. The first was Tory philanthropy. The second was the industrial democracy which had worked for Parliamentary Reform, and had been left out of the Act of 1832. These last acted obviously from interested motives. Their own health and happiness were at stake, and their campaign on behalf of the children was only part of a general campaign for shorter hours and better conditions of labour. The Tory Evangelicals acted as Tory theorists. Robert Southey, Richard Oastler, Michael Sadler, whom Macaulay beat at Leeds in 1832, and Lord Shaftesbury, who succeeded Oastler as the Parliamentary leader of the movement, were Tories of a pronounced type. But they were philanthropists, they had no personal interest as manufacturers, and their Toryism left them logically free to employ the power of the State on behalf of their philanthropy. Their general readiness to dispose of the affairs of others was in this case wholly beneficial. Shaftesbury hated Catholic Emancipation, Free Trade, life peerages, the higher criticism, the Oxford movement, everything which during his lifetime tended to free the individual from the control of selfish interests and monopolies. But as he refused to allow a Catholic or a Tractarian religious freedom, or the common people political freedom, so he refused to allow a cotton-spinner economic freedom. To his narrow mind, no less than to his large heart, the legal protection of working people against economic tyranny is due. It must not be supposed that he found more favour with the ordinary Tory than with the ordinary Whig or Benthamite. It was only where philosophic Toryism was combined with the philanthropic instincts of Evangelical Christianity that there was any marked

superiority in one party over another. Shaftesbury had to fight every step of his way, and he encountered indifference, if not opposition, wherever he turned.[218]

Apart from this lamentable neglect of economic reforms the Whigs of the Reform Bill made valuable contributions to the work of Liberalism. Something was done to abolish the cumbrous devices which made legal procedure unintelligible and costly, and the method of conveying land was simplified and cheapened.[219] A Bill to establish local courts for the recovery of small debts was introduced by Brougham, but abandoned. The reform of Parliament was followed by the reform of municipal corporations. The old close corporations were of the same type as the old close House of Commons. All were founded on monopoly, most were corrupt, and hardly any were responsible to the ratepayers whose affairs they administered. By an Act of 1835 the old system was destroyed, and the control of local government in towns was vested in bodies elected by the ratepayers.[220] The representative principle was thus asserted in local as in national affairs. The domination of the landed interest was further reduced. The old Game Laws had made the killing of game the exclusive privilege of landowners. No one else could kill game legally, and the law, sparing offenders of higher rank, was ruthlessly enforced by landowning magistrates against the poor. Between 1827 and 1830 more than 8,000 persons had been sentenced, some of them to transportation for life, for offences against this law. In 1831, before the passing of the Reform Bill, the Whigs altered the savage and partial Game Laws by permitting any one

to kill game who obtained a licence from the Inland Revenue authorities.[221] After the election of the first reformed Parliament, a second attack on land was made. In 1807 the land of traders only had been made liable to the payment of his simple contract debts. Romilly had in vain attempted to make this provision impartial. But in 1833 the liability was extended to all classes, and the country gentleman was no longer allowed to evade the obligations which were imposed by law upon his social rivals.[222]

In the same year slavery was abolished in the West Indies. The trade had been stopped in 1807. But it was still legal for the planters to own slaves, though they could no longer import them. In 1821 Wilberforce had solemnly confided the leadership of his cause to Thomas Fowell Buxton. Mackintosh, Brougham, and Lushington had supported him steadily in the Commons, and they had always had the help of Canning. But the planters had succeeded, partly by threats of secession, partly by promises of amendment, in maintaining their abominable system. The decline of the West Indian trade since the peace had reduced their influence, and Parliament, free from unrest at home, could turn its attention more easily to the Colonies. The planters were presented with twenty millions of public money. The slaves were to be treated as apprentices for seven years and afterwards were to be free labourers. Thus the last trace of acknowledged slavery was removed from the British Empire. It is melancholy to reflect that the men who expended so much honest sympathy and indignation over slavery in the West Indies should have so carefully refrained from using it to abolish the slavery which oppressed their fellow-countrymen. Slavery is not always a matter of buying

and selling, of chaining and whipping; and in the sweated labour and prostitution which were rife in England there were things no less horrible than the worst barbarities of the colonial planters.

A Liberal reform no less important than the Factory Act was the establishment of a State department of education. In 1833 Radicals like Roebuck and Grote and Whigs like Brougham persuaded Parliament to grant £20,000 to supplement the private donations which were being administered by the different societies for education. Whitbread had introduced a Bill to establish schools in all poor parishes in 1807. Brougham had obtained returns showing the existing provision for popular education in 1818. But nothing was done by the State to remedy the deficiencies of private enterprise until 1833, and even what was done then was so unscientific that, the private societies being all Protestant, Roman Catholic children got no benefit from it at all. After further efforts by Brougham and other enthusiasts, the Government in 1839 proposed to appoint a committee of the Privy Council as a central education authority. A training school for teachers was to be established under its supervision, and the State grant was to be increased to £30,000.

These proposals were slight enough in themselves. But they produced one of those ugly conflicts which are inevitable in English politics so long as one religious sect holds a privileged position. Some of the clergy of the Established Church claimed the control of all popular education, religious and secular. The more responsible claimed to control the religious education only. The Archbishop of Canterbury used

language which was none the less insolent because it fell from the lips of an amiable and benevolent man. "The moral and religious instruction of the great mass of the people of this country was a subject peculiarly belonging to the clergy of the Established Church.... In the distribution of the public money for the encouragement of religion, their first object ought to be to maintain and extend the religion of the State."[223] "The State," said the Bishop of London, "has established a great National Church, a great instrument of education, which ought to conduct the whole process as far as religion is concerned. The Church is the only recognized medium of communicating religious knowledge to the people at large; and where there is an Established Church the Legislature ought to embrace every fit opportunity of maintaining and extending the just influence of the clergy, due regard being had to complete toleration."[224] In other words, these ecclesiastics regarded it as perfectly fair that money should be taken from Dissenters to pay for the teaching of doctrines of which they disapproved, while none was expended on the teaching of doctrines of which they did approve. They were answered firmly by Ministers, more bitterly and more effectively by Brougham. "In what does the tolerance consist?" asked Brougham. "Is it in permitting the Dissenting children to be instructed in those schools in which the Church doctrines alone are taught?"[225] The meaning of religious liberty was extended. "Men who value religious liberty do not, in these days, dread anything that can be called persecution, but they do dread privileges and oppressive exclusions, preferences to one sect over another;... they are resolved never to pay to man any tax to support education, if the fruit of the tax does

not go to maintain education to which all shall have an equal access."[226] The issue was thus again joined between those who would dispose of the consciences of others and those who would allow every man an equal right with every other for the propagation of his own opinions.

On this point the Whigs were successful. Their proposals for distribution between the sects were in the direct line of their removal of ancient political disabilities, and they stood their ground. One concession was made. The inspectors of schools were to present their reports to the Bishop of the diocese as well as to the Committee of Council. But after several close divisions in the Commons and several defeats in the Lords the scheme was established. It must not be supposed that the majority of the Whigs supported these novel proposals in a very Liberal spirit. Brougham was passionately Liberal. The Radicals made State education part of their practical philosophy of equality. To men of this type education was a means of increasing the individual's power to develop and express himself. But to very many of the supporters of Government the measure was rather a measure of police than of emancipation. Ignorance meant discontent and danger to society and property. In answering the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Lansdowne said: "In the 80,000 uninstructed children now growing out of infancy your Lordships may see the rising Chartists of the next age."[227] Eight years later Macaulay declared that "It is the duty of Government to protect our persons and our property from danger. The gross ignorance of the common people is a principal cause of danger to our persons and property. Therefore it is the duty of the Government to take care that the common people shall not be grossly ignorant."[228] This is more in

the temper of Wilberforce than in that of Tom Paine. But whatever their motives, the services of the Whigs were great. Their grant was absurdly inadequate. But they had at least begun to enable the common people to think for themselves, and if they had not prevented the disputes of sects, they had at least secured that no sect should have an artificial advantage over another.

The great Whig administration went out of office in 1841. Their foreign policy was the policy of Palmerston, and is perhaps best treated in connection with his conduct of affairs after 1846, when his party returned to power for an almost continuous period of twenty years. Lord Grey retired in 1834, and was succeeded by Lord Melbourne, an easy gentleman, whose only claim to the gratitude of posterity was his careful training of the young Queen Victoria. Under his guidance the country was little troubled by legislation, and the closing years of the Ministry were marked by no important domestic achievement. But the establishment of a new Constitution in Canada marked the beginning of a new and Liberal colonial policy. This was the work of Lord Durham, who had outrun all his colleagues at the time of the Reform Bill, and earned for himself the name of "Radical Jack." He received little support from the Home Government during his service in Canada, and all the credit which it deserves is his alone.[229]

Since the loss of the American Colonies, Canada was the only considerable colony of white men which England possessed. Australia and New Zealand were comparatively recent discoveries, and South Africa, captured from the Dutch during the great war, was

only sparsely populated. Canada represented a civilization of an older type, and a large portion of its inhabitants was French. In 1791 a Constitution had created two Provinces, Upper and Lower Canada, which corresponded roughly with the distribution of the two nationalities. The arrangement was satisfactory to nobody. Upper Canada was dominated by an oligarchy which monopolized public offices, and had acquired the bulk of the public land for its own use. The Governor and his Executive Council habitually rejected the advice of his elected Legislature, and the Province was in practice governed by officials. In Lower Canada the elected House was chiefly French, and the Governor, packing the Upper House with English, managed his Province much as England had managed Ireland. The real Government of both Provinces was in fact the Colonial Office. Parliament generally was indifferent. Many of the Radicals, following Bentham, accepted in full the theory that local affairs must be controlled by local representative assemblies. But they pushed their theory to logical conclusions, and, believing that the complete independence of the Provinces must come, sooner or later, were little inclined to administer the affairs of territories which were only costly burdens upon the British taxpayer. The Whigs, misreading the lesson of the American Rebellion, saw no alternatives but this complete independence and the present difficult and irritating subjection. In this atmosphere the officials had their own way. Bickerings about domestic affairs continued from 1810 to 1837. The Lower Province wanted an elected Upper House and power to dispose of the Crown Lands. The Upper Province wanted responsibility of Ministers and no oligarchy. Commissioners were sent to Canada in

1836 to inquire into complaints, and at once came to grief. In March, 1837, the English House of Commons, in spite of Radical opposition, resolved that it was inexpedient to make the Upper House of Lower Canada elective. In August the Assembly of the Province was dissolved, and rioting began. Troops were called in, and Canadians were killed. In May, 1838, Durham arrived at Quebec on an errand of pacification. Some of his acts were arbitrary, and he was at last forced to resign by a torrent of abuse, which the Home Government did nothing to avert. But his policy was in effect adopted, and his *Report* contains the statement of the principles which have ever since been the foundation of our colonial system.[230]

The reforms were not until a later date completed by the consolidation of the two Provinces, which directed the energies of the two races into the management of their common affairs, and so ended the discord which had nearly ruined Lower Canada. But both Provinces were separately endowed with responsible government. Full control was given over revenue, Ministers were made responsible to the Legislature, and the nominated Houses were abolished. "Hitherto," said Durham, "the course of policy adopted by the English Government towards the colony has had reference to the state of parties in England, instead of the wants and circumstances of the Province." In future, other principles were to prevail, and the first step was to equip the colony with the machinery for managing its own business. "I do not anticipate that a Colonial Legislature, thus strong and thus self-governing, would desire to abandon the connection with great Britain. On the contrary, I believe that the practical relief from undue interference, which would be the result of

such a change, would strengthen the present bond of feelings and interests; and that the connection would only become more durable and advantageous, by having more of equality, of freedom, and of local independence. But at any rate, our first duty is to secure the well-being of our colonial countrymen; and if in the hidden decrees of that wisdom by which this world is ruled, it is written that these countries are not for ever to remain portions of the Empire, we owe it to our honour to take good care that, when they separate from us, they should not be the only countries on the American continent in which the Anglo-Saxon race shall be found unfit to govern itself.

"I am, in truth, so far from believing that the increased power and weight that would be given to these Colonies by union would endanger their connection with the Empire, that I look to it as the only means of fostering such a national feeling throughout them as would effectually counterbalance whatever tendencies may now exist towards separation. No large community of free and intelligent men will long feel contented with a political system which places them, because it places their country, in a position of inferiority to their neighbours." The object of the reforms was to give as much freedom to the colonists as was compatible with the sovereignty of the Crown. They would then lose two temptations to rebellion; the interference of foreign officials in the disputes of their own parties, and the contrast which the liberty of Americans as well as of English presented to their own condition. Some points were left open, and were not settled until a later date. But Parliament had at last been brought to recognize that "Englishmen abroad are the same animals as Englishmen at home—energetic,

self-relying, capable of managing their own affairs, impatient of needless and domineering interference."[231] The egoistic habit had received a decisive check.

The total contribution of the Whigs to Liberalism was very large. They had declared that government, national and local, was to be no longer the business of a class, but the interest of the people as a whole; that no form of religious opinion was to be appreciated at the expense of another; that no man should be allowed to have property in the body of another; that land should not be privileged against goods in relation to legal debts, and that landowners should not be privileged against landless men in relation to the killing of game; that employers and parents should not be allowed to dispose of the health and happiness of children; that the English people should not be permitted to regulate the domestic concerns of one of their colonies. Much remained to be done. The middle class was admitted to political power, but the working class was not. Catholics and Dissenters were no longer practically disabled by the Church, but both were still depreciated by the establishment of the rival sect, and the Jew was still excluded from Parliament and office by the Christian. Land was still privileged by the Corn Law as against industry, and particular industries as against the public by the protective tariff. The poor working man was still liable to be abused by his wealthy employer. If the Colonies were emancipated, Ireland was not. The condition of women had not been improved, or even considered. Some of these reforms were simply applications of old Whig theories about the responsibility of Government to the people and the toleration of heterodox opinions. A Whig of 1688 would have

understood the ideas which lay beneath the Reform Act, the Canadian Constitution, the repeal of the Test Act, and Catholic Emancipation, even if he had disliked the particular expression of them. Other reforms were novel not only in themselves, but also as implying a new attitude of mind, a new conception of the relations between the State and society. The education scheme and the Factory Act meant that men were ceasing to look upon the State as something external to the people, a thing which was contrived simply to protect individual human beings from being injured either by foreign invaders or by domestic law-breakers. They were beginning to look upon it as an engine which might be put to positive as well as to negative use, which might be employed to strike off fetters as well as to prevent their imposition, which might be consciously directed towards improving a man's natural capacity as well as towards allowing it free play. It was a long time before these ideas received much fuller expression. Political power remained in the hands of classes who required little assistance of this sort for themselves, and were incapable of seeing how urgently it was needed by others. Until the Reform Act of 1867 had transferred power to the working classes the new conception of the State was only rarely and unsystematically expressed in legislation. In the meantime the landed gentry and the manufacturers exaggerated rather than diminished the old idea of individualism, and neglected or resisted every proposal which tended to restrict competition.

In 1841 the Tories under Peel came into office. The Toryism of this short administration was very

different from that of Pitt, of Castlereagh, and of Liverpool. The Prime Minister was not in the least aggressive in foreign policy, and was far more Liberal in abstaining from interference with other nations than was a Whig like Palmerston. At home he was influenced by the spirit, if not by the direct teaching of Bentham, and the Peelite school of Ministers was a group which for efficiency and economy has never been surpassed in England. Peel's most conspicuous virtue was perhaps his incapacity to make permanent resistance to sound argument. Men like Liverpool would hold to a bad principle at any cost. Peel was always open to conversion. In 1829 he had, by one of these wise surrenders, saved the country from the maintenance of the Catholic disabilities, and he was now in a similar way to abandon Protection. But the real credit for this Liberal triumph belonged to the Manchester School. In other matters he moved in the same line without outside pressure. The most conspicuous exhibition of Liberalism which was made by Peel of his own initiative was his treatment of Ireland, and his most useful project was frustrated by his own party. He applied himself with his usual disinterested ambition to the government of Ireland. He saw that that country must be treated according to its own nature, and not according to that of England, if it was ever to be prosperous and contented. Its principal grievances were the subjection of Catholicism to Protestantism, and the distortion of a peculiarly Irish system of landholding to the peculiarly English rules of law. Both problems were attacked by Peel in the right spirit, if not in the right way,

One of the worst consequences of the religious inequality was the ignorance of the Catholic clergy and population. No honest Catholic would set foot in

the Irish Universities, which were exclusively Protestant in temper. A small annual grant of £9,000 had been made to the Catholic College for priests at Maynooth since the beginning of the century. This was all that had been done to carry out the conciliatory policy of Pitt. Peel in 1845 proposed to increase the grant to £26,000. This was not a purely Liberal way of dealing with the difficulty. No system of endowment can establish equality between sects, because no Government is capable either of endowing all sects or of deciding what sects should be selected in preference to the others. Endowment can only create inequalities. The only levelling process is disendowment. But the Maynooth grant was a practical measure, however little it squared with logic. The Whigs supported it, and in the face of a clamour which recalled the days of the Puritan Revolution, Peel had his way.[232] A second Bill established three colleges for laymen, which offered education to all comers irrespective of creed.

The second line of advance was towards the establishment of the tenant's right to compensation for improvements. The Irish land question had at last attracted the earnest attention of an English Government. The particular difficulty with which Peel now endeavoured to grapple was the result of the English legal theory that everything put into the soil was the property of the landlord, and the Irish custom which allowed the tenant to make all the improvements in the holding. A tenant who spent his own money on building, fencing, and ditching found his rent raised on the ground that the land had thereby been made more valuable, and in default of payment, was mercilessly evicted. In England, where the landlord paid for most permanent improvements, this rule was not unjust. In Ireland, where the

landlord paid for none of them, it was little better than robbery. Bills entitling the tenant to compensation for his improvements had been introduced in 1835, 1836, and in 1843. A Royal Commission appointed by Peel presented a favourable report in 1845, and a fourth Bill was brought forward in the Lords. That Assembly, by one of its most fatal displays of Tory spirit, killed the Bill, and it was not introduced again for thirty-six years.

The debate in the Lords presented the Tory theory of Irish government in its crudest form. It was nothing that the history and the economic structure of Irish society were entirely different from those of English society. If Ireland appeared different, it was a reason, not for trying to understand her, but for trying to coerce her. If she would not behave like England, she must be forced. If she would not swallow of her own free will those provisions which formed the ordinary diet of England, they must be rammed down her throat. Thirty-six Peers, owning Irish land, presented a petition against the Bill. Lord Clanricarde stated the case with precision. "What," he asked, "had of late years been the drift of their Irish legislation? Had it not been, as far as they could, to assimilate the laws of that country to those of Britain? And if they meant to preserve tranquillity—to support the Union—they must persevere steadily in that course of legislation."[233] To this disastrous policy Lord Stanley, for the Government, Lord Devon, the chairman of the Commission, and one or two other Peers, offered a vain resistance. Nobleman after nobleman rose to denounce this interference with the rights of property. The Bill was thrown out, and Parliament returned to its dull application of armed force to the management of the affairs of Ireland.

CHAPTER VII

THE MANCHESTER SCHOOL AND PALMERSTON

While Peel was thus, with the co-operation of the Whigs, making some approach towards Liberalism, the real control of Liberal policy was passing out of the hands of the old governing class altogether. The active force in the Liberal movement of this period was the Manchester School. The members of this school were not unlike the Philosophic Radicals, and the two were generally found on the same side. But the Manchester men differed in character, if not in opinions, from the philosophers, and as they were more numerous, they were more powerful. Conclusions which in the one case were reached by reasoning from accepted principles of human nature were reached in the other by the ways of practical experience. The manufacturer liked individual liberty, not because he believed that it was only by leaving every man to pursue his own interest that the greatest happiness of the greatest number could be secured, but because he felt that he could manage his business best if no outside person interfered with him, and that in similar circumstances others could do the same. The Radical was a Free Trader because Protection benefited one class at the expense of another. The manufacturer was a Free Trader because Protection, by raising the price of corn, made his workpeople wretched, lowered the purchasing power of the people, and lessened the

demand for his manufactures, or else forced him to pay higher wages and exposed him to foreign competition. The Radical suggested that war should be made expensive, in order that human nature might revolt against it. The manufacturer confined himself to the commercial view that, so long as war existed, it was better to make it cheap and to confine it to the smallest possible area. The Radical approved of colonial independence because he believed that the Home Government could not understand the interests of the colonists as well as the colonists themselves. The manufacturer approved of colonial independence because it lessened the expenses and lightened the taxation of the English people. By different roads the two schools generally reached the same end.

The Manchester School was essentially a middle-class school. The Radicals had nothing in common but their Radicalism. The Manchester men were almost all of that sober, clear-headed, independent class, often sadly wanting in gracefulness and culture, but always amply endowed with courage, enterprise, and common sense, which has built up the cotton industry of East Lancashire. They were not democratic in any theoretical sense.[234] They cared nothing either for aristocracy or democracy. They were accustomed to mix on terms of equality with men of all classes, and their estimate of a man's worth was always their own, and depended on nothing but his capacity. So far as personal intercourse is concerned, there is no part of the world where the social estimate of a man depends less upon the accidents of birth than that part of England where the Manchester School flourished. The manufacturers were not proof against the attacks of interest, and their opposition to factory legislation

is a serious blot on their political character. They believed as firmly as the Whigs in the virtues of property, and most of them had no liking for such things as universal suffrage. But in other respects they had an influence upon the progress of Liberalism which was profound and continuous. They made Parliament think highly of the common people.

Their general principles were best stated by Fox, of Oldham. "I have gone into politics," he said, "with this question constantly in my mind, What will your theories, your forms, your propositions, do for human nature? Will they make man more manly? Will they raise men and women in the scale of creation? Will they lift them above the brutes? Will they call forth their thoughts, their feelings, their actions? Will they make them more moral beings? Will they be worthy to tread the earth as children of the common Parent, and to look forward, not only for His blessing here, but for His benignant bestowment of happiness hereafter? If institutions do this, I applaud them; if they have lower aims, I despise them; and if they have antagonistic aims, I counteract them with all my might and main."[235] The language is more florid than that of Bentham would have been. But the principles are Bentham's, and they are purely Liberal.

The policy thus expounded by Fox was not a mere creed of pounds, shillings, and pence. The Manchester School is often denounced alternately as cold-hearted and material and as warmhearted and sentimental, of sacrificing at one time humanity to trade and at another national interests to a feeble love of peace. It in fact combined an intense moral earnestness with a degree of plain good sense which

has never been surpassed. It is, on the one hand, largely due to the efforts of the School that ideas of international unity have supplanted the old ideas of the balance of international hostilities. But their whole programme—Free Trade, peace, non-intervention, reduction of armaments, retrenchment, arbitration, and colonial self-government—might have been, and in suitable circumstances always was, urged on grounds of convenience and interest. Both the Peace Society and Mr. Norman Angell are descended politically from the Manchester School, and without the union of the two forces, moral and economic, the School would have effected little. No popular agitation can ever succeed without an appeal to a moral sense, good or bad. Cobden and Bright and the other Manchester men saw, what the men of the world who differ from them never see, that in politics, as in all life, your ultimate interest coincides with morality. Honesty, if it had no virtue in itself, would still be the best policy. It is as true among nations as among individuals that material good is achieved most easily and maintained most securely by treating your neighbour as you would have him treat you. Interference, boasting, hostile tariffs, regulating the affairs of a nation without regard to the feelings of its members, all mean unrest, expense, heavy taxation, and perhaps war. Order and peace are essential to prosperity, and order and peace can only be secured by moral conduct. Even the dullest economic programmes were thus touched by the Manchester men with moral fire. "I see in the Free Trade policy," said Cobden, "that which shall act on the moral world as the principle of gravitation in the universe—drawing men together, thrusting aside the antagonism of race, and creed, and language, and uniting us in the bonds of eternal peace."[236] The

hope was sanguine, and its realization will not come yet. But it is only by hopes like this that the world has ever been moved. We advance by the labours of those who identify interest with morality, and not of those who calculate morality in terms of interest. To domestic and foreign policy alike the Manchester School gave a tone which they had never possessed before. The international ideas of the French Revolution, thus identified with national interest, were by them made part of the inheritance of Liberalism.

The School naturally subordinated foreign and colonial policy to domestic policy. Foreign affairs were bluntly described by one of them as a gigantic system of outdoor relief for the aristocracy, and they resented the use of the common people for the dynastic aims of diplomatists. "Crowns, coronets, mitres," said Bright, "military display, the pomp of war, wide colonies, and a huge empire, are, in my view, all trifles light as air, and not worth considering, unless with them you can have a fair share of comfort, contentment, and happiness among the great body of the people."[237] "It was with that view," said Cobden, "that I preferred my budget, and advocated the reduction of our armaments; it is with that view, coupled with higher motives, that I have recommended arbitration treaties, to render unnecessary the vast amount of armaments which are kept up between civilized countries. It is with that view—the view of largely reducing the expenditure of the State, and giving relief, especially for the agricultural classes—that I have made myself the object of the sarcasms of those very parties, by going to Paris to attend peace meetings. It is with that view that I have directed attention to our Colonies, showing how you might be carrying out

the principle of Free Trade, give to the Colonies self-government, and charge them, at the same time, with the expense of their own government."[238] "The condition of England question," wrote Cobden to Peel, after the repeal of the Corn Laws, "there is your mission!"[239] It was certainly the mission of Cobden and his associates.

This insistence upon the paramount importance of domestic policy led the Manchester men into an exaggerated contempt for foreign policy. Their patriotism was not wanting in sturdiness, but it was of that noble and rare variety which is not afraid to rebuke national insolence and oppression. Their opposition to the Crimean War and the support which most of them gave to the North during the American Civil War are among the best things which the School ever did for England. Bright spoke of "the high example of a Christian nation, free in its institutions, courteous and just in its conduct towards all foreign States, and resting its policy on the unchangeable foundation of Christian morality.... I believe there is no permanent greatness to a nation except it is based upon morality.... The moral law was not written for men alone in their individual character, but that it was written as well for nations."[240] The patriotism of a man like this may have been mistaken, but it was never mean. The title of a "Peace at any price man" was never deserved by any member of the School. It opposed only the aggressive and risky policy, which in Palmerston's day passed for the maintenance of national dignity and influence, and wasted the wealth of the people in quarrels with which they had no real concern. "The middle and industrious class of England can have no interest apart from the preservation of peace. The honour, the fame, the emoluments of war

belong not to them; the battle-plain is the harvest-field of the aristocracy, watered with the blood of the people.... It is only when at peace with other States that a nation finds the leisure for looking within itself, and discovering the means to accomplish great domestic ameliorations."[241] So they suspected British rule in India, partly because it involved wars, partly because its temper reacted upon free government at home. So they maintained that England should never interfere in the quarrels of other peoples. The Balance of Power was to them a mere phrase, and unless the interests of England were directly involved, the Government had no right to inflict upon her common people the miseries even of a successful war. If Russia abused the Poles, or invaded Hungary to reduce it into the power of Austria, that was their affair, and not ours. "We are no more called upon," said Cobden, "to wrest the attribute of vengeance from the Deity, and deal it forth upon the Northern aggressor, than we are to preserve the peace and good behaviour of Mexico, or to chastise the wickedness of the Ashantees."[242] "It is not our duty," said Bright, "to make this country the knight-errant of the human race."[243] This was a rule of good sense. The breach of it was not only costly, but a bad precedent. "If you claim the right of intervention in your Government you must tolerate it in other nations also.... I say, if you want to benefit nations struggling for their freedom, establish as one of the maxims of international law the principle of non-intervention."[244] Cobden once went so far as to say that "at some future election we may probably see the test of 'no foreign politics' applied to those who offer to become the representatives of free constituencies."[245] But he was never opposed to a policy which protected our own interests, and he

approved of offers to mediate between two contending foreign nations.[246] This dislike of armed force went much farther than the old Whig principle. The Whigs denounced active interference in the domestic affairs of other peoples. The Manchester School would have prevented interference for the protection of one nation against another. Let the Continent settle its own quarrels, and however much we may abhor particular acts of immorality, let us confine ourselves to cases where we are ourselves concerned. This marked the extreme of the reaction against the policy of aggression, and it went farther than a Liberal ought to go. The Manchester men were probably driven to exaggerate their principles by the excesses of Palmerston. Canning, who was a true Liberal, interfered in defence of national rights, but only when he had a good chance of success. Palmerston often interfered when he had no chance of success, and irritated to no purpose. The reaction against Palmerston's ill-judged activity brought the Manchester School to the point of justifying inactivity even where activity would have been safe for England and of benefit to a foreign people. But however ill-judged it may have been in particulars, the general effect of this depreciation of foreign affairs was beneficial. The condition of England has ever since remained the first care of English Governments.

The domestic policy which the Manchester School made the first object of government was in the direct course of Liberalism. As has already been stated, they agreed generally with the individualist proposals of the Philosophic Radicals. "I do not partake," said Cobden, "of that spurious humanity which would indulge in an unreasoning kind of philanthropy at

the expense of the great bulk of the community. Mine is that masculine species of charity which would lead me to inculcate in the minds of the labouring class the love of independence, the privilege of self-respect, the disdain of being patronized or petted, the desire to accumulate, and the ambition to rise.... Whilst I will not be the sycophant of the great, I cannot become the parasite of the poor."[247] This habit of mind was expressed in a general opposition to institutions and policies which interfered with individual freedom. The School gave no assistance to proposals for economic regulation, and opposed Factory Bills in the same spirit as they opposed Protection.

The greatest practical service which they rendered was the emancipation of industry from the system of Protection. Import duties were an interference by Government with the freedom of the individual to use his capital and his intelligence as he thought best, and they gave advantages to certain classes and interests over other classes and interests and over the community at large. An import duty raised the price of the taxed article for the benefit of the industry which produced the same article in England. Two consequences followed. The industries which used the taxed article paid an artificially high price for the benefit of the industries which made it, and the tax might be so high that they would be unable to continue in the face of foreign competition. Government was incapable of selecting what industries might be taxed in this way without injury. It made an arbitrary selection without regard to the general interest, or at the instigation of classes which desired to be benefited at the expense of the community. Some industries were maintained by this artificial system which could not have maintained

themselves by their own efficiency. Other industries were crippled which, in a freer system, could develop themselves to an indefinitely greater extent. Protection was vicious precisely as government by a class was vicious or as a system of religious disabilities was vicious. It established an aristocracy of industry, which was as bad as an aristocracy of birth or of creed. Every industry should have an equal chance with every other, and no industry should be given the chance of exploiting the common people.

The Free Trade movement had begun with Adam Smith in the eighteenth century. But little progress had been made in practical politics before the Reform Act. A few economists like Ricardo and Joseph Hume argued the case in the Commons with as much persistency as Cobden and Bright. But the country gentry were not economists, and their main practical object had been the maintenance of their rents by import duties on corn. The common people, without any direct voice in politics, had been stung by their own sufferings into a vision of the truth, and resolutions in favour of free imports of corn had been passed at some of the Radical meetings after the French War.[248] In 1820 a number of London merchants presented a petition to the House of Commons which covered import duties of every kind, and stated "That freedom from restraint is calculated to give the utmost extension to foreign trade, and the best direction to the capital and industry of the country."[249] Huskisson, who was President of the Board of Trade from 1826 to 1828, had done something to readjust some of the import duties as between raw materials and partly or wholly manufactured goods. The Whig victory took the matter no farther. The Whigs were at first occupied with constitutional changes, and after Melbourne had succeeded Grey, they ceased to apply themselves to reform of any kind. Immediately before their defeat in 1841 they made one or two vague proposals, but were beaten before they could carry them into effect. The arrival of Peel, a Utilitarian Tory, decided the fate of the old system.

Peel, with Gladstone at the Board of Trade, carried on Huskisson's policy with vigour and success. The tariff in 1842 included no less than 1,200 separate

articles. On 750 of these the duties were cut down, and a general rule was established that duties on raw materials should never exceed 5 per cent. of their value. Though this was not Free Trade, it was a great departure from the existing system of regulating trade by taxes. But the corner-stone of Protection was the Corn Law, and this remained in force, modified, but in principle untouched. Whigs and Tories alike believed in the supremacy of land, and nothing but a revolt of the manufacturers could break it down. The revolt was led by the Manchester School.

The details of this famous struggle are not to be stated here. One or two quotations will indicate the Liberal temper of the Free Traders. The Radicals attacked the Corn Law in Radical language. "It is the duty of Parliament," said Hume, "equally to protect all the different interests in the country.... Are we warranted in giving to one particular interest a monopoly against the other interests? I see no reason for giving the capital employed in agriculture greater protection than the capital vested in other branches of trade, manufacture, or commerce."[250] The manufacturers hated the landowners with a more personal hatred. They had little respect for these ignorant country gentlemen who maintained their own dignity at the expense of the manufacturer's capital and the workman's life. "The sooner the power in this country is transferred from the landed oligarchy, which has so misused it, and is placed absolutely in the hands of the intelligent middle and industrious classes, the better for the condition and destinies of this country."[251] The Corn Law was described as saying to the people, "Scramble for what there is, and if the poorest and the weakest starve, foreign supplies shall not come in for fear some

injury should be done to the mortgaged landowners."[252] "The labourer's bones and muscles are his own property, and not the landlord's. We claim for ourselves that which we concede to him—the fair produce of whatever power, privileges, or advantages we possess. Here our principle claims the same respect, the same sacred veneration, for the rights of property of the man who has nothing in the world but the physical strength with which he goes forth in the morning to earn his dinner at noon, and that of the inheritor of the widest and most princely domain which can be boasted of in this country of Great Britain.... There is no doubt that any duty on the importation of corn must enhance the price of food; and whatever enhances the price of food takes away from the fair earnings of the industrious."[253] The victory of the Anti-Corn Law League meant the victory of the people over the landowners.

But that victory was emphasized not only by the triumph of principle, but by the triumph of organization. The fighting was done almost entirely by Cobden and Bright outside Parliament. Both of the leaders, with Hume, Villiers, and other members, made speeches in Parliament. But the real work was done by the League, which was founded in 1838, and for eight years carried on an indefatigable but orderly campaign in the country. It bore some resemblance to the Political Unions which had supported the great Reform Bill. But those Unions had been massed behind the official Whig Opposition. The League had very few Members of Parliament at its head, and not one of those was within the circle of Whig favour. The Unions had forced their policy upon the Tory party. The League forced its policy upon Parliament. So far as active assistance was concerned the Opposition was no

more to the Free Traders than the Government. Both official parties looked upon it with suspicion, and the old jealousy of popular organization which had faced the Corresponding Society and the Catholic Association was displayed by Whig as well as by Tory landlords. The lecturers of the League were denounced, not only as "commercial swindlers," but as "the paid hirelings of a disloyal faction," and "revolutionary emissaries," who inflamed the public mind "with sentiments destructive of all moral right and order."[254] In 1843 the League was accused of promoting a strike of factory hands in the North, and of rick-burning by agricultural labourers in the South, and it was rumoured that the Government intended to suppress it, as it suppressed the Catholic Association. It was not until Lord John Russell published his manifesto in favour of repeal in 1845 that a Member of Parliament of official rank openly allied himself with the League. Once the leaders of Opposition had given way the work was easy. The political centre of gravity was thus shifted from Westminster to the country. It was no longer open to Parliament to decide policy, and to direct the fortunes of the nation as it thought fit. Not even Opposition could make a free choice of the topics of controversy and of legislation. It became the duty of members to observe the main currents of opinion, to check and deflect them, but no longer to originate them. They must look in future, not to their leaders, but to their constituents, for the principles which were to direct their conduct. The people were brought into direct touch with politics, and asserted their right, not only to censure their representatives by unseating them at elections, but positively to influence their actions while they sat in the House.

An equally remarkable feature of the League, though

its immediate political importance was much less, was its use of a women's branch, which took an active part in the work. This was the first organized employment of women in practical politics. The women who took part in Reform demonstrations like that of Peterloo belonged to an impotent class, and did little active work. The women of the Anti-Corn Law League did not make speeches.[255] But short of appearing on public platforms they did the same kind of work as their men. Politics were at last acknowledged by the most powerful class in the State to be women's work as well as men's. For the moment there was no demand that women should control their own political affairs. But the one step followed inevitably from the other. It was impossible that a woman of strong character should thus engage in a strenuous political agitation without acquiring some of that desire for personal control which is the essence of democratic politics. Among the men of the League there were probably few who would have allowed women to work with them except as subordinates, and the supporters of the women used language which showed that they were not very far removed from the eighteenth century. "I offer no apology," quaintly says the historian of the League, "for the course they took, for I never had the smallest doubt of its perfect propriety and its perfect consistency with the softer characteristics of female virtue."[256] It did not occur to him that, even if it had been inconsistent with those softer characteristics, it might still have been consistent with the desire of the women to use their natural powers as they themselves, and not as he, thought fit. Men had not yet got to the point of allowing women to regulate their own lives in their own way. But when they admitted that they might safely take

part in serious public business, they sowed seed which has since borne much fruit. The modern Women Suffrage movement began in those Northern districts where the League was powerful, and it has made least impression in those quarters where the League was weak.

The repeal of the Corn Law was the greatest practical achievement of the Manchester School. In other matters they divided the credit with the Radicals, who were avowed followers of Bentham, and with the Peelites, who were often Utilitarian in practice though not in theory. So far as domestic policy was concerned their Liberalism was of the negative and incomplete kind. An attempt had been made in 1835 to establish agricultural training schools and model farms in Ireland. It was not enough to relieve the distress of that miserable land, but it attacked one of its most urgent problems in the right way. The Manchester men objected to their support of a particular industry by the State, and Peel and the Benthamites took the same side. In 1844 Peel ended the system of practical instruction, and the model farms were nearly all abandoned. In the same temper the Manchester School opposed Shaftesbury's Factory Bills, and if Free Trade is the best thing which they did for their country, their resistance to Factory legislation is the worst. Many of them accepted restrictions on the hours of child labour. But anything which forced the employer to regulate his buildings or his machinery or his processes in the interests of the health or safety of his workmen was opposed fiercely and persistently by the majority. They objected to any interference with adult men. On a motion to inquire into the condition of journeymen bakers, Bright once spoke with a most unpleasant flippancy. "He did not see how

Parliament was to interfere directly and avowedly with the labour of adult men.... He should be ashamed to stand up in defence of about two hundred stalwart Scotchmen, who could publish a Gazette of their own, and write articles in it of considerable literary merit, and appeal for a remedy to that House."[257] He and his associates overlooked the fact that the difference between a man and a woman or a child was only a difference of degree. They misunderstood the principle of all legislation of this kind. Women and children were protected not because they were women and children, but because they were economically weak. They were not organized, they were poor, and their employers could use them as they pleased. Any class of men which was economically weak was morally entitled to the same protection. To say that they were adult men was no answer to a complaint which had nothing to do with sex or age. Maleness did not of itself prevent either long hours or dirty premises. Here Radicals and Manchester men failed, and by 1867 Parliament had got no farther than to prohibit the employment of children under eight years, to restrict the hours of labour of women and youths under eighteen to ten or twelve hours a day, and to impose conditions about sanitation, ventilation, and the fencing of machinery upon some of the more unhealthy or dangerous trades. This progress, qualified by many exemptions, was all that could be won in the face of individualist opposition to economic reform.[258] But in another quarter the different schools of individualists were united with conspicuous success.

The most complete and the most successful

application of Liberal principles during this period was in the reconstruction of the colonial system. The American Rebellion and the restoration of Canada had been isolated examples, the first of Liberal defeat, the second of Liberal victory. But by the middle of the century this casual wisdom had been developed into a deliberate and consistent policy. The growth of the other Colonies at the Cape, Australia, and New Zealand forced upon the Home Government the reconsideration of their methods of transacting colonial business. The Cape had been taken from the Dutch during the French War. Australia and New Zealand had been discovered at the end of the eighteenth century, and by 1840 were both recognized as British Colonies. The Government were then faced with the same problem as that which had confronted them in America. The old system was government by the Colonial Office, and in one respect it had been more deliberately egoistic than in any other part of the world. The Australian Colonies had for a long time been used as a dumping ground for social rubbish. The people for whom the Home Government could not provide in England, it had been accustomed to send to New South Wales, to Western Australia, and to Van Diemen's Land. A large part of the population of these countries consisted partly of transported convicts and partly of paupers whom public or private money had enabled to emigrate. As Sir William Molesworth bluntly described it, "Colonial Office colonization consists in the transportation of convicts and the shovelling out of paupers."[259] The time was at length reached when the independent emigrants and the descendants of earlier settlers who were themselves of good character protested against this use of their country without their own consent.[260]

In 1839 Russell, as Colonial Secretary, stopped transportation to New South Wales. But convicts were still sent to Tasmania and Norfolk Island. In four years no less than sixteen thousand of these unwelcome immigrants had been forced upon the inhabitants of Tasmania, and in 1840 they presented a petition praying that the system might be stopped. Peel's Government suspended transportation to Tasmania for two years, but actually contemplated reviving it in the case of New South Wales. Transportation was apparently regarded as a sort of administration of human alcohol. So long as the proportion of convicts to independent settlers did not exceed a certain figure no harm would be done. But the inhabitants of New South Wales protested loudly, and when the Whigs came into office in 1847, with Lord Grey as Secretary for the Colonies, they abolished all transportation except to Bermuda and Gibraltar. A last attempt to impose upon colonists was made in 1849. A shipload of convicts was then taken to the Cape. There was a violent outburst of feeling, and the noxious cargo was finally discharged in Tasmania. After a few more years of bickering between the embarrassed Imperial Government and the determined colonists, the system was completely abandoned in 1853.[261]

The next step was to entrust the colonists with the management of their own domestic affairs. The details of the various Acts of Parliament are not important. In 1842 Peel's Ministry had established a Legislative Council in New South Wales. The Whigs extended the system to the whole of Australia. But the real credit for establishing the new spirit belongs to the Manchester School and the Radicals, of whom Sir William Molesworth was the most conspicuous. Russell and Grey always took the Liberal line, but

with more coldness. They were content with nominated or partly nominated Legislatures. Molesworth argued boldly for a complete system of responsible government. "The nostrum of the Colonial Office for the Australian Colonies is the single, partly nominated Chamber. Now every one acknowledges that such an institution is not only in opposition to the principle of political science, but to the universal experience of Anglo-Saxon communities in every part of the globe.... An Englishman, when he emigrates to the United States, carries with him in reality all the laws, rights, and liberties of an Englishman; but if he emigrates to our Colonies, on touching colonial soil he loses some of the most precious of his liberties, and becomes the subject of an ignorant and irresponsible despot at the Antipodes."[262] He proposed "that the Colonial Office shall cease to interfere with the management of the local affairs of these Colonies, and that they shall possess the greatest amount of self-government that is not inconsistent with the unity and well-being of the British Empire."[263]

The practical proposals of Molesworth were not immediately accepted, and the first colonial constitutions did not provide for the responsibility of Ministers to the Legislature. But a clause in the Australian Colonies Government Act of 1850 provided that the Colonies might alter their own constitutions, and it was not long before they took advantage of the permission. The Liberal principle of local independence was thus permanently established. The temper in which the Imperial Government has ever since applied itself to the details of administration has been that of Molesworth. "The great principle of colonial government is, that all affairs of merely local concern

should be left to the regulation of the local authorities; to that principle I know of no general exceptions, unless in cases where local interests may clash with the interests of the Empire at large, or in cases where some one predominant class of a society might be disposed to exert such powers, so as unjustly to depress some feebler and defenceless class."[264] In modern times the line between local and Imperial interests has been pushed farther back. Some Acts of Colonial Legislatures have been disallowed by the Crown. These have generally conflicted in spirit or in letter with the Imperial law. Among them have been Acts for reducing the salary of a Governor-General, for regulating copyright and shipping, for checking foreign immigration, and for altering the law relating to marriage and divorce. But with the growth of colonial populations even this interference has become rarer. Acts for checking Chinese immigration into Australia and for permitting marriage with a deceased husband's brother in New Zealand have been recently sanctioned by the Crown. Under the influence of this Liberal temper the self-governing Empire has grown to its present proportions. A queer freak of political fortune has made Tories of the present generation the self-styled champions of communities which, if Tory doctrines had been applied to their government half a century ago, would have been long since driven into revolt and independence.

The fidelity of Parliament to the new theory was once more seriously tested in 1853, when the Whigs were no longer in absolute power, and the government was in the hands of a coalition of Whigs and Peelites. The Tory side was then weighted by the influence of the Church of England, in whose favour an unfortunate reservation had been made in

Canada. The question arose out of the appropriation of some lands in Canada for the endowment of the Church. The Canadian Legislature had presented an address to the Crown, praying that the disposition of these lands might be left to itself as a matter of purely local and not Imperial concern. There had been considerable dispute about the subject in previous years, and in 1840 Parliament had passed an Act appropriating the revenues of the Clergy Reserves in part to the Church of England, in part to the Church of Scotland, and otherwise for religious and educational purposes. The Canadian Legislature now asked that Parliament should invest it with full power to deal with the endowments according to the wishes of the inhabitants of the Colony. The issue was plain. The Churches were in Canada, the clergy were in Canada, the lands were in Canada. Were their affairs to be managed by Canadians or Englishmen? The Church fought for its privileges. In 1840 the Bishops in the House of Lords had demanded that whatever other concessions were made to colonial feeling, the Church at least should be maintained at all costs. "The Church wished, for the sake of peace, to make any reasonable concessions with regard to property, provided always that the Church was recognized as the Established Church of the Colony."[265] The Canadians were to be adapted to the use of the Church, not the Church to the use of the Canadians.

In 1853 these arguments were employed in the House of Commons by Sir John Pakington and by Lord John Manners. Property had been appropriated to the Church of England, and it must remain with her even at the cost of colonial independence. Sir William Molesworth and Gladstone put the Liberal case as forcibly as on the Australian Bill. "It is high

time," said the latter, "to have done appealing to one part of the people. We know of old the meaning of these words—we know from disastrous experience their effects—we know that the effect of them was to create knots and cliques of intriguers, who put upon themselves the profession of British supporters, who denied the name of loyalists to all who would not adopt their shibboleth, and caused a strong reaction in the minds of the colonial population; so that, if under that system of government you would look to govern the people of Canada, you must expect the spread, if not of disloyalty, yet of dissatisfaction and dissent; and that pervading the great mass of the community there will be a current of public opinion throughout the Colony, if not contrary to, yet distinct from, the current of British feeling."[266] This argument, showing clearly that the speaker's mind was already moving towards the Irish policy of which he himself had as yet no conception, was sufficient to keep the House in the path upon which it had previously entered. The Church was beaten by 275 votes to 192, and the last foundation-stone of Empire was firmly laid. The strength of the structure was tested again in 1858, when the Canadian Parliament was allowed to impose duties upon British manufactures. It stood the strain, and in 1879 it was finally acknowledged that in its fiscal arrangements a Colony might treat the Mother Country as it treated a Foreign State.[267]

In foreign affairs the predominance of Palmerston gave a uniform tone to English policy for a whole generation. The Whigs were in power from 1830 to 1841, from 1846 to 1852, and, with a brief interval, from 1852 to 1866, and though Palmerston was not

always at the Foreign Office, his influence was always great while his party was in a majority. Generally his sympathies were on the side of Liberalism. He believed in the theory of nationality, and, though he was no enthusiast for democracy, he had a great hatred of tyranny. But while his principles were in the main Liberal, his methods were essentially Tory. He had a constant desire to see England play a great part in foreign affairs, and while he sometimes oppressed small peoples for unworthy objects, he frequently irritated and offended Great Powers without any profitable result. As one of his subordinates said of him, "He wished to make and to keep England at the head of the world, and to cherish in the minds of others the notion that she was so."[268] "England," he said, "is strong enough to brave consequences."[269] The braving of consequences in foreign, even more than in domestic affairs, is a dangerous game to play. It was a game in which Palmerston delighted, and whenever he was in office the country might count on a succession of hazardous enterprises being undertaken for its amusement, and at its expense.

This egoistic policy was not inconsistent with the principles of Whigs who liked national independence and English political institutions, and in some of his most dangerous exploits Palmerston had the powerful support of Lord John Russell. But it was opposed on the one hand to the theories of Peelites like Peel himself, Gladstone, and Lord Aberdeen, and on the other to the theories of Cobden and Bright and the Manchester School. The former disliked everything that was unmethodical, disturbing, and expensive. The latter hated Palmerstonism, because it so vividly expressed that aristocratic subordination of domestic to foreign affairs, that use of the

common people for purposes which they could not understand, which it was their habit to attack in all its forms. The conflict which extended over the whole of the Palmerston era was thus rather a conflict between a Tory use of Liberalism and a Liberal use of it than between Toryism and Liberalism. There was no general disposition on either side to interfere directly in the domestic concerns of foreign peoples. Palmerston was more than once guilty of this gross offence. But men so opposite as Peel and Cobden were agreed on the point, and Peel's dignified request for fair play for the Socialist French Republic of 1848 is more in the vein of Fox and Grey than in that of Pitt and Grenville. Even Palmerston would not dispute the soundness of the general principle. But his constant attempts to dictate policies to other peoples made his Liberalism a very different thing from that of his opponents, who, while they were sometimes ready to offer mediation, were never ready, as he was, to hazard the fortunes of the English people on behalf of causes where success was doubtful or impossible.

Between 1830 and 1841 Palmerston was chiefly concerned with the Iberian Peninsula and the Near East. In 1832 he very rightly sent a fleet to the Tagus to stop Miguel's abuse of British subjects, and he declined with equal propriety to prevent France from doing the same on her own behalf. He then proceeded to open negotiations for filling the thrones of both Portugal and Spain, which were inconsistent with Liberal principle and produced no result except to excite the jealousy of France. Hostility to France combined with hostility to Russia to shape his policy in Turkey and Egypt. He had at this time a belief, which he never lost, that Turkey could regenerate herself. When Mohammed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt,

threw off his allegiance to the Sultan, and not only expelled the Turks from his own territory but conquered a large part of their possessions in Syria, Palmerston interfered to prevent his advance. France had shown sympathy with Egypt, Russia with Turkey. To leave the matter where it stood meant the permanent separation of the two Eastern countries, neither strong enough to stand alone, and each therefore dependent on and dominated by one of the two European Powers whom Palmerston disliked. At all costs Turkey must be kept from Russia and Egypt from France. The British fleet was therefore sent to Syria, and Mohammed Ali was stripped of his conquests and sent back to his own country. This was a clear case of the exploitation of weaker races in the interest of England's private disputes with other Powers.

The Chinese War of 1840, in which English ships and men were used to force the opium traffic upon China, was hardly Palmerston's fault, and was begun and conducted by the British diplomatic agents. In 1841 he rendered great service to the cause of international friendship by procuring the European Powers to consent to a convention for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and thus completed the work which had been begun by Wilberforce and Clarkson more than fifty years before. In 1846, after the fall of Peel, he began his second term of office by a refusal to join France and Austria in interfering by force of arms in the internal disorders of Switzerland, and procured a settlement by mediation. This was as wise and temperate a course as could be required. But immediately afterwards he began a series of extraordinary violations of Liberal principle. In July, 1846, he instructed the British Ambassador in Spain to lecture the Spanish Government on its

unconstitutional domestic policy, and in order to thwart Louis Philippe of France, meddled with the marriage of the young Queen. In November he sent a fleet to Lisbon to overawe the Portuguese Junta, and re-established the Queen, who had been expelled, on condition of her giving up her absolutism and undertaking to govern with free institutions. In the next year he sent Lord Minto to Italy on a pedagogic tour among the various Governments, bidding them set their houses in order before the prevailing unrest upset them. All this was in the worst possible manner, and love of national freedom was strangely mixed with jealousy of France and Austria. In 1848, the year of Revolutions, when every country in Europe except Russia was disturbed, and even England suffered a final and sporadic outbreak of Chartism, Palmerston indulged his love of freedom to the full. Neither he nor Lord John Russell concealed their sympathy with the Poles, the Hungarians, and the Italians, and while they declined to join in Continental wars, they upheld the Sultan in his refusal to give up Hungarian refugees to Austria and Russia. No Liberal could find much cause for complaint in this sympathetic policy, even though it incurred the hostility of reactionary Governments. Contrasted with Russia assisting Austria to put down the Hungarians, and with the French Republic helping Austria to destroy the Republic of Rome, England at this time appeared conspicuously magnanimous. But in 1851 Palmerston's gay pugnacity led him into a gross blunder.

The object of his censure was Greece. The condition of that State was such as Palmerston could not overlook. British subjects had from time to time reason to complain of the inefficiency of the law and of the delays and evasions of the Government. A riot,

in which a substantial amount of private property was destroyed, at last gave an excuse for intervention. Claims for compensation were presented to the Greek Government, and Palmerston, without advising the sufferers to try the law, and without himself allowing any play for diplomacy, sent a fleet to blockade the Piræus, and demanded the settlement of all the claims in full. Some of these claims, of which that of the Maltese Jew Pacifico was the worst, were notoriously extravagant or dishonest, and Palmerston, by his hasty action, had made the British fleet an instrument of the most impudent blackmail. France and Russia stepped in, at first with offers of mediation, and then, when Palmerston flouted their suggestions, with vigorous remonstrance. In the face of this opposition such a bad case could not be pressed, and the matter was referred to arbitration. Palmerston's egoism had betrayed him. He had bullied Greece. He gave way to France, and he abased himself before Russia. The note addressed to the Russian Ambassador by Count Nesselrode is perhaps the most humiliating document ever received by an English Minister. "It remains to be seen whether Great Britain, abusing the advantages which are afforded her by her immense maritime superiority, intends henceforth to pursue an isolated policy, without caring for those engagements which bind her to the other Cabinets; whether she intends to disengage herself from every obligation, as well as from all community of action, and to authorize all Great Powers, on every fitting opportunity, to recognize to the weak no other rule but their own will, no other right but their own physical strength. Your Excellency will please to read this dispatch to Lord Palmerston, and to give him a copy of it." To the meek acceptance of lectures like

this was Great Britain reduced by Palmerston's "spirited and aggressive" policy. The rebuke was not made less effective by the fact that every word of it might have been addressed to Russia herself. But Palmerston, with his theories of the Balance of Power and his bluster in Spain and Portugal, no less than with his genuine love of national independence and constitutional government, had contrived to offend all the Great Powers in turn, and they clutched eagerly at this chance of reading a lecture to the man who had so often played the pedagogue towards themselves.

The case of Don Pacifico was the cause of a general attack upon Palmerston's conduct of foreign affairs. In the House of Lords, Stanley carried a vote of censure on the particular incident. This was answered in the Commons by Roebuck's motion of general confidence in the whole policy. The debate lasted for six days, and Palmerston defended himself in the finest speech he ever made. He claimed to have maintained the honour of England, and to have entitled every subject of the Crown to boast of his citizenship like the old Romans. He was answered as brilliantly by Peel and Gladstone, by Molesworth, and by Cobden. "I protest," said the philosophic Radical, "against the honourable and learned gentleman's doctrines, which would make us the political pedagogues of the world.... I maintain that one nation has no more right to interfere with the local affairs of another nation than one man has to interfere in the private affairs of another man."[270] Gladstone was less dogmatic but equally forcible, and it is in his speech rather than in those of Radicals and Manchester men that the real Liberal view of the case was expressed. He admitted that it might sometimes be right that one nation should

interfere with another, and that if England ever interfered she should interfere on the side of liberty as against despotism. But his case against Palmerston was that he interfered on behalf of revolution before it was successful. We should interfere, if at all, to protect an established constitutional Government, and not to set it up. "The difference among us arises upon this question: Are we, or are we not, to go abroad and make occasions for the propagation even of the political opinions which we consider to be sound? I say we are not.... We must remember that if we claim the right not only to accept, when they come spontaneously and by no act of ours, but to create and catch at, opportunities for spreading in other countries the opinions of our own meridian, we must allow to every other nation a similar license both of judgment and of action. What is to be the result? That if in every country the name of England is to be the symbol and the nucleus of a party, the name of France and Russia, or of Austria, may and will be the same. And are you not, then, laying the foundation of a system hostile to the real interests of freedom, and destructive of the peace of the world?... Interference in foreign countries, sir, according to my mind, should be rare, deliberate, decisive in character, and effectual for its end.... I protest against these anticipations of occasion, on every ground both of policy and of justice. The general doctrine is that we are not entitled to recognize a government, far less to suggest one, until we see it established, and have presumptive evidence that it springs from a national source."[271]

On the point of Don Pacifico, Gladstone administered a rebuke which was equally crushing. "It would be a contravention of the law of nature and of God, if it were possible for any single nation of Christendom to

emancipate itself from the obligations which bind all other nations, and to arrogate, in the face of mankind, a position of peculiar privilege.... What was a Roman citizen? He was the member of a privileged caste; he belonged to a conquering race, to a nation that held all others bound down by the strong arm of power. For him there was to be an exceptional system of law; for him principles were to be asserted, and by him rights were to be enjoyed that were to be denied to the rest of the world.... He adopts in part that vain conception that we, forsooth, have a mission to be the censors of vice and folly, of abuse and imperfection, among the other countries of the world; that we are to be the universal schoolmasters."[272]

The victory of argument was with the critics. But Palmerston triumphed in the Lobby, and there is no question that his policy was popular. A few months later he was turned out of office. He procured his downfall by a succession of foolish acts. Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, paid a visit to England early in 1851, and Palmerston gave a cordial reception to a deputation which described the Emperors of Austria and Russia as despots, tyrants, and odious assassins. The language was not very inaccurate. But it was not the business of the Foreign Secretary to receive it with approbation. Public feeling was in this matter with Palmerston, and he was allowed to keep his place. But in December of the same year Napoleon, then President of the French Republic, tore up the Constitution under which he held office, shot down some of his subjects in the streets of Paris, imprisoned his principal enemies, and took steps to get himself elected Emperor. The affair was as flagrant a violation of moral rules as any revolution that had ever taken place, and the most stubborn of

English Tories might have been repelled by such a breach of faith. The Government, acting on the Liberal principle of non-interference, instructed the British Ambassador to be strictly neutral. But Palmerston privately told the French Ambassador that he strongly approved of what had been done. This was too much for the Queen and for the Cabinet, and it was also too much for Parliament and the people. The offending Minister was dismissed. With him went the strength of the Whig party. In a few months the Ministry had fallen to pieces, and a coalition of Whigs and Peelites, with Lord Granville at the Foreign Office, had taken the place of the Tory Ministry which succeeded it.

In a Memorandum addressed to the Queen, Lord Granville laid down the main principles of the new foreign policy. They were a distinct expression of Liberal ideas. "It was the duty and interest of a country such as Great Britain to encourage progress among all other nations. But for this purpose the foreign policy of Great Britain should be none the less marked by justice, moderation, and self-respect, and avoid any undue attempt to enforce her own ideas by hostile threats.... They did not attach to the expression 'non-intervention' the meaning implied by some who used it, viz., that diplomacy is become obsolete, and that it is unnecessary for this country to know or to take part in what passes in other countries.... With respect to the internal affairs of other countries, such as the establishment of Liberal institutions and the reduction of tariffs in which this country has an interest, H.M.'s representatives ought to be furnished with the views of H.M.'s Government ... but they should be instructed to press those views only when fitting opportunities occurred, and only when their advice and assistance would be welcome

or be effectual.... With the countries which have adopted institutions similar in liberality to our own, it ought to be the endeavour of H.M.'s Government to cultivate the most intimate relations ... and also to exert its influence to dissuade other Powers from encroaching on their territory or attempting to subvert their institutions. Cases might occur in which the honour and good faith of this country would require that it should support such allies with more than merely friendly assurances."[273] This was the policy of the Government, composed partly of Whigs and partly of Peelites, which replaced the short-lived Government of Lord Derby in 1852.

The new Premier was Lord Aberdeen. He had been Foreign Secretary in Peel's administration, and had exhibited a wise temper in a dispute with America, which Palmerston had left in a state of great difficulty. By an ironic twist of fortune, this Liberal Ministry was soon involved in the Crimean War, a blunder for which Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Napoleon III of France, and the Palmerston School in England, must share the moral responsibility. Stratford was eager for war, and stimulated the Sultan, Napoleon wanted to dazzle his people by military glory, and Palmerston, once more in office as Home Secretary, hating Russia as the champion of autocracy, inspired by jealousy of her power, or fearful of anything which might endanger our communications with India, wished to bolster up the Turkish Government at all costs. The details of the negotiations need not be stated here. There was not originally the least prospect of any danger to British interests, economic or political. The question at issue was whether Russia should have the right to protect the Christians of the Balkan Peninsular against the abominable tyranny of

the Sultan of Turkey. Great Britain, through Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, from the first did everything possible to impede Russia and to stimulate the Sultan. Eventually, the terms which the chief Powers presented to the two parties were accepted by Russia. Turkey, acting under the direct instigation of Lord Stratford, rejected them, and war began.

Liberal protests were in vain. They were drowned by the clamour of a people, which is not more conspicuous than any other for wisdom in time of war. The Ministry collapsed under the odium of their bad management of the campaign in the Crimea, and Palmerston, in whose temper the negotiations had been conducted, came back to office, this time as Prime Minister. His triumph over Liberalism was complete. Every one of the leading principles of Granville's memorandum was violated. England interfered in a quarrel on behalf of the vilest Government in Europe. She interfered on behalf of a State which had rejected her terms against a State which had accepted them. She marched into the field at the side of a despot who had gained his throne by a monstrous crime. The enemy against whom she fought was so vast that not even such ends as she had could be gained except for a brief space, and real success was as impossible as the cause was bad.

In two years the war was at an end. Hundreds of thousands of lives had been lost. Hundreds of millions of pounds had been blown away. The Emperor of the French had strengthened his seat upon his throne. The Sultan of Turkey was enabled, for twenty years more, to murder, flay, beat, and ravish his Christian subjects. Russia, rebuffed for the time being in the Balkans, began to move eastwards, and threatened us more directly in Persia. The gains

of England were of the vaguest kind. If she had succeeded, after a war which was chiefly due to the folly of her representative at Constantinople, in preventing Russia from appropriating part of the Sultan's dominions, she had succeeded at the cost of committing herself to the support of an ally who was as untrustworthy as he was vicious. The most solid and permanent acquisition of the war was probably not understood at the time by one Englishman in a thousand. It was accidental, and had nothing to do with the objects of British policy. It consisted in the work of Florence Nightingale. This had finally proved two things: the value of trained nursing in the regulation of health, and the capacity of women to construct and control complicated organizations of human beings. Miss Nightingale's work in the Crimea gave her an authority which made her subsequent organization of trained nursing a comparatively easy task. Few statesmen of the nineteenth century can claim to have done more than she to make life worth living for their fellow-creatures, and if the war had produced no result but this it might almost have been worth its cost. The importance of Miss Nightingale's success in its bearings on the general condition of women will appear greater fifty years hence than now. It was certainly very great. Mary Somerville had already acquired a reputation as an astronomer. Harriet Martineau had been an acknowledged champion of Free Trade. But Florence Nightingale was the first woman who obtained for her public work that degree of publicity which catches the imagination of a people. Contemporary opinion, after assailing her with that abuse and ridicule to which all pioneers are accustomed, consecrated her as "The Angel with the Lamp." A wiser generation declines to identify her merely with

those gentle qualities in which she is rivalled by many thousands of her sex, and sees in her strong and imperious temper, her capacity for reducing order out of chaos, and her power of enforcing her wishes upon her subordinates, qualities in which she has seldom been surpassed even by the greatest men. No English statesmen engaged in the conduct of the war displayed in a higher degree than she the attributes of a great administrator, and the impression of her statesmanlike qualities can never be effaced. It has not been possible, since her day, for any reasonable man to argue that women, as such, are constitutionally incapable of managing large affairs.

The deeper significance of the Crimean War was not perceived for another generation, and in domestic affairs at least a decade elapsed before any Government displayed activity. The whole nation seemed resigned into the hands of Palmerston. Ireland continued in its sullen course. The artisans, whose political agitation had collapsed in 1848, were consolidating their Trade Unions and making successful experiments in co-operation. John Bright occasionally spoke on Parliamentary Reform, and denounced government by aristocracy with a contempt as hearty as that of Paine. But he admitted that he was "flogging a dead horse." Apathy in domestic politics pervaded all classes. Except in foreign affairs, where Palmerston kept alive his peculiar conceptions of Liberalism, Parliament showed little activity. The Cabinet, partly Whig and partly Peelite, was animated by no general principle. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, already on his way from the Peelite camp to the Liberal, confessed that in domestic matters his colleagues of 1860 were far less Liberal than those of 1841,[274]

and when the Lords rejected his Bill for the repeal of the Paper Duty in that year, it was with the utmost difficulty that he dragged his chief into a fight for the privileges of the Commons.

One or two measures, which excited little public interest, and required little effort from the easy-going Premier, marked the slow advance of Liberalism. The Settlement Duty Act of 1853 reduced the privileges of the landed interest by imposing the same duties on land passing under a settlement as had previously been paid by personal property. The Oxford University Act of 1854 and the Cambridge University Act of 1856 opened the two ancient Universities to Nonconformists, though the highest degrees and all the important offices were still retained by the Establishment. The Jewish Relief Bill, which had passed the Commons and been rejected by the Lords seven times since 1832, became law in 1859, and the Christian monopoly of Parliament came to an end. In 1857 the Divorce Act was carried in the face of clerical opposition, and enabled any person to obtain the dissolution of an unhappy marriage in a civil court. This was an essentially Liberal measure, in that it freed the individual from an ecclesiastical institution, but it emphasized on the other hand that sexual Toryism which is worse than the Toryism of creed or class. One of the most barbarous rules of a male society was preserved by the Act, and while a man was permitted to divorce his wife for a single act of infidelity, a woman could only divorce her husband if he were also guilty of cruelty or desertion. Implicitly the Act permitted a man to indulge freely in vice so long as he chose to live with his wife and not to beat her, at the same time that it sentenced her to social extinction for a single fault. Moral standards have risen since that time, and the

use of women is no longer recommended by medical men to their patients as a means of maintaining health. But the legal privilege preserved by the Divorce Act is enjoyed by the dominant sex to this day. The Act had other faults, the chief of which was that the procedure under it was so expensive that it was almost useless for the poor. But it was at least an advance towards liberty.[275] One other measure of a Liberal sort has already been mentioned. In 1860 the Lords rejected the Bill for the repeal of the duty on paper. In 1861 it was forced through, the price of paper was reduced, and the cheap newspaper and the cheap book, with their enormous influence upon the habits of the mass of the people, were made possible. This was the work of Gladstone alone, and he and Cobden together contrived the great French Commercial Treaty which completed the reform of the tariff, and left the country with no import duties except those which were imposed on goods not produced in England, and those which a countervailing excise robbed of all protective character.

With these exceptions, the important events of the Palmerston period took place abroad, where the Prime Minister's foreign policy pursued its pretentious course. It presented its usual alternation of generous but risky interference on behalf of oppressed nationalities with arrogant assertions of the British ego. A war with China in 1856 exhibited it at its very worst. A ship called the *Arrow* had obtained a licence from our representative to fly the British flag in the China seas. Like others which enjoyed the same privilege, the *Arrow* seems to have used it for very dubious purposes. After the period for which the licence was granted had expired the Chinese Governor Yeh of Canton boarded the ship

and arrested some of its crew on a charge of piracy. Though his conduct at a later stage was more violent, it seems clear that at the beginning of the quarrel he acted with dignity, and strictly within the law. But Sir John Bowring, the British Minister on the spot, chose to treat his action as a wanton and unprovoked insult to the British flag. He demanded the surrender of the prisoners and an apology, and when Yeh did what Bowring himself would have done if their positions had been reversed, and refused to give way, he proceeded to employ all the ships and troops at his disposal in warlike operations. It was the affair of Don Pacifico over again, with an even less specious excuse. In this case there was no legal justification even for diplomatic remonstrance.

The affair was atrocious enough in itself. But its atrocity was increased by the language and the methods of the English representatives. The *Arrow* had been entitled by licence to hoist the British flag. The period covered by the licence had expired. "But," argued Sir John Bowring, "the Chinese did not know that the time had expired, so that the insult to the flag is no less, and our pretext no worse." Macchiavelli himself could not have argued more shamelessly than this Utilitarian, and Cobden, who was a personal friend of Bowring, rightly denounced it as the most dishonest thing that had ever been written in a British official letter. The British agents were in fact dealing with people whom they thought to be barbarians, and they were not concerned to stand upon the points of honour which were commonly observed by civilized men. One of the incidents of the war expressed this unworthy discrimination between Europeans and Asiatics no less clearly than the methods of the diplomatists. During the Crimean War the Government had been

very careful to avoid the bombardment of unfortified towns. However reckless they had been in going to war, they had had sufficient moral discipline to refrain from the wanton injury of defenceless persons. This rule, now universally adopted by all civilized peoples, was abandoned by the British Government in China, and half Canton was laid in ruins and some hundreds of its peaceful inhabitants were shot or burnt to death, in order to assert the superiority of the civilized Western nation over these insolent barbarians.

These outrageous proceedings were brought before the House of Lords by Lord Derby and before the House of Commons by Cobden, in speeches which in sheer force of argument have never been surpassed. Every man of eminence, except the few who were in office under Palmerston, spoke on the same side, and even Lord Lyndhurst, whose Toryism dated from the days of Eldon, took the Liberal view. Lord John Russell echoed the language of the Copenhagen debate of half a century before. "We have heard much of late—a great deal too much, I think—of the prestige of England. We used to hear of the character, of the reputation, of the honour of England."[276] Even Roebuck, whose motion had once defended Palmerston's against the consequences of actions hardly more honourable than this, came back to the Liberal side. "The rule of morality extends over the globe, and what is just and unjust in the Mersey is equally just and unjust in the river before Canton."[277] On this occasion Palmerston's majority deserted him. He won by a small majority in the Lords, but was soundly beaten in the Commons. But the resources of the constitution were not exhausted. He dissolved Parliament and appealed to the country. The result of the election was not

encouraging to those who valued honour in foreign policy. The Crimean fever had not abated, and this fresh appeal to national arrogance produced a great demonstration in favour of the Prime Minister. The most striking feature of the election was the extinction of the Manchester School. Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, and Fox of Oldham were all turned out of their seats. But though the Liberals were thus censured by their contemporaries, the judgment of posterity must be pronounced hardly less emphatically in their favour. Ten years later the new Liberal party, united on domestic and foreign policy, came into power, and it governed in both fields in a spirit which was the very opposite of that of Palmerston.

In the meantime the lively veteran proceeded with varying success and unchanging cheerfulness. In November, 1857, he saw fit to pass public censure on the French Emperor, which he had done nothing recently to deserve. But by the following February he had completely changed his tone. A man named Orsini had made bombs in London for the purpose of blowing up the Emperor in Paris, and Count Walewski, in a most impudent dispatch, requested Palmerston to alter the law of England so as to prevent the repetition of such practices. To the consternation of a House of Commons which had been elected to express approval of his high-handed dealings with Russia and China, he meekly introduced a Conspiracy to Murder Bill. This was too much even for his own followers, and within twelve months of his triumph he was beaten, and resigned. But nothing could stop him, because nobody could replace him. In two years he returned to office, and he remained there until his death in 1865.

Foreign affairs gave him more than one more opportunity for the display of his peculiar qualities. The Indian Mutiny was provoked and suppressed in India, and except for the protest which some Liberals raised against the occasional ferocity of the conquerors, there were few revelations of differences of opinion. The appropriation of Schleswig and Holstein by Germany in 1863 attracted at once Palmerston's zeal for national independence and his desire to assert himself in Europe. He was always eager to protect the little man irrespective of his merits. He and Lord John Russell ventured to interfere with some outrageous oppression of the Poles by Russia and Prussia in the beginning of 1863. It was a clear case of interference with domestic concerns of another nation, and the Russian Government in effect told them to mind their own business. Their suggestions for reform here produced no good effect whatever. But in the same year they again interfered, with hardly more excuse and no better result, in the quarrel between Prussia and Denmark. The quarrel did little credit to anybody concerned. Prussia, under the direction of Bismarck, behaved with that dishonesty which was as marked a feature of that statesman's diplomacy as its apparent success. Denmark behaved with a rashness which she could not afford in defence of a position which she ought not to have taken up. By a Treaty of London which had been signed in 1852 by England, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, the two Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein had been united with Denmark. Their inhabitants were mostly German, so that this treaty was inconsistent with Liberal theory. But such as it was, Prussia could not honestly refuse to observe it. In 1864, after some fruitless negotiations, she and Austria invaded the

Danish territories. Probably no war has ever been begun with less justification since Frederick the Great marched into Silesia. Palmerston was carried away by his feelings, and declared that "those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend."[278] Relying on this rash declaration, Denmark maintained a bold front. A speedy surrender might have left her with part at least of the disputed provinces. In the end she was despoiled of both. France and Russia would not fight, England would not fight alone. After encouraging Denmark to her fatal resistance, and after summoning an ineffectual conference of the Powers she left her to her fate.

The error of the Government in this case lay not so much in their view of the facts or their refusal to go to war as in the rash declarations which had led the Danes to believe that they would have English support. Palmerston had once more applied Liberal principles in an awkward and disastrous way. Even Cobden supported him in Parliament, and approved of his refusal to go to war with a military Power like Prussia. But he pointed out that there were other principles in issue besides the interests of the reigning House of Denmark, and protested against "the dynastic, secret, irresponsible engagements of our Foreign Office," which had in the first place assigned these German men and women to a Danish Government. He emphasized the need that all diplomatists should attend to "the question of nationalities—the instinct, now so powerful, leading communities to seek to live together, because they are of the same race, language, and religion.... There will never again, in all probability, be a conference meeting together to dispose, for dynastic purposes, of

a population whose wishes they do not take into account."[279] The Government contrived to remain in office until Palmerston died, and the maintenance of the rights of nations fell into the hands of people who were as ardent as himself, and much more wise.

On the whole, the foreign policy of Palmerston had been more ostentatious than wise, and its failures were as conspicuous as its successes. But in one quarter he and Lord John Russell together by their boldness rendered invaluable service to a struggling nationality. The Treaty of Vienna had operated nowhere so vilely as in Italy. The whole country had been parcelled out between Governments, some of whom were alien and others barbarous. The kingdom of Sardinia and Piedmont was Italian. Lombardy and Venetia were Austrian. In the middle, the Pope misgoverned one-third of the people. The last third was oppressed in Naples and Sicily by a King of the House of Bourbon. The rising of 1848 had been suppressed by French troops at Rome and by Austrian troops in Lombardy. But in 1860 the zeal and devotion of Italian men and women of all classes won a final victory, and it was England's privilege to assist at this great awakening, the birth of that new Italy which died the other day in Tripoli. By a series of miraculous victories, Garibaldi drove the Bourbons out of Sicily and Naples, and Vittorio Emmanuele marched down through the Papal States to meet him. The Powers watched this uprising of a people with mixed feelings. Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia expressed their emphatic disapproval. Lord John behaved like a Whig whose fire the Manchester School had not quenched. In a dispatch written on the 27th October, 1860, he supported the new Italian system. He quoted Vattel with point:

"When a people from good reasons take up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties." The question was whether the Italian rising had taken place for good reasons. "Upon this grave matter Her Majesty's Government hold that the people in question are themselves the best judges of their own affairs.... Such having been the causes and concomitant circumstances of the Revolution in Italy, Her Majesty's Government can see no sufficient grounds for the severe censure with which Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia have visited the acts of the King of Sardinia. Her Majesty's Government turn their eyes rather to the gratifying prospect of a people building up the edifice of their liberties, and consolidating the work of their independence, amid the sympathies and good wishes of Europe." All the noble temper which had been wasted on Turkey, Poland, and Denmark was concentrated with triumphant success in this dispatch. The despotic Powers held their hands, and the Italian nation was enabled to work out its own destiny.

One more controversy arose during the Palmerston era, and it tested English Liberalism as severely as any other. This was the American Civil War, which broke out in 1861 and continued until 1864. It was easy for a Liberal to find a logical reason for taking either side. He might support the North, because it was fighting to suppress slavery. He might support the South, because it was fighting for local independence against a central tyranny. The States were all legally independent except for certain common purposes of defence. It was thus very plausibly argued that it was the duty of a Liberal to support the South in its claim to secede from the Union which interfered with its internal affairs.

Though it was not the business of England to go to war with the North, it could easily be squared with the doctrines of men like Canning that she should formally recognize the independence of the South as soon as it appeared to be achieved. When the issues were thus confused, English statesmen were dangerously vague in their language and their conduct. Toryism and the governing class took the side of the South, which in its aristocratic temper differed from the North much as they themselves differed from the Manchester School. Russell and Gladstone took the false Liberal view, and inclined towards recognition. The Manchester men were severely injured by the blockade of the Southern ports and the consequent dearth of cotton, and many of them may have hoped, even against their convictions, that the Government would take such an easy way of ending the war. The situation was highly dangerous. The North were fighting for national unity. They were fighting to keep within the Union people who wanted to secede only to maintain the most infamous of all human institutions save one. The war was not a war between nations. The Southerners were a class, not a people. The war was a war between two civilizations, one based on free labour, the other on slavery. The intervention of England would have meant war on behalf of the bad old system against that which was most in harmony with her own. So long as the issue in the States was doubtful the risk remained. Confederate privateers were fitted out in English ports, and the Government was scandalously remiss in taking steps to stop them. Mr. Gladstone in 1862 made an indiscreet speech which hinted at recognition, and the American Ambassador nearly sent in his papers. The one public man who kept his head cool and his vision clear was

John Bright, who spoke unceasingly against the approval of slavery. But it was reserved for some nameless men and women to make the noblest display of wisdom which came from England during the war. The condition of the people of Lancashire would have been little worse than it was if every one of their cotton-mills had been swept from the face of the earth. Practically the whole of the cotton operatives and their families lived for months together upon charity. If any had cause to clamour for recognition and the defeat of the North, it was they. But in the midst of their distress this magnificent race stood by its principles. No saint or philosopher ever betrayed a greater fortitude than these poor and simple workfolk. While the merchant princes of Liverpool clamoured for war, and sent their clerks to howl at Henry Ward Beecher when he pleaded the cause of the North, the suffering populace of East Lancashire made no complaint. At one meeting at Manchester they even passed a resolution of sympathy with the North. This is probably the noblest thing that has ever been done in the world. It is not uncommon for men and women, in the excitement of war and in defence of their homes and children, to sacrifice themselves and all they have. But the act of the Lancashire workfolk was done in cold blood, and in defiance of every natural impulse. There is nothing more majestic in human records than the spectacle of these starving men and women, gathered in the very shadow of their dark and silent mills to encourage those whose success meant the continuing of their own miseries. The use of such a people as this in support of the Southern States would have been a monstrous crime. The final triumph of the North saved the Government from such a fatal error and made the

recognition of the independence of the South unnecessary by making it impossible.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BEGINNING OF THE GLADSTONE PERIOD

The Palmerston era was now at an end, and that of Gladstone was beginning. The first had been a period of domestic indifference and external agitation. Energy at home and restraint abroad were the marks of the first Liberal Ministry. The dominating force in practical politics was a man who derived his principles from a mixture of sound stocks. A temperate foreign policy, a rigorous economy in expenditure, and a dislike of commercial interference and restriction he had inherited from Sir Robert Peel. Beginning his career as a strong Churchman, he had gradually acquired the old Whig liberality in religious matters. "I think it," he wrote in 1865, "a most formidable responsibility in these times to doubt any man's character on account of his opinions. The limit of possible variation between character and opinion, ay, between character and belief, is widening, and will widen."[280] To belief in popular government he seems to have approached of his own nature, and he shared with Bright the honours of leadership in the new agitation for Reform. His party was compounded in much the same way of the different schools, old Whig doctrines of freedom of opinion, Palmerston's enthusiasm for nationalities, and the Manchester

School's dislike of foreign affairs and preference for domestic interests combining in a general theory of individual and national liberty, which for the first time approached complete Liberalism. In two directions the policy of the new school of thought showed a distinct advance upon any of its predecessors. Its conception of freedom was less pedantic than that of Benthamites or Manchester men, and it was not afraid to imitate the methods of State interference which Tory philanthropy alone had previously ventured to employ. This new spirit combined with the regard for nationalities to produce an entirely novel policy in Ireland, where peculiar diseases were at last met with peculiar remedies.

The policy of economic reconstruction, which was first seriously undertaken by the Liberal Ministry of 1868, was undertaken largely in response to pressure from a new section of society. The Reform Act of 1832 had enfranchised the £10 householder. The Representation of the People Act of 1867 enfranchised every town-dweller who paid rates. The first gave power to the middle class. The second gave power to the working class. The artisans, whose political agitation had died out in the Chartist movement of 1848, had devoted their energies since that date to the development of their industrial organizations. In 1863 Holyoake started an "Association for the Promotion of Co-operation," and in 1869 the Co-operative Societies had a total capital of £2,000,000, and an annual trade of £8,000,000. A similar growth had taken place in the case of Trade Unions. Between 1855 and 1865 the numbers of Trade Unionists seem to have been more than doubled, and Unions which in 1870 contained 142,000 members, had 266,000 in 1875.[281] This

form of organization was even more directly political than co-operation in the manufacture or supply of goods. It was frequently brought into conflict with legal theories about conspiracy, restraint of trade, intimidation, and breach of contract; and the necessity of amending the existing law was apparent.

This growth of organizations had produced a great increase of intelligence and influence among the better sort of working men. In thus managing affairs on a large scale, they had developed a capacity for political control which was very different from the vaguer discontent of an earlier generation. They were now organized and disciplined, and their demand for enfranchisement could no longer be ignored or despised. The American Civil War had aroused their interest in politics, and the fortitude with which some of them had borne the sufferings of the time had done much to disarm opposition. Bright's agitation at last found a response, and in 1866 the Whig Government introduced a Reform Bill. The Ministry, deprived of Palmerston, collapsed before the Bill could be carried, and by a cynical sacrifice of the very Tory principles which had defeated the Whig Bill, the Tory Ministry of Lord Derby and Disraeli passed the Bill of 1867 into law. With the Tory leader himself supporting the Bill, the voice of Toryism was not loudly raised against it. Lord Robert Cecil, who soon afterwards became Lord Salisbury, was the most bitter of the independent men behind Disraeli, and he was rivalled, if not surpassed, by the Radical Robert Lowe. Party discipline kept most of the Tories quiet, and there was no general opposition on the other side. Disraeli cared little for his own Bill, except as a means of "dishing the Whigs," and Gladstone and Bright were the real champions of the measure, in and out of

Parliament. "The working men," said the latter, "in thinking over this question, feel they are distrusted, that they are marked as inferiors, that they are a sort of pariahs."[282] The former roused the contempt of Lord Cranborne by describing the workmen as "our own flesh and blood." The issue, in short, was simply that of all disputes about the franchise. Was the governing class for the time being to admit that the other was capable of managing its own affairs, or was it to declare that there was some essential difference between them which made its own ascendancy necessary? Disraeli was not, in these matters, a Tory, and with Liberal support he carried his Bill. It was a job, without any genuine enthusiasm to inspire it, but it had its Liberal effect. The artisans obtained fuller control over their own lives, and the Liberal Government which they set up in 1868 expressed for the first time the wishes of their class in legislation.

It is necessary at this point to refer to two forces which were acting upon the political machine. The first, Socialism, was a diffused influence, operating among the working classes. The other, the teaching of John Stuart Mill, was a definite intellectual impulse, which worked directly upon the minds of men of education. Socialism has never been accepted as a creed by the majority of British working men, and its hard, logical reasoning will probably always prove as alien to them as Philosophic Radicalism was to the middle class. It had been expressed for a short time in the co-operative experiment of Robert Owen, and it came into prominence at the time of the French Revolution of 1830. But its direct proclamation that the system of private capital meant the abuse of wage-earners, and that it was

only where the whole people owned and controlled the means of production, distribution, and exchange that the poorer section could get economic security, was never popular. The Chartist movement had a purely political programme of annual Parliaments, payment of members, the ballot, and other constitutional reforms. Practical Socialism, the direct interference of the State in order to improve economic conditions, was concentrated after the Reform Act of 1832 in the Tory philanthropists. Lord Shaftesbury hated Socialism as a creed. But in opposing a Secular Education Bill of 1850 he used the very arguments by which Socialists justified their demand for the nationalization of capital: "The honourable and learned member seemed to think that crime was to be traced in almost all instances to want of education; no doubt that was in many cases a source of crime, but it was not the only, nor the chief source. Want of employment was the source of a vast proportion of crime. The condition in which the people lived, the influences to which they were subjected, the sunken and immoral state of a vast number of parents, rendered it next to impossible to produce any permanent improvement in many brought into our schools; and so long as you should leave the condition of your great towns, in all their sanitary, social, and domestic arrangements, such as at present, a large proportion of your efforts would be vain, and the education you could give nearly fruitless."[283] This was not Socialism. But it was the recognition of the fact that the individual would have no chance of honest growth unless society co-operated to improve the conditions in which he lived.

The general attitude of legislators towards the spirit of Socialism was very different. The Tories were

largely moved to oppose it by its alliance with free thought. In 1833 the Bishop of Exeter formally moved that the Government should take steps to suppress it. The Bishop of London said that "The Government, as a Christian Government, were called upon in the exercise of their parental functions to interpose a shield between these pernicious doctrines and the minds of those who were more than the rest of society liable to the dominion of passion."[284] Wellington gravely referred to the "atrocious character" of the Socialist Associations, which decoyed the people away from church by inviting them to Sunday dances. The Whig Ministry then declined to interfere with the propagation of any opinions, however obnoxious. But their intellectual hostility was as marked as that of Wellington himself. In 1852, after the French Revolution of 1848, with its disastrous attempt to provide work for all at the expense of the State, had brought the new doctrines again into prominence, Macaulay declined with great vigour to have anything to do with "Fourierism, or St. Simonianism, or Socialism, or any of those other 'isms,' for which the plain English word is 'robbery.'"[285] Whigs and Tories, whatever their opinions about free thought, were at least united in their determination to brook no interference with private property.

The real English Socialism was of a more practical kind than the doctrinaire Socialism of Continental thinkers like Lassalle and Marx. The chief spokesman was Thomas Carlyle, who was a philosopher rather than a politician, and rather created a new spirit in men than contrived for them any practical expedients. He never concealed his contempt for the ordinary politician, and had more in common with a Tory like Shaftesbury than with Whigs, Radicals, or

political workmen.

The Whigs were "the grand dilettanti" or "lukewarm, withered mongrels." The Radicals were "ballot-boxing on the graves of heroic ancestors." The mass of the people were "the rotten multitudinous canaille," and manhood suffrage was as reasonable as "horsehood and doghood suffrage." The world could only be saved by the hero, and the best thing mankind could do was to entrust itself to the unfettered genius of its great men. All this, and much more wild abuse sprang from Carlyle's violent indignation against individualism. He had no respect either for the aristocratic neglect of the Whigs or for the philosophical basis of the school of *laissez faire*. For the conception of society as a collection of competing individuals, protected in their competition by the State, he endeavoured to substitute a conception of society as a mass of mutually dependent individuals, united by "organic filaments," the weaker aided and protected by the State against the competition of the stronger, and the whole rising and falling, advancing and retreating together. "Call that yet a society," he exclaimed, "where there is no longer any social idea extant; not so much as the idea of a Common Home, but only of a common overcrowded Lodging House? Where each isolated, regardless of his neighbour, turned against his neighbour, clutches what he can get, and cries 'Mine,' and calls it Peace, because in the cut-purse and cut-throat scramble no steel knives but only a far cunninger sort can be employed."[286] This is not scientific Socialism, with its logical formulæ, the evolution of economic structures, the ultimate nationalization of all the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the rest. But it is a passionate appeal, in the very spirit of Socialism, to

the sense of brotherhood, to the feeling that every man has as much right as every other not to be left behind in the race of industrial competition, and that the State, the organization of Society for common purposes, should not be confined merely to negative functions, but should be made the active and positive instrument of the improvement of human life.

Carlyle presented a curious contrast of the aristocrat and the democrat. His feeling was all for the people. But it was to be carried into practical effect by despotic or oligarchic methods. No man ever saw more clearly the miseries of poverty, or felt more acutely the degradation of worth by external circumstances. "Through every living soul the glory of a present God still beams." But he was convinced that misery could not be entrusted with the instruments of its own relief. The two habits of mind, the sympathetic and the disposing, were in him united. His contempt for political democracy was bound up with his zeal for social democracy, his recognition of the equal worth of all with his determination not to give them equal power. The generation in which he wrote based all its hopes upon politics. Political reform was everything. Once enfranchised, the population would be able to protect itself against aggression, and its distress would come automatically to an end. Carlyle saw, what the Whigs, the Radicals, and the Manchester men could not or would not see, that this negative operation of the vote, this power of defence against interference by others, was of little use for his immediate purpose, the economic reconstruction of society, and he declared in his haste that it was of no use. Political reform did not go deep enough, and Carlyle drove violently into the camp of opposition. There was no hope except in the hero, the man of

extraordinary understanding and strength, who could both detect the causes of human suffering and compel society to abate them.

It was this emotional appeal of Carlyle which made him such a powerful force among thoughtful men and women, and especially among those whom experience had made acquainted with the worst effects of the industrial revolution. His hero-worship gave no little encouragement to the more brutal sort of Toryism, and there are still many English people who believe that the history of a nation is only the biography of its great men. But his insistence upon the direct responsibility of the social organization for the happiness of every one within it was in the line of a reaction against crude individualism, which by 1850 was strongly marked outside Tory philanthropy. Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, a novel which dealt sympathetically with industrial unrest, was published in 1848. Harriet Martineau, identified with Whiggery and the Manchester School, wrote in 1849 of the state of the wage-earners: "A social idea or system which compels such a state of things as this must be, in so far, worn out. In ours, it is clear that some renovation is wanted, and must be found."[287] In 1850 the Christian Socialist movement in the Church of England produced the *Tracts on Christian Socialism* and Charles Kingsley's novel *Alton Locke*. Dickens published his *Hard Times* in 1854, and constantly attacked the system of *laissez faire* in the columns of *Household Words*. Ruskin, with less political instinct, pleaded as passionately for beauty in common life as for ethical principles in art, and, like his master Carlyle, clothed his economic sermons in a style which put the cold reasoning of individualism to shame. Even Disraeli, who combined unusual moral levity with an unusual

capacity for discovering the set of social currents, gave utterance to similar opinions in *Sybil* and other novels. By the time that the working men were enfranchised in 1867, the Parliamentary work of Lord Shaftesbury was being accompanied by a general movement in society. Negative Liberalism, the removal of restrictions upon the individual, had obviously produced little direct good among the poorer people. It was time that humane and generous impulses in the direction of positive assistance had their way. The difference between the new Liberalism and the old was the difference between emancipation and toleration, between leaving alone and setting free.

The influence of John Stuart Mill was not so much in the direction of definite changes in society as in the direction of an alteration of mental processes by which such changes became possible. Liberal thinkers like Paine and Bentham had assailed the human mind from without, clamouring about its gates with completely fashioned ideas, which they endeavoured to thrust into it by a sort of intellectual assault. They had no doubts of their own rightness or of the duty of others to agree with them. Mill, chiefly through his acquaintance with the evolutionary ideas of Comte, was of a more tolerant disposition, and preferred to adopt the method of getting to understand how his adversary's error had arisen, and of persuading him, as it were, to retrace his steps, and by choosing another road, arrive at a sounder conclusion. His book on Logic was an attempt to alter the prevailing system of intuitional philosophy, by which he believed that prejudices and the dictates of interest were assumed to be absolute truths, and

to substitute for it a system in which every idea might be thoroughly examined and tested before it was adopted. In other words, he proposed to do with the conceptions of philosophy what Bentham proposed to do with institutions, to accept none, except on their merits. He thus hoped to produce, not definitely new ideas, but a condition of mind to which new ideas would not be repugnant. This method of undermining his adversary's position was his method in politics as in general philosophy.

Mill was the son of a Utilitarian, and was himself a disciple of Bentham. But he never accepted the Benthamite theory without qualification. He knew that men were actuated by other motives, good and bad, than self-interest. He did not believe that by setting all men free to pursue their own interest the majority would achieve happiness. He did not believe that it was enough in politics to enfranchise every person of twenty-one years of age, or that a democracy might not be guilty of as abominable tyranny as a despot or an oligarchy. He held most of the Benthamite principles, as forming the best working philosophy, but he never supposed that they would not require safeguards against abuse, or would inevitably produce the desired result. Bentham said, "This individual is actuated by this motive; apply this remedy to his condition, and he will develop himself to this point." Mill said, "This individual seems to be actuated by various motives, of which this seems to be the most important, his history and the experience of other individuals suggests that if this remedy is applied to his condition he will tend to develop himself to this point. I will therefore make the experiment." Bentham was always confident and dogmatic. Mill was never more than patient and hopeful.

Mill in effect combined the qualities of the historical and the critical schools of thought. His was not the vigorous hammering method of previous Liberals, but a cold, illuminating, and suggestive examination, which gave full credit to the existing institution, even while it displayed its defects. He asked, "How has it grown?" as earnestly as "How does it work?" and he lamented the indifference of his predecessors to history. "No one can calculate what struggles, which the cause of improvement has yet to undergo, might have been spared if the philosophers of the eighteenth century had done anything like justice to the past."[288] Every institution is to be studied historically, though it must be justified empirically. If it is bad in use, it must be reformed or abolished, but the change must be made along the line of past growth. What he said of the position of women he applied to every other problem. "The least that can be demanded is, that the question should not be considered as prejudged by existing fact and existing opinion, but open to discussion on its merits, as a question of justice and expediency; the decision on this, as on any of the other social arrangements of mankind, depending on what an enlightened estimate of tendencies and consequences may show to be most advantageous to humanity in general.... Through all the progressive period of human history, the condition of women has been approaching nearer to equality with men. This does not of itself prove that the assimilation must go on to complete equality, but it assuredly affords some presumption that such is the case."[289] This double view, combining the Radical view of Bentham with the historical view of Burke, enabled Mill to see his subject, as it were, stereoscopically and in true relation with its surroundings. He was not influenced

by Darwin's theory of evolution. But his own work produced a very similar effect. It made men accustomed to the idea of continuous alteration, of future as well as past growth.

Mill was thus the most prominent thinker of a time in which old systems of thought were being undermined. Natural science and the higher criticism were breaking up the foundations of authority in religion, and Mill's general method of dealing with habits of thought, no less than the direct plea for free thinking and free speaking contained in his treatise on *Liberty*, gave a wider scope to honest scepticism. He expressed approval of some of the new Socialistic projects. He was in favour of compulsory education, of the regulation of hours of labour, of Trade Unionism and co-operation, and he looked forward to a time "when the division of the produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on the accident of birth, will be made in concert on an acknowledged principle of justice." The social problem of the future, he said, would be "how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership of the new material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour."[290] His most original contribution to politics was his appeal for absolute equality of freedom for men and women, which was the first effective attempt to remove the class brand from women, and to abolish the aristocracy of sex. But his most valuable work, as has already been suggested, was not so much to sow new political ideas in the minds of his followers as to plough them for the reception of such ideas. He did not so much start them along new paths as set them to inquire whether they were right in remaining in the old, and whether there was any real danger in leaving them.

As solvents of prejudice, Mill's works have not been surpassed by any. He promoted, not change, but the readiness to change; not Liberal measures, but Liberal-mindedness. Thus persuaded to refrain from hasty judgments upon opinions, and to accept every new idea upon its merits, the rising generation applied itself to the working of the improved political machine.

The Liberalism of the Government which was in power from 1868 to 1874 was displayed in the further application of old principles, no less than in the adoption of principles which were new. Religious equality was expressed in their Irish policy and in their treatment of education. Reforms in the Civil Service and the Army abolished more class distinctions in the public service. The new School Boards were another example of popular control of Government. Acts dealing with Trade Unions and the ownership of Irish land expressed the new theory of State interference with individual liberty, and Acts referring to women marked a great appreciation of them in comparison with men.

One old principle was the basis of the Ballot Act of 1872. This gave to dependent persons the power of voting freely in the choice of their representatives, without fear of landlords, employers, or customers. The project was as old as the agitation for manhood suffrage, and was first suggested in the days of Wilkes and the Society of the Friends of the Bill of Rights. Other impediments to individual freedom were removed in 1870, when all posts in the Civil Service, outside the Foreign Office, were opened to competitive examination; and in 1871, when the

system of purchasing commissions in the Army was abolished. Two preserves of aristocracy and wealth were thus thrown open to the people at large. Direct aid was given to the poorer classes by the establishment of a national system of education in 1870. This had been first suggested by Whitbread, and gained the support of Bentham, the Whigs, and the Manchester School. Tories like Lord Shaftesbury had been in favour of it so long as nothing was done to limit the privileges of the Church, and there had been no reason, other than indifference, why the parsimonious grants out of the Exchequer should not have been increased long before. By this time the neglect of the poorer children and the complete failure of private enterprise had become conspicuous. Two million children received no education at all, one million received an education which was inadequate, and only one million three hundred thousand were educated in schools aided and inspected by the State.[291] The system was now made general, and the local control was placed in the hands of School Boards, elected by the ratepayers, and empowered to provide for the expenses of their districts by levying a rate.

The old Liberal principle of equality between sects, implied in the Irish Church Act, was expressed more simply in an Act of 1871, which abolished all theological tests for professors, fellows, tutors, and scholars of Oxford and Cambridge, except in the Theological Faculties. The exception was a characteristic revelation of Mr. Gladstone's influence. If absolute freedom of religious thinking is required more in one place than in another, it is in a school of divinity. But the Churchman was still involved in the

Liberal Prime Minister, and the theological honours and offices were left to the dominant creed. The exception was not of much general importance, and the Act removed the principal disabilities which had fettered the mind of the Universities no less than they had hindered the education of Nonconformists. This Act was passed with little opposition, even from the Lords. The great conflict of religious principle took place over the Education Act, which, like most of its predecessors and successors, might have been more aptly styled the "Religious Difficulty in Schools Act." The problem was not educational at all. A substantial majority of all parties would have agreed upon a scheme of national secular education in a few hours. But the course of events had determined that the children's minds should appear less important to Parliament than their souls.

A logical Liberal, faced with the task of establishing a national system of education, could take only the course which was advocated by the Birmingham League. That was to make education free, compulsory, and secular. No one should pay for education except as a taxpayer, all should be compelled to send their children to school, and no form of religious opinion should be taught. This would have secured all the benefits of secular learning and discipline, without compelling the member of one sect to contribute to the propagation of the opinions of another, and without compelling a child to be instructed in opinions which were obnoxious to its parents. But it was impossible for logic to have its way. Schools had been established in some districts for many years. The majority taught the doctrines of the Establishment. Others were Wesleyan, others Unitarian, others Catholic, others Jewish. Most of these had already enjoyed State aid,

though they had been built by voluntary subscription. It was impossible to ignore their existence. It was impossible also to ignore the fact that the majority of the English people, in a rough and ready way, desired that some sort of religion should be taught in the schools. There was no way out except in a compromise, and the difficulty thus acknowledged has never yet been removed. State aid was given to sectarian schools as well as Board Schools, and by the since famous Cowper Temple clause it was provided that no distinctive religious formulary should be taught in a Board School. This was not pure Liberalism. Nonconformists might object, as they had always objected, to paying for the propagation of obnoxious dogmas. Churchmen and Catholics might object, with equal reason, to paying for the propagation of opinions which were obnoxious because they contained no dogmas at all. Between the devil of dogma and the deep sea of Nonconformity no English Government has yet found a way. But the sects have had to live together in the country, and the compromise of 1870, though it settled nothing, was as good an arrangement as could have been made at the time.

The Education Act was an obvious interference of Government with absolute liberty, and the argument that this measure of control was only undertaken in order to equip the individual for the better enjoyment of liberty was an argument which would have applied to Socialism itself. But this Act was only a continuation of previous policy. The Trades Union Act of 1871 was a contrivance of an entirely new sort, and the support given to it by the Liberal Ministry meant a great change. Previous legislation

had marked an alteration in the attitude of the State towards combinations of workmen, and the Act of 1871 carried the change a degree farther. The Acts of 1799 and 1800 had prohibited Trade Unions. The Acts of 1824 and 1825 had permitted them. The Act of 1871 protected them and gave them special privileges. This was the direct consequence of pressure by organized workmen, assisted by members of the middle class like Thomas Hughes and Frederic Harrison. Decisions of the judges had tended to cripple labour organizations by declaring strikes to be intimidation, and peaceful picketing a nuisance, and by holding that workmen acting in combination might be guilty of the crime of conspiracy, even though they did nothing which would have been a crime in the case of a single person. One decision had declared that a Trade Union, being an association in restraint of trade, was illegal, and that an official who embezzled its funds could not be sued by the Society.

These judicial attacks were only part of a campaign which was now being waged against the whole system of Trade Unionism. The workmen were beginning to make their strength felt, and the old legal dislike of interference with liberty joined with the less disinterested objections of employers to anything which interfered with their power to do as they liked with their capital and their labourers. Some serious outrages, committed by the smaller organizations of a few towns like Sheffield and Manchester, gave colour to the general indictment of combinations of this sort. As a matter of fact nothing stood between the most moral and responsible workmen and exploitation by the worse sort of masters but his Trade Union. Absolute freedom to sell his labour as he pleased meant for the ordinary

workman absolute freedom to be abused by an economic superior. The Trade Union was the workman's only means of obtaining security of life. "Any one who regards it as a simple instrument to raise wages," wrote Mr. Frederic Harrison, "is, as Adam Smith says, 'as ignorant of the subject as of human nature.' Unionism, above all, aims at making regular, even, and safe the workman's life. No one who had not specially studied it would conceive the vast array of grievances against which Unionism and strikes are directed. If we looked only to that side of the question, we should come to fancy that from the whole field of labour there went up one universal protest against injustice. There is a 'miserable monotony' of wrong and suffering in it. Excessive labour, irregular labour, spasmodic overwork, spasmodic locking-out, 'overtime,' 'short time,' double time, night work, Sunday work, truck in every form, overlookers' extortion, payment in kind, wages reduced by drawbacks, 'long pays,' or wages held back, fines, confiscations, rent and implements irregularly stopped out of wages, evictions from tenements, 'black lists' of men, short weights, false reckoning, forfeits, children's labour, women's labour, unhealthy labour, deadly factories and processes, unguarded machinery, defective machinery, preventable accidents, recklessness from desire to save,—in countless ways we find a waste of human life, health, well-being, and power, which are not represented in the ledgers or allowed for in bargains."[292] In other words, the law, by a pedantic application of rules of abstract liberty, was depriving workmen of real liberty. Liberty of contract did not mean liberty of life, and it was only by sacrificing individual freedom to the common good in organization that real freedom was to be secured.

The Act of 1871 partly remedied the evil. Trade Unions, if there were nothing criminal in their expressed objects, were allowed to be registered, and could then enjoy the rights over their funds which were possessed by Friendly Societies. But they were given absolute freedom in their internal organization, and no action at law could be brought against them. These changes in the law were unfortunately almost nullified by a Criminal Law Amendment Act which practically gave statutory force to many of the recent legal decisions. Strikes were made legal, but everything done in pursuance of a strike was illegal, and working men and women were frequently imprisoned after 1871 for the most trivial acts, even while the serious boycotting of workpeople by employers was freely permitted. It is a great blot on the reputation of the Government, still dominated by the middle class and its dislike of combination, that it refused to complete the work which it had begun, and to enable Trade Unions not only to exist, but to work. At the General Election of 1874 two workmen, Alexander Macdonald and Thomas Burt, were actually elected to the House of Commons, and the roused feeling of the Unionists gained its object. The Conservative Home Secretary repealed the disabling Act, peaceful picketing was legalized, and workmen in combination were no longer punishable except for acts which were criminal if committed by single individuals. The strength gained by the Unions in this brief campaign finally established them in the industrial and political life of the country. The political reforms did not directly improve the condition of the working classes. But many, if not all, the improvements which subsequently took place, were only possible in the state of real freedom which the Acts of 1871 and

1874 had established.

One attempt to interfere with the absolute liberty of the individual failed. This was the Licensing Bill of 1871, which proposed to reduce the number of public-houses in the country. The departure from the old line was very marked. There had never been absolute freedom of trade in strong drink. From the earliest years alehouses had been licensed and supervised by magistrates. But their numbers in all parts of the country were more than was required for any reasonable consumption by the population. In Liverpool a disastrous experiment had been tried. Licences had been granted to every person of good character who chose to apply, on the assumption that unrestricted competition would lead to good management and the extinction of the worst class of house by competition. A principle which was abundantly successful in the cotton industry proved a helpless failure in the drink trade. There was no unhealthy demand for cotton goods. It did not depend on a natural instinct which might be increased by supply beyond the needs of health. To multiply drink-shops was to multiply, for many of the people who dealt with them, the temptations to demoralizing excess of consumption. The Liverpool experiment showed the folly of *laissez faire* in a matter of this sort. The Licensing Bill of 1871 expressed the opposite policy. It proposed to reduce the number of houses in each district to that which the justices thought was enough for its legitimate needs. The licences, though generally renewed, were granted for one year only. For ten years they were to be continued, subject to a small annual payment by the licensees. After the expiration of that period the justices were to fix the number for the district, and, in virtue of the artificial monopoly which the

licences conferred, were to distribute them among such respectable persons as offered the highest prices. These proposals were as vigorous an interference with individual liberty as was consistent with existing rights. The holders of licences had no legal right to more than a year's profits from their licences. Custom had given them an expectancy of indefinite length. The public interest required that their numbers should be reduced. Reduction was therefore proposed, but after a substantial delay. The scheme was just in principle and generous in practice. But the extreme advocates of temperance legislation objected to its generosity, and the brewers and licensed victuallers objected to its justice. The Home Secretary, Mr. Bruce, was not strong enough to carry it. It was abandoned soon after its introduction, and a priceless opportunity of at once improving the conditions of town life and of subduing a powerful trade interest to the public was lost for ever.

The most difficult of the Ministry's problems was the Irish problem, and the most novel of its proposals were its Irish proposals. Judged by the degree of their success, these measures were perhaps not very important. At least, they did not settle the affairs of Ireland. But their spirit was of the greatest possible significance. This Liberal Government was the first English Government which ever set itself to legislate for Ireland according to Irish ideas, to recognize the essential differences between the two countries, to establish in Ireland what it would not maintain in England, and to destroy in Ireland those English institutions which had been erected by the egoism of its predecessors. The existing system was recognized

as hopeless. In February, 1868, the Tory Government suspended the Habeas Corpus Act for the fourth time in two years. Fenianism was checked, but the disease of which it was a symptom was not cured. The Liberals endeavoured to go to the root of the matter. The maintenance of order was only a condition of further action, and the only possible further action was the redress of grievances.

The case of Ireland had for a long time caused anxiety to Liberal thinkers. In 1835 Cobden had contrasted England's readiness to sympathize with Poland and Greece with her complete indifference to the claims of Ireland. "Whilst our diplomatists, fleets, and armies have been put in motion at enormous cost, to carry our counsel, or, if needful, our arms, to the assistance of the people of these remote regions, it is an unquestionable fact, that the population of a great portion of our own Empire has, at the same time, presented a grosser spectacle of moral and physical debasement than is to be met with in the whole civilized world."[293] Disraeli in 1844 declared that it was the duty of an English Minister "To effect by his policy all those changes which a revolution would accomplish by force."[294] In 1847 Bright pointed to the root cause: "There is an unanimous admission now that the misfortunes of Ireland are connected with the question of the management of the land."[295] The rejection of Peel's Bill of 1845 has already been noticed. The only measure passed for the relief of Irish tenants since that date was the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849. This had provided State assistance for the sale of hopelessly mortgaged estates. Its chief result had been to substitute for a thriftless but easy-going gentry a company of grasping absentees, who rack-rented their tenants without mercy, where their predecessors had at any

rate let them alone. The state of the Irish peasantry, even though the pressure of population had been greatly reduced by famine and emigration, was substantially worse in 1868 than it had been in 1845. The violence of Fenianism, murder and armed rescue at Manchester, and gunpowder plot at Clerkenwell, at last drew attention to a state of affairs in which there was nothing new except the degree of its badness.

Before the Liberals dealt with the land question, they turned their attention to the other great Irish grievance, the establishment of an alien Church. This was one of those matters of sentiment which, between conquering and conquered peoples, produce the most deadly and incurable animosities. The Irish Church had been established for the express purpose of prosecuting the English cause. It embodied and symbolized the alien domination. It perpetuated the memories of a thousand massacres and confiscations. In the language of John Bright, it was "a garrison Church ... the effect has been to make Catholicism in Ireland not only a faith, but absolutely a patriotism." Every clergyman "is necessarily in his district a symbol of the supremacy of the few and of the subjection of the many."[296] In its presence every Catholic Irishman felt himself a member of a conquered race, and every economic grievance was exaggerated. To invest the alien Church with the privileges of Establishment was to rub salt into the wounds of Ireland.

The Tories resisted the Liberal Bill partly on proprietary grounds. They treated a corporation, created for the propagation of certain opinions, a task in which it had conspicuously failed, as if it were a private person, and denounced disendowment

as robbery. The Liberals contended that the State had endowed the Church, and that on the failure of the Church to provide for the spiritual needs of the Irish people, it was fair that the State should resume part of the property and apply it for other purposes. But the details of disendowment are hardly material. The essence of the Bill was that it tended to destroy the ascendancy of Protestantism as against Catholicism, and of Englishmen as against Irishmen. Gathorne Hardy put the Tory case on this point in one sentence. He said that he looked upon the Church "as a part of the Imperial Government."[297] Sergeant Dowse stated the Liberal case in reply. "The Irish people regarded that Church as a great wrong and a standing memorial of conquest.... Nobody ever said the measure would lead to social equality. But in future a Bishop or Dean would no longer be preferred over a Bishop or Dean of the Catholic or minister of the Presbyterian Church, and in that way, at least, an important removal of social distinctions would be effected." He reminded his hearers that on the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne orange flags were hoisted on the spires of State churches, and described them as "the badge of degradation to the vast majority of the Irish people. Protestant ascendancy did exist, as long as one Church was patronized and preferred above another Church either of the whole or a portion of the people."[298] The Bill was carried into law after a hard fight with the House of Lords. It did not entirely destroy the insolence of Irish Protestants or allay all the discontents of the peasantry. But it was an earnest of the disposition of an English Government to legislate for the Irish people as they would have legislated for themselves.

The sentimental grievance having been removed, the

Liberals turned to the practical grievance. The Irish Land Act of 1870 provided that the tenant should receive compensation for his improvements, and unless the contrary were proved, it was to be presumed that all improvements were his, and not the landlord's. If a tenant were evicted, he was to be compensated for disturbance, unless the eviction were for non-payment of rent, and even then the court might hold that the exorbitant amount demanded, or other circumstances, entitled him to special compensation. No tenant who paid less than £50 a year could contract out of the Act. Two great principles were expressed in this measure. The first was that of the Church Act, the Irish government of Ireland. The second was the new collectivism. The Act not only alleviated the great hardship of the Irish tenants, it was a direct interference by the State with the right of property and with freedom of contract. The absolute owner of land was no longer allowed to deal with it as he pleased without compensating those to whom he leased it, and a poor tenant was expressly prevented from agreeing to his own injury. Utilitarianism and *laissez faire* had ceased to dominate the Liberal mind, and liberty was deliberately restricted in one direction that it might expand more readily in another. Where one party was rich and the other poor, where one held land in his absolute disposition and the other could not live without it, freedom of bargaining meant the lessening of liberty. This principle, suggested in the Factory Acts, and first openly applied to the problem of Irish land, is now the distinctive character of Liberal domestic policy.

A phenomenon of this period as remarkable as the

appearance of Socialistic ideas is the direction of the attention of Parliament to the affairs of women. One or two Acts had dealt with the condition of working women as with that of working children, and they had been excluded altogether from the brutalizing labour of mines. But the general status of the sex, as compared with that of men, had remained unaltered since the accession of George III. Beneath the surface of politics a substantial improvement had taken place. The first condition of emancipation was that women themselves should be enabled to demand it. The carefully fostered ignorance of the eighteenth century was now being gradually reduced by improvements in education. The vast majority of middle-class women still received a mental training which was infinitely inferior to that of men. But a few schools, of which those of Miss Buss in North London and Miss Dorothea Beale at Cheltenham were the most conspicuous, had begun to substitute a scientific training of the mind for the futile cultivation of graces and accomplishments. Bedford College and Queen's College in London provided similar training for girls who had passed the school age, and in 1870 the first women's college at Cambridge was established by Anne Jemima Clough. A few books had been published by women, who claimed the same freedom of development for the individual woman as all Liberals required for the individual man. The public distinctions of women like George Eliot, the Brontës, Mary Somerville, Harriet Martineau, and Florence Nightingale had accustomed society to the idea of vigorous female independence. Elizabeth Blackwell and Elizabeth Garrett had already contrived to squeeze themselves, in the face of every kind of opposition, into the medical profession, and soon after the Liberal victory

of 1868 Sophia Jex-Blake began that extraordinary struggle at Edinburgh which at last ended in the defeat of male jealousy and the admission of women to medical schools and medical degrees. In all directions women of the middle class were beginning to assert their right to develop their own faculties and to employ their own powers according to their own ideas of what was right and fitting, and not according to those of the dominant sex.

This movement among women was only part of the general movement towards individual freedom from external control which is described in these pages. The ruling sex was as little capable of understanding the part as the Tory of the French Revolution had been of understanding the whole. But the real Liberal had no difficulty in discovering and in comprehending the movement of women, and the most conspicuous Liberal thinker of the time attacked sexual Toryism as he attacked the Toryism of class or creed. Mill's *Subjection of Women*, published in 1869, applied to the condition of women precisely those arguments which, in other works, he applied to that of men. The question must be studied with an open mind, and not subject to a priori assumptions. Why should it be presumed that dependence and feebleness of mind were natural to women? Why should it be presumed that it was natural that men should regulate even the private lives of women? Why should it be presumed that a woman was naturally incapable of managing her own affairs? These propositions, which had perhaps been true in a barbarous society, could only be proved in a state of civilization by reason and argument. Until women had had some opportunity of exerting their natural powers in a state of independence, it was absurd to argue that those

natural powers were not equal to independence. An arbitrary standard, convenient to the interest of the dominant sex, had been erected for women, and they had been carefully trained up to it. Delicacy of mind and body, diffidence and self-effacement, superficial and unscientific learning had been required of them, and it was not surprising that they had very rarely attained to anything stronger. It was absurd to argue that women were naturally incapable of intellectual exertion, of professional skill, or of taking part in public affairs, when the whole scheme of their education had been contrived to make them so incapable. The supposed weaknesses are at best exaggerated by education, and it was not improbable that they had been created by it. When everything possible had been done by artificial means to strengthen their minds and bodies, we might be able to form some accurate judgment of what their powers were. In any case, we had no right to enforce a general mode of life upon all women, irrespective of their individual variations. We no longer branded men with class marks, and reserved special occupations and dignities for special groups. Why should we persist in maintaining the same system for women? If there was only one woman in England who was capable of practising as a doctor, it was her right as an individual to be allowed to practise, and the incapacity of every other of her sex was no reason for depriving her of her opportunity of working out her own life. Every kind of school and college, every occupation and profession, should be thrown open, and women should be permitted, as men were permitted, each to find her own place, according to her own natural capacity.

This was the ordinary argument of Liberalism, a plea for the substitution of individual opportunity for

class regulation. Mill went farther, as every Liberal is bound to go, and claimed for women the same right to control their own government as that which he claimed for men. During the debates on the Reform Bill of 1867 he actually moved an amendment providing for the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men. The respect with which the House listened to his speech was accorded to the speaker rather than to his argument, and it is only in very recent years that the opposition to Woman Suffrage has ceased to be largely frivolous and even obscene. In Mill's day the force outside Parliament was very weak, and it was impossible that his proposals should succeed. Even among the middle and upper classes only one woman in ten received a scientific mental training, and many of the best educated were so far removed by circumstances from all personal hardships that their sense of the common grievance was slight. But the movement which Mill thus brought to the surface of politics was essentially part of the great tide of individual emancipation which had been flowing since the French Revolution, and pioneers like Lydia Becker were already struggling with prejudice and prudery with some success. Women were beginning to refuse, as Catholics, Dissenters, and workmen had refused, to be treated in the State as a branded class. If the domination of one class of men over another class of men had led to abuse, did not the domination of one sex over another also lead to abuse? The deliberate stunting of the female mind in education,[299] the exclusion of women from the Universities and the professions, the gross inequalities sanctioned by the new Divorce Act, the barbarity which stripped the wife on marriage of all her property and even of the earnings of her own labour, and reduced her to

absolute physical and mental dependence upon her husband, all this was the direct or indirect consequence of the political domination of the male sex. Those who disposed of women in the State, disposed of them also in the schools, in industry, and in the family. With excess of logic, the early Woman Suffragists even opposed the restriction of women's labour by Factory Acts as if every such interference had been inspired by male jealousy.

Most barbarous of all the grievances of women were the legal and conventional rules which affected the moral relations of the sexes. In nothing had the egoism of men been so remarkably displayed as in the construction of these rules, and in the care with which they had concealed the consequences from women. The progress of the movement in favour of Woman Suffrage is precisely to be measured by the growth of women's knowledge of the facts of sex, and in particular of the meaning of prostitution. The general conspiracy of silence was at last being broken up, and the new women were turning their new eyes upon the old facts. It was at this time still common for medical men to recommend the practice of vice to their men patients, and the practice of vice was an easy thing. A child of thirteen might legally "consent" to her own dishonour, and the man who used her for his pleasure could not be punished as a criminal. It was a crime to abduct a young girl for the purpose of marrying her and so getting control of her property. But it was not a crime to abduct her for the purpose of keeping her in a brothel. It was a crime to keep a brothel. But it was a crime because it was a nuisance to the public, not because it meant the systematic degradation of women and girls. Their knowledge that the law sanctioned, and that so much of male opinion encouraged, the abuse of their sex

for the indulgence of their political superiors was enough in itself to direct the attention of earnest women to politics. But these grievances were of ancient growth, and it might reasonably be pleaded that ignorance and want of imagination alone prevented their remedy. A new expression of the same disposing habit of mind showed that it had lost nothing of its old vigour.

The subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1866 and 1869 is dreadful to contemplate and to describe. But its significance is so immense, and its neglect by all ordinary historians is so marked, that it must be treated in this book. The conflict between the disposing and the sympathetic minds, between the blind and largely unconscious egoism of a governing class and the interest of its depreciated subjects, has never been elsewhere so terribly illustrated. Prostitution has always been regarded by a male society either as a danger or as a convenience. By such women as have known of its existence it has been more justly considered as an example of heartless oppression and abuse. Only a minority of the women who engage in it are there out of their own choice. The great bulk of this trade, which is now not improperly described as the White Slave Traffic, is supplied by unwilling victims. They are entrapped in childhood, or in early youth, they are corrupted by bad housing and overcrowding, they are betrayed by seducers, or they are driven by starvation wages to earn their living on the streets. Their condition is the most wretched of any people in the world. No other trade is so dangerous to those who are employed in it, or so quickly uses up their lives. No other trade so swiftly devours in its workpeople those noble qualities of the mind which would enable them to support the heaviest physical

burdens. In prostitution everything is sooner or later destroyed that most adorns body, mind, and soul.

For the victims of this traffic in flesh the Legislature had for long provided nothing but fine and imprisonment, methods which were as useless to deter the minority which was corrupt as they were powerless to save the majority which was unfortunate. The Liberal could adopt only one course, to attack the causes at their roots, to amend Statutes like the Divorce Act, which sanctioned vice in men, to protect young girls by raising the age of consent, and to impose penalties on those who exploited them, to improve the conditions of housing and labour, and to raise wages. The Government which was left in power by Palmerston, seeing prostitution only with male eyes, made a fatal error. They set themselves, not to make prostitution difficult for women, but to make it safe for men. The diseases produced by vice were seriously injuring the health of the Army and Navy. The Government did not attempt, as its successors have attempted, to reduce the practice of vice among their servants. They took the easier course of recognizing and regulating what they thought they could not check. By the Act of 1866, amended by the Act of 1869, they compelled the unfortunate women in garrison towns to submit themselves periodically to medical examination. The healthy were discharged. The diseased were compulsorily detained in hospitals until they were cured, when they also were released to continue the practice of their trade. The soldiers and sailors were implicitly told that if they were careful to select one of these Government women they could be vicious with impunity. The climax of the system was reached in 1885, when the Commander-in-Chief in India instructed his

commanding officers to see that plenty of good-looking girls were provided for their men, and that they had all proper facilities for practising their trade.

Of the foul barbarity of this contrivance of the Legislature it is difficult to write with moderation, even at this distance of time. It is not suggested here that the majority of the men who were responsible were animated by vicious motives. It was only another example of unimaginative dullness legislating without responsibility. But the effect of deliberate wickedness could not have been worse. The wretched were confirmed in wretchedness. The degraded were thrust farther into the depths of degradation. Thousands of human beings of the subject class, originally guilty of nothing worse than poverty or a youthful lapse from principle, were placed by the State at the disposal of the governing class for the foulest purpose. It is a most vivid illustration of the rarity of complete Liberalism, that the Contagious Diseases Acts remained on the Statute Book for seventeen years, and that if they were in the first place smuggled through Parliament, they were afterwards defended by men of all parties alike.

A few politicians like James Stansfeld fought steadily in Parliament. But the Parliamentary machine is so constructed, that when parties are divided public causes fall to the ground. In this case, as in that of the repeal of the Corn Laws, reform came by way of a struggle outside the walls of the Legislature. Mrs. Josephine Butler was the leader of the agitation. Seventeen years of fighting against vested interests, against the medical profession and the Army, against indifference, against active and persecuting prudery, and against physical violence were required, and the

victory was not completed till 1886. But this long agony was of enormous historical importance. It not only achieved its immediate object, the repeal of the Acts and the further result of the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885; its indirect effects were infinite. It was the first organized effort on the part of women in their own political interest. It extended to other parts of the world. It taught women, irrespective of class and race, the value of solidarity. It stimulated the demand for education, for better moral standards, for the franchise, for everything which would enable women to control their own lives and to take themselves out of the disposition of men. It was in fact the greatest single stimulus to that vast social movement for the emancipation of women which is to-day visible in every part of the world. No one can understand the modern demand for Woman Suffrage who does not realize that the driving force behind it is the increasing knowledge of prostitution which has sprung from Mrs. Butler's agitation. Rightly or wrongly, the Suffragists believe that political domination involves moral domination, and that involuntary prostitution will exist so long as the regulation of women's political affairs rests in the hands of men.

The Contagious Diseases Acts represented the extreme abuse of the male ego. But the Liberal Government of 1868, which actually passed the second of the two Acts, did not a little in other ways to improve the condition of women. The Married Women's Property Act of 1870 protected the wife's earnings against her husband, and permitted her to enjoy, for her own use, property which she had acquired by inheritance. The Education Act of 1870 permitted women to be elected as members of the

new School Boards, and an Act of 1875 admitted them also to Boards of Guardians. These three Acts marked a substantial rise in the social scale. They affected chiefly women of the richer classes. But the admissions which they implied were of indefinite extent. Society had begun to look at the individual within the family as it had begun to look at the individual within the class or sect. The wife was acknowledged to be a separate individual from her husband, and the presence of women on public bodies was a sufficient answer to the argument that women should be confined to those duties which they could only perform in association with men. Marriage had ceased to be the sole object of a decent woman's life. In spite of the monstrous injustice of the Contagious Diseases Acts, woman was being placed in Society, in some measure at least, in accordance with her own worth, and not with the assumptions of male egoism.

The foreign policy of the Government was conspicuously Liberal, and it was justified by its results. Liberty was maintained and moral rules were enforced without Palmerston's recklessness, and there were none of the acts of petty bullying with which he had varied his tilting at tyrants. The general outline of the new policy is contained in a memorandum addressed by Mr. Gladstone to the Queen in 1871. He stated its principles to be "That England should keep entire in her own hands the means of estimating her own obligations upon the various states of facts as they arise; that she should not foreclose and narrow her own liberty of choice, by declarations made to other powers, in their real or supported interests, of which they would claim to be joint interpreters; that it is dangerous for her to assume alone an advanced, and therefore an isolated,

position, in regard to European controversies; that, come what may, it is better for her to promise too little than too much; that she should not encourage the weak by giving expectations of aid to resist the strong, but should rather seek to deter the strong, by firm but moderate language, from aggression on the weak; that she should seek to develop and mature the action of a common, or public, or European opinion, as the best standing bulwark against wrong, but should beware of seeming to lay down the law of that opinion by her own authority, and thus running the risk of setting against her, and against right and justice, that general sentiment which ought to be, and generally would be, arrayed in their favour. I am persuaded that opinions of this colour are the only opinions which the country is disposed to approve. But I do not believe that on that account it is one whit less disposed than it has been at any time, to cast in its lot upon any fitting occasion with the cause it believes to be right."[300]

This is a sort of middle between Palmerstonism and Cobdenism. It repudiates the balance of power. It condemns isolated, single-handed war on behalf of weak nations against strong, and emphasizes the necessity of international co-operation. But it lays down no general rule of non-interference, it justifies diplomatic protest against the immoral treatment of one nation by another, and it admits that war may sometimes be right and necessary, even when no specifically British interest is directly involved.[301] It is probably as nearly a precise definition of Liberal policy as could be made in connection with a matter where precision is extremely difficult.

Ministers were more than once severely tested during their term of office. Lord Clarendon, the Foreign

Secretary, made some attempt to suggest a general reduction of armaments. The British forces had been considerably diminished by the withdrawal of troops from the self-governing Colonies, and expenditure on both the war services had been cut down. Lord Clarendon's tentative advances were at least disinterested. He approached the French Emperor and Bismarck. Each waited for the other to begin, and on the 15th July, 1870, six months after the proposals were made, the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War supplied a tragically ironic comment on their futility. The British Government suggested mediation, but without success, and in another six months France was at the feet of her enemies. Sir Henry Bulwer, an old subordinate of Palmerston, was the only responsible statesman who suggested intervention on her behalf.[302] The quarrel was her own. If Bismarck had been dishonest, Napoleon III had been little better, and the French people had been as eager for war as the German. Ministers had no difficulty in maintaining a strict neutrality.

On two controversies arising out of the war they showed themselves as prompt and as resolute as any one could have wished. In order to prejudice France in the eyes of Europe, Bismarck published some proposals which the French Emperor had made to the King of Prussia a few years before for the annexation of Belgium to France. The independence of Belgium had been guaranteed by England, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia in 1839, and this plan was as immoral in itself as it was dangerous to the peace of Europe. It was suggested that England was not concerned single-handed to enforce a treaty to which other Powers were parties. Gladstone was determined at least to attempt it. An ingenious treaty was contrived between Great Britain and the two

belligerents, by which either France or Germany was to go to war in alliance with Great Britain, if the independence of Belgium was violated by the other. The House of Commons voted two millions of money and approved of an increase of the forces by 20,000 men. The treaty and the Parliamentary votes were sufficient proofs of the determination of the Government to defend the Belgians, and no hostile army set foot upon their soil. This was an intervention in a good cause, made without bluster, and it was justified by success.

The second occasion for strong action was a similar violation of an international agreement. By the treaty of Paris, which ended the Crimean War, Russia and Turkey had agreed to place no ships of war upon the Black Sea. This was a futile interference with what might almost be called the domestic concerns of the two countries, in an inland sea which was entirely surrounded by their own territories. But such as it was, it was made binding in most solemn terms. Russia could have obtained a release by diplomatic means without any difficulty. She preferred, in the crisis of the Franco-Prussian War, to announce that she intended to be no longer bounded by this restriction. This was an impudent breach of her engagement, made possible only by the difficulties of her associates. The English Government acted again with vigour and directness. Lord Granville[303] wrote to the British Ambassador at Petersburg in language which was really that of Gladstone: "It is quite evident that the effect of such doctrine, and of any proceeding which, with or without avowal, is founded upon it, is to bring the entire authority and efficacy of treaties under the discretionary control of each one of the Powers who may have signed them, the result of which would be the entire destruction of

treaties in their essence."[304] Mr. Odo Russell got the support of Prussia by saying that England would fight, even if she had no allies,[305] and a conference in London resolved formally that no single nation could arrogate to itself the power of dispensing with a treaty. The obnoxious clause in the Treaty of Paris was then repealed. Here again the readiness to use force in support of moral rules was successful.

A third occasion for intervention arose when Germany required France to cede the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Gladstone wished to procure a European protest against this transfer of territory without the assent of the inhabitants. "My opinion certainly is that the transfer of territory and inhabitants by mere force calls for the reprobation of Europe, and that Europe is entitled to utter it with good effect."[306] He did not suggest that England should step in single-handed, in the manner of Palmerston. It was Europe's duty as it was Europe's interest. "A matter of this kind cannot be regarded as in principle a question between the two belligerents only, but involves considerations of legitimate interest to all the Powers of Europe. It appears to bear on the Belgian question in particular. It is also a principle likely to be of great consequence in the eventual settlement of the Eastern question."[307] He apprehended "that this violent laceration and transfer is to lead us from bad to worse, and to be the *beginning* of a new series of European complications."[308] He was perfectly right. His aim could only be secured with the assistance of the neutral Powers, and the greatest of these had just shown how little she regarded rules of morality and the public opinion of Europe. Bismarck had indeed begun a new era, and the theory of compensation was being substituted for the theory of obligation. It

was no longer "I keep my word, therefore you must keep yours," but "I will acquiesce in your breaking your word, if you will allow me to break mine." Gladstone's attempt to maintain the better system was prevented by his Cabinet, and with Russia imitating German contempt for morality, it was probably the wisest course to do nothing.

After these two demonstrations of their readiness to enforce moral rules where the circumstances required it, the Government showed that they were equally ready to observe moral rules even against their own material interest. The American Civil War had left them the onerous legacy of the *Alabama* claims. The *Alabama* was a privateer, which Palmerston and Russell, in spite of the protests of the American Ambassador, had allowed to sail from Birkenhead. In the service of the Confederate Government, she had inflicted great damage upon the shipping of the North, and after the conclusion of the war the American Government had claimed that the British Government should pay compensation for the consequences of their negligence. Their case was spoilt by the impudent inclusion of claims for remote injuries, including the whole cost of the war after the last defeat of the Confederate army in the field.[309] Palmerston and Lord John Russell had steadily refused to admit liability. Gladstone and Lord Granville had more wisdom and more real courage. The whole case was submitted to a Court of Arbitration at Geneva composed of representatives of the two disputants, Italy, Switzerland, and Brazil. Great Britain was held to be responsible, and damages were awarded. The American claims for direct injury were nine and a half millions. The award was for three and a quarter. This was perhaps the greatest act of the Government. For the first time

in history, a great State, instead of asserting its claims by force, had agreed to be bound by the decision of an impartial tribunal, and had paid damages for its wrong-doing as if it had been a private person in a court of law. The cause of international morality advances slowly, and reaction is frequent and universal. But the disposition to subdue egoism to the common interest and to subordinate national vanity to moral rules grows steadily on the whole. The first important step in advance was made by the Liberal Government which submitted to the arbitration at Geneva.

CHAPTER IX

GLADSTONE VERSUS DISRAELI

The history of the Disraeli Ministry which in 1874 followed that of Gladstone is almost entirely a history of foreign policy. The new Premier had described the domestic activity of his predecessor as a policy of plundering and blundering, and he himself avoided the imputation of either form of error by doing little of any significance at home. In effect he revived the system of Palmerston, and endeavoured to distract the popular attention from domestic grievances by splendid demonstrations abroad. One or two useful Liberal measures, besides the Employers and Workmen Act, were passed into law. An Artisans Dwellings Act empowered municipal corporations to acquire land by compulsory purchase, for the erection of workmen's houses. This was an entirely wise application of the

new collectivist principles, and a belated individualist was discovered in Mr. Fawcett, who opposed the Bill, on strictly logical grounds, as "class legislation." The same argument would abolish the Poor Law. Another measure of great utility was forced on the Government by Plimsoll, a Liberal philanthropist. It provided for the inspection and detention of unseaworthy ships, and was a notable example of interference with private property and freedom of contract in the interest of a class of adult men. A third reform of a Liberal kind was due to Parnell, the new leader of the Irish Nationalists, who amended the Prison Bill of 1877 by inserting a clause that persons guilty of seditious libel should be treated as first-class misdemeanants and not as common criminals. This was the high-water mark of the reaction from the eighteenth-century treatment of political criticism. In 1777 an honest Republican might have been treated as a felon. Since 1877 allowance has been made for the motives even of the advocate of Revolution. Even the law shows respect for the right of the common man to censure his governors. A last Liberal measure was the Act of 1878, which enabled Universities to confer medical degrees upon women. These Acts were substantially all the important domestic legislation of the Ministry.

While thus abstaining from activity at home, Disraeli gratified his instinct for magnificence abroad, and sacrificed morality and interest on the altar of prestige. One bold stroke was to buy from the Khedive of Egypt his shares in the Suez Canal. This feat was not so splendid as it was claimed to be. It gave England no additional hold over the route to India, which, in time of war, can only be maintained by the fleet, whether the Canal is English or Egyptian. But it gave England a deciding voice in the

management of a neutral waterway, and prevented it from falling into the hands of other and less altruistic Powers. This action at least did no harm. The other proceedings of the Government were almost uniformly disgraceful, and most disgraceful where they were most pretentious. In the Balkans and in Afghanistan they were guilty of conduct which was at once vainglorious, unsuccessful, and wrong, and neither in objects, nor methods, nor results was there anything worthy of credit. The first of these shabby performances took place in the Near East, where they adopted Palmerston's policy of protecting Turkey without any of his excuse. It could be urged in favour of the Crimean War that it was undertaken to enable the Turks to set their house in order, and a firm belief in the possibility of that regeneration might justify an honest man in supporting Turkey against Russia. Palmerston retained that belief until his death. At the time of Disraeli's accession it could not have existed in the mind of any reasonable being. After twenty years, Turkish Government of subject Christian races remained what it had always been, and in 1876 a just and necessary revolt in Bulgaria was suppressed with the usual Turkish incidents of massacre, burning alive, rape, torture, and destruction of property. Gladstone was inspired to a passionate demand for armed intervention, and the British peoples have never been so deeply stirred as by his pamphlet to ignore the distinctions of party, class, and creed. Disraeli treated the news of outrage with characteristic flippancy, and talked airily of "coffee-house babble," even when Lord Derby, his Foreign Secretary, was instructing the British Ambassador at Constantinople to protest against the atrocities of the Turkish agents. The responsibility of Great Britain could not be questioned. We had taken

Turkey under our protection twenty years before, to serve our private ends, and as we had helped to maintain the system of government, so we were entitled to denounce its abuse. There was indeed only one step for an honourable and courageous people to take, to confess our error and to confine Turkish sovereignty to Turkish people. There was no question of single-handed action. Russia, Austria, and Germany agreed, in the Berlin Memorandum, to require the Sultan to reform his government, and France and Italy concurred. Great Britain refused to join the others, on the ground that she had not been consulted from the first. This policy had but one motive, distrust of Russia; it had but one consequence, the encouragement of Turkey. The joint Memorandum was ineffective, and in the face of Anglo-Russian jealousy, the Sultan snapped his fingers at suggestions of reform.

The climax was reached when Great Britain refused to join Russia in a naval demonstration in the Bosphorus. The Tsar then declared that he would act alone, and gave the British Ambassador his word of honour that he had no intention of annexing any part of the Turkish dominions or of permanently occupying Constantinople. On the lips of the Tsar Nicholas of the Crimean War such a pledge might have meant little. On the lips of the Tsar Alexander, a genuine Liberal, who had emancipated the serfs and given his subjects, for the first time in their history, courts of law in place of bureaucratic caprice, it meant very much. Nothing is more certain than that the Tsar was honest in his professions, and that he was impelled by a disinterested wave of enthusiasm among his subjects. The Balkan question is the one question on which a Russian Government always expresses the opinions of the Russian people.

But even if the Tsar had been dishonest, and if England had been placed in a real dilemma, it was entirely England's fault. The Tory Government, by refusing to act in concert with the other Powers, had left only two alternatives possible to Russia: to do nothing, or to interfere single-handed. When she showed signs of adopting the second, Disraeli at the Lord Mayor's Banquet made ominous references to war. Everything was done by the Tory Press to inflame the popular mind against Russia, and to divert attention from the real issue. Even the Liberal Opposition was distracted, and in Parliament Mr. Gladstone maintained his straight and courageous course almost without a helper.[310] When the Russians had crossed the border, and, after an astonishingly successful resistance by the Turks, were actually approaching Constantinople, the balance of English opinion swung against them, and the Government openly prepared for war.[311] The music-halls rallied to their support, the name of Jingo was invented, and Gladstone's windows were broken by the mob. But the conclusion of peace by the Treaty of San Stefano ended the war between Turkey and Russia and prevented the war between Russia and Great Britain. The Tory Government was saved, by no fault of its own, from a moral disaster which no material successes could have effaced. During the negotiations which followed the Treaty they made full use of the dangerous temper which they had aroused.

The terms of the Treaty gave them an opportunity of enforcing a Liberal principle, and for the first time Russia made a false step. The treaty gave Russia a small indemnity and a little territory. Bulgaria was made an independent principality, and the Turks, as Gladstone had demanded, "one and all, bag and

baggage, cleared out from the province they had desolated and profaned." Russia had done single-handed what it should have been the duty and the pride of England to help her to do. But the treaty, as it stood, was as much an infraction of the Treaty of Paris as the placing of armed ships upon the Black Sea, and the British Government very properly required an international agreement. Russia at first refused, and if this difficult situation had not been the direct result of their own unprincipled conduct, the British Government would have had a very good excuse for war. A disaster was once more imminent, and Lord Derby finally resigned. He was succeeded by Lord Cranborne,[312] and the Tory Press once more fanned the flames of national hatred.

But Disraeli was above all things a contriver of effects, and while his followers applauded his firmness and resolution in maintaining the Treaty of Paris, he was privately engaged in pulling it to pieces. He made a secret treaty with Russia, agreeing to support her at the international conference in asking substantially for what she had obtained by the Treaty of San Stefano. He then proceeded with great solemnity to Berlin, after having apparently humiliated his adversary, and Russia obtained what she wanted without difficulty. The Treaty of Berlin made few alterations in the Treaty of San Stefano, and the most important was unquestionably for the worse. The extent of the New Bulgaria was reduced, and it was divided into two provinces, which a few years later joined together to form the present State. The reduction was effected by the restoration of Macedonia to Turkey, and as these words are being written that unhappy district, after another generation of distress, has become the cause of another Balkan war. The policy of Disraeli was for

the time as popular as that of Palmerston had ever been. Surveyed after thirty-five years, it appears to have consisted in encouraging Turkey to fight in defence of an iniquitous system of government, and, after nearly involving the British people in a war for a vile cause, in forcing the inhabitants of Macedonia to suffer for another generation at the hands of their unregenerate oppressors. Through this policy, for the last thirty years the Macedonian peasant, setting out in the morning for the fields, has not known that on his return in the evening he would not find his house burnt to the ground and his wife dishonoured. Through this policy, the bloody issue of the Balkans has now been settled for the second time by a savage and destructive war. The transaction, so selfish in its origin, so shameless in its methods, and so horrible in its consequences, is generally described by admirers of Beaconsfield in his own words, as his achievement of "Peace with Honour."[313]

The next scene for the display of this reckless and improvident system was Afghanistan. The Viceroy of India was Lord Lytton, whose strong character was expressed in a wise and vigorous conduct of domestic affairs, and a conduct of foreign affairs which was only vigorous. His attention was directed, soon after the Balkan difficulty began, to Central Asia. In that quarter Russia, following her usual habit of advancing in Asia whenever she was repulsed in Europe, had come into touch with the Afghans. The policy of the Gladstone Government, in similar circumstances, had always been to negotiate directly with Russia, and they had steadily refused to use other peoples as tools of their diplomacy. This was not merely a moral, it was also a wise rule of conduct. Just as strong and independent Balkan States were better barriers against Russia than a

corrupt and enfeebled Turkey, so the best bulwarks of India were native tribes who had no reason to fear British aggression, and every reason to believe that she would protect them against the encroachments of other States. The policy of Liberalism coincided with that of almost every Indian statesman of experience. Everything had been done, in past times, to avoid the appearance of dictating to the small peoples beyond the frontier. "Surround India," wrote Lord Lytton's predecessor, "with strong, friendly, and independent states, who will have more interest in keeping well with us than with any other Power."[314]

This was the policy of wisdom. Lord Lytton and his Home Government preferred to adopt the other policy, and to make the Amir of Afghanistan a pawn in their game with Russia. "A tool in the hands of Russia I will never allow him to become. Such a tool it would be my duty to break before it could be used."[315] In other words, the Amir was to put himself into the hands of England in order that he might be unable to put himself in the hands of Russia. He was requested to receive a British Envoy in terms which would have been more properly addressed to an open enemy than to an ally, and from the first Lord Lytton adopted a tone which did nothing to conciliate and everything to disturb a race who are, beyond almost all others, suspicious of foreign interference. The result was that Shere Ali was driven into the arms of Russia, whose manners were better if her aims were not less selfish than those of the British Viceroy. Russia was not reluctant to embarrass England in Central Asia, and the Bulgarian dispute was followed by the despatch of a Russian mission to Kabul. The Amir objected, but was powerless. The Russian representative soon left the country, but not before his object, the

provocation of the Viceroy, had been achieved. Lord Lytton retaliated by sending an envoy of his own, who was turned back at the Kyber Pass. War began in November, 1878, and the Parliamentary parties were divided more sharply than by the threatened war with Russia.

Gladstone was on this occasion supported by all the Liberal Opposition, and in the House of Lords, Lord Lawrence, one of the greatest Englishmen who had ever governed in India, was on the same side.[316] Liberal principles had been offended in more than one way. The Viceroy had bullied Afghanistan as Palmerston had bullied China. He had attempted to interfere with her independence. He had endeavoured to repair the blunders of his diplomacy by war, and to supply his own deficiency of wisdom by brute force. If he had had any real cause of quarrel it was with Russia, and he had used Afghanistan simply as an unwilling means to an end of his own, on account of transactions in which she had had no freedom and no responsibility. "Having a cause of complaint against the strong," said Whitbread, "they fixed the quarrel on the weak; and they have brought us to a war, in which already gallant men's lives have been lost, and homes made desolate, to atone for the blunders and errors of their administration."[317] Mr. Chamberlain, the rising hope of the uncompromising Radicals, reiterated those general principles which are familiar to all who have read the debates on the China War in 1860. "Is it sufficient to call a man a barbarian in order to discharge oneself of all obligations to treat him with common fairness and consideration?... Only admit that a country has to follow the law of self-preservation without reference to others, and it is evidently a justification for an attack, say of France

upon Belgium, or Germany upon Holland, or the absorption of Canada by the United States, and this deliberate attempt to substitute might for right in dealing with Indian Princes, and the law of force for the law of nations, is certain, in my opinion, to have a most disastrous effect upon the true foundations of our Indian Empire."[318]

Force triumphed, for the time, over morals. But retribution came with more than its usual swiftness. The Afghans were beaten in the field. Shere Ali disappeared, and his son Yakúb Khan took his place. Lord Lytton had distrusted the father, who was no worse than weak. He confided in the son, who was thoroughly bad. Major Cavagnari entered Kabul as British Envoy on the 24th of July, 1879. On the 3rd of September he was murdered with all his people. A second war was undertaken, more lives were lost, and the Government actually proposed to partition Afghanistan, and to incorporate the eastern part in the Indian Empire. This course could have produced only three consequences. Free Afghanistan would have been thrust into the arms of Russia. British Afghanistan would have been in a perpetual condition of unrest. Our military responsibilities would have been extended beyond the natural barrier of the great mountains at the same time that they would have been indefinitely increased by the direct contact with the Russian frontier. Entangled in difficult passes, and surrounded by unfriendly hill tribes, our troops would have been infinitely less formidable to Russia than in the plains of India. The General Election of 1880 extricated Great Britain from this dangerous folly, and the new Government evacuated Afghanistan and abandoned the project of a British Envoy at Kabul. From that day to this the Afghans have been treated according to the

principles laid down by the Liberal Opposition.[319] They have been encouraged to believe that Great Britain will protect them against external aggression, and nothing has been done to make them suspect that she has any intention of interfering with their independence.

One other action of this Tory Government betrayed the same desire to acquire territory and to extend responsibilities as their enterprise in Central Asia. In 1877 they annexed the Transvaal Republic. This step was prompted partly by military motives, as giving additional security against the Zulus, whose quarrels with the scattered Dutch farmers caused perpetual unrest. It was also part of a scheme for South African federation, which was the offspring of the growing spirit of Imperialism. Nor did it seem at first that annexation was contrary to Boer sentiment. The Republic was loosely organized, its finances were in a bad state, its great mineral wealth was unknown, and some of the inhabitants were anxious to obtain the stability which the British connection would afford. If the promise of representative institutions, which was made at the time, had been fulfilled with reasonable speed, the hostile section might have been reduced to insignificance. But the British Government seemed to forget that it was dealing with a race whose dislike of foreign domination was as stubborn as that of their own people. It is unquestionable that the bulk of the Boer population resented the annexation, and used every peaceful means of expressing its real wishes. But in spite of deputations, public meetings, and petitions signed by practically every elector of the old Republic, the Disraeli Ministry continued to govern by the arbitrary methods of Crown Colony Government. When the Liberals came into power, in 1880, three

years after the annexation, the Boers were still without the promised institutions, and the opponents of England were no longer a faction, but the whole people. Want of imagination never stumbled into a worse folly.

The General Election of 1880 is the only election which has ever been fought in Great Britain on the general principles of foreign policy. Gladstone had retired from the nominal leadership of the Liberal party after his defeat in 1874. But there was no question who had directed its policy in the last few years, and Lord Hartington, in 1880, was obviously no more than the lieutenant of his principal follower. Any doubts which may have before existed were dispelled by Gladstone's election campaign in Midlothian. He invaded the strongest Tory constituency in Scotland, beat the nominee of the Duke of Buccleuch, and in his speeches dictated the issues upon which candidates fought all over Great Britain. These speeches were almost entirely concerned with the Liberal case against egoism in foreign affairs, and the result of the polls was an emphatic approval of their principles. There were some errors in the speeches. To represent the Zulu War as an outrage of the same kind as the annexation of the Transvaal, or the invasion of Afghanistan, was absurd. The rights of bloodthirsty and aggressive savages are different from those of civilized white men or even the comparatively peaceful tribes of Asia. But this was only an unwise application of the sound general principles which were expressed in the speeches.

The Midlothian speeches reproduced the opinions of

Granville's Memorandum of 1851 and those of Clarendon's statement of 1871. Gladstone dissented from the absolute pacificism of the Manchester School.[320] But while he admitted the occasional necessity for war, and pointed to his own readiness to protect Belgium as a proof that he did not believe in peace at any price, he required that a real and sober policy should be substituted for the ostentatious vanities of the Tories. "What we want in foreign policy is the substitution of what is true and genuine for what is imposing and pretentious, but unreal.... Let us get rid of all these shams and fall back upon realities, the character of which is to be quiet, to be unostentatious, to pretend to nothing, not to thrust claims and unconstitutional claims for ascendancy and otherwise in the teeth of your neighbour, but to maintain your rights and to respect the rights of others as much as your own."[321] "The great duty of a Government, especially in foreign affairs, is to soothe and tranquillize the minds of a people, not to set up false phantoms of glory which are to delude them into calamity, not to flatter their infirmities by leading them to believe that they are better than the rest of the world, and so encourage the baleful spirit of domination; but to proceed upon a principle that recognizes the sisterhood and equality of nations, the absolute equality of public right among them."[322] The speaker denounced Beaconsfield's reference to "Imperium et Libertas" as he had once before denounced Palmerston's use of "Civis Romanus Sum," and appealed to "the sound and sacred principle that Christendom is formed of a band of nations who are united to one another in the bonds of right; that they are without distinction of great and small; there is an absolute equality between them, the same sacredness defends the

narrow limits of Belgium as attaches to the extended frontiers of Russia, or Germany, or France."[323] From this admission of the equality of nations came the need for the observance of public law. "There is no duty so sacred, incumbent upon any Government in its foreign policy, as that careful and strict regard to public law."[324]

Gladstone laid down six general principles by which our foreign policy should be guided. "The first thing is to foster the strength of the Empire by just legislation and economy at home, thereby producing two of the great elements of national power—namely, wealth, which is a physical element, and union and contentment, which are moral elements—and to reserve the strength of the Empire, to reserve the expenditure of that strength for great and worthy occasions abroad.... My second principle ... is this—that its aim ought to be to preserve to the nations of the world ... the blessings of peace. My third principle is this—when you do a good thing, you may do it in so bad a way that you may entirely spoil the beneficial effect; and if we were to make ourselves the apostles of peace in the sense of conveying to the minds of other nations that we thought ourselves more entitled to an opinion on that subject than they are, or to deny their rights—well, very likely we should destroy the whole value of our doctrines. In my opinion the third sound principle is this—to strive to cultivate and maintain, ay, to the very uttermost, what is called the Concert of Europe; to keep the Powers of Europe in union together. And why? Because by keeping all in union together you neutralize and fetter and bind up the selfish aims of each.... My fourth principle is that you should avoid needless and entangling engagements. You may boast about them, you may brag about

them. You may say you are procuring consideration for the country. You may say that an Englishman can now hold up his head among the nations.... But what does all this come to, gentlemen? It comes to this, that you are increasing your engagements without increasing your strength; ... you really reduce the Empire and do not increase it.... My fifth principle is, to acknowledge the equal rights of all nations. You may sympathize with one nation more than another.... But in point of right all are equal, and you have no right to set up a system under which one of them is to be placed under moral suspicion or espionage, or to be made the constant subject of invective.... The sixth principle is that ... subject to all the limitations that I have described, the foreign policy of England should always be inspired by the love of freedom. There should be a sympathy with freedom, a desire to give it scope, founded not upon visionary ideas, but upon the long experience of many generations within the shores of this happy isle, that in freedom you lay the firmest foundations both of loyalty and order; the firmest foundations for the development of individual character, and the best provision for the happiness of the nation at large.... It is that sympathy, not a sympathy with disorder, but, on the contrary, founded upon the deepest and most profound love of order, ... which ought to be the very atmosphere in which a Foreign Secretary of England ought to live and to move."[325]
The most important of these general principles was that of the equality of nations, "because, without recognizing that principle, there is no such thing as public right, and without public international right there is no instrument available for settling the transactions of mankind except material force. Consequently the principle of equality among nations

lies ... at the very basis and root of a Christian civilization, and when that principle is compromised or abandoned, with it must depart our hopes of tranquillity and of progress for mankind." The policy of the Tory Government had been "unregardful of public right, and it has been founded upon ... an untrue, arrogant, and dangerous assumption that we were entitled to assume for ourselves some dignity, which we should also be entitled to withhold from others, and to claim on our part authority to do things which we would not permit to be done by others."[326] These general rules, to be applied, not in the temper of logical pedantry, but, like all general political rules, as far as the circumstances of each case will permit, form the complete theory of a Liberal foreign policy.

Every one of Gladstone's principles had been violated by the Government. The welfare of the people had been subordinated to a costly display of energy abroad. The ordinary expenditure on armaments had increased by more than six millions in five years, and a special vote of credit had been required by the quarrel with Russia. The acquisitions in the Transvaal, in Zululand, in Cyprus, and in Afghanistan had increased our burdens without adding to our strength. Peace had always been in danger, and had more than once been broken. The Government had claimed a peculiar right to dictate to Turkey, had threatened Russia with war for appearing to claim a similar right, and had made international action impossible by refusing to join the Concert of Europe. They had prevented Russia from making a separate treaty with Turkey because it violated the Treaty of Paris, and they had themselves made a treaty with Turkey which violated the Treaty of Paris in the same way and to the same extent. They had made an

indefinite engagement with Turkey to go to war in defence of her Asiatic territory, no matter how she abused her sovereign rights. They had been partial and capricious in their friendships and in their antipathies. Russia could do nothing right, Turkey could do nothing wrong. The claims of freedom had been ignored. The Transvaal had been annexed against the formally expressed wish of its inhabitants. The Afghans had been coerced into accepting an envoy. Nothing had been done to help the Bulgarians against the Turks, and when Russia undertook the work which England should have done, she had been opposed instead of helped. The worst thing that Gladstone said of his opponents is the worst thing that posterity can say of them. He quoted from a dispatch of the Turkish Government: "The Sultan's Ministers lay great stress on the maintenance of the Beaconsfield Cabinet, which has given so many proofs of its benevolent intentions for the Turkish Empire." The approbation of these men, whose praise was blame, is more damning to the Tory foreign policy of this period than any censure of their party enemies. Gladstone made some mistakes in his general attack. But posterity has seldom been so nearly unanimous as in its belief that on his two main lines, Turkey and Afghanistan, he was completely right.

The history of the Liberal Ministry which succeeded that of Beaconsfield is not a splendid record. The Cabinet and the party were in fact in process of disintegration, and even without the Irish controversy, some new grouping of the parties would soon have taken place. All sections of the Liberals were united in their dislike of the Imperialist foreign policy of their predecessors. But the younger men, headed by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke,

were aggressively Radical, deeply tinged with new theories about land, capital and labour, and the unfair distribution of wealth. Older men, like the Duke of Argyll, held by the individualist ideas of a previous generation, and Goschen refused to join the Government at all because he objected to proposed extensions of the franchise. The internal differences of such a composite Ministry inevitably weakened it in the face of the enemy. The external difficulties were also unusually great. A trade depression in 1878 and 1879 caused great distress among the working classes. Ireland was again seething with discontent, the Land League had begun a campaign against the payment of rent, and agrarian and political crime soon attained to such proportions that it seemed as if Society would be dissolved. In Parliament, the Irish Nationalists made the obstruction of business a fine art, and the Fourth Party,[327] shouldering Sir Stafford Northcote out of the leadership, conducted the Conservative Opposition with equal vigour and success. These different obstacles reduced the real power of the Government below its apparent strength. But it contrived, nevertheless, to apply Liberal principles with considerable success, both at home and abroad.

The progress of reform was along the lines which had been marked out by the last Liberal Government. Education was made compulsory in 1881, almost without opposition. The household franchise, conferred upon dwellers in towns by the Act of 1867, was extended to rural districts by an Act of 1884, and so far as men were concerned, the right of the individual to control his own government was thus secured, nearly a hundred years after the French Revolution began. Almost more significant than this legislation as a mark of the appreciation of the voter

was the construction of the modern party machine on the model of Mr. Chamberlain's system in Birmingham. Electors are now grouped in wards and divisions, each section having its elected committee, and all linked up together in a central caucus. Communication between voters and representatives has thus become more direct than ever before, and the Member of Parliament is now completely subject to the authority of those whom he is supposed to govern. Both parties, and the women auxiliaries who, about this time, were organized in connection with them, adopted this organization of public opinion between 1880 and 1890, and the effect on political life has been very great. The common man is brought into direct touch with the machinery of the State, his information is more precise, and the expression of his wishes more effective. The party system as it exists to-day has in fact completely reversed the eighteenth-century theory of government. In 1812 the Legislature, within very wide limits, enforced the wishes of its members upon the people. In 1912 the people, within very wide limits, enforced its wishes upon the members of the Legislature. Ministers have ceased to be the leaders of the Houses in which they sit, and have become leaders of the people. Their appeal is direct to the constituencies, and it is among the rank and file of their party in the country that they find their strength. The new system is not without its dangers. If it is a more efficient check upon abuse of the common people than the old, it offers less freedom to the independent member, and where we once contrived party as a means of controlling our government, we are now rather inclined to cast about for some contrivance which will control our party. The extent to which the Cabinet, relying upon its hold over the party

machine, is enabled to dictate its wishes to the members who depend upon that machine for their own success, is the greatest danger to real political freedom which at present exists. The Cabinet is now almost as much a legislative as an executive body. But whatever the difficulties and the risks involved, the construction of this political machinery in 1880 was a distinct mark in the progress of Liberalism.

The condition of women once more attracted the attention of a Liberal Parliament. An Act of 1882 finally separated the wife from her husband in all matters concerned with property, and permitted her to make contracts, and to acquire, hold, and dispose of property as if she were a single woman. Even this reform was incomplete. A husband is still responsible for all the civil wrongs of his wife, except those which consist in breach of contract, and the year 1912 has seen a husband sent to prison because he could not pay income tax on his wife's income which she earned by her own exertions and had not disclosed to him. But the existing relics of the old legal theory which subjected the wife to the husband, and made him responsible for her conduct as if she were a child, are not very numerous or important. Substantially, so far as the law allows, the wife has been economically independent of her husband since 1882. The Contagious Diseases Acts were suspended in 1883, and were finally repealed in 1886. In 1885 the Criminal Law Amendment Act raised the age of consent to sixteen, and penalties were at last imposed upon those who procured women and girls for immoral purposes. Another reform was effected by administrative act. Professor Fawcett, the Postmaster-General, began to employ women in the inferior posts in his department, and so opened to the sex the whole of the large field of

labour provided by the Civil Service. These successive improvements in the state of women were made with little difficulty except such as sprang from ignorance, and the indifference of legislators to the special claims of disfranchised classes. As has always been the case, practical reforms were executed by the Legislature when the demand for the enfranchisement of women became urgent. This House of Commons actually contained a majority who had promised to vote for Woman Suffrage. The pledges, given in response to pressure from the women of the middle class, were of that easy, good-natured sort in which Parliamentary candidates indulge in matters to which party is indifferent. The women trusted that they would be carried into effect by an amendment of the Reform Bill of 1884. But the House of Lords offered so much opposition to the Bill as it stood, that Gladstone spoke against the inclusion of women, and the proposal was defeated. The Toryism of class was destroyed. That of sex remained, and it was not until the Liberal revival of twenty years later that it was ever again threatened.

On ancient subjects of party controversy temper again rose high. Church and Chapel fought the last of many battles over the Burials Bill. The point raised by this measure was very simple. In more than 10,000 parishes the only burial ground was the churchyard. In large towns, where there were public cemeteries, and in districts where Nonconformists were wealthy, and could purchase private ground, no difficulty arose. But in the other cases no Nonconformist could be buried except with the Burial Service of the Established Church. The service, however majestic in its language, expressed opinions which were obnoxious to many Nonconformists, and the Burials Bill provided that any person might be

buried in the yard of the parish church with such religious service as his relatives desired. The Church party, while claiming that the Church was the Church of the nation and not of a sect, protested against being deprived of the absolute control of the public burial grounds. Any person might be buried there, but only on such terms as they chose to appoint. It was a plain case of a conflict between public right and private privilege. The Bill had been passed four times by the last Liberal House of Commons. It was beaten in the following Tory House. In the Parliament of 1880 it was at last accepted by the Lords, and the Nonconformist grievance was removed.

A second religious controversy provided a useful illustration of the difference between Liberalism and the Liberal party. The Nonconformist members, in debating the Burials Bill, had expressed the pure Liberal doctrine that no man should be prevented from exercising a public right by his opinions on matters of conscience. When they came to deal with Charles Bradlaugh, many of them showed themselves to be as Tory in their essential habit of mind as the most bigoted vicar who ever shut out a Quaker funeral from his churchyard. Bradlaugh was a dogmatic atheist, and as honest a man as was ever elected to Parliament. He was chosen for Northampton with Henry Labouchere, who was a man of no more Christian opinions and of much less pure character than himself. Labouchere, like other easy-going men, had no scruples about taking the oath required from Members of Parliament; Bradlaugh refused to swear, and claimed to make affirmation in the form prescribed by Statute for witnesses in courts of law. A Committee of the House decided against him, and he then offered to take the

oath in the ordinary way. There arose such a storm of bigotry and insolence as is generally to be found only in Orange Lodges. Gladstone and Bright, two men in whom Christianity was usually conspicuous, contended in vain, not only against Tories, but against those of their own party whose religious tolerance did not extend beyond the Jews. It was resolved that Bradlaugh could neither swear nor affirm, and when he refused to withdraw he was committed to the Clock Tower. Eventually, he made affirmation and took his seat, speaking on several occasions with good sense. But the matter was not ended. An informer obtained a judgment against him in the King's Bench Division, and his seat was declared vacant. He was re-elected, and again attempted to enter the House. On this occasion he was thrown out by the police. A third election sent him back again, and he sat for some time below the bar of the House. In 1883 a special Bill was introduced which enabled any person, who thought fit, to make affirmation instead of taking an oath. It was thrown out. Bradlaugh resigned, and was elected for the fourth time in February, 1884. But it was not until the end of this Parliament, and after an enormous waste of time, energy, and money in agitation and litigation, that his struggle came to an end. He was elected to the new Parliament of 1885, and took the oath without serious opposition. In 1888 he himself introduced and carried through the enabling Bill. In 1891, when he died, all the hostile resolutions were expunged from the records of the House, and freedom of conscience received at last full recognition.

The whole proceeding did little credit to a Liberal House of Commons. Parliament had been opened to Dissenters in 1828, to Catholics in 1829, and to Jews

in 1858. If these reforms had any significance at all, they meant that for political posts only political tests were to be applied, and that a man's opinions upon subjects which were not political were not the concern of the State. Liberty of thinking is one and indivisible. As Gladstone, himself the most dogmatic of Churchmen, put it, "On every religious ground, as well as on every political ground, the true and the wise course is not to deal out religious liberty by halves, quarters, and fractions, but to deal it out entire, and make no distinctions between man and man on the ground of religious differences from one end of the land to the other."[328] Every argument which could shut out Bradlaugh could shut out a Quaker or a Wesleyan. The atheist was to the Nonconformist of the day, what the Nonconformist had been to the Churchman of 1800, a person who held opinions other than his own. Experience of toleration should have satisfied those who could not see truth by their own light. The ablest men in the Cabinet were of the utmost possible diversity of religious belief. The Prime Minister was a High Churchman, Lord Hartington was a Low Churchman, Bright was a Quaker, Mr. Chamberlain was a Unitarian, Forster belonged to no Church and professed no creed. But there were members of the Liberal party who tolerated this latitude in their leaders, and yet could not bear the society of an avowed atheist. They drew the line at God. The case was made somewhat worse by Bradlaugh's opinions on the limitation of population. But the real weight of the charge against him was that he did not believe in the existence of a deity, and was sufficiently honest and sufficiently public-spirited to endeavour to preach his gospel. Some Liberals abstained from voting in these divisions. Others joined the most

bigoted and reactionary of their usual opponents, and used arguments against Bradlaugh which, if logically applied, would have excluded from Parliament more than one of the best men in the Cabinet.

While old issues were thus fought out, the new economics made a further impression upon legislation. Fawcett again led the way by making the Post Office extend its activities farther into the field of private enterprise, and experiment as a Savings Bank, in the creation of annuities, and in the management of the telegraph. About this time also began the modern development of municipal trading, which has converted the local authority from a mere regulating body to a body which supplies the means of light, heat, and locomotion to the inhabitants of its area. The debts of English municipalities in 1875 amounted to about £93,000,000. In 1905 they were about £483,000,000, and the bulk of this increase is represented by the various gas, water, electricity, and tramway enterprises which are managed by the local bodies. All this large part of national industry is now monopolized by collective management, and it is not now denied that on the whole the public wants are better supplied by these municipal monopolies than by the competition of private traders.

An extension of national and municipal enterprises was accompanied by more direct legislative restrictions upon economic freedom. The Employers' Liability Act of 1880 began the series of statutes which have compelled employers to insure their workmen against accident. The legal doctrine of "common employment" had produced a stupid state of affairs. A man who was injured through the negligence of another man's servant, acting in his

employer's business, might recover damages from the employer. But if both men were the servants of the same employer, and if the transaction in which the injury was inflicted was part of their common business as servants of the same master, no claim for compensation was allowed. A master was liable for the negligence of his workmen to everybody but his other workmen. The Act of 1880, in the face of loud opposition from employers of all parties, to some extent abolished this absurd distinction, and made the master liable to his men for injuries sustained through the negligence of his superintendents or foremen. An Act giving the English tenant the right to kill game on his own land was followed by an Agricultural Holdings Act, which entitled him to compensation against his landlord for unexhausted improvements. In 1884, in response to an agitation which had nothing to do with party, the Government appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the housing of the poor, and thus prepared for an extension of the system which had been begun by their predecessors.[329] But the most striking economic experiment made by this Liberal Government, as by the last, was made in Ireland. The condition of that country was now more dangerous than at any time since the Rebellion of 1798. The wholesale and systematic depopulation of the country by rack-renting and evictions had demoralized and degraded those whom it had not driven out of the country or starved to death, and throughout the most congested districts no spirit was to be found but hatred of the landlords and the English connection. Boycotting had now been invented, and boycotting was accompanied by agrarian outrages of the most brutal description. The Land League was supreme. Rents could not be

collected. No man would work for a tenant who paid his rent, or for a man who took a farm from which a former tenant had been evicted. The whole country seemed to be in sympathy with the Moonlighters and maimers of cattle, informers were murdered or intimidated, and the perpetrators of some of the most atrocious crimes were never discovered. The Government applied itself at once to the suppression of disorder and to the redress of grievances. Drastic Coercion Acts armed the executive with new powers, and in 1881 Gladstone introduced and carried, practically single-handed, a new Land Act.

This Act went farther than any previous Act of Parliament in interfering with freedom of contract. It strained the relations of the two sections of the Cabinet almost to breaking point, and the Duke of Argyll actually resigned. The Act of 1870 had provided that the tenant should be compensated for eviction except in case of non-payment of rent. The exception took nine-tenths of the virtue out of the Act. The country was crowded with poor people who wanted land and could not live without it. The tenant got no compensation so long as he kept his farm, and so long as he kept it he was rack-rented. If he was at last evicted, he was probably no better off for his compensation, because he had little chance of getting a second farm on any better conditions than the first. In these circumstances, bad landlords did very much as they pleased, and a Royal Commission reported that "Freedom of contract did not in fact exist."[330] The tenant was at the mercy of the landlord in every case. The Government therefore stepped in to protect him, on the principle that interference is justified "where the necessities of one of the parties to a bargain deprive his seeming freedom of choice of all substance."[331] Their Bill

accepted the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and established what were known as "the three F's," fair rent, fixity of tenure, and freedom of sale. The amount of the rent was to be fixed by an impartial Land Court. The tenant was to pay this rent for fifteen years, after which it might be revised. The right to remain in the holding at this rent was to be transferable to any purchaser. No tenant whose land was worth less than £200 a year could contract himself out of the benefits of the Act. This sweeping reform prevented the rack-renting of tenants. But the state of Ireland was now such as no remedies could affect. Parnell, the Irish Nationalist leader, was imprisoned in October, and all the extraordinary powers of the executive were employed. But in 1882 Lord Frederick Cavendish, the newly appointed Secretary for Ireland, was brutally murdered in Phœnix Park, and the release of Mr. Parnell, and an Act for extinguishing arrears of rent, were accompanied by new measures of coercion. Two years of hard administration of the law suppressed the disorder. But the national feeling was as ill as ever, and no Liberal Ministry could confound the maintenance of order with government. To produce moral corruption in his subjects is the worst wrong of which any governor can be capable, and coercion disgraces government more than it punishes crime. The disease of lawlessness was not to be cured by the mere suppression of its symptoms. So long as the temper of the people remains unchanged, obedience to the commands of authority is worth little or nothing. The attempt to find a new method of Irish government in 1885 settled the course of English politics for a whole generation.

Two disasters overtook the Government in foreign affairs. The first occurred in the Transvaal, and it was entirely their own fault. They had criticized the annexation when it took place: it had obviously been carried through in haste and contrary to the wishes of the inhabitants, and the right and wise course was to withdraw. Crown Colony Government, which meant government by Sir Owen Lanyon, an honest but unsympathetic official, had brought the Boers to the verge of revolt by the time that the Liberals came into office. They were in fact restrained only by their confidence that a change of government would mean a change of policy. But this very absence of turbulence deceived the new Ministry. They were officially informed that the Boers were reconciled to British rule, and Gladstone, Bright, and Chamberlain were overruled by their less Liberal colleagues. Unofficial warnings went astray, arrived too late, or were disregarded. By January, 1881, the Boers were in arms, and had repulsed Sir George Colley at Laing's Nek. The Government, at last aware that the population of the Transvaal wanted independence, opened negotiations. A rash move by Colley produced the defeat at Majuba and his own death.

The situation was now such that the Government could gain little credit, even by doing what was right. They had the choice of three alternatives. They could defeat the Boers and keep the Transvaal. They could defeat the Boers and give up the Transvaal. They could stop fighting and give up the Transvaal. The first meant that in order to avenge a defeat in a battle which ought never to have been fought they should do some more men to death, and then keep a country which they confessed they should never have taken. Having been guilty in the first place of robbery, they should endeavour to repair its

consequences by murder, and having made it difficult to work with the Boers by apparent insincerity, they were to make it impossible by deliberate cruelty. The second course meant simply that they should do men to death to gratify their own wounded vanity. Either course was brutal, and the first was also stupid. No Liberal Government, with the case of Ireland before its eyes, could undertake the permanent domination of a free white people by force of arms. The Ministry, in the face of a loud outcry from those who believed that the strength of England consisted in her readiness to assert her own brute strength at the expense of others, chose the third way out of the difficulty. What was right before Majuba was not wrong after Majuba. The negotiations which had been begun were allowed to proceed. No more lives were destroyed, and the Transvaal regained its independence, subject to some vague provisions for British suzerainty. In 1884 all references to this suzerainty were struck out of the Convention by the hand of the Colonial Secretary himself, and there is no question that it was then implied that England waived all right to interfere in the domestic concerns of the Dutch Republic. The Government acted as a Liberal Government was bound to act. It preferred to act according to moral rules, and to do what it thought right without regard to the protests of national egoism. This was the moral and the courageous course. But tardy moral courage is not an adequate political substitute for timely wisdom. For twenty years the two races cherished the memories of this miserable episode, and the recollections of wounded pride on the one hand and of hard-won triumph on the other were at last found to be excellent fuel for the flames of a second war.

The blunders of the Government in South Africa were balanced by other blunders in North Africa. Beaconsfield had declined to occupy Egypt openly and with the sanction of the Concert of Europe. Gladstone stumbled into it against his will, asking in vain for European sanction, and protesting his intention to withdraw at the earliest possible moment. Never was such a successful experiment in government begun in such an irresolute and unmethodical way. The details of the occupation of Egypt are not important for this book. The main outlines are clear enough. To increase the extent of the Empire by the appropriation of any country was a violation of the principles of the Midlothian speeches, and there is no question that the entry into Egypt was made with misgiving and reluctance. But circumstances were too strong, and for the first and last time in his life Gladstone masqueraded in the trappings of Imperialism.

Egypt, nominally subject to the Sultan of Egypt, had long enjoyed an insolvent independence under its Khedive. In 1879 its finances had been entrusted, in the interest of foreign bondholders, to the joint control of England and France, represented for the purpose by a large and costly army of officials. The entanglement of England in Egypt was thus the first example of what is now a common political case, the disposition of the fortunes of a whole people by its investing class. Plutocracy was beginning to usurp the temper, as well as the place, of aristocracy. In 1881 a revolt began, which was partly due to military discontent, and partly to a nationalist dislike of foreign domination. Had the British Government been free to act as they pleased, they would probably have abstained from interference, and would have recognized and supported the first Nationalist

Government of Egypt, whatever its constitution might have been. But their hands were tied by the financial arrangements of their predecessors. The Khedive was acting under the advice of England and France, and could not be deserted. When the revolt became fanatical, and Europeans were massacred in the streets of Alexandria, there was no longer any room for choice. The other Powers declined to interfere, France withdrew when it came to the use of armed force, and the revolt was suppressed by English ships and English troops. One step after another led England deeper into occupation. In 1883 the Dual Control was abolished, and Sir Auckland Colvin became the sole Financial Adviser of the Khedive. By 1885 British financial control was established throughout Egypt, and evacuation, though the intention of it was not abandoned by either Liberals or Conservatives for some time afterwards, really became impossible. The total effect of this new acquisition can hardly yet be estimated. It was infinitely less equivocal in origin than our conquest of India, and the material benefits which it has conferred upon the native population are immense. The real test of its temper will arise when the Egyptians desire to take the control of their own affairs into their own hands. If the British bureaucracy can surrender its supremacy as generously as, on the whole, it has employed it, it will prove itself a miracle of magnanimity. In the meantime, the events of this time are important as marking the intrusion of high finance into foreign politics, and the beginning of a series of huge extensions of territory, which have reacted very forcibly upon the fortunes of the British peoples.

The Gladstone Government, having been pushed and dragged into Egypt, was at least determined to go no

farther. A wise application of Liberal principle was the withdrawal from the Soudan. The death of General Gordon, who ought never to have been sent to Khartoum, has invested this operation with an unreal significance. To conquer and hold the southern provinces would have been as difficult and as costly as to conquer and hold Afghanistan. Being in Egypt, the Government wisely decided to restrict their responsibilities. The reorganization of finance was the first condition of the conquest of the Soudan, and a few years later the swift, successful, and cheap campaign of Lord Kitchener did what could at that time only have been done at the cost of enormous financial burdens. The wisdom of the policy of evacuation is not now questioned. But the loss of Gordon, due as much to his own disobedience to orders as to the tardiness of the Government, was very damaging to their reputation. They ought either to have kept out of Egypt altogether, or to have gone into it with a determination to do the work thoroughly. A vote of censure was averted in February, 1885, by only fourteen votes, and it was obvious that the days of the Government were numbered.

One flash of vigour illuminated their decline. The Ameer of Afghanistan, by the judicious treatment of Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin, had been converted into a firm friend of Great Britain. An advance by Russia in Central Asia made some definition of boundaries necessary, and while negotiations between the two Powers were in progress some Russian troops made an attack upon Afghans in Penjdeh. The Government promptly obtained a vote of credit for six and a half millions, and showed Russia plainly that, however anxious they were to restrict the extent of the Empire, they were ready at

all times to defend those peoples whom they had taken under their protection. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of the King of Denmark. The reference was denounced by the Tories as a cowardly surrender. The Liberals were content with the victory of morality over prestige. This affair took place in April. In the middle of June the Government, distracted by the prospect of more coercion in Ireland, resigned, and Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister.

In spite of their difficulties, this Liberal Ministry had contrived to do much for the cause of Liberalism. They had extended the control of the individual over his government to substantially all men. They had raised the value of women. They had removed one of the few remaining disabilities of the Dissenters. They had restored freedom to the Transvaal, and saved incalculable expense to both Great Britain and India by withdrawing from Afghanistan. They had blundered into Imperialism in Egypt, and though they had treated Ireland without egoism, like all their predecessors they had failed to pacify it. In the new spirit of collectivism they had stepped in between the economically weak and the economically strong. The Irish peasant had been further protected against the Irish landlord. The English farmers had got compensation for improvements and the right to protect their crops against game. Something had been done to get the poor into better houses. Workmen had got some protection against the negligence of their employers. The record of emancipation in the various fields of class, of sex, of race, and of wealth was respectable, if not glorious. Everything except the state of Ireland indicated the future course of Liberalism with clearness. Mr. Chamberlain expressed the opinions of

the advance guard when he demanded the reform of the House of Lords, the compulsory purchase of land for agricultural holdings, free as well as compulsory education, the disestablishment of the Church, and a graduated income tax. This was the work to be done, to reduce the power of aristocracy in government, which had been displayed of late in more than one conflict between the two Houses, to perfect the equalization of sects in the State, to employ the superfluity of wealth in mitigating the conditions in which poverty lived. But the actual course of events was determined by the state of Ireland.

CHAPTER X

THE IMPERIALIST REACTION

The condition of Ireland was now forced upon the attention of both parties. The Irish Nationalist party had demanded Home Rule since Parnell assumed the leadership in 1879. The General Election of 1885 gave this demand a force which it had never possessed before. The extension of the franchise by the Act of 1884 gave a much larger representation to agricultural Ireland, and agricultural Ireland was wholly Nationalist. Out of eighty-nine contests Parnell's party won eighty-five. All the fourteen Liberal Irish members were thrown out. The Protestant half of Ulster remained Tory and returned seventeen members. But the general sense of the country was made clear. Parnell, so long denounced by both English parties as the head of a faction, was now manifestly what he had always claimed to be, the leader of a nation. Strong and resolute English government had hopelessly failed. Crime was suppressed. But no Nationalist had been converted by punishment into a good citizen. Egoistic government by England could not succeed. Altruistic government by England could not succeed. The only alternative was the government of Ireland by Ireland.

Both English parties showed signs of a change of temper. Gladstone had hinted in his first Midlothian Speeches at a general devolution of local control upon England, Scotland, and Ireland,[332] and in his election address in 1885 he declared that, subject to the unity of the Empire being preserved, grants of such control to portions of the country averted

danger and increased strength. Mr. Chamberlain denounced government by officials at Dublin Castle as heartily as any Nationalist could have wished. Mr. Childers pronounced definitely for Home Rule. The other side hinted at a complete change of policy. They appointed, in Lord Carnarvon, a Lord-Lieutenant who was known to be in sympathy with Home Rule, and he actually entered into informal negotiations with Parnell. They declined to renew the last Coercion Act, and Lord Salisbury at Newport, Lord Carnarvon in the Lords, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Lord Randolph Churchill in the Commons denounced coercion with different degrees of vigour. [333] So far as the political leaders were concerned, the most definite opposition to Home Rule came from the Liberal Lord Hartington. But everything pointed to the abandonment of government by force and the substitution for it of government by sympathy. Parnell actually instructed Irish Nationalists in all constituencies to vote against the Liberals.

The election gave the Parliament into the hands of the Nationalists. The Liberals had a majority of eighty-five over the Conservatives, and Parnell commanded exactly eighty-five votes. The Government were beaten on an amendment to the Address, and the Liberals came into office dependent on the Nationalist vote. If they had had any reluctance to introduce a Home Rule Bill, they must have been beaten in their turn. But Gladstone's line of action had been sketched with sufficient definition to make it clear that he would introduce some measure for the better government of Ireland, and Lord Hartington, Goschen, Bright, and Sir Henry James refused on that ground to join the Ministry. Before the Bill was introduced Mr. Chamberlain and

Mr. Trevelyan resigned, and the disruption of the Liberal party began. The Bill was laid before the House on the 8th April, 1886. It proposed to establish an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive responsible to it. Law and police were included in their powers, but the establishment and endowment of religion were not, nor were the Customs. Ireland was to levy taxes and to pay one-twelfth of the British revenue to the Imperial Treasury. This Bill was accompanied by a Land Purchase Bill, under which the landlords might be bought out on the security of British credit.

The spirit of the Home Rule proposals was that of Liberal policy since 1868. The attempt to govern Ireland from England was to be given up, and the right of the Irish people to have an Irish Government was to be recognized, in the only possible way, by putting the government under the control of Irish representatives. "The fault of the administrative system of Ireland," said Gladstone, "is simply this—that its spring and source of action is English, and not Irish.... Without having an Irish Parliament, I want to know how you will bring about this result, that your administrative system shall be Irish and not English?"[334] Recognition of the principle of local independence would, it was hoped, be followed by a union between the two peoples stronger than the union of mere form. "British force," said Thomas Burt, one of the three working men in the Commons, "could do a great deal; but it could not make a real and genuine union between one people and another. That was only possible on a moral basis."[335] Home Rule, with all its possible risks, was the Liberal substitute for government which was alien, and consequently costly, obnoxious, and unsuccessful. It was not that Englishmen and Irishmen were by

nature so discordant that they could not manage their joint affairs in harmony. As a problem of race differences the Irish problem need never have existed. But artificial means had been employed to produce a divergence of character almost as complete as the divergence of East and West, of Europe and Asia. Successive English Governments had first imagined and then in fact produced such an incompatibility of temper as generally arises between nationalities so distinct as Turk and Slav, or German and Magyar, or Russian and Finn. As Mr. Balfour has recently put it, "The difficulty is not that when England went to Ireland it had to face nationality. The difficulty is that the behaviour of England in Ireland has produced nationality."[336] With this creation of her own selfish folly England had now to deal. Gladstone proposed to fuse the ancestral antipathies in the common management of common affairs.

The Tories had several mighty weapons. They appealed to Conservatives to defend the Union. They appealed to Nonconformists against the threat of Catholic domination in Ireland. They appealed to law-abiding citizens against concession to violence, and against the gift of supremacy to a political party which had not condemned, if it had not encouraged, intimidation and murder. They appealed to the less worthy motives of Liberals against whom Parnell had thrown the weight of his authority at the election. They appealed to the timid persons who listened to the threats of Ulster rebellion. They hinted at the development of municipal government. But they did nothing to solve what Mr. John Morley told them was the immediate problem of the hour, "How are you to govern Ireland?"[337] They insisted, as usual, upon forms. They spoke of the greatness of the

Empire and the wickedness of severance, of the cost to the taxpayer and of possible difficulties in case of foreign war. Much of the criticism of detail was just, and there was emphasis of mechanical difficulties which was sound enough. But nothing was expressed, in or out of Parliament, which showed that the Opposition could contrive any system which should satisfy the first condition of good government, that it should be acceptable to the governed. The most powerful Tory argument was the shocking history of agrarian crime. The sole argument which had moral force behind it was the argument that the Ulster Protestants would be persecuted by the Catholic Nationalists. Those who had used every engine of oppression to degrade and demoralize their religious enemies had a very genuine fear that the hour of retaliation had arrived. If there had been any real chance for the Nationalists, at the very gates of England, to avenge all the wrongs that their race had suffered at the hands of Ulster, this risk would have been enough to deter even Gladstone from Home Rule.

The Tory alternative was announced by Lord Salisbury to the Union of Conservative Associations on the 15th May. In a passage which contained a reference to Hottentots and Hindus, he declared that the Irish were incapable of self-government. His policy was "that Parliament should enable the Government of England to govern Ireland. Apply that recipe honestly and resolutely for twenty years, and at the end of that time you will find that Ireland will be fit to accept any gifts in the way of local government or repeal of coercion laws that you may wish to give her. What she wants is government—government that does not flinch, that does not vary." In plain English, government by consent was to come

to an end. The Irish were not to control their own political affairs. They were to be kept in subjection to a people whom they had every reason to regard as alien, and such force was to be applied as should be necessary. The temper of Roman ascendancy, applied by Palmerston to weak States like Greece, and by Disraeli to uncivilized tribes like the Afghans, was thus to be exerted over a people who, in all parts of the Empire, had shown themselves as capable of managing political affairs as any nation in Europe. Disraeli had preached the gospel of "Empire and Liberty." His successor preached the gospel of "Empire before Liberty."

On the 8th June the Bill was defeated on the second reading. No less than ninety-three Liberals voted with the Opposition, and the party broke into pieces. The General Election completed its ruin. Before Parliament was dissolved, a violent outbreak of Protestant savagery in Belfast was suppressed by force of arms, and all the devils of racial and religious ascendancy were awake. Egoism was reinforced by the ordinary reluctance of Conservatism, by a very honest hatred of agrarian crime, and by an equally honest if less reasonable fear of religious persecution. The Liberals were driven from the field in headlong rout, and the majority against Home Rule was more than 120. Gladstone came into office again in 1892. But he was without the essentials of power. The main current of political thought remained Tory for twenty years.

This general political temper was Tory and not Conservative. It was more positively reactionary than at any time since the Reform Act of 1832. Peel's so-called Tory administration of 1841 contained many Liberal elements. The Tory Ministries, which filled in

the gaps in the subsequent period of Whig ascendancy, were too short-lived to make any definite expression of principles of government. The Toryism of the Disraeli Cabinet was most marked in foreign policy, and at home made little display. But between 1885 and 1905 the temper of the dominant party was definitely and consistently Tory, and there was hardly any problem that it touched which it did not stamp with the brand of Toryism. The prime cause of this reaction was the dispute about Home Rule. The victory of Toryism in the controversy of 1886 had much the same effect upon general politics as a victory in the American War a hundred years earlier would have had. It could only be gained by arguments which applied universally, and not only in the particular case. The temper of the government of Ireland must be the temper of the government of Great Britain and the Empire.

Even among Conservatives this Irish policy was sometimes described in language which it deserved. No Liberal could put the case against Mr. Balfour's system more concisely than Sir Michael Hicks-Beach when he warned his constituents against "our favourite English habit of measuring everything by the English rule, of bringing English prejudice to bear upon the settlement of Irish affairs, and of looking upon Irishmen as our inferiors rather than our equals."[338] This was the very temper of Mr. Balfour, who believed that all the law and all the civilization in Ireland are the work of England.[339] No Liberal ever suggested that the difficulties of Irish government had nothing to do with the character of the Irish people. But no Liberal ever had any doubt that the character of the Irish people, as it appeared in 1886, was very largely due to deliberately vicious and demoralizing abuse of them by their English

conquerors. Mr. Balfour preferred to deal with them in the manner of a statesman who wished them well, but was convinced that they could do no good with themselves. Every manifestation of Irish discontent was thus attributed to a natural incapacity for good behaviour under government. Outrage and violence never attained in this Tory period to the proportions with which the last Liberal Government had had to deal. But coercion was applied as unsparingly as ever, and almost with cheerfulness. A Crimes Act, a permanent Coercion Act, was passed in 1887, and under its powers the Irish Executive might, by proclamation, apply it to any part of the country whenever it pleased. Under this Act not only were agrarian crimes punished and the armed forces of the Crown employed to collect rents and evict tenants, but Irish newspapers were suppressed, and Irish members who made speeches no more criminal than those of innumerable English, Scottish, and Welsh Liberals were imprisoned with all the degrading incidents of cells, clothing, and discipline which were forced upon common felons. Ireland was governed as Egypt and India were governed, and a race which had shown itself in other countries perfectly competent to sustain freedom of discussion and representative institutions was treated in that despotic temper which was elsewhere reserved for people of colour. Two incidents displayed this Toryism at its very worst. The first was the affair of Mitchelstown. The second was the Parnell Commission.

But before either of these events illustrated the mental habit of Toryism, another had displayed its complete futility. Under the land Act of 1881 rents all over Ireland had been fixed for fifteen years. Immediately afterwards the prices of agricultural

produce began to fall, and the rents which had been thought fair became unfair. Good landlords reduced their demands of their own free will. The type of landlord which was more common in Ireland than anywhere else in the world spoke of "the sacredness of judicial rents," and exacted the last penny of their dues. The usual process of eviction, starvation, and riot began. The Plan of Campaign was formed by the more determined Nationalists. Tenants who paid more than they thought fit were to meet and agree what rents they should offer to their landlord. If these were refused, the money was paid to a central fund, which was used to resist evictions. This was a criminal conspiracy. But criminal conspiracies are common in countries whose economic history resembles that of Ireland, and this had at least the merit of being free from violence and outrage. A Royal Commission inquired into the working of the Act of 1881, and reported in favour of a revision of judicial rents. Lord Salisbury, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and Mr. Balfour declared emphatically that they would never interfere with the rents.[340] They introduced a Land Bill in March, 1887. This Bill allowed leaseholders, who had been excluded from the Act of 1881, to obtain the benefits of its provisions. The Bill said nothing about revision. But Nature knew nothing of racial and religious distinctions. The fall in prices had been universal, and the tenants of Ulster complained as loudly as the tenants of Connaught. The Government gave way, and amended the Bill. Then the landlords set up an outcry, and the amendment was withdrawn. The tenants again raised their voices, and seeing that to hold out meant that Ulster and Nationalist Ireland might agree to subordinate their jealousies to their common grievance, the Government again

surrendered. When passed, the Act provided for the revision of judicial rents. The first of the twenty years of resolute government had ended in a fresh triumph for agrarian agitation.

Concession involved no change in temper. On the 9th September, 1887, a meeting was held at Mitchelstown, at which English Members of Parliament and English ladies were present. It was not illegal, and no attempt was made to suppress it. But the police wished to have a shorthand note of the speeches, and with gross and unpardonable folly endeavoured to force a reporter through the crowd. A squabble began, the police were hustled and beaten with sticks, they retreated to their barracks and fired upon the people who followed them, and three men were killed. All the facts except one were obscure. There was no question that the police should have applied for accommodation on or near the platform, instead of using force to introduce their reporter. What happened afterwards required thorough investigation. A coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against six officers, but this was quashed on technical grounds by the High Court. No other inquiry ever took place, though every means was used to put pressure on the Government. Their duty was plain. Even if no policeman had been technically guilty of crime, it was clear that there had been an atrocious blunder. The Government was bound to make a strict investigation, and to punish by censure, reduction of rank, or dismissal from the force the officers who were responsible. Mr. Balfour did nothing of the kind. He treated the affair of Mitchelstown as the Tories of 1819 had treated the affair of Peterloo. Before any thorough inquiry could have been made, he declared that the police were free from blame, and he never made any attempt to

do justice between them and the public. Only one meaning was to be attached to his action. His policy was crudely egoistic. The English Government was to decide at its pleasure by what rules of conduct it was to be bound in its dealings with Ireland, and considerations of morality were to be subordinated to the convenience of the executive. Gladstone appealed to the British people to "remember Mitchelstown," and the affair became a potent weapon in the hands of the Liberals. To refuse inquiry where injury has been done to the person is the most unfortunate thing that an English statesman can do. Not even the memories of agrarian crime could prevent sober people from being alienated by this refusal of the opportunity of justice.

The Parnell Commission was equally ugly. During April, 1887, the *Times* newspaper published a series of articles which endeavoured to prove that the Nationalist party were responsible for agrarian outrages of the worst kind. On the 18th of the month it printed what professed to be a letter from Parnell. If genuine, the letter showed that Parnell, while publicly disapproving of the Phœnix Park murders, privately defended them. As a matter of fact, it had been forged by a man named Pigott, and the proprietor of the *Times* had bought it with such credulity as showed that he was completely reckless in his eagerness to injure Parnell. In November an action was brought against the *Times* by another Nationalist, and the Attorney-General, who acted for the defendants, produced in court a number of other letters of the same kind. Parnell then took action. He had been advised by English Liberals that the verdict of a London jury would be cast, from political motives, against him. He had known that a verdict on the other side from a Dublin jury would get no

credit out of Ireland. He had therefore declined to issue a writ for libel. He now demanded an inquiry by a Select Committee of the House of Commons. The Tories, who believed the letter to be genuine, refused the Committee, but promised to establish a Commission of three judges "to inquire into the allegations and charges made against Members of Parliament by the defendants in the recent action." This was accepted by Parnell instead of a Select Committee. But the Government, without his consent, inserted the words "and other persons" after the word "Parliament," and thus turned a particular inquiry into the conduct of members into a roving investigation into Irish politics of the last ten years. Members of Parliament, boycotters, defaulting tenants, moonlighters, murderers, and maimers of cattle were all lumped together for examination by a body which was incapable by its nature of giving weight to the historical and economic condition of Ireland. Whether Parnell had expressed approval of murder or not was a question of fact which could be settled by a court of law better than by any one else. The rights and wrongs of England and Ireland could not be tried by any tribunal upon earth, and Parnell's case was huddled up with the rest simply in the hope that general prejudice against proved outrage might outweigh the effect of an acquittal on the particular charge. Nothing would be settled by proving that the National League had promoted outrage. The case for the League was that it was the only means of obtaining justice for the Irish peasant. No judge, however impartial, could try such an issue. The Bill establishing the Commission was forced through the House, without the excuse of urgency, by the use of the closure. Parnell was thus compelled to accept a tribunal for which he had not asked, in order that the

Tory party might find judicial support for their case against Ireland. The facts revealed by the inquiry were of no particular value. The forger shot himself, and the letters were declared to be fabrications. The Irish members were acquitted on the charge of encouraging crime, and condemned for not being more ready to disapprove it. This was nothing new. The demoralization of respectable Irishmen has been the worst result of English misgovernment of Ireland. When worthy means of obtaining redress are exhausted it requires almost a supernatural virtue not to acquiesce in unworthy means. The moral and political defence of the Nationalists could not be heard by the Commission, and the judgment did not affect it. So far as the affair influenced independent opinion at all, it influenced it against the Government. The eagerness with which the Tories had assumed the truth of the Parnell letters, and the indecency with which they had confounded irrelevant issues in order to present an indictment against a whole people were as vivid illustrations as the Mitchelstown incident of Tory disregard of equity and fair dealing. From this moment the Liberal party began to recover strength, and the union between English Liberalism and Irish Nationalism became indissoluble. But for the O'Shea divorce case, which discredited Parnell and distracted the Nationalist party, the strength of the united forces might have been sufficient to carry Home Rule in the next Parliament. In the actual event, the Liberal victory at the election of 1892 was little more than nominal, and in 1895 Toryism asserted itself more emphatically than before.

It was impossible for Toryism to govern Ireland in this spirit without the contagion spreading to other quarters. Those who refused liberty to others came

near to losing their own, and those who claimed arbitrarily to dispose of the fortunes of the Irish people found it an easy task to assert their egoism elsewhere. During the twenty years which followed the rejection of the first Home Rule Bill, every principle which Liberalism had inherited from the Whigs, the Radicals, and the Manchester School was violated in turn. The powers of hereditary aristocracy were increased,[341] the status of woman was lowered, the Established Church was aggrandized, an attempt was made to revive Protection, a sinister trade monopoly was allowed to dictate the policy of the State in its own interest, a system of labour was established under the British flag which was not distinguishable from some ancient forms of slavery, the powers of Trade Unions were limited by judicial decisions, a foreign State was invaded because it mismanaged its internal affairs, large tracts, including the territories of two self-governing races of white men, were annexed to the Empire by force, morality was frankly struck out of the list of national virtues, and in its favourite cant word "efficiency" Imperialism coined an exact equivalent for the vertu of Macchiavelli. Even women suffered a loss of status. The agitation for Woman Suffrage dwindled away. By the Education Act of 1902, which abolished the old School Boards, they were deprived of one of their opportunities of being elected to a public body, and were given in exchange the inferior dignity of co-option to a committee of men. In 1897 they received a worse blow, when the regulation of vice was re-established, in a modified form, in India. These positive wrongs were accompanied by a serious neglect to improve the conditions of common life, and the consequences of neglect were made worse by the burden of debt and the increased

expenditure on armaments which the prevailing policy involved. At the end of the Tory period, when the excitement of the Boer War left the people once more free to contemplate their own condition, economic reforms were overdue, and attempts to grapple with the modern industrial problems jostled with attempts to undo the work of positive reaction, and to assert once more the Liberal principles of the previous generation.

It is of course not suggested that the Liberal Government of 1906 had to begin again from the beginning. The practical reaction was not, and could not have been, so complete as the moral. But the tide rose high and some landmarks were covered. The full term of reaction was not reached until the end of the century, and especially in the early years of Tory domination more than one useful and Liberal measure was passed. Some of these were due to Liberal Unionist influence. Others were in the line of previous Tory action. Bradlaugh carried his Oaths Bill into law in 1888. In the same year the Local Government Act abolished the old system of county administration, and substituted councils elected by the ratepayers for the justices of the peace who were appointed by the Lord Chancellor. In London a County Council took the place of a Metropolitan Board of Works. This Act gave to all the inhabitants of counties and of London that control of their own government which had been enjoyed by the inhabitants of all other large towns since the Whig Ministry of 1832. One blemish of importance was left in the Act, a curious proof that this, like other Tory reforms in political machinery, was due to a desire rather for efficient working than for the assertion of any principle of popular freedom. Two women were elected to the first London County Council, and a

court of law decided that their election was void. No attempt was made to remove the disability, which remained until the revival of Liberalism in the twentieth century. Liberal Unionism remained male. In Ireland more than one useful change was made. A private Members' County Councils Bill was rejected in 1888. But in the same year a Land Act advanced £5,000,000 to assist land purchase, and in 1891 a second Act provided for advances up to £30,000,000 for buying out the landlords. Grants to relieve the distress caused by failure of the potato crop were made in the usual spirit of Tory benevolence, and accompanied the most relentless application of coercion. They prevented starvation, and they did nothing to alter the popular enthusiasm for Home Rule. No amount of indulgence from an acknowledged superior will satisfy the man who wants only freedom to look after himself. Ireland took what she could get, and asked for more. A last domestic reform was made in 1891, when education was made free, as well as compulsory.

The Liberals came into office again in 1892. The most important result of their brief triumph was perhaps the illustration which it afforded of the power of the new party machinery in the country. The National Liberal Federation met at Newcastle, immediately before the election, and succeeded in imposing its will upon the Liberal party with questionable effect. It seemed to be animated by the logical temper of the early Radicals rather than by the practical, managing temper which is so essential to political action. It advocated, among more orthodox things, the Disestablishment of the Churches of Scotland and Wales, and a local veto on the sale of alcoholic liquors. Both these proposals carried Liberal principles to logical and unreasonable

extremes. Disestablishment in Wales was a right application of the principle of religious equality. To invest with public privileges the members of a sect which contained a minority of the population, and had been for more than a century alien in spirit as well as in the nationality of its official heads, was one of those artificial appreciations which are abhorrent to all Liberals. The Scottish case was entirely different. The Established Church Of Scotland differed only in unimportant details of constitution and government from the other Churches. No social privileges were claimed or enjoyed by its members, and there was no national demand for the abolition of its formal privileges. An aristocratic Church with a form of service alien to the natural disposition of the people was an institution which the Welsh could reasonably denounce. A Church which was as plain and sober in its habit as the humblest chapel in the land was accepted by the Scotch because it never claimed to be more than it was worth.

Local veto was as dangerous an application of logic as the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. It meant that the majority of the inhabitants of a district could prevent any one of them from obtaining a particular form of refreshment. It was not a question of protecting weak men against temptation by reducing the number of public-houses. Nor was it a question of the inhabitants preventing a public-house being placed in a district where none had been before. Either of these applications of a popular vote would be legitimate. Every public-house above a certain number in proportion to the population is a public nuisance, and if a man has gone to reside in a neighbourhood where he cannot get a drink, it is quite reasonable to argue that he has

no real need of the opportunity. But local veto means that the neighbours of an honest and sober citizen can impose on him against his will total abstinence, a form of life of which he does not approve. Modern forms of interference with economic freedom can generally be justified on the ground that while they diminish the apparent liberty of a few they increase the real liberty of many. Local veto is an attempt rather to diminish the liberty of many in order to increase that of a few. If the extreme view of it is accepted, that total abstinence must be enforced because it is better than even moderate indulgence, it is not distinguishable from the crudest Toryism, which forces upon some individuals what others believe to be in their best interest. Hard lines can never be drawn in politics. But local veto appears to be one of those interferences with private conduct which are intolerable, even if they are applicable.

One or two Government measures were passed into law. District and Parish Councils were established by an Act of 1893 to do the less important work of rural government under the County Councils, and this Act was more Liberal than that of 1888 in that it permitted the election of women. The Budget of 1894 greatly increased the death duties on landed property and at last put an end to the advantages which it enjoyed in comparison with other forms of wealth. The same Budget emphasized and extended the principle of taxation according to ability to pay. Where money was required by the State for public purposes, it was reasonable that those who had large accumulations should pay at a higher rate than those who had small. Equality of rate was not equality of taxation. The estates of deceased persons were thus directly taxed upon a graduated scale, and the first step was taken in the process of shifting fiscal

burdens from the poorer to the richer classes, which is so marked a feature of modern Liberal policy. This reform, the House of Lords not having yet the boldness to interfere with taxation, was carried without much difficulty. A more direct attempt to improve economic conditions failed. The Employers' Liability Bill, compensating workmen for injuries caused by the neglect of fellow-workmen under the rank of foreman, was so amended by the Lords that it had to be dropped. The second Home Rule Bill passed the Commons, but was beaten in the Lords by ten to one. Gladstone resigned in March, 1894, and his place was taken by Lord Rosebery, a splendid orator, who could never lead the people because he could never understand them. Welsh Disestablishment and Local Veto Bills were introduced and dropped, because even the House of Commons would not pass them. The party collapsed in a few months, and the Tories came back to office and to power. The tide had been but little checked, and it now resumed its steady course away from Liberal ideals. The examination of the current of events requires some preliminary investigation of prevailing modes of thought.

It is impossible to understand the present methods of English political thinking without some consideration of the theory of evolution. Both habits of mind, the Liberal and the Tory, have been able to employ it for their own purposes, and its influence upon Socialism at one extreme and Imperialism at the other has been equally marked. Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species*, was published in 1859, and produced instantly a turmoil in science and religion. Its bearing upon politics was less obvious, and there are no traces of it

in the speculations of such a philosophical Liberal as Mill. The man who did most to bring the theory to bear upon things other than biology was Herbert Spencer, who was anything but a politician. But the channels by which its influence was poured into the general mind had become, by the end of the century, too numerous for discrimination, and the pulpit, the Press, the stage, the platform, and popular literature of every kind were full of references to the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. For good and evil the idea of evolution had become part of the national stock.

Stated in plain terms, Darwin's theory was that the old conception of man, as having been specially created by God in a state of blessedness from which he fell by his own sin, was false, and that he had in fact been gradually developed out of an inferior state to his present degree of perfection. Humanity, like every other living thing, had been developed, whether mechanically or by divine order was not important, by a constant struggle with environment. Individuals, varying among themselves, were placed under certain conditions of life, for which some were better suited than others. Those who were fittest for the particular environment survived, and transmitted their particular variations to their offspring. When a sufficient number of generations had lived and died, these variations or characters were permanently fixed in the stock, and a class or species had appeared on the earth, which was distinct from others, who in different environments had similarly developed different forms. This theory was connected, not only with experiments and observations in the field of biology, but with geological investigation and the system of historical examination of constitutions, systems of law, and

social structure, which was becoming increasingly common in Darwin's day. All united to emphasize the idea of growth. The eighteenth century appeared to conceive of everything as stationary. The later nineteenth century conceived of everything as in motion. The organisms which were healthy and vigorous were those which adapted themselves most successfully to their environment, fixed new characters in their stocks, and rose from a lower condition to a higher.

The immediate application of this theory to politics is obvious. If true, it gives a scientific explanation and justification of change and development. It is impossible at the present day for any political thinkers to do what Sir Henry Maine did at the beginning of the Imperialist reaction, and speak of change as a phenomenon peculiar to Western Europe and of a stationary condition as the general rule.[342] Events of recent years in Japan, China, India, Persia, Turkey, and Egypt have exposed the false basis of his reasoning. But even without this experience, a post-Darwinian politician would point to the changelessness of the East as in itself a sign of degeneracy, and the restlessness of the West as a proof of its superiority. Life is identified with change. Movement is normal, activity the universal rule of health. The peoples who stagnate, decay; and the one test of vitality is the capacity to receive and to apply new ideas. The primeval mollusc indeed saved itself from injury by its protective shell, and its descendants are molluscs to this day. The organisms which, consciously or unconsciously, preferred mobility and risk to immobility and perfect safety, have evolved, through countless intervening steps, to man. The modern outburst of reforming zeal is thus not spasmodic, but only an acceleration of an eternal

process of development. The old Toryism is dead and damned. The maintenance of the old, without inquiry and without readjustment, is the upsetting of the natural order. The prospect of change has lost its terrors. What we fear to-day is not change, but permanence; or rather, we seek for permanence in a line of change.

The evolutionary philosophy has thus come directly to the aid of Liberalism, and some reformers, particularly a certain school of Socialists, apply it mechanically to the growth of society, as from home industry to factory industry, from factory industry to the Trust, and from the Trust to the national organization of production. But most advocates of change are more cautious, and are content to find in it a defence of the need or the harmlessness of change. On the other hand, it has moderated the reforming temper. No Liberal of any capacity of mind can now rush to the cutting and carving of society with the cheerful zeal of Paine or Bentham. There can be for him no cutting off and beginning afresh. The historical caution which distinguishes Mill from Bentham must now be emphasized in his successors. Reform must be a process of training and adaptation, not of destruction and substitution. Logic must be applied with circumspection, and if the statesman has now a more certain hope that the people will ultimately achieve happiness, he is no less sure that they can never be dragged into it by the hair of the head.

While the idea of evolution has thus operated both to encourage and to discipline the Liberal temper, it has also operated to give license to the Tory. The most brutal egoism is supported by pseudo-scientific applications of the theory of the survival of the

fittest. Some thinkers find in the mere existence of a governing class a proof that its members were the fittest for their position. Capacity for government has been bred into our aristocracy, as beef is bred into a bullock, or speed into a racehorse, and the poor members of other classes represent the unfit stocks, who have fallen, by the operation of natural laws, into the position best suited to them. Neglect of social reform is justified, in a similar way, on the ground that the economic struggle eliminates unfit types, and that to make life easier for the masses of the people is to preserve undesirable stocks in the race. It is useless, and even positively dangerous, to interfere between landlord and tenant, and master and workman, or to put an end to slums and sweating. These things should be left to themselves. In the apparently dreadful conflict between individuals and their environment, beneficent laws are at work. The fittest men will survive out of this as the fittest organisms survive in the animal kingdom. Good sense and common humanity have generally prevailed over these two applications of the theory. But in foreign policy it has unquestionably dominated modern Toryism. As among primitive invertebrates, so among civilized races of mankind, it is only in struggle that any one can be developed to its highest capacity. International politics should therefore be a system of perpetual antagonism. It is only in war that we can develop those vigorous qualities which are essential to human as to animal progress. Humanity and consideration for others are fatal to that success in the internecine strife, which is necessary for the survival of the fittest among nations. The consideration of evolutionary Toryism in domestic affairs is postponed to the next chapter. It is here

necessary only to deal with its connection with what is called Imperialism. At the end of the last century it unquestionably combined with the apparent success of Bismarck to revive and aggravate egoism in foreign policy.

The first serious suggestion of Imperialism was made by Disraeli in 1872. Speaking at the Crystal Palace, he said that "self-government, when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of Imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an Imperial tariff ... and by a military code which should have precisely defined the means and the responsibilities by which the Colonies should have been defended, and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the Colonies themselves. It ought further to have been accompanied by the institution of some representative council in the metropolis which would have brought the Colonies into constant and continuous relations with the Home Government.... In my judgment, no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible our colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land." He exhorted his hearers to choose between national and cosmopolitan principles, and to fight "against Liberalism on the continental system." Nothing was done by his Ministry to carry out the plan of Imperial consolidation, except the addition of the Imperial title to the dignity of the Crown and the abortive attempt to federate South Africa. The fight against cosmopolitanism was not avoided, and the demonstrations against Russia in Turkey and Afghanistan showed the fatal ease with which large

conceptions of national importance degenerate into vulgarity. The new idea of Empire was thus early identified with national insolence and immorality.

The federation of self-governing dominions has not been the most striking feature of Imperialist policy since Disraeli. In the last thirty years of the nineteenth century four and three-quarter millions of square miles of land and eighty-eight millions of human beings were added to the Empire, and of the latter only two millions were white people.[343] The primary object of all these extensions was not the incorporation of free peoples in a federal union, but the subjugation of weak peoples for the purposes of private profit. The British trader and the British capitalist who wanted security for his foreign investments were the pioneers of Empire, and in South Africa they succeeded, not only in incorporating, by methods often worse than dubious, races of barbarians, but in dragging the whole British people into a costly war for the annexation of two civilized Republics. Imperialism has not of set purpose extended liberty in any part of the globe. It has introduced order and justice into some unsettled tracks, it has provided capital for the development of neglected natural resources, and in South Africa it showed how readily it would subordinate the moral to the material interests of Empire. The only conspicuous extensions of liberty during the period of expansion have been made by Liberals, and in South Africa they acted in the face of almost unanimous protest from the Imperialist party. The successes of Imperialism have been material.

The steady deterioration which has taken place in the ideals of Imperialism has already been indicated. Its moral failure is due simply to the fact that the

object of expansion was never in any case moral. Incidentally, as in India, Egypt, and Nigeria, an enlightened bureaucracy has avoided the blunders of exploitation and oppression. But for the most part, the best that can be said of our rule is that it is disinterested. Little has been done, even in India, to train and develop the higher faculties of the natives, and it is only in the Liberal reforms of Lord Morley that definite steps towards self-government have been taken. We are in these countries frankly to maintain order and to produce wealth, and for the most part we attempt nothing else. Benefits to the natives are only incidental and not primary. Unquestionably the growth of the Empire has extended the advantages of civilization to backward and uncultivated districts. But it has been promoted by the zeal of the investor rather than of the missionary. The enormous growth of wealth required new fields for investment. Visions of national grandeur were employed to direct the common people from the social reforms which would have reduced this wealth. The Press, the pulpit, and the platform united to represent the material pursuit of gain as a disinterested labour on behalf of humanity. A mist of moral enthusiasm was wrapped about the crude realities of commercial enterprise, and the acquisition of wealth by private persons was disguised in the trappings of national magnificence. Much honest enthusiasm was thus generated which commercial and financial magnates turned to their advantage. But in the face of temptation the artificial structure collapsed. National egoism and cupidity have now converted the organization for the distribution of blessings into an organization for the monopolizing of profits. The Empire is to-day regarded by Imperialists as essentially national, and

not as essentially international. It is to be surrounded by a tariff for the exclusion of the foreign trader, and it is to be organized as a gigantic weapon against those nations with which, for the time being, we happen to be at variance.

This conception of Empire has grown with those false applications of evolutionary theory to which reference has been previously made. The objects of the organization of the State having ceased to be moral, it has ceased to be moral in its methods of working. International morality is flung away with the other rules of conduct, and material success becomes the sole justification of public action. "As a nation we are brought up to feel it a disgrace to succeed by falsehood; the word 'spy' conveys in it something as repulsive as slave. We will keep hammering away with the conviction that honesty is the best policy, and that truth always wins in the long run. These pretty little sentences do well enough for a child's pocket-book, but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheathe his sword for ever."[344] Out of success, by whatever methods it may be achieved, this school proposes to acquire the desirable human qualities. By warfare, and warfare only, whether it be military or diplomatic, is it possible for a people to develop and to retain strength, courage, and resource. Those nations which survive in this perpetual conflict are presumed, in the Darwinian phrase, to be the "fittest." Survival justifies itself. Success is the test of virtue, and the steps by which it is obtained may be safely ignored. The gross fallacies of this process of argument have been sufficiently dealt with by other hands.[345] It is only necessary here to suggest the Liberal answer. A State is not an individual. It is simply an expression of the ideas of a human society, or aggregation of

human beings. The morals of a State are nothing but the morals of its individual members. To say that morality must be observed by those members in their dealings with each other, but not in their collective dealings with the members of other States, is to weaken private and not public morality. Public morality is not distinguishable from private. The man who abstains from stealing his neighbour's goods cannot, without personal deterioration, join his neighbours in appropriating the territory of another nation. Morality has gradually spread from organizations within the State till it includes all persons within the State. In the remote past, morality was observed only in dealings between members of the same family. Strangers took their chance. At a later date it was extended to the tribe, or the village, or the Church, and finally to all subjects of the same central government. There is no reason for stopping the operation of moral rules at the Straits of Dover, that would not prevent an Englishman from dealing honourably with a Scotchman, or a Churchman from dealing honourably with a Dissenter. Morality must be universal, or it ceases to be morality. The argument thus outlined must be fatal to evolutionary Imperialism. Qualities cannot be developed in nations. They can only be developed in the individuals who compose those nations. To speak of a strong and virile State is to obscure the issue. Strong and virile States can only be those which are maintained by strong and virile human beings. States which "survive" by the exercise of force and fraud can only be those whose subjects have ceased to dislike force and fraud. In other words, the evolution of the individual and the evolution of the State cannot proceed upon different lines. Man has now reached a point of development where mere brute

strength has ceased to be a desirable quality. The test of a man is always a moral test. We have evolved morality. If we formally reject morality in our use of the State, for the express purpose, as it were, of "breeding it out," we deliberately turn back the course of human evolution. The State will react upon the individual, and the individual will suffer. We cannot select certain qualities for individuals, and certain others for States, and suppose that evolution can be directed towards the development of both together.

British Imperialism, thus strengthening its natural tendency to egoism by the assimilation of scientific theory, has been only a local manifestation of an almost universal tendency. The career of Bismarck in Germany formed an excellent example of the operation of the same principles. Germany consolidated, France and Austria humiliated, and territory snatched from France and Denmark have invested the gospel of "State might is State right" with a lustre which conceals the deterioration of private morals, the distresses of the common people, and the profound social unrest, which this costly parade has brought in its train. Men and women as individuals may sometimes escape the Nemesis which waits on immorality. Nations can never die, and the debt incurred by one generation must always be paid by its successor. Only a short view of German history can fail to see the dangers which the policy of Bismarck has brought upon his country. The reaction of Russian policy upon the internal state of Russia is more obvious, and the case of Great Britain is hardly less clear. But for the moment, Imperialism is the fashion at home and abroad. The earth is parcelled out among the Powers. England, Germany, and France share Africa between them.

Austria covets and by instalments obtains territory in the Balkans. Russia is thrust out of Manchuria, and compensates herself in Mongolia and Persia. All join in wresting concessions of territory and financial opportunities from China, and even the United States takes her colonies from Spain. In all parts of the earth the Powers are thus brought into new competition. The Balance of Power is revived, but for investors and not for dynasties. The struggle is for opportunities for the private acquisition of wealth, rather than opportunities for the public control of territory. But the result is the same. Obligations are indefinitely extended. The risks of conflict are indefinitely increased. The burden of armaments grows larger every year. The common people are more and more removed from the decision of the most far-reaching public questions, and know little more of the things which may decide their fate than is forced upon them by the weight of their taxes and the advice which they receive from their governors for the direction of their national antipathies.

British Imperialism came to a head in the South African War. Since the troubles of 1880 the condition of the Transvaal had greatly changed. The discovery of gold had caused an enormous flow of immigrants, mostly of British descent. The government remained in the hands of more primitive men, who resented the intrusion of this foreign and industrial population. Paul Kruger, the last President, was a stubborn member of the old school, and while he possessed the confidence of his own countrymen, he was incapable of appreciating the necessity for new ideas and new institutions which the new economic conditions had produced. The older men, who had not forgotten how they had wrested their independence out of the unwilling hands of England,

were being steadily overtaken by men of wider views, who saw clearly enough that independence could not be maintained for ever on the basis of racial distinctions. Government could not be kept for ever in the hands of Dutch agriculturists, when the most vigorous, the best educated, and almost the most numerous section of the community were British industrialists. The existing system was the system which produced our Irish problem. But in the Transvaal the problem was neither so old nor so acute as in Ireland, and there was no question that time would have remedied all the grievances of the Outlanders. The conflict of the two races would have died a natural death, and would have ended in the Transvaal, as it had ended long before in Cape Colony, in amicable adjustment. The disease would have run its course. But the folly of British Imperialism preferred a surgical operation. The Outlanders who agitated for reforms of the franchise, of taxation, and of the judicial system, were used for purposes other than their own. A group of South African politicians, headed by Cecil Rhodes, a genuine, if unscrupulous Imperialist, and including several financial magnates, whose interest in the Empire was pecuniary rather than hereditary, determined to use the legitimate grievances of the Outlanders as weapons for the destruction of the Transvaal Republic. Rhodes was determined, at all costs, to unite South Africa under the British flag. His less enthusiastic associates wanted to control the Transvaal Government in their own interest, and they knew that they could not control it unless it was made British. Therefore they took steps to provoke a war which should end in the annexation of the Republic.

Case for armed interference by Great Britain there

was none. The Convention of 1884, which reserved to her some rights in connection with foreign affairs, was intended to leave the Transvaal independent in domestic matters. Undoubtedly she might have interfered on behalf of her own subjects, if they had suffered gross oppression. But they had not. They had entered the country in pursuit of gain, and many of them had acquired enormous wealth. They were denied the franchise, which they ought to have possessed. But disfranchisement had not exposed them to peculiar hardships, and the current of opinion among the Dutch was setting steadily in their favour. Taxation, though heavy, was not ruinous. Justice, though generally slovenly and sometimes corrupt, was no worse than in many parts of the United States. The general condition of the Outlanders was infinitely superior to that of the vast majority of the English people before 1832, and no grievance was so intolerable as to make it impossible to wait until the old governing class of Dutch was replaced by the new. There was ample reason for political pressure from within. There was ample reason for diplomatic representations from without. There was no reason for armed force either within or without.[346]

Having no case for war on the merits, the Imperial and financial politicians proceeded to manufacture one for themselves. A systematic campaign of calumny against the Transvaal Government was begun in the African and British newspapers, every abuse was exaggerated, and every incident misinterpreted. The climax was reached at the end of 1895, when, with the connivance of Rhodes, Dr. Jameson led a small party of invaders into the Transvaal. This expedition, as wicked a violation of State rights as has ever been made, was designed

expressly to provoke rebellion and intervention. It was invested with all the splendour of a war for liberty, and a forged invitation had been prepared some weeks before, to be discharged at the critical moment, which represented that the honour of English women in Johannesburg was in danger from the Dutch. The Raid met with the fate which its vicious inspiration and the foul lie which accompanied it deserved. The final effect of it was to destroy all the moral authority of the British Government, and to convince even the Dutch Reformers that they could only maintain their independence by force of arms. When Mr. Chamberlain publicly declared that Rhodes had done nothing inconsistent with honour, and, in the course of further negotiations about the franchise, revived the obnoxious term "suzerainty," all chance of peace had gone. The Dutch were consolidated against the English as the French had been consolidated in 1793, reform was denounced as inconsistent with patriotism, and diplomatic language was received with suspicion as proceeding from a hopelessly corrupt and tainted source. War began in 1899, and ended, after a display of energy and resource by the enemy which none of our responsible statesmen had expected, in the annexation of both the Republics.

The events of the war are of little importance for this book. A Liberal, who witnessed this display of national egoism, with its boastful beginnings, its slovenly neglect of preparations for its own work, the bestial ferocity of language with which it assailed its enemy, and its hysterical exultation at its final triumph, can find no pleasure in the recollection of it. Posterity will pass its final judgment in its own time, and if it sees virtue in the conduct of our soldiers in the field and in the colonial zeal for the

common interest of the Empire, it will doubtless see more in the stubbornness of the Dutch and in the devotion with which the people of the Orange Free State sacrificed life, property, and independence in a cause which was not their own. The actual event was probably more beneficial to us than either the thorough defeat which our vanity deserved, or the easy and overwhelming triumph which it anticipated, would have been. The one might have broken up the Empire. The other might have led us into further exploits of the same kind, which could only have ended in our final overthrow. The chastisement was serious enough to reform without destroying. The violent emotions produced by the war, and the distress consequent on its waste of life and treasure, roused the common people, whose attention had been diverted by conceptions of Imperial magnificence to other parts of the world, once more to the contemplation of their own affairs. Even before the end of the fighting the reaction had begun, and when the Imperialists were driven out of office in 1905, it was the despised and discredited Pro-Boer, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who was at the head of their successors.

Before this change of Government, Toryism had completed its course of reaction. Its government of Ireland had finally broken down. The system of Local Government by County Councils, rejected in 1888, was established in 1898, and in 1904 British credit was pledged to secure the extinction of landlordism by purchase. But if Tory government of Ireland had become little more than the tardy application of Liberal principles, its government of England remained its own. In 1902 fresh vigour was given by the Education Act to the Established Church and its itch for instructing the children of Dissenters in its

own dogmas. In 1904 the drink trade procured a Licensing Act, which gave it a new legal property in its opportunities for demoralizing the people, by making it impossible to abolish superfluous public-houses except on payment of compensation out of a limited fund. In 1903 Imperialism came to its natural end, by proposing to revive the old system of Protection, with a preference to the Colonies as against foreign countries. This was partly a Tory way of dealing with economic distress, and it has unquestionably appealed to honest as well as to corrupt sentiment. But its essential principles are national jealousy against foreign peoples, and the abuse of the common people by the plutocracy. To both these Liberalism found itself in 1903 in direct opposition. Tariff Reform involved a rise in the cost of living which would press most hardly on the poor, it involved the control of tariffs by vested interests of landlords and manufacturers, and, less certainly, of Trade Unionists. There was nothing in it which distinguished it in essence from the old Protection, and Liberalism was, in this line of attack, reinforced by the Conservatism which had grown around Free Trade. A last provocation to the working classes had been given by judicial decisions, which construed the legislation of thirty years before to deprive the Trade Unions of their powers of peaceful picketing, and exposed their accumulated funds to actions for damages for wrongs done by their agents during trade disputes. Trade Union activity was thus stimulated. The new Labour Party came into existence, and joined with the opponents of Tory Imperialism, the Nonconformists alienated by the Education Act, the people of all classes who had been offended by the Licensing Act, the Conservative Free Traders, and those who were anxious to resume the

work of economic reconstruction, to overwhelm the Tory Party at the General Election.

CHAPTER XI

LIBERALISM SINCE 1906

The policy of the Liberal Government which came into power in 1906 was the policy of those who had followed the old course during the Imperialist reaction. The general principles laid down by the new Prime Minister did not differ substantially from those of Gladstone, though the problems with which he had to deal were not precisely the same. His argument against Tariff Reform was inspired by the same zeal for personal freedom as those which he used against Chinese Labour, the Education Act, and aggression in South Africa. It was a conflict between habits of mind, and not a difference of opinion. Protection placed the common people at the mercy of capitalists and landlords, and increased the political power of plutocracy. Chinese labour established an industrial system, which had for its primary object, not the well-being of all its members, but the increase of the profits of capital. The Education Act subjected large numbers of Nonconformists to the domination of the Established Church in the instruction of their children. The Boer War was a brutal interference with the national concerns of a foreign race. The Liberal attack on the Imperialist position was thus general and not particular. Liberals in this matter were not fighting a single proposal, but a whole spirit and tone of policy

and administration and legislation. "These fiscal proposals were saturated, as the whole of the present Government had been found to be, with restriction against freedom, with inequality between trade and trade with injustice towards the community of consumers, with privilege and monopoly, with jealousy and unfriendliness towards other nations. They were essentially part of a retrograde and anti-democratic system."[347] It was this clear sight of the real issues of the moment which extinguished Lord Rosebery, and brought back the Liberals who had supposed they could at once support the Boer War and retain Liberal habits of mind in domestic affairs. The great social currents which had run strong until Home Rule produced a temporary diversion had once more gathered head, and those who suggested that the Liberal party could take a clean slate, and ignore the writings of its predecessors, were sharply reminded by the result of the election that it was their duty to take up the tale where it had been interrupted twenty years before. When the flood of war had subsided, the social stream was found running in the channel which it had followed since the French Revolution. The bad memories of Ireland were not effaced. The problems of industry were more urgent than ever. The pent-up hopes of women broke free. Nonconformity once more demanded relief from sectarian domination. Only those could deal with the new situation who had not tried to forget how they had been accustomed to deal with the old. Lord Rosebery, punting about for a new course, grounded on the shallows, and was left behind. Campbell-Bannerman, holding on the old course through the storm, found himself afloat, and set for a prosperous journey.

Much of the Liberal work done since 1905 has

consisted in the undoing of the work of reactionary Toryism. For the first time since the close of the French War, Liberalism has found itself engaged in maintaining establishments, and in leading the people to reoccupy positions which they have evacuated. Free Trade is a purely negative policy, and means nothing but keeping the ground clear for economic reconstruction. The unsuccessful attempts at Education and Licensing Reform would at best have done no more than restore the social values which had been established in the previous century. The extension of self-government to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony undid, so far as it could be undone, the war, and restored freedom.[348] The abolition of Chinese Labour was a complete reversal of a policy only a few years old. The Trade Disputes Act of 1906 put Trade Unions in the legal position which they had occupied without question for twenty years after 1874.[349] All this work of restoration hampered the Government in its positive work, and when it ought to have been free to deal with the peculiar problems of its own day, it was forced to wait while it resettled those of a previous generation. The most original work of the new Liberalism has been economic. What most distinguishes the Governments which have held office since 1906 is the degree to which they have interfered with the economic structure of society in order to give greater freedom to the poorer classes. This work was begun under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and since Mr. Lloyd George has relieved Mr. Asquith of the duty of inspiring his followers with new ideas, has been controlled and directed by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Budget of 1909, the Old Age Pensions Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Wages Boards Act, the Labour

Exchanges Act, the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, and the Insurance Act have all one feature in common, the use of State machinery for the active assistance of the economically weak. The principle of the Factory Acts has been extended into projects for Social Reform, the number and variety of which may be almost indefinitely increased. Burke's test of convenience is applied even to the right of property. "Private property is no longer regarded as one of the natural rights of man; its incidents are considered and settled by the common modern criterion of all these matters—to wit, the balance of social advantage."[350]

This growth of the importance attached to economic problems has appeared sudden only to those who have been at once deaf to the warnings of history and without experience of personal hardship. The dangers once expected from extensions of the franchise had receded from the view of a plutocracy and a middle class, which had contemplated for twenty years a common people dazzled by visions of national greatness.[351] The clamour with which these disposing classes greeted the new democracy in 1906 expressed the natural dismay of those who had thought that they could always manage the people as they pleased, and now realized, in the presence of forty working men elected to the House of Commons, that the people were going to manage themselves. Gladstone's concentration upon Ireland had delayed this advent. But for his adoption of Home Rule, the new policy, already suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, would have been incorporated in practical Liberalism at least fifteen years earlier. It was not made less ominous by the postponement. Economic discontent was both more bitter and more articulate in 1906 than it would have been in 1891. The Trade Unions

had been roused by hostile judicial decisions. The political organizations of workmen were perfected, and the Trade Unions and the Independent Labour Party worked in harmony. The workmen formed a distinct party of their own, and several of their representatives were of definitely Socialist opinions. Outside the working classes the public mind had been directed more and more to the study of industrial problems. The Fabian Society had been active for twenty years, and Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb were only the most industrious of the many investigators who were establishing a historical and scientific case for reform. All this improvement of machinery marched with an increase in actual distress. The war added not only to the temporary, but also to the permanent burdens of the poor, and not merely by accumulating debt, but by increasing the expenditure on armaments which an immoral policy required for its defence. The dislocation of industry, which always follows a war, had brought insecurity to many and destitution to not a few. Casual labour was more general, and sweating not less than at any previous period. In every direction distress and discontent had increased, and the political machinery was now adapted to the direct and articulate expression of the feelings of the common people. The Parliament of 1906 represented the desire of the masses to fit their conditions of life to their own capacity for growth.

Liberals were bound to apply themselves to the new conditions in a new way, and it savours of pedantry to accuse Liberal economists of 1906 of having departed from the principles of Liberal economists of 1846. Paradoxical as it may appear to say that a positive policy of constant interference is the same as a negative policy of constant abstention, it is true

that the mental habit at the back of the one is identical with that at the back of the other. Both aim at emancipating the individual from the things which prevent him from developing his natural capacities. The Manchester School saw only the fetters which directly impeded him. The modern Liberal sees also the want of the positive aids without which he is only half free. "Of all the obstacles which obstruct men's advance towards good living, and of all the evils with which politics can help to deal, there is no obstacle more formidable and no evil more grave than poverty.... Our first principle leads clearly and directly to a policy of social reform. Whoever admits that the duty of the State is to secure, so far as it is able, the fullest opportunities to lead the best life, cannot refuse to accept the further proposition, that to lessen the causes of poverty and to lighten its effects are essential parts of a right policy of State action."[352] Poverty cripples the individual in many ways. It deprives him of mobility, so that he cannot travel freely in search of employment. It prevents him from accumulating reserves for times of emergency, so that a depression in trade or an illness of a month's duration may drive an honest and industrious man with his wife and family to the workhouse, and make it impossible for him ever again to resume his place in the ranks of independent labour. It disables him from saving enough to keep himself in his old age, and thus makes him either an additional burden on his children or a charge upon the ratepayers. If bad enough, it permanently reduces his bodily, mental, and moral efficiency, stunts his faculties, prevents the full development of his children, and creates disease, vice, and crime in himself and his descendants. The diseases, the temporary losses of employment, and the

fluctuations in income which, to a man of substantial means, may never be, and cannot immediately be disastrous, often involve in the case of the ordinary wage-earner, the complete destruction of everything which makes life worth living. No one who seriously believes that it is the duty of society to secure freedom of growth to every one of its members can doubt that it is its duty to mitigate, so far as it is able, those consequences of poverty which no degree of thrift, enterprise, or fortitude can avert.

To this end the economic reforms of the new Liberalism have been directed. The Labour Exchanges Act did not furnish work for all. It provided facilities for obtaining work for all who sought for it. The workman is no longer left to scramble about for fresh employment. He goes to a public office, where he learns what posts are vacant, and is put in touch with those who may be willing to employ him. No man can now complain that because he cannot afford to travel in search of work, or to delay for more than a day or two before he finds it, he has suffered a permanent deterioration in health or character. If this Act can eliminate the evils of casual and irregular labour, it will have enormously increased individual liberty for growth.[353] The Old Age Pensions Act removed from the shoulders of working-class families what was to many an intolerable burden. Before the Act came into force some thousands of men and women, from no cause but the lapse of time, became incapable of supporting themselves. The alternatives were the workhouse and the generosity of their children. The first meant a loss of independence for themselves, the second a fetter upon the freedom of their relations. In the absence of sickness requiring hospital treatment, the pension of five shillings a

week is generally sufficient to maintain the dignity of the pensioner and the efficiency of the children. The Workmen's Compensation Act, extending Mr. Chamberlain's Acts of 1896 and 1900, insures the working people against accident as the Old Age Pensions Act insures them against age, and the Insurance Act against sickness and unemployment due to causes beyond their control. So the Act providing for the feeding of necessitous children in public schools aims at preventing the permanent deterioration of body and character which is produced by inadequate nourishment in the early years of life. So the Wage Boards Act and the Miners' Minimum Wage Act established machinery for fixing a wage in certain employments which, having regard to the circumstances of each trade, would insure that the wage-earner should enjoy a reasonable standard of health and comfort. All these measures are based upon the same principle, that absolute liberty of the individual meant the degradation, if not the destruction, of many individuals who were poor. There can be no equal chance of growth so long as accidents which cannot be averted, by any effort of the individual, may permanently impair his natural capacity. Social reform is justified as a national army is justified. It is a system of common organization for the purpose of common protection. What Mr. Churchill said of insurance may be said of all these economic projects: "I think it is our duty to use the strength and the resources of the State to arrest the ghastly waste, not merely of human happiness, but of national health and strength, which follows when a working man's home, which has taken him years to get together, is broken up and scattered through a long spell of unemployment, or when, through the death, the sickness, or the invalidity of the bread-

winner, the frail boat in which the fortunes of the family are embarked founders, and the women and children are left to struggle helplessly on the dark waters of a friendless world."[354] The conception of society is no longer that of an extended procession, the strongest pushing on to the full limit of their powers, while the country to the rear is strewn with the sick and injured. It is that of a compact army, every man of which has to be brought in, with a sufficient organization of waggons and ambulances to pick up all the stragglers.

This elaboration of the system of protection is not inconsistent with such competition as is necessary for the development of character, and for the production of the wealth which is so distributed among the members of society. It is not Socialism. It is not a system of doles. It removes only some of the risks of failure, and only those which are beyond individual control. No man is made less thrifty because at the age of seventy he will receive five shillings a week. No man works the better for knowing that if he is ever ill for a month he and his family will never be free again, or will work the worse for knowing that his home will be kept together until he is able once more to support it by his own exertions. No woman gets any virtue out of working fifteen hours a day for seven days a week, with the knowledge that even then she will not earn enough to keep herself in food and clothing without recourse to charity or prostitution, and her character will not be deteriorated when a level is fixed below which her wages cannot fall. The benefit of competition remains. The disasters inevitably attendant on it are averted. The poorer people no longer wrestle on the brink of an unfenced precipice. "I do not want to see impaired the vigour of competition, but we can do

much to mitigate the consequences of failure. We want to draw a line below which we will not allow persons to live and labour, yet above which they may compete with all the strength of their manhood. We want to have free competition upwards; we decline to allow free competition to run downwards. We do not want to pull down the structures of science and civilization, but to spread a net over the abyss."[355] "It is clear that the unlimited and uncontrolled struggle of wages spells anarchy almost as painful in its effects as the unlimited and uncontrolled competition of physical force in our streets and highways. What is to be the remedy? What, using the expression in its broadest sense, appears to be the solution—whether through Parliament, local boards, or an independent Commission—to which we are heading? A Plimsoll line for labour as well as for ships; a line above which the ship is not to sink with its burden when it puts out to sea; a line to limit with human lives on land as with those 'who go down to the sea in great ships,' the extent of peril and suffering to which the worker is to be liable. Not to abolish competition any more than competition has been abolished in ships. Competition will always be powerful enough. But to limit the strife—to fix a ring round the prize-fight—to protect the vital parts from the blows of the combatants."[356] These statements reconcile the old individualism with the new. Individual growth can only take place in competition. But it is not necessary that failure in competition should be mortal. The struggle of competition is to go on. But it is not to go on to the death. Economic society is to be converted into a gigantic Trade Union,[357] based upon the belief that the highest good of the individual can only be secured in co-operation with his fellows, and limiting

his freedom only in so far as it is necessary to secure freedom to his associates.

It is obvious that this new economic Liberalism has borrowed largely from Socialism, and it has one character in common with Protection. Once we admit that it is right for the State to interfere with economic freedom, we have advanced one step on the road which leads towards the nationalization of industry and towards the regulation of production by tariffs. The difference between Social Reform and Tariff Reform is nevertheless clear. Social Reform operates directly, only where it is needed, and without substantially interfering with any individual's enjoyment of life. Tariff Reform, if it can destroy poverty at all, can only destroy it indirectly by giving higher profits to the employer, who may or may not share his increased gains with his workpeople. Its operation is also entirely capricious, it can only apply to industries which suffer from foreign competition, and cannot touch those many underpaid forms of employment in which such competition cannot or does not in fact exist. Finally, as it can only operate by raising prices, it can only give benefits to one class of labour by imposing burdens upon another. It has only one certainty, the increase of prices, with the consequent increase of profits and rents. The benefits to be obtained from it by the poor are vague, must be confined to one section only, and cannot be got by that except at the cost of those which are differently situated.

The resemblance between Social Reform and Socialism is much more real. The sympathies and the objects of the two are not dissimilar, though their practical proposals are essentially different. Socialism, so far as it is ever expressed in definite

terms, makes a logical application of a general formula. Private ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange means a combination of the owners of capital against the wage-earners to the injury of the class which is economically the weaker of the two. Therefore society as a whole must take possession of industrial capital, production for use must be substituted for production for profit, work at a good wage must be guaranteed to every one who asks for it, and the fair distribution of wealth among the workers must be regarded as of more primary importance than the quantity which is produced. Socialists differ widely about methods and the rapidity with which the economic change is to be effected. Generally, the modern Socialist of the Fabian type prefers a gradual evolution to the cruder appropriations of early thinkers, he is prepared to exempt certain industries from his scheme, and the equal distribution of rewards has gone the way of the class war and community of goods. But all agree that, sooner or later, society, as politically organized in the form of the State, shall produce and distribute or control the production and distribution of wealth according to ethical principles. The Liberal is less universal in his proposals. He does not object to the municipalization, or even nationalization, of mechanical monopolies, of industries which in fact do not admit of competition. Such industries as the supply of water, gas and electricity, tramways and railways, are not in fact competitive, and efficiency is probably as well maintained by aggrieved payers of rates and taxes as by shareholders disappointed of their profits. But the Liberal is not disposed to admit that similar conditions would produce similar results in industries of a more speculative or hazardous

character. Nor can he admit that private ownership of capital necessarily involves the exploitation of labour. In certain industries, notably the cotton industry of Lancashire, he sees examples of the successful combination of individual enterprise in management with minimum standards of life and wages fixed either by the Factory Acts or by powerful Trade Unions, and he is not satisfied that the enterprise would be as brilliant or the minimum standards as high if the capital engaged were owned by the State.

In particular, the Liberal distrusts the bureaucratic system of management which Socialism involves. The London School of Economics seems to him a very good servant. He has no doubt that it would be a bad master. Even with its disadvantages, the system which makes private gain at once the incentive to efficiency and its only possible test may be much superior to that which leaves the determination of industrial policy to a sort of lay hierarchy. An active and persecuting aristocracy will at least keep its subjects alive. The dull and unimaginative methods of bureaucracy stifle even when they are inspired by benevolence. Officialism is generally fatal to new ideas, and apart from the reduction of wealth which would probably follow the abolition of private profit, the officialization of mind which would be diffused throughout society is a sufficiently deadly argument against Socialism. It might even destroy individual life as completely as did some of the religions of the East. This argument against Socialism is to some extent an argument against Social Reform. Social Reform requires the appointment of many officials. But the functions of such as have already been appointed are confined to inspection, to advice, and to the collection of money

or information. We have had no experience of officials engaged in the manufacture of goods for export, or in the conduct of the shipping trade. Such experience as we have had of municipal enterprise has only satisfied us of the capacity of officials who are controlled and criticized by unofficial ratepayers, who have a personal and pecuniary interest in the efficiency of the official. No Liberal Government has yet proposed to extend official management to those many fields where success depends upon the judicious calculation of risks. Until that proposal is made there will always be a gulf between Liberals and Socialists, and a distinction between the policy which limits the destructiveness of competition for private gain and that which abolishes such competition altogether.

A second objection which is urged against Social Reform is its cost; and the charges on the public, required by Old Age Pensions, Insurance, and Labour Exchanges, have afforded a good opportunity for contrasting the greatly increased expenditure of Liberal Government with the demand of Liberal Opposition for "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." As the terms are now understood, Retrenchment and Reform cannot go together. The new Liberalism has been compelled to recognize that economy and parsimony are not synonymous expressions, and that the mere refusal to spend money may in the end prove more costly than a judicious outlay in the present. What is too generally ignored by the critics of this new policy is that, in one way or another, all the service which is now being rendered by the State has already been rendered by society. Since the reign of Elizabeth we have admitted our duty to provide for the destitute, and the burden which has not fallen upon the poor rates has been borne by private

charity, by public hospitals, and by the police. In public or private poor relief, in the curing of disease, and in the punishment of crime we have long been accustomed to pay for the consequences of poverty. The new Social Reforms merely transfer these various duties to the national Exchequer. It is impossible to compare figures of expenditure. But it is most probable that ultimately the total weight of poverty will be considerably less than under the old system. Prevention is better than cure. Relief used to be delayed until some permanent degradation of body or character had taken place. It is now applied while there is still a chance of restoring the unfortunate to their old efficiency. The Old Age Pension directly relieves the rates by keeping the pensioner out of the workhouse, or gives his family the opportunity of a fuller life by releasing the money hitherto required for his support. The Insurance Act should eventually abolish all that very large proportion of pauperism which is produced by casual sickness, prevent the deterioration which so often follows the temporary loss of work, and maintain the average level of industrial efficiency at a higher level than before. The Minimum Wage Acts impose a direct charge upon industry. It is possible that some trades may be extinguished because they cannot bear the charge. If that should be the event, it can only be because the trades in question are at present parasitic: they do not support themselves, but suck nourishment from society by way of outdoor relief, charity, petty larceny, or prostitution. The cost to the community will here be made definite instead of remaining unknown. But in most of the underpaid trades the Acts will have the same effect as a powerful Trade Union. So long as Parliament abstains from fixing wages, and confines

itself to the erection of machinery for fixing them in accordance with the conditions of the trade, Minimum Wage Acts merely create by law what Trade Unionism creates by voluntary effort. The higher wages established under the Acts will do what higher wages established under Trade Unionism have done. They will mean increased efficiency, increased production of wealth, and increased purchasing power. In this case, as in those of the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Insurance Act, not only will a burden be transferred from one part of the community to another, but it will in time be reduced in weight. So the Act for feeding necessitous school-children, by preventing the reduction of physical, mental, and moral strength in the present, will prevent future expenditure in poor relief, hospitals, and police. The survey which includes nothing but the legislative reforms themselves is partial and deceptive. It is only when we realize that poverty is already being relieved in a tardy, disorganized, and unscientific way that we can see how the cost of the new reforms will be in fact a most wise economy of national resources, and that by spending on prevention instead of on restoration we will actually be saving money.

The philosophical argument against Social Reform which has most weight is neither the argument from bureaucracy nor the argument from expense. It is the argument which is more justly directed against Socialism, that by helping individuals the State deprives them, in whole or in part, of the disposition to help themselves, that they tend to rely more and more upon the social organization and less upon their own strength. Everything in the way of public assistance is thus regarded with suspicion. To feed school-children is to weaken parental responsibility.

To raise wages by legislation is as demoralizing as to distribute doles. To offer a pension of five shillings a week in old age is to discourage thrift in youth. It is therefore better, in the end, that poverty should be allowed to run its course than that a misdirected benevolence should demoralize the people. This argument, reproducing the logical individualism of the Utilitarians, has been greatly strengthened by Darwinism. No less impartial a man than Herbert Spencer has thus applied the theory of evolution to political affairs. "The well-being of existing humanity, and the unfolding of it into ... ultimate perfection, are both secured by the same beneficent, though severe discipline to which the animate creation at large is subject; a felicity-pursuing law which never swerves for the avoidance of partial and temporary suffering. The poverty of the incapable, the distresses that come upon the imprudent, the starvation of the idle, and those shoulderings aside of the weak by the strong, which leave so many in shallows and in miseries, are the decree of a large, far-seeing benevolence."[358] The conception, which makes of foreign politics an immoral conflict between nations, is to make of domestic politics an equally immoral conflict between individuals, in which justice and humanity are to be set aside as inconsistent with the progress of the race. At first sight it would appear that the whole of that progress up to the time of Darwin had been along a wrong line. If there is one thing which most distinguishes modern from ancient society, and society of any kind from the disorganized existence of primitive man, it is the prevalence of the idea that we are, in some measure, responsible for the condition of our neighbours. The emotions and the reasoning faculties which have produced moral inhibitions on our own

desires, laws for the protection of the weak against the strong, the machinery of private charity, and the public relief of the poor, all these have been evolved with the other characteristics of humanity as we know it. If the course of past development is any guide we may be certain that unless we take steps to alter our conditions, we shall certainly continue in the same course in the future. It would be at least surprising that the salvation of the race should now be found to lie in deliberate reaction, against the movement of countless ages towards the stage of undisciplined human egoism which followed that of the anthropoid apes. A doctrine so repugnant to what we have been accustomed to regard as our better feelings requires little examination to discover its fallacies.

The evolutionary argument against Social Reform falls to the ground when it is once admitted that the individuals in contemplation are individuals organized in a society, and that it is only so long as they are so organized that development, as we understand it, can take place. If mankind were left to scramble for such good things as it could get without co-operation, the race would no doubt, in course of time, develop such characteristics as that competition would allow to survive. But if we erect higher standards, and require, even from selfish motives, the moral, intellectual, and physical benefits which only organization, culture, and the communication of ideas will produce, the comparison between human beings and the rest of the animate creation is useless for our purpose. Some limitation of the struggle for existence is obviously needed, if we are not to fall back to the level where only the brute qualities of strength, swiftness, and cunning are of value. Once we admit the need of a

social organization, which involves a very considerable check on mechanical evolution by the survival of the fittest, the only controversy is about the extent and character of the limits on competition, and not about their existence. The beasts, birds, and fishes which are unfit for their environment, and have not those qualities which make for survival, perish by disease or are destroyed by their enemies. The man generally remains a drag on the community. What is the community to do with him? The lethal chamber being regarded as impossible, it must keep him in hospital, in prison, in the workhouse, or in a charitable institution, and if he is not thus maintained he will maintain himself by crime or beggary. Throughout his life he remains a parasite upon his fellows. It is always therefore the most economical course, if it be possible, to alter his environment, so that he may have the chance of supporting himself.

But the argument for Social Reform is not based only on the possibility of altering environment so that individuals who are unfit for it may maintain themselves so long as they live. Spencer was reasoning away from the facts. It is not only the incapable who are poor. It is not only the imprudent who are overcome by distresses. It is not only the idle who starve. Bad conditions of life destroy not only the inefficient, but the efficient, and many of those whom they do not kill they maim. He is a very dull and stupid observer who supposes that all the slovenly, debauched, and criminal men and women whom he sees around him are what they are because of their innate qualities, or that all those who die of their own dirt, debauchery, and criminality are any worse. They were not all born criminals whom our great-grandfathers hung or transported for petty

larceny, nor are they all born inefficients whom some modern eugenists would segregate or sterilize. A bad environment does not merely destroy the inefficient, it manufactures them; and it is as reasonable to oppose social reform, because it prevents the elimination of the unfit, as it would be to defend excessive eating and drinking, or sitting in wet clothes. Unhealthy living would no doubt destroy people with weak stomachs and livers, and a tendency to chalky deposits in the joints. But for every one who perished in this struggle with environment there would be ten who survived. Bad housing and bad wages produce the same results as bad habits. Of all the slum children who die of their surroundings, a large number would have lived to become valuable citizens if they had had better conditions of life in their early years. An ill-fed girl becomes the mother of weakly children. Inadequate housing produces disease, incest, and prostitution, besides killing a few undesirable infants. Casual labour kills only after it has given birth to an incalculable amount of laziness, vice, and mental disorder. Everywhere the good is kept back, even if some of the bad is prevented from development. The slum creates what the slum destroys, and it discharges upon the community much that it does not destroy. The elimination of the unfit is uncertain and capricious. The deterioration of the fit is certain and remorseless. Social Reform, if it is nothing else, is thus the only possible means of discovering which individuals are fit in the human sense. It is only when all have a chance of survival that we can distinguish the naturally inefficient from the accidentally inefficient. The reformer need have no fear that his generous impulses are signs of an anti-social sentimentalism. He is in fact only Evolution

conscious of itself. He marks a point in the great course of life, at which the cultivation of individuals ceases to be careless and wasteful, and becomes deliberate and economical, adapting its own environment to the achievement of its ideals.

When the necessity for Social Reform is admitted, the provision for its cost affords another opportunity for the conflict of Liberalism and Toryism. The Budget of 1909, which tempted a plutocratic House of Lords into a rashness which an aristocratic House of Lords had never ventured to display, was a clear expression of the new Liberal principles. Part of that Budget was merely an extension of the Finance Act of 1894. Another part was entirely new. It carried the principle of graduation to a further point, both in income tax and in death duties, and it imposed for the first time a tax upon the natural monopoly of land. To those who understand the meaning of Social Reform, the necessity of the Budget is clear. Money must be found for the purpose of relieving poverty. To raise it by a general taxation of rich and poor would be to lay a new burden upon the poor in order to remove an old burden, to increase by one act the poverty which the other was intended to diminish. Social Reform financed by Protection is an economic contradiction. The money required to improve the condition of the poor must be taken from the rich, if it is to be of any practical use. The heaviest of the new taxes were therefore placed, according to a graduated scale, upon the payers of income tax, the inheritors of large estates, and the recipients of unearned increments from land. These taxes had one principle in common. They were based, not upon the enjoyment of property, but the method of its acquisition. Those who drew incomes from permanent investments were taxed more heavily

than those whose prosperity depended upon their personal exertions, and the owners of property, which was a natural monopoly and grew in value without any effort of their own, were compelled to pay charges, from which the owners of property of other kinds were exempted. Other taxes were imposed upon the luxuries of the working classes. These would in any case be paid by those who could afford them, and would not deprive a poor man of anything which was a real necessity of life.

The arguments against the Budget were characteristic of their plutocratic origin. The class which had used Imperialist sentiment in the interest of its foreign investments, and had proposed at once to finance its military exploits and to increase its wealth by taxation of the common people, naturally resented this increase of its own fiscal burdens. The super-tax on incomes of more than £5,000 a year was described as a penalty upon thrift and enterprise, and it was urged with most patriotic zeal that these appropriations of surplus wealth would produce unemployment. The answer to the first argument is that incomes and accumulations of a size to be affected by the new taxes are not produced by thrift, in any real sense of the word, nor will the enterprise which produces them be checked by such trifling deductions. Enterprise was as vigorous and successful fifty years ago, when £10,000 a year was a very large income, as it is now, when incomes of £50,000 and £100,000, are almost as common. A certain definite inducement is required to stimulate a man to the utmost use of his capacity for producing wealth. Beyond that limit all that he earns is sheer waste, and uneconomic remuneration which evokes no further effort. Upon that surplus, and upon that only, do the new taxes operate. The argument from

unemployment is more specious. It is that, deprived of the money required for income tax and death duties, the more prosperous citizens will be compelled to dismiss some of their servants. During the discussion of the Budget, the general public learnt, for the first time, that those wealthy persons who spent money on horses and dogs, motor-cars, jewellery, and china, shooting-boxes, racing stables, and rock-gardens were animated by no selfish love of their own ease and comfort, but by a disinterested passion for providing remunerative labour for the common people. The argument was partial. It dealt only with the taxes of the Budget, and ignored the alternative taxes of Tariff Reform. The problem was to raise money. Whatever form the taxation took, it must deprive the taxpayer of his power of spending money and employing labour. If £1,000 was paid by a man with £20,000 a year, his power to employ motormen and gardeners, jockeys, gamekeepers, and dealers in pictures and jewellery was reduced by precisely that amount. But if the same sum is paid by a thousand cotton operatives, their power to employ butchers, bakers, tailors, and bootmakers is equally reduced. The reduction of employment is precisely the same in each case, whether the £1,000 is taxed out of one rich man or out of a thousand poor men. But there is an infinite difference in the other consequences of the two systems of taxation. The rich man paying the £1,000 is not deprived of anything which contributes to his present efficiency, to his future security, or to his reasonable enjoyment of life.[359] The poor men paying the same sum may suffer in any one of the three ways. A charge of sixpence a week upon an artisan who earns twenty-five shillings a week may be the difference between sufficiency and insufficiency. A charge of £1,000 a

year upon the head of a family who earns, or receives without earning, £20,000 a year leaves him with everything which could be required for the fullest development of all his natural capacities. Taxation of poverty cripples life. Taxation of wealth does not. The new Liberalism, seeking to extend life, must draw upon abundance and superfluity.

In their economic proposals the Liberal Governments since 1906 have thus advanced along the old line towards the more complete emancipation of the individual. If they have interfered with liberty, they have interfered with liberty on one side only to enlarge it on another, and the money required for reform has been so provided as to reduce by as little as possible individual capacity for growth. Whatever the particular defects of these social reforms may be, their general character has been as Liberal as that of the reforms of 1832 and 1868. In other matters they have met with varied success. Their repayment of debt and their refusal to continue the wasteful policy of borrowing for the construction of works have followed the best traditions of Peel and Gladstone, though Mr. Lloyd George's treatment of the surplus of 1912 affords a vicious precedent for less economical successors. The Irish University Act, the Home Rule Bill, and the Welsh Disestablishment Bill are partly recognitions of the principle of nationality, concessions to the demand that matters of local concern shall be regulated by local opinion. They also express the other Liberal principle, that sects shall be equal in the State. Recent demonstrations in Ulster, the persecution of Catholic and Liberal workmen in the shipyards of Belfast, and speeches which reveal a ferocity of religious bigotry equal to

that of the seventeenth century, have confirmed rather than weakened Liberal belief in Home Rule. So long as one section of Irish society looks to England as the successor of an ancient enemy, and the other looks to her as a protector against the descendants of those whom their fathers kept beneath their heel, so long will incompatibility of temper exist. As soon as possible Liberals intend to put the inhabitants of Ireland in such a position that, ceasing to batten upon the exhumed remains of mediæval controversies, they may discover, in the course of managing their joint affairs, that they are only Irishmen after all. The various Education Bills seem to have only partially expressed Liberal principles. It is impossible, in a country where sharply divided sects exist side by side, to establish a system which shall completely satisfy any party. Denominationalists and undenominationalists must agree upon mutual concessions. No practical hardship is done where denominational schools, with teachers subjected to denominational tests, are confined to the instruction of children whose parents approve of such a system. The demand of some Nonconformists, that they should not be compelled to pay for denominational teaching, cannot be recognized unless the demand of some Churchmen and all Catholics, that they should not be compelled to pay for undenominational teaching, is also recognized. Whatever logical answer there may be to the second, a Liberal State, accepting the equality of all sects as its first principle, must give them precisely the same liberty as the first. If a Churchman is not to count for more than a Dissenter, a Dissenter is not to count for more than a Churchman. Where the denominationalist case passes from a reasonable request for justice to the assertion of an insolent and

intolerable claim to control the opinions of others is when it requires that any school, which was founded for denominational purposes, shall be maintained by public money as a denominational school, with denominational teachers, for the instruction of Nonconformist children. No Liberal can have regard to this claim, not to teach their own opinions to their own children, but to teach their own opinions to other people's children. Nothing can justify this part of the denominationalist case, which would not also justify a grant from the national Exchequer to the Church of England for a mission to convert Dissenters. So far as the recent proposals tend to overthrow this denominational control of schools to which the children of Nonconformist parents are compelled by circumstances to go, they are as purely Liberal as the repeal of the Test Act or the abolition of the Church monopoly of the Universities.

In two matters of vital importance the Liberal Governments have conspicuously failed to express Liberal principles. The right of the individual to control his own government was recognized, with equal courage and wisdom, when the conquered Dutch Republics, in the face of Tory opposition, received the grant of responsible government under the Crown. The contest with the House of Lords in 1910 re-established the control of government elected by representatives, and the subordination of the hereditary and irresponsible House to that which the people could choose for themselves. The payment of Members has somewhat enlarged the field of choice, though the expense of an election is still an almost impassable obstacle to a poor man. The Plural Voting Bill, passed through the Commons and

rejected by the Lords, was an attempt of the same sort to give equal political rights to individuals, irrespective of the amount of their property, and the Franchise Bill of 1912 proposed to abolish the property qualification, or limitation, altogether. The extension of political freedom in South Africa and the defeat of the House of Lords in its attempt to prevent the application of the new economic principles of Liberalism represented real conflicts in matters of vital importance. The other measures were comparatively trifling, and the proposal to enfranchise all adult men has less popular enthusiasm behind it than any previous Reform Bill which was introduced by a Government. The only existing problem which involves the struggle between essential Liberalism and essential Toryism is that of Woman Suffrage. It is here, more than in any other field of domestic policy, that the Government have failed to discover and to pursue the Liberal course.

It is not the purpose of the writer to describe in detail a course of events which has been so interesting to the student of reforming fanaticism, unimaginative administration, and political chicanery. The levity with which Members of Parliament have given pledges which they never meant to perform, and have prepared to break pledges given openly, in the face of all circumstances, existing, probable, and possible, may seem ludicrous or contemptible according to the disposition of those who watch the working of the political machine.[360] The writer has little to say about this subject in this place. He is now only concerned to place the demand for the enfranchisement of women in relation with other expressions of the Liberal habit of mind. The

arguments which support Woman Suffrage are those which have supported every proposal for the enfranchisement of men. Women claim now to be treated in political society as Dissenters claimed to be treated in 1828, and Catholics in 1829, and the middle class in 1832. They decline to remain any longer at the disposition of governors over whom they have no control. They desire to enforce their opinions, not merely as a sex, for the removal of such political disabilities as are imposed upon them on account of their sex, but as separate and distinct individuals, each of whom has the same interest in questions of general politics as a man. Women have peculiar grievances in marriage laws, in the law dealing with sexual vice and crime, in the payment of women in the Civil Service, and in threatened legislation for excluding married women from work in factories. But their peculiar grievances are no more to them than those which they share with men. They pay taxes, their conditions of labour are regulated by the State, their wages may be affected, favourably or adversely, by legislation, questions of peace and war are decided to their benefit or detriment, in almost every action of Government the individual woman is involved to precisely the same extent as the individual man. It is not to them a question of men imposing oppressive taxes upon women, it is a question of a legislature imposing taxes upon individuals. The human being who controls his own fortunes and takes all the chance of life in society is to them no different from any other human being in the same situation. To confer political control upon one class of such human beings and to deny it to the other is to establish one of those artificial distinctions in social value which are of the essence of Toryism, and produce the

private egoism in the superior and the incomplete development of the inferior which have been already described.

The arguments against Woman Suffrage are the usual arguments of Toryism. The franchise is not a right, but a privilege, to be conferred by a disposing class upon such persons as it selects. Women are, from physical causes, periodically incapable of taking a rational interest in public affairs. To enfranchise women will distract them from their proper duties of maternity and the management of the home. It will produce dissension between husband and wife. It will lead to the admission of women to the professions, to Parliament, and to public offices. To those who have followed the course of Liberalism, as described in these pages, the arguments will appear familiar. The first is the general Tory assumption, inconsistent with every Liberal proposal of every kind, that the individual has no rights, except such as the State, or rather the governing class, chooses to bestow upon him. The second, third, and fourth are the egoistic arguments, which express the mind of a person who sees another always in relation with himself. They assume that the other is completely defined in terms of that relationship, and has outside its limits no character. All the actions of the other are explained by abstract reasoning from that assumption. Women are thus supposed to be involved entirely in their sex, and while no man suggests that the demand of transport workers for higher wages or the violence incident to a transport strike is an expression of maleness, the demand of women for the franchise and the violence of militant Suffragists are assumed to be the actions of spinsters disappointed of maternity and of females impelled by perverted sexual instincts.[361] The argument from

maternity is one of those which imply that the governed class must be confined, so far as artificial methods permit, to those occupations which it can only perform in association with the governors. Women's political fortunes must be regulated upon the assumption that they ought to become mothers. Women are not to be free to choose maternity out of all possible occupations, they must be driven to it by the want of opportunity to do anything else. It is not a question of what women think that they ought to do, but of what men think that they ought to do. The individual is not to have the right to plan out her life as she pleases. Maternity is her business, and men will so contrive the State as to discourage her from engaging in any other. In the same way eighteenth-century fathers warned their daughters not to develop their minds, lest the revelation of intellectual power should discourage suitors. Literary education was withheld in the reign of George III for the same reason that political education is withheld to-day, because it involves the independent activity of the individual. The fourth argument is even more crudely selfish than the third. Stated in plain terms, it means that if women have votes they will tend to form political opinions of their own, that these may differ from those of their husbands, and that as such a discordance could not be tolerated, the home will be broken up. The husband might be wrong. But the argument has nothing to do with the soundness of his opinions. He is entitled to think for himself, and in order to maintain his unquestioned despotism of political judgment the wife is to be deprived of the encouragement to thinking for herself. Another argument, that the natives of India will refuse to submit to government by a race which has enfranchised its women, is a characteristic example

of the reaction of Imperialism upon domestic liberty. The constitution of the United Kingdom is to be determined, not by the needs of its inhabitants, but by the wishes of a race whom they have conquered. The development of the individual is subordinated to the use which the disposing class wishes to make of her. Even if it were true that the Indian peoples would object to the enfranchisement of English women, an assertion which has never been supported by any evidence, the success of the argument would be the most astonishing example of Toryism in English history. No Englishman would suggest, after the loss of the American Colonies, that one self-governing community of white men within the Empire should dictate to another how its government should be constituted. But it carries the opposite doctrine of interference in local affairs to a frantic extremity, to say that a conquered race shall be allowed to dictate the constitution of the government of the conquerors. If this argument prevails, and the ill temper of the Indian peoples is allowed to decide the form of our political system, our eighteenth-century exploitation of them will be amply avenged. The last argument, that enfranchisement will only be a step towards other measures of emancipation, is another characteristic expression of Toryism. Private depreciation will cease, as soon as political depreciation is abolished. How can a Liberal man dictate to a woman how she shall exert herself in society? There is no motive, other than that of selfish interest, the desire to retain the most honourable and profitable occupations for the dominant sex, which can impel a man to the use of this argument. It is precisely that which most roused Burke to the support of the Catholics. It was used forty years ago against the women who wished to practise medicine,

and Sophia Jex-Blake was covered with insult, and even pelted with mud, for no other reason than that she tried to obtain admission to the medical schools of Edinburgh. It is now admitted that if a woman has the natural capacities which enable her to practise medicine mere artificial restrictions shall not stand in her way. When the medical profession is opened, how can any other logically be kept closed? When the individual can satisfy the tests which are imposed at the entrance, whether they are tests by examination or tests by election, why should she be excluded because she possesses the quality of sex, which has nothing to do with those tests? This is simply to brand women, who vary infinitely among themselves, with a class mark, and to decide the fortunes of each individual by some general assumption which may be true in other cases and false in hers. No one can use this argument, who is not steeped in those ideas of domination and disposition, which once operated in the same way to prevent the free development of Catholics and Dissenters. The case against Woman Suffrage varies little from the case against every other Liberal movement, and some of the arguments are literally the same as the arguments against the Reform Bills of 1832, 1867, and 1884. Fundamentally the case is pure Toryism.[362]

In 1906 the movement in favour of Woman Suffrage, neglected during the Imperialist reaction, became once more prominent. Various causes contributed to produce this revival. Like all the other movements for enlarging the opportunities of women, it partook of the fortunes of the general movement of Liberalism. In the history of English women the periods of emancipation have always been those of

Liberal ascendancy, and the geographical and social divisions between Liberalism and Toryism have always been substantially the same as those between Feminism and Anti-Feminism.[363] The manufacturing districts of the North are Liberal and Feminist. The agricultural districts of the South are Tory and Anti-Feminist. The Feminist movement is strong among the better sort of artisans and those of the middle class who depend upon their own exertions. It is weak among the country gentry and those whom accumulated wealth enables to live a parasitic or partly parasitic existence. The so-called Liberal who opposes the emancipation of women finds himself allied with his hereditary political enemies. Liberalism must be universal. The immediate causes of the new agitation for Woman Suffrage were three. The first was the economic condition of working women, upon whom the low wages, long hours, and unhealthy surroundings, which are described by the general term of "sweating," pressed with far greater force than upon men. The second was the general improvement in feminine education, not only by the improvement of schools and colleges for women of the middle class and the public education of women of the working class, but by the development of women's organizations. Bodies like the Women's Liberal Federation, a purely political association, the National Union of Women Workers, an association of middle-class women for the study and improvement of women's labour of all sorts, the Women's Co-operative Guild, an association of working women, the various Women's Trade Unions, associations of women for the protection of their industrial interests, all these bodies, founded in the twenty-five years preceding the Liberal victory, had broadened and

deepened the minds of women, extended their knowledge of affairs, increased their practical capacity, and given them that interest in association for the management of common concerns which is the basis of all political movements. In particular, their attention had been directed to foreign countries like the United States, Australia, and Norway, where women had recently been enfranchised, and more than one international association linked up the English movement with the rest of the universal progress of women. But the most influential of all the causes of the new strength of the agitation was the increased knowledge of physical facts and the consequences of sexual vice. The development of sick nursing since Florence Nightingale, the experience of work among prostitutes since Josephine Butler, and the study of medicine since Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Sophia Jex-Blake, had revealed to an increasing number of women the dreadful consequences of a moral standard which indulged men and degraded women. Prostitution appears to the Suffragist to be a direct consequence of the political supremacy of one sex over the other, to be the result of that encouragement of egoism which always follows the disposition of the political affairs of one class by another. There are in the United Kingdom at the present day not less than one hundred thousand women who are kept, through no desire of their own, for no other purpose than that of the destruction of their bodies and souls for the gratification of their political superiors. In 1899 Englishmen went to war, as they supposed, to rescue some of their countrymen from oppressive taxation and the abuse of the machinery of justice. The Suffragists since 1906 have been conducting a political agitation of a milder sort, as they suppose,

to rescue some of their fellow-creatures from an infinitely more dreadful fate. Those who require an explanation of their earnestness, or an excuse for their extravagance, will find it in their belief that social degradation is the inevitable consequence of political inferiority. The White Slave Traffic Act of 1913, flung by Parliament as a sop to womanhood in revolt, merely touches the surface of the problem. The whole system of sexual ethics is put in issue by the Woman Suffrage movement.[364]

The failure of the Government and their followers to deal liberally with this question has been an interesting revelation of the incompleteness of self-styled Liberalism, and of the power of the party machine to subdue independent thinking to the convenience of Ministers with stereotyped minds. The majority of members of the Liberal party, in the Cabinet and elsewhere, have acknowledged the justice of the demand, even though its sudden violence has taken them by surprise. A minority, which unhappily includes Mr. Asquith, have displayed a Toryism, in matters of sex, as complete as that of Castlereagh. It has been particularly unfortunate for the credit of the Liberal party that its leader at such a critical moment should be a man of little imagination. It is the large imagination, ever ranging beyond the bounds of the practicable and the expedient, and detecting in the obscurity of apparent chaos the currents of new social forces, which distinguishes the greatest statesmen from those who are merely great. Peel had it, though in him it was often blind and groping. Disraeli had it, though spoilt by his mean and tawdry ideals. Gladstone had it, in full measure, and so, with less practical gifts, had Campbell-Bannerman. The mantle of leadership descended in 1908 upon the shoulders

of a man who had all the qualities of a great leader except the greatest of all; and Mr. Asquith's inability to see the rightness of the women's movement has brought his party into great difficulty and greater discredit. In spite of his own public promise to adopt the opinion of the House of Commons, even if it be contrary to his own, a perverted sense of loyalty has caused many of his followers to find in his feelings a reason for the violation of their own express and public pledges. This dullness of vision in Ministers has been severely blamed. But it is not for the want of imagination which disables them from understanding the problem that they are to be condemned. The historian who wastes his indignation on such natural incapacities will have little to spare for the graver political vices. The blameworthiness of the Liberal party and the Government lies in their mismanagement of the disorder which was produced by their refusal to redress grievances. The writer has nothing to say in defence of the recent actions of the militant Suffragists. The earliest breaches of the law produced no substantial injury to anybody but the women themselves. Those of the last twelve months have in some cases been as wicked as they have in all cases been foolish. But however arrogant, reckless, and unscrupulous the militant movement may now have become, it was in origin as disinterested and as remorseless in its self-sacrifice as any political movement in history, and its corruption is due no more to the native ill-disposition of the women than to the folly of the Government and its supporters. [365]

However that may be, the treatment of the militant Suffrage movement since the death of Sir Henry

Campbell-Bannerman has been in the very temper of the Toryism of the French Revolution. Trifling disorders, springing from political discontent, have been treated as serious crimes, and people who offended, not out of private malice or greed, but out of a desire to improve the conditions of society, have been subjected to harsh and degrading punishments. It has always been the contention of Liberals in opposition that a distinction should be drawn between criminals whose motives are political and criminals whose motives are personal, between those who break the law for private and anti-social ends and those who break it for ends which they honestly believe represent the advantage of their fellow-creatures. This distinction, obvious to the moralist, is expressed in the legislation of almost every other civilized state, as well as in that Act of Parliament which provides that a seditious libeller shall be treated in prison, not as a common offender, but as a first-class misdemeanant. The same ethical distinction impelled the Whigs to oppose Tory methods of repression during the French War, and was the basis of all modern Liberal attacks on Tory methods in Ireland. Liberals have always recognized that the maintenance of order is only a condition of the redress of grievances, and that those who are impatient for redress are to be restrained only and not to be injured. If there is one principle of administration more distinctively Liberal than any other, it is that wrongful action from right motives requires delicate handling, and that even if it must be punished, the motives which produce it must be destroyed, not by brutality, but by removal of the abuse which has created them. What the Government did with the militant Suffrage movement was to violate this essentially Liberal principle, and while

they refused to remove the cause of discontent, they repressed its early and trifling symptoms with a severity which only dangerous crime could have deserved.[366] The Government in fact did what Tory Governments have always done. They looked, not to the people concerned, to find out what they were, and why they acted as they did, but to the class brand which custom had placed upon them. They thought they were dealing with women, when in fact they were only dealing with human beings. They assumed that the disorder was due to something peculiar to the sex, and not to a state of mind which was common to men and women alike. Their formula was not the general political formula, "Disorder springs from grievances," but some hasty deduction from inaccurate assumptions about the physical constitution of women. They thought that they were dealing, not with political discontent, but with sexual aberration, and they sought for explanations, not in the history of Reform, Chartism, and Fenianism, but in medical treatises on the diseases of women.[367] They did not reflect that this revolt of women did not differ in any essential from previous revolts of men, or that as it sprang from similar causes it could be cured by the same remedies. When Ministers ought to have been giving facilities to a Woman Suffrage Bill, they were contriving means of avoiding vitriol, and based their policy upon speculations about erotic mania when they should have thought of nothing but common political principles. This sexuality of mind, exactly reproducing the mental habit of eighteenth-century Toryism, determined their fatal course of action.

Ministers could not reasonably have been required to introduce a Government Bill for the enfranchisement of women. The Cabinet had not been formed on that

basis, and no Anti-Suffrage Minister could be compelled to submit his judgment to that of his colleagues. But there has not been, at any time since 1906, any reason why facilities should not have been given for the passing of a private members' Bill. So long as the Government refused to help the women, and refused to allow private members to help them, even while they continued to inflict degrading forms of punishment, so long must their administration increase instead of diminish discontent. Facilities for the private Bill were refused year after year, until the militant women and their sympathizers had become convinced of the insincerity of the Government, and when at last the concession was obtained it was robbed of all value by the recollection of previous quibbling and evasion. In the meantime punishment had failed to do anything but poison the temper of agitation. Imprisonment in the third division among common felons was at first imposed upon women who had been guilty only of technical offences. When the women were roused to demand privileged treatment in the second division, the Government advanced to granting ordinary treatment in the second division. When the demand became a demand for imprisonment in the first division, the Government consented to privileged treatment in the second division. When the women refused to submit to any imprisonment at all, and prepared to starve rather than remain in jail, the Government made a partial surrender, and offered the leaders the first division, while it kept their followers, the tools and instruments of their conspiracy, in the second. Each stage of the disease has been conscientiously treated with those remedies which would have cured it at the preceding stage, and always without any result, except to increase the contempt with which the

offenders regarded the Government. Concessions, which should have been made boldly and generously, have been made grudgingly and parsimoniously, and where prompt and spontaneous action would have been effective, this tardy and reluctant yielding to pressure has produced no good at all.

The folly of the Government has not been confined to their neglect. In two matters they have been guilty of positive action, for which they cannot escape heavy censure. The first was the adoption of the policy of feeding by force those women who starved rather than submit to degrading conditions of imprisonment. The second was Mr. Churchill's refusal to inquire into the charges which were brought against the police in connection with one of the women's deputations. The writer will not attempt to argue the abstract merits of the operation of forcible feeding. He has read most of the public and private proofs that among criminals, lunatics, and dyspeptics it is a harmless process. They appear to him to have nothing to do with the Government's adoption of it in the case of people who were neither of bad character nor of unsound mind, and who were not only unwilling patients, but were already inspired by a profound resentment against their political superiors. It is not the business of a statesman to consider how his actions would affect other persons in other conditions. It is his business to consider only what is their effect upon the particular individuals with whom he has to deal at the particular moment. Tried by this test, the Government's forcible feeding was of almost incredible stupidity. It is clear that in the case of the militant women it produced grave physical and mental injuries, in many cases of a permanent kind.[368] Of its political consequences

the writer can speak from personal knowledge. It exasperated the temper of the agitation to an infinitely greater degree, and brought us, in 1909, from the breaking of a few panes of glass to the brink of assassination. The concession of privileged treatment which was wrested from Mr. Churchill in 1910 at once allayed this dangerous spirit, but it was at once revived in 1912, when Mr. McKenna, defying all experience, resumed the stupid and brutal policy of his predecessor. It is of course argued that the Government cannot enforce the law unless it adopts this course. Are we to release dangerous criminals because they refuse food? The answer to this is simply that if the Government had been wise in the past they would have had no such difficulty to encounter in the present. When forcible feeding was first employed, hardly a single assault, even of the most trivial character, had been committed, and there had only been a few isolated cases of the breaking of windows. If concessions had been freely granted then, crime would not have become so frequent or so dangerous now. The Government, having adopted harsh methods at the beginning, are impelled to use harsher methods now. They have been occupied with great diligence in turning enthusiasts into fanatics, and fanatics into criminals, and they are now faced with dangers and difficulties which could once have been prevented by the use of tact and discretion. Five years ago they might have disarmed their rebellious subjects by giving a week of Parliamentary time for the study of their grievance. To-day, they can only subdue them by starvation or hanging. They will get little credit from posterity either for humanity or for wisdom.

The episode of Parliament Square was as ugly an affair as Mitchelstown or Peterloo. On the 18th

November, 1910, the militant organization known as the Social and Political Union sent a numerous body of women to present a memorial to the Prime Minister. Mr. Asquith, whose views had been repeatedly published, declined to receive the deputation, it was turned back by the police, and many women were arrested. Women, under similar circumstances, had been more than once maltreated by the mob. On this occasion it was alleged that brutality was displayed by the police as well as by the populace. In more than twenty cases specific charges of indecent assault were made. Many of the women concerned are known to the writer, personally or by reputation, and however strongly he may disagree with their general policy, he has no doubt that they are incapable of fabricating accusations of this sort. The police, against whom the charges were made, were not those who had had to deal with previous deputations, but had been brought in from rougher districts like Whitechapel. The case against them was not brought by the militant women, but by the committee of Members of Parliament of all parties, which had been formed to press forward the cause of Woman Suffrage in the House of Commons, and it was with great reluctance that the women consented to give the committee the information for which it asked. Mr. Ellis Griffith, a Liberal, and Lord Robert Cecil, a Conservative, both lawyers of experience and reputation, personally examined some of the women, and read the written statements of the rest, and came to the conclusion that the complaints were made honestly and deserved inquiry. In the face of this request Mr. Churchill behaved precisely as Lord Grenville behaved in 1819, and Mr. Balfour in 1887. He made no attempt to examine any witnesses against the

police, and he declared that the charges should be brought against individuals in a court of law.[369] But while he refused to pronounce judgment on the constables, he was eager to pronounce judgment on the women. He acted, not as an impartial representative of the public in a dispute between officials and private citizens, but as a champion of the officials. He threw all his influence against the women, described their story as a fabrication, and the Social and Political Union as "a copious fountain of mendacity." Mr. Churchill's party followers will no doubt be content to accept his judgment. Posterity cannot act so lightly. It is not to accept accusations against individual policemen to say that charges put forward under such circumstances, and supported by such responsible and independent authorities, must have had some foundation in fact. No impartial observer can acquit either the police of misconduct, or the Home Secretary of a gross and partisan abuse of the powers of his office. Lord Gladstone, who began the maladministration of the law, could urge that he was taken by surprise, and that he knew neither the character of the individual women, nor the force of the movement which was behind them. Mr. McKenna, who succeeded Mr. Churchill, and has developed the policy of harshness with a caprice and a partiality which has enormously increased its ill effects, may plead his natural incompetence in explanation of all his blunders. Mr. Churchill has neither one excuse nor the other. He acted in cold-blood, and he is too wise a man to be allowed to suggest that he did not know his duty. His was a deliberate refusal to grant to his political opponents the opportunity of obtaining a public endorsement of their complaints, and it will always remain a blot upon the reputation of the Government. The memory

of this affair, added to the passionate resentment provoked by forcible feeding, now prevents all chance of reconciliation. The loss of the Franchise Bill of 1912, which no reasonable person believes to be the result of deliberate dishonesty on the part of the Government, has only completed the process of satisfying the militant women that there is no good faith to be found in Parliament. The Government should have given full facilities to the Private Members' Bills of 1910 and 1911. When they had the opportunity, they refused to disarm the hostile party by concession, and when they at last had the will, the opportunity was taken away. They will now be faced by a conspiracy, involving danger, certainly to property, and probably to life, less extensive and less excusable, but no less determined than Irish Fenianism. They will suppress it with the approval of the great majority of English men and women. But no acknowledgment of the moral corruption which has now fallen upon the women will blind those who have followed closely the varying fortunes of the Suffrage movement to the fact that that moral corruption is largely due to the gross administrative blunders of the Government and the levity and moral cowardice of Members of Parliament. Such clumsy folly in the management of discontent has not been displayed in England since 1832.[370]

While the failure of the Liberal party in one important part of domestic policy has thus been unquestionable and complete, it appears, so far as it is possible to get an accurate sight of events, that they have also failed in foreign policy. In India, the Liberalism of Lord Morley triumphed over official tradition. The admission of natives of India to a greater share in their own government was as much an expression of Liberalism as the reversal of Lord

Curzon's partition of Bengal, a preference of the national idea over one of those mechanically efficient devices by which despotic Governments continually increase their own difficulties. Outside India, the management of external affairs has been less successful. The deportation of Cole of Nairobi was an excellent example of the protection of native populations against the arbitrary power of white colonists. But no effort on the part of the British Government could guarantee the political rights of black men under the new South African Constitution, and this and the equally complete failure to secure freedom of movement and occupation for coloured immigrants into the new Federation are disquieting evidence of the conflict between the two Imperial principles of self-government for white men and full opportunities of development for black and brown. These failures could hardly have been avoided. The general failure of foreign policy, so far as it is possible to speak with certainty, is due largely, if not entirely, to our own fault.

The writer has already indicated, in the first chapter of this book, how little he is disposed to lay down hard and fast rules for the conduct of foreign policy. It is conceivable, in his view, that facts may subsequently be disclosed which will satisfy Liberals of another generation that Sir Edward Grey's abandonment of most of the principles of his Liberal predecessors has been forced upon him, and that the speeches, in which he has appeared to repudiate them, have been the utterances of diplomacy rather than conviction.[371] Imperialism has not been a monopoly of Great Britain. Russia in China and Persia, Japan in China, Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy in Tripoli, and France in Morocco,

have in turn shown their willingness to upset the established rules of international morality in the pursuit of their own interests. In the almost universal demoralization of foreign policy which has followed The Hague Peace Conference of 1899, it has perhaps been impossible for a single statesman to tread a straight path. When Sir Edward Grey failed to persuade the Powers to take concerted action to prevent Austria's cynical appropriations of 1908, the fault was unquestionably not his.[372] The selfish aims of his associates prevented him from attaining his own object. But other circumstances suggest that he has not had the will to act liberally, even if he has had the opportunity. Before 1908 he had shown a personal incapacity, which had nothing to do with the machinations of competing diplomatists. The public execution and flogging of the villagers of Denshawi in 1906, for an offence which barely amounted to manslaughter, and was committed under extreme provocation, was more in the Russian than in the English temper. Here the Foreign Secretary acted under the direction of Lord Cromer, and it is not impossible that in other cases he may have surrendered himself to the hierarchy of the Foreign Office.[373] Whatever the cause, the desertion of Liberalism is clear. Even Lord Lansdowne and the late Lord Salisbury, after the Boer War, gave up some of the inheritance of Beaconsfield. They ceased to befriend Turkey, and in 1903 Lord Lansdowne failed, through no fault of his own, to revive the policy of concerted European pressure on the Turk. He, like Lord Salisbury, generally pursued a policy which tended towards internationalism, and away from egoism. But his successor twisted even his internationalism into weapons of offence. In 1904 Lord Lansdowne made

an agreement with France by which the two contracting Powers settled all their outstanding disputes. This was intended by its author to be only the first of a series of international agreements. It was converted by Sir Edward Grey into a weapon of offence against Germany, the country upon which, after passing from Russia to the United States, and from the United States to France, the animosity of modern Toryism had definitely settled. The fortunes of Great Britain were bound up with those of France. The theory of the Balance of Power was revived, every diplomatic conference was made a conflict between France and Great Britain on the one side and Germany on the other, and in 1911 the lives and the wealth of the British people were endangered, not to maintain any moral principle or any British interest, but to promote the material interests of French financiers in Morocco. To this diplomatic warfare, and to the military warfare which it constantly contemplates, our whole foreign policy is subdued. When Germany proposed at a Hague Conference, that international agreement should abolish the system of destroying private property at sea, Great Britain refused even to discuss the point. When we fought Germany, our great fleet would be able to destroy her commerce. The right to destroy her commerce was our most powerful weapon against her, and as our peace policy was determined by our war policy, we preserved this relic of barbarism. The inevitable consequence of our diplomacy was to give German Jingoism an irresistible argument for the increase of the German Fleet. The increase in the German Fleet was described in threatening language by Mr. Churchill, and was matched by an increase in our own. The burden of armaments increased, and unremunerative

expenditure drained the resources which should have been available for the costs of social reform. Such was the foreign policy of Great Britain until the outbreak of the Balkan War at the end of 1912. There may have been information in the possession of the Foreign Office which justified this persistent hostility towards Germany. That country may have been animated by some desire to destroy our commerce, or to appropriate our Colonies. So far as we are allowed by our governors to learn any facts at all, there is no more than a shadow of a foundation for such an assumption. Up to the end of 1912 we were bound straight for a conflict, of the causes of which not one Englishman in ten thousand knew anything definite, and not one in a thousand knew anything at all. All the Gladstonian principles, rightly or wrongly, had been forsaken. We made no serious attempt to establish the comity of nations, we carefully distinguished between Germany and the rest of the world, and we entangled ourselves in engagements with France and Russia, which brought us no profit, and served only to increase the suspicions of the German people. This violation of Liberal principle, which was also a violation of the practice of the last Tory Foreign Secretary, may have been inevitable. But its justification is not contained in anything that has yet been said or written on behalf of Sir Edward Grey, and those of us who held by the old rules during the Boer War can get only a melancholy satisfaction out of a comparison of the failure of this Imperialist Liberal in foreign affairs with the successes of his Pro-Boer associates in South Africa, in India, and in Social Reform.[374]

The departure from principle which has most disgusted the supporters of the Government is the

alliance with Russia. This, like so many of our modern associations, is cemented by finance, and the union of the two Governments has been followed by a steady flow of British capital into Russian municipal and industrial securities. It is suggested that the object of both the diplomatic and the financial support is the same, to restore the influence of Russia, seriously impaired by her humiliation at the hands of Japan and by her violent internal dissensions, in the councils of Europe. In other words, we have strengthened the Russian Government as part of our scheme for keeping Germany in her place. This is one of those alliances which would have been repugnant to a Liberal of the old school. Russian Government and British Government are essentially different. The temper of national independence, which is welcomed by English Liberals everywhere, and even by English Tories outside the boundaries of the Empire, is to the governing class of Russia what a heap of dirt is to a sanitary inspector. It is a perpetual menace to what it is their business to protect, and they devote to the extinction of some of the noblest of human aspirations the untiring zeal with which better men apply themselves to the destruction of evil. No Government in the world has so persistently violated the rules of morality in its dealings with its own subjects or with the foreign peoples who lie without its boundaries. In five years of the twentieth century it executed 3,750 persons, its courts of law sentenced 31,885 political offenders to imprisonment or exile, and its administrative orders transported 28,173 others without trial. More than 30,000 of its Jewish subjects have been massacred in organized riots at which it has connived. In these affairs it has had to deal with all sorts of persons. But it has exercised

little discrimination in its treatment, and if some of its victims have been the vilest of criminals, it has also caused thousands of honourable men and women to be shot or bludgeoned, to be exiled, or to rot in crowded prisons. It has even employed agents to promote the assassination of its own associates, that it might have the better excuse for taking violent measures to suppress peaceful agitation. It has now crowned its career of domestic misgovernment by beginning to destroy the liberties of the Finnish people, whose social policy has been at once the admiration of the civilized world, and a standing rebuke to the comparative brutality of Russia. It is not the business of Great Britain to dictate to established Governments, or to go to war with them for the better regulation of their internal affairs. Nor is it the business of a British Government to refuse to make agreements with any foreign Government for the management of matters in which they are jointly concerned. But it is the duty of a British Government not to corrupt its own people by involving itself intimately with a Government whose methods are not only different but are utterly alien from its own. An alliance with France is bad only in so far as it is turned into a combination against Germany. An alliance with Russia is in itself unnatural and horrible.

The Persian Agreement of 1907 appears to have been twisted into such an alliance. Originally that Agreement, like the Moroccan Agreement with France, provided merely for the settlement of outstanding disputes in Asia, and as such it was welcomed by all Liberals. It has been converted into an instrument for the destruction of the independence of Persia, which both Powers had solemnly declared it was their intention to maintain,

and more recently into a means of enabling Russia to blackmail the struggling Chinese Republic. The successive steps of Russian aggression cannot be described here. In effect, the Northern Sphere, marked out by the Agreement solely for the purposes of financial and commercial development, has been annexed politically to Russia, and occupation by her troops has been followed by outrages of almost indescribable brutality. The attempt of the Persian Government to restore the finances of the country, with the aid of the American Mr. Morgan Shuster, was frustrated by Russian intervention, and for want of money the protection of trade routes, life, and private property has ceased in many districts. In each successive act of Russian insolence, except the foul barbarities at Tabriz, Sir Edward Grey has acquiesced, and he actively assisted in the removal of Mr. Shuster. He has apparently acted Liberally in only two matters, in his protest against the outrages which followed the Russian occupation, and in his refusal to participate in the guilt of a formal partition. But the national independence of Persia to which the recent revolution seemed to give a new justification, has been practically destroyed, and the supposed limitations on British freedom of action by war of protest are construed out of that Agreement, which professed to be based upon its preservation. The strangling of Persia has not been such a plain affair of right and wrong as some critics of Sir Edward Grey suggest. Generations of misgovernment had corrupted the native system. Mr. Shuster gave provocation by his straightforward independence where a more supple diplomatist might have succeeded in managing even Russia. But he was the only hope of Persia, and if he could have been supported as Afghanistan has been supported, even

Russia might have been forced to hold her hand.[375] Here again we are brought up against our policy of isolating Germany. At all costs Russia was to be kept out of the orbit of German diplomacy. We acquiesced in Russian appropriations in Persia for the same reason that we supported French exploitations of Morocco. We were bound to make it to the interest of our allies to prefer association with us to association with our enemy. Where we might have defended a people against Russia on moral grounds, we sacrificed them for our diplomatic interests. Where we might have promoted international agreements for the disposition of uncivilized races, we were compelled to resist them in the interest of the ally, with whom we had just arranged a private deal. All came back to our settled policy of acting in opposition to Germany. There may be excuses, of which we have as yet no knowledge. But it is unquestionable that the present Government had lost the habit of expressing Liberalism in foreign policy. Liberals had certainly reason to regret it. Posterity alone will know whether or not they had also reason to be ashamed.

More recent events have lightened the general gloom. The Persian disgrace remains, and the Russian penetration of Mongolia proceeds steadily. But just as the rising tide of French Jingoism seems to have found a President and a Premier who will float easily upon its surface, the Anglo-German feud has begun to ebb. Apparently by no effort of our own, but simply through the overwhelming pressure of our common interest in peace, the Balkan crisis has united Great Britain, France, and Germany in preventing war between Austria and Russia. We have not lacked suggestions that we should make war on Germany because Russia wished to prevent Austria

from attacking Servia. This would have been the climax of anti-Liberalism; to engage in war because Servia wished to impose her will upon that of the Albanians, and because the allies with whom we were entangled decided to support her.[376] From this disgrace, and from the destruction of European civilization which such a war would have involved, we have been preserved. The reality of common interests and common aims has broken the fiction of the Balance of Power into pieces, and Sir Edward Grey, whose career had been watched with dismay by the most Liberal of his followers, now finds himself in universal favour as he expresses once more the pure theory of Liberalism. The Concert of Europe has been revived, with Great Britain at the head of it, and if the Foreign Secretary can make out of our temporary association with Germany something in the nature of a permanent friendship he will render a greater service to his country than any of his predecessors. The gross brutality of Denshawi in 1906 and the unexplained provocation of Germany in 1911 will not be obliterated by a peaceful and honourable issue out of our afflictions, and the Russian difficulty is only now beginning. It is possible that there can be no such thing as a permanently Liberal Foreign Policy, that the systematic application of Liberal principles to foreign affairs can never be undertaken with any chance of success. No Liberal as yet will be content with that desperate assumption, and the recent improvement in the international situation rather confirms than weakens his belief that abroad, as at home, politics will ultimately rest upon a basis of ethics. His chief hope is not in the chancelleries, but in the large and increasing body of international associations of private persons. Unions for the purpose of promoting

peace, and for the discussion of the unnational interests of women and of working men, and periodical meetings of representatives of all nations to determine the principles of commercial law, and even the rules of war, are steadily uniting the nations by "organic filaments." For what the present Government has apparently done in the way of preventing rather than encouraging union, Liberals are ready enough to find excuses. But until they are presented with more facts than have yet been published by the Government itself, they will continue to contemplate its foreign record with more regret than satisfaction.

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Notes

[1] T. H. Green, *Works*, iii. 367.

[2] L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism*, 122.

[3] L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism*, 126, 127, 133.

[4] L. T. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction* (2nd edition), 166.

[5] Bulwer's *Life of Palmerston*, i. 278. Palmerston's list of "Liberals" of June, 1828, includes 11 Peers and 37 Commoners.

[6] *Representative Government*, chap. xvi.

[7] J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism* (1905 edition), 319.

[8] Morley's *Life of Cobden* (popular edition), 529. The reference is to Russia's assistance of Austria against the Hungarians.

[9] *Daily News*, 16th February, 1912.

[10] There are few modern expressions of a general theory of Tory politics. *The Letters of an Englishman* (Constable, 1911, 1912) are almost pure Toryism. Lord Hugh Cecil's *Conservatism* is tinged with Liberal ideas on Free Trade and Foreign Affairs. Mr. Pierse Loftus's *Conservative Party and the Future* is essentially Tory, but is rather suggestion for the future than an expression of the present mind of Toryism. Mr. J. M. Kennedy's *Tory Democracy* is the philosophy of Nietzsche masquerading in political dress, and bears no relation to practical politics, past, present, or future. Mr. Price Collier's *England and the English* is the Toryism of an American who has enjoyed the hospitality of the leisured class, and has read the *Times* with some diligence. The cheap reprint is introduced by a characteristic eulogy from the pen of Lord Rosebery, who seems to have spent the last twenty-five years, if not in a castle in Spain, at least in an eighteenth-century nobleman's country house. Neither he nor Mr. Collier seems to have any knowledge of the industrial North. The *Standard* has now opened its columns to a discussion of the principles and proposals of Toryism, but I have not yet (December, 1912) detected much system in what has been published. Various periodicals express

various shades of Toryism, from the purity of Mr. W. S. Lilly, through the individualism of Mr. A. Baumann, to the Protectionist-Social Reform School of "Curio."

[11] But most of the Tory Suffragists stop at a narrow property franchise.

[12] Mr. Lewis Harcourt at the Albert Hall, 28th February, 1911.

[13] T. H. Green, *Works*, iii. cxii.

[14] T. H. Green, *Political Obligation*, § 122.

[15] *Hansard*, III. cxxiv. 602.

[16] *Letters to a Friend on Votes for Women.*

[17] *Speeches reprinted from the Times*, 47.

[18] *National Review*, May, 1912, 420.

[19] *Observer*, leading article, 15th September, 1912.

[20] At the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, 13th November, 1896.

[21] *Morning Post*, leading article, 22nd August, 1912. The most startling feature of this passage is its assumption that patriotism can be bought, and, indeed, cannot be made secure except by being bought. If it be true that patriotism follows the cash, we are bound to the Argentine Republic and the United States by as close ties as to Canada, and if the present flow of British capital continues, our hearts will soon warm towards Russia. For the Liberal

view of Empire, half a century old, see Gladstone's speech (1855), quoted in Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, i. 363.

[22] See, for example, leading articles in the *Morning Post*, 18th July, 1912, and *Daily Telegraph*, 12th July, 1912.

[23] Morley's *Burke* (English Men of Letters), 136.

[24] Cole shot a black man because he suspected him of stealing sheep. Lewis shot another because his daughter said he had insulted her. Both acts were done in cold blood, and with the approval of local whites. There was no suggestion in either case that the law was inadequate or could not have been enforced.

[25] *Morning Post*, leading article, 14th May, 1912.

[26] The grossest modern example of Tory Imperialism is Mr. Bonar Law's proposal, while claiming the right to close English markets to foreign manufacturers, to keep those of India, whether Indians like it or not, open to English manufacturers. It is matched by his proposal that it should be left to the Dominions to say whether or not our own food supplies should be free or taxed.

[27] The *Times* recently spoke of "insolence" when a meeting of East Lancashire manufacturers and Members of Parliament criticized Sir Edward Grey's policy in Persia.

We may be wrong in the North. But we shall always think for ourselves. The same journal has made a vicious attack upon the Supreme Court of India, because it interferes with the arbitrary acts of executive officers.

[28] Moray's *Life of Cobden*, ii. 361. The *Review of Reviews* furnished another example of this vicious reaction when it urged (October, 1912) that England must not put pressure upon Turkey to reform its government of Macedonia, because such action would impair our authority over the Moslem of India. In other words, because of our Empire, we must connive at murder, rape, and every form of brigandage.

[29] *Parliamentary History*, xxv. 472.

[30] *Wilberforce Correspondence*, i. 219.

[31] *Annual Register*, 1793, 113.

[32] *Parl. Hist.*, xxx. 810.

[33] Walpole's *Life of Lord John Russell*, i. 56.

[34] The first exception to this rule was Mr. Smith the banker, who was made Earl Carrington in 1797.

[35] Scottish borough members were exempt. But Scottish boroughs were the most rotten of all rotten boroughs. An English county member must have £600 a year, a borough member £300. The qualifications were often fictitious.

[36] *Annual Register*, 1796, 52.

[37] *Parl. Hist.*, xxii. 422.

[38] *State Trials*, xxiii. 229.

[39] Speech on Seditious Societies, 17th November, 1795.

[40] Londonderry to Brougham, 31st August, 1829, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 121.

[41] Speech on *Revolutionary Principles*, 13th December, 1792. Compare the argument which is used to-day against the enfranchisement of working women. Toryism knows no sex.

[42] Speech on *Bull-baiting*, 24th May, 1802.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] *Speech*, 24th April, 1807.

[45] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 162, 165 (1798). The publication of reports of debates began in 1771, or rather, was then first permitted.

[46] *Hansard*, I. xli. 1045 (1819).

[47] *Hansard*, I. xxxviii. 1171 (1818).

[48] *Hansard*, I. xli. 388 (1819).

[49] *Hansard*, I. xli. 914. The resolutions were no more "disgraceful" than those of the ordinary Trade Union Congress of to-day.

[50] Arnould's *Life of Denman*, i. 253.

[51] In 1817 no less than 1,200 persons were sent to prison for offences against the Game Laws.

[52] *Hansard*, I., xxxix. 1435, 1439.

[53] Beaufoy's speech, *Annual Register*, 1787.

[54] Burke's *Memoirs of the English Catholics*, ii. 459, 466.

[55] *Speeches: On Repeal of the Test Act*, 2nd March, 1790.

[56] *Strictures on Female Education* (1799), i. 106.

[57] *Legacy to Young Ladies* (1826).

[58] *Legacy to his Daughters* (1784).

[59] Lucy Aikin's *Memoir of Mrs. Barbauld* (1825), xvi.

[60] See further, the writer's *Emancipation of English Women*, ch. 3.

[61] *Speeches*, 26th May, 1797.

[62] *Hansard*, I. xli. 391.

[63] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 1384.

[64] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, ii. 367.

[65] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 416.

[66] *Parl. Hist.*, xix. 1100.

[67] *Leviathan*, ii. ch. xvii.

[68] *On Civil Government*, ch. viii.

[69] *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe* (1792). Compare his *Speech at Bristol previous to the Election* (1780).

[70] *Speeches*, vol. vi. 310 (23rd March, 1797). Compare Granville, in the *Annual Register*, 1808, 196.

[71] Burke, *French Revolution*.

[72] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxii. 961 (1796).

[73] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 1429.

[74] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, iii. 88, 435. His ideas on education he tried to enforce on his own estates. But "the clergy opposed his lordship's intentions, lest the children should become Dissenters, although it was engaged that the children of Church people should go to Church with their parents." *Ibid.*, 438 n.

[75] Fitzmaurice, iii. 497, 498.

[76] *Ibid.*, ii. 329.

[77] *Ibid.*, 360.

[78] *Ibid.*, iii. 438.

[79] *Ibid.*, iii. 365.

[80] Letter to Lord Holland, 12th October, 1792.

[81] *Speeches*, vi. 383.

[82] M. Halévy suggests that the Wesleyan revival, which began in the middle of the eighteenth century, was largely if not

wholly responsible for the social changes. But, except in so far as it increased dissent in religion, the liberating influence of Wesleyanism was small. The Wesleyans are, to this day, the most conservative of Nonconformists, and their mystical piety was utterly opposed to the rationalistic freethinking of the Revolution.

[83] Arthur Young's *Annals*, xxv. *passim.*

[84] 39 Geo. III, c. 81; 39 & 40 Geo. III, c. 106.

[85] *Letters to his Son*, 19th December, 1767.

[86] Walpole's *George III*, iii. 197; Chesterfield's *Letters*, 12th April, 1768.

[87] *Annual Register*, 1770, 72.

[88] *Annual Register*, 1769, 125.

[89] *Annual Register*, 1769, 197 *et seq.*

[90] Stephen's *Memoirs of Horne Tooke*, *passim.*

[91] William Knox, in a letter to Grenville, *Grenville Papers*, iv. 336. Knox wrote the pamphlet *State of the Nation*, to which Burke replied in his celebrated *Observations*.

[92] For the views of Fox, see Lord Russell's *Correspondence of C. J. Fox*, I. 146; Walpole's *Last Journals*, ii. 241; and for those of the elder Pitt, *Chatham Correspondence*, ii. 367. The Duke of Richmond set up a claim to an old French peerage, by way of preparing an

asylum for himself when George III had finally established his despotism. Burke's *Correspondence*, ii. 112.

[93] *Speech at Bristol previous to the Election* (1780). The union between English reformers and American rebels was marked by deeds as well as words. In 1770 the Assembly of South Carolina subscribed £1,500 to the Society of the Friends of the Bill of Rights. *A. R.* 1770, 224.

[94] *A. R.* 1780, 51. See also Sir George Savile's *Address to the Freeholders of York*, 169.

[95] *A. R.* 1780, 55.

[96] Watson's *Anecdotes of His Own Time*.

[97] *Parl. Hist.*, xxix. 509.

[98] See, for instance, Luxford's case, mentioned by Fox in *Parl. Hist.*, xxix. 557, and contrast the judge and the juries in William Hone's trials (1817).

[99] See the speech of Calcagus to the British, in Tacitus' *Agricola*, c. 30.

[100] In her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

[101] *Political Arithmetic* (1774), 95.

[102] *Thoughts on Scarcity* (1795).

[103] *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. IV., cix.

[104] *Reports*, 1806, iii. 2.

[105] *On Civil Liberty* (1776), 72.

[106] *Political Justice* (1793), ii. 190.

[107] *Memoir of Major Cartwright*, i. 244.

[108] I use the term "Radicals" for these early extremists because it is the most convenient. But the word was not actually introduced till the end of the French War in 1816.

[109] P. 3.

[110] P. 22.

[111] P. 37.

[112] *Memoir*, i. 191.

[113] In 1793 the Society published a *Report on the State of the Representation*, which showed that 309 members were returned by private patronage, 163 of them by Peers (*Annual Register*, 1793).

[114] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 793.

[115] *Speeches*, v. 97, 115 (1795).

[116] *Hansard*, I. xxxviii. 1118. The voting on Burdett's resolution was 106 to 0. *Ibid.*, 1185.

[117] *Speeches*, 17th May, 1794.

[118] The minority in the Commons ranged between forty and sixty. In the Lords it was sometimes only three or four.

[119] *Appeal to the Nation* (1812), 78.

[120] *A Problem* (1824).

[121] Preface to *Rights of Man*, Part II.

[122] Part I.

[123] *Ibid.*, Conclusion.

[124] Part II., Preface.

[125] Part II., c. i.

[126] See for example the resolutions of the London Wards in the *Annual Register*, 1792.

[127] *Rights of Man*, Part II.

[128] Part II., Preface.

[129] Part II.

[130] *Rights of Man*, Part II., c. 3.

[131] So late as 1840 Cook, a Whig, described the *Rights of Man* as "a fountain of evil," and denounced its "licentiousness and impiety." See his *History of Party*, iii. 399.

[132] *Parl. Hist.* (1799), xxxi. 467. Compare Colonel Cawthorne's speech, xxx. 1440.

[133] *Hansard*, I. xli. 434 (1819).

[134] *Speeches*, 24th May, 1802.

[135] *Annual Register*, 1782. There is an admirable account of these different societies in Mr. G. S. Veitch's *Genesis of Parliamentary Reform* (1913).

[136] *Annual Register*, 1792. The Association soon got into difficulties. Its

president, Mr. John Reeves, published a pamphlet so violently Tory in tone that the House of Commons ordered him to be prosecuted for sedition involved in contempt of itself. He was acquitted.

[137] Government spies were sometimes involved in their own net. Two of them took part in treasonable proceedings at Edinburgh, and were hanged, drawn, and quartered (*Annual Register*, 1793, *Chronicle*, 53, 58).

[138] These cases are taken from the *Chronicle* in the *Annual Register*, 1792.

[139] *State Trials*, xxiii.; *Annual Register*, 1794, 32.

[140] *State Trials*, xxiii.

[141] *Report of Secret Committee of Commons*; *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 727.

[142] *Reports of Secret Committees* of 1795 and 1799 in the *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 475, 574, 688; xxxiv. 579, 1000, and the consequent debates. Dr. J. Holland Rose and Mr. G. S. Veitch come to the same conclusion as that reached in the text.

[143] Shelburne became Lord Lansdowne in 1784.

[144] *Speeches*, vi. 61.

[145] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 992.

[146] *Hansard*, I. xli. 7, 8.

[147] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 248.

[148] During their brief tenure of office in 1807 they stopped the Slave Trade, which Pitt's Government, while always condemning it, had never suppressed. This was the last and the noblest of the public acts of Fox.

[149] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 213.

[150] Letter to Lord Holland, in the *Correspondence of C. J. Fox*, 23rd February, 1799.

[151] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxiv. 244. Cf. Granville and Auckland at pp. 668, 717.

[152] To Charles Grey, 8th August, 1803, 6th January, 1804; *Correspondence of C. J. Fox*.

[153] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 684 (1793).

[154] *Ibid.*, xxx. 422 (1792).

[155] *Speeches*, v. 496.

[156] *Ibid.*, 84.

[157] *Ibid.*, 174.

[158] Alison's *Life of Castlereagh*, i. 21, 23.

[159] *Parl. Hist.*, xxxi. 1367 (1795).

[160] *Speeches*, vi. 620 (1805).

[161] *Hansard*, I. x. 290.

[162] *Hansard*, I. 354.

[163] *Ibid.*, I. x. 365.

[164] *Ibid.*, 376.

[165] The descent upon Copenhagen is to-day used as an argument for a powerful German Navy. Our old immoralities pursue us still.

[166] *Life and Opinions of Earl Grey*, by Colonel Grey, 220.

[167] *Ibid.*, 332.

[168] Yonge's *Life of Lord Liverpool*, ii. 26.

[169] Alison's *Castlereagh*, i. 500 *et seq.*; Castlereagh's speech in *Hansard*, I. xxx. 292.

[170] Walpole's *Life of Russell*, i. 110.

[171] *Hansard*, I. xxvii. 850.

[172] *Ibid.*, 862.

[173] *Ibid.*, 790, 791

[174] *Hansard*, I. xxvii. 773.

[175] *Ibid.*, I. xxvii. 782.

[176] *Hansard*, I. xl. 338, 671; xli. 421, 892.

[177] Tooke's *History of Prices*, ii. 4, 18.

[178] *Hansard*, I. xli. 924.

[179] Pellew's *Life of Sidmouth*, iii. 276. The name "Radical" was just coming into use. It was explained in the Commons as a new word in 1817 (*Hansard*, I. xxxvi. 761).

[180] Yonge's *Life of Liverpool*, ii. 429. There

were one or two flashes of imagination. Peel, just rising into prominence in the Tory party, thought that Reform could not be long delayed. "Public opinion is growing too large for the channels that it has been accustomed to run through" (*Croker Papers*, i. 170).

[181] *Hansard*, I. xxxvii. 570, 680, 682; xli. 230. Bamford's *Passages in the Life of a Radical*, *passim.*

[182] *Castlereagh Correspondence*, xii. 162, 259.

[183] *Annual Register*, 1819, *Hist.* 107. Hunt and his associates were afterwards sentenced to imprisonment for conspiracy, Hunt for two and a half years. *A. R.*, 1820; *Chron.*, 898.

[184] See the speech of Lord Grenville in *Hansard*, I. xli. 448.

[185] Burdett's motion of 1818 for Radical Reform was beaten, as already described, by 106 votes to 0. See *ante*, p. 105, and *Hansard*, I. xxxviii. 1185. For the official Whig view see Brougham, *ante*, p. 105.

[186] Yonge's *Liverpool*, ii. 365. Wilberforce supported State grants in aid of education from a similar motive. See *ante*, 52.

[187] *Hansard*, I. xli. 1212.

[188] Twiss, *Life of Eldon*, ii. 124.

[189] *Hansard*, II. xvi. 397.

[190] *Hansard*, II. xxi. 1632.

[191] *Wellington Despatches*, v. 409.

[192] *Hansard*, II. xxi. 1646, 1655. For the Liberal arguments see *ibid.*, xix. 1719; xxi. 1601, 1795; xxii. 591; xxiii. 75, 738; xxiv. 126.

[193] *Catechism of Parliamentary Reform* (1817).

[194] *Theory of Legislation*, ch. xiii. § 10.

[195] *Constitutional Code.*

[196] It was Macaulay who, during the debates on the Reform Bill, contrasted "the beauty, the completeness, the speed, the precision with which every process is performed in our factories, and the awkwardness, the rudeness, the slowness, the uncertainty of the apparatus by which offences are punished and rights vindicated" (*Speeches*, 5th July, 1831). This is pure Utilitarianism.

[197] *Hansard*, I. xxiii. 1166.

[198] *Report of Lords' Committee on the State of Ireland* (1825), 558.

[199] *Commons' Committee* (1825), 414.

[200] *Ibid.*, 810.

[201] Catholics were expressly excluded from the places of Lord Chancellor and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. These disabilities still exist.

[202] *Hansard*, II. xviii. 711.

[203] *Ibid.*, II. xviii. 869.

[204] A declaration was substituted for the old tests, that the candidate for office would never attempt "to injure or subvert" the Established Church. The Lords added the words "upon the true faith of a Christian." In freeing the Dissenters they disabled the Jews.

[205] Macaulay's *Miscellaneous Writings; Westminster Reviewer's Defence of Mill.*

[206] Macaulay's *Speeches*: Speech on Reform, 16th December, 1832.

[207] *Ibid.*

[208] Macaulay's *Miscellaneous Writings; Mill on Government*.

[209] Macaulay, *Speeches*, on Reform, 20th September, 1831.

[210] *Works* (1869), 670 (written in 1830).

[211] *Speeches*, on Reform, 16th December, 1831.

[212] Speech on the People's Charter, 3rd May, 1842.

[213] *Hansard*, III. xxiii. 101, 102.

[214] Bulwer's *Palmerston*, ii. 174, 178. See also his *Memoirs*, iii. 322, 323; Torrens' *Life of Melbourne*, i. 437; Walpole's *Life of Russell*, i. 264; and the *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1834. The King included the Catholic

Association, the Orangemen, the Political Unions and the Trade Unions in one dislike, and wished they could all be put down by law (Walpole's *Russell*, *ubi sup.*).

[215] See, for instance, Webb's *Local Government; The Parish and the County*; Peet's *Liverpool Vestry Books*, vol. i.

[216] *Speeches*, on Ten Hours Bill, 22nd May, 1846.

[217] Morley's *Life of Cobden*, i. 464.

[218] Hodder's *Life of Shaftesbury, passim*; Oastler's letters on *Slavery in Yorkshire* (1830); Hutchin and Harrison's *History of Factory Legislation*, ch. iii.-vi.

[219] The Acts were the Common Law Procedure Act (1832) and the Fines and Recoveries Act (1833).

[220] The House of Lords did its utmost to maintain the old abuses. The Bill was sent back to the Commons "with the title altered but the preamble changed.... Out of 140 clauses 106 have been in substance omitted, 18 other clauses have been introduced, and of the whole purport and intention of the original Bill little is to be found in the Bill which is now come down to us" (Lord John Russell in *Hansard*, III. xxxiv. 218). The Government stood firm, and, with the help of Peel, obtained the greater part of what they wanted.

[221] The contending principles were most clearly expressed in the Lords. The Duke of

Richmond and Lord Wharncliffe supported the Bill because it abolished a class distinction. Wellington opposed it for precisely that reason (*Hansard*, III. vii. 129).

[222] Romilly, *Memoirs*, iii. 252; *Memoir of Earl Spencer*, 185.

[223] *Hansard*, III. xlviii. 1252.

[224] *Ibid.*, 1304, 1305.

[225] *Hansard*, III. xlviii. 1321.

[226] *Ibid.*, 1322.

[227] *Ibid.*, xlviii. 1263.

[228] *Speeches*, on Education, 18th April, 1847.

[229] He was very ably supported by his secretary, Charles Buller.

[230] *Parliamentary Papers*, 1839, xvii. 53.

[231] Adderley, in *Hansard*, III. cx. 578 (1850).

[232] In ten days 5,884 petitions were presented against this "endowment of error."

[233] *Hansard*, III. cxxxi. 1123.

[234] Cobden to Peel; Morley's *Life of Cobden* (Popular Edition), 395.

[235] Quoted in F. W. Hirst's *Manchester School*, 491.

[236] Hirst, 229.

[237] *Speeches*, ii. 397.

[238] Hirst's *Manchester School*, 251.

[239] Morley's *Cobden*, 396.

[240] *Speeches*, i. 470; ii. 397, 399.

[241] Cobden, *England, Ireland, and America* (1835).

[242] *The Three Panics*; *Russia*, c. iv.

[243] *Speeches*, i. 463.

[244] Cobden, *Hansard*, III. cxii. 671.

[245] *England, Ireland, and America*.

[246] *Hansard*, III. clxxvi. 832.

[247] Hirst, xii.

[248] See *e.g.*, *Hansard*, I. xli. 456 (1819). A few Whig members like Lord Grenville (*ibid.*, 456) and Ellice (*ibid.*, 931) pressed the same point.

[249] The whole petition is set out in Hirst's *Manchester School*, 117 *et seq.*

[250] Hirst, 123 (1833).

[251] Cobden, *Speeches*, i. 256 (1845).

[252] Bright, in Hirst, 218.

[253] W. J. Fox, in Hirst, 175.

[254] Prentice's *History of the League*, i. 129, 140.

[255] A meeting of Birmingham women on

the 2nd April, 1838, protested against the Corn Law and the new Poor Law. It was connected with the Chartist agitation.

[256] Prentice, i. 171.

[257] *Hansard*, III. cx. 1248.

[258] After 1867 Factory Bills were often opposed by women and their champions, in the same logical spirit, as an interference by men with women's "liberty."

[259] *Hansard*, III. cx. 566.

[260] It is perhaps worth noting here that there is no trace to-day in the character of Australian colonists of any unusual taint in origin. Many of the transported criminals were made criminal simply by their surroundings, and when they obtained a new chance became as energetic, as resourceful, and as valuable to the community at large as the most respectable people in the Colony. This experience should always give pause to those who argue that the inhabitants of our slums are naturally degenerate, and that the process of "selection" which has reduced them to the depths has anything accurate or scientific about it.

[261] *Hansard*, III. ciii. 383; cviii. 161, 777; cxvii. 543; cxxiv. 554. Convicts were until 1867 occasionally sent to Western Australia, but only at the request of the inhabitants, who needed cheap labour.

[262] *Hansard*, III. cx. 559, 566.

[263] *Ibid.*, 1170. Compare Bright at p. 661, and Russell, *ibid.*, cviii. 549.

[264] Lord Grey, *Hansard*, III. cx. 657.

[265] Archbishop of Canterbury, *Hansard*, III. liii. 959.

[266] *Hansard*, III. cxxiv. 1150.

[267] *Hansard*, III., ccxliv. 1313.

[268] Lytton Bulwer's *Palmerston*, i., 139.

[269] *Ibid.*, 346.

[270] *Hansard*, III. cxii. 583, 584.

[271] *Ibid.*, 508, 509.

[272] *Hansard*, III. cxii. 586.

[273] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Granville*, i. 49.

[274] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, ii. 37.

[275] The two great blemishes, the inequality of the sexes, and the difficulty of giving redress to the poor, have now been unanimously condemned by a Royal Commission (1913).

[276] *Hansard*, III. cxliv. 1476.

[277] *Ibid.*, 1784.

[278] *Hansard*, III. clxxvi. 709.

[279] *Ibid.*, 829.

[280] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, ii. 431.

[281] Webb's *History of Trade Unionism*

(1902), 495.

[282] *Speeches*, ii. 100.

[283] *Hansard*, III. cx. 464. Compare Viscount Duncan's speech on the Window Tax, *ibid.*, 68.

[284] *Ibid.*, III. li. 537.

[285] *Speeches*, on re-election to Parliament, 2nd November, 1852.

[286] *Sartor Resartus* (1833) Bk. III. c. v. Compare his *Past and Present* (1843) and *Latter Day Pamphlets* (1850).

[287] *Thirty Years' Peace*, iv. 454.

[288] *Essay on Coleridge.*

[289] *Subjection of Women*, c. i.

[290] *Autobiography*; *Political Economy*, Bk. V. c. xi.

[291] Sir Henry Craik, *The State in its Relation to Education*, 84, 85.

[292] *Fortnightly Review* (1865); reprinted in *National and Social Problems* (1908).

[293] *England, Ireland, and America.*

[294] *Hansard*, III. lxxii. 1016.

[295] *Speeches*, on the Coercion Bill, i. 308.

[296] *Speeches*, i. 425, 369 (1866).

[297] *Hansard*, III. cxciv. 2071.

[298] *Ibid.*, 1955, 1963.

[299] See the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the condition of education in England (1869-70). So little importance was attached to the education of girls that the Commission at first proposed to confine its work entirely to boys' schools!

[300] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 318.

[301] For a statement of Gladstone's views on war and the Manchester doctrine, see his speech at Edinburgh on the 17th March, 1880, quoted in Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 182.

[302] *Times*, 25th September, 1870.

[303] He succeeded Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office just before the outbreak of the war.

[304] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 350.

[305] *Ibid.*, 353.

[306] *Ibid.*, ii. 346.

[307] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 347.

[308] *Ibid.*, 348.

[309] The Prime Minister estimated these at more than the whole National Debt (Lord Selborne's *Memorials*, II. i. 231.)

[310] One of his resolutions advocating intervention was beaten by 131 votes, a far greater majority than the Government could expect on any party measure.

[311] Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon

resigned their posts in the Ministry rather than share the responsibility of such a crime. The former suspended his resignation for a few weeks.

[312] Afterwards Marquis of Salisbury.

[313] Beaconsfield did not stop at this point. He made a treaty with Turkey, binding us to defend her possessions in Asia, and her to reform her system of government. The reforms were never carried out, and fifteen years later the Armenian massacres showed what Turkish promises were worth. One omission was made in these arrangements. Bismarck offered to support a British occupation of Egypt. Beaconsfield refused thus to impair the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and took a worthless "lease" of the island of Cyprus instead. The sanction of Europe for our incursion into Egypt was thus lost.

[314] Lord Mayo, quoted in *Hansard*, III. ccxliii. 312. Lady Betty Balfour's *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration* is a very good account of the Viceroy's aims and methods. See also the Blue Book, *Papers Relating to Afghanistan* (1878).

[315] Balfour, 30.

[316] For the Parliamentary debates see *Hansard*, III. ccxliii. 245 (Lords), and 310 (Commons). Lord Lawrence's views were quoted from a dispatch of his (1869) at p. 311.

[317] *Hansard*, III. ccxliii. 349.

[318] *Hansard*, 380. Mr. Chamberlain's defence of the claim to criticize a war while it is in progress (p. 382) is the best possible comment on his treatment of Pro-Boers twenty years later.

[319] The best Liberal speeches are in *Hansard*, III. ccxliii., Lords Halifax (245), Lawrence (261), and Grey (406); Whitbread (310), Chamberlain (380), and Gladstone (541).

[320] *The Midlothian Campaign* (speeches in 1879 and 1880), 113.

[321] *Ibid.*, 194.

[322] *The Midlothian Campaign*, 19.

[323] *Ibid.*, 66.

[324] *Ibid.*, 131.

[325] *The Midlothian Campaign*, 58.

[326] *The Midlothian Campaign*, 63.

[327] Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Sir John Gorst, and Sir Henry Drummond Wolff.

[328] *Hansard*, III. cclxxviii. 1174. Bright's best speech is at cclx. 1199.

[329] *Times*, 21st November, 1883; *Nineteenth Century*, January and February, 1884. Miss Octavia Hill, who knew more about the subject than anybody else, was not appointed a member of the Commission,

though she gave evidence. Twenty years elapsed before a woman sat on a Royal Commission.

[330] *Report* of Lord Bessborough's Commission (1881), 21.

[331] Lord Morley's *Miscellanies*, iv. 306.

[332] *Midlothian Campaign*, 44.

[333] See *Hansard*, III. ccxcviii. 1659; ccxcix. 1085, 1098, 1119. Lord Salisbury spoke at Newport on the 7th October, 1885, three months after Lord Carnarvon had, with his knowledge, communicated with Parnell.

[334] *Hansard*, III. ccciv. 1050.

[335] *Ibid.*, 1372.

[336] At Nottingham, 31st January, 1913.

[337] *Hansard*, III. ccciv. 1268.

[338] At Bristol, 17th January, 1888.

[339] *Aspects of Home Rule* (speech of 22nd April, 1893), 170. Mr. Balfour succeeded Sir Michael as Irish Secretary on the 7th March, 1887.

[340] *Hansard*, III. ccccix. 66, 1191; cccxii. 183; cccxiii. 1608.

[341] Lord Hugh Cecil, Lord St. Aldwyn, and Mr. Bonar Law have recently suggested that the Crown itself should once more take an active and open part in politics and veto legislation.

[342] See his *Popular Government*.

[343] J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism*, chap. i.; Meredith Townsend in *Liberalism and the Empire*, 341.

[344] Lord Wolseley's *Soldier's Pocket Book*. His lordship would probably not poison his enemy's wells, or burn him alive, or kill him with explosive bullets, or massacre his women and children. But why not?

[345] See, for instance, L. T. Hobhouse's *Democracy and Reaction*; J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism*; and Norman Angell's *Great Illusion*.

[346] See Fitzpatrick's *Transvaal from Within*; Sir E. T. Cook's *Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War*; Mr. Bryce's *Impressions of South Africa*; and Sir Francis Younghusband's *South Africa of To-day* (1897), 246, 250.

[347] Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's *Speeches reprinted from the Times*, 167.

[348] It has been suggested that without the war this would have been impossible. Even if this were true, the case against the war would still stand. Material success cannot be balanced against morality. It might similarly be argued that an eruption on the skin is a good thing, because it rids the body of poisonous matter. Clean living would have prevented the accumulation of the poison, and made the violent means of discharge unnecessary.

[349] The questions of limiting the number of "pickets," and of making Unions liable for the wrongful acts of their central executive committees are not yet finally settled. The Acts of 1871 and 1874 did not, I think contemplate an absolute immunity.

[350] Lord Morley's *Miscellanies*, iv. 311. The same principles are of course being applied in all civilized countries. See Mr. Jethro Brown's *Underlying Principles of Modern Legislation*.

[351] In a very remarkable article in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1912, an anonymous writer declares that the better sort of workmen are now not merely politically, but actually, in character and ability, the superiors of the middle class. The shameless ignorance and hostility to ideas, which he discovers in the latter, are due partly to the increase of luxury and partly to the public-school system. The reform of the latter, which is now in progress, is probably as urgent a need of the middle, as industrial insurance is of the working class.

[352] Herbert Samuel's *Liberalism*, 8, 11.

[353] The Labour Exchange at Liverpool has actually decasualized the whole of the system of dock labour in that port. Credit for this is due to Mr. Rowland Williams, of the Exchange, and Mr. Lawrence D. Holt, a local shipowner. The machinery established by the Act has done what private effort had for a generation found beyond its strength.

[354] *Liberalism and the Social Problem*, 316. These speeches are by far the best expression of the philosophy of the new Liberalism.

[355] Churchill, *op. cit.*, 82.

[356] Mr. Harold Spender, in Mr. Philip Snowden's *Living Wage*, x.

[357] It should be remembered that in the peculiar case of women Trade Unionism is almost impossible. Without the State, they have no means of raising their wages as men have raised theirs by combination.

[358] *Social Statics* (1851), 325.

[359] A great proportion of this surplus wealth is spent on giving fictitious values to works of art and curiosities. A china jar which cost £500 fifty years ago may be bought for £5,000 to-day. The increase represents no real increase in value, but simply an increased capacity of millionaires to bid against each other. The price will again fall, as incomes are reduced.

[360] Accusations of moral corruption are most rarely made by those who are best acquainted with political history. But what other term is to be applied to this action, of which I am informed on the best possible authority? For several days before the day on which the Woman Suffrage amendment was moved to the Franchise Bill, a Liberal Member, who had refused to pledge himself to either side, was "bombarded" with

requests from pledged Suffragist Members that he would vote against them and defeat the amendment. We hang soldiers who commit this offence in military warfare.

[361] Sir Almroth Wright's notorious pamphlet has of course been repudiated by the saner women Anti-Suffragists. But it certainly represents the opinions of the average man Anti-Suffragist.

[362] I cannot deal seriously with the argument that the vote is merely an expression of physical force, that a minority only yields to a majority because it would be beaten in a civil war, that substantially all women might vote on one side at an election and substantially all men on the other, that the women outnumber the men and would therefore be able to procure the legislation which they wanted, that the men would refuse to obey the law, that civil war would follow, that the women would be beaten, and that society would be dissolved. Those politicians who believe in the possibility of such a succession of miracles had better retire each to a separate desert island. They will not find in any society of human beings a constitution which does not admit, on similarly logical grounds, of the same dreadful disasters. Such an absurd and pedantic example of reasoning away from human nature has not been seriously maintained in England since the time of Cartwright.

[363] I use these terms as a convenient way

of referring to the general movements for and against emancipation. They may mean anything in themselves. So far as I am concerned, I believe neither in that sexual promiscuity which some Anti-Suffragists charge against their opponents, nor on the other hand in that theory of a primitive matriarchate upon which some Suffragists base their claims.

[364] For the history of the agitation see Mrs. Fawcett's *Women's Suffrage* ("The People's Books" series); and for its philosophical basis, Mrs. Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour*, and my own *Emancipation of English Women*.

[365] I refer those who believe that the militant women were suffering from hysteria or other sexual disorder to the deliberate contradiction of Mr. H. L. Carre-Smith, in the *Standard* of the 9th April, 1912. Mr. Smith is a competent physician, and an Anti-Suffragist, and he has made a careful study of the militant type. "As a rule," he says, "I have been struck by their normal demeanour."

[366] The only Government department which acted wisely in dealing with the women was the Irish Office. The first offenders against the law in Dublin were promptly placed in the first division. Unhappily, this was after Mr. McKenna had revived forcible feeding, and too late to produce any effect. The next Irish offences were attempts at arson and murder,

committed by one of Mr. McKenna's prisoners. Had Mr. Birrell been at the Home Office in 1906, we should still be far from arson and explosives.

[367] I received a letter from a Cabinet Minister in 1909, in which he said that he expected vitriol-throwing at any moment. Vitriol is, of course, the weapon of an outraged sex instinct, the injured wife or discarded mistress.

[368] I refer my readers to the grave and responsible report of Sir Victor Horsley, Dr. Mansell Moulin, and Dr. Agnes Saville, three physicians of unquestioned competence and probity, which appeared in the *Lancet* of the 24th August, 1912.

[369] One of the charges, that a large number of plain-clothes policemen had mingled with the crowd for the purpose of attacking the women, was no more a subject for investigation in a court of law than the subject of the Parnell Commission. On this point Mr. Churchill denied the charges without inquiring of anybody but police officers, whose evidence, even if it was perfectly honest, was of little value. For a police officer to say that he did not see a fact, one of a large number of facts, is not sufficient proof that a private person is lying when he states that he did see it. Two gentlemen known to me say that they saw a large number (one says "more than a hundred") of plain-clothes men march back into Scotland Yard after the disturbance.

Mr. Churchill says that there were "not more than a dozen" on duty. My informants may be lying or mistaken. But Mr. Churchill is not in a position to say so, because he never attempted to cross-examine them. Both appear to me to be honest witnesses.

[370] For a naïve and illuminating statement of the militant women's case see *The Suffragette*, by Sylvia Pankhurst; and for a fuller statement of my own opinions, my *Emancipation of English Women* (1913 edition). For the case against Mr. Churchill see the pamphlet *Treatment of the Women's Deputations by the Metropolitan Police* (The Woman's Press, 1911). See also my pamphlet *Political Prisoners* (National Political League, 1912). During the London Dock strike of 1912 charges similar to those above mentioned were made against the police. Mr. McKenna granted a public inquiry at once.

[371] No Liberal questions Sir Edward Grey's honesty or good will. His record in connection with Woman's Suffrage, no bad touchstone, is conspicuously pure.

[372] The action of Austria in establishing formal sovereignty over Bosnia and Herzegovina was not such a gross violation of moral rules as it appears at first sight. Austria had been in occupation of these territories, with European sanction, for more than a generation, and there is no question that they had been well governed. It was only in taking advantage of the

revolution in Turkey, without obtaining the formal consent of the Powers, that she acted immorally.

[373] It should be remembered that the whole of the Foreign Service is recruited from among people with minimum incomes of £400 a year. This ensures a Tory bias among permanent officials.

[374] There is great need of a history of foreign policy which shall trace in a satisfactory way the various currents which have brought us to our present situation. For the present we have to rely on detached studies like Mr. E. D. Morel's *Morocco in Diplomacy*, Mr. E. H. Perris's *Our Foreign Policy and Sir Edward Grey's Failure*, Mr. J. A. Spender's pamphlet reprinted from the *Westminster Gazette*, Mr. Morgan Shuster's *Strangling of Persia*, Professor E. G. Browne's pamphlets on the same subject, and the Hon. George Peel's *Friends of England*, *Enemies of England*, and *Future of England*. There is no general historical survey, and until there is, foreign policy will remain as much the monopoly of a caste as ancient legal systems. It is time that this mysterification of such important affairs was ended. At this moment (February, 1913), though the French Government has published a huge Yellow Book on the Morocco crisis, Sir Edward Grey still refuses to the English people any explanation of the reason why he nearly led them into war eighteen months ago.

[375] An article in the *Times* of the 15th March, 1913 seems to endorse all our Liberal protests and criticisms.

[376] See, for example, the article by Mr. Sydney Brooks in the *Fortnightly Review* for January, 1913. The suggestion was also made in a leading article in the *Daily Telegraph*, the date of which I forget.

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